



The International Organization for Mycoplasmaology (IOM) IOM Newsletter

Volume 45, Number 1, December 2021

Chair: Steven Geary (USA); **Chair-Elect:** Meghan May (USA); **Past Chair:** Glenn Browning (Australia); **Secretary-General:** Pascal Sirand-Pugnet (France); **Treasurer:** Maria Pieters (USA); **Membership Secretary:** Sabine Pereyre (France); **IRPCM Chair:** Christine Citti (France); **Information Officer:** Mitchell Balish (USA); **Board Members-At-Large:** Chih-Horng Kuo (Taiwan); Yonathan Arfi (France); Makoto Miyata (Japan); Inna Lysnyanski (Israel); Birgit Henrich (Germany).



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MESSAGE FROM THE IOM CHAIR

Fellow Mycoplasmologists,

To begin with I want to thank Glenn Browning for his leadership and guidance during his extended tenure as Chair due to Covid. He did a masterful job during these trying times and I appreciate that he will be assuming the post of Past-Chair and continue to serve in an advisory capacity.



I want to now introduce our Board Members:

Steve Geary, Chair

Meghan May, Chair-elect

Glenn Browning, Past-Chair

Pascal Sirand-Pugnet, Secretary General

Maria Pieters, Treasurer,

Sabine Pereyre, Membership Secretary

Mitch Balish, Information Officer

Christine Citti, IRPCM Liaison

At-Large Members:

Yonathan Arfi

Birgit Henrich

Chih-Horng Kuo

Inna Lysnyansky

Makoto Miyata

The 2021 IOM Board meeting was held at the beginning of the IOM Congress. At that time a number of issues were raised that required more thought and discussion so I have established three subcommittees to address these issues.

Subcommittees (tasks and Chairs):

- 1) To revamp the IOM and IRPCM websites. Mitch Balish and Christine Citti will co-chair this committee to discuss options and to suggest changes.
- 2) To grow the IOM membership substantially. Pascal Sirand-Pugnet will Chair this committee.
- 3) To clarify the criteria and validation processes for the IOM awards. Rohini Chopra-Dewasthaly, Amir Hadjinoormohammadi (the new awards committee chair) and Meghan May will co-Chair this committee to discuss this issue and suggest modifications as needed.

Anyone interested in participating in any of these committees is welcome to contact the designated committee Chairs and request participation. The results of discussions and suggestions from these committees will be discussed at the next Board Meeting, scheduled for 2/28/22.

I want to thank Ran Nir-Paz and the local organizing committee for organizing and hosting a very successful virtual 23rd IOM Congress in Israel. That required a great deal of creativity and patients, for which I am very grateful.

Call for nominations to host the 2025 IOM Congress. Anyone interested in hosting the 2025 IOM should send the Board a brief letter of intent by April 1, 2022. The full proposals will be submitted at a later date.

Finally, I wish for the health and safety of the membership from Covid and other illnesses and I look forward to seeing all of you in Osaka, Japan in July, 2023.

Best Wishes and Happy New Year,

Steven Geary



THE 2021 IOM AWARDS

These awards honour the highest achievers in our field and are initiated through specific nomination by IOM members.

Emmy Klieneberger-Nobel Award -- for outstanding research in mycoplasmaology

2021 Recipient: Duncan Krause

Peter Hannan Award -- for outstanding research in applied clinical mycoplasmaology.

2021 Recipient: Roger Dumke

Derrick Edward Award -- for outstanding research in mycoplasmaology by a young researcher.

2021 Recipient: Brad Spiller

Robert Whitcomb Award -- for outstanding research in plant mycoplasmaology.

2021 Recipient: Chih-Horng Kuo

Louis Dienes Poster Award – is given to recognize an outstanding poster in mycoplasmaology by an author who is a postdoctoral fellow.

2021 Recipient: Takuma Toyonaga for “Fine structure of supramolecular motor for *Mycoplasma mobile* gliding”

Harry Morton Poster Award - is given in recognition of an outstanding poster presentation in mycoplasmaology by a graduate student.

2021 Recipient: Hana Kiyama for “Spiroplasma swimming reconstructed in minimal cell”

Founder’s Award – IOM Board award for outstanding support to the IOM.

2021 Recipient: Dan Brown

THE IOM BOARD 2018 – 2021 MEETING MINUTES



INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATION
FOR MYCOPLASMOLOGY

Chair, DR. GLENN BROWNING (Australia)
Chair-Elect, DR. STEVEN GEARY (USA)
Past Chair, DR. CÉCILE BÉBÉAR (France)
Secretary-General, DR. BRAD SPILLER (UK)
Treasurer, DR. MARIA PIETERS (USA)
Membership-Secretary, DR. SABINE PEREYRE (France)
Information Officer, DR MITCHELL BALISH (USA)
IRPCM Chair: DR CHRISTINE CITTI (France)
At-Large Members, CHIH-HORNG KUO (Taiwan), RAN NIR-PAZ (Israel), ROHINI CHOPRA DEWASTHALY (Austria), BIRGIT HENRICH (Germany), CAROLE LARTIGUE-PRAT (France).

<http://www.iom-online.org/>

2018-2021 IOM BOARD MEETING 23rd IOM CONGRESS

Sunday October 31st 2021, Virtual Meeting for Tel Aviv (16:00 Israel Time)

Present: Glenn Browning, Steve Geary, Meghan May, Brad Spiller, Mitchell Balish, Sabine Pereyre, Christine Citti, Maria Pieters, Chih-Horng Kuo, Ran Nir-Paz, Rohini Chopra-Dewasthaly, Birgit Henrich, Carole Lartigue-Prat, Yonathan Arfi, Makoto Miyata, Meghan May Inna Lysnyansky.

Apologies from: Cécile Bébéar.

1. Opening, welcome and introduction (Glenn Browning)

Glenn welcomed the elected officers and appointed at-large members of the board and thanked them for the support over the last 3 years. Glenn thanked Ran and Inna for coping with the difficulties inherent to this unusual meeting. He expressed regret at our inability to meet in person, but indicated the organisers have made the virtual meeting run smoothly and enjoyably. Glenn also thanked Carole and Yonathan for their hard work in organizing the scientific programme for the meeting, as well as thanking Rohini for the awards, particularly the difficulties associated with distributing the posters for grading and determining the Louis Dienes and Harry Morton Awards.

2. Officer and Committee reports

a. Brad Spiller (Secretary-General)

Brad expressed his gratitude to all the executive members who have put in an additional year in their elected positions as IOM 2020 had to be delayed for a year because of COVID. He expressed gratitude not only to the current executive board, but also to the previous 2 boards that he has had the privilege to work with. The last 3 executive committees have each strived to improve the functioning of the society, including drafting and refining standard operating procedures to support Local Organising Committees,

Scientific Programme Committees, and Awards committees. Cecile in particular wanted to standardize deadlines. Brad indicated that he will continue to support Pascal in newsletters and reminding for key dates (IOM award applications), as Roger Ayling had supported him when he took this position over 7 years ago. In particular he wanted to thank everyone for their kindness, fellowship and friendship over the last several years and all the hard work put in by the current and past 2 executive boards.

b. Maria Pieters (Treasurer report)-attached.

Maria shared the summary for the first ¾ of 2021 to bring us up to date. As a meeting year there is more membership fees coming into PayPal and the transfer to the bank account hasn't as yet occurred. Bank account has the normal depletion of \$10,000 to support the meeting by payment to Paragon. Normal costs for website hosting are up to date as incurred expenses, as well as FedEx and wire transfer costs incurred. Refund was required for isolate collection due to lack of growth was required. Income includes sustaining membership from Mycoplasma Experience Ltd, as well as their funding for the Peter Hannan Award. Overall a slight decrease in the amounts due to investment performance. Overall the investment accounts are not altered, they remain static and unchanged. Perhaps variation in investment should be discussed in the future. Christine Citti indicated that IRPCM has a defined budget and wanted clarification as to how much they have. The report shows just less than \$34,000. Maria indicated that this money is a fluid investment and could be spent following communication with VanGuard for access. Glenn indicated that transfer of the Tully Collection would be funded by that. Mitchell added that since he was Treasurer (pre-2012) that the levels in the investments are relatively the same, which means that expenditure and investment are balancing out – but with the consideration of inflation the IOM has essentially declined in its capital. He indicated that the draw on the funds has always been predominantly to support the meeting. Glenn highlighted that when the IOM carried the risk of meetings, they didn't haven't been getting any potential profit from the meetings. Glenn highlighted that we need to increase our membership.

c. Sabine Pereyre (Membership Secretary)-attached

We only have 129 paying members through December 2020, which was down from 2018 with 196, 2016 we had 190 and in 2014 we had 181 fully paid members. Sabine requested if the database in the website is currently up to date. In October 2021, Sabine contacted former members to encourage renewal – about 200 emails – of which several pledged to renew their membership. Maria indicated that membership from the last week hadn't been added, but that only 5-7 have renewed recently. Forty-one of the emails were invalid (students that have moved on, etc.). Maria indicated that Mitchell was required update

the web database and Sabine asked how to clean the database. Mitchell explained that clearing e-mail addresses was approached with caution. Meghan asked about following up students to their new e-mail address where known and speculated outreach would be best tracked through their publications or social media contacts, as e-mail outreach. Brad indicated that the newsletter and Secretary-General e-mail list was not derived from the website database, but was a continuously curated e-mail that removed dead-links and included potential members so that they would be encouraged to join, as they would join as required to participate in the IOM congresses. This curated database will be given to Pascal. Stephen raised the declining membership as a worrying trend. He highlighted that there are competing organisations (country based), but indicated that the USOM will pay their fees when USOM meetings are in person (which is a requirement of their charter) but this wasn't enforced during Covid as the meetings were virtual and free. Ran highlighted a problem at registration to the congress where many people expressed a wish NOT to join IOM, but were happy to pay the higher registration fee to join the congress. For this meeting only 69 of the 167 attendees were IOM members (i.e. this represents a \$9800 USD loss of income to the IOM). This includes many registrants that are active members of India, Chinese, or Phytoplasma mycoplasma organisations. Ran highlighted that to access these communities we need to promote and invest in these organisations to receive increased membership from them. Rohini indicated that there also needed to be more investment in the student and post-doc mycoplasma communities, she also indicated that society fees are not re-imbursed but meeting registration is – as well as the fact that up to date membership is not a criteria for many awards. Glenn recommended embedding the membership fees in the registration fees. Brad suggested that following be proposed what had emerged from this discussion: Local Congress Organisers charge non-members the equivalent of the membership fee (i.e. reduced fees for members) – however, the cost of the meeting for members and non-members is equivalent for meeting hosts. In future this higher tariff for “non-members” needs to be returned to the IOM financially as an equivalent membership payment. In other words, all IOM congress attendees become members automatically – either they are paid-up members with a reduced registration fee, members in arrears pay their renewal membership fee as part of the congress registration or non-members pay for a new membership and are registered as part of the congress registration. In the latter 2 scenarios the money for members in arrears or non-members are returned to the IOM as missed income potential. Glenn proposed this for a vote, as long as that didn't cause any difficulties for Makoto for IOM 2023. Makoto indicated that he needed to discuss with the organisers, but in principle agreed. Makoto indicted that membership would be better served by a more dynamic and inclusive website –especially to attract meeting sponsors. Makoto requested that a refit of the website. Yonathan indicated that he became part of

the IOM through a congress, but that since joining hasn't seen a benefit or incentive to join – particularly a lack of the website benefit and proposed like to see some social media. Brad highlighted the membership ensures and facilitates the biennial congresses and Ran indicated that membership also supports the lower fees for students to participate in an international congress. Yonathan highlighted that there appears to be a disconnect between the meeting and the organization, if membership supports the meeting then there needs to be more promotion of the meeting on the website. Christine indicated that the IRPCM also wants a better website presence and there needs to be a work group to address this to increase membership. Makoto indicated that membership is split between Japanese Mycoplasma and IOM and that local branch (like the USOM) should be used as a model to unify the disparate organization memberships. Maria indicated that embedding the fees to conference registration may incur difficulties in reporting income for the IOM to tax authorities and this needed to be examined and a solution created. Glenn indicated that in the past meetings that made profits could return that money to the IOM.

Motion: that membership becomes compulsory to anyone attending an IOM congress, contingent on taxation legalities, and that a task and finish group will meet and make recommendations to Steve to make the website better value to members. Yonathan to head the task and finish website/social media group, Maria to advise on circumventing the issues around embedding the membership fees in congress registration. Motion was passed with majority.

Mitchell highlighted that other Organisations also have paid staff, whereas IOM is a run by volunteers.

d. Mitchell Balish (Information officer report)-attached

Website activities are largely being devolved to outside providers for this meeting and the last IOM congress, particularly where the abstract handling is concerned. There were no security incidents over the last 3 years due to encryption. Jason Minion resolved 2 issues that arose in September 2021. Taxonomy content has been updated. Mitchell requested that Christine determine what could be archived for IRPCM content. Christine indicated that the IRPCM use of the website was support to be temporary and that reports can't be deposited without security issues. Mitchell indicated that the website appearance is becoming dated, it is largely serving only to provide society information and serve to manage membership. He concurred that something new needs to be implemented, a more modern conceptualisation that promotes greater functionality and engagement with the communities. However, he indicated that is beyond his capacity and that he was hopeful that he would be able to find someone over the last 7 years for someone else to take this over. Mitchell requested that a successor be found as Information Officer and

Webmaster, he thanked Chris and Jason Minion for their continued support over the last 7 years in solving technical issues that arose during his tenure. Brad thanked Mitchell for all of his years of hard work and his consistent rapid response and problem solving for member access, content updates and newsletter archiving required by the Secretary-General office over the last 7 years as officer. However, Brad indicated that he would have to lead the search for his successor. Makoto asked how much we could pay for outside web support and to increase the attractiveness. Mitchell indicated that website cost could be directly linked to membership levels. Brad indicated that outsourcing costs needed to be costed before determining if we could finance or support it. Meghan recommended that this needs to be incorporated into the aims of the task and finish group. Meghan proposed a committee for web and engagement, Brad indicated that the Information Officer has the freedom to form a support committee, but that should be the remit of Mitchell's successor to determine. Pascal highlighted that websites require social media to become successful and that needs to be addressed as part of the modernisation of the IOM's web presence.

e. Christine Citti (IRPCM Chair Report) - attached

Theme leads have been replaced as people have stepped down, however, three leads need to be identified for the following themes: Clinical Aspects of Human Mycoplasmas; Porcine Mycoplasmas and Ruminant Mycoplasmas. Plant and Arthropod Mycoplasmas replace two previous merged groups for Spiroplasmas, Phytoplasmas and Mesoplasmas. IRPCM groups had been meeting this morning and previously and greater frequency for inter-congress meeting of the IRPCM were going to be facilitated. Christine supported a Frontiers' in Microbiology special topic issue to increase visibility of Mollicutes in the scientific fields. A total of 14 articles were accepted in 2020 and Christine is requesting the special issue be re-opened to include an opinion paper from each of the IRPCM groups. The demographics for citation and publication are in the attached report. This morning the IRPCM meeting discussed the websites requirements and are setting up a twitter account. Brad thanked Christine for taking on the role of IRPCM Chair as it is a particularly onerous task overseeing all these committees and is done on a voluntary basis.

f. Vicki Chalker (Taxonomy Committee report) – attached.

Since taking this post over on the 13th of January 2021, Vicki has arranged meetings every 8 weeks. The group has been very active and has reviewed all the international repositories that contain mollicutes, and communicated them via the ICSP and IOM websites and newsletter to the IOM members. The NCTC Mollicutes collection was summarised and shared with the Taxonomy group and efforts to house the Tully collection in NCTC have

been negotiated. Text on mollicute nomenclature, culture deposition and the Nagoya protocol has been developed and distributed via the ICSP and IOM websites and these activities will be shared with the IOM through presentation of an accepted abstract from Vicki at the IOM 2021 virtual congress. Future plans include addressing the Gupta nomenclature problems directly with repositories (i.e. ATCC, etc.) Bi-annual reports will be generated for the IOM. Glenn indicated that GenBank is particularly problematic and Vicki indicated there is an ongoing communication with them regarding this. Vicki highlighted that another recent change has occurred: The phylum Tenericutes has now been renamed as Mycoplasmatota.

g. The Mollicutes Collection (Brad Spiller)

NCTC (UK) has agreed to take as much of the Tully collection that has been curated by Dan Brown for many years now. However, some are banned for entry and these need to be identified and excluded for merger. Meghan May agreed to keep a percentage of the entire collection and the non-UK permitted Mollicutes in her lab. She was still waiting to find out what the space requirements were for this. Equally a defined number is required for US permits to be requested. Brad will chase NCTC lead Sarah Alexander on Monday when she returns from annual leave. Dan continues to be in communication and has distributed an excel spreadsheet. NCTC will save it, but relocation may be protracted. Brad to arrange a future meeting between all parties.

h. Rohini Chopra Deswalthy (Awards Committee Report) - Attached

Suggestions for the future Awards committee were made: The LD and the HM awards are for poster judging, but this is not taken into considerations by the scientific committees and can be accepted as a talk. This needs to be clarified in the future – and the rules (one submission per person) and designation of which abstract is to be considered. Having an even playing field where all participants have the same advantages. This needs to be clarified for future congresses. Very few nominations in this round –was this because the package is too cumbersome. The guidelines don't stipulate the number of letters of support required and this should be clarified. Also the verifications for the MH and LD awards –are they really checked (actually a student – less than 5 years post-doctoral years)? Letters of support should not come from close associates –but this is unclear –how close is close? Does co-authorship exclude? Glenn indicated that the recommendation letters don't actually sway the decision; however, they do educate the awards committee if the person is not in their particular field. However, modification of constitutional points requires a greater than 50% membership agreement – so this is not something that is easily changed. Self-nominations were not allowed and were problems but they were too junior applying or nominating lab-mates. Further clarification should be made in a dedicated SOP for the next

chair of the Awards Committee. Meghan highlighted difficulties for selection of oral vs. poster for consideration of LD or MH for career progression – so presenting your abstract twice needs to be made clear for LD and HM hopefuls. Meghan also highlighted that maternity time off disadvantages women for those awards with time requirements (LD and Derrick Edwards) – so “active years” needs to be considered in the eligibility for the future – and should be updated. (Need to be included in the SOP). Also to accept the nomination it should be made as a contingent on agreement to present a talk at the congress for the nominated work. Steven recommended that a work group be formed to review and reconcile the issues arising from this discussion. As chair he will arrange this meeting in the future. Rohini agreed to inform and support the next

i. **Yonathan Arfi and Carole Lartigue-Prat (Scientific Committee Report) - Attached**

Many difficulties were caused by COVID and the extra year extension. There were several difficulties in coordination between LOC and Scientific Committee that need to be addressed by the next Scientific Committee and LOC for IOM2023 to avoid the same problems. A good response, despite the virtual meeting, was observed with 175 abstracts accepted with excellent global distribution. A busy and full programme was generated with good diversity. Support by volunteers for chairing the sessions also was appreciated. Brad thanked Yonathan and Carole for all their hard work. Yonathan concluded the report by indicating that “hybrid” conferences must be considered for the future and indicated that participation might be increased by hybrid models. Carole indicated that more participation from the Phytoplasma field needs to be encouraged to get greater representation and participation. A discussion with CH ensued that highlighted a circular problem: using the programs from previous meetings, which have a lower Phytoplasma/Spiroplasma content are difficult to use to encourage greater engagement for future meetings, which results in continued lower abstract submissions. The discussion included potential for parallel sessions or “phytoplasma/spiroplasma” days. Glenn recounted previous meetings where parallel sessions or division of content into different days as having resulted in low attendance and complaints from the divided disciplines – as well as emphasizing that often techniques and advances often had cross-discipline impact and importance, which he had always found very useful. Steve indicated that this was another area that will require a further dedicated board meeting to address, as no obvious solution was apparent. Yonathan and Carole emphasized that the representations of presentations were directly proportional to the number of abstracts received for each discipline (human, veterinary and plant/insect mycoplasmas), to ensure that fairness of representation had been achieved in developing the programme.

3. Update for IOM Website (Mitchell Balish)

The information officer report is detailed above. The key aspects for discussion of the IOM

website are as follows: 1) Mitchell Balish is stepping down, but has been tasked with finding a replacement. 2) The new Information Officer will decide if a committee (with them as the chair) is required to allow the continuing function of the IOM website, as IRPCM has renewed requirements for website content, IOM2023 wishes to have greater impact of the website for inducing sponsors for the meeting, and the role of website in hosting abstracts and meeting registration (synchrony between current membership fee status and reduced registration fees being a key area of interest. 3) The requirement for outsourcing needs to be decided, as well as the capacity to support that cost from the budget, will be the focus of further meetings headed by Mitchell and Yonathan, with an invited panel including the Treasurer.

4. Report on the 23rd Congress by Local Organising Committee (Ran Nir-Paz)

Ran gave a presentation summarising the LOC data and experiences with the meeting. He started by thanking the sponsors and supporters (ESCMID, Israel Society for Microbiology, The Israeli Society for Infectious Diseases, the Federation of European Microbiological Societies, Pathogens (MDPI journal) and the IOM. He also thanked the commercial supporters for their financial contributions (Bioproperties, Pfizer, and SpeedX) and also thanked the Paragon Group for coordinating the technical and virtual aspects of the meeting. Ran acknowledged the aid of his colleagues in the LOC (Inna Lysnyansky, Aged Gera, Nati Keller, Jacob Moran-Gilad, Ziv Raviv, Shlomo Rottem, and Ali Sabateen); the Scientific Committee (Carole Lartigue, Yonathan Arfi, Mitchell Balish, Roger Dumke, Jorgen Jensen, Chih-Horng Kuo, Meghan May, Ran Nir-Paz, Emma Sweeney, Cristina Marzachi, Elisa Schieck, Mary Brown, Aizhen Guo, Jose Perez Casal, Maria Lluch Senar, and Dasuke Nakane); and the Awards Committee (Rohini Chopra Dewasthaly, Steve Geary, Assunta Bertaccini, Chih-Horng Kuo, Joachim Frey, Inna Lysnyansky, Sabine Pereyre, Lisa Manhart, Pascal Sirand-Pugnet, Lucas Miranda Marques, and Ken Waites). Ran recounted the history leading to this meeting: it was first proposed at the Brisbane meeting in 2016 – planned for July 2020. However, the outbreak of COVID in February 2020 that resulted in proposed adjustment to 2 tentative alternative dates that finally resulted in the current virtual meeting at the start of November 2021. This meeting has 167 attendees, presentation of 63 lecturers and 132 posters representing 30 countries. USA, Australia, France and Japan all had over 10 registered attendees. The keynote lecturers were given by Prof. Anat A. Herskovits (Tel Aviv University), Prof. Rotem Sorek (Weizmann Institute of Science) and Prof. Jacob Malone (John Innes Centre and the University of East Anglia). Ran also highlighted with regret what had been lost through the virtual context of the meeting: Formal pre/post conference tours and activity, conference dinner/banquet/reception, non-formal conference activity and no conference shirt. Ran discussed the budget for the meeting. Revenues raised from registration fees (\$54,050 USD) and sponsorship (£31,074 USD) came to a sum of \$85,124 USD, while expenses (Graphic Design, Printing & Promotion; Registration & Administration; and hosting platforms

(Whoova + Zoom) came to a sum of \$95,170 leading to a deficit of \$10,046 USD. There were some social program for the virtual meeting that guided attendees on how to make Basbusa as well as a virtual tour by Itay Gay Tours. Ran discussed some ideas for future conferences (forging greater alliances with Mycoplasma organisations in China, India, Japan, Europe and Phytoplasma community). Ran also recommended review of overlaps of LOC, Award, Scientific and IOM board with the possibility of reducing the overlaps. He also suggested reducing the conference by 1 day and look into parallel sessions. Given the FEMS support Ran was also obliged to mention the FEMS conference in Belgrade, Serbia from 30 June- 2 July 2022.

5. Nominations for New Honorary IOM members

Nominations for new honorary IOM members were discussed and no honorary IOM members were appointed from the list of applicants discussed for this conference.

6. Update on 22nd IOM 2023 meeting in Osaka, Japan (Makoto Miyata)

Was deferred to the New Board meeting – immediately following this one.

7. IOM Awards – Future of the Emmy Kleinenberger-Nobel award (Brad Spiller)

Last year had seen the use of the last of the EKN medallions for the award winner. Prior to IOM 2018, Brad had tried several methods of reproducing these medals. Many attempts including 3D printing from 3D scanning failed either to yield either good resolution or sufficient weight to the resulting reproduction to serve as an equivalent to the original medallion production. Brad finally employed sculptor Christine Baxter to generate a mould from the last of the EKN medals that was used to generate 10 replicas that were constructed from bronze infused polymer as a cold press. These were then finished using patina stains and polish to give the same lustre to the replicas as the originals. Duncan Krause received the first of the new edition and there are now enough medallions for the next 9 IOM congresses.

8. Other Items of Business

Ran asked what he should do with the 36 posters that had not paid their registration fees – the Board decided that all those that had failed to pay their registration fees would result in blocked access to their posters being viewed and the abstract book would be amended to remove their names.

In the interest of time, as this meeting had already run 90 minutes over, the meeting was handed over to the new IOM executive board, chaired by Steven Geary and run by Pascal Sirand-Pugnet.

9. Adjournment

Meeting overran significantly and was adjourned at 18:30 p.m.

THE IOM BOARD 2021 – 2023 MEETING MINUTES



**INTERNATIONAL
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<http://www.iom-online.org/>

2021-2023 IOM BOARD MEETING 23rd IOM CONGRESS

Sunday October 31st 2021, Virtual Meeting for Tel Aviv (18:30 Israel Time)

Present: Glenn Browning, Steve Geary, Meghan May, Brad Spiller, Mitchell Balish, Sabine Pereyre, Christine Citti, Maria Pieters, Chih-Horng Kuo, Ran Nir-Paz, Rohini Chopra-Dewasthaly, Birgit Henrich, Carole Lartigue-Prat, Yonathan Arfi, Makoto Miyata, Meghan May Inna Lysnyansky.

Apologies from: Cécile Bébéar.

1. Hand-Over Opening, welcome and introduction (Steven Geary)

Steven thank Glenn for his leadership of the IOM during the past period. After discussion with Pascal, Steven proposes to shorten the New Board Meeting as many items have already been discussed during the Old Board Meeting. Moreover, it was decided to have more regular virtual IOM Board meetings.

2. Items passed on from the IOM Old Board (Glenn Browning)

No specific items were discussed here.

3. Proposal for new Japanese Society for Mycoplasmaology local branch (Makoto Miyata)

Makoto proposes the IOM to rely more on local branches. Especially, it would be more efficient to get sponsorship. Makoto proposes Japanese Society for Mycoplasmaology as a local branch of the IOM and offers to help making connection between the two organisations. Makoto prepared a list of points that might be discussed with the Board (see LETTER from the IOM2023 LOCAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE). Steve suggests Makoto to talk with Mitchell who has the experience of launching the US local branch of the IOM. Mitchell offers to provide Makoto with all documents regarding the application for the USOM.

4. Update regarding running of the previously approved United States Organization for Mycoplasma local branch (Mitchell Balish)

Mitchell explained the USOM join the IOM in 2018. There was a first face-to-face meeting in 2019 at J. C. Venter Institute, hosted by John Glass. Another in-person meeting was planned for 2021 but it was crashed by the pandemic. Two on-line meetings were set, with no fees charged to participants, so it is difficult to evaluate the impact on membership. All USOM members have also to be members of the IOM. First virtual meeting focused on vaccine (November 2020) and then a summer USOM Zoom conference on emerging mycoplasma pathogens, mechanisms of virulence and diagnostics (June 2021). Chair of USOM has passed from Mitchell to Prescott Atkinson. Meghan May continues her role as USOM secretary. The idea for the future is to keep having USOM in-person meetings during years without IOM meetings. Mitchell encourages other local branches to organize themselves as the USOM, as Makoto is proposing for Japan. Maria added that dues are collected using the same system as the IOM, there are 14 members for the USOM, so far. Mitchell think when in-person meetings will occur regularly, there will be an increase of membership.

5. Nominations of committees

Steven presents nominated IOM members for several tasks related to the 2023 IOM meeting:

Scientific Program Committee for 2023: Meghan May

Awards Committee for 2023: Amir Hadjinoormohammadi

6. 2023 IOM Congress Plans (Makoto Miyata)

Makoto share information and points he would like to discuss with the Board for the 2023 IOM meeting (see LETTER from the IOM2023 LOCAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE- attached). Regarding conference fees, Ran mentions it is rather complicated to reach low prices as the global budget of the congress has to be balanced at the end. If more donations by sponsors are given, then the price can get lower. Makoto proposes a questionnaire for IOM members and possible IOM members to improve IOM society and IOM meetings. Especially, he would like to know if people are always paying the conference from research money or sometimes with their private money. Ran proposes two levels of pricing: one for western countries and one for developing countries. Makoto agrees that having a special price for developing countries would be important to open the IOM congress to more people. Glenn mentions the main cost is generally travel and accommodation. IOM congress fees are rather low compared to other professional conferences. Makoto proposes a session for local researchers to make them more familiar to the IOM. Ran reminds that the clinical session that was held in the Portsmouth 2018 IOM congress with the ESCMID and suggests Makoto to organize something similar with Sabine who agrees. Makoto also suggests to have enterprise seminars to get some more sponsor money. Pascal proposes to

continue discussion about all those important points during the next months. Makoto proposes to use business chat instead of emails for that and ask for more regular meetings of the Board.

7. Proposals for 25th IOM Congress 2025

Currently, no formal bid has been presented to the Board. However, a couple of likely interested parties were identified.

8. Other Items of Business for this Board

No other points were discussed.

9. Adjournment

Steve concluded there had been a good discussion and Pascal closed the meeting at 19:00 p.m..

TREASURER'S REPORT – Maria Pieters

**International Organization for Mycoplasmaology
Treasurer's Report**

01/01/2020-12/31/2020

Cash balance (USBank checking account)

Beginning of period: \$ 25,724.98
End of period: \$ 25,936.88

Income Received During the Period Covered

New memberships and renewals (in PayPal) \$ 3,416.67
Strains/antisera from Mollicutes Collection to researchers \$ 1,708.85 ^ * ^Includes
reimbursement of Fedex charges *Wire Transfer fee(s) charged.

Expenses Paid During the Period Covered

FedEx charges – Shipment of strains/antisera from Mollicutes Collection \$ 431.55
USDA APHIS Permit – Reimbursement to Dr. \$ 247.00
WebHosting for IOM \$ 119.40
Membership(s) - to International Societies \$ 461.84 *
Bank fees for Wire Transfer(s) \$ 194.00
Mailing supplies \$ 18.75
*Wire Transfer fees charged

Financial Issues

Invoice # 20-002 (\$700 to be reimbursed to researcher due to lack of strains growth)
Invoice # 20-003 (payment pending IOM providing vendor information)

Additional Investment Account Updates

Total \$ **120,594.32**

Vanguard Admiral Treasury Money Market Fund \$ 5,561.54
Vanguard Short-Term Federal Fund Admiral Shares \$80,962.93
Vanguard Short-Term Treasury Fund Investor Shares (IRPCM) \$34,069.85

December 31, 2019 balance was \$115,821.43. Thus, annual change was an increase of \$4,772.89

Maria Pieters, DVM, PhD.
IOM Treasurer
January 1, 2021

**International Organization for Mycoplasmaology
Treasurer's Report**

01/01/2021-09/30/2021

Cash balance (USBank checking account)

Beginning of period: \$ 25,936.88
End of period: **\$ 14,588.04**
PayPal account balance: \$ 21,309.91

Income Received During the Period Covered

New memberships and renewals (in PayPal) \$ 5,598.05
Strains/antisera from Mollicutes Collection to researchers \$ 1,813.10

Expenses Paid During the Period Covered

FedEx charges – Shipment of strains/antisera from Mollicutes Collection \$ 106.01
Transfer to Paragon (IOM meeting 2021) \$ 10,000.00*
WebHosting for IOM (DreamHost) \$ 119.40
IOM Website (GoDaddy) \$ 42.34
Membership(s) - to International Societies \$ 100.00*
Bank fees for Wire Transfer(s) \$ 255.00
Reimbursement to researcher due to lack of strains growth \$ 726.00*

*Wire Transfer fees charged

Financial Issues

Invoice # 20-003 (payment pending IOM providing vendor information)

Additional Investment Account Updates

Total **\$ 120,582.58**

Vanguard Admiral Treasury Money Market Fund \$ 5,562.14
Vanguard Short-Term Federal Fund Admiral Shares \$81,046.55
Vanguard Short-Term Treasury Fund Investor Shares (IRPCM) \$33,973.89

December 31, 2020 balance was \$120,594.32. Thus, annual change was a decrease of \$11.74.

Maria Pieters, DVM, PhD.

2018 IOM MEMBERSHIP REPORT – Sabine Pereyre

International Organization for Mycoplasmaology Membership report 2018 - 2021

On the 14 October 2021, we had **129 members** paid through December 2020 or beyond. In 2018, we had 196 members. In 2016 we had 190 members. In 2014, we had 181 members. The IOM membership has thus been stable between 2014 and 2018 but has decreased for three years. The COVID crisis and the next online IOM conference are probably responsible for this situation.

To encourage the IOM membership, emails were sent in October 2021 to people from our database that had not paid through 2020 or beyond, inviting them to renew their membership. A total of 195 emails were sent (91 to former members until 2016 and 104 to former members until 2018). It should be noted that many email addresses of our membership database were invalid : 28.6% (26/91) until 2016 and 14.4% (15/104) until 2018. These invalid email addresses mainly include students and retired people.

Sabine Pereyre
Membership Secretary



2018 IOM and IRPCM INFORMATION OFFICER REPORT – Mitchell Balish

Introduction

The IOM website has continued to operate with few significant changes since the previous IOM Congress.

Abstract handling

For the 2018 Congress, the IOM website was not used for abstract handling, but I found another mechanism by which to handle abstracts, at a cost to the IOM, and still oversaw the process. For the present Congress, the local organizers opted to control abstract handling, and I was not involved in the process at all.

Subcommittee of the International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes

I've added a page with information pertaining to the taxonomy subcommittee.

Security

There were no security incidents since the previous Congress. I have begun using Encryption certificates to ensure secure interactions with the IOM website via the https protocol.

Incidents

On 1 September 2021 I attempted to do a routine database update, which not only failed but prevented the website from being reached. I contacted Jason Minion, whose knowledge far exceeds mine, and he was able to identify and clear an error that seemed to originate within the automated component of the update process. Afterwards, I was able to update as usual. It is unclear what the nature of the problem was.

Shortly thereafter, on 7 September 2021, DreamHost, the IOM website's hosting provider, migrated the IOM website to an upgraded server. In so doing, they changed parameters that were required for the website to be reached, which I noticed the next day (8 September). I was able to

contact them to learn what had changed, and Jason Minion showed me how to change it. By the end of the day the website was back up.

IRPCM

The IRPCM website to which the IOM website was linked preceding the 2018 IOM Congress is currently being run and updated by the IRPCM chair. However, old information from prior to that still is present on the IOM website. Work will be done to archive material of significance from that website and the links to the old material will be taken down.

Future prospects

The IOM website and the new IRPCM website appear to continue to function well, as did IOM Officer elections.

The website is aging. Its appearance is increasingly dated, and in the absence of abstract handling, its value is declining. At present all it really does is provide some information and serve as a hub for managing membership. A more modern conceptualization of the website that promotes greater functionality and engagement with the IOM community is desirable, but it is beyond my technical ability to make major changes.

Having had the privilege of overseeing and taking care of the IOM website for 7 years, I believe that it is time for me to identify a successor who is able to transform it into a more forward-looking form before the next IOM congress in 2023. I would appreciate the help of the new Board of Directors in this process.

Acknowledgments

Many thanks to Chris Minion and Jason Minion for their continued support of the IOM website and my efforts to grasp it more fully.

Respectfully submitted,

Mitchell Balish

2018 IOM IRPCM CHAIR REPORT – Christine Citti

Report of the IRPCM activities 07.2018-10.20210

Change in Team’s leaders and team’s designation

Several team’s leaders stepped down after the 2018 IOM in Boston and were partly replaced (see below).

IRPCM Groups	Previous Group Leader	Current Group Leader	Up coming
Chemotherapy of Mycoplasma Infections	Vicky Chalker (UK)	Florence Tardy (Fr)	Florence Tardy (Fr)
Clinical Aspects of Human Mycoplasmas	Ran Nir-Paz (Israel)	To be appointed	To be appointed
Porcine Mycoplasmas	Dominiek Maes (Belgium)	To be appointed	To be appointed
Ruminant Mycoplasmas	Paola Pilo (Switzerland)	To be appointed	To be appointed
Spiroplasma/Mesoplasma Assunta Bertaccini (Italy) s/Phytoplasmas/entomoplasma* was renamed in: Plant and Arthropod mycoplasmas	Assunta Bertaccini (Italy)	Chih-Horng Kuo (Tw)	Chih-Horng Kuo (Tw)
Molecular Genetics and Cell Biology	Meghan May (USA)	Meghan May (USA)	Meghan May (USA)
Avian Mycoplasmas	Chris Morrow (Australia)	Chris Morrow (Australia)	Anneke Feberwee (nl)
New and Emerging Species	Ana Ramírez (Spain)	Ana Ramírez (Spain)	Ana Ramírez (Spain)

Please note:

- the change of the “Spiroplasmas/Mesoplasmas/Phytoplasmas/entomoplasma” into “Plant and Arthropod mycoplasmas”
- the “General Diagnostics and Cell culture” is no longer running

IRPCM group meeting outside the IOM congress

Due to the pandemic and the canceling of the IOM meeting in 2020, team leaders were offered to run group discussion outside of the IOM not to loose contact.

Two group meetings were held:

- the Plant and Arthropod mycoplasmas was held on September 9th 2020 (large participation). Minutes were sent to the group.
- the Chemotherapy of Mycoplasma Infections was held on October 8th 2020 : 34 participants and 3 topics discussed with for each a discussion leader. The minutes of the meeting were sent to the group.

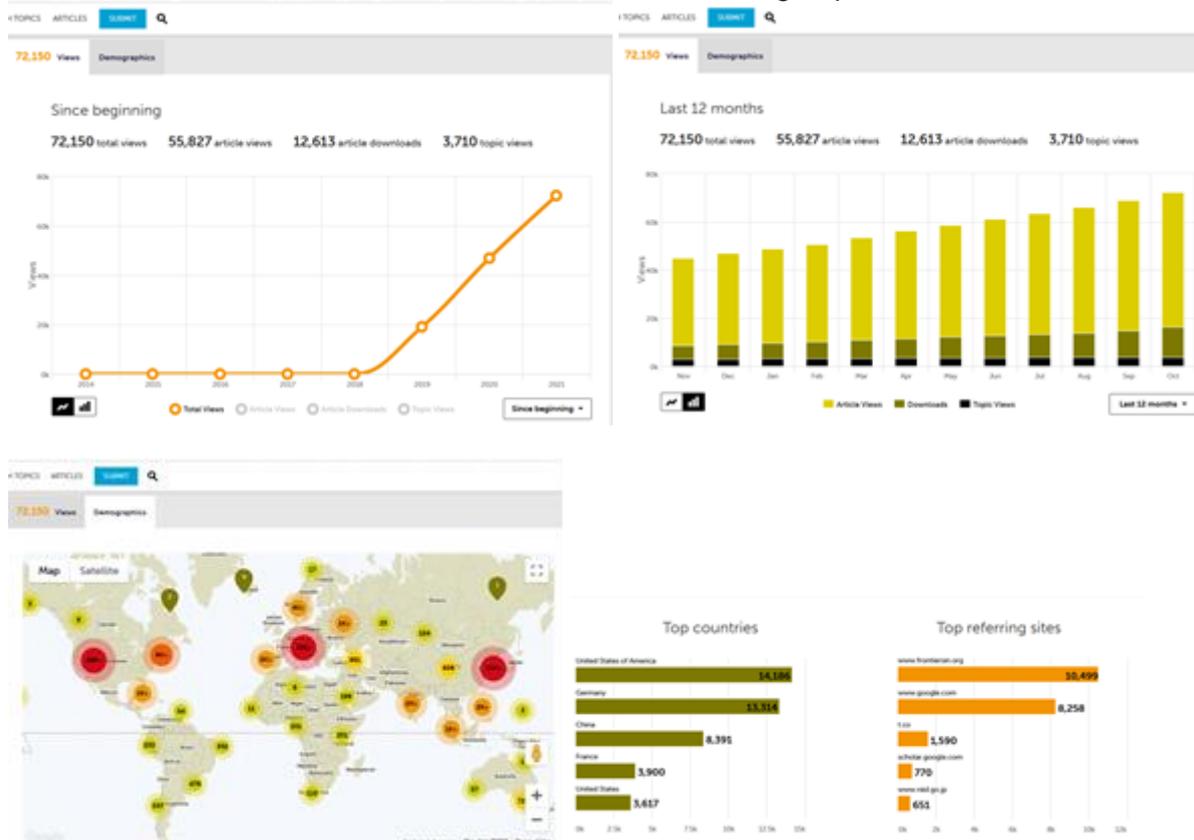
Frontiers’ in Microbiology special topic

Mollicutes: From Evolution To Pathogenesis
 Glenn Francis Browning, Chih-Hong Kuo, Florence TARDY, Meghan May and Christine Citti

The class Mollicutes (trivial name "mycoplasma") encompasses a large group of bacteria having no cell-wall and a minute size genome (580 to 2,200 kb). From an evolutionary point of view, Mollicutes are derived from a...

Submission closed
 19 articles 114 authors 71,737 total views

2019: set up of a Frontier collection (Mollicutes: From Evolution to Pathogenesis) with the aim of increasing visibility of the mycoplasma community by publishing in 2020 (at the end, as a free of charge manuscript) a compilation of the conclusions of the IRPCM groups on the next challenges in mycoplasma. The pandemic came in, and I was no longer able to handle the topic which was closed in 2020. A total of 14 Articles were published. I will try to see whether it can be re-opened to include an opinion paper from the IRPCM groups.



2021 TAXONOMY CHAIR REPORT – Vicki Chalker

ICSP Mollicutes Update for the IOM Board 2021

V Chalker took up position of Chair, with the first meeting held on the 13 January 2021. The board membership has been refreshed and broadened to ensure greater cross Mollicute representation. New members with interest in taxonomy are welcome. The board meets 8 weeks weekly. The board has been restructured to focus on task and finish of items of importance and discussion of topics considered priorities.

Key achievements include:

- International culture collection repositories have been reviewed with those that accept mollicutes being communicated via the ICSP and IOM websites and to IOM members in the newsletter.
- NCTC mollicute collection summary was collated and shared with the group
- Text on mollicute nomenclature, culture deposition and Nagoya protocol has been developed and communicated via the ICSP and IOM websites and to IOM members in the newsletter.
- A culture collection has confirmed willingness to accept at risk Tully mollicute collection and are applying for funding to preserve as an at-risk collection of biological significance.
- Abstract and session arranged at the IOM 2021 in Israel

Future plans include:

- Summary publication on definitive Mollicute taxonomy is in preparation
- Communications with GenBank and other databases/repositories regarding Mollicute nomenclature is planned/underway to limit use of inaccuracies of Mollicute naming
- We are preparing bi-annual reports of the meetings for publication
- Phytoplasma speciation definition guidelines, discussions and documentation are in progress by members of the ICSP sub-committee on Mollicutes

2021 AWARDS COMMITTEE REPORT – Rohini Chopra-Dewasthaly

The 23rd IOM Awards Committee (AC) was formally assembled in early October, 2019.

1. Selection of Awards Committee Members:

Following general guidelines, 5 hold-over members from the 2016-2018 Committee were to be included in the current AC. However, two of these, namely Glenn Browning and Maria Lluch-Senar, were replaced by Joachim Frey and Assunta Bertaccini, respectively. This was done considering Glenn Browning's many responsibilities as the current IOM Chair, which anyhow oversees and approves all AC selections/decisions; Maria Lluch-Senar had expressed her unavailability to serve in the AC. Assunta Bertaccini was especially chosen to reinforce the presence of specialists in plant mollicutes.

With the approval of the IOM Chair Glenn Browning, the following members were selected to represent different research areas in Mycoplasma, as well different geographical locations:

Rohini Chopra Dewasthaly* (Austria, Chair)

Steve Geary (USA)

Chih-Horng Kuo (Taiwan)

Inna Lysnyansky (Israel)

Lisa Manhart* (USA)

Lucas Miranda Marques (Brazil)

Assunta Bertaccini (Italy)

Joachim Frey*

(Switzerland)

Sabine Pereyre (France)

Pascal Sirand-Pugnet

(France)

Ken Waites (USA)

(*) Tried to keep the 2018 IOM awardees, as done in the last AC

2. **Emmy Klieneberger-Nobel (EKN), Derrick Edward (DE), Peter Hannan (PH), and Robert F.**

Whitcomb (RFW) Award

In May 2019 Newsletter, Glenn Browning (IOM Chair) called upon the IOM community to start thinking and preparing nominations for these prestigious IOM awards. Brad Spiller (IOM Sec. Gen.) formally made the first call for nominations on 29th Oct 2019 via emails sent to all IOM members. The deadline for nominations was first set at 31st Dec 2019, and then later extended to 30th Jan 2020 to encourage more nominations, especially because there were no nominations for the DE award. A total of 10 nomination packages were received by the deadline. There were 3 nominations for the EKN, one for DE, 2 for RFW and 4 for PH

(although 3 of the latter were PhD/Post Docs, more suited for LD/HM yet wanted to contest). The packages were organized by the AC Chair and distributed to the members on 5th Feb 2021 for evaluation after sharing and approval from the IOM Chair on 3rd Feb 2021.

Fortunately, prior to the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the AC was able to conclude the proceedings to determine the 23rd IOM awards. The AC members were asked to adhere to the criteria and rules for each award category, sent to them along with the nomination packages and ballots for the 23rd EKN/DE/PH/RFW awards on 5th Feb, 2020 by the AC Chair. All members, except one member for one award category, completed the ballot forms (with abstention from two members with conflict of interests, and by few others on specific award categories according to their personal preference). The votes were returned to the AC Chair by 28th Feb, 2020 with a CC to the IOM Chair for verification. The recipient of each award was decided by majority votes, and was reported to the IOM Chair, Glenn Browning for verification, and also to Brad Spiller, the Secretary-General on 2nd March 2020, before sharing with the AC members. Each award recipient was individually informed by the Committee Chair by email on 5th March 2020.

The first public announcement of the major award winners was made by the Secretary General in the IOM Newsletter - Volume 44, Number 1, June 2020, together with their condensed biographical sketch and a summary of their scientific work. The names of the 23rd IOM awardees were as follows:

Duncan Krause (USA) - for the Emmy Klieneberger-Nobel Award for outstanding research in Mycoplasmaology

Brad Spiller (UK) - for the Derrick Edward Award for outstanding research in Mycoplasmaology by a young investigator

Roger Dumke (Germany) – for the Peter Hannan Award for outstanding research in applied clinical Mycoplasmaology.

Chih- Horng Kuo (Taiwan) - for the Robert F. Whitcomb Award for outstanding research in plant and insect Mycoplasmaology.

Louis Dienes (LD) and Harry Morton (HM) awards

The Contestants for these awards are self-nominated at the time of abstract submission. However, during the online abstract submission for the 2021 IOM Congress there was somehow no provision to nominate the abstracts for HM or LD awards. Later, all candidates were sent emails to ask if they wanted to contest for LD/HM awards. The AC had no access or information about the LD and HM abstracts (total numbers, titles, names, etc) or the abstract submission site until September 2021. Around this point, while discussing options for poster presentations and award evaluations in the virtual setting, the AC Chair reiterated that LD and HM awards were poster awards. On 2nd September 2021, Yonathan Arfi and Carole Lartigue Prat, the SC Chairs, informed the AC Chair that as most of the contestants

had requested oral presentations, they had selected 11 of the total 19 'award' abstracts for oral presentations (excel sheet with applicant names and abstract titles was provided to AC Chair), and only the remaining 7 for posters. Not to drastically change the already planned scientific programme, the AC Chair emailed all the 19 contestants on 4th Sept 2020 to let them know that additional poster presentations are a requirement for these awards, immaterial of their selected oral presentations. It was also noticed by the AC Chair that two candidates were contesting with 2 abstracts each for the LD award and hence were asked to choose just one. This led to the omission of two abstracts from 12 LD abstracts. Also, 2 other applicants withdrew from the contest. At this point, there were 6 abstracts in the HM category and 9 in the LD and this list of 15 candidates/abstract titles was sent to the SC chairs. On 25th Oct 2021, information of another candidate's withdrawal from HM award was received by the AC Chair from Paragon Congress manager, making the final count to 14 abstracts. As of today, there are 8 contestants for the LD award and 6 for the HM award.

Evaluation procedures for these poster awards were discussed by the AC Chair with all members (and also with local Chairs, IOM Chair and Sec Gen), especially considering the virtual set-up. It was agreed to evaluate the posters using a scoring sheet ahead of the congress start, also to avoid being biased by the oral talks, whereby marks would be given out of 10 points each for clarity, presentation, and quality of science. All members would send their scoring sheet for all posters to the AC Chair with a concomitant copy to Glenn Browning and Brad Spiller as IOM Chair and Sec Gen, respectively, for verification. The organizers had agreed to send the posters to all AC members (including 4 non-registered members) in advance of the meeting. Reminders have been sent to the organizers by the AC Chair (including one today, i.e. 26th Oct 2021) to provide access to LD and HM posters to the AC for evaluation as soon as possible.

As told by the organizers all AC members would get access to the posters by tomorrow, i.e. 28th Oct and would be given 2-3 days to send their scoring sheets to the AC Chair, with a CC to Glenn Browning and Brad Spiller for verification purposes. After this the AC Chair will decide the winners based on highest pooled scores, and then send the same to Glenn Browning and Brad Spiller for verification, before announcing the winners to the organizers, and subsequently to the winners:

Suggestions for the future

The IOM should discuss some of the issues pertaining to IOM awards, and if needed reframe rules to make them more clear and visible

- i) For eg. LD and HM awards are poster awards was hardly known, neither to the applicants and their mentors (?), and perhaps not to the SC as more than 70% applicants opted for, and were selected for oral talks. Too late in Sept 2021 to drastically change the Scientific Programme, we could only ask the applicants to make poster presentations in addition to the oral talks if they wanted to contest for these two awards. Also, candidates were applying with 2 abstracts for one award ii)
EKN/PH/DE/RFW are not self-nominated awards.
- iii) A clear distinction and suitability of award nominations needs to be stipulated. For eg. in case of PH award, we could only write and suggest the nominators to nominate their PhD/PostDocs for the more suitable LD/HM awards and not these categories. However, they kept re-sending the nominations, and I had to accept these in the packages, as there was no rule or guideline barring them, per se.
- iv) For EKN award perhaps it is different, but clarity on acceptance of nominations and recommendation letters for PH, DE and RFW awards from the nominees' own lab members needs to be discussed, and if needed guidelines to be reframed. For eg. how many recommendation letters are mandatory, if at all etc. Are we getting fewer and fewer nominations due to the cumbersome process of nomination packages including several recommendation letters? These were some issues that were talked about in our term.

- v) More coordination of the AC and SC right from the start of the meeting.

Although much of the confusion and issues could be attributed to the Covid pandemic and the virtual mode of the 2021 meeting yet in any case, its perhaps time we discuss and revise the rules and guidelines, not only to increase clarity and visibility, but perhaps also to attract more nominations.

Rohini Chopra Dewasthaly
Chair of the Awards Committee
October 27th, 2021

2021 IOM SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM COMMITTEE REPORT – Carole Lartigue & Yonathan Arfi

1. Overview

The 23rd IOM Scientific Program Committee (SPC) was assembled in August 2018 and worked throughout the next year to organize what was initially supposed to be the 2020 IOM in Tel Aviv. However, the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuing lockdowns and travel restrictions led to the postponement of the congress to 2021, and later to the decision to hold a fully virtual meeting. These decisions were made collegially by the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) and the IOM Board, with consultation of the SPC chair and co-chair. Following the announcement of the postponement, the SPC was put on hold for a time and then re-convened once the IOM 2021 had been confirmed. Although most members were keen to rejoin the SPC, several were no longer available owing to various factors.

2. Scientific Program Committee Members

A total of 16 members served on the Scientific Program Committee for the 2018-2021 stint: Carole Lartigue (France), Chair; Yonathan Arfi (France), Co-chair; Mitchell Balish (USA); Roger Dumke (Germany); Jørgen Jensen (Denmark), Chih-Horng Kuo (Taiwan); Meghan May (USA), Ran Nir-Paz (Israel); Emma Sweeney (Australia), Cristina Marzachi (Italy); Elise Schieck (Kenya); Mary Brown (USA), Aizhen Guo (China), José Perez-Casal (Canada), Daisuke Nakane (Japan), Maria Lluch Senar (Spain). The SPC was composed to be gender-balance, to represent all the fields of Mycoplasma and Phytoplasma, and to be geographically diverse.

3. Keynote speakers

We experienced difficulties to secure three keynote speakers at the beginning of the SPC work period, as several of the potential speakers were unavailable at the initial dates of the Congress in 2020. After several rounds of consultation between the LOC and the SPC, we managed to identify Dr. Rotem Sorek (Weizmann Institute, Israel), Dr. Jacob Malone (John Innes Centre, United Kingdom) and Dr. Nathalie Balaban (Hebrew University, Israel) as keynote speakers. Following the postponement to 2021, Dr. Balaban was no longer available and was replaced by Dr. Anat Herskovits (Tel Aviv University, Israel).

4. Abstract submission and review

The LOC has elected to delegate multiple aspects of the organization of the IOM 2020 (and later 2021) to the Israel-based event organizer Paragon Group. The company provided us with a customizable abstract submission system which was successfully tested and validated. Abstract submission initially opened on October 15th 2019. The IOM 2020 was officially postponed on June 24th 2020. As this date was close to the submission deadline, a significant number of abstract had been deposited, although the uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic led to a somewhat low number of abstracts.

When the IOM 2021 was confirmed, the SPC elected to request an update on each already deposited abstract from their authors. Given that more than a year and a half would have elapsed between the IOM 2020 and IOM 2021, we anticipated that many abstracts would be updated or

withdrawn. Following a new period of opened submissions, which ended on August 1st 2021, the SPC began the evaluation of the submitted abstracts and on the composition of the Scientific Program.

5. The Scientific Program

At the beginning of the SPC tenure, it was decided through consultation of all the members that a transversal program would be used for IOM 2020 – IOM 2021. In this structure, each session would be based around broad themes that are applicable to all the fields of Mollicutes studies, and would see presentations from the Human, Animal and Plant sides. We believe that this structure would lead to a better engagement of the attendees in each day and session, and would be the best suited to broaden the scientific horizon of the audience. The transition of the IOM 2021 to an online event was not accompanied by specific changes in the overall schedule. However, in order to compensate for time zone differences, the order of the presentation was dictated predominantly by the region of origin of the speaker (GMT+5/+12: morning, GMT-1/+4: mid-day, GMT-2/-10: afternoon). Overall, the program was organized around 4 days and 5 sessions (“Physiology, Cellular and Molecular Biology”, “Virulence, Pathogenesis and Host Response”, “Vaccines Development and Evaluation”, “New Technologies and Methods” and “Diagnostics, Epidemiology and Antibiotics Resistance”).

The program included 59 oral presentations, 3 keynote lectures, 5 award lecture and 4 poster sessions (116 posters). The number of poster session was increased in order to have two sessions in the mid-day and two sessions in the afternoon, again to accommodate all time zones.

Statistics (28 October 2021)

Total Accepted Abstracts (oral and poster): 175

Abstract Submission by Country:

Country	Number
China	35
USA	24
France	22
Australia	17
India	16
Israel	7
Japan	7
UK	7
Italy	6
Austria	5
Germany	5
Hungary	5
Netherlands	5
Belgium	4
Pakistan	4
Poland	4
Spain	4
Brazil	3
Canada	2
Nigeria	2
Russia	2
Switzerland	2
Taiwan	2

Turkey	2
Afghanistan	1
Botswana	1
New Zealand	1
Puerto Rico	1
Reunion	1
South Korea	1
Sri Lanka	1
Wallis et Futuna	1

6. Lessons and suggestions for the future

The conditions in which IOM 2020/IOM 2021 were extremely peculiar and challenging, due to the COVID-19 pandemics, its frequent uncertainties, and its impact on worldwide mobility. Given that the future of the pandemic is still unclear, and that a similar event has the possibility to re-occur in the next decades, a game plan should be thought out and put in place in order to smoothen future event planning. It is also noteworthy that the various lockdowns have demonstrated the interest of the scientific community for “online” conferences, from a financial, logistical and ecological point of view. The IOM should take this shift in mentality into consideration and eventually consider the possibility that the next IOM events could be “hybrid” or that a full online congress could be organized every other year in alternance with the face to face bi-annual meetings.

This hybrid nature of future event could also facilitate the selection of keynote speakers, as they might have less constraint in their schedule for a half day online slot, compared to the 2-3 days of travel often required for face to face events.

7. Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the Scientific Program Committee members for their fruitful contribution, the local organizing committee for their enthusiastic and unfailing support in setting up the program and the PARAGON society for its management of the abstracts submission website.

Carole Lartigue & Yonathan Arfi
Co-Chairs of the Scientific Program Committee 2018-2021

LETTER from the IOM2023 LOCAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE – Makoto Miyata

A. Letter from Local organizing committee in Japan to IOM board (20211031)

1. The local organizing committee (LOC) is composed almost entirely of members and related personnel of the Japanese Society of Mycoplasmaology (JSM). IOM2023 will be prepared and operated in collaboration with JSM.
2. The meeting will be held from July 16 (Sun) to 20 (Thu), 2023.
3. LOC currently estimates that the early bird registration fees for IOM members are 526 USD (60,000 yen) for regular members, 307 USD (35,000 yen) for students, and 263 USD (30,000 yen) for two-days participation.
4. LOC expects that the COVID-19 will settle down by the end of 2022. We need to choose whether to run IOM2023 onsite or online at least seven months before the congress.
5. IOM was established in the era when information was communicated by mail, and decision-making methods may not have been updated since then. In order to effectively prepare IOM 2023, LOC would like the IOM to consider using websites, SNS, and business chats to share and disseminate information.
6. LOC strongly requests that the IOM website be updated to disseminate information to non-members through images and SNS. This issue should be resolved within 2021,

because researchers and companies considering IOM 2023 participation will refer to the activities of the parent academic societies more than individual scientific meetings.

7. The October 2018 newsletter (page 8) describes the abstract registration system, C-Paper. Should it be used for IOM 2023? LOC has already ordered a system including abstract registration.

8. LOC would like to have support for IOM2023 from global companies as well as domestic companies. Attached is a list of past IOM congress sponsors. LOC wishes to receive information from the board regarding the potential of each company sponsoring IOM 2023 and the IOM members (if any) who will be the contact persons.

9. In order to make Japanese researchers feel familiar with the IOM, LOC will propose a session for local researchers (see attachment) similar to the one held in Portsmouth. In addition, LOC would like to propose short enterprise seminars (voluntary participation in lunch time), presentations on the history of mycoplasma, and others.

10. In 2023, the annual meeting of JSM, which is held annually in Japan, will be held as a participation and presentation of IOM 2023. JSM board hopes to include our society name in the meeting title as, (i) The 24th Biennial Congress of the International Organization for Mycoplasma (IOM) in association with the 50th Congress of Japanese Society of Mycoplasma (JSM)" or (ii) The 24th Biennial Congress of the International Organization for Mycoplasma (IOM) (associated with the 50th Congress of Japanese Society of Mycoplasma (JSM)).

B. Possible discussion in IOM board (20211031)

1. Since Japan is easily accessible from Asian countries, IOM 2023 is considered to be a good opportunity to increase the regional diversity of the IOM. Therefore, IOM board may consider the selection of committee members, and the use of the branch system in near future.

2. Examples of using the branch system include: (1) supporting the IOM activities by linking to the IOM website and SNS accounts; (2) providing small grants (e.g., \$200) for meetings and publications; (3) to be a condition for inviting the IOM congress; (4) establishing branch slots on a board member; (5) providing nomination rights for IOM awards; and (6) estimating the number of participants in IOM biennial congress, etc.

3. JSM may have drifted away from the IOM in the 23 years since IOM 2000 was held in Japan. The use of the branch system might have been effective.

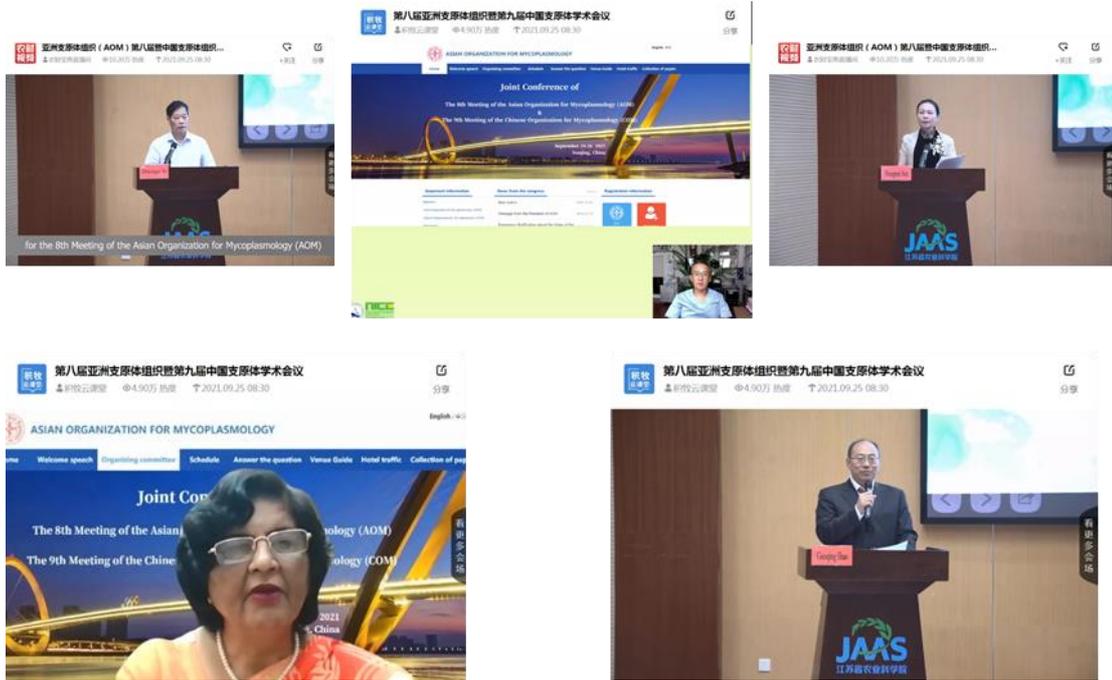
4. The academic diversity of the IOM seems to be more limited than before. In other words, the number of clinical, diagnostic, basic science and phytoplasma researchers may be decreasing. What about the board's current discussions on this issue?

8th MEETING of the ASIAN ORGANIZATION for MYCOPLASMOLOGY & 9th MEETING of the CHINESE ORGANIZATION for MYCOPLASMOLOGY – Guoqing Shao

The 8th Meeting of the Asian Organization for Mycoplasma and the 9th Meeting of the Chinese Organization for Mycoplasma, jointly organized by the Asian Organization for Mycoplasma (AOM) and the Chinese Organization for Mycoplasma (COM), was held in Nanjing from September 25 to 26, 2021. Due to the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic, this meeting was held online.

At the opening ceremony, Prof. Yi Zhongyi, President of the Jiangsu Academy of Agricultural Sciences, the organizer, delivered a welcome speech. Prof. Koichi Izumikawa, chairman of the Japan Organization for Mycoplasma, Prof. Rama Chaudhary, chairman of the Indian Association for Mycoplasma, and Prof. Hongmei Sun, chairman of the China Organization for Mycoplasma, delivered speeches on behalf of Japanese, Indian and Chinese scholars

respectively, introducing the new progress and organizational activities of Mycoplasma research in their countries.



Prof. Guoqing Shao, the chairman of AOM, made an opening address. He introduced the intimate AOM culture of brotherhood. Thank the Organizing Committee for its hard work and the kind sponsorship from Zoties.

The conference theme in one and a half days included the research progress on pathogenicity, drug resistance, laboratory and clinical diagnosis, treatment, prevention and control of mycoplasmas of human, animal and plants. The speeches of the main venue of the conference includes invited lectures, keynote lectures and young scientist lectures. There were also two branch venue of the 9th Meeting of the COM. The speeches of the branch venue 1 focus on basic and applied research on different mycoplasmas. The speeches of the branch venue 2 focus on swine mycoplasmas. Seventy-four experts reported in the 8th AOM and 9th AOM this time.

In the invited lecture section, Prof. Kenro Oshima from Hosei University, Japan, Prof. Zhimin Chen from Zhejiang University School of Medicine, China, Prof. Rama Chaudhary from All India Institute of Medical Sciences, India, Prof. Junhong Lin from Taiwan Academy of agricultural science and technology, China, and Prof. Amit Yadav from National Centre for Cell Science, India, made reports about phytoplasma, *Mycoplasma pneumonia*, mycoplasma vaccine and Co-infection with *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* and SARS-CoV-2.



COVID-19 changed the conference, on line meeting and playback, attracted extensive attention from Asian scholars, the total audience was 7210, Positive evaluation online praise 6611 times, the total number of visitors to the conference website reached 148500. These data show that Mycoplasma disease is an important problem in Asia, which is concerned by many people. Network conference has its unique advantages over offline conference as an exchange platform. At the closing ceremony, the local chairman of the 2023 IOM meeting, Prof. Makoto Miyata from Osaka City University had introduced the 2023 IOM meeting in Osaka, Japan. Prof. Guoqing Shao made a closing address.



Organizing Committee of 8th Meeting of the Asian Organization for Mycoplasma and 9th Meeting of the Chinese Organization for Mycoplasma