

IUPAC ChemRAWN Committee Agenda

Bled, Slovenia, June 12 and 13, 2014

Members attending:

Leiv Sydnes (Chair), Brindaban Ranu, Nadia Kandile, Carlos Tollinche, Dick Durst, Zafra Lerman, Venceslav Kaucic, Jean-Marc Paris, Ting-Kueh Soon, Oleg Demchuk, Kazuhiko Shimura, Ekaterina Lokteva, Gary vanLoon (Secretary)

Written regrets:

Sean Corish, Fernando Galembeck, Raminee Wijesekera, Vincenza Faraco, Rameshwar Adhikari

Sydnes opened the meeting at 4:05 pm by welcoming participants. He expressed thanks to 'Slavko' Kaucic for his considerable work in facilitating arrangements for travel and accommodation and announced a committee dinner to be held on June 12 at Hotel Toplice, sponsored by the Slovenian Chemical Society.

1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved after addition of 'Other business' as item 9

2. Minutes of meeting held in Istanbul, August 11 and 12, 2013

Having already been accepted electronically, the minutes were noted.

3. Matters arising

ChemRAWN e-bulletin –

vanLoon reported that there was almost no response to the call for material that could be included in a bulletin related to the contribution of chemistry in responding to world needs. This led to a discussion about whether such a bulletin was an appropriate activity for ChemRAWN. There was a variety of comments – need for a clear objective, a more focussed approach, focus could be limited to ChemRAWN projects or ChemRAWN-related topics, could contribute to our goal of making ChemRAWN more visible ('branding') through being made available through the ChemRAWN home page, possibility of encouraging discussion, perhaps through social media.

It was decided to make a further attempt to produce such a bulletin, this time by asking each committee member to submit one item related to a ChemRAWN project with which

they are associated. vanLoon is to write to members about this, soliciting submissions by the end of September, 2014..

Website improvements –

Various factors related to changes in the ChemRAWN administration have come in the way of improving the website. At present there is no one person in the office whose job is responsible for the website. Sydnes will contact IUPAC regarding a need for a more attractive and informative website for IUPAC in general and ChemRAWN in particular. Demchuk has offered to work with vanLoon if and when our committee is authorized to be involved in assisting to make improvements.

4. Report of the Chair (Leiv Sydnes)

On behalf of ChemRAWN, Sydnes reported to the IUPAC Bureau in April. A copy of the report is appended to the minutes.

Sydnes is a member of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and brings ChemRAWN representation to that group. In 2013, the OPCW received the Nobel Prize for its work and it aims to strengthen its position as the organization responsible for world issues concerning chemical weapons. There are challenges related to the fact that not all countries are members and because it deals with state parties only; its mandate does not include terrorist groups. In working with OPCW, Sydnes believes that it is important for ChemRAWN to remain independent and to be able to act when called upon by OPCW for assistance. Soon sits on groups connected with outreach and education related to OPCW.

The winner of the third ChemRAWN prize for Atmospheric and Green Chemistry has been selected and the name will be announced at the Conference on Green Chemistry to be held in Durban in August. There were only two applicants for this award and future discussions are needed to focus on publicity, age specifications for 'young scientists' and the possibility of offering the award alternately for Atmospheric and for Green Chemistry work.

The IUPAC Secretary General has resigned and Colin Humphries has been chosen as the Acting Secretary General at the April bureau meeting. There have been other changes in the administration of IUPAC as well.

At this point, the meeting ended for the evening and was reconstituted at 8:30 am, June 13.

5. Conferences under Development

Herbal Medicines – Mosihuzzaman

On behalf of Mosihuzzaman, Sydnese reported. The program for this conference is ready, but there are challenges in obtaining financial support. In particular, IUPAC does not support conferences, but only projects, yet ChemRAWN conferences are a type of project. IUPAC will, however, provide financial support for attendance of scientists from low income countries. Some support should be available from the Herbal Medicine industry in countries like Bangladesh and India. The kind of issues that will be covered include semantic and efficacy issues, significance of analytical data and other technical reports, relations with the conventional pharmaceutical industry, export regulations. It was recommended that the international scope of the conference be expanded beyond the current emphasis on and participation from South Asia to include Russia (Lokteva will recommend connections) China and Brazil (Paris will recommend connections). The meeting has been postponed until November 2015.

Chemistry and Sustainable Development – Sydnese

Sydnese reported on developments related to this initiative which was first considered in 2009. It arises out of a SicheM activity, is concerned with the ewaste problem and is Africa focussed. Three attempts to form a committee have not elicited any significant response from African scientists whose buy-in and active participation is essential. Soon pointed out the desirability of ensuring industrial participation and Ranu emphasized that disposal of ewaste involves more than chemistry alone. South African and Francophone connections could be helpful. Sydnese will continue to investigate if a meeting on this subject can be developed.

Green Catalysis – Ranu

Ranu described that the idea for a meeting on Green Catalysis was originally submitted in 2011 and, after discussions, has been modified several times. Attempts to involve the Green Chemistry Committee have not so far been successful. Current thinking is that the meeting will focus on green catalysis and chemical waste. There was considerable discussion as to whether an additional conference on waste is appropriate. Ranu pointed out that minimizing waste in chemical processes is totally different than other waste subjects like ewaste or municipal solid waste. It was also pointed out that there are currently many meetings on green chemistry and particularly on green catalysis. Ranu asked for specific direction on how to proceed. Sydnese suggested that a meeting should be directed toward solving well-defined waste problems – energy and materials. Soon recommended a meeting title such as 'Green catalysis processes for chemical waste management. Ranu will continue to pursue the topic by submitting a draft outline by the end of this year.

Chemistry in Water Treatment – Kandile and Lee

There are two parts to this proposal. Kandile reported that in Egypt, all action on conferences has been postponed until after September. Nevertheless, there is a need for a conference on water with a Middle East regional perspective. Lerman described the goals of the Malta Conferences, which focus on education and science in this part of the world. There is a particular interest in water problems and other environmental issues in Gaza. A ChemRAWN activity dealing with this subject could be planned in conjunction with the upcoming Malta conference, Nov 15-20, 2015, Approval would be needed for this approximately one year in advance. Kandile and Lerman are to investigate this possibility.

Lee is organizing a symposium on Green Chemistry for World Needs, as a part of IUPAC 2015 in Pusan, Korea. Through correspondence submitted to the committee, he is seeking ChemRAWN endorsement for this four-part symposium. The committee agreed to endorse the symposium as a ChemRAWN activity with the proviso that the program be submitted to the ChemRAWN committee for approval, and the symposium should allow space for Sydnes to provide an introduction of ChemRAWN.

Diagnostic Technologies for Resource Limited Countries – Durst

Durst reported that he has been able to make only limited progress in planning this meeting and indicated that it will need to be postponed until 2015. He proposed that it be held in combination with an IAEAC (International Association of Environmental Analytical Chemists) conference/workshop that is to take place September 19-23, 2015 in Regensburg, Germany. The ChemRAWN meeting could be held on the two following days. The proposal is that the meeting would be similar to a Gordon Conference, with opportunities for informal interactions, and there should be space made to involve graduate students, perhaps through a poster session. The conference should be of interest especially to scientists from African, Asian and other low income countries, but its location and association with IAEAC will ensure good European and other participation as well. The immediate need is to set up a scientific committee and to begin seeking funding from various sources.

Urban Solid Waste Management – Faraco and Paris

It had been hoped to enable Faraco to present her proposal through Skype, but a connection was not available. In her absence, Paris provided an update on the planning activities. It was suggested that the meeting should be held in 2016 and could incorporate ideas from the megacity movement. The meeting should also examine practices specific to various countries. Shimura volunteered to be an additional member of the planning committee. A progress report is to be provided by the end of this year.

This suggestion of a need to receive a progress report led to a more general request that mid-year reports on progress regarding all proposals should be made. vanLoon will send out a reminder to project leaders about this in November.¹

Shale Gas – Galembek

There was a wide-ranging discussion regarding the chemical issues involving shale gas and the regions where these issues apply. Given the complexity of the subject and the relative newness of the topic, it was decided that it would be best to plan for a meeting when the subject has matured somewhat – possibly in conjunction with the 2017 IUPAC Congress in Brazil.

6. New Ideas for Conference topics and other ChemRAWN activities

Suggestions for future conferences/activities were solicited.

Sydnese provided information about a Norwegian group that were looking toward a conference that would review of perspectives on issues surrounding greenhouse gases and climate change. After discussion, it was agreed that this subject continues to be well covered in other conferences and did not merit ChemRAWN's attention at this time.

Demchuk suggested a conference on improving the image and promoting the value of chemistry. This may not be a specific ChemRAWN issue, but it is important to IUPAC. Discussions with the Committee on Chemical Education regarding this topic are appropriate.

Paris suggested a meeting regarding the high cost of medicines and the fact that some are available only to the wealthy. The meeting could consider both the chemical and economic aspects of developing strategies for promoting production of lower-cost medicines.

Durst proposed meetings on new materials, nano-materials and two-dimensional materials – their meritorious properties and potential health or environmental problems.

Referring back to the discussion on the value of chemistry, Lokteva suggested a meeting on the historical contribution of chemistry. This could be connected with the IUPAC anniversary in 2019. The subject could also be highlighted on the ChemRAWN webpage.

In response to the World Chemistry Leadership report from Istanbul, Tollinche discussed the need to support activities of young chemists. Initiatives should involve ChemRAWN as well as other divisions and committees.

¹ After the committee meeting, Tollinche suggested that a template be prepared for use in preparing these mid-year updates. vanLoon will arrange for this to be done.

7. ChemRAWN Committee membership

Sydnes expressed a wish that we have additional national representatives beyond the specified quota

8. Other business

Sydnes said that we need to develop a mechanism for facilitating the availability of seed money to support our conferences. The challenge is that IUPAC does not consider our conferences to be projects. On our behalf, Sydnes will write to the IUPAC executive to see if some change can be made.

The next meeting is to be held in Pusan, Korea on August 9 and 10, 2015.

The meeting adjourned at 3:55 pm