

The fourth edition of the “National Meeting on Dioxins, Furans and Related Persistent Organic Pollutants” was held from 26th to 28th, June 2013 at the Meliá Alicante, located in the city of the same name. Dr. Juan Antonio Conesa, professor in the department of chemical engineering at the University of Alicante, chaired the local organizing committee, which also consisted of thirteen other academic members from the same University. The scientific committee consisted of eight representatives of renowned universities and research centers of Spain.

The meeting opened on June 26th with speeches by Mr. Enrique Herrero, Director of the Bureau of Research of the University of Alicante, Mr. Luis Barcala, Councillor for Health, Consumer Affairs and Environment of the City Council of Alicante, and by Dr. Juan Antonio Conesa, chief organizer of this event. A total amount of 29 oral and 19 poster communications distributed in five thematic sections were presented. Four of these thematic sections were introduced in the form of high scientific quality plenary lectures by internationally renowned figures in the field of POPs:

i) Global distribution of POPs, with four oral presentations including the plenary lecture “Old sins throw long shadows: PCBs -40 years after restrictions in Switzerland-still an environmental problem?” by Markus Zennegg from the Swiss Federal Laboratories for Materials’ Science and Technology, in Dübendorf, Switzerland.

ii) Exposure to POPs. Regulation, policy and management of the Life Cycle, with five oral presentations including the plenary lecture “Flame retardants in the environment: an overview”, by Mehran Alaee, from the Water Science and Technology Directorate of Environment Canada in Burlington, Canada.

iii) Analytical methods and quality control, with eight oral presentations including the plenary lecture “Recent advances in blood analyzes for POPs”, by Jean-François Focant, from the Center for Analytical Research and Technologies of the University of Liege, Belgium.

iv) Formation, sources and inventories of dioxins and related compounds, with six oral communications.

v) Food and feed. Toxicology and health, with six oral presentations including the plenary lecture “Wide range of aspects related to POPs in the food chain: from contributions of the EURL/NRL for dioxins and PCBs in feed and food network to human biomonitoring of POPs” by Rainer Malisch from the Reference Laboratory of the European Union (EU-RL) for Dioxins and PCBs in food and feed, in Freiburg, Germany.

This event was sponsored by several companies such as Thermo Scientific, Waters, Agilent, Perkin Elmer, Bruker and Techno Spec, which set up a trade show of their analytical products. Also, representatives of Thermo Scientific, Waters, Agilent and Bruker delivered oral communications explaining their major advances in analytical instrumentation and technology.

The last speaker of the meeting was Ms. Cristina Perdiguero, Head of Service of the Directorate General of Fisheries Economics of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment. Ms. Perdiguero explained the work and involvement of the Ministry at the international, European and Spanish levels in relation to residue values of contaminants allowed in food. She also emphasized the crucial importance of scientific research, which is the only responsible for our current knowledge about the occurrence and behavior of POPs and other pollutants in the environment.

The fourth edition of this meeting was closed on Friday, June 28th by Dr. Begoña Jiménez from the Institute of Organic Chemistry (IQOG) of CSIC in Madrid, by Dr. Esteban Abad

from the Institute of Environmental Assessment and Water Studies (IDAEA) of CSIC in Barcelona, and Dr. Juan Antonio Conesa. Dr. Begoña Jiménez introduced the celebration of the international conference in the field of POPs “DIOXIN 2014, the 34th International Symposium on Halogenated Persistent Organic Pollutants” in Madrid from August 31st to September 5th, 2014. Dr. Esteban Abad and Dr. Juan Antonio Conesa stressed the quality and scientific interest of the works presented at the meeting, and urged potential organizers to take over the planning of the future fifth edition of it.

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