

ANNUAL REPORT 2013

ECREA'S SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMUNICATION SECTION

Activities

The main activity taking place during 2013 in the Science and Environment Communication Section was a research workshop about “The Communication Researcher’s Role(s) in Science and Environmental Communication” being held in June in Uppsala, Sweden. The event was organized in cooperation with the Department of Culture and Media Studies, Umeå University, Sweden. The workshop was held in relation to the International Environmental Communication Association’s (IECA) 12th biennial Conference on Communication and Environment (COCE), also taking place in Uppsala and for the first time held outside of the United States. The timing was deliberate in order to facilitate broad participation for the SEC members and to minimize the environmental impact from researchers’ conference travels. The workshop had about 30 participants that listened to 11 paper presentations and took part in a final joint panel discussion. Three invited commentators (Gitte Meyer, Aalborg University, Denmark; Stacey K Soward, University of Texas at El Paso, USA and Jennifer Schneider, Colorado School of Mines, USA) also shared their reflections with the group on the day’s topic. The call for papers for the workshop generated a good response and about half of the proposals were selected for presentation.

The purpose of the ECREA SEC workshop was to focus on the role of the communication researcher in science and environmental projects. The theme was chosen since this type of (self)reflection is much needed, yet on the whole overlooked, or at least not sufficiently acknowledged among our research community. The intention was to gather communication researchers with varied experiences from the field of science and environmental communication in order to initiate a broader discussion and to reflect upon different role(s) of communication researchers in research projects. One conclusion that can be drawn from this workshop is that there is a significant interest for this type of (self)reflection regarding the complex and often contradictory positions that communication scholars find themselves in. However, many researchers are at the same time unfamiliar with these kind of discussions and do not e.g. incorporate them in their academic writing.

The year was also the starting period for the new SEC executive team with a new chair (Annika Egan Sjölander, Umeå University, Sweden) and vice-chair (Pieter Maesele, University of Antwerp, Belgium) who took over together with the sitting vice-chair (Anabela Carvalho, University of Minho, Portugal). The management team's work begun with a follow-up discussion regarding recent experiences from the ECC 2012 Istanbul conference. This was also the first part of different preparations for the 5th European Communication Conference 2014 to be held in Lisbon, Portugal.

During the year the SEC management team has, with significant support from the section's webmaster Mathieu Jahnich, reviewed its current website (<http://www.scienv-com.eu>) and started a discussion about replacing it with an alternative more interactive website. This work will continue during 2014.

Regarding other future plans, the SEC management team will continue to look into the viability of organizing a side-event on environmental communication at the Conference of the Parties of one of the UN conventions (such as the Framework Convention on Climate Change or the Convention on Biological Diversity), possibly in collaboration with the International Environmental Communication Association (IECA).

The Section has continued to collaborate with IECA where Anabela Carvalho is elected member of IECA's Board of Directors. During 2013 SEC's vice-chair Pieter Maesele was elected to chair the Environment, Science and Risk Communication Working Group in the International Association for Media and Communication Research.

Throughout 2013, the Section continued to disseminate information to its members and to wider audiences by means of its website and mailing list.

SECs' Executive Management Team

January 2014