



## GUIDELINES FOR SYMPOSIA

Symposia are central to the scientific program of ATBC annual meetings. Each symposium should address a specific theme, falling into at least one of the following contexts:

1. A topic of interest to numerous attendants;
2. Conceptual syntheses with contrasting views on scientific and conservation issues that are actively debated; or
3. Introducing novel perspectives and approaches into research domains related to tropical biology and conservation.

Proposals addressing the meeting theme, "TROPICAL BIOLOGY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT", are particularly welcome, but any timely and coherent topic will be considered.

We invite symposium proposals for ATBC's 56th Annual Meeting to be held from the 30 July to 3 August 2019, at the CCI Ivato, Antananarivo, Madagascar.

### Summary of timelines associated with symposia

Deadline for submission of symposia proposals	10 January 2019
Notification of acceptance of symposia proposals	20 February 2019
Deadline to submit abstracts associated with each accepted symposium	20 March 2019
Notification of abstract acceptance	15 April 2019
Deadline for symposium speakers to register for meeting	15 May 2019
Notification of scheduling (session date and time)	21 June 2019

### Application format

All symposium proposals must include:

- Title: 12 words maximum
- Principal organizer (name, institutional affiliation, address, and email): Note that this person is the point of contact for the symposium and is responsible for communicating with the speakers.
- Co-organizers (names, institutional affiliations, addresses, and emails). A maximum of two co-organizers are allowed.
- Moderator (name, institutional affiliation, address, and email) if different from the organizers
- Potential speakers (name, institutional affiliation, address, email, and tentative talk titles), listed in the anticipated sequence of presentation. At least five speakers, excluding the organizer, should have been contacted previously and indicated commitment to attending the ATBC 2019. Session of more than six speakers should be justified. *"This meeting will include up to 40 symposia. Each symposium will receive a 2-hour block. In rare cases, proposals with strong scientific merit of broad interest may be planned for two 2-hour blocks. Individual talks in symposia are 15 minutes-long (12 min presentation + 3 min Q&A). The symposium organizers are encouraged to allocate time to an introductory overview and/or a closing summary to promote conceptual synthesis or audience debate within the allocated time block. The symposium organizers also must be willing to accept*





*requests from the ATBC 2019 Scientific Committee to accommodate additional presenters on the basis of scientific merits, topic compatibility and logistical reasons."*

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- Description (200 words): This should clearly summarize the background, scope, goals, and objectives of the symposium, as well as its importance and interest to ATBC attendees. The description should avoid overly specialized language; any biologist attending the meeting should be able to understand it. The accepted version of this text will appear in the online program and accessed by attendees seeking additional information on the session.
- Justification (200 words): The justification should focus on how the review criteria (see below) are met by the proposal. It should not simply repeat the description.
- One sentence summary (maximum 50 words): A short version of the symposium description will appear in the final program.

### Evaluation process and criteria

All proposals will be evaluated and scored by reviewers selected by the Scientific Committee of ATBC 2019. The Scientific Committee may accept, decline, or offer an opportunity to present the proposed work in a more appropriate format (organized oral session or special session). Organizers will be notified of the committee's decision by the 20 February 2019.

Proposals will be assessed using the following criteria.

- **Scientific merit** - likelihood of promoting significant advance in understanding of tropical biology and ecosystems, innovative or interdisciplinary approaches, likelihood of novel conceptual synthesis, etc.
- **Broader impacts** - integration of science with conservation issues, positive impacts on policy makers, utility to conservation practitioners, etc.
- **Appeal to a broad audience** - specifically among participants of ATBC 2019.
- **Structure and organization** - in the sense that the symposium will provide insightful synthesis or perspectives. Symposia should NOT be simply a set of case studies or series of results from the same group of collaborators, and must avoid biases associated with the perspectives of the symposium organizers.
- **Relevance** for the meeting's theme, as well as common scientific and academic interests of ATBC 2019 attendees.
- **Speaker lineup** - invited speakers may be a mix of well-established or younger scientists, particularly those providing novel perspectives. Each speaker should make a novel contribution to the symposium theme, and not just review previous work. Proposals with a large proportion of confirmed speakers will be favored.

All symposium speakers will be required to submit an abstract by the submission deadline (20 March 2019). Symposium organizers are responsible that all associated abstracts are received by this deadline, and reconfirm participation by speakers on the same date. All symposium abstracts will be peer reviewed, and the ATBC 2019 Scientific Committee may be in contact with the symposium organizers and require revisions of individual symposium abstracts.

### Presentation rules

The 'one presentation' rule will be applied to all symposium speakers; a presenter in one symposium is not allowed to present in another symposium, make another oral presentation or be the lead author of a poster.

Symposium organizers will receive a notice from the ATBC 2019 Organizing Committee if speakers in their sessions have not registered for the meeting before 15 May 2019.

### Confirmation of session





If your proposal is accepted, you will be responsible for ensuring that your symposium will be organized in a correct manner. Organizers must be willing to accommodate requests for adjustment from the ATBC 2019 Scientific Committee. Organizers must submit a revised and updated summary of the symposium description and an updated list of confirmed speakers by 20 March 2019. This summary should be 200 words or less. The ATBC 2019 Local Organization Committee reserves the right to cancel a symposium if less than 50% of the speakers have not registered by 15 May and will then reassign speakers to oral sessions or other symposia. Accordingly, symposium organizers must maintain communication with the Scientific Committee to ensure registration and participation by their invited speakers.

Symposium organizers will be informed of the time and date of their symposia by 21 June 2019, and they are expected to communicate this to individual speakers in their session.





## Cancellation policy

It is disruptive for the meeting program to have accepted symposia cancelled. Submit a symposium proposal only if you are sure to attend the meeting and are willing to fulfil your responsibility as a symposium organizer. The principal symposium organizer, in case of unavoidable circumstances, may be replaced by one of the symposium co-organizers.

As a rule, ATBC does not provide financial assistance, stipends or free registration to individual speakers. Symposium organizers should notify potential speakers of this policy when they are invited to participate. If needed, individual symposium organizers are responsible for identifying funding sources for the speakers in their sessions. The ATBC 2019 Organizing Committee cannot accept symposium proposals with multiple speakers whose participation is pending financial support.

In unavoidable circumstances, in which a presentation must be cancelled, the speaker should immediately notify the symposium session organizer, whose duty is to identify a replacement speaker. The replacement would be ideally someone who is already a co-author, but the symposium session organizer may identify another suitable person. The name of the replacement speaker must be sent to the Program Chair and Co-chairs as soon as possible and even if it is the day before the session.

## Communication with speakers

If a proposal is accepted as a symposium, it is very important that the organizer communicates with speakers about its acceptance, confirm the registration status of speakers, abstract requirements and deadlines, session scheduling information, and expectations for participation in the conference. Here are a few details that all speakers should know up front.

When asking speakers to commit to the session, organizers should inform them that the session could be scheduled any day of the meeting.

Speakers who fail to submit an abstract on time will be removed from the session. It is the responsibility of the symposium organizer to make sure speaker submit an abstract associated with their talk.

All speakers are required to register for the conference. Registration will not be waived or reduced for any speaker. ATBC is not able to provide any financial assistance, stipends, free or reduced registration, travel assistance, or paid lodging to session organizers or to individual symposium participants. Organizers are responsible for making this clear to their speakers.

## Proposal submission

Proposals should be submitted as WORD or PDF documents to: [info@atbc2019.org](mailto:info@atbc2019.org)

At the same time, please send the proposals to the following addresses:

- Scientific secretary: Dr. Onja Hariveloniaina Razanamaro: [onjarh@gmail.com](mailto:onjarh@gmail.com)
- Scientific program chair: Dr. Daniel Rakotondravony: [rakotondravony.daniel@gmail.com](mailto:rakotondravony.daniel@gmail.com)
- Scientific program co-chair: Dr. Steven Goodman: [sgoodman@fieldmuseum.org](mailto:sgoodman@fieldmuseum.org)

