Community News

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SCS Swiss Chemical Society

SWISS CHEMICAL SOCIETY NEWS

2019 EuChemS General Assembly – Bucharest, Romania

The 2019 EuChemS General Assembly annual meetings took place at the Politehnica University of Bucharest, Romania, on the 3–4 October 2019 and was hosted by EuChemS Member Society the Romanian Chemical Society.

This year's General Assembly saw wide ranging discussions and developments. In the first instance, Floris Rutjes from the Royal Netherlands Chemical Society (KNCV) was elected as EuChemS President-Elect. Eckart Rühl, of the German Bunsen Society for Physical Chemistry was re-elected as EuChemS Treasurer. Two new members of the Executive Board were also elected: Ioannis Katsoyiannis (Association of Greek Chemists) and Rinaldo Poli (French Chemical Society). The new roles will officially begin in January 2020.

The General Assembly also voted in favour of two new Supporting Members: the International Sustainable Chemistry Collaborative Centre (ISC3), and ChemPubSoc Europe.

Discussions also looked at EuChemS' latest initiatives for the International Year of the Periodic Table (IYPT2019), policy work, communications and internal finances. Plans for events and activities for next year, in light of EuChemS' 50-year anniversary were also presented, along with a new logo to celebrate the occasion. An 'All You Want To Ask' session with free discussion between representatives and the EuChemS secretariat were organised, allowing the sharing of ideas, comments and suggestions for optimising EuChemS' work.

EuChemS was most pleased to welcome Bonnie Charpentier, President of the American Chemical Society (ACS) to the open session of the General Assembly, where, together with Pilar Goya, EuChemS President, a 'Chemisty Enterprise Partnership' was signed. The document reaffirms the commitment of both the ACS and EuChemS to work together to advance the chemical sciences, and to promote chemistry as a way of addressing global challenges, particularly as laid out in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

www.euchems.eu/2019-general-assembly-bucharest-romania/

Videos of the SusChem Evening Session @ILMAC, 26.09.19

From Wed, 25.09.2019 to Fri, 27.09.19, during the 2019 ILMAC, the Swiss Chemical Society and SusChem Switzerland organized the first Swiss SusChem Days. Three lunch symposia, two workshops one session with discussion roundtables and an evening session provided a fantastic program on the topic of green & sustainable chemistry. More than 400 participants visited one of the sessions and complimented the high value input they got. Experts from industry and academy gave lectures and answered questions during the networking events or the panel discussion.

Webcast: SusChem Evening Session, Thu, 26.09.19

- Prof. John Warner, Warner Babcock Institute for Green Chemistry (USA)
  «Green Chemistry: The Molecular Mechanisms of Sustainability and Innovation»
- Dr. Rafael Cayuela, Dow Chemicals
  «The Chemical Industry under the 4th Industrial Revolution»

Panel Discussion

- John Warner, Warner Babcock Institute for Green Chemistry
- Rafael Cayuela, Dow Chemicals
- Nicoletta Piccolrovazzi, Dow Olympics
- Martin Vollmer, Clariant
- Juan Gonzalez-Valero, Syngenta
- James Clark, University of York and entrepreneur

Moderator: Bérangère Magarinos-Ruchat, Global Head Sustanabillity, Firmenich

https://portal.klewel.com/watch/nice_url/ilmac-2019-suschem-evening-session/talk/1/

Lunch Lectures Webcasts of the Swiss SusChem Days at ILMAC 2019 available for SCS Members

The webcasts are available for free on the SCS website for SCS members. Login to your SCS account and search for the webcasts in the news section of the SCS website.

https://scg.ch/login

Webcasts of the Lunch Symposium, Wed, 25.09.2019

- Prof. John Warner, Warner Babcock Institute for Green Chemistry (USA)
  «Green Chemistry: The Molecular Mechanisms of Sustainability and Innovation»
- Prof. Matthias Beller, University of Rostock (GER)
  «Precious Catalysis with Non-Noble Metal Catalysts»
- Prof. Rebecca Buller, ZHAW Wädenswil
  «Harnessing Nature: Biocatalysis for Industrial Applications»
- Prof. Jeremy Luterbacher, EPFL Lausanne
  «Renewable Chemicals from Plants»
- Dr. Benjamin Martin, Novartis Pharma AG
  «Continuous Manufacturing as an Enabling Tool with Green Credentials in Early-Phase Pharmaceutical Chemistry»

https://portal.klewel.com/watch/webcast/PkPvNmngrGGiK-crg78XKw9/talk/1

Lunch Symposium, Thu, 26.09.2019

- Prof. James Clark, University of York (UK)
  «Setting the Scene, the 12 Principles of G&SC»
- Dr. Georg Wuitschik, F. Hoffmann- La Roche AG
  «ChemPager: Greener Processes through Data Analysis»
- Dr. Martin Vollmer, Clariant
  «Sustainability fuels Innovation»
- Dr. Nicoletta Piccolrovazzi, Dow Olympics
  «Sustainability Application concepts»
- Hazal Ustundag George / Dr. Gilles Oddon, Firmenich SA
  «Firmenich EcoScent Compass™: First Holistic Fragrance Sustainability Measurement»

https://portal.klewel.com/watch/webcast/PriviqkEToTZcjiqrv-vK8B/talk/1

Ausschreibung der SPG Preise für 2020

Auch im Jahr 2020 sollen wieder SPG Preise, die mit je CHF 5000.– dotiert sind, vergeben werden.

Die SPG möchte mit diesen Preisen junge Physikerinnen und Physiker in der Frühphase ihrer Karriere, auf alle Fälle vor Erreichen einer akademischen Festanstellung oder bevor sie mehr als drei Jahre in einer Start-up-Firma oder in der Industrie tätig sind, für hervorragende wissenschaftliche Arbeiten auszeichnen.

- SPG Preis gestiftet vom Forschungszentrum ABB Schweiz AG für eine hervorragende Forschungsarbeit auf allen Gebieten der Physik
- SPG Preis gestiftet von der Firma IBM für eine hervorragende Forschungsarbeit auf dem Gebiet der Kondensierten Materie
- SPG Preis gestiftet von der Firma Oerlikon Surface Solutions für eine hervorragende Forschungsarbeit auf dem Gebiet der Angewandten Physik
- SPG Preis gestiftet vom METAS für eine hervorragende Forschungsarbeit mit Bezug zur Metrologie
- SPG Preis gestiftet von der Firma COMSOL für eine hervorragende Forschungsarbeit auf dem Gebiet der computergestützten Physik

Die eingereichten Arbeiten müssen entweder in der Schweiz oder von SchweizerInnen und Schweizern im Ausland ausgeführt worden sein. Die Beurteilung der Arbeiten erfolgt auf Grund ihrer Bedeutung, Qualität und Originalität.
Einsendeschluss: 31. Januar 2020
Die Preise werden an der Jahrestagung 2020 in Freiburg überreicht.
www.sps.ch/sps-award/

Call for nominations: GRAND PRIX of the Fondation de la Maison de la Chimie

Call for nominations for the 2020 GRAND PRIX of the Fondation de la Maison de la Chimie, which carries a monetary award of 35'000 Euros.

The prize is intended to reward original work in chemistry of benefit to mankind, society or nature. The GRAND PRIX will be awarded for the seventeenth time in 2020, to one or several persons, irrespective of nationality. The prize will carry a monetary award of 35,000 Euros.

All entries must imperatively be presented through a learned society or a national or international scientific organisation without any direct link with the nominee. Entry forms, together with a report detailing the arguments for the nomination, must be returned to the Fondation de la Maison de la Chimie by 30th April 2020. These documents should be sent by e-mail to the following address: presidence@maisondelachimie.com. General information including entry forms are available on the Foundation's website: https://maisondelachimie.com/, section "LES PRIX DE LA FONDATION".

Award Ceremony : The laureate will be invited to deliver a lecture on her/his work at an award ceremony that will take place at the Maison de la Chimie during the first quarter 2021.
actions.maisondelachimie.com/

A Warm Welcome to Our New Members!

Period: 18.09.–24.10.2019
Miguel Angel Aleman Garcia, Basel - José Augusto Berrocal, Fribourg - Ibrahim Eldeeb, Fribourg - Valeriia Hutskalova, Basel - Javier Lopez Andarias, Geneva - Jiaming Peng, Basel - Julia Reisenbauer, Zurich - Beliz Sertcan, Zurich - Scaringi Simone, Geneva - Scaringi Simone, Geneva - Maria Tejeda Serrano, Zurich - Michael Zumstein, Dübendorf.

HONORS, AWARDS, APPOINTMENTS

Prof. Copéret gave the Falk-Plaut Lectures at Columbia University

The Falk-Plaut lectureship was inaugurated in 1951 in order to bring exceptionally distinguished scientists to Columbia University in New York City for a series of public lectures. On October 24 and 25, ***Prof. Christophe Copéret*** gave the two Falk-Plaut Lectures 2019:
«Understanding and Design of Interfaces for Selective Nanoparticle Catalysis» (October 24, 2019)
«NMR Chemical Shift beyond Numbers: Understanding Electronic Structure and Reactivity of Organometallics» (October 25 2019)
Source: *chab.ethz.ch*

ERC Synergy Grant for Prof. Jeffrey Bode, ETH Zurich, and collaborators

For a joint research project, ***Prof. Jeffrey Bode*** and his colleagues at the Friedrich Miescher Institute for Biomedical Research (FMI) in Basel and the University of Bristol received an ERC Synergy Grant. The interdisciplinary team were awarded this highly competitive funding to investigate the molecular mechanisms of viral infection for broad-spectrum anti-viral therapy.
Source: *chab.ethz.ch*

Prof. Clémence Corminboeuf was named as Full Professor at EPFL Lausanne

Prof. Anne-Clémence Corminboeuf was named as Full Professor of Theoretical and Computational Chemistry from the 1st of October 2019.

She has attracted international recognition for her ground-breaking contributions to theoretical and computational chemistry, particularly for her novel approaches of electronic structures driven by non-covalent phenomena, opening promising perspectives in the domains of catalysis and organic electronic materials. Her work based on non-covalent interactions was already supported by two ERC Grants and has major impact on the design of homogeneous catalysts and organic semi-conductors. By promoting Anne-Clémence Corminboeuf, EPFL is strengthening its position in a future-oriented field of study.
Source: *actu.epfl.ch/news*

Prof. Beat Fierz was named as Associate Professor at EPFL Lausanne.

Prof. Beat Fierz was named as Associate Professor of Biophysical Chemistry from the 1st of October 2019 has gained worldwide recognition as one of the top specialists in the structure, regulation and dynamics of chromatin – the main component of chromosomes. His research approach combines biophysics and chemical biology in a unique way; he has already been awarded an ERC Consolidator Grant and has been published in leading academic journals. Beat Fierz has the increasingly important ability to work successfully in a multidisciplinary context. His dynamism and high potential will further strengthen the international reputation of EPFL.
Source: *actu.epfl.ch/news*

Best Poster Prize Winners at the SCS Syngenta Symposium

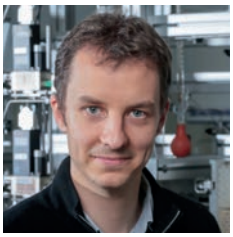
Congratulations to ***Vincent L. Revil-Baudard***, Ecole Polytechnique, Palaiseau (FRA), and ***Simon D. Schnell***, University of Zürich for their outstanding poster presentation at the SCS Syngenta Symposium. Both young researcher received the Helvetica Best Poster Award that was handed over by Dr. Mathilde Lachia and Dr. Jérôme Cassayre, members of the oganizing committe of Syngenta.

Simon's presentation highlighted the Novel 3-Monosubstituted s-Tetrazines and Application in the Labelling of Macromolecules. Vincent presented his poster on Xanthate Mediated Direct Functionalization of Heteroarenes.
scg.ch/syngenta-symposium/2019

Edoardo Baldini, former PhD student at EPFL, wins the 2019 APS Carl E. Anderson Award for pioneering work in ultrafast laser science

The American Physical Society (APS) is the world's largest physical society. Since 2014, the APS has been awarding the Carl E. Anderson Division of Laser Science Dissertation Award, which recognizes outstanding doctoral research in the area of Laser Science. This year the award went to ***Edoardo Baldini***, recognizing his PhD work carried out at the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne under the supervision of Professors Majed Chergui and Fabrizio Carbone. This is the first time that the prize is awarded for research performed in a European institution. Baldini received the award at a special ceremony in Washington (DC) last September, during the Frontiers in Optics/Laser Science conference.
Currently working at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as a postdoctoral researcher in Nuh Gedik's group, Baldini was awarded other international prizes based on his thesis work: the Chorafas Prize, the Nature Springer Prize, and the 2019 IBM Condensed Matter Physics prize.
Source: *actu.epfl.ch/news*

Jeremy Luterbacher wins University Latsis Award EPFL 2019



Prof. Jeremy Luterbacher from EPFL was awarded the University Latsis Award 2019 for his discovery of the acetal functionalization of lignin and carbohydrates, which prevent degradation reactions during the extraction of these fractions from plant matter. Acetal formation notably enables the isolation of lignin, which can easily be upgraded to useful chemicals, with the potential to greatly increase the productivity of biorefineries and of pulp and paper processes."
Source: *actu.epfl.ch/news*

JOURNAL NEWS

ChemPhotoChem: Special Issue on Computational Photochemistry

The latest Special Issue of ChemPhotoChem,guest edited by Lluís Blancafort, Denis Jacquemin and Young Min Rhee, is dedicated to the field of Computational Photochemistry. It covers some of the current trends, hot topics, and the key challenges that will drive future developments in the area. With contributions from Leticia González, Masahiro Ehara, Marco Caricato, Roberto Improta and many more. Enjoy free access until the end of 2019.
onlinelibrary.wiley.com/toc/23670932/2019/3/9

ChemBioChem: Special Issue on Bottom-up Synthetic Biology

ChemBioChem's Special Issue on bottom-up synthetic biology, guest edited by Hannes Mutschler, Tom Robinson, T.-Y. Dora Tang, and Seraphine Wegner. Bottom-up synthetic biology uses both biological and artificial chemical building blocks to create biomimetic systems, including artificial cells. In this Special Issue, experts present and review the latest progress in this rapidly expanding and diverse field. Enjoy free access until the end of 2019.
onlinelibrary.wiley.com/toc/14397633/2019/20/20

ChemPlusChem: Readers' Choice 2019

Check out ChemPlusChem's latest special collection, featuring articles from 2017 and 2018 that were highly cited, most downloaded, and most popular on social media. All articles in this collection will be free to read until the end of 2019.
onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/toc/10.1002/(ISSN)2192-6506.Readers-Choice

Helvetica, Volume 102, Issue 10, October 2019

Communications
Enhancement of Acid-Catalyzed Esterification by the Addition of Base
Nobuhiro Kihara, Yasuhiro Matsumoto, Shunsuke Tsukamoto

Reactivity of B-Xanthyl N-Heterocyclic Carbene-Boranes
Anne-Laure Vallet, Sofia Telitel, Jacques Lalevée, Emmanuel Lacôte

Full Papers
Radical Mediated *Aza-Pauson-Khand* Reaction of Acetylenes, Imines, and CO Leading to Five-Membered Unsaturated Lactams
Takahide Fukuyama, Takuma Okada, Nao Nakashima, Ilhyong Ryu

Synthesis of Azabicyclic Building Blocks for *Daphniphyllum* Alkaloid Intermediates Featuring *N*-Trichloroacetyl Enamide 5-*endo-trig* Radical Cyclizations
Sergi Jansana, Dr. Guilhem Coussanes, Jordi Puig, Faiza Diaba, Josep Bonjoch

Molecular and Silica-Supported Mo and W d^0 Imido-Methoxybenzylidene Complexes: Structure and Metathesis Activity
Pavel A. Zhizhko, Florian Toth, Christopher P. Gordon, Ka Wing Chan, Wei-Chih Liao, Victor Mougel, Christophe Copéret

onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/15222675/

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

Source: *www.chemanager-online.com*

Clariant Licenses Second Sunliquid Plant

September 24, 2019: Clariant has signed a second license agreement for its sunliquid cellulosic ethanol technology, this time with Poland's Orlen Poludnie, part of the Orlen Group. Orlen Poludnie will build a plant at Jedlicze in southeastern Poland, using available land and integration potential with its refinery at the site. Production capacity is planned to be 25,000 t/y. The Polish firm said the agreement supports its intention to build a full-scale commercial plant for producing cellulosic ethanol from agricultural residues, further strengthening its position in the country as a frontrunner in biofuels and bio-component technologies. "We invest in modern technologies and focus on high-margin products as they will be crucial to maintaining our leading position in the region in the coming years," said Daniel Obajtek, president of PKN Orlen's managing board. In September 2017, Clariant signed a first sunliquid license with Enviral, Slovakia's largest producer of bioethanol. The 50,000 t/y plant was planned to be integrated into Enviral's existing facilities at Leopoldov. The Swiss company also announced in October 2017 that its board of directors had approved plans to invest in a full-scale commercial sunliquid plant in Romania. The plant, with a capacity of 50,000 t/y, is intended to be a flagship facility, confirming competitiveness and sustainability of the technology at commercial scale. Construction was due to start last year with the plant anticipated to deliver its first batch of product in 2020. Clariant said at full capacity, the plant will process roughly 250,000 t/y of wheat straw and other cereal straw, sourced from local farmers. Co-products from the process will be used to generate renewable energy with the goal of making the plant independent from fossil energy sources.

Brenntag Snares Clariant's Kohlpaintner as CEO

September 27, 2019: Brenntag has appointed Christian Kohlpaintner as its next CEO and member of the management board with effect from Jan. 1, 2020, replacing Steven Holland who will retire. Kohlpaintner joins from Clariant, where he has been a member of the executive committee since he started with the Swiss firm in 2009. Stefan Zuschke, chairman of Brenntag's supervisory board, says Kohlpaintner is an internationally experienced business leader with a proven track record. "It will be his mission to lead Brenntag to sustainable growth and expand the market leadership further. It will also be about breaking new ground while at the same time preserving the core of the successful business model," Zuschke said. A Ph.D. chemist, Kohlpaintner started his career at Hoechst, where he held various positions in Germany and the US, then moved to Celanese and Chemische Fabrik Budenheim. Holland retires after 14 years with the leading chemical distribution group. He was previously managing director of the UK's Albion Chemicals, which Brenntag bought in June 2006. Zuschke said Holland's vision and leadership have driven the company's growth and success in a dynamic and challenging environment.

Clariant Discusses Masterbatch Sale to PolyOne

October 8, 2019: Clariant is in talks to sell its plastic additives business to US compounder PolyOne, according to Bloomberg. Quoting unnamed sources, the report said Clariant wants about $1.5 billion for its masterbatch unit, which makes colorants and optical brighteners for plastics. Although discussions with PolyOne are said to be the most advanced, there is interest from other companies too, including private equity investors, the sources added. If PolyOne buys the business, it would become a world

leading supplier of color concentrates for plastics. The US group is currently selling its PVC/PP Performance Products & Solutions (PP&S) business – which primarily serves the North American construction and automotive industries – to SK Capital Partners for approximately $775 million in cash. The deal is expected to close by the end of 2019. Clariant, regarded as the world's leading masterbatch producer, is seeking a sale so it can focus on three core areas: care chemicals, catalysts and natural resources. In its first-half 2019 results, the Swiss group said softer demand in China and the slowdown in the global automotive sector had negatively impacted sales of masterbatches and pigments. Talks to combine Clariant's additive and masterbatch business with major shareholder Sabic's engineering resins division fell apart in July. At the time, the companies said they had shelved plans for a joint venture because of unfavorable market conditions, stressing that talks would resume when markets improved. However, commentators said they failed to see a basis for a joint venture if Clariant sold its masterbatch unit. Clariant and PolyOne have not commented on the report.

Delpharm may Buy Five Famar Sites

October 11, 2019: French contract development and manufacturing organization Delpharm has announced it is in exclusive talks to buy five production sites from financially struggling Greek competitor Famar for around $250 million. In the event of a deal, the French CDMO, which already has 12 sites across Europe, could pick up five more with 1,300 employees, in addition to a plant in North America. Negotiations concern the Athens-based company's French sites in Orléans, Aigle and St-Rémy-sur-Avre, along with its site at Bladel, the Netherlands and its Pointe-Claire site in Quebec, Canada. Delpharm's president, Patrick Puy, said Famar's board has agreed that the French competitor's offer is in the best interest of the Greek firm's five sites and their employees. Completion of the transaction, he said, "will allow the sites to enter into a new phase of sustainable and promising development." According to the Reuters news agency, Famar's parent, the Marinopoulos Group, ran into financial problems several years ago. At the end of 2019, following an overextend acquisition phase, the CDMO completed a €174 million debt restructuring and received an infusion of cash from private equity group Pillarstone. In early September this year, Delpharm completed its acquisition of a solid and liquid formulation plant at Segrate, Italy, from Roche from Pharma giant Roche for $274 million. As part of the deal, it agreed to supply the Swiss pharma giant from the facility. This was Delpharm's second Italian acquisition.

BASF Construction Chemicals Exit Stalls

October 14, 2019: BASF's planned exit from the construction chemicals sector may take longer than expected, reports from the market suggest. In the latest setback, sources speaking to the Bloomberg news agency said Swiss cement manufacturer LafargeHolcim, the sole remaining company interested in the additives portfolio, has opted not to bid because it considers the price too high. The cement producer also reportedly had concerns about how long it would take for BASF to execute the sale, which could hurt the performance and integration of the business. The division produces mortars and cement additives, as well as waterproofing materials and sealants. LafargeHolcim is said to have been competing with private equity investor Cinven for the business; however, both it and roofing materials specialist Standard Industries have since stepped back from the plate. Cinven owns construction chemicals producer Chryso, which offer synergies but also pose antitrust issues, the news agency noted. BASF kicked off the sales process In January this year, saying it expected to divest all the activities acquired in 2006 from the former Degussa (now Evonik) for a total of about €2.7 billion, potentially by the end of 2019. Announcing a strategic review of the business in October last year, then new-CEO Martin Brudermüller suggested that a partnership might be considered if targets for the divestment were not met. Bloomberg's analysts now expect the focus of the sale to shift from the industrial to the private equity sector. However, the news agency added that several other private equity buyers have already walked away from the bidding, with some saying BASF did not provide detailed information on earnings.

Takeda Sells OTC Drugs to Acino

October 21, 2019: In another move to reduce debt after buying Shire early this year, Japanese drugmaker Takeda has agreed to sell roughly 30 prescription pharmaceuticals and over-the-counter (OTC) products to Swiss pharma Acino for more than $200 million. Acino will acquire the rights to selected pain management, gastroenterology, cardiovascular and respiratory products marketed in a number of Near East, Middle East and African (NEMEA) countries. The agreement covers countries such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, Ukraine and United Arab Emirates, among others. In addition, the companies will enter into a multi-year manufacturing and supply contract, under which Takeda will continue to make the products on behalf of Acino. Headquartered in Zurich, Acino's focus is on selected markets in the Middle East, Africa, the CIS region and Latin America. The company has been owned by private equity firms Nordic Capital and Avista Capital Partners since 2013. The deal is the third that Takeda has done this year as it aims to deleverage and focus on its core long-term growth areas. The company sold Shire's Xiidra dry-eye drug to Novartis for $3.4 billion upfront as well as its TachoSil surgical bleeding control patch to Johnson & Johnson subsidiary Ethicon for $400 million. "The divestment of non-core assets sold in NEMEA represents the continued execution of our strategy to optimize our portfolio, invest in the defined core business areas, and accelerate our progress toward

reaching our target leverage ratio," said Costa Saroukos, Takeda's chief financial officer. Takeda said the products being sold are primarily outside of its chosen business areas of gastroenterology, rare diseases, plasma-derived therapies, oncology and neuroscience. The transaction is expected to complete in the first quarter of 2020, subject to the usual closing conditions and regulatory approvals. According to media reports, Takeda looks likely to make more divestments as it seeks to raise about $10 billion to help pay down its debt of more than $30 billion from taking over Shire. The Bloomberg news agency, citing people familiar with the matter, said the Japanese pharma is in final talks to sell some assets in Russia to German drugmaker Stada Arzneimittel. In addition, Brazil's EMS Pharma was reported in July as being the frontrunner for buying Takeda's Latin American business. Several of Takeda's OTC and prescription drugs in Western Europe are also said to be up for sale with Bloomberg reporting last month that private equity firms such as Advent International, Apollo Global Management and Cerberus Capital Management are interested. These assets are said to be worth about €1 billion.

Novartis to Cut Jobs in Ireland

October 25, 2019: Novartis has informed workers that it plans to close some operations in Ireland with the potential loss of 320 jobs. The Swiss drugs giant will close an API unit and a global service center at the Ringaskiddy site in County Cork as it consolidates API operations there up to mid-2022. Local management said the workforce drawdown of the now 550-strong workforce would begin in mid-2020. Local management said 240 jobs in the API plant will be affected, along with 80 in the Global Service Centre. According to the newspaper Irish Times, some €850 million has been invested at the site "over the years." Novartis will continue to carry out certain business services at the Irish campus where it will continue to manufacture medicines for hypertension, heart failure and acromegaly. The company has hinted, however, that more jobs could be cut in future as it evaluates potential partnership opportunities and divestment scenarios. Reducing the workforce at Ringaskiddy is a strategic decision and part of the ongoing evaluation of the its manufacturing network around the world, the drugmaker said in a statement. At the service center, which currently employs 180 people, the job cuts are said to reflect the relocation of some service positions to centralized operations centers in Europe and Asia. As the downsizing kicks in, Novartis said it will work closely with employees and their representatives to support the transition, providing severance packages and outplacement services. Cork is one of 60 global sites belonging to the Novartis Technical Operations division. With a sharper focus on centralization, the drugmaker aims to optimize capacity and lower costs.

Syngenta Pledges $2 Billion to Fight Climate Change

October 28, 2019: Swiss agrochemicals giant Syngenta, part of ChemChina, has announced it will spend $2 billion over the next five years to help farmers tackle the threats posed by climate change. The Basel-based group said the investment supports its new sustainability goal of delivering at least two technological breakthroughs to market each year. In addition, CEO Erik Fyrwald has pledged to reduce the carbon intensity of Syngenta's operations by at least 50% by 2030. This commitment has been validated and endorsed by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) – a partnership between charity CDP, United Nations Global Compact, World Resources Institute and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). The emissions targets form part of Syngenta's Accelerating Innovation commitment launched in April to address the increased challenges that farmers face as a consequence of climate change, soil erosion and biodiversity loss. Progress against these targets will be reported annually and audited independently. "Agriculture is now at the front line of global efforts to tackle climate change. Syngenta is committed to accelerating our innovation to find better and ever safer solutions to address the shared challenge of climate change and biodiversity loss," commented Fyrwald. "These aren't just words, this is real action that will drive focus in Syngenta to help farmers tackle climate change and reduce the sector's contribution to the world's greenhouse gas emissions." The $2 billion sum will be directed toward programs with "clearly differentiated benefits or breakthrough technologies" that enable a step change in agricultural sustainability, such as land use, soil health and integrated pest management. In April this year, Syngenta also announced a multi-year collaboration – Innovation for Nature – with The Nature Conservancy (TNC). This will focus on business practices aimed at improving soil health, resource efficiency and habitat protection in Argentina, Brazil, China, Kenya and the US. The alliance combines Syngenta's R&D capabilities with TNC's scientific and conservation expertise to scale up sustainable agricultural practices.