

Message from the President



Dear members of GA,

Publication of the second newsletter of 2014 reminds us that we are already approaching the end of the year. Thus, it is time for looking back to events that took place during this year, and time to look ahead into 2015.

The 62nd Annual Congress of GA was a success. It attracted more than 600 scientists from over 40 countries to the historic city of Guimarães. An attractive program with excellent plenary lectures, numerous short lectures, and some 600 posters awaited us. Judging from the positive feedback I received from congress participants, the meeting was no doubt successful! I would like to express here my gratitude to Prof. Alberto Dias and his team for the organisation of the congress.

The abstracts of all presented contributions have been recently published in a Special Issue of our journal *Planta Medica*. To all of you who attended the congress, the abstract issue will serve as a highly useful reference. To those GA members who were not able to attend, I wish you all an inspiring reading, and new ideas that may come out of some of the data that were presented.

In 2015, the 63rd Annual Congress will be held in Budapest. Prof. Judith Hohmann and her organizing team are busy with preparing the conference. Preliminary information on the congress is already available on the congress website, and more details are soon to follow. I can assure you that we will, once more, enjoy a series of captivating plenary lectures by distin-

guished speakers, and we again expect numerous contributed short lectures and posters of high quality. The venue is highly attractive given that Budapest is a major European capital with a rich history. Thus, I look to forward to see you in Budapest!

In this context I wanted to draw your attention to the awards that will be presented in 2015: The Egon Stahl Award in Silver, the Dr. Willmar Schwabe Research Scholarship, the *Planta Medica* Best Paper Award, and, last but not least, the Bionorica Phytoneering Award. Detailed information on awards is available on the GA website, and announcements will be soon published and distributed to all GA members. I invite you to apply, and I invite all senior scientists to either propose potential candidates, or to inform eligible scientists about these opportunities.

A few words on another point that is close to my heart: *Planta Medica*. The official journal of GA is one of the oldest journals in our field, and is well regarded in the scientific community. Important research papers and reviews related to medicinal plants and bioactive natural products were published in *Planta Medica* over the years of its existence. The journal publishes every year one or two thematic issues on topics that are of a broad interest to the natural products community. In 2014, for example, a Special Issue "Bioassays and Models, Guidelines and Recommendations for Testing" was published with Prof. Pia Vuorela, Helsinki, as Guest Editor. In eight contributions, internationally renowned scientists addressed a range of aspects that are pertinent for successful research on bioactive natural products. Despite all this, an official journal of a scientific society lives from publications submitted by its members, and original research papers indeed represent the most important contributions in *Planta Medica*. Therefore, I invite you all to contribute some of your best research to the journal! Citation analysis shows that excellent papers are well received and frequently cited. Help to further advance the reputation of our journal which should reflect the quality of science performed by GA members!

For the festive season I wish you personal happiness and success for the forthcoming 2015!

Matthias Hamburger, President of GA

NEWSLETTER



A Foundation of the Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research (GA)

A new foundation supporting research into all aspects of medicinal plants and natural products has been created by the Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research (GA) and is asking for your support.

Medicinal and natural product research is thriving all over the world. There is a considerable interest in this field of research especially from younger scientists. This is also an area of tremendous interest for the general public with new products offering opportunities for farmers, producers and retailers. However, there is a consistent and deepening lack of public funding particularly for projects which are at an early stage of development.

Our key goal is to support highly innovative and multidisciplinary research projects which will strengthen the academic basis of medicinal plant and natural product research and to nurture emerging research networks.

Specifically the Foundation will:

- Initiate scientific collaboration and the development of research networks
- Provide start-up funding for innovative projects
- Provide start-up funding for best in class junior research groups and their leaders.

The funds will initially be used for travel and equipment facilitating proof-of-concept projects. Your donation will help to foster innovation and research in the fields of medicinal plant and natural product research and you will benefit from tax concessions (depending on your tax status and the regulations in your country of residence).

The foundation will be managed by the chairman Prof. Dr. R. Bauer (Graz, Austria) together with Prof. Dr. M. Heinrich (London, UK), Prof. Dr. A. Hensel (Münster, Germany) and Dr. B. Roeder (Neumarkt, Germany).


Contributions can be made to:

Recipient: Foundation 'Plants for Health'
Bank: UniCredit Bank AG
Oberer Markt 42,
92318 Neumarkt, Germany
IBAN: DE26 7602 0070 0018 2195 90
BIC.: HYVEDEMM460

For further enquiries, please contact the Chairman of the Foundation Board, Prof. Rudolf Bauer (rudolf.bauer@uni-graz.at), the President of GA, Prof. Matthias Hamburger (Matthias.Hamburger@unibas.ch), or visit the website www.ga-online.org/plants-for-health.

On behalf of the many researchers in this field, thank you very much in advance for your support.

Notes from the Society



Editorial remark

All contributions for the GA-Newsletter are welcome.

Deadline for submission is fixed to May 25th 2015.

Please send all contributions by e-mail:
Prof. Dr. A. Hensel
University of Münster,
Institute for Pharmaceutical Biology and Phytochemistry,
Corrensstrasse 48,
D-48149 Münster, Germany
ahensel@uni-muenster.de



The GA executive council and the advisory board: many discussions during the last meeting in August 2014 during our Portugal conference



Honorary award for Prof. Dr. G. Franz

Prof. Dr. Gerhard Franz, University of Regensburg, Germany, has been announced to act as Honorary President of the Special Committee of World Federation of Chinese Medicine Societies (WFCMS 2014) and obtained the Honorary Membership of the Good Practice in Traditional Medicine Research Association (GP-TCM 2014). The official appointment was communicated at the Conference in Nanjin, China, at July 19th 2014.

GA congratulates!



Some Data from the Membership Data Base

New GA members

Since May 2014 the following 75 members have joined our Society. GA warmly welcomes all new members and hopes that the Society may get an international platform for many scientific and personal contacts.

Dr. Yasmin **Abdel-Latif**, Egypt; Fauziah **Abdullah**, Malaysia; Dr. Abiodun **Adebayo**, Nigeria; Prof. Nektarios **Aliigiannis**, Greece; Daniel **Ambe**, Nigeria; Adnan **Amin**, Belgium; Dr. Aldo **Ammendola**, Germany; Prof. Reuben **Arowolo**, Nigeria; Dr. Fatma **Bassyouni**, Egypt; Dr. Sonali **Bhandari**, India; Dr. Eric **Boakye-Gyasi**, Ghana; Dr. Caroline **Cayrou**, United Kingdom; Elisabetta **Corradi**, Switzerland; Dr. Ewa **Dlugosz**, Poland; Dr. Raquel Regina **Duarte Moreira**, Brazil; Dr. Noureddine **El Aouad**, Spain; Dr. Walaa **El Kshak**, Egypt; Fayrouz **El Maddah**, Germany; Dr. Moha-

med **El Raey**, Egypt; Dr. Reham **Elsharawy**, Egypt; Dr. Yousef **Emamipoor**, Iran; Peter **Eze**, Nigeria; Dr. Wissam **Faour**, Lebanon; Dr. Bertha **Fenton Navarro**, Mexico; Dr. Maria D.P.T. **Gunawan-Puteri**, Indonesia; Dr. Ahmed **Hamed**, Egypt; Manal **Hamed**, Egypt; Dr. Amani **Hashim**, Egypt; Dr. Heba **Hassanein**, Egypt; Dr. Anna **Holefors**, Sweden; Luc **Holthof**, Belgium; Dr. Yusuf **Kachwala**, India; Jelena **Katanic**, Serbia; Dr. Ahsan Jamil **Kazi**, Malaysia; Parikshit **Khemka**, Nepal; Dr. Dimas **Kubmarawa**, Nigeria; Tatyana **Kustova**, Kazakhstan; Dr. Tatiana **Kuznetsova**, Sweden; Joana **Liberal**, Portugal; Dr. Marisa **Machado**, Portugal; Mahmoud **Malekzadeh**, Hungary; Dr. Frank **Marthe**, Germany; Diogo **Matias**, Portugal; Dr. Ana Claudia **Medeiros**, Brazil; Ms. Yasmine **Meghriche**, Algeria; Eunice **Mgbeahuruike**, Finland; Dr.

Vladimir **Mihailovic**, Serbia; Dr. Tarik **Mohamed**, Egypt; Dr. Hassan **Mohammed**, Nigeria; Dr. Safaa **Morsy**, Egypt; Phanankosi **Moyo**, South Africa; Rini **Muharini**, Germany; Dr. Omonike **Ogbole**, Nigeria; Anita **Parricchi**, Italy; Prof. Atanas **Pavlov**, Bulgaria; Johanna **Persson**, Sweden; Charlotte **Petit**, Switzerland; Dr. Daniel L. **Pouliquen**, France; Justine **Ramsayer**, Switzerland; Dr. Flavia **Santos**, Brazil; Dr. Carine **Smith**, South Africa; Dr. Maha **Soltan**, Egypt; Verena **Spiegler**, Germany; Dr. Konstantina **Stathopoulou**, Greece; Prof. Hanan **Taie**, Egypt; Nonye T. **Ujam**, Nigeria; Sampson D. **Umoh**, Nigeria; Philip F. **Uzor**, Nigeria; Dr. Ligia M. M. **Valente**, Brazil; Ana Catarina **Valle**, Brazil; Elisabet **Vikeved**, Sweden; Amisha **Vora**, India; Dr. Onder **Yumrutas**, Turkey; Dr. Dalia **Zend**, Egypt; Dr. Liping **Zheng**, China.

Egon-Stahl Award in Gold 2014 for Kurt Hostettmann



The Egon-Stahl-Award in Gold is the highest scientific honour of the Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research (GA). The award acknowledges the outstanding scientific lifetime achievements of an eminent scientist who has been closely attached to Pharmaceutical Biology throughout his scientific career.

This year, the award was given to Professor Kurt Hostettmann, Emeritus Professor of Pharmacognosy and Phytochemistry at the Universities of Geneva and Lausanne. Professor Hostettmann, born in 1944, obtained a degree in Chemistry from the University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland, and a PhD from the same university with a thesis on the phytochemistry of gentians. He pursued postdoctoral research with Prof. Koji Nakanishi at Columbia University, before joining the research group of Prof. Otto Sticher at the ETH Zurich as a Senior Scientist. In 1981 he was appointed Full Professor of Pharmacognosy and Phytochemistry at the University of Lausanne and, from 2004 until his retirement, served as Professor at the University of Geneva, and as Head of the Laboratory of Pharmacognosy and Phytochemistry.

Professor Hostettmann was a highly productive scientist throughout his academic career. He published more than 500 scientific articles, numerous book chapters, and more than 15 books. His name is linked with pioneering work in the field of natural products separation and analysis. He conducted seminal work in the use of liquid-liquid-partition chromatography in natural products separation and, later, spearheaded the application of LC-MS and LC-NMR in natural product analysis. With his team he isolated and characterized hundreds of bioactive natural products with molluscicidal, fungicidal, and other properties.



Professor Hostettmann directed over 60 doctoral theses, and many of his students later made careers in academia and industry. For his achievements, he received numerous scientific distinctions, and appointments as Honorary Professor. Collaboration with lesser developed countries was always a major commitment for him. In his laboratories in Lausanne and Geneva numerous scientists from Asian, African and Latin American countries received training in modern natural products research.

After his retirement Professor Hostettmann has continued to lead an active life devoted to science. Since 20 years he serves as Chairman of the IOCD Working Group

on Plant Chemistry. Also he is a frequent lecturer on topics related to medicinal and toxic plants, and he has published an impressive series of books for lay persons, devoted to various facets of medicinal and food plants.

In recognition of his lifetime achievements, in particular, for his groundbreaking work in natural product separation and analysis, GA was happy to confer the Egon-Stahl Award in Gold to an eminent scientist who has shaped the field of natural products research in a decisive manner.

The award was given by the president of GA, Professor Matthias Hamburger, during the opening ceremony of the 2014 GA Annual Congress.

Egon-Stahl Award in Silver 2014 to Dr. Kenny Kuchta



On the occasion of his 60th birthday, Professor Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Egon Stahl donated a medal, a document and a monetary prize in order to recognize and promote young scientists working in the field of Pharmacognosy (Pharmaceutical Biology) and Analytical Phytochemistry. The silver medal is awarded to scientists up to the age of about forty, while the bronze medal is given to young scholars of about thirty who have made notable contributions in the field.

In 2014 the Bronze Medal was awarded to Assistant Professor Kenny Kuchta, Sanyo Gakuen University, Japan. Dr. Kuchta obtained a Diploma in Biology from the University of Münster, and in 2012 a PhD in Pharmacognosy from the University of Leipzig, under the supervision of Professor Hans Wilhelm Rauwald. The doctoral thesis was devoted to the phytochemistry of *Leonurus* species used in European folk medicine, and in Japanese Kampo traditions. Also, he performed quantitative analysis of constituents in these plants with the aid of HPLC, instrumented planar chromatography, and ¹H-qNMR.

Dr. Kuchta has been recipient of a Scholarship of the German National Academic Foundation. In 2012, Dr. Kuchta was appointed Assistant Professor at the Teaching and Research Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, Sanyo Gakuen University, Japan, where he is



conducting interdisciplinary research on plants used in Kampo medicine. He has published 12 research papers, and he contributed to the Japanese translation of the well-known textbook of phytotherapy of V. Fintelmann and R.F. Weiss.

During the opening ceremony of the 2014 GA Annual Congress, the award was given by the president of GA, Prof. Matthias Hamburger, followed by Dr. Kuchta's award lecture.

Dr. Willmar Schwabe Research Scholarship 2014 for Young Scientists for Blessing Umeokoli

The aim of the Dr. Willmar Schwabe Research Scholarship for Young Scientists is to support research of young scientists, especially from developing countries, in leading research institutions. Projects focusing on pharmacological or clinical research of phytopharmaceuticals and their active substances are particularly welcome. The award enables a research attachment of at least 6 months.

In 2014 the fellowship has been awarded to Mrs Blessing Umeokoli from Nigeria. Mrs Umeokoli obtained a MSc in Chemistry from the Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria, in 2009, and since 2010 she has been pursuing a PhD at the same university. Beside her doctoral research project she has been involved since 2012 in teaching duties, as an Assistant Lecturer in the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences. Her research has been centered around the phytochemical, biological and pharmacological evaluation of West African plants, and in particular, plants that have a



traditional background in Nigeria. She published several publications on her findings, and she also presented data at national and international conferences, as for example, at the 61st Annual Meeting of GA in Münster, in 2013.

The fellowship was awarded to allow her to join the group of Prof. Peter Proksch,

Pharmaceutical Biology, University of Düsseldorf. During her stay in Germany she pursues isolation and structure elucidation of antimicrobial and anti-proliferative compounds from *Buchholzia coriacea*, a medicinal plant that is used in Nigeria as a treatment of bacterial infections and cancers.

Dr. Günter Meng from Dr. Willmar Schwabe Company awarded the fellowship to Mrs Umeokoli during the opening ceremony of the GA Annual Congress in Guimaraes. Mrs Umeokoli will present the results of her project at the 2015 GA Annual Congress in Budapest.

Thieme Award 2014 for the Most Innovative *Planta Medica* Original Paper for Young Chul Kim

Starting in 2013, Thieme awards every year the most promising paper that was published in *Planta Medica* in the previous year. The decision of the jury – the Editors of the journal – is strictly based on scientific quality and on the interest that the paper has met with in the scientific community. The prize money is EUR 1.500. In 2014, a paper by Kwon et al., “Alterations in sulfur amino acid metabolism in mice treated with silymarin: A novel mechanism of its action involved in enhancement of the antioxidant defense in liver”, was selected.

Professor Young and his team investigated the well-known, but still poorly understood, mechanisms by which silymarin protects the liver from oxidative injury induced by various hepatotoxicants. With a combination of *in vivo* and *in vitro* studies they were able to show that silymarin enhances hepatic glutathione generation by elevating cysteine availability, via enhancement of cysteine biosynthesis, and concurrent inhibition of cysteine catabolism to taurine.

The award was given to Professor Kim by the Editor-in-Chief of *Planta Medica*, Professor Luc Pieters, and Dr. Regina Wenzel, Thieme Publishers, during the award ceremony on Monday morning of the GA Annual Congress in Guimaraes.



Dr. Willmar-Schwabe Award 2014 for Christian Gruber



Dr. Willmar Schwabe
From Nature. For Health.

The aim of the Dr. Willmar-Schwabe Award is to motivate preferentially young scientists to resolve phytotherapeutical and phytopharmaceutical problems in an interdisciplinary approach, in order to support the evidence-based use of natural products. The Award was initially donated in 1961, and, after a period of dormancy, was re-established in a new form in 2006. The award is now given every second year. In 2014 the award was given to Professor Christian Gruber, Medical University of Vienna. Professor Gruber, 36 years of age,

studied Biochemistry and Molecular Biotechnology at the University of Tübingen, Germany, and Queensland University of Technology, Australia. He obtained a PhD in Molecular Biosciences from the University of Queensland in 2007. In 2008 he moved to Vienna, as a Lise Meitner Postdoctoral Fellow at the Medical University. From 2009–2011 he was a postdoctoral scientist at the Department of Pharmacognosy, University of Vienna, and was appointed in 2011 as an Assistant Professor at the Center for Physiology and

Pharmacology at the Medical University of Vienna.

The focus of his research has been, since his PhD work with Professor David Craik, on biologically active peptides derived from medicinal plants. He is using an interdisciplinary approach to study the chemistry, pharmacological activity and pharmaceutical applications of these molecules. More specifically, his research interest focuses on the chemical biology and

biochemistry of bioactive peptides from nature, and on the molecular pharmacology of these molecules.

For his innovative ideas and successful research he already received several prestigious awards for excellence, including the Biochemical Journal Young Investigator Award (2006), a Dean's Commendation for an outstanding thesis (2008) and the Heribert Konzett Award from the Austrian Pharmacological Society (2013).

The high quality of his work is also documented by his publication record. He has published over 35 articles in high-impact journals, including *Journal of Biological Chemistry*, *PLoS ONE*, *ACS Chemical Biology*, *The Plant Cell*, *Journal of Natural Products*, *PNAS*, and *Natural Product Reports*. Also, he published in 2011 in our official journal, *Planta Medica*, a well-cited review on "Uterotonic plants and their bioactive constituents". With his work Professor Gruber is certainly among the leading scientists worldwide in the area of plant peptides.

During the opening ceremony of the 2014 GA Annual Congress, the award was given by Dr. Meng from Dr. Willmar Schwabe Company, followed by Prof. Gruber's award lecture.



8th Young Researchers Workshop Awardees

The Young Researchers Workshop on Sunday afternoon at the 62nd International Congress and Annual Meeting of GA, 01st to 04th 2014 in Portugal was organized and chaired by Prof. Judith Rollinger (Vienna, Austria) and Prof. Andreas Hensel (Münster, Germany). In the closing ceremony of the congress four awards (sponsored by Bionorica SE) for best presentation at the Young Researchers Workshop were given to:

Angelo C. Salvador
University of Aveir, Portugal

Theresa Beelders
Stellenbosch University, South Africa

Job Tchoumtchou
University of Athens, Greece

Yaw Duah Boakye
Kwame Nkrumah University, Ghana

Because of extraordinary scientific content and perfect presentation the following two young scientists were selected to present their talk as official short lecture during the main conference:

Fabian Herrmann
University of Münster, Germany

Katharina Waldbauer
University of Vienna, Austria



At the occasion of this 8th workshop Prof. Andreas Hensel retired from the duty of the organization and participation for this workshop in GA. Prof. Hensel was one of

the two initiators who founded and established the Young Researcher Workshop in 2005 within GA.

GA 2014 Poster Awards

At the 62nd International Congress and Annual Meeting of GA in Portugal out of a great number of nearly 600 posters 6 were nominated to be outstanding and poster awards were presented on a highly competitive basis to the following author groups for the following posters. The poster awards consisting of a certificate and a monetary prize of 200 EUR were handed over during the closing ceremony.

Adreana Assimopoulou: Stability study of the pharmaceutical substance shikonin.

Betania Cota: In vitro screening of 5000 plant extracts and identification of eichlerianic acid from *Cabralea canjerana* (Vell.) Mart as one of its trypanocidal compounds.

Noélia Duarte: Lathyrane diterpenes from *Euphorbia boetica* and *Euphorbia pedroi*: promising ABCB1 modulators for overcoming multi-drug resistance.

Manuela Harms: Biological activity of different *Inonotus* species on human keratinocytes.



Martina Picmanova: Co-occurrence of cyanogenic glucosides and their derivatives as a common feature in metabolic profiles of almond and cassava.

Jakub P. Piwowarski: Role of human gut microbiota metabolism in the anti-inflammatory effect of traditionally used ellagitannin-rich plant materials.

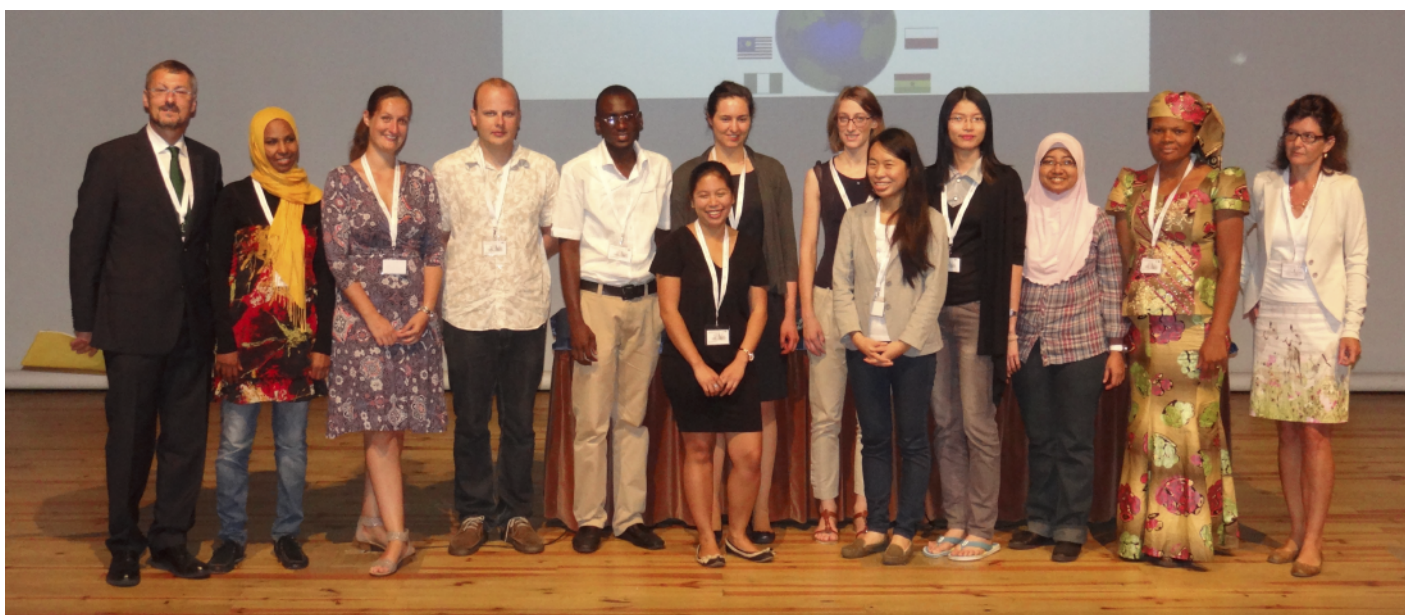
Travel grant winners for GA 2014 conference in Portugal

GA was able to sponsor several travel grants for graduate students and a postdoctoral fellow to attend the 62nd International Congress and Annual Meeting of the Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research, 2014 in Portugal. The GA travel grant committee 2014 consisted of Prof. Judith Rollinger, Dr. Hebba Abdel Aziz and Dr. Elke Heiss. The committee

had received a total of 21 applications from 13 nations and finally 11 travel grants could be awarded on a competitive basis from among the accepted abstracts. The GA congratulates the following recipients:

Postdoctoral Fellow Level Dr. Chau Ling Tham, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, University of Putra, Malaysia

PhD Student Level: Yaw Duah **Boakye**, Ghana; Rica **Capistrano**, Belgium; Sebastian **Granica**, Poland; Christina Elisabeth **Mair**, Austria; Noor Wini **Mazlan**, Scotland; Chin Then **Ng**, Malaysia; Sabine **Ortmann**, Austria; Enass **Salih**, Finland; Blessing **Umeokoli**, Nigeria; Katharina **Waldbauer**, Austria.



Announcement of the Egon Stahl-Award in Silver 2015 of the Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research (GA)



On the occasion of his 60th birthday, Professor Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Egon Stahl donated a medal, a document and a monetary prize in order to recognize and promote young scientists working in the field of Pharmacognosy (Pharmaceutical Biology) and Analytical Phytochemistry. As a rule, the silver medal and an award of € 3,000 should be awarded to scientists up to the age of about forty, who have published outstanding scientific work during the years following their graduation. In 2015 the ESA Silver Award will be given during the 63rd International Congress and

Annual Meeting of GA in Budapest, Hungary, August 23-27, 2015 (<http://ga2015.hu/>).

Members of the Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research (GA) are invited to submit nominations for candidates together with supporting data to the president of GA, Prof. Dr. Matthias Hamburger, University of Basel.

A nomination for the prize has to include a motivation letter explaining the significance of the scientific achievements of the candidate, a CV of the candidate, an index on her/his publications, and reprints of

several of his/her more recent publications. All publications can be taken into consideration.

All documents have to be submitted in **electronic form** (as CD in 5 copies). Deadline for submission is **February 28, 2015**.

Prof. Dr. Matthias Hamburger, Pharmaceutical Biology, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of Basel, Klingelbergstrasse 50, CH-4056 Basel, Switzerland, E-Mail: matthias.hamburger@unibas.ch

Announcement of the 2015 Dr. Willmar Schwabe Research Scholarship for Young Scientists, by the Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research



Dr. Willmar Schwabe
From Nature. For Health.

Awarding Institution: Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research (GA)

Endowing Sponsor: Dr. Willmar Schwabe GmbH & Co. KG, Karlsruhe (Germany)

Endowment: 10,000 EURO

Frequency: upon announcement

Objective: The aim of the **Dr. Willmar Schwabe Research Scholarship for Young Scientists** is to support research of young scientists, especially from developing countries in leading research institutions. Projects focusing on pharmacological or clinical research of phytopharmaceuticals and their active substances are particularly welcome. The award is exclusively used for travelling and living costs of the awardee and not for consumables. Aduration of at least 6 months is mandatory.

Criteria for Application:

- Advanced (year 2 onwards) PhD students and postdocs.
- In case of similar scientific quality of applications applicants from developing countries shall have priority.
- GA membership for at least one year prior to application, with paid fees.
- Age: preferably 30 years of age (post-docs) or younger (PhD students).

- The hosting institution states in the Letter of Acceptance that (i) it is prepared to cover the cost of consumables used for the research project; (ii) that the student will have an adequate laboratory infrastructure and; (iii) that a tutor is assigned who will supervise the applicant during his/her stay.

Documents for Application

- Letter of Motivation (applicant)
- Letter of Support (supervisor)
- CV and list of publications
- Project description including experimental design, time schedule and justification why the research shall be performed in the respective institution
- Letter of Acceptance (hosting institution)
- Confirmation of the host institution to cover the laboratory costs (consumables)
- Specification of costs for travelling and living

All documents have to be submitted to the president of the Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research in electronic form (as CD-Rs in 5 copies).

Jury

The president of the Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research appoints at least 2 independent experts to evaluate the applications. The jury will select the awardee on the basis of the expert reports.

The jury consists of the President and the Vice-presidents of the Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research, the Editor-in-Chief of *Planta Medica*, and a representative of Dr. Willmar Schwabe GmbH & Co. KG.

Further details

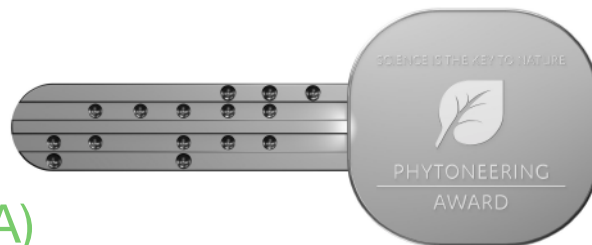
The **Dr. Willmar Schwabe Research Scholarship for Young Scientists** will be bestowed in a ceremony during the 63rd International Congress and Annual Meeting of GA in Budapest, Hungary, August 23–27, 2015. The scientific results of the project shall be presented during the next annual congress, preferably in a short lecture.

The awardee has to prepare a final report on the project supported by this grant. This report is to be signed by the head of the host institution. A copy of the signed report has to be sent to the GA president and to Dr. Willmar Schwabe GmbH & Co. KG. In case of publication of the results the award has to be mentioned in the Acknowledgement.

The **deadline** for submissions for the 2015 announcement is **March 31, 2015**.

Documents are to be sent in electronic form (as CD in 5 copies) to: Prof. Dr. Matthias Hamburger, Pharmaceutical Biology, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of Basel, Klingelbergstrasse 50, CH-4056 Basel, Switzerland, E-Mail: matthias.hamburger@unibas.ch

Announcement of the Bionorica Phytoneering Award 2015 of the Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research (GA)



BIONORICA SE is globally one of the leading companies in the area of phytopharmaceuticals producing plant based medicines with proven efficacy, safety and quality. BIONORICA's Headquarters are located in Neumarkt i.d. Opf. (Germany/Bavaria). The company is family owned since nearly 80 years.

A significant focus of BIONORICA's work is concentrated on R&D activities with annual capital investments of about 15% of the company's turnover. Although the centre of all R&D activities is in Neumarkt, BIONORICA has established further research institutes in Innsbruck (Austria) and Hong-Kong.

In addition BIONORICA has built a scientific network with multiple renowned institutions, organizations and scientists worldwide.

The *Bionorica Phytoneering Award (BPA)* acknowledges outstanding research in the field of development and application of herbal medicinal products.

The award is endowed with 10,000 €.

The purpose of the award is to motivate primarily young scientists (normally younger than 45 years of age) to perform research in phytomedicine focusing on following areas:

- generally any new discovery and innovative application related to phytomedicine
- pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics of herbal medicinal products and their active principles
- clinical research in the areas of respiratory tract infections, inflammation, women's health, pain, oncology and metabolic syndrome
- safety and pharmacovigilance studies

Scientists or research groups of universities and other non-commercial scientific institutions are entitled to apply.

Scientific publications on a specific topic which have been published during the last three years can be considered. They must be submitted in **electronic form** (as CD in 5 copies) until **28 February 2015**, along

with an accompanying document explaining the significance and relevance of the submitted publications in the broader scientific context, a CV, and a list of publications to the president of GA, Prof. Dr. Matthias Hamburger, University of Basel.

The *Bionorica Phytoneering Award* will be granted during the annual GA congress in Budapest, Hungary, August 23–27, 2015 (<http://ga2015.hu/>). The award-winning scientific results shall be presented during the congress in a lecture of 30 minutes.

Applications/documents to be sent to: Prof. Dr. Matthias Hamburger, Pharmaceutical Biology, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of Basel, Klingelbergstrasse 50, CH-4056 Basel, Switzerland, E-Mail: matthias.hamburger@unibas.ch

Minutes of GA Members Meeting 2014

The Members Meeting took place during the annual congress in Guimaraes on 2 Sept. 2014 from 6.50–7.45 p.m. 71 GA members attended the meeting.

1. Approval of the Agenda

President Prof. M. Hamburger welcomed all participants. The agenda, published in the GA Newsletter 1-2014, was unanimously approved. Based on a request from Prof. R. Bauer one additional topic (Report on the Foundation "Plants for Health") was added to the agenda.

2. Approval of the Protocol of the Members Meeting 2013

The minutes of the previous Members Meeting on 3 Sept. 2013 in Münster, published in the GA Newsletter 2-2013, were unanimously approved.

3. Annual reports

3.1. Report of the President

Prof. M. Hamburger

- He participated in a meeting with Thieme Publishers regarding the launch of *Planta Medica Letters*, an open access sister journal of *Planta Medica*. The agreement was signed in the beginning of 2014. Together with Prof. L. Pie-

ters he prepared an editorial to announce the launch of the journal.

- He wrote an endorsement for the ABC-AHP-NCNPR Botanical Adulterants Program for education, scientific research, and quality of botanical dietary ingredients and related plant derived materials.
- He was involved in the preparation of the 62nd Annual Congress in Guimaraes.
- He was involved, at various levels, with the preparation of the 63rd Annual Congress in Budapest, in 2015.
- He was involved with the preparation of the 2016 Joint Meeting of Societies in Copenhagen. He coordinated with Prof. A. Jäger the invitations of the sister societies, and he attended the JSP Annual Congress to explore participation of the Japanese society in 2016.

3.2. Reports of the Vice-Presidents

3.2.1. Report of Vice-President Prof. A.R. Bilia

She was as member of the jury for the ESA Bronze and Dr. Willmar

Schwabe Award and participated in the evaluation of applicants.

3.2.2. Report of Vice-President Prof. W. Blaschek

- He participated in a meeting with Thieme (Drs. Wenzel, Schiller) on 16 Sept. 2013 together with Prof. Hamburger and Prof. Pieters concerning *Planta Medica Letters* as Open Access Journal. Meanwhile a final contract has been signed by M. Hamburger.
- He participated in the *Planta Medica* Editorial Board Meeting in Frankfurt on 25 Oct. 2013.
- He sent Christmas cards to all Honorary Members together with a request for sponsoring the Foundation "Plants for Health" (signed together with Prof. R. Bauer).
- He was in contact with the American Botanical Council (ABC), the American Herbal Pharmacopoeia (AHP) and the National Center for Natural Products Research (NCNPR), as they asked for participation of GA (as non-profit/professional association) in an ABC-AHP-NCNPR Botanical Adulterants Program for educa-

tion, scientific research, and quality of botanical dietary ingredients and related plant derived materials. According to a decision of the ExC a positive answer has been written by M. Hamburger.

- He has written various contributions for the GA Newsletter 1/2014.
- He has written the announcements for the Awards 2014 (Egon-Stahl Award in Gold, Egon-Stahl Award in Bronze, Dr. Willmar Schwabe Award, Dr. Willmar Schwabe Research Scholarship).
- He thanked all members of the ExC and the BoD for their great commitment and the very good cooperation during his period as president of GA.
- Honouring of Prof. B. Kopp: At the end of 2013 Prof. Brigitte Kopp retired from the Board of Directors of GA. In Dec. 2013 she was honoured with a document and the GA-cube for her long lasting work for GA as member of the Advisory Board, as Vice-President and as President of GA.
- On 13 May 2014 he participated on behalf of GA in a meeting of the German group "Zukunft Phytotherapie" in Berlin. Participants were members of the BPI, KOOP Phytopharmaka, BAH, Dr. Willmar Schwabe GmbH, SymbioPharmGmbH, multiMEDvision GbR.
- He was involved in planning of the annual congress 2014 in Guimaraes.
- He participated in the evaluation of submitted applications for the awards 2014.
- He participated in the congress "Phytopharm 2014" in St. Petersburg, Russia, 3–6 July 2014. GA was co-organiser. He was member of the organising and the scientific committee. He gave a greeting address from GA during the opening ceremony and gave a plenary lecture.

3.3. Report of the Secretary

Dr. B. Benedek

Members statistics: As of 24 August 2014 GA has 1.130 active members. 604 thereof pay the regular membership fee of 60 EUR, 459 the reduced fee of 20 EUR. GA has 32 company members (decrease of 2 this year due to a cancellation from Steiner and an inactivation of DIOD Moscow due to 2-years unpaid fees). For 35 members the membership fees are waived. 10 thereof are Honorary Members. For 25 members the fees have been waived due to 40 or more years of membership (Prof. W. Alfermann, Prof. H.P.T. Ammon, H.J. Bieler, Prof. T. Kartnig, Dr. L.

Roth, Dr. W.G. van der Sluis, Dr. F. von Massow). There is a decrease in the membership number during the last years which is due to the fact that since 2011 members who have not paid their fees for 2 years are inactivated (before: inactivation after 3 years unpaid fees). The ExC is aware of this decrease and made efforts to re-activate members by contacting them personally which was partly effective. During the congress in Guimaraes 29 participants applied for GA membership, and they will be mentioned personally during the closing ceremony. 75 existing members paid their membership fees in cash at the congress with a total revenue of about 3000 EUR. Regarding the countries of origin of the members Germany is the most prominent country, followed by Nigeria. For the first time in the history of GA a representative from Nigeria is a member of the BoD (Dr. Christian Agyare, since 01/2014).

3.4. Report of the Treasurer

Dr. B. Roether

He reported about the current financial situation of GA: The total assets of GA amount to 106,734 EUR (funds value: 46,530 EUR, cash: 60,204 EUR). The Egon Stahl fund currently amounts to 55,001 EUR (funds value: 52,688 EUR, cash: 2,313 EUR). The revenues in 2014 were 81,966 EUR so far (status 08/2014, budget 2014: 119,103 EUR), the expenses in 2014 were 96,154 EUR so far (status 08/2014, budget: 104,500 EUR), leading to a saldo (revenues minus expenses) of -14,189 EUR so far (status 08/2014, budget: +14,603 EUR). Planta Medica online subscriptions: 23 members have subscribed to PM online back to 1998, 22 members back to 1953.

3.5. Discharge of the Executive Council

Due to the absence of the cash auditors Prof. E. Stahl-Biskup and Dr. B. Frank Prof. R. Bauer presented the Report of the Auditors. According to their reports the expenses and revenues were plausible and appropriate, and they both expressed her compliments for a good accounting and cost awareness.

Based on the Report of the Auditors Prof. R. Bauer asked for the discharge of the ExC which was accepted unanimously by the whole assembly.

4. Report of the Editor-in-Chief of Planta Medica Prof. L. Pieters

Prof. Pieters presented some statistics related to the performance of the journal: the relation of submitted versus published manuscripts was 1376 to 207

in 2013 (15% accepted manuscripts). Still most of the manuscripts are submitted by scientists from China. Over 60% of submitted manuscripts are from Asia. The current impact factor of *Planta Medica* is 2.339.

The following special issues are planned in 2014: Pharmacological Methods (guest editor: Pia Vuorela), GA Abstract Volume, In Silico Pharmacognosy (guest editors: Judith Rollinger, Ron Quinn). For 2015 a special issue on Cardiovascular Protection (guest editor: Catherina Caballero-George) is scheduled.

M. Hamburger appealed to the whole audience to publish their scientific work in *Planta Medica*, since it is the official journal of the society.

5. Reports of the Permanent Committees (PC)

"Biological and Pharmacological Activity of Natural Products" (chair: V. Butterweck)

A workshop entitled "Bone health maintenance by plant derived therapeutics" was organised successfully during the annual congress in Guimaraes.

"Breeding and Cultivation of Medicinal Plants" (chair: O. Kayser)

A workshop entitled "Breeding, phytochemical profiling, and bioengineering strategies for *Cannabis sativa* for medical use" was organised successfully during the annual congress in Guimaraes.

"Manufacturing and Quality Control of HMPs" (chair: C. Erdelmeier)

No workshop was organised this year.

"Regulatory Affairs" (chair: A. Vlietinck)

A workshop entitled "Where do we stand with the quality assurance of herbal (medicinal) products in Europe today?" was organised successfully during the annual congress in Guimaraes. A. Vlietinck informs the auditorium that this has been his last workshop as chair of the Permanent Committee, and thanked the BoD for the confidence and for more than a decennium of good collaboration.

"Young Researchers Workshop" (chairs: J. Rollinger and A. Hensel)

A workshop was organised successfully during the annual congress in Guimaraes. The awards were sponsored by Bionorica (4 x 200 €). The two young researchers with the most mature presentations were selected for a short lecture at the main conference. A. Hensel informed that he will step down as member of the YRW committee after the congress. The YRW committee now consists of J. Rollinger, D. Tasdemir, R. Fürst, S. Apers, A. Braca and J. Gertsch.

6. Future Congresses, Symposia and Workshops

6.1. Annual GA Congresses

- 2015: Budapest, Hungary (organiser: J. Hohmann)
- 2016: Copenhagen, Denmark (Joint Meeting, organiser: A. Jäger)

- 2017: Basel, Switzerland (organiser: M. Hamburger)
- 2018: Beijing/Shanghai, China (organiser: D. Guo)

6.2. Future Congresses and Workshops

- “Natural Products and Drug Discovery – Future Perspectives”, 13–14 Nov. 2014, Vienna, Austria
- “Phytopharm 2015”, 21–23 July 2015, Bonn, Germany
- “Mistletoe Symposium”, 12–14 Nov. 2015, Otzenhausen, Germany
- 6th International Symposium Breeding Research on Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (BREEDMAP 6), June/July 2016, Quedlinburg, Germany

7. Foundation “Plants for Health”

Prof. R. Bauer presented the recent activities of the foundation “Plants for Health”.

The key goals of the foundation are: support of highly innovative and multi-disciplinary research projects strengthening the academic basis of medicinal plant and natural product research and promotion of new research networks. The funds shall initiate scientific collaborations, the development of new research networks, provide start-up funding for innovative joint projects, and provide start-up funding for best in class junior research groups.

The foundation has been converted from a preliminary foundation into a self-dependant foundation under the control of the foundation supervising authority on 30 April 2014 by the respective authorities (Regierung der Oberpfalz). The foundation board consists of R. Bauer as chair, M. Heinrich and A. Hensel. B. Roether acts as financial advisor within the foundation board. A constitutive meeting of the foundation board took place on 1 Sept. 2014. The non-profit character of the founda-

tion for Germany has been evaluated and approved; thus charitable contributions (“Spenden”) and external donations (“Zustiftungen”) are tax-deductible in Germany. With respect to external donations from other countries it would have to be examined whether and how an external donation is tax-deductible according to national law.

The establishment of a corporate identity including a logo, brochure and homepage is planned. So far 71.000 EUR of donations have been received (50.000 EUR from GA, 20.000 EUR from companies and 1.000 EUR from an individual person). Any financial support of the foundation is welcome.

8. Miscellaneous

No contributions.

Dr. Birgit Benedek
Neunkirchen am Brand, 11 Nov. 2014

Announcement of the 63rd International Congress and Annual Meeting of the Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research (GA)



Budapest, Hungary, 23–27 August, 2015

We are delighted to invite you to the 63rd International Congress and Annual Meeting of the Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research (GA). The conference, which will be held in Budapest, Hungary, (23–27 August 2015) covers natural product research from phytochemical studies to phytotherapeutic applications. The aim of the congress is to serve as a forum for discussions on trends, and the latest results, and to exchange ideas relating to phytochemical analysis, ethnopharmacology, phytopharmacology and clinical studies of herbal medicinal products.

The scientific program will include plenary lectures by invited speakers, and keynote talks on recent topics of natural product research, as well as short lecture sessions and poster presentations. The conference will be accompanied by Young Researchers Workshop and Regulatory Affairs of Herbal Medicinal Products Workshop.

Main scientific topics will cover:

- From natural products toward potential drug leads
- Natural products in CNS-related diseases
- Medicinal plants in the treatment of chronic diseases
- Pharmacokinetics of phytochemicals
- Clinical and observational studies with herbal products
- Quality assessment of medicinal plants, phytomedicines and herbal dietary supplements
- New opportunities for biotechnology and cell biology
- Ethnobotany and ethnopharmacology
- Herbal dietary supplements
- Medicinal plants and natural products in animal healthcare and veterinary medicine

Scientific contributions in other topics related to natural product research will also be welcome.

Budapest, a European metropolis with its vibrant cultural life, is the academic center of the country. As a participant of the GA Conference, you will have the opportunity

to become acquainted with the monuments of the historical past of the city and discover its present with spas, restaurants and contemporary museums. The venue of the event, the Budapest Congress Center, is a perfect setting for the organization of an enjoyable and fruitful scientific meeting.

On the last day of the Conference, participants can choose from two alternative excursions, both offer unforgettable experiences for participants and accompanying persons. The Monastery at Pannonhalma, an ancient historic monument, a UNESCO world heritage site, is one of the cradles of medicinal plant cultivation in Hungary. The Tihany Peninsula at the lake Balaton, with its picturesque location, is famous for its lavender fields.

Registration and abstract submission will start in February 2015. For further details and updates please visit our official homepage at www.ga2015.hu.

Prof. Judit Hohmann and
Dez  Csopor PhD
Co-Chair of the Congress

Meeting Reports

Dear Colleagues,

Once more, the Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research (GA) organized its annual congress, the 62nd International Congress and Annual Meeting (GA 2014), that gather scientists from academia and industry dealing with natural products, medicinal plants and phytotherapy research. This important scientific meeting took place at Guimarães (Portugal), University of Minho, Azurém Campus, at walking distance from the medieval city center, classified as World Heritage Site by UNESCO. The historical city of Guimarães, where the Portuguese nation was founded in the early 12th century, is located in the north of Portugal, in the dynamic and colorful Minho Region. This area is also famous for its landscape and vineyards, where the famous and unique wine “Vinho Verde” is produced. The University of Minho is one of the biggest and most important universities in Portugal, with excellent facilities to host the Congress.

GA2014 represented an excellent forum for the presentation and discussion of cutting-edge research in the fields of phytochemistry, analytics, pharmacology, and clinical applications. Moreover, this conference provided an appropriate environment for intense discussion of new technological approaches and for networking between academia and industry. It was also a pleasure to collaborate with the Association Francophone pour l'Enseignement et la Recherche en Pharmacognosie (AFERP), that further contributed to the scientific program.

The scientific program attracted the interest of a variety of researchers worldwide, with more than 600 scientists from over 45 countries participating in this meeting. Many papers were submitted (a total number of 747 abstracts) and after a thorough review process, 690 were accepted for



**GA 2014, August 31 – September 4
Guimarães, Portugal**

short-lecture or poster presentations. The major contributors come from Portugal, Brazil and Germany (by this order). In this context, and personally, it was a great pleasure to have such participation at GA2014, namely from Brazil, a country that has a strong relationship with Portugal.

The main topics of the congress were:

- Clinical phytomedicine
- Nanotechnology and drug delivery
- Natural compounds as leads
- Natural products from fungi and algae
- Nutritional phytochemicals Medicinal plants and bioeconomy Metabolomics
- Plant molecular farming

The highlights included twelve invited lectures, all delivered by distinguished speakers and covering the major scientific topics



of the conference. In addition, a total of 45 short lectures were presented, selected from the accepted abstracts. Several workshops dedicated to topics of particular interest also provided in-depth insights into various aspects of medicinal plant and natural products research. It is noteworthy to mention the “Africa Research Network Workshop”, organized for the first time in this meeting, aiming to promote the interaction and research with and within African countries.

Two poster sessions, scheduled within central time frames during the congress, brought together scientists from different disciplines and stimulated the exchange of experiences and knowledge. In general, this conference provided a basis for intense networking between scientists of academia and industry from all over the world.



The conference president Prof. Dr. Alberto Diaz during the opening session of GA meeting.

To complement the scientific program, there was a stimulating and diverse social program. This included excursions to the Peneda-Gerês National Park, Portuguese northern seashore, and a visit to the Douro Valley and its famous terraced vineyards.

Finally, this congress was possible by the efficient and excellent work of many staff members and students from the Biology Department of the University of Minho, namely from the CITAB Research Center. We express our deepest gratitude to all of them. We also thank GA Executive Council and Advisory Members for all the support, and the many members of the GA2014 scientific committee for their meticulous help in evaluating more than 700 abstracts and – last but, not least – the many dedicated researchers who submitted so much of their excellent work!

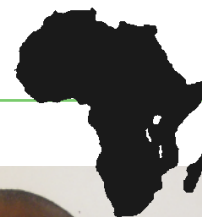
We hope you had a pleasant and fruitful GA2014 meeting with science, culture and hospitality!

We also wish all the best for the upcoming GA Annual meeting at Budapest, Hungary.

Prof. Dr. Alberto Diaz



Africa Research Network Workshop



The maiden meeting of the African Research Network Workshop held on Tuesday the 2nd September 2014 University of Minho, Guimarães, Portugal.

The meeting commenced at 12.55 pm with Dr. Christian Agyare introducing the following speakers of the Workshop:

1. Prof. Dr. Andreas Hensel, University of Munster, Germany/European Member.
2. Prof. Dr. Reuben Arowolo, Federal University of Agriculture, Nigeria.
3. Prof. Dr. Olukemi Odukoya, University of Lagos, Nigeria.
4. Prof. Dr. Deniz Tasdemir, European Member.
5. Dr. Christian Agyare, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Ghana.

Dr. Agyare explained that the idea of the African Research Network was conceived in 2010 in Berlin (GA 2010), to foster collaborations especially amongst Africans and collaborations between Africans and Europeans/other countries in GA. He asked those who were interested to be members of the Network to put down their names and emails.

Dr. Christian Agyare gave a presentation on the concept, vision and mission of the African Research Network. He explained that the Network was more interested in active membership rather than a large number of members. He also explained that the Network workshop would now be a normal feature of GA meetings since the

concept has been accepted by the GA executive committee and board of directors. An interactive platform for the African Research Network would be introduced to the GA website.

Prof. Dr. Andreas Hensel's remarks followed Dr. Agyare's presentation. Prof. Hensel explained that African members constituted the 3rd or 4th largest members of GA. He remarked that despite this large figure, the scientific output, as well as *Planta Medica* publications from Africa was not proportional to membership. His expectations are that Network like this would improve output. He said the GA's support this initiative would not necessarily be monetary but other machinery at the GA's disposal.

Prof. Hensel commented that improvement were important in the following areas for African researchers:

1. Style of writing – he remarked that correcting abstracts from African researchers was tedious. The fault is not the science but the style of writing especially the ability to follow instructions.
2. He explained that though the number of submissions by African researchers to *Planta Medica* had increased, the number of publications had decreased citing the absence of basic analytical standardization of extracts as one of the reasons. He explained that *in vivo* or *in vitro* studies, without at least partial characterization of extracts, were not likely to be accepted for publications. He advised that collaborations with



other researchers to carry out characterization of extracts would improve the chances of publications

3. He implored the Network to organize itself and be united. He advised the Network not to depend on others (Europeans) to solve its problems.

Prof Reuben Arowolo, gave a talk on the need for the African Research Network. He explained that one of the major ways for African researchers to improve their research output was to improve collaborations with other scientists who had better research facilities. He explained that the dearth of facilities in African Laboratories was no longer news, but that a network like this would assist African researchers in locating and collaborating with other researchers.

He lamented the trend in which Africans, who were trained in the West, found it difficult to return home because of the poor facilities and so remained in the West. Also many African researchers who go for further studies in European countries were often compelled to remain there because of better facilities. Prof. Arowolo surmised that the collaborations fostered by the African Research Network could improve not just the output of African researchers but even the facilities on ground which would ultimately lead to brain gain in Africa.

Dr. Deniz Tasdemir gave her comments and thanked Dr. Agyare for the African Research Network initiative. She explained that there were already many collaborations between European and African researchers. She stated that she had many African doctoral students. Prof. Tasdemir explained that while brain drain was a major challenge for Africa, collaborations with foreign researchers would ultimately improve the quality of science in Africa. She implored African scientists to be more ambitious and try new areas of research. She explained that she is currently working on marine organisms and would be glad to collaborate on that area.

Prof. Olukeyi Odukeya commended the previous speakers, who she stated had spoken her mind on the task before the African Research Network. She added that the solution to African problems must be by African s themselves, however, with the assistance of the international community.

The remarked that the Network must aim to answer the 5 Ws:

Why – Why should a research be done?
 What? – What is to be done?
 Who? – Who will do it?
 Where – Where will it be done?
 When – When will it be done?

She explained that most African researchers were committed to research and to improving their scientific output despite the very unsupportive nature of their home governments and she believed if this initiative is managed properly, it would give the impetus for more African researchers to excel.

Dr. Agyare then gave opportunities for comments from attendees. One of the European attendee welcomed the initiative but commented that several opportunities for collaborations between African researchers and Europeans already existed. He encouraged African researchers to use these opportunities and also to improve the infrastructure in Africa.

Prof. Mohammed Khalia from Egypt remarked that one of the ways of improving collaboration amongst Africans was to create a data base for African researchers in specific fields and their areas of specialization. He also commented the GA was not well known in Africa and that improving the awareness of GA would be a step in the right direction.

Dr. Oluwayokun Olajide also commended the African Research Network initiative. He explained that if the Network is organized

and managed properly, many of the difficulties faced by African researchers would be addressed.

Dr. Agyare asked for suggestions on the projects that could be done by the African Research Network. Some suggestions were made including – Workshop on grantsmanship and writing of grant proposals, writing of manuscripts, neglected tropical diseases. After some deliberation, a workshop on manuscript writing was accepted.

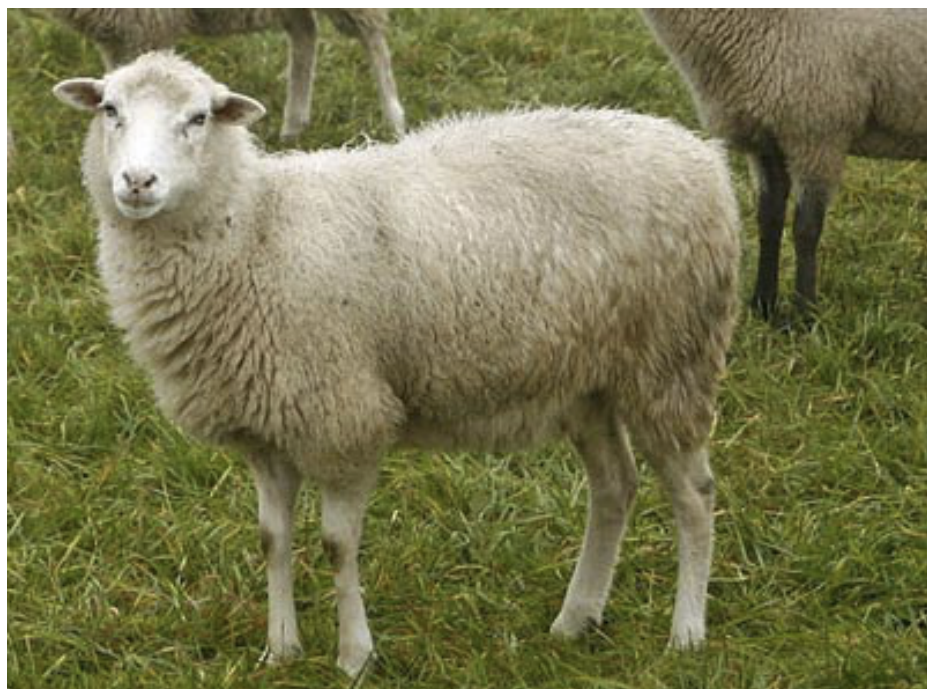
Dr. Agyare then informed the attendees to pick a coordinator for the Network. It was decided that every country should have a coordinator. The following coordinators were nominated and appointed.

1. European coordinator –
 Dr. Oluwayokun Olajide
 (o.a.olajide@hud.ac.uk)
2. Ghanaian coordinator –
 Dr. Christian Agyare
 (chrisagyare@yahoo.com)
3. Nigerian coordinator –
 Prof. Olukeyi Odukeya
 (olukemiodukoya@yahoo.com)
4. South African coordinator –
 Dr. Maxleena Sandesi
 (sandesi@tat.ac.za)
5. Egyptian coordinator –
 Dr. Mohammed El-Raey
 (elray@yahoo.com; elray@gmail.com)

Animal healthcare and veterinary medicine: The GA-Networking group

Symposium on veterinary phytotherapie at June 20th 2014, Winterthur, Switzerland

As a follow up to the first meeting at the GA congress in Muenster 2013 a veterinary symposium was organised by the veterinary division of the Swiss Medical Society for Phytotherapie (SMGP) in cooperation with the newly found GA-networking group on medicinal plants and natural products in animal healthcare and veterinary medicine. The main topic “between evidence and empiricism – (re)activating of veterinary phytotherapy” tried to build a bridge between modern science and historical as well as recent therapeutically experiences. There were 60 participants from five countries and four different professional groups present in this symposium. A series of presentations was started off by Prof. Dr. Felix Althaus, head of the department of Veterinary Pharmacology and Toxicology, University of Zürich, Switzerland and Dean of the Vetsuisse faculty Zurich and Bern with some critical thoughts on modern science. He outlined the fact that if everyone would only think along the common lines a lot of important medical history would have never been



written. Based on some historic examples like the use of laughing gas as an anaesthetic and the story behind Dr. Semmelweis he showed that well documented empiricism can be a very useful tool in the progress of medicine and that we should be aware of the "Semmelweisreflex" which seems to be still alive today within the scientific community.

An example of an empiric approach to science is the field of ethnoveterinary medicine. Prof. Dr. Christian Vogel, Division of Organic Farming, Department of Sustainable Agricultural Systems, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU), Vienna, Austria was unfortunately not able to give his lecture in person, but it was given as a video lecture. Prof. Vogel outlined the importance of the correct plant identification and the documentation of the source of information if one wants to seriously work in this field.

Dr. Michael Walkenhorst and Dr. Franziska Klarer, both researchers in the field of ethnoveterinary medicine, shared their experiences and pitfalls in ethnoveterinary research in Switzerland. Interestingly they found that the dosages used varied from very low dosages to dosages far higher than advertised in books.

After this thought engaging lectures on science and its pitfalls and opportunities Dr. Sabine Vollstedt, and Dr. Cäcilia Brendiek-Worm, both German veterinary practitioners with extensive experiences in veterinary phytotherapy looked back in time

to take an outlook on the future. Dr. Vollstedt went back to the roots of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) – a discipline within veterinary medicine that is getting more and more popular. She took results of modern research to explain some of the underlying thoughts in TCM all wrapped up in an old Chinese fairy tale. Dr. Brendiek-Worm looked back of the use of western herbs in veterinary medicine. She put a question mark on research practices with singular high dosage component toxicity studies. Some of those plants that consequently aren't used anymore have been used in the past with hardly any or no reported side effects. Is it the plants or do we need to find are more complex system to evaluate their safety? She also drew attention to the fact the strict separation between plants used for their nutritive values and plants used for their health benefits just grew within the last century. However, in a lot of cultures food plays an important role in the view on healthcare.

Dr. Stephan Häsler, president of the Swiss society for veterinary history and Dr. Elisabeth Stöger, veterinary practitioner from Austria, looked back on the veterinary pharmacology lectures from Prof. Steck, of the University of Bern, Switzerland earlier on in the 20th century when products derived from plants still were the majority of medication available to the veterinary practitioner. Dr. Stöger illustrated the historic tales with examples of the use of phytotherapy in her practice in the Austrian Alps.

After this philosophical-critical lecture session a poster discussion was held. The scientific entries were widely spread between Phytotherapy in zoo veterinary medicine, the reduction of the use of antibiotics in farm animal health and herd management as well as pharmacokinetic studies which focused mainly on horses. Please see <http://phytotherapie2014.smgp.ch/programme/20pp.htm> for more details. The discussion also gave plenty of opportunity to network and exchange ideas, not only within the animal health group but also between animal and human researchers and clinicians. The next animal health symposium is planned at the GA conference in Budapest in 2015, where "Medicinal Plants and natural products in animal healthcare and veterinary medicine" is again one of ten main scientific topics. All scientists involved or interested in research regarding veterinary phytopharmacology and ethnoveterinary medicine, clinical applications of natural products and herbal drug materials in animals as well as plant derived feeding additives are invited to submit scientific abstracts, to present short lectures and posters and to discuss research results and project ideas with colleagues from all over the world.

Looking forward to meet you next August in Budapest,

Anette van der Aa, Michael Walkenhorst and Ursula Glauser

New Books

A new book for German-reading scientists, botanists, chemists, pharmacologists on toxic natural products for development of therapeutic drugs. The author covers a wide range of pharmacologically active compounds with pronounced toxicity, starting from ethnobotany of various plants, animals or marine organisms, describing the isolation towards and ending up at the actual use of such compounds as modern drug. Cardiac glycosides, cancer therapeutics, natural products for malaria,

therapeutics from marine organism, snail toxins, botox and peptides and proteins as modern tools in research and diagnostics are described.

A really nice book, written by a competent author, illustrated with many high quality images and good for reading in the evening after an exhausting day to relax. May be the author will provide the next edition in English? Than the book is just perfect!

Dietrich Mebs (2014) *Heilende Gifte – Toxische Naturstoffe als Arzneimittel*. Wissenschaftliche Verlagsgesellschaft, Stuttgart, Germany, ISBN 978-3-8047-2983-4 150 pages and 162 color images. 39.80 €.



Sticher/Heilmann/Zürndorf (2014) *Hänsel, Sticher; Phramakognosie–Phytopharmazie*. 10 ed. Wissenschaftliche Verlagsgesellschaft, Stuttgart, Germany, ISBN 978-3-8047-3144-8 (Print); 978-8047-3347-3 (E-Book, PDF). 1004 pages.

on the actual scientific knowledge. Pharmaceutical aspects and aspects of rationalized phytotherapy are also discussed. A short, but very informative chapter on TCM drugs covers many hot topics in this area. The nicely produces book should be the basic for all students of Pharmacognosy/ Pharmaceutical Biology, but will always be a perfect text book for the desk of scientists in the field. May be the author will provide the next edition in English? Than the book is just perfect!

The 10th edition of the classical text book "Pharmacognosy, Phytopharmacy" for scientists and students is just appeared in December 2014! GA-honorary member Prof. Dr. O. Sticher and his co-authors Prof. J. Heilmann and Dr. I. Zürndorf have implemented the newest scientific and clinical aspects for the most used herbal drugs. Detailed description of the chemistry, biosynthetic formation, pharmacological effects and clinical use of natural products are described, based

Recent thesis (2014) on Medicinal Plant Research



(Notices of Ph.D- and M.Sc./diploma thesis to the editor are welcome any time!)

Ph.D. thesis (2014) Polyphenols from *Rumex acetosa* L. with anti-adhesive and anti-biofilm activity against *Porphyromonas gingivalis*. By: Jana Marina Schmuch; Promotor: Prof. Dr. Andreas Hensel, Institute of Pharmaceutical Biology and Phytochemistry, University of Münster, Germany.

Ph.D. thesis (2014) Phytochemical characterization and *in vitro* wound healing activities of extracts and compounds from *Combretum mucronatum* (Schum. & Thonn.). By: Emelia Kisseih; Promotor: Prof. Dr. Andreas Hensel, Institute of Pharmaceutical Biology and Phytochemistry, University of Münster, Germany.

Ph.D. thesis (2014) Traditionally used medicinal plants with antiadhesive activity against uropathogenic *Escherichia coli*. By: Nasli Rafsanjany; Promotor: Prof. Dr. Andreas Hensel, Institute of Pharmaceutical Biology and Phytochemistry, University of Münster, Germany.

Ph.D. thesis (2014) Lichenan from *Cetraria islandica* (L.) ACH. and xyloglucan from *Tropaeolum majus* L. as inductors of cellular differentiation of human keratinocytes. By: Jana Marina Schmuch; Promotor: Prof. Dr. Andreas Hensel, Institute of Pharmaceutical Biology and Phytochemistry, University of Münster, Germany.

Dr. rer. nat. thesis (2014) Entdeckung bioaktiver Naturstoffe unter Verwendung der multivariaten Datenanalyse. By: Therese Ellendorff; Promotor: Prof. Dr. Thomas J. Schmidt, Institute of Pharmaceutical Biology and Phytochemistry, University of Münster, Germany.

Dr. rer. nat. thesis (2014) Untersuchungen zum Einfluss HOCl modifizierter Plasmaproteine auf die Funktion der Thrombozyten und Interaktion mit potentiellen Inhibitoren. By: Christopher Stavermann; Promotor: Prof. Dr. Thomas J. Schmidt, Institute of Pharmaceutical Biology and Phytochemistry, University of Muenster, Germany, in cooperation with Prof. Dr. B. Kehrel, University Hospital, Münster, Germany.

Ph.D. thesis (2014) Inhibition of pro-inflammatory mediators NF- κ B1 and COX-2 by Chinese medicinal plants and bioassay-guided fractionation of Semen Ziziphi spinosae. By Nadine Otto; Promotor: Univ.-Prof. Dr. R. Bauer, University of Graz, Austria.

Ph.D. thesis (2014) Investigations of the Chinese formulation Sì Miào Sǎn and its modifications. By Mag.pharm. Agnieszka Lower-Nedza; Promotor: Ao. Univ.-Prof. Dr. A. Brantner, University of Graz, Austria.

Ph.D thesis (2014) Untersuchung der katalytischen Eigenschaften Tropinonreduktase-ähnlicher kurzkettiger Dehydrogenasen/Reduktasen aus Brassicaceen. By: Nicole Reinhardt. Promotor: Prof. Dr. Birgit Dräger, Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg, Germany.

Ph.D. thesis (2014) A pharmacognostic study of *Vernonia guineensis* Benth. (Asteraceae) Biological activity, safety, and phytochemical analysis. By: N.J. Toyang. Promotor: Prof. Dr. R. Verpoorte. Natural Products Laboratory, IBL, Leiden University, Leiden, The Netherlands.

Ph.D. thesis (2014) Terpenoids and terpenoid indole alkaloids in *Catharanthus roseus* cell suspensions. By: M.Z. Saiman. Promotor: Prof. Dr. R. Verpoorte. Natural Products Laboratory, IBL, Leiden University, Leiden, The Netherlands.

Ph.D. thesis (2014) *Bryophyllum pinnatum* – metabolite profiling and *in vitro* effects on porcine detrusor contractility. By: Karin Monika Furer; Promotors: Prof. M. Hamburger and Prof. U. von Mandach, University of Basel, University of Zurich, Switzerland.

Ph.D. thesis (2014) Screening of Panamanian plant extracts for agricultural and cosmetic activities, and metabolomic study of *Isatis tinctoria* accessions. By: Niels Hendrik Gulbrandsen; Promotor: Prof. M. Hamburger, University of Basel, Switzerland.

M.Sc. thesis (2014) Isolierung und Charakterisierung von Arabinogalactan-Protein-Clustern. By: Dan-Eric Heiland; Promotor: Prof. Dr. Andreas Hensel, Institute of Pharmaceutical Biology and Phytochemistry, University of Münster, Germany.

M.Sc. thesis (2014) Isolierung und Identifizierung von Inhaltsstoffen mit antiprotozoaler Aktivität aus *Anacyclus pyrethrum* L. By: Claudine Malyszek; Promotor: Prof. Dr. Thomas J. Schmidt, Institute of Pharmaceutical Biology and Phytochemistry, University of Münster, Germany.

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Diploma thesis (2014) Mikroskopische Monographien traditionell medizinisch genutzter Pflanzen aus der Assosa-Region in Äthiopien. By: Claudia Becker; Promoter: Prof. B. Dräger and Prof. Dr. R. Neubert, Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg, Germany.

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Editorial remark

All contributions for the GA-Newsletter are welcome. Deadline for submission for the next edition is fixed to May 25th 2014. Please send all contributions to: **Prof. Dr. A. Hensel**, Institute for Pharmaceutical Biology and Phytochemistry, Corrensstrasse 48, D-48149 Münster, Germany; ahensel@uni-muenster.de