

EDITORIAL ECETOC LOOKS TO THE LONG-TERM



This 24th May, industry representatives from member and non-member companies, representatives of the academia, of regulators and of other stakeholder organisations, came together to have their say about future challenges for the science of ecotoxicology and toxicology of chemicals.

At the ECETOC Annual Technical Meeting that took the form of a 'Futures Workshop,' visionaries, strategists and innovators inspired an invited audience throughout one morning with their take on the dynamics of the chemical industry in the coming 5-10 years.

"You don't need to be a scientist... .. to see that there are unintended consequences of chemicals throughout the world" Geoff Lye, Sustainability.

Innovation and a growth in the complexity of chemicals, -of materials, -of consumer behaviour, -of markets and of the regulatory landscape were some of the challenges underlying the broad range perspectives.

"Uncertainties are the real game, the real issue," stated Klaus Heinzlbecker of BASF (helpfully) *"..and industry must do its homework to innovate, to restructure, to reassess its market /customer orientation and the sustainability of its activities."*

Donald Hepburn of Unilever forecasted that forces such as the growing economic role of Asia, the price of oil, as well as shifts in demographics and an increasing influence of



ethics, will affect supply and demand and create a new, more complex landscape for consumer-oriented companies.

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Kees Van Leuwen of the European Commission DG Joint Research Centre was pragmatic in his presentation and highlighted the increasing demand for exposure/risk assessment; the need for intelligent testing strategies and the importance of industry's long-term commitment to REACH implementation as key challenges. He referred to the growing need for co-ordination in an environment with an increased scarcity of scientific resources.

The growing importance of social sciences was a further common denominator: The new European maxim is that *"technology will achieve its true potential through social innovation,"* said Alfred Nordmann of University of Darmstadt. When looking into the future, we should all consider the idea of the *"human at the centre of technology,"* added Raymond Oliver of Cenmaps.

"We're in an age of perception rather than science," said Geoff Lye of Sustainability. In such an age, then what is the role of ECETOC?

Alfred Nordmann summarised his view bluntly: *"You [manufacturers of chemicals] need to make the case that chemical progress is a risk worth taking."*

This question was further debated during afternoon breakout sessions. Buzz words such as "diversity," "accountability" and "communication," animated the rooms where groups of participants were encouraged to identify trends, think about whether they should be approached by ECETOC and if so, in what order of priority.

The conclusions of each group were presented by the group chairs and rapporteurs at the end of the afternoon. These were summarised by David Taylor of AstraZeneca.



The presentations will be made available to participants and interested parties via the ECETOC extranet.

What's more, the output of this workshop in the form of David Taylor's summary and the breakout session reports will form a substantial part of a forthcoming two-day Scientific Committee meeting this October. It will be on the basis of this information, that ECETOC's scientific strategy and associated work programme for the next 5 years will be agreed. This long-term strategy and work programme will be presented to the ECETOC Board of Administration in November for approval and following their feedback, will be made public at the end of this year.

SG CORNER

The second quarter of the year is the time for two key ECETOC meetings, namely the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and the Annual Technical Meeting (ATM), which took place this 23-24th May. This is a hectic time for the Secretariat, however, as usual everyone responded with much energy and gusto to make it all happen.

Annual General Meeting

There was a very respectable attendance at the AGM, which was kindly hosted by Degussa Benelux on behalf of the Board Chairman Dr. Jochen Rudolph. The agenda was relatively standard, with all motions accepted including the re-appointment to the Board for another 2 years of Prof. Bart Sangster of Unilever and approval of the 2005 finances and the 2006 proposed budget. This Finance agenda item created some lively discussion, which was appreciated for its role in re-enforcing ECETOC's accountability. On this occasion, the Chairman advised that the Board was still in the process of appointing a new Secretary General. Therefore, it has been decided that for the interim, I would maintain continuity and hence the reason I still get to write the SG Corner for another couple of times!

Later on that evening, AGM and ATM delegates were invited to a social event held at the Brussels Tram Museum. This historic setting encouraged delegates to observe past engineering advances before casting their minds to the future for the following day's ATM, taking the form of a 'Futures Workshop.'

Annual Technical Meeting

The ATM Futures Workshop was organised as a forum for delegates to consider a range of speaker's approaches and assessments of the future. Their feedback, collated during a range of breakout sessions in the afternoon, will serve to support the ECETOC Scientific Committee in the development of ECETOC's work programme for the next 5-10 years.

outREACH

While I'm on the subject of meetings, I'd like to draw your attention to the fact that ECETOC will be 'on tour' again this autumn with two further outREACH events. This year, we will be organising events in France and the UK. We are currently finalising the dates and will send out a separate announcement with further information in the coming weeks.

ECETOC Activities

ECETOC at EUROTOX Congress

ECETOC will again have a presence at the forthcoming EUROTOX European Annual Congress, this year from 20-24th September in Croatia.

ECETOC will be supporting an award within the framework of its Science Awards, to encourage developing scientists to pursue innovative research in the realm of eco-/toxicology of chemicals.

Furthermore, visitors to the event will be able to meet up with members of the ECETOC Secretariat who will be present with a booth to provide insight and information on ECETOC publications, membership and activities.

For more information on the congress, visit: www.eurotox2006-6ctdc.org

Images from the Annual General Meeting 23rd May, Degussa, Brussels



From left to right: Michael Gribble, Secretary General, Martin Kayser, ECETOC Treasurer and Jochen Rudolph, Chairman of the ECETOC Board

Presentation by the Chairman of ECETOC's Scientific Committee, Geoff Randall



Left and below: Representatives of ECETOC member companies



NEW Reports



Technical Report

No. 99 Toxicological Modes of Action: Relevance for Human Risk Assessment
Published June 2006

2006 Annual Report

Published May 2006

The ECETOC Value Proposition for Consumer Product Companies

Published May 2006

See www.ecetoc.org/publications for all executive summaries!

Images from the Annual Meetings Social Event

23rd May, Tram Museum, Brussels

As a bridge between the Annual General and Technical Meetings, and between the past and the future, delegates were invited to dine and network at the Brussels Tram Museum.



Young Scientist Best Platform Award goes to Fabienne Moser of Centre for Expertise of Life Sciences, Switzerland

Within the framework of its commitment to encourage promising scientists, ECETOC supported the Young Scientist Best Platform Award at the 2006 SETAC (Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry) Europe Annual Meeting, this 7-11th May in The Hague, The Netherlands.

ECETOC is pleased to announce that this award has been accorded to **Fabienne Moser**, Centre for Expertise of Life Sciences, Waedenswil, Switzerland for her presentation: "Amphibian metamorphosis assay for the detection of endocrine disruptors of the thyroid axis: Effects of perchlorate on *Xenopus laevis* tadpoles." Fabienne gave this presentation during the Congress session on "Reproductive and developmental toxicology, often a matter of critical windows".

In addition to the award, Fabienne receives a free registration to the next SETAC Europe Annual meeting and travel and accommodation.

For more information, please visit:

www.setacmeeting.org/thehague/Programme/Scientific_Programme/Awards/Young_Scientist_Award.htm

FORTHCOMING Meetings

July

- 3 ECETOC-EEMS Symposia
Prague, Czech Republic
- 6 Long-range Research Initiative (LRI) Health Effects Monitoring Team
Brussels, Belgium
- 10 Endpoint specific TTC Task Force, ECETOC Offices, Brussels, Belgium
- 11 RIP 3.3-2 Endpoint Working Group on Repeated Dose Toxicity
ECETOC Offices, Brussels, Belgium
- 18 PBT Case Studies Task Force, ECETOC Offices, Brussels, Belgium

September

- 5 Board of Administration, ECETOC Offices, Brussels, Belgium
- 6 Scientific Committee, ECETOC Offices, Brussels, Belgium
- 6-7 PBT Case Studies Task Force, ECETOC Offices, Brussels, Belgium
- 28 Fluoroalkanes Task Force
Rome, Italy
- tbc outREACH, United Kingdom

October

- 17-18 Scientific Committee, ECETOC Offices, Brussels, Belgium
- tbc outREACH, France

ECETOC In Brief

ECETOC, European Centre for Ecotoxicology and Toxicology of Chemicals, was established in 1978 as a scientific, non-profit, non-commercial association, financed by 48 of the leading companies with interests in the manufacture and use of chemicals. A stand-alone organisation, it was established to provide a scientific forum through which the extensive specialist expertise in the European chemical industry could be harnessed to research, review, assess and publish studies on the ecotoxicology and toxicology of chemicals.

Website

Be sure to visit our website via www.ecetoc.org regularly for the most up-to-date information on all our activities and for a complete list of our [Publications](#) which can be ordered online.

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