

## 23<sup>rd</sup> ESAB NEWSLETTER – September 2006

The Scientific Committee of the EFB Section on Applied Biocatalysis (ESAB) had her 57<sup>th</sup> meeting in Hamburg/DE on 3 September 2006. A short report of this meeting is given below. ESAB had 850 members in September 2006, which is an unbelievable increase of 104 members (14%) since April this year!

### 1. Past ESAB events

The Symposium on **Multistep Enzyme Catalysed Processes** took place from 18-21 April 2006 in Graz/AT. There were 250-300 participants and the general impression was extremely positive. Eight to nine of the submitted papers will be published in a special issue of *Biocatalysis and Biotransformation*.

The symposium on **Environmental Biocatalysis: From remediation with enzymes to novel green processes** was a good meeting, held in Cordoba/ES from 23-26 April. There were 155 participants, among which a lot of people from the Americas. Also this symposium will lead to a special issue in *Biocatalysis and Biotransformation*.

The **Laboratory Course on Directed Enzyme Evolution** in Vilnius/LT, 28 May – 2 June, was fully booked with 20 students. This was the first time that ESAB organised such a course but it worked out very well, thanks to the excellent preparatory work done by the Vilnius and Greifswald groups.

ESBES is now the largest section of EFB and their symposium **ESBES-6** in Salzburg/AT (27-30 August) was attended by 281 participants, among which many young scientists. Of the 50 applications from students, 10 papers were selected for oral presentation and 3 got a prize. There were good joint sessions with ESAB and the whole event was very positively received.

The second symposium on **Protein Design and Evolution for Biocatalysis** took place in Greifswald/DE, from 30 August – 1 September. The meeting was very successful, the 148 participants stayed until the very end. Unfortunately Frances Arnold and Dan Tawfik were unable to come. There were 150 posters and a special issue of the *Biotechnology Journal* will be devoted to this symposium.

York/UK was the venue for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference on **Renewable Resources and Biorefineries**, from 6-8 September. There were 170 participants, a little less than expected but the conference itself was good.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Symposium on **Biocatalysis in the Food and Drinks Industries** was in Wageningen/NL, last week from 24-26 September 2006. There were 72 participants, which was also less than expected, but this allowed a very nice atmosphere with lots of possibilities for personal contacts. There was a nice 1:1 ratio of participants from academia/industry + research institutions. I have received many positive comments about the event. There were 23 lectures and 30 posters.

### 2. Other events in 2006

Our ESAB SciCom member prof. Patrick Adlercreutz organises a one-day Greenchem meeting on **Efficient biocatalytic routes for selective introduction of oxygen** in Malmö/SE on 9 November.

Registration and poster abstract submission closes on **30 September!!** Participation is limited, registration should be done by sending an e-mail to [eva.nordberg\\_karlsson@biotek.lu.se](mailto:eva.nordberg_karlsson@biotek.lu.se). Invited lectures will be given by David Leak, Oliver May, Andreas Schmid, Rolf Schmid/Vlada Urlacher, Roger Sheldon and John Woodley.

### 3. Upcoming ESAB events in 2007 (incl. deadlines)

The 7<sup>th</sup> Symposium on **Protein Stabilisation** will take place from 11-14 April 2007 at Exeter University, Exeter/UK and is organised by prof. Jenny Littlechild. The main topics to be covered will address: protein folding; protein denaturation; natural methods of protein stabilisation; mechanisms to stabilise existing proteins; protein immobilisation; protein water interactions; protein organic solvent interactions; proteins in ionic liquids; protein-protein interactions; protein-carbohydrate interactions; industrial proteins and optimisation for use. There is a website open now for registration and submission of abstracts, [www.centres.ex.ac.uk/biocatalysis/prostab2007](http://www.centres.ex.ac.uk/biocatalysis/prostab2007). Early registration closes on 30 January 2007.

The 7<sup>th</sup> **Carbohydrate Bioengineering Meeting** (CBM7) will be held from 22-25 April 2007 in Braunschweig/DE under the leadership of prof. Klaus Buchholz. The website is [www.dechema.de/cbm7](http://www.dechema.de/cbm7), the topics and keynote lectures are given there. The deadline for all contributions is **29 September!!**, but I hope the organisers will be flexible if you are a few days late. Registration will be possible from January on.

Sven Panke (ETHZ) and colleagues will organise an international conference on synthetic biology (**Synthetic Biology 3.0**), from 24-27 June 2007 in Zürich/CH. Synthetic biology is defined as an engineering approach to biology: "take biologic parts and assemble!" The website on which all details will be published is [www.syntheticbiology.ethz.ch/conf\\_2007](http://www.syntheticbiology.ethz.ch/conf_2007).

The largest European symposium on Biocatalysis is **Biotrans**, and the 8<sup>th</sup> edition will be in Oviedo/ES, 8-13 July 2007, see [www.uniovi.es/biotrans2007](http://www.uniovi.es/biotrans2007) (note: new address of website). Registration will be possible from 15 October on, deadline for oral contributions is **15 December**.

The 13<sup>th</sup> European Symposium on Biotechnology (**ECB13**) will be in Barcelona, 17-19 September 2007, see <http://efb-central.org/europeancongress> for general information. The 5 main conference themes will be SymBIOsyS (Science, Industry and Society), Industrial Biotechnology, Health and Medicine, Plant Biotechnology, and Functional Genomics and Systems Biology.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference on **Renewable Resources and Biorefineries** will again be in Ghent/BE. More details will follow.

### 4. Brussels affairs

The breakdown of the budget for FP7 has been fixed now. Of the 32.4 billion Euro for cooperation in the years 2007-2013, 1.9 bn € will go to theme 2 (food, agriculture and biotechnology). That is not a lot and we have tried to convince the members of the European Parliament that this part should be increased, but it was in vain. However, also themes 4 (nanoscience and materials) and 5 (energy) will lead to useful calls for our field of research. In general, the rumours about the text of the first calls for proposals are positive: industrial biotechnology will be present there! The first call should officially be out in December this year, but there is a serious risk that this deadline will not be met. We will keep you posted!

## **5. Changes in the ESAB Scientific Committee and Board**

During the ESAB meeting in Hamburg, prof. Durda Vasic-Racki (Zagreb/HR) was welcomed as a regular SciCom member (she used to be an associate member). Furthermore, a new board was elected. Dr. Roland Wohlgemuth (Sigma-Aldrich, Buchs/CH, current vice-chairman) was elected as the new chairman of ESAB, and prof. Wim Soetaert (Univ. Ghent/BE, current secretary) was elected as vice-chairman.

The new secretary will be Willi Meier (DECHEMA/Frankfurt a.M./DE). Dr. Meier is already very active within EFB as the manager of the German Regional Branch Office, and as a secretary of ESBES. Especially the latter function combines well with the secretariat of ESAB and will strengthen the ties between these important sections of EFB.

This means that this was my last newsletter to you, the next one in December will be made by dr. Meier. I hope you liked them, it has been a pleasure to serve you. Please motivate your colleagues to sign up as ESAB member so we can pass the 1000-member mark next year!

*Maurice Franssen (former chairman of ESAB)*