



ISAG Conference 2008, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Comparative Genomics Workshop

Chair: **Chris Tuggle**, Department of Animal Science, Iowa State University, Ames, USA

Around 120 people attended the workshop.

Approximately 116 persons attended the Workshop, which featured several new research directions in comparative genomics. As no funding was available for invited speakers, the Standing Committee (Chris Tuggle, Chair; Andre Eggen, Sue Galloway, George Liu, Abel Ponce de León, and Martine Yerle) agreed prior to the meeting that the format of the Workshop would be presentations by speakers selected from interesting abstracts. These abstracts were selected by discussion amongst the committee, led by the Chair and Sue Galloway, who served as the organizer for this email discussion and created the final program. The criteria for an invitation were that the abstract had to be of high quality and had to include some aspect of comparative mapping, sequence comparison, or function. Within this group of abstracts, committee members then voted for those of most likely general interest and highest scientific quality.

The following shows the Program as it was held:

Monday 21 July 15.30 - 17.30

Comparative Genomics: from Gene to Genome

15.30 - 15.40 Welcome and introduction

15.40 - 16.00 Oliver Jann - Comparative genomics of Toll-like receptor signalling

16.00 - 16.20 Tomasz Zabek - Phylogeny relationship of GDF5 in mammals

16.20 - 16.30 Comparative Genomics Workshop discussion

16.30 - 16.50 Shuhong Zhao - Discovery of miRNAs through comparative genomics

16.50 - 17.10 Francesco Strozzi - Analysis of non-orthologous genes between genomes

17.10 - 17.30 Denis Larkin - Chromosome rearrangements in amniote evolution

Discussion of the Workshop Structure

During the open period, there was discussion related to the value of these workshops, as most ISAG Workshops, including the Comparative Genomics Workshop, have become mini-Symposia rather than a practical Workshop where attendees interactively exchange data and information on reagents and work plans. Both Harris Lewin and Joan Lunney raised this issue and added that because of this trend many of the “workshops” were overlapping and too general. Alan Archibald indicated that the whole concept of the Workshops was being discussed within the Organizing Committee for the 2010 meeting in Edinburgh, and that there was a strong likelihood that another approach would be put forward, potentially including some Symposia-type meetings but also true Workshops created by interacting groups. This new structure will be forthcoming. Because of this potential change in the structure, it is unclear what will be organized for the Comparative Genomics community in 2010. It is possible



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that building a Symposium around a specific topic in Comparative and Functional Genomics might be a good option to maintain this Workshop.

Changes to the Standing Committee and Workshop

A motion was made by the Chair to change the name of the Workshop to Comparative and Functional Genomics, to better reflect the larger emphasis in Comparative genomics to compare function of genes, as well as structure, across species. This was approved by a vote of the attending society members. Two new members of the Standing Committee were nominated and then approved by acclamation: Shu-hong Zhao of Huazhong Ag. University, Wuhan, China, and Klaus Wimmers of FBN Research Institute for the Biology of Farm Animals, Dummerdorf, Germany. Congratulations to these new members. Rotating off the Committee was Martine Yerle. Sue Galloway agreed to Chair the Committee for the next meeting and will be in contact with Alan Archibald. The committee membership for 2008-2010 is thus Sue Galloway (Chair), Andre Eggen, Sue Galloway, George Liu, Abel Ponce de León, Chris Tuggle, Klaus Wimmers, and Shu-hong Zhao.

The Workshop on Comparative Genomics was adjourned at 17:30 hours, with the Chair requesting that everyone look for announcements regarding the Workshop in Edinburgh in 2010