

Minutes of the General Assembly of IAVS
11 September 2008, 17:15–18:30
Venue: Stellenbosch University, Stellenbosch, South Africa

1. Opening

After the traditional group photograph, the meeting was opened at about 5.15 pm by the President of IAVS (R. Peet). There were about 100 members attending the General Assembly. The President and Secretary-General (L. Mucina) informed the Assembly on actions taken by Council and of upcoming events. The announcement of student prize winners was postponed to the symposium dinner (the same day as Assembly). (The winners of the prizes are listed at the end of this report).

Two main subjects were announced by the President:

- (1) The resolution on biofuels as proposed in Wales was accepted by Council in a revised version (printed in IAVS Bulletin 11);
- (2) five-member Publication Committee was formed in fall 2007 to screen offers from publishing houses to publish the IAVS journals. The Committee unanimously voted in favour of accepting the proposal submitted by Wiley-Blackwell Publishers. This recommendation was accepted by the Executive Committee and formally realized July 1, 2008.

2. Report from the Council Meeting

Financial report

A short financial report was provided. The assets of the IAVS grew from 28,450 € in 2006, to 34,485 € in 2007 to 63,283 € in September 2008. The text of this report is already available in IAVS Bulletin 11.

Committees We have a group of Global Fund members (members short of resources). Use of this fund will be explored.

With more income for IAVS as a consequence of the new publishing contract, new ways of using this money for the development of IAVS will be explored. Members are invited to provide suggestions.

The President also informed the Assembly about the new Award Committee and the new journal in discussion (see the Minutes of Council).

Membership profits

IAVS-Members now profit from their membership with the reduced fee for symposia, with our journals, website information, and the IAVS Bulletin, but there could be many more benefits. The AC decided to introduce a special student fee (10 € instead of 20 €) to attract more young people (especially students) into our ranks. Several suggestions were made by the members for use income:

- * stimulate research through free membership in under-represented areas;
- * pro vide discounts on books (this will be possible with our new Publisher);
- * give members privileged right of registration for symposium excursions;
- * start discussion groups on the internet;
- * connect working-group meetings to IAVS symposia.

3. Activities in Coming Years

The President informed the Assembly about the upcoming meetings in Greece (2009) and Mexico (2010). Panayotis Dimopoulos (organizer of the 2009 meeting) and Jose Delgadillo (organizer of the 2010 meeting) gave short introductions about their respective meetings.

Suggestions were sought for other meeting locations and organizers, noting that discussion has been ongoing with Russia - at least for field excursions. It was noted that excursions and annual meetings have not always been and need not be at the same venue or in the same country.

4. Other Business

The current meeting attendance was announced as 237 registered participants, from 37 countries. There were 13 young people supported by the regional Section for Southern Africa of IAVS and 7 participants by the Oppenheimer Foundation. local organizers want to thank the sponsors and Unistel Consultus (the company which managed the daily proceedings of the meeting, registration and finances) for their support and help.

5. Closing

The meeting was closed by the President at 6.30 pm.

6. Addendum: Prizes for the Best Presentations/posters at the 51nd IAVS-Meeting in Stellenbosch, South Africa:

The IAVS has awarded two Prizes for young scientists (< 35 years of age) for their outstanding work and presentation skills. The two winners were awarded an IAVS Travel Grant of € 1000 to attend either the oncoming 52nd or the 53rd IAVS symposium.

The IAVS congratulates:

Gerald Jurasinski (University of Rostock, Germany) for his oral presentation on "*Upward shift of alpine plants increases floristic similarity of mountain summits*".

Jeff Ott (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, USA). for his poster presentation *“Sharpening the focus of community patterns by adjusting phylogenetic scale”*.

In addition to the above prizes, the Regional Section for Southern Africa of the IAVS awarded two journal subscriptions to outstanding young scientists (< 35 years of age) of the SADC region.

The two winners were:

Peter le Roux (Stellenbosch University, South Africa) in the Category Best SADC Presentation for his presentation on *“Rapid altitudinal range expansion and the formation of no-analog communities in response to warming”*.

Justine Nyaga (SANBI, South Africa) in the Category Best SADC Poster for **his** presentation *“Impacts of fog and dew on soil moisture, respiration and nutrients recycling”*.

Honourable mentions:

Marina Semchenko (University of Tartu, Estonia) for the oral presentation *“Foraging for space by plant roots: a comparative study of grasses from contrasting habitats”*.

Kuo-Jung Chao (University of National Taiwan University, Taiwan) for the oral presentation *“Vegetation of the lowland tropical rainforests in Taiwan”*.

Forbes Boyle (University of North Carolina, USA) for the poster presentation *“Using high-quality vegetation plot datasets to restore ecosystems: an example from the Coastal Plain of the Southeastern US”*.

Desale Okubamichael (University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa) for the poster presentation *“Host specificity and bird dispersal in the parasitic mistletoe, *Tapinanthus natalitius* (Loranthaceae)”*.