

Conference Call

The discussion during the symposium was very active, and many participants rated the symposium and its organization highly, particularly for providing a high-level platform for exchanging ideas related to novel materials and synthesis.

Of course, fun was also to be had. Yuping Wu's group from the Laboratory for New Energy and Materials organized a variety of events for the participants, including an acrobat performance, a night boating tour along the Pujiang River, and a tour of Shanghai.

The NMS Organizing Committee has decided to hold this symposium biennially in Shanghai; accordingly, the next Shanghai event (NMS-V and FCFP-XIX) will be held 18–22 October 2009. This year's conference, NMS-IV and FCFP-XVIII will be held at Jiangsu University at the beautiful port city of Zhenjiang, near Nanjing, on 15–18 October 2008.

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Public Health Applications of Human Biomonitoring

by Paul Erhardt

The **Public Health Applications of Human Biomonitoring** international workshop was sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA). It took place 24–25 September 2007 at the EPA Main Campus Auditorium in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, in the United States. Nearly 200 participants attended from government, academia, and industry, representing the United States, Canada, Europe, and Japan. Paul Erhardt, a member of the Chemistry and Human Health Division of IUPAC, represented IUPAC, standing in for President Bryan Henry who was unable to attend. As part of a plenary roundtable session pertaining to international perspectives on human biomonitoring, Erhardt delivered a lecture entitled "Challenges Faced in Less Industrialized Regions of the World," which described IUPAC and some of its activities.

Other plenary sessions discussed various initiatives that are being undertaken across Europe and within the United States, Canada, and Japan and addressed specific topics such as children's health. Technical sessions were run in parallel, with topics ranging from the application of biomonitoring data to usefully characterize and prioritize certain vulnerable populations, to discussions on environmental carcinogens within the session on scientific advances in the interpretation of biomonitoring data. Although considerable focus was directed toward metals, a broad range of other environmental chemical contaminants were also covered. Overall, a high level of scientific quality was conveyed by the various technical presenters, who took a very open approach toward engaging in discussions as to how to most appropriately implement their findings (if they were ready to be implemented at all).

It is clear that IUPAC can play a useful role in this area by continuing our ongoing efforts to harmonize analytical measurements in terms of definitions and standards, particularly at the clinical level. It may also be worthwhile for us to consider serving as a central hub to enhance the internationalization of the numerous national and European initiatives. Such an effort might be best contemplated by IUPAC's Division on Chemistry and the Environment. In this regard, it can be noted that while certain of the IUPAC Chemistry and Human Health Division's Subcommittees have interests in chemical toxicology and clinical chemistry measurements in general, our interests in biomonitoring extend less toward environmental issues and more toward the identification of biomarkers that are useful for the development of new diagnostic and therapeutic agents to treat human disease while avoiding toxicity.

For more information about the meeting, including access to the presentations made during the meeting, please visit the EPA website at http://es.epa.gov/ncer/publications/meetings/09_25_07.

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