



Austral and Neotropical America Section Society for Conservation Biology

2004 Members Meeting Report

The present Report summarizes the 2004 Members Meeting of Austral and Neotropical America (ANA) Section, Society for Conservation Biology. The meeting was held in New York, USA, from 7:00 – 8:30 pm, August 31, during the 18th Annual Meeting, Society for Conservation Biology.

At different times, the meeting was attended by 23 to 30 members from 12 countries (Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Guyana, Mexico, Peru, United Kingdom, United States of America and Venezuela). Four ANA Board members hosted the meeting: L. Calvo (Secretary, Guatemala), M.A. Marini (Education, Brazil), J.P. Rodríguez (Past President, Venezuela) and J.A. Simonetti (President, Chile).

Section President J.A. Simonetti, offered an overview of the Section 2004 activities. Major issues addressed were activities related to: a) inform the regional scientific community about SCB and ANA in the region, b) increase capacity-building opportunities, c) facilitate access to scientific information, d) membership growth and e) 2005 activities.

Activities reported regarding activities to promote SCB and ANA in the region includes the support to the 19th SCB Annual Meeting, to be held in Brasilia. ANA Board members help as members of following 19th Meeting Committees: a. Plenary speakers and symposia; b. Contributed oral and posters presentations c. Travel awards, d. Fund raising, e. Student activities and, f. Short-courses. ANA also organized a series of lectures in association with the Mesoamerican Society for Biology and Conservation at Universidad del Valle, Guatemala.

Regarding capacity building, ANA co-sponsored two graduate level courses at Centro de Biodiversidad y Genética, Universidad Mayor de San Simón, Cochabamba, Bolivia: i. “Dinámica de poblaciones: implicancias para la conservación” (by R.O. Bustamante, Universidad de Chile) and ii. “Advanced Topics in Conservation Biology” (by J.A. Simonetti, Universidad de Chile and Luis Aguirre, Universidad Mayor de San Simón). ANA also launched an Editorial Assistance Program, in order to assist Latin American authors in their written English in manuscripts submitted to Conservation Biology.

On issues related to access to scientific information, ANA prepared two resource web-pages, one with the home pages for scientific journals devoted to biodiversity and conservation and a second web-page contains information about graduate programs in Ecology, Biodiversity and Conservation offered by Latin American universities. Furthermore, ANA supports the publication of NeoCons, the electronic Neotropical Conservation Biology Bulletin.

ANA membership is increasing but few members are scientist from regional countries. On this regard, ANA is sponsoring memberships to key professionals and promising students.

Obstacles to the internationalization process emerging from USA regulations were also mentioned, including visa restrictions to ANA citizens, and potential restrictions to publish emerging from the International Emergency Economic Powers Act and Trading with the Enemy Act.

Finally, planned activities from 2005 were mentioned, including the already mentioned commitment to the 19th Annual Meeting, and the continuous efforts to organise graduate level courses, participate or sponsor regional scientific meetings, organise a Lecture Series, increase membership and to evaluate ANA's Strategic Development Plan. For further information, members were referred to the ANA 2004 Annual Report, available at ANA's web page. The presentation ended with an open call for volunteers to join ANA's activities.

After the Report, the Chairperson for the 19th Annual Meeting, Miguel Marini, entertained a series of questions from the audience, Secretary Lorena Calvo received applications for Ssponsored Membership and Liliana Campos advanced the idea of organizing video conferences. Such suggestion was accepted. Communication and Education Directors, Miguel Vasquez and Marcelo Lima, respectively will be requested to explore its feasibility.
