

## SEH News

At the approaching 14th Ordinary General Meeting of SEH in Porto the Council is going to propose a number of initiatives and ideas which are summarized below. Some of these imply minor changes in the By-Laws as specified in the following sections. Furthermore the Council proposes five candidates for a second term re-election; their CVs are found at the end of these SEH News.

### Announcement of proposals of changes in SEH By-Laws

**1. Number of Associate Editors.** One of the new developments regarding Amphibia-Reptilia is the launch of the board of Associate Editors. These assist with manuscript management and other editorial tasks without being member of the SEH Council. The By-Laws currently impose an upper limit of 10 Associate Editors. This restriction is not useful, and the Council considers that already at the present stage, an Associate Editor Board of more than 10 members would be desirable. We therefore propose to delete the corresponding restriction from the By-Laws.

By-Laws, §6.7:

Current text: "...The Council can further nominate *up to 10* Associate Editors for a period of four years, with the possibility of renomination".

Proposed change: Delete "up to 10" to read: "...The Council can further nominate Associate Editors for a period of four years, with the possibility of renomination".

German version:

Current text: "...Der Vorstand kann weiterhin *bis zu 10* Angeschlossene Schriftleiter für einen Zeitraum von 4 Jahren benennen, mit der Möglichkeit der Wiederbenennung".

Proposed change: Delete "bis zu 10" to read: "...Der Vorstand kann weiterhin Angeschlossene Schriftleiter für einen Zeitraum von 4 Jahren benennen, mit der Möglichkeit der Wiederbenennung".

**2. Creation of an online-bulletin.** As discussed unanimously by the Council, there is a strong need in Europe for an outlet of short notes on distribution, ecology and behaviour of amphibians and reptiles. Such small observations can be of high importance for conservation, distribution mapping and ecological/behavioural accounts but are often too cursorial for a publication in "Amphibia-Reptilia", and are buried in local bulletins of very difficult access or remain unpublished. This situation could be alleviated by the creation of a bulletin of SEH which would be published online and therefore result in no or very limited costs for the Society. Detailed

proposals will be discussed at the upcoming OGM 2007 in Porto. In the case that the OGM agrees with the creation of this Bulletin, we suggest the two Bulletin Co-Editors to become equivalent to Committee Chairs and thereby gain the right to vote at Council Meetings. This requires an addition to §7 of the By-Laws of SEH ("Publications").

By-Laws, §7, new paragraph:

"7.4. Next to 'Amphibia-Reptilia', the Society publishes an online bulletin for short notes on distribution, ecology, behaviour and conservation of amphibians and reptiles". This bulletin is of open-access and available from the SEH website. It is managed by two Co-Editors which have the status of Committee Chairs and thereby the right to vote at Council Meetings".

German version:

"7.4. Neben 'Amphibia-Reptilia' publiziert die Gesellschaft ein Online-Bulletin im Internet, in dem kurze Mitteilungen zu Verbreitung, Ökologie, Verhalten und Schutz von Amphibian und Reptilien Aufnahme finden. Die Beiträge in diesem Bulletin werden im Internet kostenlos über die SEH-Website verfügbar gemacht. Das Bulletin wird von zwei Schriftleitern editiert welche den Status von Ausschussleitern innehaben und damit Wahlrecht bei Vorstandssitzungen des Vorstandes besitzen".

### Proposal of a new student membership rate

The Council will propose a new special membership rate for students to be voted upon at the 14th OGM. New members with student status will have the right of gaining a reduced rate (50%) for the two first years if subscribing for two years of membership.

### Call for proposals on a standardized name for the SEH congress proceedings

In his last meeting, the SEH council decided to propose to the next OGM to introduce a standardized layout for the SEH congress proceedings, and to publish them as a series of monographs of the same title and continuous numbering of volumes, instead of using different titles in each Proceedings volume. Two potential titles have been proposed: "Scientia Herpetologica" which was already used for the Proceedings volume of the 7th SEH meeting in Barcelona, and "European Herpetological Proceedings". We invite SEH members and all readers of Amphibia-Reptilia to submit alternative title proposals to the secretary general. The decision on this proposal will be taken by the next OGM in 2007 in Porto.

## Curricula vitarum of candidates nominated by the Council for election at the 14th OGM, Porto, 2007

**Vice-President: Miguel Vences** (Braunschweig, Germany). Double nationality (German and Spanish), born 1969 in Köln (Cologne). He studied biology at the Universities of Köln and Bonn (Diploma in 1996), having received the SEH grant in herpetology in 1990. From 1996 on, he was a PhD student of Wolfgang Böhme at the Zoologisches Forschungsinstitut und Museum A. Koenig in Bonn, obtaining his Dr. rer. nat. (equivalent to PhD) in 2000. Subsequently he was a postdoctoral researcher in Paris (with Alain Dubois) and Konstanz (with Axel Meyer). From 2002-2005 he worked as Assistant Professor at the Zoological Museum of the University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands, and since 2005 he is Professor for Evolutionary Biology at the Technical University of Braunschweig, Germany. His main scientific interests include the systematics, phylogeny and biogeography of the Madagascan herpetofauna, speciation mechanisms, and the ecology of montane amphibians. He published about 200 research papers and co-authored the descriptions of over 60 new species of amphibians and reptiles.

**General Secretary: Marco A.L. Zuffi** (Firenze, Italy), Italian nationality, born 1960 in Milano (Milan, Italy). He studied Natural Sciences at the Universities of Milano and Pavia (Graduation thesis "Laurea" in 1983, 110/110 *cum laude*). From 1984-1986 he obtained specialisation in Management and conservation of vertebrate animal (University of Pavia). From 1984-1988 he worked as Assistant Researcher at the Dipartimento di Biologia Animale, University of Pavia and Assistant Curator for Herpetology at the Municipality Museum of Natural History in Milano. From 1988 on, he was Curator of Vertebrate Zoology and Comparative Anatomy at the Museum of Natural History and Territory, University of Pisa.

From 1992-2000 he worked as Assistant Researcher in Comparative Anatomy at the Museum of Natural History and Territory, University of Pisa. From 2002 on, he is assistant Professor for Naturalistic Museology at the University of Pisa. From 2004-2006 he was a PhD student of Filippo Barbanera (Dipartimento di Biologia, University of Pisa), obtaining his PhD in 2007 (January). His main scientific interests include ecology, reproductive biology, and chemical recognition systems in Palaearctic reptiles (terrestrial tortoises, pond turtles, colubrid and viperid snakes). He published about 80 research papers, about 30 on IF journals.

**Vice-Treasurer: Jarmo Perälä** (Helsinki, Finland/Gonfaron, France), Finnish citizen. He studied biology and zoology at the universities of Oulu, Cologne and Bristol, and received his PhD in 2002 on the systematics, taxonomy and conservation of circum-Mediterranean and Central-Asian testudinids (genus *Testudo* sensu lato). During 2003-2004 he was a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Helsinki working on the effects of traffic on amphibian genomes, and the biology of the adder *Vipera berus* in the field as well as in the lab. He is currently working with Centre de Recherche et de Conservation des Chéloniens—Station

d'Observation et de Protection des Tortues dans le Monde (Gonfaron) on the population fragmentation, hybrid identification and conservation status of mainland French *Eurotestudo hermanni*, and with the Finnish Museum of Natural History (Helsinki) to create standard Finnish names for reptiles and amphibians. He has worked in around 20 major museum collections globally and has done extensive fieldwork related especially to Palearctic testudinids. He has been a referee for 15 journals, his publication record includes some 30 research articles, and he has (co-)authored the descriptions of six tortoise species and one new genus. Selected positions of trust: He was recently elected President of the Herpetological Society of Finland, he is member of the IUCN Species Survival Commission/Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group, and the Range Country Contact for the Mediterranean region with Turtle Conservation Fund (TCF = Conservation International/IUCN partnership initiative). His research interests include, among others, practical and theoretical systematics (including problems arising from conflicting evidence associated with the use of molecular vs. morphological data), taxonomy, history/bibliography of herpetology, morphology including paleontological data, and conservation biology especially in conjunction with chelonians of the world and the Finnish herpetofauna.

**First Co-Editor: D. James Harris** (Oporto, Portugal), nationality English, is currently an invited assistant professor at the University of Porto, and a member of the research group CIBIO where he has worked since 1999. He has been a co-editor of Amphibia-Reptilia since 2003. His main interests are in phylogenetics and island biogeography of reptiles. His current research projects include a phylogeographic analysis of Iberian and North African *Podarcis*, variation within the herpetofauna across the Strait of Gibraltar, and the evolution and colonization history of reptiles from the Indian Ocean islands. He has produced about 50 scientific articles in these fields in the last five years. He is currently supervising several PhD and MSc students working on these topics. He has acted as a reviewer for most herpetological and molecular journals, and also for various grant funding bodies from the UK, EU and USA.

**Third Co-Editor: Mathieu Denoël** (Liège, Belgium). Nationality Belgian, born 1974. He studied biology at the University of Liège, and obtained his PhD in 2001 on the evolutionary ecology of paedomorphosis in the Alpine newt. From 2001 to 2004, he was a post-doctoral researcher working on three main topics: adaptive significance of alternative morphs, sexual selection and conservation biology. He worked in different labs in France, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States and also carried out research in the field (e.g. Larzac plateau, Alps, Apennines, Cantabrian, Pindos and Rocky mountains). He has now obtained a permanent researcher position at the University of Liège (Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique) and is continuing his exploration of amphibian biology with an increasing focus in conservation, but also on feeding habits, habitat selection, skeletochronology, population dynamics, courtship, biogeography, molecular and landscape ecology, invasive species, and ecotoxicology. He is the first-author of more than 40 research papers in a wide range of journals. He

has been a member of SEH since 1991 and of eight herpetological societies since 1991-1995 (AHE, ASIH, BHS, HL, ISSCA, OGH, SHF and SSAR). He has been a referee for 25 journals, on the SEH Advisory Editorial Board since 2001, and became Co-Editor of *Amphibia-Reptilia* in 2003. During his editorial work in SEH, he edited more than 160 manuscripts, adapted the layout of *Amphibia-Reptilia*, obtained an increase of published pages per year from the pub-

lisher, moved the journal towards rapid on-line procedures, reduced the large backlog to offer a faster publication service, created a board of Associate Editors and a group of language reviewers, and collaborated with the help of more than 100 scientific reviewers. He is now continuing his work for the society in improving the procedures and the quality of the services to provide to SEH members (e.g. open access of old issues, web submission procedures, and indexation).