



NEWSLETTER

International Federation of Environmental Health

July 2010 Edition

Welcome to the July edition of the IFEH Newsletter

Just over two months to go before the next IFEH World Congress and we invite you to join us in Vancouver, British Columbia, the gateway to the four-season playground and the rest of Canada. Located on the west coast, Vancouver is a world-class, multicultural city situated between majestic coastal mountains and the Pacific Ocean. Rainforests, sparkling waterways and seasonal foliage have inspired others to confer accolades of “Most Liveable” and “Most Beautiful” on this city. The Congress theme, Global Health Protection From Sea to Sky, provides a broad platform from which to explore universal challenges to environmental health in an era of increasing globalization. This Congress, the 11th in the history of the Federation, will coincide with the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors 76th Annual Educational Conference and Exhibition.

INTERNATIONAL ESSAY COMPETITION TO MARK THE 135th BIRTHDAY OF REHIS

The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS), a Founder Member of the International Federation of Environmental Health, celebrated its 135th birthday earlier this year and to mark the occasion we invite undergraduate and postgraduate students on Environmental Health programmes accredited by member organisations of the Federation to participate in an essay competition. The set essay topic will be: *How would you raise the profile of environmental health and make its delivery more relevant to government and policy makers over the next five years?* Each member organisation of the Federation and the programme providers will assess submissions from their student cohort. One submission (only) from each member organisation will be assessed by a panel of international environmental health academics (Koos Engelbrecht, Tony Grimason, Barbara Delaney, Steve Konkel and Harold Harvey) who will determine the winning entry. All submissions to be made in MS Word and to be submitted in English. A maximum word count of 2,500 has been set. This is a REHIS award and the Institute aims to raise the profile of international environmental health issues, encourage student Environmental Health Professionals to consider

Environmental Health in a global perspective, and to promote the work of the Federation as the global umbrella organisation for environmental health.

Member organisations/programme providers have to submit their entry to Tom Bell, Chief Executive of REHIS at tb@rehis.com by 15 July at the latest. He will then forward these entries to the assessment panel who will advise me of its decision by 16 August 2010. The name of the winning entrant will be announced at the World Congress in Vancouver in September. Prize money of £500.00 will be awarded. Further information is available at the IFEH and REHIS websites.

2nd All Africa Environmental Health Congress

The 2nd All Africa Environmental Health Congress took place from the 24 - 27 May in Lilongwe, Malawi. An attendance of around 160 participants took part in the four day event which included a day of technical visits. The Congress was officially opened by Malawi's Minister of Health, Honourable Professor Moses Chirambo, MP.

The Congress programme covered areas of particular importance to Malawi and Africa and was very much centred on Public Health issues including Diarrhoea Control and Treatment, Water and Sanitation, Drinking Water Safety Plans, Community Led Total Sanitation, Community Health, and Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management.

During the opening ceremony the official handover of the African Academy of Environmental Health Curriculum document took place. One of the main objectives of this British Council sponsored project, the development of a curriculum for environmental health for Africa, has now been successfully completed after years of collaboration between academics who deliver environmental health courses throughout Africa



Congress photo - Lilongwe May 2010

Malawi Environmental Health Association (MEHA).

Malawi Environmental Health Association was recently relaunched and as a result elected new office bearers. The President is Young Samanyika, Vice President is Dr Steve Taulo, Esther Kaunda is the Secretary and Paul Chunga has taken over as Treasurer. Good luck to MEHA's new office bearers.

South African Institute of Environmental Health (SAIEH).

The SAIEH together with the Professional Board for Environmental Health in South Africa pushed for the promulgation of the scope of the profession for environmental health. The scope of the profession was finally promulgated and signed into a legal document. This legal document comprises all legal functions that can be discharged exclusively by environmental health practitioners only in the country. The practise of environmental health has been encroached by many professionals other than environmental health practitioners. This legal document protect environmental health professional practise.

A breach of the scope is therefore an offence that can be taken to court by any environmental health practitioner. Many environmental health practitioners in the country regard this as a victory for the profession.

As mentioned earlier the Africa Group held its 2nd Congress on environmental health on 24-27 May 2010 at Cross Road Hotel at Lilongwe, Malawi. The Congress was well represented by both academics and practitioners from over ten (10) African countries, America, Scotland, Australia and Jamaica. The congress emerged with six (6) congress resolutions with clear time frames and responsible person for implementation. The resolutions covered areas of environmental interventions in the control of diarrhoeal diseases, climate change and greenhouse gases, water quality, sanitation and hygiene, food safety, etc. It was also resolved that the 3rd Africa congress will be hosted by South Africa in 2012. The Congress was a resounding success for environmental health on the African continent.



Member exchange opportunities

Almost two years ago the IFEH Council decided to set up an exchange program. The aim of this initiative is to allow individual members the opportunity to see how environmental health is delivered elsewhere in the world. We decided that each member organisation should appoint a national coordinator or contact point, to take care of applications from their own members as well as applications from potential visitors. Unfortunately we have only received the names of a few national coordinators. Jan Homma jhomma@chello.nl or Steen Fogde fogde@mail.dk would urge all Member Organisations to nominate a national coordinator as soon as possible. This information will be placed on the Federation website for those who are interested in gaining experience in another country.

EFEH meet in Hamburg despite volcanic ash!

The planned EFEH meeting in Altona, Hamburg on 17th April was held despite severe disruption due to the Eyjafjallajökull volcano in Iceland. Members travelled overland from Denmark and the Netherlands and IFEH Treasurer Stephen Cooper who had already left home before the flight ban began continued the journey and return by train, Eurostar and (eventually) ferry across the Irish Sea.

New EHOA representative Martin Fitzpatrick had intended to fly to Hamburg from Helsinki where he had been on holiday but endured a nine country trip home by road, rail and sea. Our new colleagues from SPSA (Portugal) were also disappointed in being unable to attend as were Bernard, Colin and Peter from REHIS and CIEH.

However, the meeting was lively and a number of suggestions centred around setting up technical discussion groups as part of the Council and Regional group agenda, pursuing the development of a climate change toolkit for members, preparation of a briefing note on Climate Change and COP16 are to be referred to the Council meeting in Vancouver in September. We welcomed two new representatives to the EFEH – Mascha Weihe (BVLK) and Jens Mortensen (ENVINA)

The meeting noted the contribution of Dolerita Mifsud and Hadrian Bonello of the Malta Association of Environmental Health made over the last two years as Chair and Secretary and our thanks were recorded to them. Kati Grünwald with the support of BVLK now takes the Chair for the next two years.

New membership groups

Members are reminded that there are now two new membership groups in the Federation, Individual Membership and Affiliated Membership. Individual membership is open to individuals who will either be a member of a Member Organisation of the Federation or possess a degree or relevant post graduate qualification, and be involved in the field of environmental health. In all cases applicants will require to satisfy a Membership Panel (President, President Elect, Honorary Secretary, and Honorary Treasurer) that they are suitable for membership of the Federation. Although no voting privileges are accorded to this class of membership Individual Members are encouraged to become involved in Federation and Regional Group activities. Individual Members will be allowed to use the designatory letters M IFEH. Affiliated Organisation membership is open to a private company interested in environment and health and support the aims and objectives of the Federation. Applicants will require to satisfy a Membership Panel (President, President Elect, Honorary Secretary, and Honorary Treasurer) that they are suitable to become members of the Federation.



Help the Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer.

The IFEH is manned by volunteers who work tirelessly for the Federation in *their own time*. What adds to the workload considerably is the lack of up to date information concerning changes that take place within Member Organisations. It is essential that we know who the IFEH representative is from your organisation, also the name of the Chairman/President and Secretary together with contact details. All the information is placed on the website and we know that this is a source of information for many agencies. So please check your entry on the website and let us know of any changes *as soon as possible*. Thank you.

Finally the next edition of the Newsletter will be published in October 2010. If you have any news for the Newsletter from your organisation please send it to me by the first week in September. My thanks go to Tom Bell, Steve Cooper, Jerry Chaka, Andrew Forteath and Henning Hansen who have assisted in the production of this issue.

