

COMMENTARY

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News from the SETAC Europe Student Advisory Council - September 2012

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Abstract

The Student Advisory Council is the speaking tube of SETAC Europe's students aiming to support young researchers in becoming fully-fledged members of the Society. In this article we report our latest activities during the 6th SETAC World Congress/SETAC Europe 22nd Annual Meeting in Berlin, Germany, and the upcoming 3rd Young Environmental Scientists (YES) Meeting in Krakow, Poland.

General - The Student Advisory Council

The promotion of young scientists should be a top priority in a sustainably operating scientific community. Besides university education, great importance has to be placed upon the integration of young researchers into this community and coaching them for everyday life in the scientific world. It is for this reason that during the 2006 Annual Meeting in The Hague, the SETAC (Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry) Europe Student Advisory Council (SAC) was founded as the speaking tube of SETAC Europe's students. The aim of the SAC is to support these young researchers to become well-networked, self-confident scientists, and as a result, fully-fledged members of the Society. To achieve these goals the SAC regularly organizes special student activities during SETAC Europe Annual Meetings and, on a biennial basis, an international students-only meeting (see below). Starting with this article, the SAC will regularly report its latest and upcoming activities in ESEU. For further information visit the council's webpage at <http://www.sac-online.eu/>.

Latest - Activities during the Berlin Meeting

For the 6th SETAC World Congress/SETAC Europe 22nd Annual Meeting from May 20 to 24 in Berlin, Germany, the SAC organized several activities. On Monday, a *Mentor Lunch* took place (co-organized by the North American SAC and kindly sponsored by the German

Federal Environment Agency). In a relaxing atmosphere, students had the chance to meet established scientists from all over the world (Figure 1). On Tuesday we had a lunch time session with *Career Talks* given by three professors at different stages of their academic careers, namely Ralf B. Schäfer (D), Lúcia Guilhermino (PT), and John Sumpter (UK). All three provided very interesting insights into their personal careers and presented useful information on crucial skills required for scientific progress, as well as the opportunities and challenges scientists may face during their academic careers. During the annual *Student Assembly* on Wednesday, SETAC's students were updated about past and upcoming activities of the SAC. Moreover, Dominic Englert as well as Mirco Weil were elected as new members of the SAC and Dragan Jevtić as co-chair, who will succeed Jochen Zubrod during the Annual Meeting in Glasgow 2013. All activities were well-received by both student attendees and involved senior scientists.

Upcoming - The 3rd YES Meeting

From February 11 to 13, 2013, the third international students-only meeting organized by the SAC (together with the local organizing committee) – the Young Environmental Scientists (YES) Meeting – will be hosted by the Institute of Environmental Sciences (www.eko.uj.edu.pl) of the Jagiellonian University (www.uj.edu.pl) in Krakow, Poland, under the motto "Interdisciplinary discourse on current environmental challenges" (Figure 2). Like the two highly successful precursor meetings [1,2], the upcoming one is tailored to the specific needs of the

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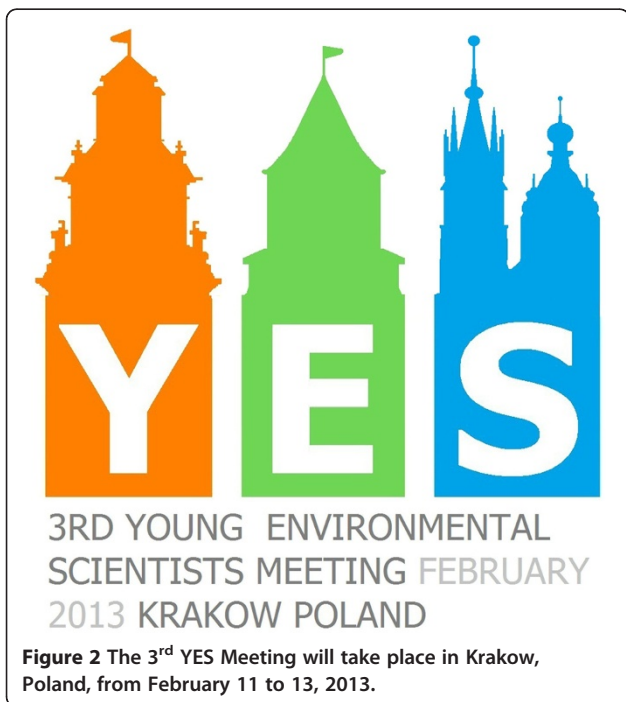
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Figure 1 Students discuss with established scientists during the Mentor Lunch (Photograph: Rachel Conrad).

student audience. On the first day, Dr. Valery Forbes (University of Nebraska–Lincoln, USA) will give her workshop “The Essentials of Scientific Networking – Be Remembered for the Right Reasons”, equipping the participants with soft-skills crucial for their careers in science. Furthermore, on each of the three days a Career Talk will be given with respect to the tripartite structure of SETAC. Additionally, attendees will have the chance to get in touch with potential future employers at the Job Corner. A further benefit for students is that after



each platform presentation, the student auditorium will be given enough time to discuss the results, as well as the layout and performance, of each presentation. During a poster social, similar interactions are intended. To ensure that it is not the financial situation of the applicant but the scientific quality of submitted abstracts (evaluated through a peer review process) that determines students' participation, no conference fees will be charged and all attendees will receive travel grants. Thus, we are grateful for all donations (potential supporters can still contact us via yes@sac-online.eu or the first author's email address). For further information about the 3rd YES Meeting and abstract submission (open until October 30, 2012), visit <http://yes2013.sac-online.eu/>. See you in Krakow!

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Authors' contributions

All authors are members of the SAC, have supported the organization as well as the conduct of the activities mentioned in the text above, and have read and approved the final manuscript.

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