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## Working Groups of SIL continued

### Aquatic Birds

During the SIL Congress in Munich, Germany in 1989, it became apparent to a small group of participants that the time was ripe for waterbirds to be treated in a limnological context. This led to an *ad hoc* Symposium, "Aquatic Birds in the Trophic Web of Lakes", held in Sackville, New Brunswick, Canada, in August 1991. The proceedings of this symposium were published in *Hydrobiologia* (1994) and *Developments in Hydrobiology* (1994). The success of this symposium led to the formation of the Working Group on Aquatic Birds during the XXV SIL Congress in Barcelona, Spain, in 1992. The main objective of the Working Group is to integrate waterbirds into hydrobiology and treat waterbird studies in a limnological context. The conferences of the Working Group facilitate communications among limnologists interested in aquatic birds and ornithologists interested in the aquatic habitat.

The first conference of the newly formed SIL Working Group on Aquatic Birds was held in Sarród/Sopron, Hungary in November 1994. These proceedings were published by Wetlands International (1997, Special Publication #43). The second conference was convened in Mérida, Yucatan, Mexico in November 1997 (Proceedings by Universidad Autonoma de Yucatan, Mérida, Mexico). The third conference took place in Trébon, Czech Republic in May 2000 (Abstracts published in *Sylvia*). These conferences are held at least once every three years between SIL Congresses. The most recent conference, "Limnology and Water Birds 2003" was held in Sackville New Brunswick, Canada, August 3-7, 2003. Over 110 persons were in attendance, 69 papers were presented. (Proceedings are in press: *Hydrobiologia* and *Developments in Hydrobiology*).

The Aquatic Birds WG also held workshops and paper sessions during the SIL Congresses in São Paulo, Brazil (1995), Dublin, Ireland (1998), Melbourne, Australia (2001) and recently in Lahti, Finland (2004).

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## Announcements

### The Academy of Sciences for the Developing World

TWAS, the Academy of Sciences for the Developing World, (formerly the Third World Academy of Sciences) which operates under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), represents the best of science in the developing world. Its principal aim is to promote scientific capacity and excellence for sustainable development in the Southern Hemisphere.

TWAS is an autonomous international organization, founded in Trieste, Italy (<http://ale2ts.ts.infn.it:6163/TS/TS.html>) in 1983 by a distinguished group of scientists from the Southern Hemisphere under the leadership of the late Nobel Laureate Abdus Salam (<http://www.ictp.trieste.it/ProfSalam/index.html>) of Pakistan. Originally named "Third World Academy of Sciences", it was officially launched by the then-Secretary General of the United Nations, Javier Perez de Cuellar, in 1985. Since its inception, TWAS's operational expenses have largely been covered by generous contributions by the Italian government.

The Academy's more than 700 Fellows and Associate Fellows are elected from among the world's most distinguished scientists. Fellows are citizens of the Southern Hemisphere; Associate Fellows are citizens of the Northern Hemisphere who either were born in the Southern Hemisphere or have made significant contributions to the advancement of science in the Southern Hemisphere. About 80 percent of TWAS's membership are Fellows representing more than 70 countries in the Southern Hemisphere. (See TWAS Membership (<http://www.ictp.trieste.it/~twas/mbrs/Members.html>) page for more information).

A Council, (<http://www.ictp.trieste.it/~twas/Council.html>) elected by members every three years, is responsible for supervising all Academy affairs. A small secretariat headed by an Executive Director assists the Council in the administration and coordination of the programmes (contacts) (<http://www.ictp.trieste.it/~twas/Contacts.html>). The secretariat is located on the premises of The Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) (<http://www.ictp.it/>) in Trieste, Italy.

Since 1986 TWAS has supported scientific research in 100 countries in the Southern Hemisphere through a variety of programmes (<http://www.ictp.trieste.it/~twas/Activities.html>). More than 2,000 eminent

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scientists worldwide, including TWAS members, peer review proposals free-of-charge for research grants, fellowships and awards that are submitted to the Academy by scientists and institutions in developing countries.

### **Partnerships:**

TWAS works in close collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), International Council for Science (ICSU), International Foundation for Science (IFS) and International Science Programme (ISP).

In 1988 TWAS facilitated the establishment of the Third World Network of Scientific Organizations (TWNSO) (<http://www.twngo.org/>), a non-governmental alliance of 149 scientific organizations in the Southern Hemisphere. TWNSO's goal is to help build political and scientific leadership in the Southern Hemisphere for science-based economic development and promote sustainable development through South-South Hemisphere and South-North Hemisphere partnerships in science and technology. TWAS provides the secretariat for TWNSO and co-sponsors a number of its activities.

TWAS also played a key role in the establishment of the Third World Organization for Women in Science (TWOWS). TWOWS, launched in 1993, now has more than 2,500 members representing over 90 countries in the Southern Hemisphere. Its main objectives are to promote women's leadership in science and technology in the Southern Hemisphere and to strengthen their participation in science-based development and decision-making processes. The TWOWS secretariat is hosted and assisted by TWAS.

Since May 2000, TWAS has served as the secretariat for the InterAcademy Panel on International Issues (IAP), a global network of 92 science academies worldwide established in 1993. IAP's primary goal is to help member academies work together to inform citizens and advise decision-makers on the scientific aspects of critical global issues.

Since November 2004, TWAS has served as the secretariat for the InterAcademy Medical Panel (IAMP), a global network of academies of medicine and medical divisions within science academies. IAMP, which currently has 52 members, is committed to improving health worldwide; building scientific capacity for health; and, providing independent scientific advice on health issues to decision makers.

TWAS and TWNSO together have played a major role in the establishment of COMSATS, the Commission on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development in the Southern Hemisphere, whose membership consists of heads of state or heads of government in the Southern Hemisphere and whose aims are to bring awareness to developing countries of the pivotal role science and technology have in the process of development, and to support major initiatives for promoting indigenous capacity in science and technology for science-led sustainable development.

### **Objectives:**

- To recognize, support and promote excellence in scientific research in the Southern Hemisphere;
- To provide promising scientists in the Southern Hemisphere with research facilities necessary for the advancement of their work;
- To facilitate contacts between individual scientists and institutions in the Southern Hemisphere;
- To encourage South-North Hemisphere cooperation between individuals and centres of scholarship; and,
- To encourage scientific research on major Third World problems.

### **Main Contributors to TWAS's Current Activities:**

- The Direzione Generale per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Italy;
- The Department for Research Co-operation (SAREC) of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) (<http://www.sida.se/Sida/jsp/polopoly.jsp?d=10&t=1>);
- The UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (<http://portal.unesco.org>);
- The OPEC Fund for International Development (<http://www.opecfund.org/>);
- The Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS); and,
- The Governments of Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Nigeria, Pakistan and Syria.

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