

DIRECTOR'S UPDATE FROM THE FORTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

1. The following is a brief report updating on the follow-up to the 49th Session of the Scientific Council and relating to items not covered elsewhere on the agenda. A number of items of follow-up from the Scientific Council were considered at the 55th Session of the Governing Council and hence are addressed in document SC/50/3.

Presentation of standard reports: Biennial report of the IARC Ethics Committee (IEC), 2011–2012 (document SC/49/5)

2. In line with the Scientific Council's request, the IEC has developed a discussion paper on the management of incidental findings in IARC genomic studies, which is available for consultation on the IEC's website [<http://ethics.iarc.fr/index.php>].

Future directions for the Education and Training Group (ETR) (Document SC/49/7)

3. The Scientific Council had welcomed ETR plans to develop e-learning at the Agency and recommended further investment in the technical infrastructure for online training. The Information Technology Services (ITS) and the Administrative Services Office (ASO), in collaboration with ETR and other Agency Groups conducted an assessment of the technical solutions currently available for recording and online re-diffusion of presentations, training courses, workshops, etc. The solution judged to be most appropriate for IARC's plans in this area, "Inwicast", has recently been acquired and will be put into operation in the near future.

4. In line with the principles set out in the Postdoctoral Fellowship Charter and with one of the recommendations of the Scientific Council, the 'Early Career Scientist Association' (ECSA) was created in July 2013. ECSA is open to all post-docs and students at IARC and works in collaboration with ETR to promote opportunities for training, career development, social activities, and regular dialogue between early career scientists, ETR, and IARC management. Since its creation, and as a complement to generic training activities organized by ETR, ECSA has set up a range of career development events: Career Development Talks by senior scientists, Round Table events with invited speakers at the Agency, ECSpertise seminars held by Early Career Scientists. The Association also organized a variety of social events and launched the publication of the ECSA Newsletter. ECSA is also engaging in ongoing discussions with ETR

and the IARC administration about the most appropriate approach to provision of mentorship for trainees, as identified by the Scientific Council.

Future directions of the IARC Biobank (document SC/49/10)

5. The Scientific Council had endorsed the Laboratory Services and Biobank Group's (LSB) plans for establishing a large, high-quality shared biobank of collections from low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) at IARC.

6. LSB in collaboration with the Centre for Global Health, NCI, USA hosted a meeting in Lyon in September 2013 on the establishment of a 'LMIC biobank cohort building network' (BCNet). The meeting was attended by representatives of 14 LMICs and a number of international biobank organizations (BBMRI.eric, BBMRI.se, ESBB, ISBER, AORTIC, NCRI (UK), P3G and NCI). There was strong support for the BCNet project, together with the request from the LMIC partners for IARC to coordinate the network, provide leadership and guidelines on appropriate technologies and tools, and assist in training and capacity building. A Steering Committee has been established to develop the project.

7. A comprehensive review of the Biobank's current space and facilities is being undertaken, following the Scientific Council's recommendation to develop a plan in the short-term for the IARC Biobank. To this end a detailed review of the liquid nitrogen facilities is being conducted, including an assessment of the condition of storage tanks and automatic filling pipeline by an external company. Additional floor space has been made available in the tower basement to accommodate eight additional freezers with the possibility of more space becoming available in the future, and funds have been provided to purchase two additional liquid nitrogen tanks to replace one faulty tank and to accommodate the contents of 10 smaller tanks that are now being filled manually.

8. The IARC Biobank Access Policy has been completed after extensive internal consultation and is now posted on the IARC internet [<http://ibb.iarc.fr/>]. The cataloguing of bio-specimens and the entry of information into the sample management system is continuing.