

Editorial

FECS Working Party has become a FECS Division on Chemistry and the Environment

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The FECS Working Party on Chemistry and the Environment and the association with ESPR was presented last year.¹ Since that time much has happened. The most important being that our expressed goal for 1998 – the promotion of the Working Party to be a FECS Division – was finally approved by the General Assembly of the Federation of European Chemical Societies (FECS) held in Istanbul, Turkey, 17-18 September 1998.

At present FECS has 5 Divisions in the following topics²:

- Analytical Chemistry
- Chemical Education
- Food Chemistry
- Chemistry and the Environment
- Organometallic Chemistry

Establishment of a FECS Division requires the support of at least twenty national chemical societies. Presently, the Division on Chemistry and the Environment has 29 members from 27 countries, that is 8 more members than last year. The new members are from Germany, Switzerland, Cyprus, Russia, Croatia, Israel, the Czech Republic, and most recently Sweden. We hope to have at least one more member during 1999.

The first meeting of the Division with twelve members attending took place in Cagliari, Sardinia, on 17 October following the joint Italian Chemical Society/EU Conference on "Water in the Mediterranean Area". A brief report of the conference will appear shortly in ESPR.³

The 6th FECS Conference on Chemistry and the Environment, subtitled Atmospheric Chemistry and Air Pollution, took place in Copenhagen 26-28 August, 1998. It was a great success with a fine scientific programme and some 250 delegates attending. Full abstracts of the conference papers have been published in a special issue of ESPR.⁴

The 7th FECS Conference on Chemistry and the Environment, subtitled "Trace Metal Speciation in the Aquatic Environment", is scheduled for August 27-30, 2000 in Porto, Portugal. The first announcement will be circulated in January.⁵

The Division and its members are also involved in organisation of smaller scientific meetings and workshops. For instance, the Division co-sponsors the First International Symposium on Atmospheric Reactive Substances to be held in Bayreuth, Germany, on 14-16 April 1999.

The Division initiates co-operation with other organisations in the field such as the IUPAC Division of Chemistry and the Environment, the Division of Environmental Chemistry in the American Chemical Society, and the Working Group on Chemistry in the Environment of the European Chemistry Thematic Network (ECTN). This network is *inter alia* discussing curriculum content for environmental chemistry education.

The new FECS Division is considering formation of working groups on topics such as water chemistry, atmospheric chemistry and education in environmental chemistry.

The role of the Division in research co-ordination will be of increasing importance, and many Division members have already agreed to assist environmental chemistry research groups find partners for the 5th Framework Programme. We are particularly interested in advancing research in the smaller member countries, candidate EU member states and Eastern Europe generally. In that connection it could be mentioned that the Division has members from for instance Cyprus, Estonia, Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovenia.

The FECS Division has been asked by the European Environment Agency to spearhead a European equivalent of the American Presidential Green Chemistry Challenge Awards Program. The intention is to have a award scheme ready for year 2000. Such a Green Chemistry Award could also improve the image of chemistry.

¹ Editorial. ESPR - Environ. Sci. & Pollut. Res. 4 (3) 121-122 (1997)

² FECS homepage: <http://www.chemsoc/gateway/fecs.htm>

³ ESPR – Environ. Sci. & Pollut. Res. 6 (1999)

⁴ ESPR – Environ. Sci. & Pollut. Res. 5 (3) (1998)

⁵ <http://www.ecomed.de/naturw/bereiche/titel/espr/welcome.htm>