

21st ESAB NEWSLETTER – May 2006

The Scientific Committee of the EFB Section on Applied Biocatalysis (ESAB) had her 56th meeting in Brussels/BE on 2 April 2006. A short report of this meeting is given below.

1. Membership and ESAB SciCom composition

ESAB had 746 members in April 2006, an decrease of 61 since September last year. The decrease is caused by the 'clean-up' of the membership list by the EFB Central Office. If your colleague/student is an ESAB member but complains that he/she does not receive any news from ESAB, then this probably means that his/her mail address was lost. Please ask this person to re-register at the EFB website (www.efb-central.org/index/php/member/register) and ask him/her not to forget to say “yes” at the button “Join the Section Applied Biocatalysis?” !!

At this meeting, two new members have been elected to the Scientific Committee (SciCom) of ESAB: prof. Jiri Damborsky (Masaryk University, Brno/CZ), who will replace prof. Miroslav Marek, and prof. Paul Engel (University College Dublin/IE), who is the first ESAB delegate from Ireland.

For prof. Klaus Buchholz (TU Braunschweig/DE), this meeting was his last one, because he decided to leave the ESAB SciCom after his retirement last year. Prof. Buchholz was involved in the work of the section right from the beginning in 1978, at the time when the section was called the Working Party on Immobilised Enzymes (later Applied Biocatalysis). The chairman Maurice Franssen thanked prof. Buchholz for his continuous efforts for ESAB and its predecessors over such a long period.

2. Past ESAB events

On 6–7 October 2005, a workshop on **Gram to tonne biocatalysis** took place in Dortmund/DE, organised by prof. Andreas Schmid. The first day consisted of group discussions and the second one was spent on the outcome of the discussions. It was a strong and well-attended meeting with about 100 participants, 30 from industry and 70 from academia. The outcome of the discussions will be collected in a book which will be published by Wiley; the editors will be profs. Andreas Schmid and Andreas Liese.

3. Upcoming ESAB events in 2006 (incl. deadlines)

ACHEMA2006, 28th Exhibition-Congress on Chemical Engineering, Environmental Protection and Biotechnology, Frankfurt am Main/DE, 15-19 May 2006, see <http://achema-content.dechema.de/index.php?selectedItem=0&spkz=E>. There is a two-day special event called "Industrial Biotechnology Partnering Conference" inside ACHEMA, see www.achema.de/biotechnology.html for more information. There is also a symposium about downstream processing, organised by our sister section on Biochemical Engineering Science (ESBES). The deadline for submission of orals and posters at ACHEMA has elapsed, but registration is still possible.

The sixth version of the biennial ESBES symposium (**ESBES-6**) will take place in Salzburg/AT, from 27-30 August 2006. The programme is finalised now and available on the website www.esbes2006.org. In collaboration with ESAB, there are about 20 lectures devoted to biocatalysis and biotransformations. On Monday there are 9 lectures about Integration of

Biotransformation and Separation, and about Biocatalysis and Process Design. On Tuesday afternoon, there is a special session devoted to Oxidative Biotransformations. The deadline for submissions of abstracts has passed already; cheap registration closes at **5 July**.

The 3rd Symposium on **Biocatalysis in the Food and Drinks Industries** will take place in Wageningen/NL from 24-26 September 2006, see www.vlaggraduateschool.nl/bfdi. Submission of abstracts for oral presentation **has been extended to 22 May**. The deadline for cheap registration is **15 June**. A brochure can be downloaded at www.vlaggraduateschool.nl/bfdi/bfdi.pdf.

The second symposium on **Protein Design and Evolution for Biocatalysis** will take place in Greifswald, north-east Germany, from 30 August – 1 September, as a satellite symposium to BioCat2006. The website is www.chemie.uni-greifswald.de/~biotech/pdb-2006.html. Early registration is recommended, since the maximum number of participants has been set to 150. The deadline for oral presentations is **2 May**, for posters **30 June**. Cheap registration is possible until **30 June**, ESAB members get a strong reduction!

After the first successful event in Ghent last year, there will be a 2nd Conference on **Renewable Resources and Biorefineries**, in York/UK, 6-8 September, organised by prof. James Clark, well known from the Green Chemistry Network. The main themes of the conference are in the areas of European Policy and Socio-Economic issues, Biorefining, Green Chemistry, Renewable Feedstocks for Chemical Manufacture, Industrial Biotechnology, Biocatalysis, Bioprocessing, Carbohydrates, Oleochemicals, New Materials and Products from Sustainable Resources, Biofuels, Bioenergy and Investment. The keynote and invited speakers and all other details can be found at the website www.rrbconference.net. The deadline for all kinds of abstracts is **31 May**.

4. Other events in 2006 (incl. deadlines)

BioCat 2006, 3-7 September 2006, Hamburg/DE, see www.biocat2006.de for all details. The deadline for abstract submission is **31 May**, for cheap registration 15 July.

5. Upcoming ESAB events in 2007

The 7th Symposium on **Protein Stabilisation** will take place from 12-14 April 2007 at Exeter University, Exeter/UK. The organisers will be dr. Tim Gibson and prof. Jennifer Littlechild.

The 7th **Carbohydrate Bioengineering Meeting (CBM7)** will be held from 22-25 April 2007 in Braunschweig/DE. There is a website now, www.dechema.de/cbm7, on which the topics of the symposium are listed, and on which all details will be published in the near future.

There will be another symposium on **Biocatalysis in nonconventional media**, organised by prof. Vytas Svedas, most probably in the second part of June 2007, at the Lomonosov Institute in Moscow/RU. The event will be linked to the Russian Symposium on Biocatalysis, which traditionally takes place on a boat which sails from Moscow to Saint Petersburg.

Biotrans 2007 will be in Oviedo/ES, 8-13 July 2007, see www.uniovi.es/bioorganica/congresos/biotrans2007/index.html.

6. Brussels affairs

After the Vision Paper on Industrial Biotechnology and the corresponding Strategic Research Agenda (both downloadable at our website www.esabweb.org/Technology_Platform.html), we are now working on the Implementation Action Plan in the field of industrial biotechnology. The aim of this Plan is to identify barriers and to advise the European Commission on when what kind of research should be stimulated (i.e. in what order), who should pay for it (EU, member states, industry, or combinations thereof) and who should be the drivers (academia, industry or both). All these issues were discussed in a workshop in Brussels on 3 and 4 April. The draft version of the Plan will be published on our website before summer.

7. Young European Biotech Network

I would like to draw your attention to the Young European Biotech Network (YEEN). This network was founded by 4 student organisations. Its aim is to provide information to young biotechnologists and to help them in networking, see www.yeen.org. YEEN has several interesting projects, like BIOPOP which is an EU-funded programme to innovative approaches for communication for life sciences and biotechnology. YEEN has recently launched a job matching forum where you can find a new job, or advertise yourself, see www.eurobiojobs.org. Membership of YEEN is free and they are quite relaxed concerning the definition of "young", so do sign up!

Maurice Franssen (chairman of ESAB)