

# INTERNATIONAL UNION OF PHYSIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

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## 2014 Annual Report

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This annual report covers the activities of the International Union of Physiological Sciences for the calendar year 2014. This report addresses the main events of this year, including the activities of the Executive Committee (ExCo) and Board of the General Assembly (BGA), updates from Commissions and Committees, outreach endeavors, and the interactions of the IUPS with the International Council for Science (ICSU).

An electronic version of this report can be found on the IUPS website (<http://iups.org/reports/annual-reports/>).

### 1. 2017 Congress Planning

Planning is proceeding apace for the IUPS-2017 Congress, scheduled to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from August 1–5, 2017. Prof. Vagner Antunes is Chair of the Local Organizing Committee. Prof. Benedito Machado (representing SBFis) and Prof. Walter Boron (representing IUPS) are the Co-Chairs of the International Scientific Programming Committee (ISPC).

In June of 2014, SBFis President-Elect Vagner Antunes submitted a financial model for the 2017 Congress, which was reviewed by ExCo. At their Strategic Planning Meeting in October, ExCo completed their first draft for the contract for the Congress, and submitted it to SBFis. Revisions of the contract have since gone back and forth between SBFis and IUPS, and the contract seems to be nearly finalized.

In November of 2014, SBFis launched the Congress website at <http://iups2017.com/>. In addition, plans were made to (a) launch a call in March of 2015 for nominations of Plenary and Keynote speakers, (b) initiate calls for Congress support from major national physiological organizations, (c) hold a meeting of the ISPC in Aguas de Lindoia from July 31 to August 1, 2015 in conjunction with the SBFis 2015 Congress, and (d) launch a call in Fall of 2015 for nominations for symposia and other sessions at IUPS-2017.

### 2. ExCo Strategic Planning Meeting in Oxford, UK

ExCo held a strategic planning meeting on October 6 and 7 at Oxford University, UK. At the meeting, ExCo agreed that IUPS should do more than hold a quadrennial congress. To that end, Treasurer Peter Wagner will create a questionnaire to send to member societies, to get a clearer picture of what the best course of action.

**Regionalism.** A major topic of discussion was the importance and encouragement of regionalism in the physiological community. The five regional federations work quite differently from one another. The Federation of the Asian and Oceanian Physiological Societies (FAOPS) in Asia is quite strong and proactive. The Federation of European Physiological Societies (FEPS) and the Latin American Association of Physiological Sciences (LAAPS) are less active, whereas African Association of Physiological Sciences (AAPS) is in the process of reorganization. It was discussed how to better serve the Middle Eastern countries not currently part of IUPS. First Vice President Julie Chan offered to speak to the FAOPS council, and discuss admitting Middle Eastern countries. Saeed Samnani, as chair of the Recruitment Committee, could be a major asset in expanding the role of Middle Eastern physiologists in future IUPS matters.

An important question posed by ExCo was how to encourage regional collaboration without imposing on member societies. One issue faced by regional federations (e.g., FEPS) is potential competition with strong national societies (e.g., PhysSoc). Further insight into regionalism was provided during meetings with Richard Vaughan-Jones, President of PhysSoc, and David Eisner, President of FEPS.

ExCo also discussed the concept that regional activities might completely replace the current quadrennial Congresses. An important issue with the Congresses is the enormous costs associated with hosting and traveling to a Congress. The consensus was that the IUPS ought to continue holding regular Congresses, but that the financial model needs revision. Requiring regional cooperation for future Congress bids was seen as a way to reduce the economic burden on any one country. SBFis in Brazil has been reaching out to neighboring societies as part of its planning for the 2017 Congress, although extent of involvement with LAAPS is unclear. Julie Chan reported that CAPS was seeking strong collaboration with FAOPS for 2021 Congress. Another approach would be to finance the Congress based on substantial contributions from physiology organizations around the world. Indeed, this approach is being pursued with vigor as we plan for the 2017 Congress.

**The function of IUPS commissions and committees.** President Denis Noble spoke of the frustration among Commissions and Committees as a result of their having had little input into the 2013 Congress, and having no clear mandate for recurring activities. Denis Noble noted that the Commissions could provide regional and subject-area balance to IUPS. He also said that the Education Committee was doing excellent work with little outside help.

One suggestion for reinvigorating the Commissions and Committees was for the Commission and Committee chairs to constitute the IUPS Council. Such an approach would require a Constitutional amendment.

ExCo decided that Committee and Commission chairs would serve on the ISPC for the 2017 Congress in Brazil.

The full report from the Strategic Planning Meeting can be found at:

[http://iups.org/media/meeting\\_minutes/2014100607\\_Minutes\\_Summary.pdf](http://iups.org/media/meeting_minutes/2014100607_Minutes_Summary.pdf)

Indeed, the minutes of all meetings are posted on the IUPS website.

### **3. Dues-Revision Process**

P. Wagner and M. Spyer, in consultation with the BGA, created a draft proposal to revise IUPS's annual dues structure. The "white paper" was circulated to ExCo and BGA who were encouraging. The proposal called for using a formula based on membership numbers and national GDP. Some BGA members suggested using annual budget, rather than membership numbers, as a metric. P. Wagner felt that information on society budgets would be difficult to obtain, heterogeneous, and basing dues on membership numbers reflects IUPS's philosophy of supporting society members regardless of economics. S. Webster sent out a survey to member societies requesting updated membership numbers

and contact information. P. Wagner and M. Spyer are waiting for 75% of responses to come in before moving on with the process.

## **4. Updated Terms of Reference**

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President P. Hansen initiated work on creating official IUPS Terms of Reference (ToR). She asked to work with individual members or pairs to work on specific Terms. She will work with J. Chan on BGA Terms, W. Boron and D. Noble for ExCo, and S. Webster for the Manager's position. With permission, P. Hansen used IUBMB's ToR as a starting point to base IUPS's.

## **5. Updates from Committees and Commissions**

The following were named for IUPS Commission Chairmanships:

- Commission III—Endocrine, Reproduction, and Development: Ludmila Filaretova
- Commission IV—Neurobiology: Katsuhiko Mikoshiba

### **A. Education Committee**

The Education Committee had a presence in three separate physiological meetings this year. The first was "Physiology Without Borders", held on August 2-6 in Iguassu Falls, Brazil. An IUPS Regional Workshop was held in conjunction with the Physiological Society of Nigeria on October 20-23, in Lagos, Nigeria. Finally, the 4th Biennial Conference of the South Asia Association of Physiologists took place on December 5-7, in Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

## **6. Outreach**

### **A. P. Hansen to Pan-American Conference**

P. Hansen attended the First Pan-American Congress of Physiological Sciences, hosted by SBFis. She conveyed congratulations to the organizers of the First Pan-American Congress of Physiological Sciences in August 2014 at Iguassu Falls, Brazil. This meeting was a successful example of a way to strengthen regional associations among physiologists and their societies.

## **7. ICSU and Bio-Union activities**

### **A. BioUnions meeting in New Zealand**

Before the start of the ICSU Congress, on August 29, 2014, as well as during the Congress itself, representatives of the BioUnions among themselves to discuss ways in which the Unions could work together for common cause. Of the 11 BioUnions, representatives of 9 were present: IUPS, IUBMB (International Union of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology), IUPESM (Engineering Science is Medicine), IUBS (Biology), IUPHAR (Pharm), IUMS (Microbiology), IUFoST (Food Science), IUPAB (Biophysics), IUTOX (Toxicology).

The group agreed to support IUPS is reprising the Systems Biology Meeting held following the 2013 IUPS Congress. In addition, members expressed interest in supporting an Advanced School (at this point only IUBMB, the host, IUPS, and IUPAB would participate), as well as exploring ways to engage in ICSU's Future Earth.

IUBMB announced that they were dropping out of ICSU. Negotiations are underway to bring them back into the fold.

The group agreed to meet again at the IUPESM Congress in Toronto in June, 2015.

## **B. ICSU meeting in New Zealand**

W Boron represented the IUPS at the triennial Congress of the International Council for Science (see <http://www.icsu.org/>) in Auckland, NZ (August 31 – September 3, 2014). The major philosophical decision reached was to support the idea that hiring and promotions should not be based on the impact factor of the journal in which papers are published. The General Assembly elected new officers who generally seem to be sympathetic to the BioUnions.

## **8. Personnel**

At the end of June, L. Price retired from her position as Manager of IUPS. She was succeeded in the post by S. Webster. He served in an interim capacity until September, when he formally took the job.

Respectfully submitted to the International Physiology community by  
Walter Boron, Secretary General  
July 31, 2015