



EFB Microbial Physiology Section

A meeting of the EFB Microbial Physiology Section was held at 17:50 h on Friday , May 27, 2005 during the 3rd Meeting on Analysis of Microbial Cells at the Single Cell Level in the Hotel Panhans, Semmering, Austria. All Section Members and everyone registered for the scientific meeting were invited to attend this open meeting.

MINUTES

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Christine Lang, Colin Harwood, Ursula Rinas, Gen Larsson, Peter Lund and Pau Ferrer

2. Minutes of the Open Meeting of the Section held held at 19:00 h on Friday 12 November, 2004 during the 3rd Recombinant Protein Production meeting in the Hotel Vila Gale Tavira, Algarve, Portugal.

The Minutes, which can be found can be found on: http://www.tu-berlin.de/biotec/mibi/AG_Lang/efb/ , were accepted by all present members.

3. Report from the Section Chairman

(a) Report from the EFB Executive Board.

The European Federation of Biotechnology became an independent organisation following the General Assembly held in Basle in August 2003. During the subsequent year, the President and Vice-Presidents focused on two major problems: establishing a permanent Central Office with secure funding and well-qualified staff; and establishing the Federation as a legal entity registered in Belgium.

It was reported that both objectives had now been achieved. First, following the EFB Executive Board's vote to select a bid from the Barcelona Bio Region and the signing on 15 January 2005 of an agreement with the Catalan authorities and SEBIOT, a new and permanent EFB European Central Office in Barcelona opened on 1st March 2005. Also, during the previous the statutes of the EFB had been approved and the King of Belgium had confirmed by Royal Decree and signature the legal status of EFB as an independent entity. As previously announced, Christian Suojanen had been selected as General Secretary and had been serving EFB in this capacity since the opening on the new Central Office in Barcelona on March 1st. A second member of staff, Anna Alsina Bardagí, had started work in Barcelona on Wednesday 5th May, and the third and final

staff member, Alexandra Castells, was appointed on Friday 6th May, with a starting date of 1st June. The full secretariat will be able to provide a dedicated secretariat to serve the EFB and handle administrative matters, in addition to supporting Sections, Task Groups, RBOs and all EFB initiatives. Furthermore, it will enable EFB to update membership details, establish a completely redesigned website with fully updated information, and maintain much better communication with our membership than has been possible in the past.

Colleagues in the European Commission had warmly welcomed these developments, and the first contract with them was currently being negotiated. The EC is keen for guidance to Framework 7 programmes: accordingly, anyone who is interested in the wide aspects of biotechnology is invited to join EFB. The next important task of EFB will be to keep the sections active.

Please visit the EFB Website (www.efbweb.org) to see how to become involved in any of the above activities.

(b) Arrangements for the next European Congress of Biotechnology, Copenhagen, 21 – 24 August, 2005.

The Chairman reported that the Congress is being organised by the Danish Technical University, Copenhagen. The programme will be organised in parallel sessions according to themes, so that participants will find topics of interest throughout the now shortened three-day meeting. The Congress will offer an excellent program on applied genomics, systems biology, covering industrial, pharmaceutical, food and feed, and environmental biotechnology. The Microbial Physiology Section had intended to organise a joint session with the Environmental Biotechnology Section, however, approval from this Section was not obtained because Professor Egli had evidence based upon a survey of its Section members that ECBs were unlikely to attract any significant support from the environmental biotechnology sector.

For information, see: www.ecb12.dk

4. Review of recent Section meetings:

3rd Recombinant Protein Production meeting Nov. 2004, Tavira, Portugal:

Danilo Porro reported on behalf of Manuel Carrondo that about 240 participants had been registered, which was a significant increase again compared with the previous meeting in Italy. The programme was highly appreciated by the participants, especially the integration of both prokaryotic and eukaryotic expression systems including animal cells and plants, which turns out to be a unique feature of this meeting series. One problem that could not be solved was the low participation from Eastern European countries, including the new EU member states. Measures have to be discussed in the future to increase this number.

The support of FEMS for the meeting had been highly appreciated, as was the cooperation with ESACT on this meeting series.

At the end of the meeting it was decided to organize a follow-up conference in September 2006 in Barcelona (see below).

5. Review of arrangements for the current meeting.

a) Analysis of Microbial Cells at the Single Cell Level III. Austria. 26 – 29 May 2005

Nicole Borth from BOKU Vienna reported that 122 participants had registered for the meeting. It had been possible to raise 17000 EUR sponsorship from companies, Austrian governmental organisations, and international organisations like FEMS. Recent developments in single cell analysis were presented at the conference, pointing out that the field is rapidly progressing. Accordingly, it was unanimously decided to aim at the organisation of a follow-up meeting within three years. Hazel Davey (UK) and Susann Mueller (Germany) volunteered to chair the Organising Committee. A location will be decided in due course.

6. Review of progress in the organisation of the forthcoming Section symposia

a) Meeting on Microbial Respiratory Chains: Tomar, Portugal, 19 – 23 March 2006.

The meeting will be co-organised by Ligia Saraiva and the Section Chairman Jeff Cole.

Meeting's Aim and Scope: The aim of this European Workshop will be to help all laboratories interested in the physiology, biochemistry, and genetic regulation of bacterial electron transfer chains to exchange information and establish collaborations. It will focus on bacterial electron transfer reactions, especially those that enable bacteria to adapt to oxygen starvation, reactive oxygen or reactive nitrogen species.

FEMS have awarded a meetings grant of EUR10 000 to sponsor participation of young microbiologists in the meeting. A list of speakers had been drawn up and preliminary invitations would soon be issued.

More information can be obtained from lst@pop.itqb.unl.pt

Jeff Cole reported that this meeting series dates back to 1988. Tomar, a beautiful ancient city, is an attractive location. The programme will comprise about 46-47 lectures. The costs will be about 500 EUR, to include registration, accommodation and all meals and social events.

b) 4th Recombinant Protein Production Meeting: Barcelona, Spain, September 21-23, 2006.

At the last meeting in Tavira, Portugal, a two years interval for a follow-up conference had been agreed. Pau Ferrer and Antonio Villaverde from the Autonomous University of Barcelona, volunteered to organise this meeting in Barcelona. The Organising Committee was being set up, which will refine the draft programme.

A wonderful *Art Nouveau* forum hall (Casa de Convalescència - Hospital de Sant Pau), in a very central area close to the Sagrada Família, will offer a comfortable atmosphere for the discussion of the new advances in protein production.

This meeting is designed to provide a forum for discussion on the basic cell biological principles that underlie the interactions between cell physiology/function and environmental conditions in protein production processes. In particular, the meeting will cover the wide diversity of microbial systems used as cell factories, broadening the scope to higher eukaryotic systems such as mammalian and plant cells.

Session topics will focus on newly identified host cell responses to protein production, new insights on protein quality control and the main bottlenecks in protein production such as folding and proteolytic degradation. The scope of these sessions will be geared towards the understanding how to manipulate cell functions as well as to develop new tools and devices for protein production. In addition, a number of specific workshops will be designed to focus on the industrial aspects of protein production, improved gene expression vectors and strategies, and tools to acquire useful physiological data (including systems biology platforms).

The first announcement with preliminary scientific programme and scientific & industrial committees will be launched in Summer 2005.

The second announcement with more detailed information on the scientific programme, registration issues and call for abstracts will be available by the end of this year.

Importantly, the number of registrants will be restricted to 200~230.

c) Physiology of Yeasts and Filamentous Fungi III (PYFF III).

As the participants of PYFF II voted unanimously for a follow-up conference, the Section is keen to organise a PYFF III meeting. Merja Penttila announced that VTT Biotechnology (Finland) would volunteer to organise the next PYFF meeting in 2007. Both yeast and filamentous fungi should be reviewed from the biotechnological viewpoint. This suggestion was approved unanimously by all present section members.

Jeff Cole suggested that FEMS Yeast Research should be invited again to publish a special issue of selected, peer reviewed papers, as from PYFF 2. It was agreed to seek cooperation with FEMS Yeast Research again.

d) International Specialized Symposium on Yeasts (ISSY 2006): Systems biology and metabolic engineering of yeasts

In the context of yeast physiology the Section will cooperate with the organisers of ISSY 2006, a meeting of the International Commission of Yeasts (ICY). Merja Penttila of VTT, Finland is chair of the Organising Committee. More information can be obtained from merja.penttila@vtt.fi. As soon as available, a link will be available on the Section Webpage.

The conference dates are June 18-22, 2006. The location in Finland, and a list of key speakers will be available on a website in July. The conference is planned to host approx. 250 participants.

e) Microbial Response to Environmental Stress

Dr Peter Lund (Birmingham) had offered to help the Section organise a meeting on the microbial response to stress. This meeting is planned to be held in 2007. An open invitation to support this event is expressed.

7. Sources of information on Section activities.

Details of all of the Section activities, including the current membership of the Section Committee, can be obtained from the Section website (http://www.tu-berlin.de/biotec/mibi/AG_Lang/efb/) or the EFB Website: (<http://efbweb.org>).

8. Next meeting of the Section.

To be agreed

Diethard Mattanovich (Honorary Secretary) d.mattanovich@iam.boku.ac.at

Ursula Rinas (Membership Secretary) uri@gbf.de

Jeff Cole (Chairman); Birmingham, 2005 j.a.cole@bham.ac.uk