Dear Members,

the 57th annual congress of GA will be held this year in Geneva/Switzerland and will be organized by Prof. Hostettmann and his team. The scientific program will feature the topics “Lead finding from Nature, Conservation and biodiversity issues, Plants and aging of the population, Natural products and neglected diseases, Anti-cancer agents, HIV and viral diseases, Quality control and safety assessments of phytomedicines, Prevention of metabolic diseases by medicinal plants and nutraceuticals, Cosmetics, flavours and aromas”. Thus, a broad spectrum of medicinal plant research will be covered and we expect interesting lectures and posters from scientists throughout the world. More information on the GA congress 2009 is available in this newsletter and at the homepage of the congress (www.ga2009.org).

More than 600 abstracts of the presentations will be published in Planta Medica, the official organ of our Society. We are very delighted about this development and I would like to sincerely thank the publisher, Thieme, Stuttgart, for their ongoing support to our Society. You might have noticed that a low rate online access to Planta Medica articles for members of GA is available; I hope that this service will intensively be used and that more members will consider Planta Medica for the publication of their valuable results in the future.

In Geneva we will, for the first time, present the new Bionorica Phytoengineering Award of the Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research (BPA) which has been donated by Bionorica AG, Neumarkt (Germany) to promote excellent pharmacological and clinical research with herbal medicinals as well as safety and pharmacovigilance studies. This award will complement our well known Egon-Stahl-Award which is dedicated to promote young scientists working in the field of pharmacognosy and analytical phytochemistry.

Besides our annual congress, GA is again co-organizing several other symposia on medicinal plant research during this year, and I hope that you will have the chance to attend some of these meetings as well. You can find the corresponding information in this Newsletter or on our web site. All our previous events clearly showed that there is a continuously high interest in medicinal plant research. Since last year, also a large number of colleagues have joined our Society, which I personally would like to welcome as new and active members of the GA family.

I am very pleased that GA has developed to a globally leading society in the field of medicinal plant and natural product research and has become a platform for an exchange of knowledge and ideas between scientists worldwide. It is our aim to make GA even more attractive by providing exchange opportunities that may facilitate such collaborative efforts. We anticipate a number of outreach programs including enhancing our representation around the world, particularly in countries where natural products research is historically strong. However, in order to realize these goals we need to count on a secure and predictable funding base. Therefore, I would like to bring your attention to the following issue: Our Society’s budget largely depends on membership fees and donations from various organizations to maintain its operations. One reason for the significant budget cuts (e.g. reduced budget for travel grants for our youngest members) this year is that membership fees are not being paid in time. Just as a friendly reminder, the annual membership fees are due and payable at least in January of each year, therefore I kindly ask you to make arrangements to have the fee paid in time. This would highly contribute to develop a secure budget that preserves our Society’s core educational and research missions, while positioning GA to withstand the economic realities in these challenging times. If you have already submitted your 2009 membership fee, please ignore this message. Otherwise, we would appreciate that you make the payment for your 2009 membership fee as soon as possible. These are difficult times, but with your help GA will continue to be an excellent Society.

I hope to interact with many of you in Geneva where also our next member’s meeting will take place. I am cordially inviting all members, especially our new and young members, to attend the member’s meeting. During this meeting we will have to elect the Executive Council and Advisory Board of GA. I hope that especially some young members are willing to candidate and to serve GA with enthusiasm and new ideas.

I look forward to seeing many of you in the famous city of Geneva, during an exciting and stimulating congress.

Cordially,

Brigitte Kopp (President of GA)
Notes from the Society

Invitation to the GA Members’ Meeting 2009

During the 57th Annual meeting of our Society which will take place in Geneva, Switzerland, from August 16 – 20, 2009, a regular Members’ Meeting will be held. It is scheduled for Tuesday, August 18, 2009, 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Location: Hall #2 at the congress venue, the Centre International de Conférences Genève (CICG), 17, rue de Varembé, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland

This announcement in the Newsletter has to be considered as the official invitation to the Members’ Meeting (in accordance with the GA bylaws), as this Newsletter is sent out to all members of our Society.

Preliminary Agenda

1. Approval of the agenda
2. Approval of the minutes of the Members’ Meeting held in Athens on 5 Aug. 2008 (published in GA Newsletter 2-2008)
3. Annual reports
   3.1 Report of the President
   3.2 Reports of the Vice-Presidents
   3.3 Report of the Secretary
   3.4 Report of the Treasurer and report of the auditors
   3.5 Discharge of the ExC
4. Report of the Editor-in-Chief of Planta Medica
5. Reports of the Permanent Committees
6. Election of the Board of Directors
   6.1 Election of the president
   6.2 Election of the two vice presidents
   6.3 Election of the treasurer
   6.4 Election of the secretary
   6.5 Elections of the members of the Advisory Board
7. Future congresses, symposia and workshops
8. Miscellaneous

On behalf of the Executive Council
Prof. Dr. Brigitte Kopp, GA President

GA-Elections 2009

During the Members’ Meeting 2009 the Board of Directors for the period of 2010–2011 will be elected. Only GA members are entitled to vote. Supporting members are requested to transfer their vote to an authorized representative in writing to the GA secretary, no later than 1 Aug. 2009. Absent members may not be represented by proxy during the casting of ballots (§ 11.5 of the bylaws).

Nominations of candidates for the Board of Directors (Executive Council and Advisory Board) should be made in writing to the GA President, no later than 1 Aug. 2009; the nomination must include a written statement of consent by the candidate. Each candidate will be asked to submit a short CV on a powerpoint template for a presentation before the elections.

Some Data from the Membership Data Base

GA acknowledges the 50 years lasting individual memberships of Dr. Otto Isaac, Germany (since 5/1/1959), Prof. Dr. Max Wichtl, Austria (since 10/1/1958) and the supporting membership of Klein GmbH & Co.KG, Arzneipflanzenforschung und -herstellung in Zell, Germany (since 3/9/1959). We congratulate and thank them all for their support and loyalty over all the years! (members for even more than 50 years see NL 1-2008, p.3)

Notes to all GA members

Note to all GA members

Please inform the secretary by phone, fax or mail of any change in your coordinates, especially in case of changes in e-mail addresses.

Fax / phone: ++49 8141 613 749
e-mail: Ga-secretary@ga-online.org
The GA-homepage (www.ga-online.org) contains a special members area for which an access code is needed: username “gamember”, password “morphine”.

Editorial remark

All contributions for the GA-Newsletter are welcome.

Deadline for submission is fixed to November 30th 2009.

Please send all contributions by e-mail: Prof. Dr. A. Hensel University of Münster, Institute for Pharmaceutical Biology and Phytochemistry, Hittorfstrasse 56, D-48149 Münster, Germany ahensel@uni-muenster.de
The society can announce 95 new members since December 2008 as well as 2 new supporting company memberships: Merck Selbstmedikation, Germany, and Vitafreenet, Hungary. Thanks for their support!

The Society welcomes you all warmly and wishes that GA may get a platform for many scientific and personal contacts. We are looking forward to your active participation in many GA events! All the best for you all!

Aderibigbe, Adegbuyi, Nigeria; Adhami, Hamid-Reza, Austria; Agboola, Isaiah, Nigeria; Alyealaage, Olapeju, Nigeria; Arawawala, Menuka, LK; Armbüster, Nicole, Germany; Arsic, Ivana, Serbia; Bofa, Pompei-Florin, Romania; Bourgaud, Frederic, France; Boustie, Joel, France; Brudasca, Florin, Romania; Carlen, Christoph, Switzerland; Chaita, Eliza, Greece; Ching, Fidelis Poh, Nigeria; Chuenpitayaton, Sittisak, Thailand; Chuarojjumtri, Linda, Thailand; Cibron-Palmai, Reka, Hungary; Cuspor, Deszö, Hungary; Cuendet, Muriel, USA; Dafan, Dalen, Nigeria; Dimaik, Chryssa, UK; Eid, Hoda, Canada; El-Adawy, Hala, Egypt; Elsayed, Ebada, Germany; Emadi, Fatemeh, Iran; Eschenlohr, Eugen, Germany, Ezike, Adoabi, Nigeria; Fevre, Jean-Paul, France; Fidan, Ozan, Turkey; Gachet Otanez, Maria Salome, Austria; Heneka, Biklis, Germany; Hosbas, Sanem, Turkey; Howard, Caroline, UK; Huck, Christian, Austria; Isachi, Benedetta, Italy; Ismail, Amel, Tunisia; Jackson, Simon, UK; Jimenez, Pilar, Spain; Kadkade, Prakash, USA; Kagaru, Daniel, Nigeria; Kainz, Kerstin, Austria; Kaya, Güllem Irem, Turkey; Kerr, Conor, UK; Klar, Fabian, Germany; Kokosda, Ladislav, Czech Rep.; Kraus, Birgit, Germany; Lendvuthisopon, Nusiri, Thailand; Lirk, Katarina, Austria; Mahatanadul, Sirima, Thailand; Maxia, Andrea, Italy; Melo, Francislete, Brasil; Mertens, Michaela, Germany; Meybeck, Alain, France; Mignard, Benoît, France; Modarai, Maryam, UK; Mondal, Anindita S. S., India; Nemeth, Eva, Hungary; Ngwoke, Kenneth, UK; Niculae, Mihaela, Romania; Niehues, Michael, Germany; Odeleye, Olukayode, South Africa; Olszewska, Monika, Poland; Opoku, Andrew, South Africa; Orhan, Nilüfer, Turkey; Patnala, Srinivas, South Africa; Pesin, Ipek, Turkey; Quintanilla-Licea, Ramiro, Mexico; Rajabi, Afsaneh, Iran; Rehecho, Sheyla, Spain; Rindt, Julia Kristina, Romania; Riviere, Celine, France; Rocha, Graciela, UK; Rohs, Laura, UK; Salazar-Oblio, Luis, Mexico; Salou, Claude, Singapore; Sandru, Carmen Dana, Romania; Sarris, Jerome, Australia; Schwarzbach, Andrea, USA, Selvaraja, Malarvali, Malaysia; Sendker, Jandirik, Germany; Singhuber, Judith, Austria; Situ, Chen, UK; Spino, Marina, Romania; Staiger, Chrystiane, Germany; Taiwo, Bamigboye, Nigeria; Tansakul, Pimpinon, Thailand; Tewtrakul, Supinya, Thailand; Thomesen, Mette Goul, Norway; Ueda-Nakamura, Tania, Brasil; Unver-Somer, Nehir, Turkey; Vogl, Sylvia, Austria; Watatanayakul, Suvara, Thailand; Yadav, Narayan, India; Yong, Yoke Keong, Malaysia; Zapata Bustoa, Rocio, Mexico; Zugic, Ana, Serbia

Planta Medica online-only Subscription

Planta Medica, official organ of the GA, is available to all GA members at special rates as an online-only subscription. This special GA member subscription covers full text access to all articles, including eFirst and a range of back issues, depending on which option is chosen:
(1) an annual subscription to Planta Medica with access to back issues up to 1998 for EUR 60 per year or
(2) an annual subscription to Planta Medica with access to all back issues (i.e., up to and including 1953) for EUR 100 per year.
Subscriptions are valid for one full calendar year. All subscriptions include access to eFirst articles.

How to order
In October of every year, the annual invoice for membership fees will be sent out together with the option for the Planta Medica online-only subscription for the following year. Both have to be paid before November 15.
If you have joined the GA early in the year, you will receive an invoice for the membership fees with the option of taking out the subscription that will need to be paid before June 15.
If, as an existing member, you want to subscribe after November 15, please send an email to the GA treasurer to order and receive an invoice that will need to be paid before June 15.
Before January of the year of subscription (viz., before July 15 if you are joining during the year), the publisher, Georg Thieme Verlag KG, will provide subscribers with the necessary access data.
This offer is limited to individual members of the GA – Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research – Gesellschaft für Arzneipflanzen- und Naturstoff-Forschung. Use of the articles is for individual purposes only (including individual re-search). No distribution, transferring or forwarding of articles to other persons or institutions (universities, libraries, companies) is allowed.
We hope that many members will take advantage of this exclusive GA subscription!

Prof. Dr. Brigitte Kopp, GA president and Georg Thieme Verlag KG (Publisher)

Congratulations to GA president Kopp and vice president Blaschek

GA president, Univ.-Prof. Mag. Pharm. Dr. Dr. h.c. Brigitte Kopp, Vienna, as well as vice president Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Blaschek, Kiel Germany, celebrated their 60th birthday recently.
The Faculty of Life Sciences of the University of Vienna honoured Prof. Kopp, president of studies legislation of the University of Vienna and vice director of the Department of Pharmacognosy, with a birthday symposium, where the rector of the University of Vienna, colleagues, friends and GA vice president Rudolf Bauer for GA painted the professional and personal path of Prof. Kopp as multi-engaged scientist and Academy member. She is the first female and Austrian president of GA.

GA vice president Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Blaschek, head of the Department Pharmaceutical Biology at the Institute of Pharmacy of the Christian-Albrecht-University of Kiel, Germany, celebrated his 60th birthday on March 4th. of this year in Australia, where he was invited as visiting professor at the University of Melbourne for several months.

GA congratulates both and wishes them all the best and a lot of joy and energy for many more active years in our society as well as in their professional environment!
Dear Colleagues,

the 57th Congress of the Society of Medicinal Plant and Natural Product research will be held this year in Geneva, Switzerland. The congress venue is going to be at the CICG (Centre International des Conférences Genève) which is very well equipped to host such an important scientific event. As chairman of the Organizing Committee and also currently Director of the Laboratory of Pharmacognosy and Phytochemistry, School of Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of Geneva, University of Lausanne, I am highly pleased that the proposed programme attracted numerous scientists of 71 different countries who submitted more than 900 abstracts for poster or oral presentation.

The main topics of the Congress are:

- Lead finding from Nature
- Conservation and biodiversity issues
- Plants and aging of the population
- Natural products and neglected diseases
- Anti-cancer agents
- HIV and viral diseases
- Quality control and safety assessments of phytomedicines
- Prevention of metabolic diseases by medicinal plants and nutraceuticals
- Cosmetics, flavours and aromas

The programme of the Congress is offering invited lectures to be delivered by distinguished scientists, short oral communications which will be in parallel sessions and numerous posters. The opening lecture will be given by HRH Princess Chulabhorn Mahidol, President of the Chulabhorn Research Institute in Bangkok. The present issue of Planta Medica devoted to our Congress could be realized thanks to the help of Dr. Kuhlmann from Thieme Verlag and also because of the efficient work realized by staff members of my Laboratory, namely Karin Megzari, Martine Cabo, Prof. Jean-Luc Wolfender, Dr. Karine Ndjoko, Dr. Philippe Christen and Dr. Frederic Martin. My thanks go also to the agency selected for organizing this Congress, namely Kuoni Destination Management and their collaborators, Laetitia Roch, Franck Grosset and Steeve Girod. Checking more than 900 abstracts represents an enormous work which was achieved by the members of the scientific Committee. I express my gratitude to all of them for helping us to publish abstracts of good quality in this volume of Planta Medica.

I hope that everybody will enjoy his stay in Geneva.

Prof. Kurt Hostettmann
Chairman, Organizing Committee of the 57th International Congress & Annual Meeting of the Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research

Invited Speakers

- HRH Prof. Dr. Chulabhorn Mahidol (Thailand)
  Recent investigation of diverse cytotoxic natural products from Thai bioresources
- Prof. Dayar Arbain (Indonesia)
  Recent study on the chemistry of Sumatran plants
- Dr. Bettina Böhlendorf (Switzerland)
  Nutraceutical discovery – from plant extracts to functional food
- Prof. Jürgen Drewe (Switzerland)
- Prof. Mary Garson (Australia)
  New chemistry from South East Asia medicinal plants
- Dr. Paul Grothaus (USA)
  Anti-cancer agents from plants, current and future prospects
- Prof. Sami Khalid (Sudan)
  Phytomedicines safety and pharmacovigilance: some important considerations
- Prof. Hongxiang Lou (China)
  Chemical constituents from Chinese liverworts and their biological significance
- Prof. Alex Matter (Singapore)
  Natural products for the treatment of HIV / AIDS
- Prof. Elaine Perry (United Kingdom)
  Phytotherapy for the ageing brain
- Prof. Monique Simmonds (United Kingdom)
- Dr. Christian Starkenmann (Switzerland)
  Screening botanicals for new tastes and new flavors compounds
- Prof. Olov Sterner (Sweden)
  Novel GABAA ligands, inspired by nature
- Dr Emmanuel Tamchères
  Mimopezil: a monthly injected AChE-I, derived from Huperzine A
- Dr Deniz Tasdemir (United Kingdom)
  Natural products for the treatment of infectious neglected diseases
PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME

Sun. Aug. 16
08h00
Registration
09h00
Opening Ceremony

Mon. Aug. 17
08h00
Session 1
09h00
Opening lectures
10h00
Coffee break
11h00
Award lectures
12h00
Lunch
13h00
WORKSHOP:
Biological and Pharmacological Activity of Natural Products
14h00
Plenary lecture
15h00
Key note lecture
16h00
Coffee break
17h00
Key note lecture
18h00
Get together

Tue. Aug. 18
08h00
Session 2
09h00
Short lectures
10h00
Coffee break
11h00
Short lectures
12h00
Lunch
13h00
Plenary lectures
14h00
Key note lecture
15h00
Coffee break
16h00
Short lectures
17h00
Key note lecture
18h00
Poster session

Wed. Aug. 19
08h00
Plenary lectures
09h00
WORKSHOP:
Breeding and Cultivation of Medicinal Plants
10h00
Lunch
11h00
Plenary lectures
12h00
Member meeting with elections
13h00
Key note lecture
14h00
Congress dinner

Thu. Aug. 20
08h00
Excursion
News on regulatory affairs

What's on top of European Medicines Agency EMEA concerning Herbal Medicinal Products?

**Community herbal monographs**

After preparation and discussion in the MLWP and adoption by the HMPC, the following finalised monographs as well as one list entry were published on the EMEA website:

- *Avena sativa* L., fructus
- *Avena sativa* L., herba
- *Harpagophyllum procumbens* D.C. and/or *Harpagophyllum zeyheri* Decne, radix
- *Mentha x piperita* L., folium
- *Peumus boldus* Molina, folium
- *Polypodium vulgare* L., rhizoma
- *Rhusc aculeatus* L., rhizoma
- *Salix sp.*, cortex
- *Solidago virgaurea* L., herba
- List Entry for *Mentha x piperita* L., aetheroleum

Furthermore, several accompanying documents were published which were prepared in the MLWP. These documents provide further background information on the content of the published monographs and comprise HMPC opinions, assessment reports, lists of bibliographic references and overviews of comments received during the consultation period.

Scientific and herbal industry’s associations in principle welcome the preparation of the above-mentioned Community herbal monographs which may provide harmonised assessment criteria for herbal medicinal products and thus facilitate mutual recognition in Europe. However, in many cases comments were submitted suggesting amendments on individual chapters of the draft monographs, e.g. on *Harpagophyllum*. The associations were of the opinion that the draft which included only “traditional” indications did not take a number of clinical studies into account which were able to justify a “well-established medicinal use” of *Harpagophyllum* extracts. Although no change was made when the final ver-

---

**Herbal Medicinal Products – New Regulatory Developments in Europe**

Dr. Barbara Steinhoff; German Medicines Manufacturers Association (BAH); Co-chairperson of the ESCOP Scientific Committee; Ubiestr. 71–73; D-53173 Bonn, Germany, steinhoff@bah-bonn.de

Like all kinds of medicinal products herbal medicinal products have to prove their quality, efficacy and safety prior to gaining access to the market. Nowadays, in accordance with the European Directives, two options exist: in the area of “well-established medicinal use” a marketing authorisation based on bibliographic references or in the area of “traditional use” a registration as a “traditional herbal medicinal product”. It depends on the interpretation of the legal requirements by the authorities in EU Member States on how intensively these procedures can be used. In the past few months, the following new developments in scientific assessment and regulatory practice were observed.

**Registration of traditional herbal medicinal products**

After implementation of the Directive into national legal systems of most of the EU Member States, only relatively few registrations for traditionally used herbal medicinal products have been granted so far, most of them in the United Kingdom, e.g. for Devil’s Claw, Feverfew, Black Cohosh, Saw Palmetto, Valerian, Horse Chestnut or St. John’s Wort. In Germany, approximately 350 applications for registration have been submitted until 31 December 2008, the deadline to apply for new registrations of the existing § 109a marketing authorisations for traditional herbal medicinal products.

**The Committee on Herbal Medicinal Products**

The Committee on Herbal Medicinal Products (HMPC) meets 6 times per year under the chairmanship of Dr. Konstantin Keller, Germany. Vice-chairperson as well as chairperson of the Working Party on Community Monographs and Community List (MLWP) is Professor Ioanna Chinou, Greece, since January 2009, and vice-chair of this working group Dr. Werner Knöss, Germany. All drafts released for public consultation as well as the finalised documents can be found on the EMEA website (www.emea.europa.eu). Some important new documents, which might be of particular interest from the scientific point of view, will be discussed in the following.

---

**Other Meetings**

**Nice, France**

June 8 – 12, 2009; 2nd Pharmaceutical Sciences Fair and Exhibition (Pharm SciFair); www.pharmscifair.org/

**Bonn, Germany**


**Vienna, Austria**


**Berlin, Germany**

Sep 10 – 12, 2009; 7th Berlin Conference on Phytotherapy 2009; information by the local flyer: First Announcement

**Shanghai, China**

October 16 – 18, 2009; 2nd Shanghai International Conference on Traditional Chinese Medicine and Natural Medicines (S-TCM 2009); www.s-tcm.com/english.html

---

**Local Meetings**

**Ljubljana, Slovenia**


**Shanghai, China**

September 25, 2009; Herbal Drugs and Herbal Drug Preparations www.adaptogen.ru/phyto2009.html

**Ljubljana, Slovenia**


**Bonn, Germany**


**Ljubljana, Slovenia**


---

**Other Meetings**

**Local Meetings**

**Ljubljana, Slovenia**

June 17 – 21, 2009; 4th International Symposium Breeding Research on Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (ISBMAP2009); www.isbmap2009.si/
The "Reflection paper on markers (marker substances) used for quantitative and qualitative analysis of herbal medicinal products and traditional medicinal products" (EMEA/HMPC/253629/2007) was finally adopted in July 2008. It describes issues related to markers which are intended for quantitative and qualitative analytical control of herbal medicinal products and provides possible criteria for their selection.

The "Guideline on quality of combination herbal medicinal products/traditional herbal medicinal products" (EMEA/HMPC/214869/2006) became effective on 1 November 2008. This document addresses approaches for identification and quantitative determination of herbal substances/preparations in combination herbal medicinal products and takes into account their complex composition.

A draft "Concept paper on the development of a guideline on preparation of herbal teas" (EMEA/HMPC/451978/2008) was released for public consultation until 15 January 2009. It aims at providing instructions for the preparation of herbal teas and standardising the terminology used in HMPC documents. The herbal industry, in particular the manufacturers of herbal teas, did not see a necessity for the preparation of such a paper, because many issues are already regulated in the European Pharmacopoeia, and an additional standardisation of herbal teas does not seem appropriate. However, preparation of a reflection paper on glossary which is restricted to the explanation of terms commonly used for the preparation of herbal teas, could be seen as an alternative approach.

A draft "Reflection paper on the level of purification of extracts" (EMEA/HMPC/186645/2008) searches for criteria to distinguish the borderline between herbal preparations and isolated herbal constituents. Interested parties were invited to submit comments by 15 April 2009. According to some comments submitted, all levels of purification of primary extracts have to be classified as "herbal preparations" with the exception of "isolated single chemically defined substances" representing the final step of purification. Consequently, all guidelines for herbal preparations and herbal medicinal products (e.g., on quality, specifications, stability, declaration etc.) should apply for these purified preparations.

A revision of the "Guideline on declaration of herbal substances and herbal preparations in herbal medicinal products/traditional herbal medicinal products" (EMEA/HMPC/3626/2008) intends to generate a discussion on establishing guidance criteria for stability testing and application of existing guidance documents. Interested parties were requested to provide examples of possible stability scenarios specific for herbal medicinal products and traditional herbal medicinal products by 15 May 2009.

In July 2008, the "Guideline on the assessment of genotoxic constituents in herbal substances/preparations" (EMEA/HMPC/104681/2007) had been published on the EMEA website. It provides guidance on the practical interpretation and implementation of genotoxicity testing, hazard identification and risk assessment of herbal medicinal products and might serve as a pragmatic approach to address the issue of genotoxicity testing describing a stepwise approach according to the ICH S2 guidelines. More recently, a "Concept Paper on selection of test materials for genotoxicity testing for traditional herbal medicinal products/herbal medicinal products" (EMEA/HMPC/315413/2008) has been prepared. In addition to the above mentioned guideline it contains further guidance for genotoxicity testing mentioning e.g. a "Bracketing & Matrixing" approach for testing different types of extracts from the same plant. This document is highly appreciated by interested parties because it represents a pragmatic approach for testing selected extracts that are able to serve as representative examples for a
broader range of preparations. Thus testing can be restricted to a reasonable extent.

The HMPC prepared a “Reflection Paper on the ethanol content in herbal medicinal products and traditional herbal medicinal products used in children” (EMEA/HMPC/85114/2008) which is intended to reflect the need for safety limits for ethanol exposure by herbal medicinal products for oral use. It was released for public consultation until 15 March 2009. In their comments several associations made clear that the ethanol-related risk of herbal medicinal products is negligible when they are used in the recommended dose, in particular when compared to ethanol-containing beverages and food such as bananas and apple juice.

All respective drafts released for public consultation as well as the finalised documents can be found on the EMEA website (http://www.emea.europa.eu/htms/human/hmpc/hmpcguide.htm).

ESCOP – The European Scientific Cooperative on Phytotherapy

ESCOP, the European Scientific Cooperative on Phytotherapy, was founded in Cologne on 18 June 1989. The vision of the original founder members was to establish a European umbrella organization of national societies and associations for phytotherapy. It was already evident at that time that the European review of medicines had not achieved a reasonable degree of harmonization in herbal medicinal products. The need to create harmonized criteria for assessment of the therapeutic uses of herbal medicinal products led to the concept of ESCOP monographs, the first ones being completed in 1990. ESCOP has now finalised its work on a supplement to the book containing ESCOP monographs. This supplement of approximately 35 monographs will contain revisions e.g. on Devil’s claw, Eleutherococcus, Valerian and Echinacea as well as approximately 25 new monographs e.g. on Milkthistle, Capsicum, Pumpkin seed and Hawthorn berries. On the exact date of ESCOP’s anniversary, a scientific symposium will take place in Cologne, the city where ESCOP was founded 20 years ago. Representatives from health authorities, academia, industry and other interested parties will take the opportunity to discuss recent developments in the assessment of herbal medicinal products and the importance of phytotherapy from scientific, regulatory and political viewpoints.

Address:
Dr. Barbara Steinhoff
German Medicines Manufacturers’ Association (BAH)
Co-chairperson of the ESCOP Scientific Committee
Ubiestr. 71–73
D-53173 Bonn
E-Mail: steinhoff@bah-bonn.de

New Books

Mikroskopischer Farbatlas pflanzlicher Drogen

The advent of digital photography in pharmacognosy is come. This new book presents European official plant drugs in a novel and timely manner. Absolutely brilliant digital colour photographs show the main microscopic characteristics of over 140 drugs (8 photos per drug) in highly detailed and absolutely realistic form. Such realism could, of course, not be reached by previous works of this type based on drawings.

The finish of the book is also of very high quality: The brilliance and sharpness of the photographs is supported and emphasized by high paper quality. The protective synthetic-coated cover seems quite suitable for a book that may spend most of its time lying beside the microscope, not too far from reagent bottles of Lugol’s iodine and chloral hydrate solutions.

The text of each drug monograph, besides the systematic and nomenclatorial details, a brief description of the plants, their active constituents and use, is made up of descriptions of the depicted microscopic details in a concise and precise manner – exactly what is needed to understand each characteristic detail in its anatomical context.

So far, only few shortcomings that might be worth mentioning were detected by the author of this review. One is the systematic treatment of certain plants which have recently been re-classified (e.g. “Caesalpinaceae” should no longer be treated at the family level since they now form a subfamily of Fabaceae). Another one is found in the rear inner cover, where the typical cross sections of the plant organs are presented in schematic form. These drawings – in some instances – lack certain details (or show some in excess) which, however, is easily detectable, at least for the teacher. Slight improvements in this part might be desirable in further editions.

All in all, the book can definitely be recommended and is certainly one that those of us who teach basic pharmacognosy, and – even more – our students, will profit from. Moreover, it will also represent a valuable reference for the practical pharmacist in identity control and for anyone involved (or interested) in classical pharmacognostic analysis. It should finally not be left unmentioned that the price (€ 29.95) is really a scoop for a book of this quality.

Prof. Thomas J. Schmidt, Institut für Pharmazeutische Biologie und Phytochemie, University of Münster, Germany


Pharmazeutische Biologie 1: Grundlagen für Studium und Praxis

“The Reinhard”: nearly everybody in the German-speaking countries dealing with pharmaceutical aspects of herbal materials knows about this basic text book, edited now in the 7th edition and founded many years ago by GA honorary member Ernst Reinhard, Tübingen, Germany. The text book presents all basic and advanced knowledge for understanding Pharmaceo- nosophy and Pharmaceutical Biology. Main chapters are dealing with cytology, morphology, histology of plants, genetical aspects, physiology and aspects of developmental physiology, systematics and taxonomy of virus, bacteria, and a great chapter on systematics of eukaryotes. The 7th edition was redone concerning the colored figures, which are now in a high quality with a high didactic impact. A perfect text book and a must for students on undergraduate level, but also for scientists looking for quick information on basic pharmaceutical biology.

GA worldwide
and their Institutes of Pharmacognosy: International, Interesting and Cooperative

We introduce and present two research groups working in the field of medicinal plants and natural products with their special characteristics. In this Newsletter: India.

GA has 29 regular members from India. Two working groups have prepared a short presentation of the group and the activities.

Name of Institute: VNS Institute of Pharmacy, Bhopal (M.P.), India
Department of Pharmacognosy and Natural Products Chemistry

Address: Department of Pharmacognosy, VNS Institute of Pharmacy, Bhopal
Postal Address: 313-B, D.K. Surbhi, Gomti Colony, Nehru Nagar, Bhopal (M.P.) 462003 INDIA
Homepage: www.vnspharm.org
Head of Department: Prof. Umesh K. Patil (umeshpatil29@yahoo.com)
Working areas:
1. Standardization of Herbal Medicinal Products.
2. Pharmacological screening of plant drugs and natural isolates.

2 publications, representing the institution:

Coworkers: 15 Academic staff members, 2 PhD, 4 Postdocs, 3 Technicians, 2 Assistants
The “speciality” or the unique selling proposition of the institution:
The institute is committed to provide quality education in pharmacy and pharmaceutical research. Quality herbal drug research is an asset of Department of Pharmacognosy and natural product chemistry.

Running projects with industrial partners?
Three research projects based on standardization based on Herbal Medicinal Products are in progress.

International Institute of Herbal Medicine 5/57B, Vineetkhand, Gomtinagar, Lucknow
Run by: International Society for Herbal Medicine, 2/301, Vijaykhand, Gomtinagar, Lucknow

Address: International Institute of Herbal Medicine (IIHM), 5/57B, Vineetkhand, Gomtinagar, Lucknow -226010.
Homepage: www.synergylko.com/ishm or www.ishm.in
Head of institution: Dr. Narendra Singh
Working areas:
Organic Herbals, clinical trials of herbal medicines, standardization of herbal drugs / formulations.

2 publications, representing the institution:
Singh N. 2008. Herbs – The Life of Man, Need Pharmacoclinical Studies for their Scientific Validation – Relevance of Modern Methods of Pharmacological Studies to Traditional Medicine, October 17–18, 2008, Department of Pharmacology & Therapeutics, C.S.M. Medical University, Scientific Convention Centre, Lucknow, pp 37-43.

Coworkers: 6 Academic staff members, 10 guest faculty members, 2 technicians and 2 lab assistants
Recent thesis on Medicinal Plant Research

(Notices of Ph.D. and diploma theses to the editor are welcome any time!)

Ph.D. thesis (2009) Isolation and characterization of polysaccharides from liquorice (Glycyrrhiza glabra L.) and influence on adhesion of pathogenic bacteria. By: Nicole Katharina Wittschier; Promotor: Prof. Dr. Andreas Hensel, Institute for Pharmaceutical Biology and Phytochemistry, University of Münster, Germany.


Ph.D. thesis (2009) Untersuchungen zur Wirkung von Valeriana officinalis L. s.l. By: Gabriele Trauner; Promotor: Prof. B. Kopp, Department of Pharmacognosy, University of Vienna, Austria.


Ph.D Thesis (2008) Polyketide synthases in Cannabis sativa L. By: I.J. Flores Sanchez; Promotor: Prof. Dr. R. Verpoorte, IBL, Leiden University, NL.

Ph.D thesis (2008) New antimycobacterial compounds from plants. By: Doris Lechner; Promotor: Prof. F. Bucar and Prof. K. Groschner, Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of Graz, Austria.


Diploma thesis in Chemistry and Pharmaceutical Technology (2009) HPLC analysis of different extracts of Artemisia annua L. and evaluation of their activity in some neglected disease. By: Michela Burico; Promotor: Prof. A.R. Bilia, Prof. M.C. Bergonzoni, Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Florence, Italy.

Diploma thesis in Herbal Technologies (2009) Rapid isolation Hypericum perforatum naphthodianthrone and inhibition of thioredoxin reductase system. By: Alessandro Reggiori; Promotor: Prof. A.R. Bilia, Dr. Anastasia Karioti, Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Florence, Italy.

Diploma thesis in Herbal Technologies (2009) Evaluation of cytotoxicity and insights in the anti-inflammatory activity of bergenin, proanthocyanidin B3 and prodelfphinid C. By: Monica Galigani; Promotor: Prof. A.R. Bilia, Dr. Anastasia Karioti, Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Florence, Italy; Prof. M.C. Recio Iglesias, Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Valencia, Spain.

Diploma thesis in Herbal Technologies (2009) Aromatherapy: a rational use. By: Chiara Caleri; Promotor: Prof. A.R. Bilia, Dr. Anastasia Karioti, Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Florence, Italy.

Diploma thesis in Herbal Technologies (2009) Analysis of the volatile constituents of Artemisia annua L. By: Giulia Beatrice Bianchini; Promotor: Prof. A.R. Bilia, Dr. Anastasia Karioti, Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Florence, Italy.

Diploma thesis in Herbal Technologies (2009) Phytochemical and toxicological research of Rhododendron ferrugineum L. By: Daniela Harmanstein; Promotor: Prof. B. Kopp, Department of Pharmacognosy, University of Vienna, Austria.

Diploma thesis (2009) Metabolic profiling of Vaccinium macrocarpon using 1H-NMR: Application for quality control of cranberry juice. By: Maria Kundračíková; Promotor: Prof. B. Kopp, Department of Pharmacognosy, University of Vienna, Austria; Prof. Robert Verpoorte, Institute of Biology, Leiden University, the Netherlands.

Diploma thesis (2009) Vermehrung von Süßholz über somatische Embryogenese. By: Martha Winter; Promotor: Prof. B. Kopp, Department of Pharmacognosy, University of Vienna, Austria.