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Society

Community News

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SWISS CHEMICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Welcome Message from the new SCS President, Prof. Christian Bochet, University of Fribourg



Dear members of the SCS,

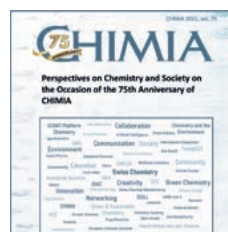
It is a great honor for me to be able to wish all of you a very happy and fruitful year 2022. Once again, it will be a year full of challenges, but also full of hopes. After nearly two years of pandemic, let's use what we have learned from it to be stronger, more efficient and, above all, happier. First, for both industry and ac-

ademia, it has been amazing to see how fast we all could adapt our way of working to resume our professional activities past the first shock. There are times where too much retrograde or forward thinking is not the best way to go, as it may lead to either nostalgia or exaggerate optimism (or pessimism!). Focusing on immediate actions to allow the proper functioning of our institution, company and even civilization was necessary, and we all succeeded in doing that at our own individual and humble scale. Second, it has also been amazing how fast science could provide valuable data to properly respond to the situation, ranging from developing vaccines and treatments to modeling aerosol dispersion and filtering capacity of materials, without forgetting high-throughput testing and multiple other, less visible but nevertheless important, aspects. Third, sorting facts from myths, identifying syllogisms and sophisms and admitting that acquiring knowledge doesn't necessarily take the straightest path are our collective responsibility, as scientists. We may have underestimated how important it is to communicate to people from other horizons what we do, and it is precisely in turbulent times that rigorous thinking is of the highest importance. Finally, we may have taken for granted that interaction with friends, colleagues or random individuals is easy and can be replaced by chat messages and video meetings. After multiple events that had to go online, the Swiss Science Night was definitely a huge success, and the pure joy of seeing each other in person was a live proof of the necessity of direct human contacts.

I am deeply grateful to my predecessors, who years after years built the SCS into what it is now: a vibrant society, able to cross through the last two years with a remarkable resilience and playing its role as the hub linking chemists of Switzerland. In fact, despite all the difficulties, it was able not only to run, but also to expand its activities in numerous directions while maintaining healthy finances. I already look forward to report on our new activities at the next General Assembly (save the date: April 22nd, 2022 !), and in the meantime I wish you all the best and I hope to have the pleasure of meeting many of you at all possible occasions.

Prof. Christian Bochet, SCS President 2022
University of Fribourg
christian.bochet@unifr.ch

Virtual CHIMIA Issue: 'A Perspective on Chemistry and Society'



During 2021, to celebrate 75 years of publishing CHIMIA, a special column was created called 'A Perspective on Chemistry and Society'. To celebrate this milestone, throughout the year, we published short opinion pieces by invited authors on wide-ranging topics including science, industry, the environment, education, society, and politics.

We asked the authors to look forward rather than back and address current and future prospects for chemistry and society.

We were very pleased to publish 22 interesting articles and we would like to thank all the authors who generously and enthusiastically contributed their insightful thoughts and took the time to write these articles. The articles have been collected into a special, open access, virtual issue, which is available on the CHIMIA website: chimia.ch

Chemical Landmark 2020 honors the work of Paracelsus in Basel



The Swiss Academy of Sciences (SCNAT) honors the work of the Swiss physician, alchemist and natural philosopher Paracelsus in Basel with the Chemical Landmark 2020. A commemorative plaque was ceremoniously unveiled at the Pharmacy Museum of the University of Basel. The works and teachings of Paracelsus have had a lasting impact

on medicine and chemistry. The physician, chemist and alchemist, who was appointed city physician of Basel in 1527, has now received his own commemorative plaque. At his former place of life and work in the "Haus zum Sessel", where today the Pharmacy Museum of the University of Basel is located, the Swiss Academy of Sciences SCNAT has presented the tribute. Members of the Pharmacy Museum and the University of Basel as well as guests of the Paracelsus Project of the University of Zurich looked back at the achievements, conflicts and stages of the versatile physician on the threshold between the Middle Ages and the early modern period at the award ceremony.

SCNAT introduced the Chemical Landmark program to identify the scientific and technological heritage in the field of chemistry within Switzerland. Switzerland, in particular, owes much of its prosperity to discoveries in chemical research as well as the industry that built on them. Therefore, every year significant places in the history of chemistry are declared "Historical Sites of Chemistry". The award is intended to commemorate chemical discoveries, famous scientists and their places of work. More information: chemie.unibas.ch or chem.scnat.ch

Invitation to the SCS General Assembly 2022



The Board of Directors invites all members of the Swiss Chemical Society and the delegates of its associated societies to join the 32nd General Assembly.

SCS General Assembly 2022
April 22, 2022, 13.30–14.00h (Lunch break of the SCS Spring Meeting 2022).
University of Geneva, Science II, 30

Quai Ernest-Ansermet, Geneva.

Agenda GA 2022 (provisional)

1. Welcome and approval of the agenda
2. Election of the vote counters
3. Minutes of the 31st General Assembly from April 15, 2021 (published in CHIMIA 5/2021, A459)
4. Annual report 2021 (published in CHIMIA 1-2/2022)
5. Financial statement 2021 incl. audit report (a summary of the financial statement 2021 and the asset allocation per network and funds is available for members on the website after the formal audit (login required))
6. Discharge the Board
7. Elections for the ExB and the BoD. Election of the auditors
8. News and strategic projects
9. Outlook 2022/2023
10. Varia

Motions to the assembly can be submitted until April 1, 2022 to info@scg.ch.

Swiss Chemical Society (SCS)
Prof. Christian Bochet, President
David Spichiger, Executive Director
More information: scg.ch/about

SCS Partnerships: four companies joined the program in the past months



In 2020 the SCS implemented the SCS Partnership program as a new strategic tool to strengthen the collaboration with industrial partners and to align the Society's activities to the community's requirements. Starting with 13 partner companies in spring 2020 the program includes 20 partners as of January 2022.

Please contact the SCS Head Office if you are interested in a SCS Partnership as well (CHF 3'000 p.a.).

Recent SCS Partnerships Assignments

In the past three months four companies signed the partnership agreement and joined the program. We are happy and proud to welcome the following companies:

- Chemspeed Technologies AG, Füllinsdorf: gamification of R&D
- SpiroChem AG, Basel: Get inspired. Innovate.
- Büchi AG, Uster: Büchglasuster, Pilot Plant & Reactor Systems
- Carbogen Amcis, Bubendorf: bringing your science to life

SCS Partnership Program

Make the difference as an Institutional Partner through

- Active involvement in the strategic alignment of the society (board-, committee- and jury-membership)

- Becoming Industrial Science Award Program Stakeholders (former SISF Program)
- VIP Guests/Delegates at the Swiss Chemistry Science Night ... and also enjoying the benefits of a "classical" corporate membership:
- Free CHIMIA subscription, publication of Company Reports in CHIMIA, advertising at reduced rates, and logo presence on SCS documents (print, digital)

More information: scg.ch/network

Mechanochemistry Video Challenge: Call for nominations



With this award Deasyl and its sponsor WAB seek to drive innovation in mechanochemistry that helps the environment. By organizing a world-premiere in mechanochemistry with a green impact reactor, DEASYL and WAB have achieved a breakthrough innovation in this field.

This challenge is open to all professionals and students working in the chemistry field whose projects use chemistry to tackle sustainability challenges.

Participants must show, through a video of up to 180 seconds: Mechanochemistry participates to a green future, prove it!

Deadline for applications: April 5, 2022

Applications must be submitted via contest@deasyl.ch exclusively

More information are available in the SusChem CH news section on the SCS Website: suschem.ch

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www.thieme.de/roempp-ch



Happy Birthday!

Several of our senior SCS members will celebrate special birthdays in 2022. This gives us the opportunity to warmly congratulate them and wish them many more years with us!

95 Years

Hans Peter Schad, Chatham (USA)

90 Years

Klaus Günter Artz, Basel
Max Schellenbaum, Muttenz

85 Years

Rudolf Andreatta, Arlesheim
Christoph Buxtorf-Hosch, Basel
Philipp Christen, Zurich
Maurice Cosandey, St-Prex
Raoul Daniel, Tannay
Daniel O. Hauser, New York (USA)
Dieter Seebach, Zurich
Helmut Sigel, Basel
Günter Wolf, Windisch

80 Years

Renato Amadò, Luzern
Richard Buchecker, Zurich
Felix Escher, Aathal-Seegräben
Helmut Maecke, Lörrach (D)
Ernö Pretsch, Uetikon am See
Bernhard Schreiber, Graz (AT)
Christian Suter, Basel
Gerard van Koten, Basel
Urs von Stockar, Lutry
Max Widmer, Rothrist
Wolf-Dietrich Woggon, Binningen
André Boschung, Gland
Reinhard Hobi, Maur
Hans-Kaspar Wipf, Wallisellen
Hans Künzi, Riehen
Paul Hug, Geuensee

75 Years

Albert K. Beck, Uetikon Waldegg
Marc Güggi, Arisdorf
Suzanne Hauffe, Allschwil
Max Hunziker, Düdingen
Tobias J. Lotz, Lörrach-Stetten (D)
Peter Oggenfuss, Stein
Wilfred van Gunsteren, Zurich
Kurt Wälti, Rafz
Guido Wicki-Meyer, Auw
Gerhard Wittwer, Pratteln
Gérald Jan, Villars-sur-Glâne
Thomas S. Kowalski, Zurich
Peter Bläuenstein, Hausen
Klaus Rudolf Lindner, Sinzing (D)
Christian Salomon, Soral

70 Years

Alfredo Alder, Zurich
Peter Benz, Rorschach
Giorgio Caravatti, Bottmingen
André Chollet, Tannay
Thomas Fuhrer, Bern

Peter Göltz, Weinheim (D)
Lothar Helm, Romanel
Rita Hofmann, Marly
Thomas Laube, Schaffhausen
Roland Looser, Lausen
Hans Peter Lüthi, Thalwil
Hans Peter Märki, Basel
Peter Mohr, Basel
Benoît Pugin, Münchenstein
Toshiaki Taura, Nagoya (JP)
Ferdinand Wild, Uetikon am See
Martin Riediker, Seltisberg
Niklaus Schwizgebel, Uetendorf



Albert K. Beck



Richard Buchecker



Christoph Buxtorf



André Chollet



Maurice Cosandey



Raoul Daniel



Felix Echer



Peter Göltz



Lothar Helm



Reinhard Hobi



Rita Hofmann



Paul Hug



Thomas Kowalski



Hans Künzi



Thomas Laube



Klaus R. Lindner



Roland Looser



Hans Peter Märki



Peter Mohr



Ernö Pretsch



Martin Riediker



Christian Salomon



Dieter Seebach



Helmut Sigel



Gerard van Koten



Urs von Stockar



Hans Kaspar Wipf



Wolf Dieter Woggon

A Warm Welcome to Our New Members!



Period: 25.11.2021–25.01.2022

Imaad Ansari, Zurich - Manuele Bal-
estra, Meggen - Angelo Bellia, Zurich
- Valdrin Beluli, Gjilan - Simon Boe-
hme, Zurich - Leonie Braks, Fribourg
- Héloïse Bürgisser, Zurich - Mariana
Damian, Braunschweig - Leon Feld,
Zurich - Carla Ferreira Rodrigues, Zu-
rich - Marit Fiechter, Zurich - Christof

Finkler, Basel - Sandro Fischer, Neuenkirch - Pauline Franz,
Chavannes-près-Renens - Paul Hanselmann, Brig - Glis - Gor-
don Honeyman, Münsingen - Chong Huang, Zurich - Christoph
Jansen, Rossrüti - Stefanie Kammereck, Zürich - Camiel Kroo-
nen, Basel - Dennis Kucina, Basel - Jinxia Li, Zurich - Kaidi Li,
Geneva - Sara Almudena Lopez Paz, Zurich - Boris Lozhkin,
Basel - Benjamin Manser, Basel - Walker Marks, Zurich - Lydia
Merakeb, Zurich - Solène Miaskiewicz, Huingue (FR) - Ivan
Mosiagin, Lausanne - Anton Natter, Zurich - David Niedbalka,
Zurich - Jaclyn Parris, Zurich - Md Atiur Rahman, Fribourg -
Giacomo Rigoni, Basel - Yves Ruff, Strasbourg (FR) - Adriano
Rutz, Geneva - Lukas Schneider, Weil am Rhein (D) - Isik Tun-
cay, Zurich - Erik Turner, Baden - Ramakrishnan Vallinayagam,
Basel - Valentina Valmacco, Basel - Caspar Vogel, Basel - Joshua
Walsh, Zurich - Zhenbin Wang, Zurich - Matthew Wheatley, Zu-
rich - Khalil Yamani, Zurich - Zeyi Zhang, Zurich - Han Zhao,
Zurich.

HONORS, AWARDS, APPOINTMENTS

Dr. Renana Gershoni Poranne, ETH Zurich, receives the Golden Owle from VSETH 2021



Dr. Renana Gershoni Poranne from ETH Zurich receives the golden Owle for the commitment to her course – commonly known as OC4 – and successfully built “bridges”: professional ones between quantum chemistry and organic chemistry, and interpersonal ones with her students. The energy always came back to her from the audience, along with beautiful moments.

The Golden Owl honours lecturers who have provided exceptional teaching and motivates them to continue with their excellent teaching. The Owl is awarded by the VSETH, ETH Zurich's students association, who are also the initiators of the award.

Source: chab.ethz.ch

Chorafas Prize 2021 of University of Fribourg goes to Dr. Subhajt Pal



Dr. Subhajt Pal has been awarded the 2021 Chorafas Prize for the best doctoral thesis in natural sciences at the University of Fribourg. Pal completed his PhD thesis on “Towards Sequence Controlled Polymer Synthesis” as a member of NC-CR Principal Investigator Prof. Andreas Kilbinger's group at the Department of Chemistry. His thesis focused on developing novel synthetic methodologies for

biomimetic functional polymer synthesis, taking its cue from nature's mastery of producing on-demand smart materials. He was able to develop new and precise methods of polymer synthesis allowing him to create hollow helixes. These can mimic biological functions such as ion transport, water transport, and information storage, and could find potential applications in biology and material chemistry.

Source: unifr.ch/chem

JOURNAL NEWS

New CHIMIA website incl. the article archive that goes back to 1990



In 2020, CHIMIA became a platinum Open Access journal. By doing so the Swiss Chemical Society, as the publisher of CHIMIA, and the CHIMIA Editorial Board stated their support to the growing movement across Europe towards Open Access and Open Science.

In a further move to establish CHIMIA as a modern, accessible journal both

in print and online, the <https://chimia.ch> website has been redesigned to provide all CHIMIA offerings from submission to pdfs of published articles, based on the OJS system. The previous partnership with IngentaConnect.com as content host has been discontinued and no CHIMIA articles will be available anymore as of March 2022. You will find direct free access to all past content going back to 1990 and a link for online manuscript submission on the new website <https://chimia.ch>.

Pdfs of the full issues are also available to SCS members. Simply login to your member account and download issues going back to 2016.

The huge task of programming and migration of over 30 years of digital content was undertaken by Editorial Board member Martin Brändle, to whom we are very grateful.

New CHIMIA website: chimia.ch

Prof. Eva Hevia and Jérôme Waser new Editors in Chief of Helvetica



As of January 2022 Prof. Eva Hevia, University of Bern, and Prof. Jérôme Waser, EPFL Lausanne, took over the roles as Editors in Chief of Helvetica. The Swiss Chemical Society is proud and happy to announce this news and wishes them both all the best and much satisfaction in their new positions. As an important partner, Helvetica supports

the SCS formally and financially and we kindly ask and motivate all our members and colleagues to publish their scientific articles in Helvetica. It's for the benefit of the SCS and the Swiss science community.

After the Helvetica relaunch in 2016, Prof. Christophe Copéret and Prof. Jeff Bode, both ETH Zurich, served as Helvetica editors for six years and established Helvetica as a Swiss based, high-quality journal. Thanks, Christophe and Jeff, for having done an excellent job!

«Helvetica: A new beginning»

Editorial by Eva Hevia and Jérôme Waser, <https://doi.org/10.1002/hlca.202100244>

December 23, 2021

«With the beginning of the New Year, we are both equally excited and honored to take on our new roles as Editors-in-Chief of Helvetica Chimica Acta. We do it full of enthusiasm, humility and motivation, aiming to continue the sterling work that our predecessors Christophe Copéret and Jeffrey Bode from ETH Zürich have carried out during the past six years.

We are extremely thankful to the Swiss Chemical Society (SCS) for choosing us as the next team of Editors-in-Chief for its flagship journal. Since 1917, Helvetica has been one of the main pillars of the SCS. It publishes top scientific results from Switzerland and abroad and is recognized for its very high quality standards. Founded over 120 years ago the SCS continues to actively support our community, providing unique scientific forums for networking and scientific exchange, and recognizing research excellence through its awards. Helvetica sponsors many of these important activities, including the SCS Lectureship Tours, as well as the organization of conferences and workshops and several early career researcher awards. It is worth to remind ourselves that every engagement with Helvetica (that is being an author, reviewer, guest editor, or advisory board member, etc.) also represents an important contribution towards supporting the SCS in its dedicated work.

As mentioned above we are particularly indebted to Christophe and Jeffrey who have implemented key innovations, paving the future of a modernized version of Helvetica. Key features of Helvetica include the rapid processing of its manuscripts, which undergo a robust but fair peer-review process within just three weeks from submission to first decision, transfer options from other Wiley journals, publication of original research as well as Reviews and Perspective articles in all areas of chemical science and further engagement with the wider community providing social media coverage. Helvetica also offers full freedom to its authors concerning the length of their manuscript. It should also be noted that by complying with the open-access mandate for research funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation and the European Research Council, Helvetica is one of the few chemistry journals offering a short embargo period of six months for Green Open Access and it also offers Gold Open Access to all Swiss and German authors as part of a broader agreement with Wiley (CSAL, DEAL).

Building on recent successes, and looking towards the future, we are thrilled to continue reshaping Helvetica, increasing its visibility, diversity and inclusivity across the whole landscape of chemical science. We hope that our distinct and complementary backgrounds and expertise will expedite progress towards these targets. Aiming to reach an even wider global readership, the main criteria for publication will, as ever, be high quality research, which has been rigorously conducted in an accurate and objective manner, advancing the chosen field of study. We encourage submissions from authors at every stage of their career and look forward to continuing to attract contributions from international leading authors. We are also delighted to work closely with our International Advisory and Editorial Board members and would like in the future to further engage younger scientists by the creation of an Early Career Advisory Board. By sharing a similar vision to ours, the boards will assist us on setting up the next steps on Helvetica's strategic roadmap in its primary role of continuing offering strong support to the community in advancing fundamental and applied knowledge in chemical sciences.

Wishing you all the best for 2022

Eva and Jérôme»

Helvetica, Volume 105, Issue 1, January 2022**Editorial**

Helvetica: A New Beginning
Eva Hevia, Jérôme Waser

Reviews

Norhygrine Alkaloid and Its Derivatives:
Synthetic Approaches and Applications
to the Natural Products Synthesis

Andrey V. Smolobochkin, Almir S.

Gazizov, Alexander R. Burilov, Michail A. Pudovik

Metal Nanoclusters as Versatile Building Blocks for Hierarchical Structures

Ewa Banach, Thomas Bürgi

Communications

High trans-2-Decalones by Photoredox Catalyzed β -Isomerization

Juliette Sombret, Julie Quintaine, Tony Biremond, Quentin Barnes, Jean-Yves de Saint-Laumer, Lionel Saudan

Full Papers

Pd/Gorlos-Phos-Catalyzed Chemoselective Amination of Bromophenyl Chlorides with Primary Arylamines

Xinyu Duan, Yulong Song, Chunling Fu, Shengming Ma

Visible-Light Mediated Photooxidative Phosphorylation of Benzylamines: A Novel and Mild Pathway Towards α -Aminophosphorus Compounds

Sothène P.-M. Ung, Inna Perepichka, Chao-Jun Li

Synthesis and Structure Diversity of Half-Sandwich Rare Earth Dialkynyl Complexes

Gang Xiong, Olivier Tardif, Masayoshi Nishiura, Guan Bingtao, Zhaomin Hou

Keteniminium Induced Dienone-Phenol Rearrangement and Intramolecular 6-endo-dig Cyclization Cascade of Yne-Dienone

Rajendra K. Mallick, Shubham Dutta, Manash Protim Gogoi, Akhila K. Sahoo

The Preparation and Resolution of Novel Axially Chiral Pyrazine-Containing P,N Ligands for Asymmetric Catalysis and Their Application in Palladium-Catalysed Allylic Substitution

Sarah Kelly, Richard Goddard, Patrick J. Guiry

Advances in Stereoselective Iron(II)-Catalyzed Synthesis of Sulfilimines with *N*-Mesyloxycarbamates

Calvine Lai, Hélène Lebel

Website: onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/15222675

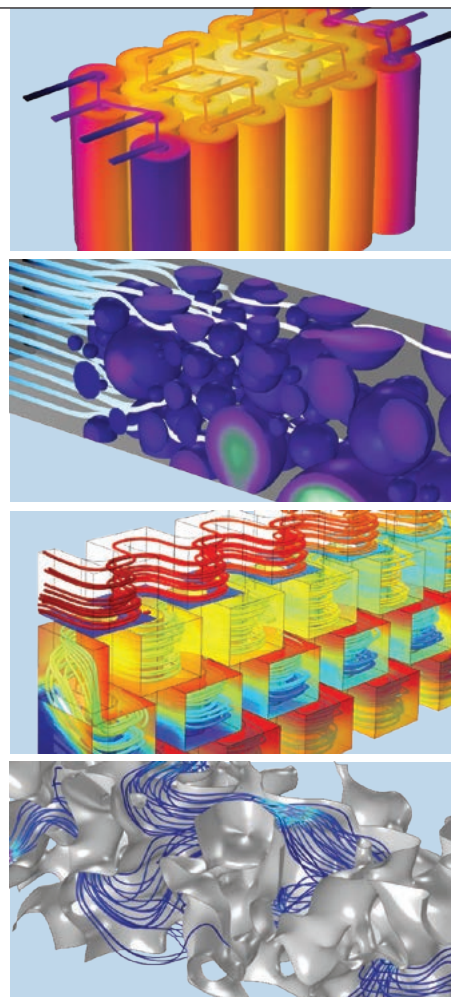


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INDUSTRIAL NEWS

Source: www.chemanager-online.com

Selecting the Right European Location for Life Sciences Activities

November 26, 2021: KPMG's Site Selection Report for Life Sciences Companies in Europe Provides Information for Companies as well as Governments

Agile and resilient: This is how manufacturers in the life sciences industry could be described during the Covid-19 pandemic. As disruption took hold in many other industries' supply chains, life sciences companies moved to rapidly develop new products and build new capacity. They are maintaining this momentum, with pharmaceutical and biotech businesses showing continued interest in expanding existing operations in Europe or starting operations from scratch. Fully integrated Biopharmaceutical companies and contract development & manufacturing organizations (CDMOs) can be seen developing existing manufacturing facilities or setting up new R&D centers in Europe. At the same time, "first time launchers"—small biotech companies that are launching products for the first time—are beginning to realize that they do not need large pharmaceutical groups in order to do so. Instead, they are setting up their own distribution networks across Europe, while many are currently looking for the ideal location for their regional headquarters.

Further impetus is provided by climate discussions and the EU's Green Deal, and a resurgence in industrial strategies to stimulate post-pandemic economic growth. These factors are encouraging governments across Europe to attract direct investments in the life sciences industry, which is generally a low-carbon-emitting and high-added-value sector. Tax incentives, grants and loans are all on offer, though it is always advisable to take a close look at the fine print of offers before taking such a big decision such as where to establish business operations.

Against this background, what should life sciences executives look for, and how do the various European jurisdictions compare? It is a simple question with a complex answer. Let us look at some of the contributing factors.

"Clusters of life sciences companies are a major plus; however, they can be victims of their own success."

Taxes Are Suddenly Less Interesting

Large businesses that are planning significant capital investments in manufacturing plants or R&D facilities are generally attracted by low corporate tax rates. Life sciences companies, in particular, have typically structured their operating and tax models to benefit from low taxes and government incentive programs such as tax holidays. Such tax planning models have suddenly become far less relevant and will not give the desired return if they are based on an effective tax rate of less than 15%. This is because of moves by the OECD, where on 8 October 2021, 136 member states—representing over 90% of global GDP—agreed on a minimum corporate tax rate of 15% from 2023 on. Host countries are likely to raise tax rates to a minimum of 15% for companies with revenues above a certain threshold and abolish tax holiday schemes. Loans or grants may become the preferred means of governments to attract foreign direct investments (FDI) instead—though such moves might be restricted by international state aid regulations and anti-subsidy rules. Moreover, governments are connecting their support for greenfield and brownfield projects to job creation and other commitments. Strict 'claw back' rules might apply if the recipient of governmental support does not comply with the predefined objectives.

Sticking Together: Cluster Size Matters

Clusters of life sciences companies are a major plus. They make it easier to attract and create an even larger pool of talent, exper-

tise, and know-how. This in turn supports profitable pipelines. A positive cluster impact is particularly evident when it comes to innovation, as it can encourage a creative environment around a solid academic ecosystem, supporting the development of specialists and the discovery of new drugs. Clusters can be victims of their own success, however. High demand for qualified talent, experts and specialists often means a spike in salary levels and increases in land prices and office rents. In many life sciences hotspots, a run on talent results in a rise in staff turnover and higher retention costs.

It can be difficult for life sciences companies to respond effectively to such developments, especially on more extensive manufacturing projects. It is therefore advisable to have a shortlist of locations that have a strong manufacturing industry outside the life sciences sector, such as food production, from where qualified staff may be sourced.

Balancing Salary Costs with Labor Law Flexibility

Salary costs can be an important decision factor when choosing a location. Yet, for life sciences projects, for which access to talent is key to success, this factor should be weighted carefully against the flexibility of labor law and a location's attractiveness to specialists. Countries with flexible labor laws and high educational standards almost always also have high labor productivity which is one of the reasons for higher salary costs. By contrast, jurisdictions with lower salaries often lack the capacity to attract qualified workforce necessary to adequately staff operations.

GSK Lures Pfizer's Vaccines R&D Chief Away

December 2, 2021: Britain's largest drugmaker, GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) has landed a major coup, luring Pfizer's vaccines R&D chief away, as it tries to regain its position in the top tier of the vaccine league and build up its presence in the mRNA field. On Dec. 3, Philip Dormitzer, who had served as the US pharma giant's chief scientific officer for RNA and viral vaccines since 2015, will say goodbye to New York and, figuratively, at least, hello to London. As GSK's global head of vaccines, Dormitzer, who will report to Hal Barron, the company's chief scientific officer and president R&D, will be based in the Boston, Massachusetts area, center of the US biotechnology universe. Pfizer said the 58-year-old scientist's former position will be filled internally from the company's "deep bench of experts in vaccine innovation." During his time at the New York drugs giant, the soon to be ex-Pfizer executive, who previously served as head of US vaccines research at Swiss drugmaker Novartis, is credited with establishing Pfizer's presence in messenger RNA. In particular, he is said to have been instrumental in negotiating the link-up with Germany's BioNTech on the Covid-19 vaccine now known as Comirnaty. Along with the Covid project, Gormitzer led an earlier collaboration between Pfizer and BioNTech on an mRNA-based influenza vaccine as well as helping to develop a vaccine candidate for respiratory syncytial virus that as analysts noted will compete with a vaccine GSK is developing. At Glaxo, which has tread softly in the vaccines field latterly, the US national who earned MD and PhD degrees at Stanford University in California, will find shoes of all sizes to fit into. The British drugmaker has shed several senior vaccine scientists over the past recent months and is seen as having a lot of catch-up work to do. Without entering the Covid field directly, GSK has instead forged alliances with other European vaccine manufacturers. In one project, it is collaborating with French drugmaker Sanofi, providing an adjuvant to power that company's shot, which is still stuck in Phase 3 trials after several setbacks. More recently, it entered a partnership with German biotech CureVac to develop a second-generation Covid vaccine. Weighing in on the new hire, Roger Connor, president of global vaccines at GSK, told the UK newspaper Financial Times that the pandemic had helped prove

the value of mRNA technology. The company is “investing significantly” in the field, he said, with 200 scientists deployed, not including the CureVac team. Without giving further details, he said GSK is also building mRNA vaccine manufacturing capacity.

Azelis Acquires Austria’s Neupert Specialities

December 2, 2021: Azelis has acquired Neupert Specialities, an Austrian distributor specializing in food and health raw materials and ingredients in its local market, as well as in Germany and Switzerland. The deal strengthens the Belgium-based distributor’s presence in the growing Austrian food and health segment and in the region’s broader life sciences market, also adding cross-selling opportunities. Financial details of the transaction were not disclosed. “There is an outstanding compatibility between our two companies and we are very excited about the enhanced opportunity to expand the business under Azelis’ ownership by leveraging combined global principal relationships. Azelis’ strong track record in sustainability, especially their EcoVadis Platinum rating, as well as the technological capabilities, are of particularly great value to our joint food and health customer base,” said Peter Suppan, Neupert’s founder and managing director. Headquartered in Vienna, Neupert specializes in products such as proteins, hydrocolloids, agar and sugar substitutes. The company was founded by Suppan and Norbert Resch, both of whom will continue to lead the business. In late October, Azelis also agreed to acquire 90% of the shares in South Africa’s Umongo, a leading distributor of lubricants and metal working fluids. The transaction is expected to close by the end of this year. Umongo has its head office in Durban and employs 35 people. It also has an application laboratory. CEO Boston Moonsamy will remain with the company and continue to lead the business.

Lonza and Bioqube in Biologics Pact

December 6, 2021: Swiss CDMO Lonza has agreed a five-year collaboration on the development and manufacturing of biologics and small molecules with European venture capital firm Bioqube Ventures. Under the terms of the deal, Lonza will support Bioqube Ventures during the due diligence of candidate biotechs and provide a tailored offering of advice and services to its portfolio companies. It will offer its expertise and technology on molecules ranging from monoclonal antibodies, complex proteins and small molecules to antibody-drug conjugates. “This framework agreement provides Bioqube Ventures and its portfolio companies with a range of services for its late discovery and early development needs. Our customized and scalable solutions demonstrate our commitment to enabling emerging biotechs to take their drug candidates to the clinic,” said Pnina Weitz, global head of venture capital business development & relationship management at Lonza. The partners said the holistic approach to drug substance and drug product development and manufacturing across various platforms significantly simplifies the supply chain, reduces process complexity and allows for shortened development timelines.

Novartis May Have Sandoz Buyer on the Hook

December 14, 2021: Novartis and market watchers alike have been dropping repeated hints that a sale of the Swiss drugs giant’s Sandoz-branded generic drugs arm may be closer than has been hinted up to now. In an interview with German weekly news magazine *Wirtschaftswoche* last week, CEO Vas Narasimhan said, however, that beyond several requests for information no concrete offers are currently on the table. In any case, he said, “we have to do our work internally first to be able to provide financial data to some of the interested parties,” adding that this could take time, even as much as a year. In October this year Novartis suggested the the right time to divest Sandoz could be close as pressure on prices of off-patent drugs intensifies. Officially, Novartis’

timeline to wrap up a deal extends until the end of 2022. The activities potentially up for grabs accounted for \$9.7 billion in sales last year, about a fifth of group turnover. Narasimhan told the magazine that all options are in play, including keeping Sandoz – which no one believes –, spinning it off to shareholders or selling it to another company. In recent interviews, he has stressed that the drugmaker’s business priorities lie elsewhere. “What is clear is that we want to focus Novartis on innovative medicines,” he told *WirtschaftsWoche*. The names of several prospective buyers for the generics business have circulated recently, including US biotechs Incyte, Intellia Therapeutics, Alnylam und Biomarin. Those willing to put the needed amount on the table could also include private equity companies. The hottest rumors focus on the Strüngmann brothers, backers of German Covid-19 vaccine maker BioNTech, making a \$21.6 billion joint offer with Swedish investor EQT. The Strüngmanns in 2005 sold German generics manufacturer Hexal to Novartis. As it moves toward streamlining its group structure, Novartis in 2019 spun off its Alcon eye care business and recently completed the sale of its nearly one-third voting stake in Roche back to the compatriot drugmaker. Journalists and analysts have speculated on how management might want to spend the cash accumulated in the selloffs. At present, about 80% of Novartis’ annual sales revenue and 80-90% of its earnings stem from patented drugs to treat cancer, cardiovascular or genetic diseases. Beyond these, the CEO has said the company may look at immunology, neurology and hematology assets. Any deal the pharma major cuts would not need to be a very large one, Narasimhan remarked. Most of Novartis’ acquisitions in the recent past have involved sums of less than one billion Swiss francs or dollars, he said.

Wacker and CordenPharma in Lipid Nanoparticles Partnership

December 16, 2021: German chemical company Wacker and compatriot CDMO CordenPharma have agreed to jointly develop know-how and processes for manufacturing lipid nanoparticles (LNP) to meet growing market demand. Both companies will first build up R&D capacities at their respective sites – Wacker in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and CordenPharma in Caponago, Italy. The Dutch site produces mRNA actives, which are often used as vaccines or therapeutic agents in LNP formulations, and the infrastructure necessary to enter LNP production is already available at the site. Wacker will also contribute its expertise in producing plasmid DNA, an essential intermediate for mRNA. CordenPharma’s Caponago facility will provide LNP formulation development, manufacturing and fill & finish. The company also makes a range of lipids at its facilities in Switzerland, France, and Colorado, USA. LNPs are drug delivery systems for nucleic acid therapeutics consisting of special fats (lipids), which ensure that actives can safely enter the body in order to exert their biological effect. The protective capsules are an essential component of advanced medicines such as mRNA-based drugs, protein replacement therapeutics and antibody therapeutics. Wacker said that while demand for LNP has taken off in recent months with the development of mRNA-based vaccines to protect against Covid-19, the broader field of mRNA-based actives is also projected to undergo dynamic growth. According to the Munich-based group, about 250 candidate actives are currently under development worldwide, some in the field of vaccines and others for therapeutics.

CSL Takes Vifor Pharma for \$11.7 Billion

December 17, 2021: After days of speculation, it’s now official. Australian biopharmaceuticals manufacturer CSL has grabbed for and won the hand of Swiss Vifor Pharma. The boards of both companies have unanimously approved the \$11.7 billion public tender offer, which looks certain to be accepted by Vifor’s shareholders. Its largest, Patinex, with 23%, has already agreed to tender. The all-cash deal

represents a 40% premium over Vifor's 60-day average share price as of Dec. 1 and is worth considerably more than the \$7.1 billion transaction the market had initially anticipated. If all goes to plan, this would be the biggest pharma takeover of 2021, ahead of the stunning \$11.5 billion US Merck & Co. coughed up for Acceleron. With the proposed acquisition, the Melbourne-based drugmaker, whose portfolio is heavily weighted toward vaccines and blood plasma products, will be able to broaden its offering. CSL said the iron deficiency, nephrology & cardio-renal therapeutics platform of the Swiss company based in Glattbrugg, near Zurich, was clearly a drawing card. Vifor said it believes CSL's global reach, R&D capabilities and balance sheet will allow it to bring its products to more patients. "The combination with Vifor Pharma is expected to be immediately earnings accretive in the first full year of CSL's ownership, and can be executed while retaining our balance sheet strength," said CSL's CEO Paul Perreault. He added that the purchase further advances the company's 2030 strategy to create "high value growth, cash generative and sustainable business" complementing and expanding the global leadership positions of its two business units, CSL Bering and Seqirus. With Vifor, the new Australian owner said it will gain complementary therapeutic focus areas across its existing platform, including hematology and thrombosis, cardiovascular-metabolic and transplant. Adding Vifor's pipeline will give CSL 37 products in development, representing a 32% increase over its existing suite of pipeline products. One caveat, analysts said, is that the Swiss company's best-selling product, Ferinject, an iron supplement accounting for 30% of its sales, faces generic competition between 2024 and 2026.

Divestment of finished drugs to CordenPharma

Shortly before sealing the deal with CSL, Vifor announced it would sell its finished drug product manufacturing business for an undisclosed sum to CDMO CordenPharma. This move, it said, reflects its strategy to transform itself into a multi-brand commercial organization, focusing on its core capabilities of in-licensing, partnering and commercializing products in nephrology and further growing and maximizing opportunities of its iron portfolio. Divestment of the activities at three sites in Fribourg and Ettingen, Switzerland, along with Lisbon, Portugal, will trigger an asset impairment to be reported in Vifor's 2021 financial results. CordenPharma said it will integrate the facilities into its existing CDMO network of cGMP and R&D plants across Europe and the US and manage manufacturing operations under its Small Molecule Platform. It plans to retain the plant workforce, which will continue to produce and supply Vifor Pharma products. Commercial operations will remain with Vifor.

BASF to Sell Attapulgit Business to Clariant

January 3, 2022: BASF is selling its US-based attapulgit business to Clariant for \$60 million. The deal expected to close in summer 2022 following regulatory approval also includes the transfer of a production facility at Quincy in the state of Florida. The German chemical giant acquired the site, which is currently operated by its Dispersions & Resins division, with its 2006 acquisition of Engelhard, a US specialist in metals and catalysts. Following an in-depth review, BASF said it had decided that the future of the site and the attapulgit business would be best secured by selling it to a company with experience and expertise in mining. The business with operations in Florida and the neighboring state of Georgia is one of the established attapulgit miners in North America and also manufactures products for a wide range of applications and end-markets. BASF's business is well recognized in the industry for its unique combination of mineral quality, mine reserve size and strategic location, Clariant noted. Concurrently with the sale, the German and Swiss chemical producers plan to sign a supply agreement for attapulgit. This will allow BASF to continue supporting customers in the paints, coatings and construction markets, said Denise Hartmann, senior vice president of the group's Dispersions & Resins business in North America. Clariant said the deal with

BASF, which is in line with its bolt-on acquisition strategy and sustainability focus, will strengthen its already leading position in the market for purification of edible oils and renewable fuels and extend its North American footprint. Substantially increasing production capacity, moreover, will enhance its ability to participate in the attractive market there. The Basel-based company said its "unique" technology reduces greenhouse gases in road transportation and its process for the purification of pyrolysis oil enables chemical recycling of plastics. North America's renewable fuels market based on waste streams such as used cooking oils, tall oil, tallow, animal fats and distillers' corn oil is an attractive growth market. Taking over the BASF business will boost Clariant's Functional Minerals business, CEO Conrad Keijzer said.

TTP Group Appoints Redjai Mamuti as Managing Director of Triplan Ingenieur

January 5, 2022: Redjai Mamuti is the new Managing Director of Switzerland-based Triplan Ingenieur, effective Jan. 1, 2022. He takes over from Martin Scherrer, who has presided over the company as Interim Managing Director since February 2021. Mamuti has a degree in process engineering and initially took over the position as Deputy Managing Director. He joins from TTP Group's Swiss subsidiary Pharmaplan, where he held the role of a senior engineer and team leader since 2019, leading and managing process teams in various investment projects. Stefan Berg, Country Head of TTP Group in Switzerland, is counting on the synergies created by this change of position: "With Redjai we can count on an excellent leader who represents the values of TTP Group in the best possible way. I am therefore convinced that Redjai Mamuti will optimally develop Triplan Ingenieur AG in the chemical industry and the life science market in Switzerland and strengthen customer relationships." For Triplan, Mamuti sees growth potential above all in chemical APIs, fine and specialty chemicals. According to Mamuti, Triplan Ingenieur's expertise lies in the execution of small and medium-sized projects, which are handled in regional proximity to the customer and with a high level of local knowledge of the plants.

Heubach and SK Complete Clariant Pigments Buy

January 6, 2022: Germany's Heubach Group and US private equity investor SK Capital Partners have completed their acquisition of Clariant's global colorants business and integrated it into a new Heubach Group. The share of the Clariant pigments business in Infraser Höchst, which operates the chemical park at Frankfurt, Germany, was not part of the deal that valued the pigments portfolio at 800-855 Swiss francs. The acquisition makes the formerly family-owned company based at Langelsheim, Germany, a major global supplier of comprehensive color solutions with a portfolio of organic, inorganic and anti-corrosive pigments, pigment preparations, dyes, colorants and specialty materials. The new Heubach Group, which will have its headquarters at Vienna, Austria, will have sales of around €900 million and employ some 3,000 people at 19 production facilities across Europe, the Americas, Asia and Africa. With effect from Jan. 10, Stefan Doboczky has been named CEO of the new entity. The new chief executive most recently served as CEO of Austrian cellulose producer Lenzing. Prior to that, he was on the managing board of global Dutch chemical producer DSM, where he held general management roles for nearly two decades.

Clariant holds 20% of the new colorants producer

Clariant has taken a stake of 20% in the reorganized business. By reinvesting, the Swiss group said it could continue benefiting from the improving profitability generated by its ongoing efficiency program as well as participate in future growth opportunities offered by synergies of the combined operation. CEO Conrad Keijzer stressed that the divestment of the pigments business represents a final step in Clariant's portfolio repositioning announced in July 2018. He said the Muttentz-headquartered player will reinvest

the net cash inflow of 615 million Swiss francs in its core business areas, its ongoing transformation and in further debt reduction.

Huntsman Reviews Options for Textile Effects

January 6, 2022: Huntsman has announced it will undertake a strategic review of its Textile Effects division, which is headquartered in Singapore and supplies dyes and chemicals to the textile and related industries. The review, which will include a potential sale, is due to start early this quarter. The US chemical producer did not say how long it would take, other than it “plans to move expeditiously.” Textile Effects operates eight primary manufacturing facilities in Germany, Switzerland, Mexico, China, India, Indonesia and Thailand, as well as 14 formulation distribution centers. The division’s revenue in 2020 was \$597 million, making up 10% of Huntsman’s total sales. Adjusted EBITDA was \$42 million, representing a slump of 50% from the year before. “We believe now is the right time to explore options for Textile Effects. We expect that the division will generate close to \$100 million of adjusted EBITDA in 2021, recovering much of what was lost due to Covid-19,” said chairman, president and CEO Peter Huntsman. “While its value-added portfolio of sustainable products is consistent with Huntsman’s strategic direction, there may well be an external party that recognizes the value of these extremely attractive assets and will be a better owner for them.”

CordenPharma Sale Rumors Take Firm Shape

January 19, 2022: Rumors that German pharmaceutical producer CordenPharma is up for sale have resurfaced following fresh reports that the company’s owner, International Chemical Investors Group (ICIG), plans to formally solicit bids for the business at the end of January. German daily newspaper Handelsblatt said the divestment plans had been delayed due to the need to restructure operations following the company’s acquisition of the finished drug product manufacturing business of Switzerland’s Vifor in 2021. The deal included three production facilities in Fribourg und Ettingen, Switzerland, as well as Lisbon, Portugal. According to the Bloomberg news agency, ICIG has hired investment bank William Blair to handle the sale that could potentially value the drugmaker at around €2.5 billion. Big name private equity investors such as Bain, Blackstone, Cinven, EQT and Permira are thought to be interested in at least studying the prospect. Corden has declined to comment on the mooted sale plans. Following the expected divestment of the pharma asset, ICIG is seen as planning to focus on its chemicals holdings, which include CMO WeylChem and PVC producer Vynova as well as CarboTech, synthetic fiber composites maker Enka and Rütgers Organics.

CordenPharma expands asset base

In recent months, CordenPharma has been steadily expanding its asset base. Alongside the Vifor transaction, the company announced it would spend nearly €10 million on a new GMP facility at its Plankstadt, Germany, campus for oral solid drugs to be used in clinical trials. It also invested in the expansion of production in the US state of Colorado and at Chenôve, France, and signed a deal with Germany’s Wacker Chemie to jointly develop know-how and processes for manufacturing lipid nanoparticles (LNP). In its first project of 2022, the company announced a collaboration with PeptiSystems, a Swedish developer of instruments for peptide and oligonucleotide therapeutic process development and manufacturing based on flow through column technology. At its peptide center of excellence in Frankfurt, Germany, CordenPharma has introduced PeptiSystems’ innovative solution to reduce the environmental impact of its Process Mass Intensity (PMI) of peptide manufacturing processes. The concept, it says, allows manufacturing in continuous mode, thereby reducing solvent consumption and waste by at least 40% in all peptides produced by Solid-Phase Peptide Synthesis (SPPS).



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