

Report on the Activities of ISEE European Chapter

Period March 2019 - May 2019

Organization

The committees of the European Chapter, including elected and associated members, have continued their work with monthly conference calls and committee interactions.

We've changed some roles on our council as we continue to bring a fresh perspective to our Chapter. We say a huge thank you to Danielle Vienneau who has been our co-chair for the last two and a half years and welcome Hanna Boogaard, who takes her place as co-chair. In addition, we are preparing for the new ISEE Europe elections in September. Benedicte Jacquemin will stand for re-election and Martine Vrijheid will step down, after a very much appreciated contribution to the committee, in particular promoting research in environmental health, e.g., EU Horizon 2020. We have already identified some new promising candidates – from countries not currently presented, which we plan to introduce during the ISEE European chapter meeting in Utrecht.

Main activities

The main Europe Chapter priorities for 2019 are to:

- Communications: Undertake a complete update of the website and strengthen other channels of communications including Twitter
- Education: Plan for the next Masterclass in Europe, and work closely with main ISEE council and Africa chapter to facilitate capacity building
- Policy: Stay engaged in ongoing high priorities across Europe including the air quality fitness check.

We just issued a spring 2019 ISEE Europe newsletter and distributed it to all ISEE members based in Europe. In addition, we keep revamping our website and we see an uptick in visitors as we strive to keep it up to date and lively. For example, we regularly update the news and events page, and we have redesigned the blog to encourage wider engagement. Lastly, we have just started a pilot using Basecamp for internal communications within the ISEE Europe chapter.

After a successful masterclass on climate change and health last year held in Brussels together with the European Respiratory Society (ERS), we are organizing a new ERS-ISEE masterclass this year in Poland in November 2019. The aim is to increase awareness, knowledge and capacity regarding advocacy on current air pollution issues. Poland is an important contributor of air pollution in Europe and is also an important country in European decision making. We are working with the Polish Association of Lung Disease (PTChP) <http://www.ptchp.org/>. Moreover, we are working with CAPE to help support the WHO in organizing/advertising an Epidemiology training course in autumn 2019.

There are two major ongoing evaluations that will shape air quality policies in Europe and beyond in the near future. The European Commission is conducting an evaluation of the Air Quality Directives, and the WHO is updating the Global Air Quality Guidelines. For example, chapter members attended the ERS 'emergency meeting' in Spring 2019 on air quality issues and health in the EU. This meeting was a response to developments started in Germany this

winter involving German doctors casting doubt regarding the health effects of NO₂, and requesting a new review of the NO₂ limit values. The meeting was successful and follow up steps are currently being discussed. One idea is to organize a meeting in Brussels in 2020 jointly with ERS/ISEE/WHO/HEI on air pollution and health studies investigating health effects at low levels, as well as other air pollution and health issues. There is increasing evidence for adverse health effects of air pollution even at levels below current ambient air quality standards and guidelines. ISEE Europe contributes to these evaluations to make sure that new epidemiologic studies will be fully taken on board.

Other activities

As a chapter we continue to support the annual conferences in various ways. Again this year several on our committee are serving on the Scientific Committee of ISEE Utrecht. We will have our annual meeting, and have a table at the Committee fair to promote our Chapter work.

The new EU-by-laws were recently approved by the main council and have been put on our website.

Planning for the 4th ISEE Young Conference to be held in Basel, Switzerland in February 2021 is ongoing. Chaired by Danielle Vienneau, the local organising committee (LOC) has been working behind the scenes to secure the university venue, insurance, etc. The LOC awaits the latest ISEE conference guidelines, and is prepared for bilateral discussions with the ISEE Executive council. We hope to announce the 4th ISEE Young at our Europe members meeting in Utrecht.