



[Issue 1/2023, June 5th]

IUBS BioNews

Dear national and scientific members of IUBS, dear friends and colleagues,

Thanks for reading our first IUBS BioNews. How often did you recently think of the International Union of Biological Sciences (IUBS)? Presumably not so often. And certainly not often enough considering the important activities of IUBS at the transnational level. IUBS stands for a strong bioscience voice in times of climate change, need for stronger efforts in nature conservation and sustainability, and also unprecedented opportunities to advance our knowledge and present bio-based solutions.

You are kindly asked on the one hand to get IUBS involved whenever inter- and transnational aspects of biology come into play and coordination at this level benefit the purpose, but on the other hand to engage in IUBS activities yourself.

IUBS BioNews aim at deepening our information exchange with you! Apart from thinking more often of IUBS, we are convinced that this quarterly update will foster our topical interaction and the effectiveness of our activities to our mutual benefit, to the benefit of biology and nature.

Many ideas came into our mind that would fit and enrich the first issue of IUBS BioNews, but we decided to limit the length of our quarterly newsletter. We wish to inform you about recent activities and events related to biology as a key discipline in natural sciences that occurred at the international level. An example is a short report from the International Science Council (ISC). We also wish to take the opportunity to present the overview of the scientific programs and to describe one of them in more detail. We introduce the newly elected Executive Committee of IUBS and give some insight into the functioning of IUBS. We hope that you find the IUBS BioNews informative and helpful and look forward to the second issue with more insight and information and to your feedback and input.

Cordial Greetings
IUBS-BioNews team

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Updates from IUBS

The 34th General Assembly
Logo of the 34th General Assembly of the IUBS, held in Japan 9-12 March 2023. Design by Nao Kawagoe and Ayumi Harashima who state "Kamon are designs for Japanese family symbols. A variety of organisms modified as Kamon represents Japanese high biodiversity and mutualistic culture", i.e. what IUBS stands for.

- The 34th General Assembly of IUBS (GA34 IUBS) was held in Tokyo in March 2023. In keeping with our tradition, the GA consisted of a scientific program with lectures and discussions covering diverse aspects of biology and administrative meetings ([more information](#)). We express our deep thanks to Harufumi Nishida (Chuo University) for organizing this successful and unforgettable event.
- The GA34 of IUBS received the scientific and financial reports for the last triennium since the previous GA33 in Oslo in July/August 2019. According to our Statutes, the "final authority in the governance of the Union lies with the Ordinary Members. This authority is exercised collectively by the delegates of the Ordinary Members when meeting in a General Assembly with representatives of the Scientific Members." As a reminder, IUBS has national members (=Ordinary Members) and internationally active member bodies and organizations (=Scientific Members). They constitute the General Assembly held every third year. The GA34 of IUBS decided on the future directions for the upcoming triennium and on the support of scientific programs and elected the new Executive Committee.
- The next GA35 of IUBS will be organized in **Bangalore, India**, in 2026, as proposed and presented by Renee Borges and LS Shashidhara, and accepted by the GA34.

News section of IUBS BioNews

IUBS award
Lily Rodriguez (Peru) was awarded the IUBS fellowship during GA34 for her continuous engagement for international cooperation in research, nature conservation and sustainable development. Her inputs into the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the organization of the Science Forum, the latest one in Montreal, are outstanding services for the biological community and IUBS.
< LS Shashidhara and Lily Rodriguez.

ISC

- The International Science Council (ISC) strengthened its representation in New York by establishing a New York office.

ISC aims to provide scientific expertise, advice and influence on issues of major concern to both science and society. ISC is partnering with the United Nations and intergovernmental bodies, by participating in affiliated conferences, programs and activities such as World Health Organization (WHO) ([more information](#)).

- ISC President Peter Gluckman (New Zealand) emphasized in his quarterly Zoom meeting (18th / 19th April 2023), that ISC aims to campaign for "Trust in Science" in the upcoming years in a close interaction with ISC members. IUBS is a founding member of ICSU (International Council for Science), one of the parent bodies of ISC. Science is the language of trust and honesty. This is particularly true for natural sciences. However, scientists increasingly have to struggle to be asked for advice and to receive the necessary trust and societal recognition.

COSPAR
Dieter Bliotner has been appointed the IUBS representative to the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR). In recent years, Dieter Bliotner has been Vice-Chair (2010 – 2014) and Chair (2014 – 2022) of the Commission F on Life Sciences as Related to Space, Sub-commission F5 on Gravitational Physiology.

ICZN
IUBS has ratified the amendments of International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN) Constitution. More information on declarations 45 and 46 of the Code [here](#).

IUBS new triennial programs

BHBD
The Open Biodiversity and Health Big Data (BHBD) is coordinated by Yiming Bao. The project aims at building the principles and mechanisms for global sharing of biodiversity and health data in accordance with laws and ethics of member countries. It wants to develop a big data platform under the FAIR principles for biodiversity and health data integration, translation and sharing that is publicly accessible to worldwide communities.

Grand education Challenge
The Grand challenge: Education on Chemical Ecology in the Anthropocene is coordinated by Renee Borges. The goal of the programme is to foster the global engagement in sensitisation of young researchers and the general public on the impact of the Anthropocene on the Chemical Ecology of Organismal Interactions and to bring together researchers from diverse fields to identify knowledge gaps, exchange information, and engage in further collaborative efforts.

Pastoralism
Pastoralism as a global herbivory socio-ecosystem program is coordinated by Pablo Manzano. The goal of the project is to better understand the significance of herbivory as a global socio-ecosystem process, mainly mediated by pastoralist animals, and how the pastoralist socio-ecosystem mediates such processes through integration of social, anthropological, economic and ecological knowledge.

ZDCN
The Zoonotic Disease Coordination Network program is coordinated by Zhibin Zhang. The goals of the project are to promote studies on zoonotic diseases among scientists of different disciplines, to educate young scientists and students joining in the field of zoonotic diseases, to provide advices or knowledge to governments and the public for disease prevention and control, to employ landscape approach to monitor interactions among domestic animals, wildlife, and human beings, to develop standards of detecting, prevention or control of zoonotic diseases.

The IUBS EC Members 2023-2026

If you wish to address the IUBS to obtain information on our activities or to propose new or even joint activities, please contact our Executive Director Nathalie Fomproix, our President Karl-Josef Dietz or any member of the Executive Committee (EC). They will be happy to discuss the suggestions with you and channel them into suitable committees and organizations. The EC of IUBS was newly elected at the GA34 of IUBS in Tokyo and has the following members for the upcoming triennium 2023–2026:

- The GA elected the following Executive Committee:
- President: Karl-Josef Dietz (Germany)
 - Vice-President: Le Kang (China)
 - Secretary General: Renee M. Borges (India)
 - Treasurer: Moemen Hanafy (Egypt)
 - Executive member: Gillian Bowser (USA)
 - Executive member: Ravinder Kohli (India)
 - Executive member: Noriaki Murakami (Japan)
 - Executive member: Guy Smaghe (Belgium)
 - Executive member: Yafang Yin (China)
 - Past President as senior advisor: LS Shashidhara (India)

All EC members will be introduced in this and subsequent IUBS BioNews editions.

Renee M. Borges
IUBS Secretary General Renee M. Borges researches evolutionary ecology of species interactions as Professor at the Centre for Ecological Sciences of the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore (India). R. Borges is interested in sensory biology of these interactions, especially their chemical and visual ecology.

Her research aims to connect behavioral ecology at the organismic level with mechanisms influencing such behavior. The major current interaction systems are figs–fig wasps, ant-plant mutualisms, fungus-growing termites and pollination systems in the Western Ghats. This fundamental research has valuable practical applications. She also collaborates with PhD for her thesis work titled "Resource heterogeneity and the foraging ecology of the Malabar Giant Squirrel *Ratufa indica*" at the University of Miami (Florida, USA).

Karl-Josef Dietz
IUBS President Karl-Josef Dietz is a biologist at Bielefeld University (Germany) with research and teaching focus on plant biochemistry and physiology. Starting with his PhD on "Rate limiting steps in photosynthesis" at the University of Würzburg, he stayed at Harvard University as postdoc, but also in France, USA and Japan. His group investigates sensing and response mechanisms of plants enabling acclimatization to environmental stress factors. He served in several societies, e.g. as president of the German Plant Science Society (DBG) and presently as president of the German Life Science Association (VBIO).

Quoting from his presentation prior to the election "Science is international and democratic in its aims, in its openness for cooperation and necessity and fun of networking, in providing a platform for mutual understanding and peaceful interaction. But even in science we have to strive for acceptance and also for equality, inclusivity and fair participation. IUBS plays and must expand its important role in the process."

Yafang Yin
IUBS Executive Committee Member Yafang Yin is the leading professor in wood science and technology at the Chinese Academy of Forestry, Beijing (China) and is in charge of the management and research innovation of the largest Wood Collection in China. His research interests include wood anatomy and cell wall structure, wood formation, and wood identification.

He held postdoc position in Canada, and visiting scholar in Japan, Sweden and USA. He made service as Deputy Coordinator of IUFRO (International Union of Forest Research Organizations) 5.06, Coordinator of IUFRO 5.16 and the IAWA (International Association of Wood Anatomists) Executive Secretary, and appointed as a member of China CITES Scientific Committee. He was assigned to the Editorial Board of *Wood Science and Technology* and the Associate Editor of *IAWA Journal*, and selected as a fellow of IAWS (The International Academy of Wood Science)

Spotlight history – how IUBS shaped the self organization of biosciences

The history and activities of the international federations and societies in the various biosciences were always closely linked to IUBS. Close to 90 international societies nowadays are scientific members of IUBS. The new Executive Committee of IUBS wishes to strengthen the relationships with its scientific members. We are planning to contact you, the representatives of the scientific members, in order to explore ways of teaming up with you in times of urgent input of biology into policy making and reaching the sustainable development goals.

International Genetics Federation

An excellent example is the International Genetics Federation that was created by IUBS right away from its initiation on the 28th of August 1969 at the Business Session of the XII International Congress of Genetics held in Tokyo, Japan. In fact the Genetics Section of the IUBS served as the Interim Representative Council of the new federation which then took over the functions of the Genetics Section of the IUBS (News and Views/Organizer, 22:2, 195-196, DOI: 10.1080/00087114.10796338.1969).

This tight interaction and "phylogenetic ancestry" of the International Genetics Federation with IUBS is part of the success story of IUBS since its inauguration 104 years ago. Many societies and federations and other biological unions arose from committees and activities in IUBS. In the subsequent BioNews, we will provide additional examples for these historical "phylogenetic" relationships and close interactions. We should build on these relationships to shape a successful future.

The following people have contributed to the newsletter:
Yiming Bao, Renee Borges, Karl-Josef Dietz, Yafang Yin, Zhibin Zhang, Moemen Hanafy, Le Kang, Pablo Manzano, LS Shashidhara, Yafang Yin, Fomproix, Nathalie Fomproix

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