



## **SIL General Assembly Minutes** **Gwangju, Korea: SIL2021, August 2021**

*General Assembly was open to all members and conference attendees  
Lead by SIL President Thomas Mehner, and SIL Secretary General – Treasurer, Tamar Zohary.*

### **Open General Assembly**

The president, Thomas Mehner, welcomes everyone to the General Assembly and to the SIL 2021 congress.

### **Presidential address: Thomas Mehner: Challenges Ahead**

- Which activities come first into your minds, when thinking of SIL as a scientific society? What does SIL stand for? Meeting, knowledge, networks, congress, research groups, etc.
- The main activities of scientific societies:
  - Promoting excellent research
  - Publishing a leading scientific journal
  - Organising international congresses and workshops
  - Supporting scientific networking and career development in academia
- Covid-19 has accelerated changes in the scientific landscape that were already happening, but forcing us into new ways of doing science:
  - Access to publications by a fingertip
  - Oversaturated landscape of scientific publishing models
  - International collaboration and networking via remote connections
  - Ever increasing imbalance between motivated students in science and number of academic positions
- Need to redefine SIL to address these challenges:
  - A community of researchers that supports creating and promoting innovative scientific ideas in limnology
  - A society that assumes thought leadership in developing concepts and solutions to address problems in water-related fields
  - Fostering global partnerships for sustainable provision and maintenance of healthy inland water ecosystems including their biodiversity and nature's contributions to people
  - A society that educates researchers and water managers on interdisciplinary approaches of sustainable water management
  - A society with a vibrant international network of early-career researchers in water-related research fields
- SIL remains essential in the progress of climate change and inland water ecosystem sustainability: SIL World Climate Statement & the Statement of World Aquatic Scientific Societies on the Need to Take Urgent Action against Human-Cause Climate Change, Based on Scientific Evidence.

- SIL is not immune to the changes and challenges that come with COVID 19 (Mohamed, and Wissel, 2021)
- SIL's Internationality is one way in which SIL is a dominant force:
  - SIL has members in 66 countries
  - SIL will elect an **ECR for Developing Economies** in the Steering committee
  - SIL will create stronger synergies with the **National Limnological Societies via the SIL Ambassadors**
    - Replacing the International Committee and National Representatives by National Ambassadors
  - SIL has special programmes for developing economies:
    - Tonolli Memorial Award: \$1000 to \$1,500 for a period of one year
    - Wetzel travel award
- SIL, with the leadership of Ines O'Farrell, has launched a successful mentorship program for student scientists in developing countries
- Inland Waters journal:
  - Upcoming Special Issues: Preventative Management in Lakes (SIL working group), Dryland Limnology (SIL working group), Limnology and Sustainable Development Goals, 100 years SIL
  - Promotion of Open Access options in new contract with publisher
  - Associate Editor Mentoring for ECRs
  - 14 recent papers at free access for 2 weeks during SIL2021
- SIL Congress has been redesigned in recent years
  - Strategic considerations to promote international partnerships
  - Selection of continents where to hold congresses
  - Bi-annual event : SIL2024, 2026
  - Broad international access: SIL2022 will be of hybrid format
  - Sustainability: SIL2021 (and all upcoming ones) are Eco-friendly congresses
  - Accompanying workshops on scientific skills for early-career members
  - Well received for SIL2021
- Announcement: SIL 2022 will be held in Berlin, Germany!
  - **The next 100 years: Sensing and Safeguarding Inland Waters: Berlin, Germany; August 7-10<sup>th</sup> 2022**
  - Co-chairs are Rita Adrian, Mark Gessner, and Lars Tranvik
- The biggest challenge: *Stabilizing SIL's financial basis*
  - Currently revenue generated by member dues
    - Substantial decline in members since ~15 years (<1000 who have paid dues in 2021)
    - Substantially more researchers follow SIL on Social Media than being active members
  - Shift in member due structure
    - 1/3 regular, 1/3 students, 1/4 emeritus; too few ECRs
    - total ~30% members from developing economies

- Needs development of new concepts to generate revenue
  - Partnerships with foundations and private companies
  - Pay-for-content
  - Congresses as a source of income (but also as financial risk)
- Take-aways: Almost 100 years after its foundation, SIL has come to a turning point
  - To facilitate another 100 years of SIL: Changes in the statutes as the first formal steps, Vision and mission – enabling partnerships, Composition of SIL steering committee – addressing our main activities, SIL ambassadors and national societies – strengthening our international network, Congresses as strategic investments – engaging where many limnologists work, Changes in the revenue structure have to follow
- SIL leading bodies are essentially composed of volunteers: **We need your engagement and support!**

### **Activity report & Financial statements – Tamar Zohary, SIL General Secretary General – Treasurer**

- Since the last congress, there have been some changes to the SIL Executive board. Of note, Yves Prairie, has been replaced by Thomas Mehner as SIL President in May 2019, and Alexandra Descoteaux (social media, comms, etc) has been taken over by Michelle Gros in May 2021.
- We also have four board members that are outgoing and being replaced by new positions (per the new statues)
  - ECR rep Iestyn Woolway →
  - VP, Martin Kainz →
  - VP Jeremy Piggott→
  - ECR rep Marieke Frassl →
  - → ECR Education, Barbara Barta
  - → ECR Communication, Juan David Gonzáles-Trujillo
  - → VP Education, Maria de los Àngeles Gonzales-Sagrario
  - → VP Communication, Cecilia Barouillet
- At our next congress: New General Secretary (Tamar Zohary stepping down), New (3rd) ECR for Developing Countries (support for VP Dev Countries, Ines O’Farrell), New (4th) VP and ECR for Global Outreach
- Following Nanjing 2018 Congress we had 4 objectives:
  - **Engage young generation of SIL members & officers:** Mentorship programs, Social media, student volunteers, Congress is student-oriented, SIL working groups
  - **Promote IW and SILNews:** IW: Contract, Special issues, Associate Editor mentorship program, SILnews: facelift
  - **Improve SIL’s financial status (greatest challenge):** Use congress to generate income

- **Re-structure SIL for the future:** Mission statement, Governance review, statutes, revised executive board

## 1. Engage young generation of SIL members & officers

SIL has undertaken many different initiatives to boost student involvement in SIL:

- Student website manager (Veronica Nava)
- Social media on Facebook, Twitter posting weekly (Alexandra Descoteaux, Michelle Gros; student volunteers: Mark Louie Lopez, Janine Tolod). Also occasionally post on Instagram and Youtube.
- Students/Early Career Rep on SIL board: increased from 2 ECR members to 4ECRs board members
- ECRs are now on all SIL committees & activities
- Student-oriented congress (e.g. SIL2021: eminent scholars, short courses).

Student Awards

- Student Awards Committee chair: VP Inés O’Farrell
- **Wetzel Award** – travel to a SIL Congress (not applicable this year, but has been very useful for students in the past and should resume in the future)
- **Tonolli Award** – small research grants for students from developing economies that is always popular and helps many students every year complete their research projects. High diversity of applicants and countries:
  - 2019 – 12 applicants, 8 awards (Argentina, Colombia, Philippines, Uruguay)
  - 2020 – 2 applicants, 2 awards (India, Uruguay)
  - 2021 – 14 applicants, 8 awards (Argentina, Congo, Cuba, Philippines)
- SIL’s 3rd **Student competition** (Student Competition Committee chair: Judit Padisak):
  - 2019/20 – 10 participants in Int’l stage (9 countries): 3 awards (Germany/China, Holland, Argentina), special session on Thursday 26.8

Mentorship Programs

- Student mentors/mentees: regular members are paired up with student members. Very successful program with almost 10 pairings (and more in the works) in several countries. Lead by Ines O’Farrell
- Inland Waters Associate Editor Mentorship Program: New this year, led by Jay Piggott and David Hamilton.
  - *A word from Jay Piggott: Mentees learn to review submissions, identify potential reviewers, act as a social media ambassadors, and attend editorial board meetings under the mentorship of senior editors.*
  - *To train the next generation of journal editors and promote diversity, SIL launched the Inland Waters Associate Editor Mentoring Program for Early Career Researchers.*
  - *Congratulations to the mentees accepted to this program: Benjamin Misteli, Dengjun (Kevin) Wang, Joanna Rosinska, Fegzhi He, Clay Peter, Maho Iwaki,*

*Ma Cristina A Paul-Mercado! Thank you to the Associate Editors that volunteered to be mentors!*

## 2. Promote IW and SILNews

- SILNews: Not everything can fit into a tweet, SILnews fills the gap between a journal publication and social media
- Editor: Giovanna Flaim, SILnews@limnology.org
- SILNews includes items of interest to the limnological community such as upcoming meetings, reviews of new books, photos, opinion articles on limnological issues and concerns, short articles for Limnology Around the World, project reports from students who received the SIL Tonolli Award

## 3. Re-structure SIL for the future

### Governance review:

- Recommendations:
  - Stagger officer terms
  - Define VP responsibilities -> VP Education; VP Communication
  - More educational activities made accessible
  - Improve website
  - Promote IW
  - Consolidate committees
  - Re-structure Nat'l Rep group into a global network of limnological engagement and communication (*require changes to SIL statutes*)
  - Add 3rd ECR to board (*require changes to SIL statutes*)
- Special thank you to the governance review board lead by Jack Jones, USA: Rey Donne S. Papa, David Livingstone, Cecilia Barouillet, Michele Burford, Andras Abonyi

## 4. Working Groups

WG Title	Coordinator(s)
Aquatic Invasive Species	Vadim Panov
Dryland Limnology	Luciana Barbosa
Echohydrology	Maciej Zalewski, Małgorzata Godlewska
Lake Restoration	Miguel Luerling, Bryan Spears
Physical Limnology	Sally MacIntyre, Andrew Folkard, Bertram Boehrer
Macrophytes	Liesbeth Bakker, Krzysztof Szoszkiewicz
PEG (Plankton Ecol Grp)	Lisette de Senerpont Domis, Ali Ger

### Statement of Accounts (Last 5 years):

- **INCOME:** 2016/17 has very high membership dues because of the libraries that paid journal subscription. While memberships have been declining, the dues are further impacted by the increase in student members, who pay much less than a regular member. Congresses have also started bringing in money, starting in China in 2018. While page charges have gone down (no more page charges for IW), royalties have increased, and the hope in the coming years is to continue increasing revenue through royalties.
- **EXPENSES:** journal publication expenses have gone down drastically since switching to a major publisher. The remaining expense for IW are the copy-editor, an honorarium to the publishing editor and the fees for access to IW for our members. Congress fees from Italy spilled over into the following year. Expect very few expenses for 2021 because nobody flew to Korea.
- **YEARLY BALANCES:** a little bit more expenses than income in general, but mostly balanced. Will need to think about way to increase revenue and stabilize expenses.

### **Naumann-Thienemann Medals: Presented by Thomas Mehner**

NT Medal is the highest honor that can be bestowed internationally for outstanding scientific contributions to limnology: This year it is awarded to **Nelson Hairston & Tamar Zohary**. *A pre-recorded video of each honorary was played of them receiving their award in their homes with a close colleague/family.*

- **Nelson Hairston:** For blending theory with an analysis of field patterns and manipulative experiments, he has provided valuable insight into interactions between ecology and evolution, and the causes and consequences of life-history variation in freshwater zooplankton. For his fostering of scholarly excellence in his students and colleagues alike, and for contributing to his local and international academic communities.
- **Tamar Zohary:** For her global leadership in the area of phytoplankton taxonomy and ecology, and high-level leadership for research conducted on Lake Kinneret. For her long-serving and very active participation in SIL as the General Secretary and Treasurer, and for being a role model for young women interested in pursuing a scientific career.

### **Announcement of Kilham and Baldi lecturers for 2021: Thomas Mehner**

Kilham Memorial Lecture : August 24, 2021 @ 8:30pm KST

- Cayelan C. Carey, Department of Biological Sciences, Virginia Tech, USA
- Causes and consequences of changing oxygen in lakes

Baldi Memorial Lecture: August 26, 2021 @ 8:30pm KST

- Michele Burford, Australian Rivers Institute, Griffith University, AUS
- Limnologists have a role in ensuring a better future for the planet and us.

**Presentation by Thomas Mehner of motions for changes to Statutes and Governance (to be voted on electronically) :**

- In the context of a Governance Review, the SIL Executive Committee has a series of recommendations which they are trying to follow. The proposed changes to the statutes are essential to be able to make some of these changes.
- Our request for your comments and contributions to these changes was done over the summer. The SIL Executive Board acknowledged and incorporated your ideas. Today, we will present them to you as a series of motions for approval.
- Today, you should receive a link via email where you will be able to vote.

Motions to be approved:

**1. Motions on governance structure & new composition of Executive Board:**

- Main changes: Removal of International Committee from Governance (leaving Execs + GA). Board has 4 VPs and ECRs in education, communication/publication, developing economies, and global outreach. Terms will be of 2 years each for a max of 6 years. Quorum for Executive meeting is 2/3.

**2. Motion to remove the International Committee as a legal entity:**

- Main Changes: Removal of International Committee & it's duties

**3. Motion on new role of National Representatives:**

- Main Changes: Redefining NRs as National Ambassadors: SIL Ambassadors form the Global Outreach committee, to be Chaired by the Vice President Global Outreach. The SIL Executive Board is the entity responsible for developing and updating periodically the mandate for the Global Outreach Committee

**4. Motion to create a new section on Committees**

- The Executive Board maintains authority to establish/terminate committees. Committee Chairs will be nominated by the Executive Board. SIL standing committees comprise the following: (1) Nominating Committee (2) Baldi, Kilham, N-T Awards Committee (3) Student Awards committee

**5. Motion on rules around decision where to hold Congress**

- The time & place of the next Congress is decided by a formal process: A Request for Proposal shall be circulated to SIL members. The Executive board will appoint a Congress selection committee. Shortlisted proposals will be presented to the Board and passed by resolution.

**6. Motion to incorporate the new mission statement and goals**

*The mission of SIL is to promote excellence in the study and management of inland waters and address global issues by promoting interdisciplinary approaches and fostering settings conducive to transfer of knowledge.*

*SIL delivers on its mission through the following strategic priorities:*

- *Foster and support international scientific networks of inland water research*
- *Develop and maintain partnerships for sustainable management of inland water ecosystems and water resources*
- *Contribute to addressing global environmental and societal issues around inland water ecosystems through a strategic alignment with the UN SDGs*
- *Empower diverse researchers of tomorrow and facilitate knowledge-transfer to promote limnology to a wider audience*

### **Call for action! Opportunity to get involved**

- Serve on a committee: Nominating, Publications Advisory, Student Awards, Student Competition, Awards (Baldi, Kilham, N-T), Membership engagement, Education, Communication & Technology, Revenue Generation & Partnerships.
- Join a Working Group: Aquatic Invasive Species, Dryland Limnology, Echohydrology, Lake Restoration, Macrophytes, Plankton Ecology Group, Physical Limnology, and others
- Become mentor or mentee with the mentorship program!
- Volunteer as social media representative
- Donate to SIL with monetary contributions!
- Take leadership within your country to help raise SIL international collaboration
- My lake Videos
- 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary committee: SIL is 100 years old this year and we want to honor all of SIL member's accomplishments, how far we've come, and where we are going.

Attendees are encouraged to fill out a google form to volunteer with SIL activities.

### **Close General Assembly**

*Thomas: Thank you for attending. Enjoy SIL2021 congress. Up next is the international committee meeting open to all NRs and the Executive Board members where the future of the international committee will be reshaped.*