

Template for AG and Committee Annual/Semi-Annual Report (limit to 2 pages if possible)

AG/Committee Name: Science and Risk Communication – SCIRIC

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Council/Board Liaison: Roel Evens

Organization

SCIRIC was established in May 2015, and is currently led by the founding steering committee, of which founding member Thomas-Benjamin Seiler is the chair. The operational guidelines are finalised and submitted to SEC, approval is expected for early 2017. As agreed on in the charter the founding steering committee will serve a three-year term starting from the SETAC Europe annual meeting in Nantes, France, in May 2016, and after the initial three-year period, the committee will be revised to ensure a turnover of approximately one-third members per year.

Activities Summary

- We (re)presented SCIRIC at the SETAC Europe annual meeting in Nantes, France, in May 2016. A SCIRIC poster in the AG area informed about the group. A slide was prepared for presentation at the SETAC booth. We also introduced the AG at the SETAC booth during the assigned time slot. Thomas-Benjamin Seiler participated in the Reddit AMA. Two sessions on communication topics in the respective session track were proposed and chaired by group members. The track comprised three sessions in total.
- We (re)presented SCIRIC at the SETAC World Congress/North America annual meeting in Orlando, Florida, in November 2016. A SCIRIC poster in the AG area informed about the group. A slide was prepared for presentation at the SETAC booth. We also introduced and promoted the AG at the SETAC central area during the assigned time slot. One session on communication was chaired by Thomas-Benjamin Seiler and Leonie Nüßer.
- The outcomes of the session in Nantes were published in a session summary for SETAC Globe 2016 October issue.
- Thomas Backhaus and Thomas-Benjamin Seiler wrote an Editorial in Integrated Environmental Assessment and Management (IEAM) on "Communicating environmental science to the general public", where we shortly analyse the situation of science and risk communication and the associated problems and try to encourage our colleagues to anyway take on the challenge of communicating science.
- SCIRIC chair Thomas-Benjamin Seiler joined the SEC meeting in Brussels, 19 January 2016, to discuss the next steps in shaping a communication strategy for SETAC EU. Main outcome was formation of a working group that explores the feasibility of establishing a SETAC helpdesk as an interface between SETAC scientists and different target audiences. Thomas continued to be active in this working group throughout the year.
- For the SETAC Europe annual meeting 2017 in Brussels, Belgium, Leonie Nüßer and Thomas-Benjamin Seiler proposed a session out of SCIRIC, continuing the series of communication sessions since 2012.

Coordination with Other Advisory Groups and Committees

Contacts were established to the SETAC NA Human Health Risk Assessment AG (HRAA) via member of the HRAA steering committee Brian Mulhearn. He was invited to act as liaison to SCIRIC, and Thomas-Benjamin Seiler was invited to act as liaison to HRAA.

Thomas is active member of the SETAC Europe Membership and Public Relations Committee and helped to organize the buddy programme at the Nantes meeting. He is also member-at-large of the SETAC Europe Long-range Planning Committee and the Helpdesk Working Group of SEC.

Future Plans

In 2017 work on the TOPICS pillar of our work programme will start. This will analyse environmental sciences from a communication point of view, define key characteristics, challenges and major requirements for successful science and risk communication of environmental research findings/issues.

The outcome will be the foundation for developing tailored communication tools and strategies. This exercise will be topic-specific, taking into account any recognizable differences between the various research fields within SETAC. A working group on this planned to be formed at the next annual meeting in Brussels.

Business and Planning Meetings

SCIRIC met for the first time officially in Nantes during the SETAC Europe annual meeting 2016. Main topic of this meeting was the discussion of the first draft of the operational guidelines. The meeting agreed on all open questions so that the guidelines could now be finalized and submitted to SEC for approval.

The work programme was reviewed and discussed. It was agreed to start with the PEOPLES pillar of SCIRIC work in such a way that the network of SETAC scientists with expertise or large experience in science and risk communication should be properly established. One work group was formed that will start to collate the contacts of the presenters at all communication-related sessions since the World Congress 2012 in Berlin. It will extract from the SETAC membership directory a list of all members who tagged their profiles with „risk communication“. This initial list will be extended to the authors of the article collection on science and risk communication in *Env Sci Europe*. All presentations at the Orlando meeting that are related to communication but do not run in a communication session will be identified. Contacts to the presenters will be added to the list. Also, a survey will be carried out asking the SETAC membership to define their current outreach activities and their opinion about this topic. Silke Bollmohr, who communicated strong interest to serve on the committee, was suggested to be added to the founding steering committee. She would represent business and Germany/Africa. The meeting agreed on including Silke.

The next business meeting will be held in Brussels at the SETAC Europe annual meeting 2017.

Membership Communications

Main channel for communication is the group mailing via the SCIRIC homepage. Also, the forum was used for discussion, e.g., about session proposals for annual meeting. However, activity was low, which is certainly also caused by the forum interface, which does not offer a pleasant user experience. Thomas-Benjamin Seiler more or less regularly writes on the blog, and sometimes distributes messages, e.g., to announce availability of meeting minutes. The steering committee is addressed through a local mailing list maintained by Thomas.

Communication with other bodies, such as HRAA, committees, happens via email and sometimes Skype conferences.

Issues/Problems

The steering committee does not yet fully resemble the tripartite structure of SETAC. Communication via the group mailing and messaging functionality of the setac.org is not convenient and user friendly.

Current Steering Committee

Academia:

Thomas-Benjamin Seiler – Chair (2016-2019)

Agnieszka Hunka (2016-2019)

Henner Hollert (2016-2019)

Government

Gerd Maack (2016-2019)

Sarah Bowman (2016-2019)

Business

Pernille Thorbek (2016-2019)

Silke Bollmohr (2016-2019)

Roel Evens – Liaison

No. active members: 16

Total membership (from Your Membership AG directory): 59