

International Society for the Study of Harmful Algae (ISSHA)

Minutes of the Meeting of the ISSHA Council

Hornbaek, Denmark, 1 – 3 April 2004

Attending Council Members: Don Anderson, Barrie Dale, Greg Doucette, Kim Hak-Gyoon, Jane Lewis, Øjvind Moestrup, Beatriz Reguera, Pat Tester, Adriana Zingone

Attending Executive Members: Karen Steidinger (President), Allan Cembella (Vice-President), Henrik Enevoldsen (Treasurer), Stephen Bates (Secretary)

Unable to Attend: Yasuwo Fukuyo, Edna Granéli, Gustaaf Hallegraeff, Marina Montresor, Yasukatsu Oshima (Vice-President), Ted Smayda, Max Taylor (Past President)

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The President had proposed a list of agenda items, which was accepted and discussed as below, with any additions as indicated. It was decided that the meeting would be conducted by consensus building.

2. Goals of the Meeting

This was the first meeting of the ISSHA Council, whose members were elected on 15 May 2003. The goals of this meeting were to: review the aims and objectives of ISSHA (as outlined in Article 5 of the Statutes); highlight the benefits of ISSHA membership; and determine how ISSHA could affiliate with existing initiatives in the field of harmful algae, without competing with those initiatives. This was accomplished by establishing several Standing Committees that will put ISSHA on a solid footing and move the Society forward. Standing Committees were established as shown below, with the indicated chairs and members appointed; other committee members may be recruited from the general membership at a later time. Discussions related to each topic are grouped under the appropriate section, even though they may not have been discussed in that order. Benefits of ISSHA membership are summarized in Section 12, below.

3. Committee on Statutes and Bylaws

It was decided not to change the Statutes and Bylaws for now, but to do so once there was a greater need. Therefore, no Chair was appointed. For now, the Council will remain responsible for this activity and will recruit other members when enough proposed changes accumulate, to justify revising the Statutes and Bylaws.

4. Committee on Elections

Chair: Karen Steidinger

Member: Stephen Bates

Mandate: solicit nominations from the membership for the new Executive.

Article 23 of the Statutes indicates that nominations shall be forwarded to the Secretary no later than four months before the General Assembly, which will be held during the 14-19 November 2004 XI International Conference on Harmful Algae, in Cape Town, South Africa. Therefore, nominations are due by 1 July. The Secretary must circulate written ballots to the membership three months before the General Assembly, or by 1 August. The ballots will be counted and declared during the XI HAB Conference. It was agreed that nominations for new Council members will take place at the XII HAB Conference, in Copenhagen, in July or August 2006.

Nominations for the Executive can include current members of the Council. If a Council member is elected, then the Council has the power to appoint any member of the Society to fill that vacancy; the tenure of such co-opted members terminates at the next election (Article 19 of the Statutes).

Action items:

- Karen to prepare a text requesting nominations, for publication in Harmful Algae News. Deadline = 20 April.
- Stephen to send the request for nominations to the ISSHA and PHYCOTOXINS mailing lists. Deadline = 1 July.
- Karen to contact each nominated person to ensure their willingness to run, and to ask for a short statement from each candidate.
- Stephen to send list of nominations to Henrik, who will mail the hard copy nomination list to all members, for voting. Deadline = 1 August.
- Stephen to receive ballots and to ensure that they are transported to the XI HAB Conference, Cape Town, for counting at the ISSHA General Assembly.
- Karen to write Grant Pitcher regarding a time and meeting room for the ISSHA General Assembly during the XI HAB Conference.

5. Committee on Membership

Chair: Pat Tester

Members: Kim Hak-Gyoon, Beatriz Reguera (plus Gustaaf Hallegraeff and Ted Smayda, if they agree)

Mandate: increase membership numbers; retain existing members.

This is to be accomplished by promoting the benefits of ISSHA membership on the ISSHA website and in Harmful Algae News, as well as via personal contacts. It was agreed to have

regional representation on this committee, so other members may be recruited later on, from the wider ISSHA membership community.

It was acknowledged that the mechanism for renewing existing memberships and for recruiting new members must be made easier. Stephen Bates and Nancy Lewis (NRC, Halifax) have proposed changes to the application procedure found on the ISSHA website, to enable this. It was agreed to eliminate payment by cheque or money order, because of the increased cost of processing this form of payment. Payment may be by credit card or by bank transfer (via bank or by e-banking).

It was proposed that membership renewals be every two years, to coincide with the International Conferences on HABs. This would encourage the highest retention of memberships because of the conference registration discount applied to ISSHA members during conference registration. However, this would require a change in Article 11 of the Statutes, which will not be done at this time (see Section 3, above). In addition, it was pointed out that the International Conferences are not necessarily evenly spaced every two years. Nevertheless, Article 11 of the Statutes does indicate that “subscriptions shall be paid in advance”, so this would allow members to renew for more than one year at a time, if they so wished. An advantage would be that the current fee would be applied over those two years, even if the membership fee increased. This option will now be included in the revised membership form. Also suggested was to provide the option of paying for a membership on behalf of another HAB scientist.

A new membership category was proposed: Lifetime Membership. It was suggested that \$500 US be the fee for this category. A Charter Membership category was also suggested. However, inclusion of these new categories will require a revision of the Statutes, so this item was postponed until the Statutes are revised.

It was decided to keep the membership fees at the amounts indicated on the ISSHA website. An increase in fees will be considered at a later date, once the Society has moved farther ahead.

As a way to increase Society revenue, it was proposed to include on the membership application form the option of contributing to the following causes: Yasumoto Lifetime Achievement Award; Student Travel Award; Maureen Keller Student Presentation Award.

Discussions were held on the advisability of posting members' names and addresses on the ISSHA Membership website page. Two methods were suggested to protect this information: 1) add password protection to the membership list, and 2) add known Java script that is able to hide e-mail addresses from Internet “robot scavengers”. Alternatively, the membership form can be revised to include a checked box asking permission to include the member's name and address on the website; one must then uncheck the box to opt out of this option.

A current difficulty is that members are not informed if their membership payment has been received until their name is posted on the ISSHA Membership website page. This may sometimes occur only after a long delay, and thus many members have sent e-mails enquiring about their payment status. The difficulty is that the Treasurer does not have the resources to acknowledge when each membership payment is received. It was therefore proposed, and

agreed, that ISSHA funds be used to hire temporary help for Henrik to process memberships and to send acknowledgements of payment in a timely manner. It was agreed that temporary help could also be used for such tasks as mailouts.

Action items:

- Committee members to target specifically those ISSHA members whose membership has expired.
- Committee members to promote the Society by: making a flyer for distribution at conferences and marine labs; asking marine lab websites to add a link to the ISSHA website; suggesting that members place the ISSHA logo (using the current one until a new one is developed and voted on) on the title page of Powerpoint presentations.
- Pat to contact Gustaaf and Ted, to see if they wish to be on this committee.
- Stephen to contact Nancy Lewis (NRC, Halifax) to determine the feasibility of adding password protection to the membership list page (as well as to any other pages, as deemed necessary) on the ISSHA website.
- Stephen to contact Judy Kleindinst (WHOI) in order to find out how to make the members' e-mail addresses unable to be scavenged by Internet "robots".
- Henrik to verify the procedures for paying membership fees by e-bank transfer.
- Henrik to inquire about hiring temporary help (e.g. a student) to help process membership payments, and to report back to the Council on such costs.

6. Committee on Finances

Chair: the current Treasurer (or, the Treasurer may be a committee member)

Members: Don Anderson, Karen Steidinger (plus Edna Granéli and Yasuwo Fukuyo, if they agree)

Mandate: make decisions on fundraising for the Society (e.g. student travel and Yasumoto awards); review the costs of projects that the Society wishes to undertake; examine and approve costs of the International HAB Conferences and of Executive / Council meetings; act as an oversight committee for how ISSHA funds are spent.

This proposed committee was added to the agenda, for discussion, after it became evident that the Treasurer requires additional assistance with handling finances and as specified in the Statutes Article 28.

It was decided that after the Executive elections at the XI HAB Conference, when Henrik steps down as Treasurer, he will still be able to handle ISSHA funds, as the *Ex-officio* Treasurer and a member of the Finance Committee. The Society is registered in Copenhagen, Denmark, and it would be untenable to transfer the registration and banking functions to a different country each time a new Treasurer is elected.

In order to save on costs, mailouts should combine as many actions as possible (e.g. membership renewal requests, nomination requests, ballots).

Ideas for fund raisers include having an auction and selling small versions of glass “laser” carvings or wood carvings (at the HAB Conferences); soliciting government and NGO funds for student travel; soliciting membership contributions for special funds and other sources.

The tax deductible status of ISSHA contributions depends on the tax legislation in each country where one pays tax.

Action items:

- Karen to contact Edna and Yasuwo, to see if they wish to be on this committee.
- Karen to contact Grant Pitcher (Chair, Organizing Committee of the XI International Conference on Harmful Algae) to discuss further fundraising for the conference.

7. Committee on Conference Program

Chair: Øjvind Moestrup

Members: Don Anderson, Allan Cembella, Barrie Dale, Greg Doucette, Jane Lewis

Mandate: liaise with the local organizing committee to produce the conference plan, budget and program; assist with conference fundraising; establish a mechanism for deciding on conference venues and registration fees.

It was agreed, with the consent of the Convener of the XII International Conference on Harmful Algae (Ø. Moestrup), that as from 2006 the International Conferences on Harmful Algae will be ISSHA Conferences.

The advantages of ISSHA being responsible for convening the International Conferences on HABs were discussed. These include: being able to transfer startup funds remaining from the previous conference; using the current ISSHA Council members as the International Advisory Committee for the conference; assistance in fundraising for student travel and student awards.

One option discussed for fundraising was to have an auction, as occurs with great success in several other societies (e.g. the Psychological Society of America). This option will be discussed further by organizers of the XII International Conference, in Copenhagen.

Action items:

- Øjvind to convene a meeting of the Conference Program Committee immediately following the XI HAB Conference, in Cape Town, South Africa.
- Øjvind to solicit nominations for the HAB conference venue after Copenhagen (via Harmful Algae News and the ISSHA website); those nominated must make a presentation at the next General Assembly. Deadline = 20 April for Harmful Algae News.
- Henrik to mail out venue ballots and Stephen to post information on ISSHA website. Deadline = 1 August.
- Conference venue ballots to be returned to Stephen. Deadline = 1 September.
- Karen to write Grant Pitcher regarding a time and meeting room for the Committee meeting during the XI Conference; the e-mail to be Cc'd to Council members.

8. Committee on Achievement Awards

Chair: Barrie Dale

Members: Allan Cembella, Henrik Enevoldsen, Beatriz Reguera, Pat Tester (plus Marina Montresor, if she agrees)

Mandate: solicit nominations for the established awards; decide on the final names of the awards; decide on the criteria for each award; post the criteria on the ISSHA website; solicit biographies of award winners and post past winners on the ISSHA website; decide on the type of award to be given; liaise with the Finance Committee in order to obtain the financial awards; procure the other types awards; recruit ISSHA members to become judges for the Student Presentation Awards.

The following current awards were discussed: Yasumoto Lifetime Achievement Award, Maureen Keller Student Presentation Awards, Student Travel Awards, Scientific Achievement (or Merit) Award, and Service Award. When ISSHA assumes responsibility for convening future International Conferences on HABs, each of these awards will become awards presented by ISSHA; up to the last conference, the Maureen Keller Award and the Service Award were presented by the local organizing committee of the conference.

It was announced that Professor Yasumoto recently received the Imperial Award of Japan, which he has kindly donated to ISSHA. This will become a contribution to the Yasumoto Lifetime Achievement Award.

The merits and criticisms of having ISSHA present the above awards were debated. Not everyone was in agreement that scientists should receive any type of award. Nevertheless, the consensus was that these awards should be provided to the deserving candidates. It was felt that the awards given should promote and further the goals of the Society. It was also agreed that the research of deserving students, in particular, should be recognized with awards, as an encouragement.

There was discussion regarding what certain of the awards should be named and what item(s) should be awarded (e.g. financial, books, wood carvings, glass “laser carvings”). There was consensus that the Yasumoto Lifetime Achievement Award should remain as is. However, the criteria for and name of an award to honour other scientists was not agreed upon; this will be up to the Achievement Awards Committee. The Maureen Keller Student Presentation Awards should be given for both oral and poster presentations, and there should be runner-up awards for these. A student was defined as someone within one year of their thesis defense. It is not necessary to give a Service Award (Special Award, or whatever the name is decided on) each time, only as appropriate; nominations should not be sought. The criteria for each award should be specified, and the nominators should address each of the criteria in their nomination letters, to be limited to one page. Past winners should be included in the nomination request. A short list of the nominations will be sent to Council members, for voting. The local organizing committee of the HAB Conference should be given latitude to provide their own awards.

Action items:

- Barrie to send an announcement to Harmful Algae News (via Henrik) regarding the request for award nominations and award criteria. Deadline = 20 April. He is to circulate criteria for each award to Council members prior to 20 April.
- Barrie to send the above announcement to the ISSHA website (via Stephen).
- Nominations for each award to be sent to Barrie. Deadline = 1 September.
- Barrie to send collected nominations to Council Members for evaluation and voting. Deadline = 1 September.
- Council to send votes to Stephen. Deadline = 1 October.
- Barrie to contact Marina to see if she wishes to be part of this committee.
- Henrik to contact Takeshi Yasumoto for wood carvings and the Bigelow Lab for glass (“laser”) carvings (with ISSHA logo) to be made.
- Find a judge’s form, used by other societies, to establish consistent judging criteria for student presentation awards.

9. Committee on Travel Awards

Chair: Don Anderson

Members: Allan Cembella, Henrik Enevoldsen, Beatriz Reguera, Karen Steidinger (plus Yasuwo Fukuyo and Edna Granéli, if they agree).

Mandate: find funding sources; raise funds; distribute funds for international travel to the HAB conferences for students, postdocs, and scientists from developing countries.

To receive a Travel Award, the participant must be an ISSHA member, find matching funding, provide a paragraph indicating why they wish to receive the award, and present a poster or oral presentation at the International Conference on HABs. Travel requests for non-student scientists from underdeveloped countries are considered by IOC-SCOR.

Other options discussed include waving the registration fee for students receiving the award, and asking the students to write a short description of the HAB situation in their own country, for posting on the ISSHA website.

Action items:

- Karen to send an e-mail to Grant Pitcher asking if he has already found funding for student travel to the XI HAB Conference in South Africa, and if he wishes to request that additional funding be found; e-mail to be Cc’d to Council members.
- Beatriz (along with other committee members) to look for funding sources.
- Don to contact Edna and Yasuwo regarding membership on this committee.
- Don to send an announcement to Harmful Algae News (via Henrik) about the committee’s planned activities, with a request to the community for suggestions on possible funding agencies and programs. Deadline = 20 April.
- Don to send the above announcement to Stephen, for posting on the ISSHA website.

10. Committee on Publications

Chair: Jane Lewis

Members: Stephen Bates, Alan Cembella, Barrie Dale, Greg Doucette, Henrik Enevoldsen, Karen Steidinger, Pat Tester, Adriana Zingone

Mandate: oversee the proposed or existing publications of the Society (Harmful Algae News affiliation, journal affiliation, conference proceedings, ISSHA website, special publications).

Harmful Algae News (HAN): HAN is an IOC publication that is currently published irregularly and sometimes suffers from a lack of material to publish. Both the Society and HAN should therefore benefit by an affiliation. Tim Wyatt is the HAN editor, and there are regional representatives who are responsible for feeding material to the newsletter. Themed newsletters have been well supported in the past.

It was agreed that:

- ISSHA should become affiliated with HAN.
- HAN would appear regularly (even if relatively “thin”), i.e. at least three times a year.
- For 2004, the production deadlines would be end April, end August, end December.
- Suggestions for themes should go to Jane, who will pass them on to Tim.
- Each member of the Committee will solicit two articles for HAN or write an article themselves.
- HAN will include a regular ISSHA section (up to four pages), to contain:
 - President’s message
 - Society announcements (from the Secretary)
 - Invitation to students for thesis titles and abstracts; not earlier than 2003 (for website/HAN)
 - Invitation for website links (for website)
 - Invitation for bibliographies (for website)
 - Invitation for job advertisements (for website)
 - Information on elections
 - Reports from Committee Chairs
 - Reports/updates from Special Projects
 - Information on how to join the Society

Action Items for HAN:

- Jane to contact Tim to update him on these initiatives.
- Committee members to send material for the ISSHA section to Henrik, with a Cc to Jane. Deadline = 20 April.

Conference Proceedings: There has been uneven production of proceedings volumes in the past, with the extreme in Tasmania of two outputs (a book and a journal volume). We must ensure that the contributions be of highest quality possible. Since 1995, proceedings have been published by, or co-published with, the IOC. This has ensured a wide distribution of the proceedings and that extra copies are produced (for ongoing availability) and that a PDF file is

made available. The format for the Cape Town conference proceedings has already been decided (a volume of the African Journal of Marine Science). IOC will co-publish.

It was agreed that:

- Proceedings should be administered through the Publications Committee of the Society.
- The editorial team for the proceedings should be appointed by the Committee but will normally be lead by the local organizer.
- The proceedings should contain papers of limited page length that are peer reviewed (as for past proceedings); ISSHA membership could be a source of reviewers.
- A copy editor could be paid out of the conference budget.
- Individual authors should have the option to pay for any colour images or graphs.
- Publication should be of low cost to allow maximum accessibility.
- Cost of the proceedings will be included in the registration for the conference; further copies will be sold at cost recovery.
- Proceedings should be published in collaboration with the IOC (although one Council member argued that the proceedings should be published by a commercial company, e.g. Elsevier).

Action Items for Conference Proceedings:

- Jane to contact Grant Pitcher regarding any support we can offer for the Cape Town XI HAB Conference.
- Henrik to investigate registering the Society in order to allow the proceedings to have an ISBN number.

Journal: A journal (Harmful Algae) already exists for the field, so it is not an option to start a new journal. Harmful Algae is published by Elsevier, and its Editors-in-Chief are Sandy Shumway and Ted Smayda. Adriana Zingone is an Associate Editor and 11 other ISSHA Council members are on the Editorial Advisory Board; thus, 13 Council members (out of 32 Editorial Board members) are part of the editorial process of this journal. Discussions were held regarding the advantages and disadvantages of the Society affiliating to Harmful Algae. If we do affiliate to the journal, there must be benefits to members.

It was agreed that:

- The Society should seek affiliation to the journal.
- The Society should seek reduction in journal subscription for ISSHA members.

Action Items for the Journal:

- Jane and Allan to contact Sandy, Ted and Elsevier to explore the issues noted above.

ISSHA Website: It is essential to recruit material for the website and to turn it into a valuable service to members. Much of the same material published in HAN could first be included in the website, but earlier and in more detail. Open access to the membership list is an issue for some people. This could be resolved by using password protection or by Java script that protects e-mail addresses from being scavenged, as discussed above (Section 5).

It was agreed that:

- Council should record its thanks to Nancy Lewis for all her work on the website.
- Stephen should continue acting as “Website Editor” (to provide and collect website content and to help organize the website), in collaboration with Nancy.
- The linking function of the website was extremely valuable and should be widened; further links would be invited from ISSHA members.
- There should be an element of quality control of these links; this will be provided by members of the Publications Committee acting as reviewers.
- The visibility of ISSHA would be improved by getting the ISSHA logo on appropriate websites known to committee members.
- Nominations for a new ISSHA logo should be solicited.
- Special projects under construction (e.g. HAB-MAP) could be password protected, for access by members only; once completed these would be placed on open access.
- Thesis titles (in their original language), abstracts (in English) and any links will be placed on website; students will be invited to submit these to Stephen or Nancy.
- Bibliographies will be placed on website; members will be invited to submit these.
- Job advertisements will be placed for appropriate periods on the website.
- The website could include Members’ News (personal profiles, changes in jobs, etc.).
- The website should have a greater content of toxin chemistry, epidemiology, public health issues, remote sensing, and monitoring programs.

Action Items for the Website:

- Stephen to investigate with Judy Kleindinst the mechanism for preventing e-mail addresses being “harvested” from the website.
- Stephen to explore with Nancy the possibility of password protection to the membership list and any other web pages.
- Stephen to explore the technology for linking ProCite and Endnotes bibliographies to the ISSHA website.
- Stephen to ask Nancy to place a counter back on the website.
- Each committee member to send 2 – 3 favourite websites to Stephen, in order to improve the linking on the site.
- Each committee member to ask webmasters to make a link to the ISSHA website.
- Stephen to send each Council member a small ISSHA logo to include with the link.
- Each committee member to solicit bibliographies to include on the ISSHA website; this could also be done via HAN.
- Allan to solicit chemists to provide web content and links related to toxin chemistry.
- Pat and Adriana to send Stephen HAB-MAPs, when ready, for posting on the website.

Special Publications: It was considered premature to consider these in detail at present, but as recommendations come from the special projects committee these will be taken forward.

11. *Ad hoc* Committee on Special Projects

Co-chairs: Henrik Enevoldsen, Pat Tester, Adriana Zingone

These are projects undertaken by ISSHA members and relate to HAB issues under Article 5 of the Statutes (Aims and Objectives; “support and implement research projects and programs linked to the study of harmful algae” and “encourage the participation and training of students in the study of harmful algae”). Below, are discussions led by those who have ongoing and new special projects. The *ad hoc* Committee is open to other special projects, as they arise.

HAB-MAP: This is an initiative begun by ISSHA in 2001, to compile regional summaries of the occurrence of toxic and ichthyotoxic marine microalgae, for 11 areas of the world. Experts have been contacted, and maps are underway for Mediterranean waters (Adriana Zingone) and from the east coast of Florida through the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean to Argentina (Pat Tester). These project leaders met during the Council meeting to standardize their maps (e.g. to take into account the HAE-DAT format) and to try to find common parameters for their databases. Pat Tester and Adriana Zingone provided the following information on the HAB-MAP project:

Background: Through a series of International Conferences on HABs, a relatively informal mapping of the occurrence of toxicity syndromes caused by microalgae was initiated (Lund 1989, Rhode Island 1991, Nantes 1993, etc.). These maps have been used repeatedly in many a context and it has become clear that it would be very desirable for the scientific and managerial community to have such maps, where each record could be tracked and associated to a reference. The idea for these regional summaries was finally formulated at an Executive meeting of ISSHA in St. Petersburg in February 2001. During the Xth International Conference on Harmful Algae in St. Pete Beach (Florida), a meeting took place with the editors of HAB-MAP (Henrik Enevoldsen and Adriana Zingone), and a number of editors of the regional maps. During the meeting, a restricted list of ca. 40 species was agreed on.

Objective: To provide easy access to a series of GIS maps containing the worldwide occurrences of toxins (ASP, AZP, CFP, DSP, NSP, PSP, yessotoxins, spirolides), fish kills, and the main causative species, plus verified references for each record.

Expected output: A CD-ROM publication entitled “HAB-MAP - the ISSHA Regional HAB Summaries”, to be published by the IOC of UNESCO (and possibly other suitable partners). HAB-MAP will consist of a map for each of the selected species, syndromes and effects. The system will allow for the indication of the potentially harmful species, if toxins were detected, and if there were harmful effects. Data can also be combined in one map as required. Each record on a map will be click-able to access information on the reference(s).

Inputs for HAB-MAP:

- Species, effects, toxins (ASP, AZP, CFP, DSP, NSP, PSP, yessotoxins, spirolides, ichthyotoxins).
- Specific times of events, duration of events, locations with coordinates, if possible.
- Maximum cell counts and max chl a, if possible by event, temperature, salinity, pH, DO.
- Ranges, or whatever environmental data may be available.

- What databases exist and who to contact; the HAB-BIB is one available tool for regional reference searches by use of the ASFA regional codes (see <http://ioc.unesco.org/hab/HAB-BIB.htm>).
- References, including the grey literature and other websites.

Action items:

- Henrik to define a format for the inputs (either Excel files or HAE-DAT questionnaires).
- Henrik and Adriana to contact the editors of the regional summaries to provide them with updated instructions on format and content.
- Pat and Adriana to send Stephen the HAB-MAPs, when completed, for posting on the ISSHA website (restricted access).

Support Letter for a Competence Centre for the Taxonomy of Recent Dinoflagellates: Allen Cembella proposed that the ISSHA Council write a letter in support of a planned Competence Centre for the Taxonomy of recent Dinoflagellates at the Senckenberg Museum, Germany, as communicated by Malte Elbrächter. It was agreed that ISSHA would back this proposal.

There is also a need to write a statement of concern, urging the return to developing competence on organismal biology and systematics, in light of a recent trend toward emphasising molecular biology. Knowledge of organisms and how they respond to their environment is essential for understanding marine biodiversity, and ultimately HABs.

Action items:

- Allan, with assistance of Jane and Stephen, to draft a letter of support for the Competence Centre for the Taxonomy of Recent Dinoflagellates.
- Allan, with assistance of Jane, to draft a conceptual page on the need to support organismal biology.

Support for Training Courses: The Council indicated that “ISSHA supports and encourages reputable training courses, including those organized by IOC and others”. Each request for support will be reviewed individually, and then the support statement will be posted on the ISSHA website and in HAN. At present, ISSHA should simply support existing training courses, and look for gaps in training. Later on, it may organize its own courses and write manuals, if necessary.

Suggested Improvements for ISSHA, from Spanish-speaking Countries: Beatriz Reguera took the initiative of sending an informal questionnaire to Spanish-speaking colleagues. It asked the following questions:

- What do you think of ISSHA?
- What is missing to turn ISSHA into an attractive Society?
- If you are not still a member, what new activities should ISSHA include to make you reconsider becoming a member?

Fourteen experts answered the circular sent to Latin American institutions. Three of them had never heard of ISSHA. In some other cases, there seemed to be confusion between ISSHA and the IOC-HAB Programme, especially relating to the activities carried out through the IOC Science and Communication Centres on Harmful Algae (Copenhagen and Vigo). Responses were received from the following countries: Argentina (1), Brazil (1), Chile (1), Colombia (1), Cuba (2), El Salvador (1), Mexico (3), Portugal (1), Peru (1), Spain (2).

A general complaint was that ISSHA needed more dissemination efforts and more interaction among its members. A couple of experts expressed the view that ISSHA lacked a structure, a programme and an organization that would allow for systematic reports of ongoing activities. They indicated that this should not be a problem these days *via* the Internet, a system that has allowed an excellent communication among HAB experts within the regional IOC group on Harmful Algae in South America (IOC-FANSA). Some expressed the view that ISSHA had not reached those scientists most in need from developing countries, and they suggested it was a Society for “an elite of famous scientists”. One previous member indicated that he had not renewed his annual fee due to a “lack of feedback”. Another member complimented the ISSHA website, but said that she was able to benefit from it without becoming an ISSHA member. Two experts complained about the complicated system to pay the annual membership fees.

Suggestions for future activities/improvements included:

- Inform members about scientific and technological advances in this field and receive contributions of results from the members.
- Have a directory of experts, organized by their expertise in an specific taxon of harmful algae (note: this is already available by the IOC at <http://ioc.unesco.org/hab/data1.htm#1>)
- Promote organization of training courses, specially those by Internet (e-learning)
- Disseminate recently defended PhD theses, announcements for jobs, grants, exchanges, etc.
- Raise funds that would allow participation of experts from developing countries, who have good results to present but no economic possibilities to attend international conferences.
- Produce some kind of hard copy leaflet reporting activities and announcements.
- Participate in international fora, such as GloBallast (<http://globallast.imo.org/>), to make members feel that there are fighting for a common cause.
- Make a glossary of HAB terms in both English and Spanish.

Aquatic Food Programme: Torger Børresen (tb@dfu.min.dk) and Roland Cormier (roland.cormier@afpportal.org) were invited to present the Food and Agriculture Organization’s new initiative, the Aquatic Food Programme (AFP). Roland was not able to attend, but Torger gave the presentation. The AFP is being established to generate a peer-reviewed aquatic food safety and quality multidisciplinary knowledge base that would support processing industries and member countries regarding the safety and quality of food produced from aquatic species. Six food-related special topics (case studies) have been chosen to begin the Programme: tuna, shrimp, bivalves, *Vibrio*, Salmonella, and biotoxins.

Case Study Project Teams will be chosen to establish the scope of information to be collected on each topic and to ensure that it is based on valid scientific facts and pertinent published

knowledge. An example of how this knowledge base may be used is to conduct risk analysis in the development of food safety objectives and standards in relation to Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) systems. A “food chain approach” is taken to develop food safety and quality control systems along the entire food chain from “sea to table”. Biotoxins fit into the Ecosystem box of the food chain approach to integrated risk management.

Torger asked the ISSHA Council for nominations of qualified HAB scientists who would be willing to take part, if chosen by the FAO, in the Biotoxins Case Study. This project team would work for one year to identify and focus already existing pertinent knowledge on biotoxins in relation to food safety. The FAO would provide funding to support travel expenses to attend meetings. The Council proposed 10 names of scientists for consideration by the FAO; these scientists have a broad knowledge in the field of HABs and include experts in the biology and chemistry of the major biotoxin groups.

Action item:

- Karen to send the names, e-mail addresses and areas of expertise of the 10 nominations to Torger, for consideration by the FAO.

12. Benefits of Being a Member of ISSHA; a Summary of Discussions

Throughout the three-day meeting, participants brought up various benefits of being a member of ISSHA. The overall benefit is to be in a position to promote the study of harmful algae by implementing the objectives of the Society, as outlined in Article 5 of the Statutes. More specifically, the membership benefits discussed are summarized, below:

- Receive a registration discount for the International Conferences on HABs.
- Purchase inexpensive proceedings of the International Conferences on HABs, which will be under the editorship of ISSHA members and published by the IOC.
- Be a part of a Society that will:
 - sponsor the International Conferences on HABs
 - support student travel to the International Conferences on HABs
 - write letters of support for specific needs of HAB researchers
 - foster specific research directions
 - identify special topics to be addressed
 - implement special projects
 - promote public awareness of the social, economic and ecological effects caused by harmful algae
 - organize “virtual conferences” on the Internet
 - support the implementation of training courses and workshops that will advance the needs of Society members
 - offer achievement awards in the field of harmful alga research
- Access information on the ISSHA website, including:
 - Society News and Activities
 - Membership List
 - links to HAB websites, bibliographies and conference announcements
 - thesis titles and abstracts (with the appropriate links)

- information on ISSHA Special Projects (e.g. HAB-MAP)
- scientific clearing house for instruments and samples

Some of the above website content is proposed to be under password protection, for members only. In particular, work in progress within ISSHA Special Projects will be password protected, so that all members may contribute comments and information. This will also give members a chance to actively collaborate and to see the information in advance. An overall balance must be struck between open access to the interested public, as a resource, and maintaining information as a specific benefit to members.

- Use the ISSHA Mailing List Server to discuss Society issues, promote Society activities, and advertise available grants and job openings. Send messages to the list using issha@whoi.edu; a web page for users of the list is set up at the following URL: <http://www.whoi.edu/mailman/listinfo/issha>.
- Access information from and provide information to a special ISSHA section of Harmful Algae News, an IOC publication distributed to over 2000 people worldwide.
- Propose and support regional initiatives for HAB research, with the backing of the Society.
- Receive a subscription discount to the Elsevier journal Harmful Algae (only a proposal for discussion, at this point).

During the meeting, it was emphasized that being an ISSHA member means not only that one can be a recipient of Society benefits, but also that the member has a responsibility to be a contributor of constructive ideas that will further the goals of the Society. Input from the membership is therefore sought, in order to maintain a viable Society.

The meeting was adjourned at 17:30 h, on 3 April 2004.

Submitted by Stephen Bates, ISSHA Secretary.