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Re: your letter of 26 October 1998

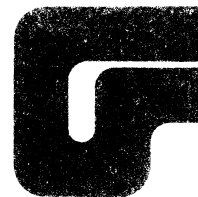
Dear Dr. Becker,

Thank you very much for extensively informing us on the changes in organization and management of IUPAC's scientific work.

Here is our response to your letter and the questions you put forward to the NAO's.

1. We noted that the question about the definition of membership of IUPAC and the use of the terms Titular and Associate Member will be addressed in future. We would ask you to give this problem full attention. In our opinion it plays an important role in attracting scientists in your activities.
2. The problem how to incorporate expert participants in IUPAC's activities nominated by the NAO's is a difficult one. If you solicit for nominations from all NAO's, it will slow down the realization of a Project considerably. At the same time it creates a fair chance that far too many candidates will be proposed and that selection will be inevitable leading to disappointments and frustration for the non-selected NAO's. We think that the starting point for any activity in recruiting members of Task Groups should remain with the Divisions and the coordinator(s) of the Project. They have the best overview in the field and will mostly directly approach the scientists they want as members. Of course they must take into account the principle of good geographical balance, but never by sacrificing the requisite of adequate expertise. We do not agree with appointments for geographical reasons only. This means that in our view there is hardly any role for NAO's in the formation of Task Groups. An exception could be formed by cases where the Project Leader prefers that the NAO approaches an individual or a research group with a request for participation. In case of such specific requests, our NAO will certainly be able to respond quickly. However, if IUPAC will be able to find a solution for involving the NAO's with the Project without additional bureaucracy, we will be happy to cooperate.

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3. You made it clear that also NAO's can submit proposals for Projects to be carried out by IUPAC. The new rules will probably exclude submission of just loose ideas. Nevertheless, we think that an initiative of a NAO will be fruitful only if the proposal incorporates an expert who is willing to guide the project as its leader.
4. We do not feel a necessity to enlarge the participation of our NAO in the work of IUPAC by nominating additional National Representatives. We feel to be involved sufficiently in IUPAC by having Members in commissions and (sub) committees as well as National Representatives.

Finally, concern was expressed by some of our members about a topic not touched in your letter. It bears upon the continuation of the ongoing activities when the new system becomes effective. IUPAC should make clear what will happen with ongoing Projects. It seems that with the Commissions all Projects will be terminated. Or will Projects of good quality be preserved? With respect to the first possibility the fear was expressed that quite a number of "dismissed" members can not bring up the enthusiasm that is needed to do IUPAC work any longer. If so, an activity gap arises that will be difficult to fill up. We are anxious to hear what IUPAC has in mind to make the transition as smooth as possible.

Yours sincerely,

**ROYAL NETHERLANDS
CHEMICAL SOCIETY**

Ir. E.J. de Ryck van der Gracht
Secretary General