



New Zealand Society of Plant Biologists

## **2009 AGM Minutes New Zealand Society of Plant Biologists**

The Annual General Meeting of the New Zealand Society of Plant Biologists Inc. was held in Meeting Room 4+5, at the Christchurch Convention Centre, 5:45pm, on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2009.

Mike Clearwater welcomed the 37 members present at the meeting (Rainer Hoffman, Matthew Turnbull, Brian Jordan, David Whitehead, Peter Minchin, Julian Heyes, David Collings, Michael McManus, Ari Kornfeld, Jocelyn Eason, Nick Albert, Andrew Clarke, Kevin Davies, David Lewis, Adrian Walcroft, Afsana Islam, Diantha Smith, Susanna Leung, Aluh Nikmatullah, Alvina Grace Lai, Jibrán Tabir, Rubina Jibrán, Nick Gould, Paul Dijkwel, Kate Chambers, Ellen Cieraad, Iggy Menzies, Mary Black, Tony Conner, Paula Jameson, Julian Eaton-Rye, Tina Summerfield, Wouter Ballizany, Brent Barrett, Kevin Gould, Marian McKenzie, Ronan Chen.)

Apologies were presented for Ian McIvor, Jim Crush, Colin Eady, Erin O'Donoghue, Michelle Williamson, Paul Petrie, Sheryl Somerfield, Dennis Greer, Margaret Barbour, Don Hunter, John Clemens and Jan Binnie.

1. The **minutes** of the 2008 AGM were accepted (**moved**: Mike Clearwater, **seconded** Rainer Hoffman, carried).
2. **Matters arising** from 2008 AGM minutes  
Mike Clearwater summarised the world summit of plant science societies held at the 2009 annual meeting of the American Society of Plant Biologists in Hawaii. We were invited to send an attendee, but as we had no members attending the associated conference that year we asked Barry Pogson (ASPS) to represent us. All societies present agreed to form a 'Global Plant Council' to 'explore ways in which plant scientists can come together to address global concerns such as world hunger, energy, climate change, health and well-being, sustainability, and environmental protection'. NZSPB will monitor developments and take part where appropriate.
3. Mike Clearwater presented the **President's report**.  
Paula Jameson clarified that we had met with the Ecology Society once previously.
4. The **Treasurer's report** was presented by Tina Summerfield.  
Matthew Turnbull noted that the \$3000 provided by NZSPB to help seed Combio 2009 will be returned, with a small profit also expected.

Mike Clearwater **moved** that both the President's and Treasurer's reports be adopted, **seconded** Brian Jordan, carried.

5. **Election of officers.** Mike Clearwater declared all positions vacant and nominations opened. Mike Clearwater stood for President again, and nominated those who had volunteered to stand for council again (Vice-President, Kevin Gould; Secretary, Marian McKenzie; Treasurer, Tina Summerfield; Nick Gould, David Collings, Rainer Hofmann, Brian Jordan (Council). Margaret Barbour decided to stand down, and was thanked for her work on the council. Mike Clearwater declared nominations closed, **seconded** Peter Michin. Mike Clearwater proposed that the nominees be elected, **seconded** Paula Jameson, carried unanimously.
6. **Conference Venues 2009 and beyond.**

### **2010**

Mike Clearwater proposed we meet in Palmerston North with a smaller NZSPB-only meeting as preparations by the NZSBMB for their 2010 meeting are already well underway, and the NZIAHS are planning a more animal oriented meeting in 2010. Suggested time for the NZSPB meeting was the week of 5<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> July 2010. The meeting would be for two days and would be strongly student focused, with a couple of high-profile speakers funded by the society itself, and the Annals of Botany could also be approached. Mike suggested that Roger Slack himself could be asked to present the Roger Slack Award as he is Palmerston North based.

Matthew Turnbull liked the idea of a smaller meeting, and the opportunities that would give our students, but was concerned over the suggested time, being only seven months after Combio2009. He suggested August/Sept 2010 as an alternative. Kevin Davies pointed out there would be a conflict with the Queenstown molecular biology (QMB) meeting at that time, which is held in August each year. Paula Jameson suggested we join the QMB Plant Satellite meeting for our 2010 meeting.

David Lewis, extended an invitation from NZIAHS to their two day meeting in Hamilton in 2010, but acknowledged the theme of the Environmental impact of dairying might not be so appropriate for NZSPB members.

OzBio/Combio will be meeting in Melbourne in 2010.

### **2011**

Mike Clearwater outlined that the NZ Ecological Society are meeting in Rotorua in November of 2011. Also NZSBMB did not have plans for their 2011 meeting yet.

Matthew Turnbull said that ASPS had extended an invitation to NZSPB to attend Combio (in Cairns) in September.

Nick Albert outlined recent changes to the NZ Plant Biotechnology Society (previously named the International Association of Plant Tissue Culture) conference, in that it is moving beyond tissue culture techniques into general plant molecular biology, so could be a suitable meeting for our members. Tony Conner said that they meet every two years and that the meeting is run by the NZ branch of the international society.

Mike Clearwater expressed concern that the International Botanical Congress in Melbourne in 23<sup>rd</sup>-30 July may draw members away from ComBio 2011. Andrew Clarke

outlined that two symposia at the International Botanical Congress had been applied for by the NZ Plant Radiation Network with the intention that these would have a NZ focus.

## **2012**

Mike Clearwater reported that Combio 2012 would be in Adelaide, and this will be the next Combio on the three year cycle that NZSPB is currently attending.

## **2014**

Julian Heyes? outlined the International Hort Congress, which will be in Brisbane in 2014. This will be a large meeting (about 2000 attendees) and NZSPB members are invited to attend.

7. **Roger Slack Award.** Mike Clearwater announced that Matthew Turnbull was the 2009 recipient of the Roger Slack Award and that this was in recognition of his work on plant respiration. He will be giving his address tomorrow entitled “Factors regulating the acclimation of plant respiration and photosynthesis along environmental gradients.” Matthew was congratulated by the members. Mike outlined that next year the award would be open to people within seven years of being awarded their PhD. He encouraged members to consider and nominate suitable people.
8. **Annals of Botany Speaker.** This year’s Annals of Botany speaker is Professor Brent Helliker, of University of Pennsylvania. Brent gave his plenary lecture entitled “Homeothermy of tree leaf temperatures during photosynthesis: evidence isotopic and otherwise” on Wednesday morning. Members were reminded that nominations for next year’s speaker were now open.
9. **Society activities and attracting new members.** Mike asked for ideas around raising the profile of the society. He thanked Nick Albert for his submitted design for our new logo, and Marian McKenzie and Margaret Barbour for pushing the logo through to completion. Mike said that the website was the next to be targeted for updating with a fresh new look, a suitable person to drive this is being sought. Also the aim is to have membership subs paid on line for convenience.

Mike also reminded that the society can be approached to provide funds for supporting invited speakers to travel nationally to give seminars, in exchange for promotion of the society. He also aims to write to potential members and to develop fliers to point out the advantages of being a member of NZSPB.

Kevin Gould said that he felt the NZ plant science community was yet to realize we are now Plant Biologists, and so cover a broader range of plant science than previously. Rainer suggested that we could announce the new name and logo nationally, and send fliers to relevant departments throughout the country with an invitation for members to join. Andrew Clarke said that he would promote NZSPB to the Plant Radiation Society, and that a flier could go in their next year’s conference pack (in September). Iggy Menzies suggested an essay competition for students. Kevin Davies suggested a membership drive where current members could receive a prize for the most new members recruited.

David Lewis gave further support for the idea of linking in with QMB, which would increase publicity for the society. Also that being part of the Rotorua meeting run by the

NZ Ecological Society might encourage Auckland based plant researchers to become members of NZSPB.

Mike Clearwater talked about cementing links to the ASPS, and stated that he has discussed ideas for this with the ASPS council. NZSPB could contribute to Phytogen, their newsletter, which included rotating reports on their states, and we could contribute to one of these as New Zealand (but not as the 5th state of Aus!). They also have a job advertising service we could link into, with discounted rates for members. We could also take advantage of society rates for Combio meetings, even if NZSPB was not one of the officially attending societies. Rana Munns, current ASPS president and editor in chief of Functional Plant Biology has also indicated initial interest in offering a cash prize for those awarded the Roger Slack Award in return for a review written by the awardee (as the FPB currently does for Goldacre Award recipients)

Matthew Turnbull saw the contribution to the ASPS newsletter as a good idea as it would require less time than creating our own, and would reach all ASPS members as well.

10. **Plants in Action textbook.** Paula Jameson reported that the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of this textbook was not going to be furthered due to cost. Instead a Wiki was to be developed, and if NZSPB was to contribute financially it would be as a donation and therefore no royalties would be expected to come back to the society. Members will be approached to contribute.
11. **Any other business.** Michael McManus suggested we should move towards making a decision on next year's conference. There was general agreement that we should investigate 2011 QMB further, asking if a Plant Satellite meeting might be available for our members to contribute to. Kevin Davies said that Roger Hellens should be approached as the prime organizer of the Plant Satellite meeting, also saying that the main part of the QMB meeting could include plant material to encourage members to stay on following the satellite, with more opportunities for students to build research links. Julian Eaton-Rye felt that we would need to act quickly and volunteered to talk with Peter Sheppard, chair of QMB.

Meeting closed at 6:25pm