

# news

from the  **COST OFFICE**

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## COST Kicking off for the summer!

With the beginning of a hopefully warm and pleasant summer, this newsletter offers you many articles on COST activities and achievements. This issue introduces Georges Wanet, the coordinator of recently launched Trans-Domain Proposal's Standing Assessment Body (TDP-SAB), to you.

Widening Frontiers focuses on the reciprocal agreements with Australia and New Zealand, delving deeper into COST's international appeal. A fact also emphasised by the successful COST Days held in Israel, a COST cooperating state since 2000. Dr Husam Massalha, COST National Coordinator for Israel, and Ms Ilana Lowi, Director, Division for International Relations, Ministry of Science, Culture and Sport of Israel organised an intense week of activities at Tel-Aviv University, the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev in Beer-Sheva, the Technion Institute of Technology in Haifa and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

The international and strategic aspects of COST were also confirmed by the COST Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) at its latest meeting in Belgrade on 18 and 19 June 2008. The committee did not only approve 25 new COST Actions and welcomed 26 new requests for participation in ongoing Actions from non-COST countries. It also concluded that more emphasis would be put on various Strategic Scientific Initiatives to optimise the flexibility and rapid response capacity of COST as an intergovernmental instrument, enhancing the Lisbon Strategy. A few examples of strategic initiatives such as the COST-ESF Interdisciplinary Science Initiative "New Perspectives on Landscapes" are showcased in this newsletter.

I hope to have inspired you before the summer break! From your side, take the time to also look at previous newsletters, neatly listed on the COST Website and join us at ESOF2008.

Martin Grabert,  
Director of the COST Office

PS Please note that the next collection date is 26 September 2008.



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## Portrait

**David Coates - DC Chair for COST  
Domain Food and Agriculture (FA)**

**Georges Wanet:** Interview with Georges  
Wanet, TDP SAB  
Coordinator

## COST Activities

**Widening Frontiers:** COST Brings Australia,  
New Zealand and  
Europe Closer Together

**COST-ESF:** Interdisciplinary Science  
Initiative: New Perspectives  
on Landscapes

# Promoting the Image of Chemistry Today

The 2nd EuCheMS Chemistry Congress: Chemistry the Global Science is set to take place from 16 to 20 September 2008 in Turin, Italy. It will be co-organised by the European Association for Chemical and Molecular Sciences (EuCheMS) and Società Chimica Italiana (SCI). This second edition is an important event for all European chemistry societies. Participation is expected to be strong with visitors coming from universities, industry, and both public and private institutions for research and analysis.

“The event aims to be a European showcase for chemical and molecular sciences by bringing together scientists from industry, academia and government institutions across Europe

and from around the world,” boasts Giovanni Natile, Chairman of the 2nd EuCheMS Chemistry Congress on the congress website.

Chemistry is widely acknowledged as crucial to underpinning economic growth and global sustainability. The EuCheMS Congress hopes to increase discussion and strengthen the case for chemistry in Europe. An exciting programme has been drawn up based on contributions from international researchers.

Outstanding scientists including Nobel Laureates Peter Agre, Robert H. Grubbs, and K. Barry Sharpless will give plenary lectures. Six parallel sessions will focus on chemical processes and analysis as well as

chemistry’s role in life sciences, energy, industry and environment. “Chemistry meets the public”, scheduled for the late afternoon, and special evening sessions will be devoted to presentations by candidates for the 2008 European Young Chemist Awards, sponsored by SCI.

COST will promote its activities in this sector at an exhibition stand. The COST CMST Domain aims to foster European expertise in discovering, understanding, producing, and mastering the use of molecular structures and chemical processes.

More information:

<http://www.euchems-torino2008.it/site/home.asp>

**2<sup>ND</sup> EUCHEMS CHEMISTRY CONGRESS**  
CHEMISTRY: THE GLOBAL SCIENCE  
SEPTEMBER 16-20 2008 - TORINO, ITALY



## News from staff

From 1 June 2008, the Senior Science Officer positions will be taken on by **Carine Petit** for the Natural Sciences Cluster and by **Kalliopi Kostelidou** for the Life Sciences Cluster.

**Caroline Whelan** accepted the position of Science Officer MPNS in the Natural Sciences Cluster, starting in June 2008.

**Melae Langbein** is the new Science Officer FPS in the Life Sciences Cluster as from May 2008.

**Albino Maggio** has accepted the position of Science Officer FA in the Life Sciences Cluster, starting in June 2008.

**Sally Horspool** joined the COST Office in May 2008 in the position of Public Relations and Communications Assistant.

**Antje Teegler** joined the COST Conference Unit in May 2008 and will be replacing Burcu Dagurkuden as from June 2008.

**Sebastien Chopin** accepted the temporary position of Administrative Officer from June 2008 to provide support to the ISCH Domain.

# David Coates

DC Chair for COST Domain Food and Agriculture (FA)



**Name:** David Coates

**Country where I currently live:** United Kingdom

**Languages:** English, French

**Education:** In the 70's and 80's at the Universities of Exeter, Bath and later Middlesex. Trained as a botanist and plant pathologist, specialising in fungal ecology and forest pathology. Obtained an MBA in the 90's.

**Current profession:** General Secretary of the Academia Europaea (The Academy of Europe) and also as a European Research consultant at the UK Department (Ministry) of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in the Science strategy and International Directorate.

**Research experience:** Pre and post-doctoral research in fungal population biology

**When did you join COST?**

First in 1995, as the UK Senior official representing the UK on the CSO, later as a Vice president of COST and Chairman of the JAF. Then I rejoined COST in, I think, 2004, as the UK member of the (now Domain Committee) Technical Committee for Food, Agriculture and Biotech. I am also involved in EU Framework matters (actually since Framework three) and SCAR (Standing Committee of Agriculture Research).

**You were nominated as a COST Domain Committee member by your country. What was your motivation to stand for election as DC Chair?**

To work to increase the level of novel and transdisciplinary Actions. I am convinced that COST represents the best framework for encouraging emergent ideas, especially in response to transboundary issues that society faces and which require new combinations of expertise and radically novel solutions. I am also strongly supportive of the concept of an 'à la carte' and flexible bottom-up approach where researchers themselves can develop new relationships.

**How do you see the future and further evolution of COST?**

The future depends on strengthening the quality and attractiveness of COST, in order to maintain and enhance its attractiveness to the researcher communities. The future will also depend upon demonstrating to national authorities that COST can deliver added value through cooperation and networking over

and above that provided by other fora. Societal relevance will in my view be the critical measure against which COST will be judged as of value. In this context, COST has to evolve into a mechanism that is highly responsive to the future 'horizon' issues; it has to be rapid and responsive and capable of assembling non-traditional formations of expertise in ways that will encourage the emergence of exciting and novel science and solutions. COST has to work hard to establish itself as the main tool to encourage and capture the best emergent transdisciplinary European science.

**What is your vision of Europe for the next 10 years?**

I think that the key development in science, higher education and training will be establishing a more coordinated European research policy (or agenda) – better structure in terms of the way issues of common concern are identified and research solutions developed. COST cooperation could be a crucial cornerstone in enabling the emergence of effective European knowledge systems.

**When you have one free moment in your busy schedule, what is your preferred leisure activity?**

I sing (sometimes badly) in my son's school adult Choral Society. I am also a keen gardener and our home garden in North East London is open once a year to the public, to raise money for charity.

# Widening Frontiers

**COST Brings Australia, New Zealand and Europe Closer Together**

Two new pilot schemes recently introduced by COST will help European researchers and their counterparts in New Zealand and Australia meet, learn from each other and explore opportunities for working together. The first researchers from Australia have already returned from successful study trips to Europe with tangible results.

Both of the new schemes, launched on 1 July 2007, will run for an initial two year pilot period. Each scheme provided for up to twenty travel grants of approximately EUR 2 500 each. To cope with the overwhelming demand, the Australian Academy of Science has already increased its funding significantly.

## Exchanging Knowledge

By enabling visits to Europe, the new schemes will aid participation in existing COST Actions. Professor Wieslaw Krolikowski of the Laser Physics Centre at the Australian National University in Canberra was able to visit the Centre for Nanotechnology in Münster as part of COST Action MP0604 on Optical Micro-Manipulation. The visit acquainted him with the state of the art in non-linear nanophotonics and laser trapping. He also established new links that could lead to further collaborative work in the area of optical tweezers.

“My trip to Germany was very fruitful. Not only was I able to advance my collaboration with the group on non-linear effects in periodic systems but I also identified new

research problems for my future activities. I exchanged ideas with a number of researchers from various European institutions and Universities which may lead to future collaboration, student exchanges and joint publications,” says Professor Krolikowski. “I was impressed by the extremely high-quality research in the field of non-linear microscopy and laser tweezers”.



G'day from Down Under (from left to right):

**Tomaso Aste**, **Tiziana Di Matteo** Member of the Management Committee of COST Action P10, COST Science Officer **Piotr Swiatek**, **Peter Richmond** Chairman of COST Action P10 and **Rosario N. Mantegna** Member of the Management Committee of COST Action P10

## Crossing Disciplinary Boundaries as well as Continents

Tomaso Aste and Tiziana Di Matteo, also from the Australian National University, in particular its Department of Applied Mathematics, were able to travel to Europe to visit colleagues working on COST Action P10, the Physics of Risk. The aim here is to apply the latest knowledge and tools from the physics of complex systems – such as emergence and non-linearity – and apply them to understanding problems of risk in economics, social sciences, food safety and health.

“I participated in different international forums where I presented results from my research and collaborated with COST members in Europe. In particular, I enhanced my existing international collaborations and also started new ones. I discussed new EU research proposals and a new COST Action proposal to be submitted,” says Tiziana Di Matteo.

By facilitating participation in international forums in Europe, the COST pilot scheme helped the Canberra-based researchers to showcase Australian research capacities. Furthermore, meeting with European colleagues working on similar problems in econophysics and complex systems, as well as concrete research carried out during the visit, has already produced two new research papers submitted for publishing.

“This visit was of fundamental importance to establish strong links with the European scientific community in a moment of high strategic

importance: the first year of the Seventh Framework Programme. This will assure future participation in international collaborative programmes with Europe. Moreover this was a valuable occasion to showcase leading Australian research in important international forums," explains Aste.

### Sowing the Seeds of Future Collaboration

In 2007, Chief Executive of the Royal Society of New Zealand,



**Australasian Gannet**  
(species name: *Morus serrator*)  
Cape Kidnappers, Hawkes Bay,  
New Zealand.  
Photo courtesy of Peter Day.

Dr Di McCarthy explained the need for the new schemes, saying: "global scientific research still faces practical barriers such as lack of funding for travel. This agreement helps alleviate some of those barriers."

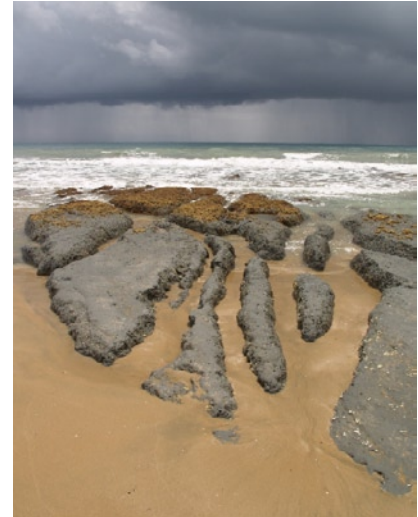
The launch of the new pilot programmes was also welcomed by Professor Sue

Serjeantson, Executive Secretary of the Australian Academy of Science, who said last year that this agreement provides opportunities for people-to-people cooperation, which is essential to the success of global engagement in science.

Tomaso Aste remarked on Europe's high standards of science and technology during his visit to Romania. "This was a very enriching and interesting experience revealing strong commitment from the EU towards newly-joined members in helping them develop science and technology. At this stage these countries are very important strategic partners in any EU project".

The networking opportunities with hundreds of European scientists encouraged work on proposals for new projects in EU research funding programmes. These links will grow in importance as the European Seventh Framework Programme progresses and should stimulate further international cooperation in future.

The missions also led to two-way exchanges and laid the ground



Beach, **Cape Kidnappers**, Hawkes Bay,  
New Zealand.  
Photo courtesy of Peter Day.

work for longer-term collaboration. A follow-up visit to Canberra by the COST Action P10 coordinator, Professor Peter Richmond, has led to the drafting of a new COST Action proposal.

### A Bright Future Ahead

The enthusiastic response to the pilot schemes could serve as a model for similar reciprocal agreements which "bridge" scientific communities in the 35 COST countries to their colleagues in the rest of the world. South Africa, India and Argentina are already looking at the possibility of similar arrangements.

Australian and New Zealand researchers have participated in various COST Actions that focus on a variety of Domains from MPNS, ICT to FA. According to statistics published in May this year, some 30 Actions have included Australian participation compared to 10 in 2003 and 6 Actions have included participation from New Zealand.

COST Action 298 Participation in the Broadband Society will organise a one-week joint work programme in Australia with six of its members and their Australian counterparts. Australia provides the European Research Area with a model to consider the role of technology when factors such as geographic distance and dispersed population are at play.

Moreover, the distribution of Australia's demographic in largely urban pockets along the coastal areas further exasperates acute digital divides (i.e. rural versus urban, generational, class) that can also be found throughout the rest of the world. In this way, both Australia and Europe can learn from each others' divergent and yet parallel models of what it means to participate in a broadband society.

The press releases on the pilot schemes can be downloaded from <http://www.cost.esf.org/news>

# TASK FORCE ON REACTIVE NITROGEN – A STEP TOWARDS INTEGRATED NITROGEN POLICIES

Under the UNECE Convention on Long-Range Trans-boundary Air Pollution, a Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen (TFRN) has been established which will act as the policy framework for dealing with the nitrogen cascade in Europe. This Task Force stems from COST Action 729 on [Assessing and Managing Nitrogen Fluxes in the Atmosphere-Biosphere System in Europe and the European Science Foundation Programme: Nitrogen in Europe \(NinE\): Current Problems and Future Solutions](#).

Human influence on the nitrogen cycle is having an impact on a wide range of global issues from climate change, water and air quality to biodiversity. Our food production and energy use lead to many nitrogen leakages, generating a fast-growing cascade of effects.

A nitrogen atom that begins as part of a smog-forming compound may be deposited in lakes and forests as nitric acid, which can kill fish and insects. Carried out to the coast, the same nitrogen atom may contribute to red tides and dead zones. Finally, the nitrogen will be put back into

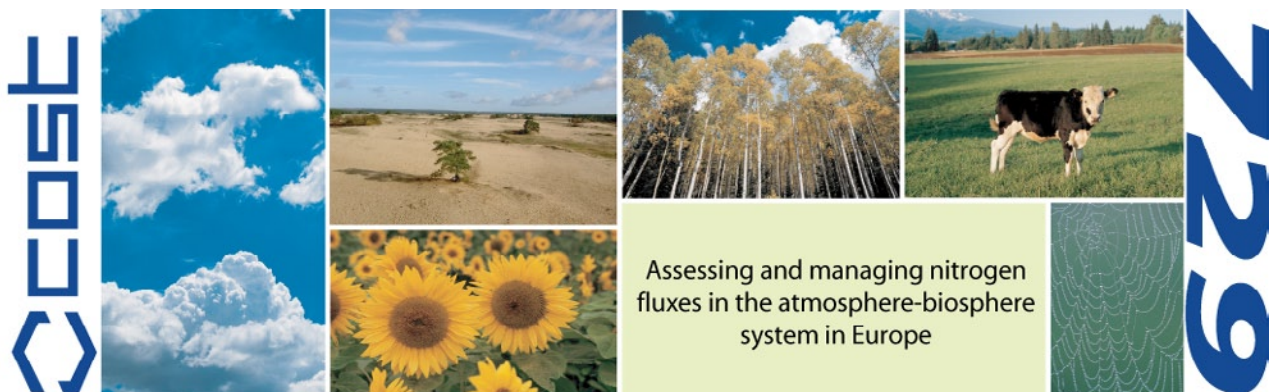
the atmosphere as part of the greenhouse gas nitrous oxide, which contributes to the greenhouse effect and destroys atmospheric ozone.

The TFRN is the first official body, engaged with other policy areas related to nitrogen, to develop technical scientific information and options which can be used for strategic development across the UNECE, creating a more integrated approach to mitigating nitrogen. Its aim is to start investigating more holistic approaches to managing reactive nitrogen, linking the threats to air quality and biodiversity loss with other issues like water quality and greenhouse gas balance. Co-chairmanship is led by Prof. Oene Oenema from Wageningen University Research Centre in the Netherlands and Dr. Sutton CEH in the UK.

Two new papers on this topic, supported and co-authored by COST Action 729 and ESF-NinE, were published in the 16 May issue of the leading journal [Science](#). Researchers describe how food and energy production are causing reactive nitrogen to accumulate in our

atmosphere, coastal waters and soil - causing smog, haze, acid rain as well as contributing to the greenhouse effect, a loss of biodiversity, the development of coastal 'dead zones' and stratospheric ozone depletion. The papers show that we know a lot about nitrogen and its transformations in the environment. However, the complexity and extent of the interactions mean that current scientific understanding and policy is divided into several parallel streams. Directions are proposed to limit the growth in reactive nitrogen production and related effects.

The next step for the ESF and COST programmes is to produce a European Nitrogen Assessment report that will incorporate current nitrogen issues, the cascade effects as well as interactions and feedback. It will provide valuable insight for governments and other stakeholders on the balance between the benefits of fixed nitrogen to society (fertilizer, food, fuel and energy) and the different adverse effects of excess nitrogen in the environment.



**Further reading:**

Transformation of the Nitrogen Cycle: Recent Trends, Questions, and Potential Solutions

James N. Galloway, Alan R. Townsend, Jan Willem Erisman, Mateete Bekunda, Zucong Cai, John R. Freney, Luiz A. Martinelli, Sybil P. Seitzinger, and Mark A. Sutton  
*Science* 16 May 2008: 889-892.

Impacts of Atmospheric Anthropogenic Nitrogen on the Open Ocean

R. A. Duce, J. LaRoche, K. Altieri, K. R. Arrigo, A. R. Baker, D. G. Capone, S. Cornell, F. Dentener, J. Galloway, R. S. Ganeshram, R. J. Geider, T. Jickells, M. M. Kuypers, R. Langlois, P. S. Liss, S. M. Liu, J. J. Middelburg, C. M. Moore, S. Nickovic, A. Oschlies, T. Pedersen, J.

Prospero, R. Schlitzer, S. Seitzinger, L. L. Sorensen, M. Uematsu, O. Ulloa, M. Voss, B. Ward, and L. Zamora  
*Science* 16 May 2008: 893-897.

**More information:**

Jan Willem Erisman, Chair of ESF-NinE and COST Action 729  
 erisman@ecn.nl

# COST-ESF Interdisciplinary Science Initiative “New Perspectives on Landscapes”

COST and ESF joined forces in an ESF-COST Interdisciplinary Science Initiative in order to establish a “network of networks” within landscape studies. It integrates relevant COST Actions and ESF-funded activities, as well as national programmes and activities, spanning several scientific domains. The policy of the initiative is set within the context of the European Landscape Convention and changes in the Common Agricultural Policy. Launched in late 2007, four thematic workshops and a synthesis workshop are also set to take place in 2008. The final outcome will be a joint ESF-COST Science Policy Briefing.

This network aims to make knowledge, gained through basic research in human, social and environmental sciences, more societally relevant. It will try to respond to the need to integrate expert and local knowledge and values.

Each workshop brings together COST and ESF networks and is

open to contributions from other European and extra-European researchers’ networks. Civil society and politically relevant stakeholders are also strongly involved to address the challenge of developing community participation in research and practice-led research.

The initiative will culminate in a synthesis workshop to be held in Brussels towards the end of 2008, which will result in a joint COST-ESF Science Policy Briefing. This will identify coordination and collaboration needs and potentials which arise from the profiles and results of existing programmatic, national and international research activities. It will also describe new needs for knowledge to underpin evidence-based decision-making in implementing the European Landscape Convention.

**More information:**

<http://www.cost.esf.org/events>  
 or contact **Francesca Boscolo**  
[fboscolo@cost.esf.org](mailto:fboscolo@cost.esf.org).

## The four thematic workshops cover the following themes:

### Landscapes – Perception, Values and Meanings

Nottingham, 7 and 9 May 2008  
 Convener: Stephen Daniels, University of Nottingham

### Social Relations and Environmental Resources

Stockholm, 27 and 29 May 2008  
 Convenor: Mats Widgren, Stockholm University

### Imagining the future

Madrid, 11 and 13 June 2008  
 Convenor: Professor Almudena Orejas, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC)

### Exploring New Territories in Landscape Studies

Krakow,  
 19 to 21 September 2008

In addition, a final conference will be held on 27 and 28 November 2008 in Brussels.  
 Convenors: Professor Przemysław Urbanczyk, Polish Academy of Sciences, and Professor Richard Stiles, Technical University Vienna



# A Man with a Mission

Georges Wanet is the neutral coordinator of the Trans-Domain Proposal's Standing Assessment Body (TDP-SAB). Following a recent decision by the COST Committee of Senior Officials (CSO), the SAB has been established to help researchers develop international scientific networks spanning across many disciplines. He reveals how he sees his new role.

"The decision on the TDP-SAB is a good example of how, like society, COST fluctuates and thinks outside the box by providing a platform to develop further obvious links between domains," explains Georges Wanet who was recently appointed to the role by the President of the COST CSO.

"Science is no longer a restricted field as more and more disciplines interlink. For example, the department of mechanical engineering at the Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB) is working on microsurgery which is clearly an important medical field. This example would address the COST Domains MPNS and BMBS and even ISCH because it

affects people's health directly," he continues. Wanet addresses this trend in the management courses he gives where he often compares running a company to the functioning of the human body, citing obvious connections between corporate strategies and biology.

A member of many high-level European Commission panels, he has known COST for many years and is convinced of its benefits and societal impact. He remarks that one of the main conclusions in the COST Customer Satisfaction Study 2007 is to extend COST's strategic positioning by coordinating and cooperating with adjacent, but more downstream, policy instruments, such as the Framework Programme, the European Space Agency and other European and national programmes.

The TDP-SAB will include the nine COST Domain Committee Chairs and two additional scientific experts per Domain. The COST Office's own Science Officers may also serve as experts. However, the neutral coordinator will also rely

on the COST Office Science Officers' expertise to fully understand the scientific elements unique to each Domain.

"Without wanting to categorise the COST Domains, I would say that some domains like BMBS, CMST and MPNS may be linked to pure research; some like ESSEM, FA and FPS are more prone to applied research; some others like ISCH and TUD dealing with society at large; and ICT may be pure research or applied research as well as support for all the other Domains. There is not one Domain that does not interact with any of the others and it is my vision to help establish interlinks between all of them," he says.

It takes time to succeed and TDPs also give European researchers the hope to build successful projects in the longer term. He knows that some COST Actions will not have any lasting contributions when they finish but thinks this is entirely normal and a fact that can also be noted in the private sector. Typically, 50% of start-up companies do not survive



**Name:** Georges Wanet  
**Year of birth:** 1944  
**Nationality:** Belgian  
**Languages:** French, English, Dutch  
**Education:** PhD in Applied Sciences, Telecommunication and Electronic Engineer

Georges Wanet has a multidisciplinary career; working in telecom, IT, banking and transport. He was and is director of several Belgian and foreign companies, including a biotech company, and teaches at the Brussels Free University (ULB). He

is a member of several European Commission high-level panels contributing to COST. These include the "Marimon" Panel: Evaluation of the effectiveness of the New Instruments of Framework programme VI, the "Kneucker" Panel: COST Mid-Term Review Panel Report and the "Wanet" Panel: guidance of the implementation of the new Customer Satisfaction Survey and COST strategic positioning in relation to other EC instruments.

the first five years and only 10 to 20% develop successfully.

It is Wanet's mission to guide this process by setting priorities and making the experts from the different Domains work together within a certain timeframe. He believes that it is the TDP-SAB's role to question the main components of each proposal

and find out how to involve particular Domains for certain topics, and to which extent.

"It will be an intellectual challenge to align top experts in their Domain, especially since researchers tend to be individualists, and develop a ranking system for the TDP proposals with clear rules. I will rely on my

management expertise to fulfil this mission," he smiles. "I am, for example, a strong believer in the key principles of decision-making whereby a decision is reached through open dialogue and, once a decision is taken, feedback is welcomed in the form of concrete proposals for improvements rather than criticism."

## Recent events and activities

### □ **COST Action E55: Espoo workshop**

*13 to 14 March 2008, Helsinki, Finland*

The 3rd COST Action E55 workshop was organised by Mr Tomi Toratti, MC Member from the VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland. This time around, a total of 16 technical presentations took place. Joint sessions looked at the topics of monitoring structures, a draft failure assessment template, joint ductility, moisture induced stresses, timber structural systems behaviour, strength spatial distribution, and timber structure stiffness and robustness.

The main objective of this Action is to provide the basic framework and knowledge required for the efficient and sustainable use of timber as a structural and building material.

### □ **COST Action E52: Workshop on the Evaluation of Genetic Resources of European Beech (*Fagus Sylvatica*) for Sustainable Forestry**

*16 to 17 March 2008, Florence, Italy*

The ten presentations held during the COST Action E52 workshop in Florence revolved around the eco-physiology of beech populations and their sensitivity to climate change. Moreover, the group elaborated on the tools to analyse the total genetic variation and reviewed the recommendations using suitable reproductive beech material under sustainable forest management.

More information: [http://www.bfafh.de/inst2/cost\\_e52/index.htm](http://www.bfafh.de/inst2/cost_e52/index.htm)

### □ **COST Action FP0602: The first workshop on biotechnology for lignocellulosic biorefineries**

*26 to 28 March 2008, Copenhagen, Denmark*

The first workshop on biotechnology for lignocellulosic biorefineries gathered 120 visitors mainly from Europe, but also from New Zealand and USA. Presentations covered all three work group areas including thermophilic microorganisms for pentose (C5) fermentation, new insights into the role of accessory enzymes for cellulose hydrolysis and oxidative modification of fibres.

Keynote talks focused on current research and progress in the USA and New Zealand. The overall turn-out was of high scientific quality and proved to be an excellent kick-off for this Action, showing much promise for future activities. A full day excursion to the Inbicon 2nd generation ethanol production pilot plant was also organised, so visitors could find out the latest in lignocellulose processing biotechnologies.

# COST Workshop Focuses on Global Change and Sustainability in Mountain Regions

Innsbruck in Austria was the location for the COST Workshop on Global Change and Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions, which took place from 7 to 8 April 2008. Scientists, experts, practitioners and scholars from Europe and overseas gathered to exchange project ideas and discuss research on the effect of global change on this specific type of region.

Participants came from many disciplinary backgrounds and discussions showed that future research should be designed in a more interdisciplinary way, as mountains are very complex systems. Because every mountain region is different, strategies to cope with global change must be defined within a local or regional context.

“Because of their diversity, mountain regions are the most sensitive seismographs of global change. A comparative monitoring system is needed to give a reliable analysis, develop scenarios and elaborate the strategies which may lead to sustainable development in these regions,” said Prof. Axel Borsdorf from the Austrian Academy of Science.

“Long-term ecological research project should include strong socio-economic components and be based on harmonised international strategies. Future research should be based on research, monitoring and education,” added Dr. Robert Jandl from the Austrian Research and Training Centre for Forests, Natural Hazards and Landscape.

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the MRI website. The page title is "COST Strategic Workshop: Global Change and Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions, 7-9 April 08". The navigation menu includes "The MRI", "Networks", "Projects", "Events", "Media", and "Database". The main content area features a "Welcome Address" by Axel Borsdorf, Robert Jandl, Günter Siegel, Harald Mauser, Wolfgang Meixner, and Herwig van Stea. Below this, there are sections for "Climate Change" by Hanns Kerschner and "Effects of changing land use on biodiversity and ecosystem services provided by traditionally managed grasslands" by Sandra Lavorel. The page also includes a "Subscribe to the eNewsletter" form and a "News+Events" sidebar with links to various publications and events.

The outcome of this workshop is to support many existing international networks dealing with ecological and economical challenges for mountain regions. Results have been acknowledged and used by the Mountain Partnership (FAO), the Alpine Convention, the Carpathian Convention (UNEP), the Mountain Research Initiative and many others.

## More Information:

The webcast of this event was paid for by COST. It includes presentations and can be viewed at the following link:

<http://mri.scnatweb.ch/content/view/223/73/>

# Recent events and activities

## □ **COST Action FP 0601: Workshop on Forest Management and the Water Cycle (FORMAN)**

*9 to 11 April 2008, Zagreb, Croatia*

The second Science Workshop of Action FP 0601 “Forest Management and the Water Cycle (FORMAN)” was held at the Ministry of Regional Development, Forestry and Water Management in Zagreb, Croatia. It mainly served to prepare a joint book publication from the Action with three focal sections:

- Tree to small catchment processes in a changing environment
- Forest structures, management and water fluxes
- Scales and approaches for forest - water interactions.

The work will be continued at the next Science Workshop to be held in Vienna 15-17 September 2008.

## □ **COST Action E46: Workshop the 13th PTS-CTP De-inking Symposium**

*15 to 17 April 2008, Leipzig, Germany*

220 participants, including 140 from industry, participated to this event which focused on all aspects related to de-inking, the process whereby ink is removed from printed paper and board prior to reprocessing. 14 papers from COST Action E46 were presented. They covered many topics from understanding the phenomenon, test and evaluation methods, to process improvements and the industrial evaluations of results.

The symposium was a good opportunity to transfer the knowledge and results from COST Action E46 participants to industry representatives and discuss possible implementation.

## □ **COST Action E53: Workshop on Quality Control for Wood and Wood Products**

*19 to 20 May 2008, Oslo, Norway*

80 experts from 23 countries were brought together to discuss the latest advances in scanning, drying and grading technology. Three parallel working group sessions also took place. All four main producers of grading machines attended the session related to stress grading and it was a great success. More than 10 presentations focused on grading, with intensive discussions related to the European database, output control, development of grading standards, new probabilistic methods and so on. At the other sessions, scanning systems and some information leaflets on drying quality, distortion and discoloration in sawn timber were intensively discussed. The next conference will be in Delft, in The Netherlands, at the end of October and will be related to end-user's needs for wood material and products.

More information: [www.coste53.net](http://www.coste53.net)

## □ **COST Action 865 “Bioencapsulation Multiscale Interaction Analysis”**

COST Action 865 involves 25 countries and is still growing because of an increasing industrial participation. Over the last 12 months, COST Action 865 has been quite busy co-organising several meetings.

Two industrial workshops took place at the beginning of 2008 in France and Switzerland, welcoming nearly 200 participants. During the meeting in France, the publication of the book “Microencapsulation: des sciences aux technologies” was announced. The COST 865 Spring meeting in Ljubljana was also a huge success.

More information: <http://COST865.bioencapsulation.net> or <http://bioencapsulation.net>

## Mark your calendar

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### □ **COST Action E39 International Conference on Forests, Trees and Human Health and Well-Being**

*28 to 30 August 2008, Hamar-Elverum, Norway*

This conference will provide an excellent opportunity for discussion between practitioners, policy-makers and scientists as well as to learn more about the final results of four years of European co-operation within COST Action E39. The first conference day will focus on the general politics of human health and forests and “highlights” from this Action. This day will be open for a wide range of interest groups, including politicians, health personnel, forest managers, social and behavioural researchers, and others. The second day will focus on specific COST E39 results and further presentations, discussions and recommendations. On the third conference day an excursion will be held in the surroundings of The Health City of Elverum ending at the Forest Museum.

More information: [http://www.e39.ee/?Conferences:Hamar-Elverum\\_conference](http://www.e39.ee/?Conferences:Hamar-Elverum_conference)

### □ **XVI International Conference on Bioencapsulation**

*4 to 6 September 2008, Dublin, Ireland*

The 16th International Conference on Bioencapsulation co-organised by the COST Action 865 will bring together more than 150 researchers from around the world presenting more than 100 contributions. The content of the COST Action 865 autumn meeting will be revolving around the work performed by the working group and on will also focus on the set-up of a bioencapsulation technological encyclopedia.

More information: [http://bioencapsulation.net/XVI\\_ICB](http://bioencapsulation.net/XVI_ICB)

### □ **Second EuCheMS Chemistry Congress (see article)**

*16 to 20 September 2008, Turin, Italy*

### □ **COST-ESF High Level Research Conference “Systems Chemistry”**

*3 to 8 October 2008, Acquafredda di Maratea, Italy*

Systems Chemistry is the joint effort of prebiotic and supramolecular chemistry together with theoretical biology and complex systems research to address problems relating to the origin and synthesis of life. A major focus is placed on the study of autocatalytic reaction systems, such as chemical self-replicating, self-reproducing and chiral symmetry breaking systems. The conference will convene internationally leading experts from various relevant areas to elucidate where we stand in 2008. Facets from this intriguing and truly interdisciplinary endeavour come from fields as diverse as geochemistry and organocatalysis, biomolecular chemistry and liposome technology, metal-organic chemistry and the theory of networks and evolution. Joining these facets together, by the unifying principle of autocatalysis, leads to a new view which may be especially attractive for the next generation of chemists. Time will be allotted to poster presentations.

More information:

<http://www.esf.org/activities/esf-conferences/details/confdetail267.html?conf=267&year=2008>

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p 1 photo: Port Puponga, Nelson,  
New Zealand. Photo courtesy of  
Peter Day.

p 7 photo: "Landscapes–Perception,  
Values and Meanings" Workshop  
participants.

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### Domain abbreviations used:

**BMBS** - Biomedicine and Molecular Biosciences  
**CMST** - Chemistry and Molecular Sciences and Technologies  
**ESSEM** - Earth System Science and Environmental Management  
**FA** - Food and Agriculture  
**FPS** - Forests, their Products and Services  
**ISCH** - Individuals, Societies, Cultures and Health  
**ICT** - Information and Communication Technologies  
**MPNS** - Materials, Physical and Nanosciences  
**TUD** - Transport and Urban Development

## Agenda (continued)

- **Final Conference of COST Action E46 “Improvements in the Understanding and Use of De-inking Technology”**  
*22 to 23 October 2008, Bordeaux, France*  
This conference will include representatives of the printing and paper industries. The objective will be to review de-inking difficulties related to different print types and the solutions proposed. The international association of paper mills operating de-inking plants (INGEDE) will be involved in this conference.  
More information: <http://www.cost-e46.eu.org/>
  
- **COST Strategic Workshop: Exchange of Best practices on Environment and Transport**  
*27 to 28 October 2008, Ghardaia, Algeria*  
This workshop will deal with the environmental issues related to transport in different areas with a particular focus on southern countries. It will aim at generating a discussion forum for researchers from different backgrounds, at capitalising the best practice and sharing north-south and south-south experiences. Furthermore, the workshop will try to contribute to a state of the art scientific knowledge in southern countries, initiate research topics towards solutions adapted to specific situations in developing countries and making available tools for policy makers and environmental managers order to support them in decision-making.  
More information: <http://www.inrets.fr/services/manif/ghardaia-oct08/>
  
- **The European Forest-Based Sector: Bio-Responses to Address New Climate and Energy Challenges?**  
*6 to 8 November 2008, Nancy, France*  
The forest-based sector is involved in two major crises, one related to climate and the other to energy. During its EU Council presidency, France wishes to contribute to the debate on the roles of forests and their products in a post-2012 climate regime. This international conference will focus on the roles of the forestry sector and its perspectives. It will look at forests as carbon sinks, wood-based products: carbon pools and energy conservation as well as the forest-based sector as a source of renewable energy.  
  
350 participants are expected to attend including scientists from research centres and universities, professionals from the European forest-based sector, delegates from European Member States and the European Commission. A selection of the papers presented at the conference will be published as a special issue of the French forest review (Revue forestière française).  
More information: [http://www.gipecofor.org/publi/page.php?id=3&rang=0&domain=34&lang=en\\_GB](http://www.gipecofor.org/publi/page.php?id=3&rang=0&domain=34&lang=en_GB)