



## Minutes of the ISDB 2005 Board Meeting Sydney, Australia - September 6, 2005

The International SDB Board Meeting was held at the Darling Harbour Convention Center during the 2005 ISDB Congress held in Sydney, Australia.

Items on the agenda were:

- 1) **Report from the ISDB Officers** on their activities and financial outlays since the Kyoto meeting held in 2001.
- 2) **Future activities.**
- 3) **Site of next ISDB Congress in 2009.**
- 4) **Election of new ISDB Officers:** President, International Secretary, Secretary-Treasurer, Business Manager and Board Members representing paying Societies.
- 5) **Improving international relations between Developmental Biologists**, which is the main purpose of ISDB. This discussion took place during the ISDB General Assembly, on the same afternoon, after the Harrison Prize Lecture.

### Delegates in attendance were:

APDBN	Masatoshi Takeichi	takeichi@cdb.riken.jp
	Douglas Sipp	sipp@cdb.riken.go.jp
Australia SDB	Graham Lieschke	graham.lieschke@ludwig.edu.au
	Rob Saint	robert.saint@anu.edu.au
Belgium SDB	Danny Huylebroeck	danny.huylebroeck@med.kuleuven.be
China	Xiao Yang	mengam@mail.tsinghua.edu.cn
Finland SDB	Elina Järvinen	eajarvin@mappi.helsinki.fi
France SDB	Christine Thisse	thisse@igbmc.u-strasbg.fr
Germany SDB (Past ISDB Secretary)	Herbert Jäckle	hjaeckl@gwdg.de
Holland & ISDB Secretary	Ben Scheres	b.scheres@bio.uu.nl
Hong Kong SDB	Kathy Cheah	hrmbdkc@hkusua.hku.hk
India SDB	Vijay Raghavan	vijay@ncbs.res.in

Iran	Ali Amini	aamini@razi.ac.ir
Japan SDB	Makoto Asashima	asashi@bio.c.u-tokyo.ac.jp
LASDB and MOD	Claudio Stern	c.stern@ucl.ac.uk
New Zealand SDB	Phil Crosier	ps.crosier@auckland.ac.nz
SDB (USA) President-Elect	Gail Martin	gmartin@itsa.ucsf.edu
President	Elliot Meycrowitz	meycrowitz@its.caltech.edu
Singapore	Karuna Sampath	karuna@tll.org.sg
South Korea SDB	Kunsoo Rhee	rheek@snu.ac.kr
Switzerland (Past ISDB President)	Walter Gehring	walter.gehring@unibas.ch
Taiwan	Henry Sun	mbyhsun@ccvax.sinica.edu.tw
UK SDB	Matthew Freeman	mf1@mrc-lmb.cam.ac.uk
	Nancy Papalopulu	np209@cam.ac.uk
ISDB Past President	John Gurdon	j.gurdon@gurdon.cam.ac.uk
ISDB Business Manager	Paul van der Saag	paul@niob.knaw.nl
ISDB President	Eddy De Robertis	ederobertis@mednet.ucla.edu
Elsevier	Steve Watson	S.Watson@elsevier.nl

Dr. De Robertis thanked the participants for attending and introduced Drs. Ben Scheres (ISDB International Secretary) and Paul van der Saag (Business Manager).

**1) Report of Activities.** Attendees were presented with a list of all the expenditures incurred during the present administration. Dr. De Robertis explained that this is required by the By-Laws and is the only time at which the activities of the executive committee come under scrutiny. He emphasized the importance that all financial outlays be approved by the Board and later on by the General Assembly. These expenditures were for:

a) **First Latin America SDB Meeting, Jan. 15-18, 2003, Valle Nevado, Chile.** The funds provided by ISDB were used to provide local lodging for a group of 10 graduate students (3 from Argentina, 2 from Brazil, 2 from Chile, 1 from Venezuela and 1 from Mexico) selected by the organizers. Dr. Stern explained that this initial

contribution to LA-SDB had a critical effect in the creation of this important regional society.

- b) **Joint SDB/ISDB Meeting, July 30-August 2, 2003, Boston, USA.** Dr. De Robertis explained that ISDB provided outside speakers for a Symposium and advertised the meeting widely among our constituent societies. He thanked Drs. Brigid Hogan, Ruth Lehman and Douglas Melton for making this possible. The best consequence was that an ISDB Board Meeting could be convened, which helped jump-start the activities of the society. There were about 200 posters from non-USA scientists at the Boston Meeting.
- c) **BSDB/ISDB Meeting, March 15-17, 2004, Warwick, UK.** ISDB helped advertise the meeting among member societies and financed outside speakers chosen by the BSDB. This had a highly beneficial consequence in that the BSDB General Assembly, at the request of the outgoing Chair Phillip Ingham, voted to join ISDB as a paying member for the first time. In addition, the possibility of organizing the 2009 Congress came up in discussion with incoming BSDB Chair Matthew Freeman and Meetings Secretary Nancy Papalopulu.
- d) **ISDB Congress, September 3-7, 2005, Sydney, Australia.** The Congress is the most important activity of ISDB. Dr. De Robertis thanked the Scientific Committee, formed by Drs. Richard Harvey, Sally Dunwoodie and Peter Currie for their wonderful work in putting together what was a superb Congress. The ISDB Congress is expected to be the premier Developmental Biology meeting and indeed this was the case. Several delegates joined in laudatory comments about Richard Harvey and his team.
- e) **Asian-Pacific Developmental Biology Network.** Dr. Robert Saint reported on the positive impact the AP-DBN has already had in the scientific activities of this important region. The Network was established by Dr. Masatoshi Takeichi at the request of ISDB, and had its first large-scale meeting concomitantly with the Sydney Congress. ISDB contributed start-up funds towards the new initiative used in part to fund Poster Prizes (named Mechanisms of Development/Elsevier/ISDB) for graduate students and postdocs of the region attending the Sydney Congress. It is hoped that this will set a valuable precedent for future meetings of developmental biologists in the Asian-Pacific region.
- f) **Second LA-SDB Meeting, May 4-7, 2005, Guaruyá, Sao Paulo.** Funds for this meeting, which firmly established this regional society, were used to finance the

attendance of the winner of the Mexican SDB Graduate Student Poster Prize (awarded to Ana Cepeda) and the lodging of 12 Latin American graduate students. These were selected among applicants by a committee composed of Drs. Roberto Mayor, Claudio Stern and Eddy De Robertis.

- g) **Harrison Prize 2005.** International Secretary Ben Scheres outlined the procedure by which the Harrison Prize was awarded. Suitable candidates were requested from all member societies and other members of the community such as past ISDB officers. Thirteen nominations were received. An international committee of eight jurors then voted by email. The winner was Dr. Elliot Meyerowitz. The prize consists of US\$ 5,000. The travel expenses of Dr. Elliot Meyerowitz will also be reimbursed by ISDB after the Congress.

The total cost of these activities was US\$ 69,286. The personal travel of ISDB Executive Officers to these meetings was paid from their own personal grants, not from funds donated by ISDB.

The Board, and later the General Assembly, approved of this report by the Executive Officers. The minutes of the Boston ISDB Meeting were also approved. Drs. De Robertis and Scheres explained that all financial decisions had been taken jointly as required by the By-Laws of ISDB.

2) **Future Activities.** The signing of a formal Society Sponsorship Agreement with Elsevier will allow in future an annual income for ISDB activities of US\$ 20,000 a year. Steven Watson from Elsevier reported that this agreement would last for a minimum of four years (with 1½ elapsed already) and would be renewable every two years after that. He explained that this contract was a good example of the partnership between the scientific publisher Elsevier and the scientific community. He further said that Elsevier was very satisfied with the new agreement and that continuation was expected; ISDB can look forward to a stable financial future. Dr. Claudio Stern, speaking on behalf of the Managing Editors expressed that Mechanisms of Development and Gene Expression Patterns, as the Official Journals of ISDB were very happy to contribute to the betterment of the scientific community, but this was a two-way street and that Developmental Biologists should submit good papers to MOD in order to improve the journal. Similar sentiments were presented by Dr. Stern during the closing ceremonies of the Congress.

The ISDB is supported by contributions from member societies, which contribute US\$ 3 for each of the first 100 members and US\$ 2 for each subsequent member. Dr.

De Robertis explained that at present the Japan SDB, British SDB, and Australian SDB paid their dues. SDB, our largest Society, has provided a grant of US\$ 5,000 per annum for three years but not joined formally. Dr. Meyerowitz, President of SDB said that the matter of joining formally would be brought up again to the SDB Board in December 2005. In the meantime SDB would abstain from voting at the Board Meeting. Finland, France, India, Belgium and South Korea SDBs promised to join as paying members.

Dr. Herbert Jäckle of the German SDB said that Germany was happy to pay their dues but this had not been practicable due to difficulties in obtaining an invoice from ISDB. Dr. De Robertis responded that with the election of a Secretary-Treasurer the obstacles to National SDB contributions would be lessened. In general, the atmosphere was one of enthusiasm as to joining as dues-paying members. Dr. De Robertis explained that it was ISDB policy not to exclude anyone. The contributing ISDB National SDBs will be rewarded in that they will be able to name a person to the SDB Board. These Board Members, as described in the By-Laws, will represent each society in ISDB and will be consulted by the Executive Officers in an Ad-Hoc basis. He then asked paying societies to nominate their Board Members. Only the Australian Society had decided on one, Dr. Robert Saint which was appointed to the Board. It was then decided that the other Board Members named by the contributing societies would be appointed once the new ISDB International Secretary and Secretary-Treasurer were in place.

**3) Selection of the ISDB 2009 Congress site.** Two competing proposals, Edinburgh and Helsinki, were received from the BSDB and FSDB. Dr. De Robertis proposed that in this and the subsequent votes of the Board, the AP-DBN (including China, Singapore and Taiwan) and LA-SDB would have one vote each, as well as all countries with an SDB represented at the meeting (Australia, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Holland, India, Japan, LA-SDB, New Zealand, Switzerland and UK). Drs. John Gurdon (ISDB Past-President) and Paul van der Saag (ISDB Business Manager), and Ali Amini (a Professor from Iran) would not vote. The ISDB President would vote only in case of a tie.

The merits of the Edinburgh site were presented by Dr. Matthew Freeman, and those of Helsinki by Dr. Elina Järvinen. A vote was taken and the majority decided that the next ISDB Congress will be hosted by BSDB, September 6-10, 2009, in Edinburgh. This date was fixed so that Congress delegates will start arriving in Edinburgh in time for the spectacular fireworks that mark the closure of the Edinburgh Summer Arts Festival. It was agreed that the ISDB would contribute US\$ 30,000 as seed money at the earliest possible opportunity.

It was then discussed whether the excellent proposal by Finland should be adopted as the site for the 2013 Congress. Discussion indicated that such a move would be premature. Dr. De Robertis remarked on the excellent scientific committee proposed by Finland and suggested that Finland should bring up the proposal again once the new Officers are in place.

2007 Pan-American SDB Congress. A joint meeting between the LA-SDB and the SDB will take place in Cancun, Mexico. Dr. Gail Martin, who will be organizing the meeting, explained that preparations are on track and that this meeting will replace the Annual SDB Meeting in 2007. Cancun is a prime location on the Caribbean, located about two hours away by bus from the famed Mayan pyramids of Chichen-Itzá. Dr. De Robertis explained the great importance of this meeting for the Americas, and requested that ISDB support the LA-SDB, or local Mexican SDB organizers, with a total of US\$ 10,000 in seed money. This request was approved.

**4) Election of New SDB Officers.** All National SDBs were asked to submit names of candidates in emails previous to the Board Meeting. Nominations were collected by the International Secretary Ben Scheres. The posts of President and Secretary-Treasurer were contested, but those of International Secretary and Business Manager were not. After discussion, election took place and the results determined that the next ISDB Executive Officers shall be:

- 1) ISDB President: Prof. Masatoshi Takeichi. Director, RIKEN Kobe Center of Developmental Biology, Japan (takeichi@cdb.riken.jp).
- 2) Secretary: Dr. Sarah Hake. University of California, Berkeley, USA (maizesh@nature.berkeley.edu).
- 3) Secretary-Treasurer: Prof. Jonathan Slack. University of Bath, UK (bssjmws@bath.ac.uk).

At the General Assembly, Dr. Paul van der Saag was renewed in the post of Business Manager for four years.

**5) Improving international relations.** This important matter was discussed during the General Assembly. Dr. De Robertis expressed the opinion that in future a principal goal of ISDB should be to promote the creation of National Societies of Developmental Biology in as many countries as humanly possible. When not possible, then ISDB

should continue building regional SDBs, which have proven very successful in the case of AP-DBN and LA-SDB.

Dr. Rob Saint commented on the excellent impact of AP-DBN. One concrete consequence has been the formation of a Hong-Kong SDB. One of the most desirable goals for ISDB would be the creation of an SDB in China itself. Dr. Vijay Raghavan related how India has an SDB that holds annual meetings and would be interested in international collaborations.

The difficulties encountered in incorporating Eastern European countries were discussed. Dr. Roberto Di Lauro suggested that EMBO, through Dr. Frank Gannon, may have useful contacts. Dr. Floriana Bulić-Jakuš (Univ. of Zagreb) expressed there would be interest in Croatia in forming an SDB. Prof. Ali Amini (Iran) expressed that there is great interest in the Islamic world in joining in international activities. The African continent was also mentioned as a place to consider in future.

**Conclusions.** While aware of the challenges lying ahead, closing comments indicated enthusiasm for the future of international exchanges between developmental biologists. Dr. De Robertis thanked all delegates for coming and the meeting was adjourned.

These Minutes were prepared by Eddy De Robertis and Ben Scheres.