

**ICRP to establish a new Committee for radiological protection of non-human species
– R J Pentreath elected a new Main Commission member and Chairman-elect of the
new Committee**

The International Commission on Radiological Protection, ICRP, has decided to develop a framework for the assessment of radiation effects in non-human species, based on the concept of reference animals and plants. The proposed system does not intend to set regulatory standards. The Commission rather recommends a framework that can be a practical tool to help regulators and operators demonstrate compliance with existing and future environmental legislation.

At the International Conference on the Protection of the Environment from the Effects of Ionising Radiation in Stockholm 6-10 October 2003, the participating Member States and international organisations supported the approach of ICRP, including the development of reference animals and plants. The Conference also outlined the role of various international organisations in this work, inter alia:

- UNSCEAR, the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, should provide findings on the sources and effects of ionising radiation in relation to non-human species.
- ICRP should continue to issue recommendations on radiation protection, including specific recommendations for the protection of non-human species.
- IAEA, the International Atomic Energy Agency, should mediate the application of this work internationally.

ICRP can and is prepared to play the key role, both in developing a limited set of reference animals and plants and in advising on a common international approach.

The Main Commission of ICRP met in San Carlos de Bariloche, Argentina, 8-9 November 2003. This was 75 years since the Commission was established. At this meeting, the Commission decided to establish a new Committee for the protection of non-human organisms, thereby showing its commitment for this rapidly developing area. After two terms, the mandates of this committee, Committee 5 will be reviewed to determine its future. The Main Commission also decided that the mandates of the four existing Committees would be reviewed in the next term so as to ensure its relevance for the future.

The Commission also decided to fill its current vacancy by electing Professor R. J. Pentreath of the Environmental Systems Science Centre, University of Reading, UK, as a new Main Commission member and Chairman-elect of the new Committee 5 of ICRP.