



ISAG Conference 2008, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Comparative MHC Nomenclature Workshop

Chairs: **Shirley Ellis**, Dept of Immunology, Institute for Animal Health, Compton, Newbury, UK.

Mike Stear, Dept of Animal Production, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, Scotland.

Around 50 people attended the workshop.

Report:

The aims of this workshop were to give a brief overview of the committee and an update on its activities, and to provide a forum for discussion of issues relating to MHC nomenclature, and the wider area of comparative MHC.

The first presentation was a report from the committee, given by S. Ellis. The committee currently consists of *Chris Davies, Doug Smith, Lorna Kennedy, Jim Kaufman, *Steven Marsh, *Mike Stear, *Keith Ballingall (* = present). The committee and chair are part-way through a second 4-year term, thus a reminder was issued that a new chair and potentially new committee members should be elected at the next ISAG meeting (2010). A suggestion was made that, since we have been an active committee and have achieved most of our initial aims, we should now extend the remit of the committee. Specifically, that we should facilitate comparative MHC studies using the sequence data relating to eleven species groups now lodged on the ImmunoPolymorphism Database (IPD), and also use these data in disease studies. There was also discussion as to whether we should try to get funding to maintain and expand the IPD, and thus maximise its value to the scientific community. There was support for this, and various suggestions were made which will be pursued by individual committee members.

The workshop programme reflected the broad interests of the committee, and included presentations on: analysis of genome organisation, genome annotation, analysis of MHC genetic polymorphism, and the functional significance of MHC polymorphism. In addition there was an overview of the IPD. Once again, emphasis was placed on the need for the MHC community to ensure that they use this resource appropriately, by submitting their sequence data and keeping curated sections up to date.



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Presentations were given by invited speakers:

Steven Marsh: IPD-MHC: a database for MHC sequences.

Rebecca Baxter: Annotation of the bovine MHC.

Don Miller: Polymorphism and genomic organisation of the equine MHC class II region.

Keith Ballingall: Signatures of species hybridisation contributing to MHC diversity in domestic sheep.

Chris Davies: The non-classical MHC class I genes of cattle.

Mike Stear: Immunogenetic analysis of nematode infections in sheep.

Joan Lunney: Update on SLA genes and their impact on immune and disease interactions.

The next ISAG/VIC comparative MHC nomenclature workshop will take place at the ISAG meeting (July 2010, Edinburgh).

S. Ellis acknowledges support for herself and invited speakers from VIC to attend this meeting.