The EuCheMS Division of Chemistry and the Environment meets ESPR—a synergistic partnership

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In May 2009, the journal *Environmental Science and Pollution Research* (ESPR) entered a new phase, ushered in by the adoption of challenging new goals and a new editorial management system. In their Editorial describing the realignment and reorganization of ESPR, Alvin Young (ESPR's Editor-in-Chief) and Paul Roos (Springer's Editorial Director for Environmental Sciences) stated that ESPR intends to strengthen its relationship with the Division of Chemistry and the Environment (DCE) of the European Association for Chemical and Molecular Sciences (EuCheMS) (Young and Roos 2009). A progress report was published in January (Young 2010). As the current DCE chair, I would like to express some thoughts on the current and future relationship between EuCheMS, DCE, and ESPR. From a personal perspective, I also want to evaluate a few aspects of the present status of ESPR and propose some goals and objectives for the journal.

What are EuCheMS and DCE, and how do they relate to ESPR? EuCheMS, a nonprofit organization founded in 1970, aims to promote cooperation in Europe between scientific and technical societies in the field of chemistry and molecular sciences. The organization can draw upon the significant resources of its 47 member societies that, in total, represent some 150,000 individual chemists in academia, industry, and government in 34 countries. EuCheMS provides a powerful voice for chemists and the chemical sciences in Europe. Its 16 divisions and working

parties carry out scientific meetings, sponsor events, and develop initiatives in specific areas.

John Holder described in 2004 the detailed structures and activities of EuCheMS and DCE (Holder 2005). Although some aspects have changed during the past 5 years, much remains still valid. Here, I briefly summarize the cornerstone characteristics.

DCE aims to promote environmental chemistry as a discipline that deals with substances in the environment across environmental media, methods (analytical chemistry, modeling, physical chemistry, etc.), and substance source categories (e.g., technical production, biosynthesis, and metabolism). A journal like ESPR that is unbiased regarding both environmental compartments and methodologies is a perfect partner for DCE. Based on its interdisciplinary scope, ESPR also welcomes contributions on the implementation of scientific results for decision-making (risk analysis, environmental communication, and politics) and, therefore, has a unique potential to put environmental chemistry into context for industry, policy makers, and government authorities.

DCE has enjoyed a close and beneficial relationship with ESPR since 1997. ESPR published summaries of the DCE meetings, reports, and selected papers from international conferences and articles on environmental education. On the occasion of ESPR's reorganization, the DCE members want to further intensify their already existing involvement.

ESPR in 2009 and 2010 The new editorial procedures of ESPR have functioned very well since May 2009. Here are some statistics: During the first 9 months, 370 manuscripts were submitted and handled by the Editors and the Editorial Staff. Currently, the flow of manuscript submission is continuing at an average rate of 40–50 manuscripts per month. At the end of January 2010, 65 manuscripts were

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accepted after careful review, often followed by major manuscript modifications through the authors.

The first 16 articles managed by the new editorial procedure appeared in the January, February, and March 2010 issues of ESPR. For these articles, the average times from submission to editorial accept decision, to online publication, and to printed issue were 15, 20 and 39 weeks, respectively. These numbers can still be improved significantly, particularly regarding the publication in print. The first two numbers certainly reflect an excellent performance during the starting phase of the new editorial procedure that was made possible due to the inputs by Alvin Young and the ESPR editors as well as by Paul Roos and the staff of the editorial office at Springer. All of them put a substantial amount of time and energy in helping ESPR to continue being a highly successful scientific journal. In the name of the DCE members, I sincerely thank all of them.

ESPR's visibility At present, ESPR still has the potential to further widen its distribution and usage. Thus, one should still aim to improve the knowledge about ESPR beyond a relatively small readership. DCE members and their colleagues in the respective chemical societies can contribute substantially through their professional networks to alleviate this problem. I would like to note one incident that took place in 2009. It is generally accepted that the “best of class” journal in environmental sciences is *Environmental Science and Technology* (ES&T), published by the American Chemical Society. The highly reputable journal ES&T published a news article referring to a recent ESPR paper authored by Wagner and Oehlmann (Lubick 2009). Most likely, many ES&T readers heard about ESPR for the first time from that news story. As a DCE member, I had taken the opportunity to tell a reporter about these new results by Wagner and Oehlmann, in order to highlight ESPR as a destination for high-quality environmental science research. In the future, ESPR should try to raise its profile through media exposure for the scientific community as well as through other general-interest outlets.

European chemistry meetings Within the EuCheMS organization, there are four types of meetings:

- The European Chemistry Congresses
- The International Conferences on Chemistry and the Environment (ICCE)
- Various international conferences sponsored by EuCheMS
- Expert workshops organized by DCE

The Third European Chemistry Congress will take place in Nurnberg from 28 August to 3 September 2010 (Garrigues 2010). The symposia of specific interest for ESPR readers are under the topic “Resources and Environ-

ment”. The symposium on “Analytical Environmental Sciences” will be convened by Philippe Garrigues, a DCE member as well as Editor of ESPR and the Springer flagship journal *Analytical and Bioanalytical Chemistry*.

The most recent International Conference on Chemistry and the Environment (ICCE) took place in June 2009 in Stockholm, presided over by ESPR Editor Ake Bergman (De Lange 2010). The ICCE 2011 will be organized in Zurich, under the presidency of the Consulting ESPR Editor and author of this Editorial. Plans are also afoot to organize a workshop in May 2011, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the POP Stockholm Convention in Brno, Czech Republic. DCE members can be highly instrumental in motivating meeting speakers to submit manuscripts to ESPR.

Editorial materials A look through the editorial materials published in ESPR over the past 3 years reveals that some articles are close to review articles; others mainly helped to brush up ESPR's citation performance by including long reference lists to ESPR articles. In my opinion, DCE members should contribute much more to the editorial section of ESPR in order to enlarge the scope of its content. Potential topics could be:

- Master curriculae in environmental sciences at European universities and other educational programs
- European legislation: REACH, Water Framework Directive, Drinking Water Directive, etc.
- Global regulations: UN POPs, new POPs; greenhouse gases
- Activities in the framework of the UN International Year of Chemistry 2011

Synergism, goals and objectives I am fully convinced that a close cooperation between DCE and ESPR can produce added value to both the journal and the professional organizations in a truly synergistic way. I propose that we all should be increasingly supportive of this relationship in the near future. Please let me know your suggestions and/or opinions via E-mail.

As a long-range goal for ESPR, I suggest to reach the top 10% of the journals in the field of environmental sciences. This achievement can be checked for the peer-reviewed articles based on the indicators published by the Web of Science. As a second but also important goal, I suggest the publication of attractive non-reviewed editorial materials that have a high appeal for scientists and professionals involved in the implementation and environmental politics. As short-term objectives, I would note a more even distribution of the submitted manuscripts among those countries from which high-level contributions are known to exist. During the first months of the new editorial

ESPR structures, more than one third of the submissions came from three countries (China, Germany, and India; Young 2010). Such an inclined geographical distribution should be eliminated by making ESPR much more popular in many other countries and by fostering submissions from expert authors from many geographical regions.

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