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● **message from the President**

The past six months has seen the Society expanding its reach into the seed science community. We now will be supporting sessions in a symposium on Translational Seed Biology in UC Davis, USA and the International Symposium on Preharvest Sprouting in Cereals in Mendoza, Argentina. Details of these meetings are on our Society website. This is in addition to our own ISSS Workshops and Conference. Those interested in requesting support from the ISSS for meetings should consult the guidelines laid out on our website.

The 2nd ISSS Workshop on Molecular Aspects of Dormancy and Germination was held in Salamanca, Spain from July 1st-4th, with over 100 registered attendees. The program was intensive and educational, intermixed with enjoyable social events. It was notable how far the field of research has progressed since the first workshop three years ago, and how many new faces were in the audience. There was an enthusiastic call for a 3rd workshop three years hence, which will be held at the University of York, England. Many thanks to Dolores Rodriguez and Oscar Lorenzo, and their assistants, for their hard work in making this a memorable workshop. See later in the Newsletter for pictures. The Annual General Meeting was also held during the workshop, with over 60 members in attendance. A report on the AGM is also later in the Newsletter.

In January, DesWork, the desiccation workshop, partially sponsored by the ISSS, was held in the Drakensbergs, South Africa. This popular event included lively discussions, both in the meeting room and on the ever-popular outdoor patio bar. There was a strong seed component to the workshop, as well as interesting insights into tolerance in vegetative tissues.

Another activity of the Society was to host a half-day symposium at the ISTA meetings in Iguassu Falls, Brazil. We welcome this association with ISTA, for we recognize interactions between the different interests of the seed science community are important.

Upcoming, in September, is the second ISSS Meeting on Seed Ecology, in Perth, Australia, the program for which is now available online, with a distinguished list of invited speakers. A third

ISSS workshop topic is being discussed, encompassing seed longevity, gene banks, etc, to be held in the year following our triennial conference. Members interested in helping with the structure and organization of such a workshop should contact the Secretary, President or President-elect.

Also going well is the organization of the 9th ISSS Conference on Seeds to be held in Olsztyn, Poland next July. Invitations have been sent to keynote speakers, and many have replied positively. With respect to the 8th meeting of the Society, which was held in Brisbane, the published proceedings are available, and have already been sent to the main speakers. Because CABI has been facing a temporary staff shortage, the mailing of the books to all registrants has been slower than anticipated, but this backlog should be cleared soon.

Finally, on a sad note, we mourn the passing of our good friend and colleague, Daniel Côme, our first President. A memorial presentation was made at the workshop in Salamanca, and an appreciation of his work and his life follows. He will be missed.

J. Derek Bewley

● **tribute to Daniel Côme**

Seed scientists are greatly saddened by the recent death of Daniel Côme. He had been unwell for the past two years and succumbed to leukaemia on 30 May 2007.

When the ISSS was founded in 1999, Daniel was selected as its first President, and in the three years of his tenure the society grew in strength and energy. In many ways, he was the natural choice to lead an international society as he was an enthusiastic internationalist, participating in meetings and conferences all over the world, collaborating with scientists from many countries and welcoming them to his laboratory in Paris.

He began his own research with a very extensive series of investigations on gas exchange by seeds in relation to germination and dormancy and the effects thereon of seed coats and the chemicals, such as phenols, that they contain. The other main research topics of his group were the physiological and metabolic characterisation of germination, including the involvement of the pentose phosphate pathway. The research was published in numerous papers in French journals in the 1960s and 70s and perhaps it thus did not receive as much recognition among English-speaking scientists as it deserved. Most of these studies were carried out on seeds and embryos of species of horticultural or agricultural importance, particularly apple. This emphasis on cultivated species led Daniel to occupy a unique position in French plant science that he maintained throughout his career, at the interfaces of plant physiology with horticulture and with food science, one expression of which was his appointment as head of the CNRS Laboratoire de Physiologie des Organes Végétaux Après Récolte (post-harvest physiology) at Meudon, near Paris. It was here that a second interest developed, in physiology and cold storage of plant foods, a field in which he became an expert. He was the President of the C2 Commission "Sciences and Food Technologies" (1983-1991) and of the C Section "Biology and Food Science" (1991-1999) of the International Institute of Refrigeration. He was also a member of the French Academy of Agriculture from 1991.

This first laboratory of Daniel's later evolved into the Laboratoire de Physiologie Végétale Appliquée (Applied Plant Physiology Laboratory) at the Université Pierre et Marie Curie (Paris 6), with Daniel as Professor and Head. Here, he gathered a team of colleagues and students that became a highly productive and respected group, built up by Daniel to become the prominent centre in France for research in seed science. To a large extent thanks to Daniel's enthusiasm and vision, the laboratory over the years attracted many foreign students and scientific collaborators in and from numerous countries. He had in particular built strong relationships with various laboratories in Poland.

All those who have visited or worked in Daniel's laboratory will testify to his energy and commitment to seed science, to his warm and engaging personality, to his generous spirit and to his infectious bonhomie. He was a mainstay of the International Seed Workshops and of other conferences, meetings and scientific societies: all who met him will remember his contributions and his open, friendly and encouraging character.

He leaves a wife, Jacqueline, three children, and grandchildren and a team of devoted colleagues, to whom we offer our sympathy. He will be greatly missed by us all, by seed scientists the world over.

Michael Black

fuel for thought

The increasing atmospheric levels of the greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide, have provoked a growing interest in the use of alternative, carbon-neutral, renewable fuels from plants. Of the three bio-fuels – biomass, bio-ethanol and bio-diesel – the last two rely substantially (in the case of bio-diesel, almost exclusively) upon seeds. A major source of bio-ethanol in Europe and the USA is cereal grains, especially wheat and maize. The cereal starch is hydrolyzed by fungal amylase and the resulting sugars are fermented to ethanol. Cars are now being produced, for example by Ford and Saab, that can run on an 85%:15% ethanol:petrol mixture, while other, standard cars perform acceptably when fuelled by 5% ethanol. In the case of the higher bio-ethanol mixtures, about 45,000 km of motoring can be provided by a hectare of wheat.

Though there are sources of bio-ethanol other than seeds (e.g. sugar beet or cane), almost all the bio-diesel currently produced comes from seeds. Some of the major petroleum companies, such as British Petroleum (BP) are now beginning to invest in the cultivation of crops predominantly for bio-diesel production and a record number of bio-diesel industrial plants are scheduled to open in the USA. At present, the most commonly used seed oils for bio-diesel are from soy, palm, rape (canola) and sunflower. Concern has been expressed that the diversion of these seed oils into bio-diesel production leads to increases in seed prices, reduced food resources and undesirable environmental, economic and agricultural consequences as more land becomes exploited for oilseed cultivation.

But another species, free of these disadvantages, is now under active development as a bio-diesel source – *Jatropha curcas*. *Jatropha* (also known as the physic nut), a shrubby member of the Euphorbiaceae, is thought to be of Central American origin but is now found widely over the tropics. Its seeds are about 35% (fw) oil, but contain the toxic, ribosome-inactivating protein, curcin – one reason why it has not been exploited as a source of edible oil. The species is a plant of marginal lands and therefore is not a competitor with arable crops for space: in parts of India, for example, it is grown alongside railway tracks, specifically as a source of bio-diesel. In collaboration with D1 Oils, BP is initiating a project costing about US\$80M for cultivation of *jatropha* on lands of low agricultural value.

To make bio-diesel, the seed oil is subjected to trans-esterification with methanol (using NaOH or KOH as a catalyst) to produce a mixture of fatty acid methyl esters and glycerol. The latter is removed and theoretically it could be fermented to ethanol, so as a fuel source oilseeds qualify on two counts. Unsaturated fatty acid esters are more unstable than the saturated acid esters, having a greater tendency to oxidation, thus lowering the quality of the bio-diesel – this is why antioxidants are sometimes added. On the other hand, higher levels of saturated fatty acid esters affect the cold flow performance of the fuel. So the ratio of unsaturated to saturated fatty acids in the seed tri-acylglycerols is crucial to bio-diesel quality. *Jatropha* scores well in this evaluation, actually better than the more common bio-diesel sources, soybean, rapeseed and palm. Some other seeds that have favourable fatty acid compositions are the tropical tree species *Azadirachta indica* (neem), *Callophyllum inophyllum* (undi or nagchampa: seeds contain 75% oil), and *Pongamia pinnata* (*P. glabra*) (karanja or pongam).

In the coming years, we are likely to see a growth and more diversity in the exploitation of seeds for bio-diesel, including all those mentioned above. I wonder if we will witness another development if the demand for bio-diesel becomes critical – the engineering of designer oilseeds. The technology for modifying the fatty acids in seed tri-acylglycerols, including the saturated and unsaturated fatty acid ratios, to suit a variety of purposes is advancing rapidly. Genetic modification of seeds therefore one day might reach your petrol station forecourt.

Michael Black



Jatropha 'nuts'. Left: on tree, one fruit has been opened to display two of the seeds from which biodiesel is extracted.

● meeting report

2007. July 1-4. 2nd ISSS Workshop on Molecular Aspects of Germination and Dormancy. Salamanca, Spain.

After a welcoming ceremony the Workshop commenced with an address by Prof. Gregorio Nicolas in which he traced the course of research on seed dormancy and germination over the last eight decades. Each of the subsequent sessions commenced with an invited lecture, followed by shorter presentations by researchers on topics related to this. In addition, time was found to introduce information on new databases and means of usefully analyzing the myriad of data that are being generated.

The invited lectures represented the international flavor of the meeting, and were Drs. Allison Kermode (Simon Fraser University, Canada), Ruth Finkelstein (UC Santa Barbara, USA), Gerhard Leubner (Albert-Ludwigs-Universitat, Germany), Bill Finch-Savage, HRI Warwick, UK), Peter McCourt (University of Toronto, Canada), Isabel Diaz (Universidad Politecnica de Madrid, Spain) and Kent Bradford (UC Davis, USA). The presentations were instructive and stimulating, and included controversial suggestions leading to interesting discussions.

Noticeable was the progress that has been made over the past three years since the 1st ISSS Workshop on this topic, in particular at the genome level, with the identification of specific genes or gene sets that are related to seed dormancy and germination. It is clear that both are complex events, however, and that there are many cellular and molecular changes involved in their implementation. Also noticeable amongst the almost 110 participants was the influx of new researchers into these topics, a rich source of new ideas, technologies and approaches.

The quality of the scientific events was well matched by the social ones. The Workshop dinner at the Restaurant Don Mauro in the Plaza Mayor was a delightful culinary and bibulous event. The atmosphere of the meeting led to many scientific and social interactions, and the forging of new research collaborations. Many thanks are extended to Drs. Dolores Rodriguez and Oscar Lorenzo for



Dolores Rodriguez and Oscar Lorenzo, organizers of the Second ISSS Workshop on Molecular Aspects of Dormancy and Germination, Salamanca, July 2007.

their hard work and commitment to making this Workshop such a successful event. There was enthusiasm for a 3rd Workshop, which will be held at York University, England in 2010.

The ISSS supported free registration and accommodation for five junior members of the Society. The PhD students receiving support were: Julie Catusse (France), Luis Fernández (Argentina), Theodoros Matakias (France), Guillermina Mediondo (Argentina) and Krystyna Oracz (Poland).

J. Derek Bewley

● meetings and workshops

Numerous upcoming meetings are being sponsored in whole or in part by the ISSS. More information will be posted on the meetings page of the ISSS website as it becomes available.

2007. September 9-13. 2nd ISSS Meeting on Seed Ecology: Seed Ecology II, an international meeting on seeds and the environment will be held in Perth, Western Australia. Interest for the meeting has been strong, with 150 registrants to date. There will be oral and poster presentations under five topics: 1. *Advances in Seed Dormancy and Germination*, 2. *Dispersal Ecology*, 3. *Conservation and Restoration Seed Ecology*, 4. *Soil Seed Bank Dynamics* and 5. *Applied Seed Ecology*. Keynote speakers include **Costas Thanos** (University of Athens, Greece), **Carol and Jerry Baskin** (University of Kentucky, USA), **Peter Poschlod** (University of Regensburg, Germany), **Robert Marrs** (University of Liverpool, UK), and **Ken Thompson** (University of Sheffield, UK).

In addition to three days of oral and poster presentations at The University Club of Western Australia, there will be a welcome reception and conference banquet. The mid-conference field trip will showcase the wildflowers and scenery on Perth's doorstep, the Darling Range. An optional extra is an exciting three day and two night field tour to the north of Perth that will traverse one of the richest wildflower regions on earth and part of the south west global biodiversity hotspot. Registration for the conference is still open, and will be accepted up to the conference date. Visit www.seedecology2007.com.au for conference information and to access the online registration form. The organising committee can be contacted via Seedecology2007@bgpa.wa.gov.au

2007. September 17-20. Translational Seed Biology: From Model Systems to Crop Improvement, an international symposium focusing on the transfer of knowledge of seed biology developed through studies of model systems to improve the agricultural and nutritional value of crops, will be held at the University of California, Davis, California from September 17-20, 2007. The symposium will focus on how fundamental research in model plant systems is being applied to improve crops to benefit producers, consumers and the environment, particularly for applications in the regions of the world where the needs are greatest. The program brings outstanding international experts together to discuss the progress and the challenges in transferring basic discoveries into practical applications. Within this conference, the ISSS is sponsoring the session: "Desiccation Tolerance, Longevity and Vigor." For more information and to register for the symposium go to: <http://www.plantsciences.ucdavis.edu/seedsymposium2007>. Abstracts for posters can be submitted through August 15, 2007.

2008. July 6-11. 9th ISSS Conference on Seed Biology. Olsztyn, Poland. Keep visiting www.seedbio2008.pl/ for up-to-date information.

Other meetings of interest to ISSS members

2007. September 4-6. ISTA Vigour Testing Workshop. Seed Technology Centre, Ege University, Izmir, Turkey. www.seedtest.org/stream/nl-l---1--%401eebcaa21736--51.html

2007. September 5-6. Symposium on Plant Cell Biology. Cologne, Germany. Speakers: **Diane C. Bassham** (Iowa State University, USA), **Philippe Bastiaens** (Max Planck Institute of Molecular Physiology, D), **Ikram Blilou** (Universiteit Utrecht, NL), **Jiri Friml** (ZMBP – University of Tübingen, D), **Dorus Gadella** (University of Amsterdam, NL), **Ikuko Hara-Nishimura** (Kyoto University, Japan), **Marcus Heisler** (California Institute of Technology, USA), **Martin Hülskamp** (University of Cologne, D), **David Jackson** (Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, USA), **Andy Maule** (John Innes Centre, UK), **Sakiko Okumoto** (Stanford University, USA), **Daphne Preuss** (University of Chicago, USA), **Karin Schumacher** (ZMBP – University of Tübingen, D), **Sidney Shaw** (Indiana University, USA), **L. Andrew Staehelin** (University of Colorado, USA), **Derek K. Toomre** (Yale University School of Medicine, USA), **Claudia Veigel** (The National Institute for Medical Research, UK), **Sacco de Vries** (Wageningen University, NL), **Zhenbiao Yang** (University of California, USA). Registration is free and will be open until all places are filled. To register please contact Claudia Vojta at vojta@mpiz-koeln.mpg.de

2007. September 11-14. ISTA Workshop on Seed Sampling of Agricultural Seeds. NAK, Emmeloord, The Netherlands. www.seedtest.org/stream/nl-l---1--%401eebcaa21736--52.html

2007. October 3-6. 6th Plant Genomics European Meeting. Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain. Plant GEM is an international annual meeting on the subject of genomics in all its assets, designed to be the platform for researchers from Europe and all over the world to discuss latest developments and to exchange new ideas for future projects and to improve cooperation.

Opening Session. Highlights in Genomics/ Opening Keynote Lectures

Session 1. Emerging Plant Genomic Tools and Platforms

Session 2. Genomes of Model Plants and Crops

Session 3. Genomics in Evolution (Genome Structure and Comparative Genomics Approaches)

Session 4. Natural Variation & Ecosystem genomics

Session 5. Plant Systems Oriented Biology

Session 6. Bioinformatics & Process Oriented Approaches

Session 7. Phenotypic Plasticity on Biotic & Abiotic Stresses

Session 8. Genomics for Agriculture Sustainability and Food Security

Session 9. Epigenetics, Small RNAs and Chromatin Structure

Session 10. Nutrition and Health Related Plant Genomics

Session 11. Industries in Plant Genomics

For more information visit <http://www.plant-gems.org/>

2007. October 8-12. ISTA Moisture, Purity and Germination Workshop. GEVES – SNES, Beaucauzé, France. www.seedtest.org/stream/nl-l---1--%401eebcaa21736--53.html

2007. November 5-9. 11th International Symposium on Preharvest Sprouting in Cereals to be held in Mendoza, Argentina. For further information see www.agro.uba.ar/epg/sprout2007/ or e-mail sprout07@agro.uba.ar

2008. August 17-22. XVI Congress of the Federation of European Societies of Plant Biology (FESPB) Tampere, Finland. Invited speakers: **Phil Benfey** (Duke University, USA), **Paul Christou** (Universitat de Lleida, Spain), **Caroline Dean** (John Innes Centre, UK), **Xinnian Dong** (Duke University, USA), **Joseph R. Ecker** (Salk Institute for Biological Studies, USA), **Ed Farmer** (Université de Lausanne, Switzerland), **Jiri Friml** (University of Göttingen, Germany), **Hiroo Fukuda** (University of Tokyo, Japan), **Jonathan Jones** (John Innes Centre, UK), **Olaf Kruse** (University of Bielefeld, Germany), **Dario Leister** (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Germany), **Ove Nilsson** (Umeå Plant Science Center, Sweden), **Salomé Prat** (CNB-CSIC, Spain), **Outi Savolainen** (University of Oulu, Finland), **Julian Schroeder** (University of California, USA), **Alison Smith** (John Innes Centre, UK), **Jens Stougaard** (University of Aarhus, Denmark), **Tai-Ping Sun** (Duke University, USA), **Jan Traas**

(ENS-Lyon, France), **Yves Van de Peer** (Ghent University, Belgium), **Jian-Kang Zhu** (University of California, USA). More information: <http://www.fespb2008.org/>

● news from our representatives around the world

Western Europe and Scandinavia

Dr. Oscar Lorenzo, ISSS member since 2000, has received the 2007 Award of the Spanish Society of Plant Physiology and will be the Spanish candidate for the Federation of European Societies of Plant Biology 2008 Award.

Dolores Rodriguez

● publications

Nucleic Acids Research 2007 Web Server Issue The 2007 Web Server Issue of *Nucleic Acids Research* is a special issue dedicated to web-based software resources for analysis of molecular biology data. It is freely available online:

http://nar.oxfordjournals.org/content/vol35/suppl_2/index.dtl

● job spot

Group leader for the laboratory of Plant Reproduction and Development. École Normal Supérieure (ENS), Lyon, France. The ENS is one of France's prestigious "grandes écoles", offering high-level education for a career in research, education, business, and industry. The research units of the ENS, including the RDP, are located in one of the top research centres in France, offering very attractive conditions to achieve competitive research in fundamental as well as applied biology. Candidates must have extensive post-doctoral experience and set up an independent research project in the field of plant developmental biology. He/she will actively participate in the teaching program of the ENS (note that French language skills are not required). For further information see <http://www.ens-lyon.fr/RDP/> Contact: Dr Jan Traas (Jan.Traas@ens-lyon.fr); Dr Thierry Gaude (Thierry.Gaude@ens-lyon.fr).

● minutes and reports from the ISSS annual general meeting

ISSS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (Financial year 2006-2007) July 2, 2007 18:30 – held in Salamanca, Spain

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the International Society for Seed Science, held in Salamanca, Spain, on July 2nd 2007, 18:30.

The Meeting was chaired by the President, Dr. J. Derek Bewley, with Dr. Bill Finch-Savage as acting Secretary. The President called the meeting to order, and presented the Agenda. No further items were added.

1. The minutes of the 2006 AGM were approved.
2. The President's Report was presented, and adopted.
3. The Secretary's Report was presented by the President, and adopted.
4. The Treasurer's Report was presented by the President. One question arose with respect to the Society's expenditures related to publication of the proceedings of the 2005 meeting in Brisbane, as to why they were not included in this year's report. The President replied this is because the final bill has not been sent to the Society by CABI, but will be included in next year's account. The Report was adopted.
5. The Seed Science Research Editor's Report was presented by the President. A question was asked as to whether there is any intention to discuss the open access policy that is being adopted by some journals. The President replied that this issue has not been raised with the Society, and with the change in ownership of the journal several other issues need to be resolved first. One issue is the discount which is offered to ISSS members: our Secretary Karen Koster is in contact with Cambridge University Press over their failure to respond to members who have requested a discount, and the hurdles that are making this matter difficult. There was an open discussion over the positive new official impact factor, now being over 2.0, and how the Editor determines the 'unofficial' factor.
6. Commemorative presentations for our first President, Prof. Daniel Côme were made by Profs. Gregorio Nicolás and Roberto Benech-Arnold, which reflected his memorable contributions to the Society and to the research communities in France and internationally. Their reflections were warmly received. It was suggested that an award be created by the ISSS to commemorate Daniel's long service to seed science. This matter will be discussed by the Executive.
7. Any Other Business. A request was made by Prof. Mike Holdsworth that the opening presentation to the Workshop by Prof. Gregorio Nicolás be made available on the Society website. This was agreed to be a good idea, and Dr. Oscar Lorenzo volunteered to follow up on this request.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 19:10.
The next AGM will be at the ISSS Conference in Olsztyn, Poland in July 2008.

Appendix I. ISSS President's Report (Derek Bewley, July 2007)

This has been an active year for the ISSS, with our visibility in the seed research community increasing as we undertake and participate in more activities.

In September 2006 we sponsored a symposium at the 3rd International Seed Health Conference in Bydgoszcz, Poland, and in January 2007 supported Deswork, the 5th International Workshop on Desiccation Sensitivity and Tolerance in Seeds and Vegetative Tissues in Drakensberg, South Africa. We also participated in the ISTA Seed Symposium. Diversity in Seed Technology, in May 2007 in Iguassu Falls, Brazil. Many thanks to all who were involved in the organization of these meetings, and to those who acted as the liaison between the meeting organizers and the ISSS. And of course our AGM is being held at the 2nd Workshop on the Molecular Aspects of Seed Dormancy and Germination here in Salamanca, Spain. Later this year the ISSS meeting on Seed Ecology (Seed Ecology II) will be held in Perth, Australia, in September, and for the first time we are a sponsor of the 11th International Symposium on Pre-harvest Sprouting in Cereals which is to be held in Mendoza, Argentina, in November. In September also we are providing support a symposium at a meeting at the University of California, Davis on Translational Seed Biology: From Model Systems to Crop Improvement. Next year in July will be the time for our triennial Seed Conference in Olzstyn, Poland, the arrangements for which are well underway thanks to the Organizing and Program Committees. The program in Olzstyn is being expanded to formally include two workshops on emerging molecular seed technologies.

It is pleasing to see that the Workshops on Germination and Dormancy, and on Seed Ecology are entering their second round, and again we are grateful to those who have invested valuable time in putting these meetings together. It is anticipated that these workshops will continue to be held at three-year intervals, in the year before our larger and more comprehensive triennial Conference. This leaves the year after the Conference without any formal ISSS event; preliminary discussions are underway, however, to hold a workshop related to aspects of seed storage, gene banks, viability etc., in this 'off'-year to broaden our appeal to seed research specialists, and to cover an important area that is currently absent from our meetings agenda.

As in previous years, my role as President has been helped greatly by the enthusiastic participation of the Executive, and I have drawn particularly on our Secretary, Treasurer and President-elect who have provided sage advice and guidance. In addition I acknowledge the work done by our Regional Representatives, for their contacts with other professional groups, and for their recruiting of new members. It is important for us to keep our membership at a constant and higher number so that we can provide more support for meetings, especially for travel bursaries to students and to seed scientists from countries in which research is less well supported. Communication with our members is important, and the labors of Karen Koster in maintaining and updating our website, and of Fiona Hay in producing the Newsletter are much appreciated.

The year draws to an end on a sad note, with the passing of our first President, Daniel Côme. We also mourn the earlier loss of Daphne Osborne. Both contributed notably to seed research and to our Society; in fact, both were invitees to the very first seed workshop that was organized in Jerusalem in 1980, and have been our supporters since then, even before the ISSS was formally constituted. Their participation will be missed.

As always, your Executive welcomes the input of ideas and initiatives from the membership to help improve our Society and to further its objectives to enhance communication and collaboration between seed scientists.

J. Derek Bewley, July 2007

Appendix II. ISSS Secretary's Report, including Membership Report (Karen L. Koster)

Membership report

ISSS membership for 2007 stands at 252¹, an increase from our final 2006 tally of 242 members (Fig. 1). Among these members are three institutional members, the Haworth Press, the Botanic Gardens Trust of Sydney, and the University of Valencia Botanical Gardens. The ISSS is also pleased to have 45 student members; we hope that the meetings sponsored by the society provide valuable opportunities for their professional development.

Recruitment of new members was successful for 2007. The ISSS welcomed 51 new members and 10 former members who rejoined after a lapse in membership. By comparison, only 27 new members joined in 2006. Prior to 2006, the ISSS gained from 55 to 96 new members each year; large gains in membership appear to be associated with years in which the ISSS is sponsoring international meetings. Thus, it appears that the reduced registration fees for most ISSS-sponsored meetings is a significant incentive for new members to join the society. We anticipate that many more members will join or rejoin the ISSS prior to the 9th ISSS Conference on Seed Biology, which will take place in Olsztyn, Poland, in July 2008.

In addition to the reduced registration fees for ISSS sponsored conferences, ISSS members also can receive reduced subscription prices for *Seed Science Research*, the official journal of the society published by Cambridge University Press. Yet another benefit of ISSS membership is a 25% discount on books published by CABI. More details on these offers can be found on the ISSS website at www.SeedSciSoc.org.

The mission of the ISSS is to “foster and promote research, education, and communication in the scientific understanding of seeds,” and your membership fees are used to promote this mission. The ISSS uses membership fees to help sponsor regional and international meetings on various aspects of seed science and to provide support to students to attend our meetings. As the society has grown, additional conferences, workshops, and symposia have been made possible. In 2007, five ISSS sponsored meetings have or will take place, as described on the ISSS website. We hope you agree that the seed science community benefits from the ISSS. As always, we would be glad to hear suggestions from the membership on how we can continue to fulfill the goals of the society and improve our service to the seed science community.

Members of the ISSS represent 39 countries, with the largest numbers of members located in the USA, Spain, Australia, The Netherlands, and France (Table 1). The significant increase in the number of Spanish members results from the twelve individual memberships associated with the institutional membership of the University of Valencia Botanical Gardens. The geographic distribution of ISSS members did not change notably from 2006, other than small increases in the proportion of members in Western Europe & Scandinavia (from 31% to 36%) and Eastern Asia (from 6% to 9%) at the expense of proportional membership in North America (from 24% to 20%).

¹ Membership renewals are still arriving, so this number will increase prior to the end of the year.

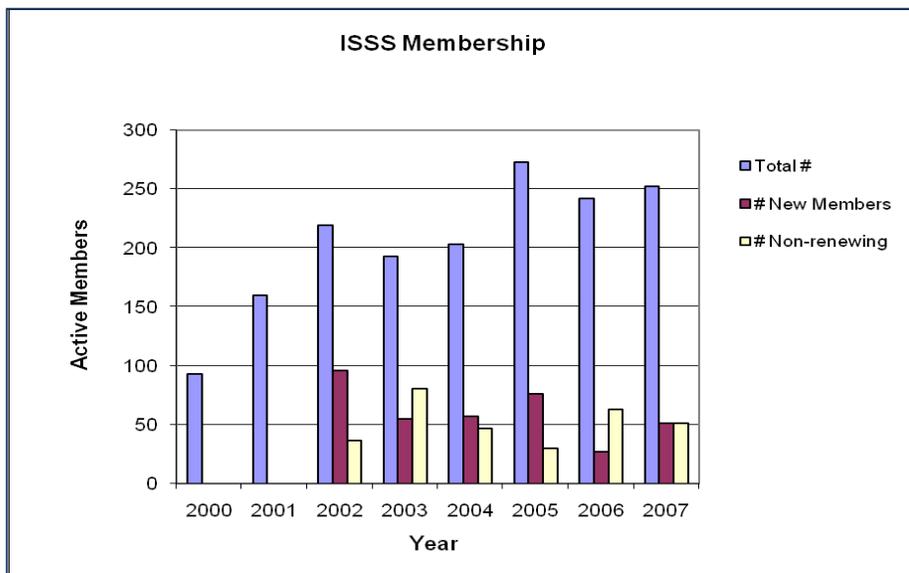


Figure 1. ISSS Membership Subscriptions 2000-2007. The blue bars represent the total number of active subscriptions for each year. Brown bars represent first-time members each year. Yellow bars represent the number of non-renewing members from the previous year.

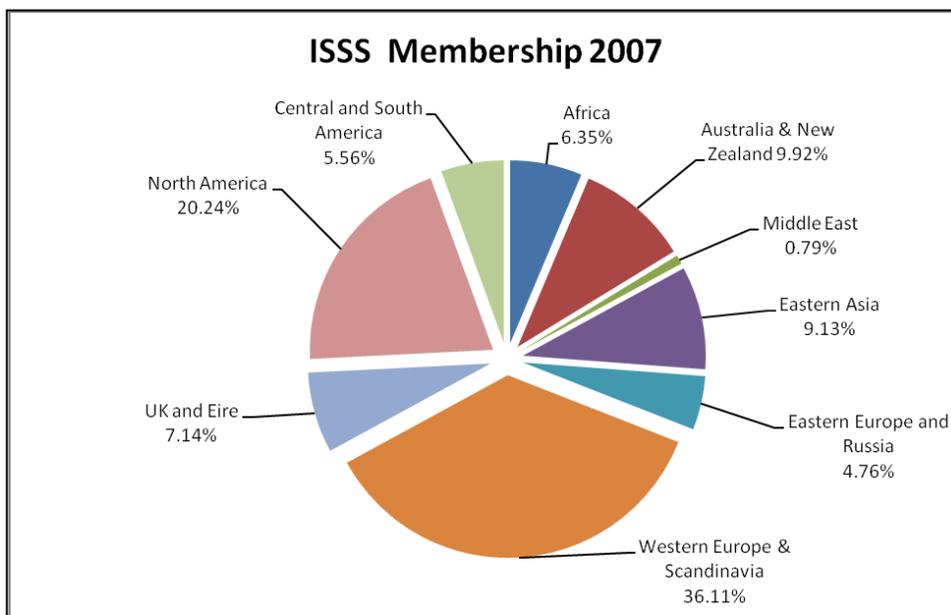


Figure 2. Geographical Distribution of ISSS Members in 2007. ISSS members were grouped according to the nine geographical regions defined in the ISSS Constitution & By-laws.

Table 1. Distribution of ISSS Members by Country (2005-2007).

Country	# Members			Country	# Members		
	2005	2006	2007		2005	2006	2007
Argentina	4	3	6	Jordan	1		
Australia	39	23	23	Kenya	1		1
Austria		1		Malaysia	1		
Belarus	1	1	1	Mexico	6	7	5
Belgium	2	1	1	Nepal			2
Brazil	3	4	2	New Zealand	1	2	2
Canada	5	9	7	Nigeria			1
China	8	6	12	Norway	1	1	1
Czech Republic	3	3	2	Pakistan	2		1
Denmark	2	2	1	Poland	9	4	5
Finland			1	Russia	2	2	2
France	21	17	19	Scotland	1	1	1
Germany	6	5	5	South Africa	11	11	13
Ghana			1	South Korea		1	
Greece	7	7	4	Spain	12	11	32
Guyana			1	Sweden	5	5	5
Hungary	1	1	1	Thailand		1	1
India	2	1	2	Switzerland			1
Indonesia	1	1		The Netherlands	19	18	20
Israel	6	7	2	Turkey	1	1	1
Italy	1	1	1	UK	29	19	17
Japan	5	4	5	USA	48	47	44

Karen L. Koster, 21 June 2007

Publications Report

The proceedings of the 8th International Workshop on Seeds held in Brisbane in May 2005 were published by CABI in February 2007. The title is “Seeds: Biology, Development and Ecology” and the ISBN is 9781845931971.

Appendix III. Treasurer’s Report for 2006-2007 (Ken Thompson)

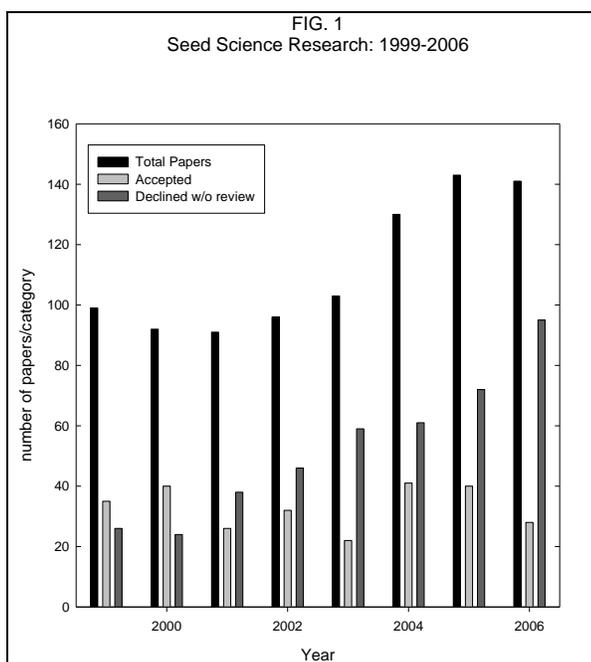
Compared with 2005-05, subscription income was up substantially, largely because the first round of ‘four years for the price of three’ subscriptions came to an end, and many members chose to take out another four year subscription. A windfall payment from the Brisbane meeting also contributed to a large excess of income over expenditure. We made three charitable payments, and several more are in the pipeline for the current financial year. Note that a payment of \$1000 to the ISSS Seed Symposium at the X Brazilian Plant Physiology Congress 11-16/09/2005, referred to in the last Treasurer’s report, was in the event not made. We paid the money to the conference account twice, and on both occasions it was returned without explanation, so there seemed little point in trying a third time.

Income and expenditure for the period 01 April 2006 to 31 March 2007

INCOME	£	EXPENDITURE	£
Subscriptions	4968.00	Charitable payment 1: Desiccation Workshop South Africa, January 2007	1020.42
Royalties - <i>Seed Biology: Advances and Applications</i>	76.73	Charitable payment 2: Seed Health Poland, September 2006	416.37
Royalties - <i>Biology of Seeds: Recent Research Advances</i>	364.07	Charitable payment 3: Dormancy and Germination Workshop Salamanca, July 2007	1000.00
Balance from Brisbane meeting	9934.33	ISSS Poster and Banner	130.00
Haworth Press - payment for mailing list	75.00	Credit card and other bank charges	220.17
Interest	214.52		
Total income	15632.65	Total expenditure	2786.96
Excess income over expenditure	12845.69		
Brought forward from previous year	22058.25		
Balance carried forward 31 March 2007	34903.94		

Ken Thompson

Appendix IV. Report from the Editor of Seed Science Research (M.A. Cohn)



I am pleased to report continued success for *Seed Science Research*. The total number of submissions has been increasing nicely for the past several years, and the projected numbers of submissions for 2007 are comparable to 2006 (141 mss). Our acceptance rate has ranged from 20 to 43% on a yearly basis (Fig. 2), and the average acceptance rate is 30% for the 1999-2006 interval. These acceptance rate values would be higher were it not for the large number of manuscripts that must be declined by the editors without further peer review (Figs. 1, 2). Unfortunately, we still receive many papers that are outside the scope of the journal or are not substantial enough for further consideration.

Our impact factor (for those of you who like to, or have to, keep score) is very acceptable for a quarterly publication; the unofficial estimated SSR impact factor for the 2004-2005 period is 3.73, and the average impact for 1999-2006 is 6.72!

The editors continue to strive to process and evaluate submitted manuscripts as quickly as possible. However, there are only so many hours in a day, and there are times when we do have other activities besides SSR. The latest ISI official impact factor (2005) is 2.085.

I look forward to a productive 2007 publication year, and heartily thank the associate editors, editorial board members, production staff at CABI/CUP and our team of peer reviewers. We couldn't do it without your help. Cheers, MAC

The News from Baton Rouge

The last few years have flown by, and 2006 was particularly busy for us. Seed Science Research has a new publisher, Cambridge University Press, and all of us on the production team have been at work getting settled and making new friends. The journal continues to enjoy the support and efforts of Ms. Katy Christomanu and Ms. Linda Antoniw, who have migrated along with the scientific staff. We welcome our new associations with Ms. Sue Tuck and Ms. Karen Neylon at the press. Ms. Neylon is working with us to establish an electronic editor's desk, which will enhance communications among authors, editors and reviewers.

Dr. Kent Bradford has retired as Associate Editor to devote more time to administrative duties at the Davis campus. All of us thank Dr. Bradford for his thorough, careful attention to the scientific and editorial quality of the papers under his jurisdiction; he will remain a member of our distinguished Editorial Board. Our new Associate Editor is Dr. William Finch-Savage, Warwick HRI, Warwick University. Dr. Finch-Savage has distinguished himself in many areas of seed biology, and we look forward to tapping his broad expertise.

In 2006, the journal further refocused its Editorial Board to reflect the changes in seed biology and the subjects addressed in manuscript submissions (physiological ecology, seed conservation, and molecular biology) over the past few years. Joining the Board in 2006 were Drs Phil Allen (Brigham Young University), Roberto Benech-Arnold (University of Buenos Aires), Gerhard Leubner-Metzger (Albert-Ludwigs-University), Hiroyuki Nonogaki (Oregon State University), Hugh Pritchard (Royal Botanic Gardens), and Peter Toorop (Royal Botanic Gardens).

Retiring from the Editorial Board were Carl Leopold, Bryan McKersie, Alfred Mayer, Trevor Wang, Kay Walker-Simmons, and Geoffrey Fincher. Many of these individuals were charter or long-term members of the Board. We thank them all for their many years of dedicated service. I would particularly like to thank Drs Mayer and Leopold for their wise counsel regarding my own career, as well as matters related to the journal. We also mourn the losses of Dr. Daphne Osborne and Dr. Daniel Côme; they are irreplaceable.

On behalf of the Cambridge University Press staff, the editors, and the Editorial Board, I thank you for your continued support of *Seed Science Research*. To all of our readers, and especially to our contributing authors, may 2007 be a healthy and scientifically productive year.

P.S. Mr. Cabi remains Mr. Cabi – his choice!

FIG. 2
Seed Science Research: 1999-2006
(Percentage basis)

