

## **IUPAC CCE Meeting August 2008, Mauritius**

The Committee on Chemistry Education is a senior body within IUPAC with responsibility for being an authoritative source of information and advising IUPAC on educational policy, working with and through other organisations in carrying out educational activity and disseminating good practice. The importance of Chemistry Education to IUPAC's mission is evident in the organisation's Strategic Plan, and in particular in the statement:

*IUPAC will utilize its global perspective and network to contribute to the enhancement of chemistry education, the career development of young chemical scientists, and the public appreciation of chemistry.*

IUPAC's method of working is through projects. CCE is associated with a number of excellent projects with diverse aims, for example:

- Responsible Stewardship
- Microscale
- Flying Chemists' Programme
- Cost Effective Chemistry in the Primary School
- Young Ambassadors

This bottom up approach is effective in utilising the expertise and enthusiasm of the chemistry community at low cost to IUPAC. The approach can, however, result in the good work being somewhat isolated, standing alone rather than supporting each other in contributing to a wider goal.

The Strategic Plan provides guidance to project proposers, as does CCE's own statement of priorities (see, for example, the Committee's 2007 annual report), but is written as a high level set of aspirations rather than as guidance for action. There is a need to develop a policy view of Chemistry Education for IUPAC that allows for regional and national differences, yet makes clear what IUPAC values and wishes to achieve.

Drawing down from the Strategic Plan, IUPAC has developed

- a Code of Conduct that sets out the ethical responsibilities of Chemists and provides guidance
- IUPAC's Role in the Public Understanding of Science (Mahaffy et al) that sets out what IUPAC should do and guides National Adhering Organisations and individuals

What is now required is a guide to educational policy for IUPAC. It would sit alongside the above, inform major initiatives such as the International Year of Chemistry and enable IUPAC and CCE to maximise the benefit derived from projects.

Many national organisations concerned with chemistry education have policy statements and find them helpful. Some have collaborated on a regional basis to do so. Chemistry Education is now a major aspect of IUPAC's activity and so should have an agreed policy framework.

Tony Ashmore

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