



Dear colleague,

2020 is less than two months old but it has already been very eventful. A new virus emerged in Wuhan, China, eventually forcing us to cancel the Principal Investigator (PI) conference in Taiwan; the United Kingdom left the EU; and the race for the White House is warming up. And while these events are affecting each of us in different ways, our community of zebrafish researchers is more active than ever. In 2019, and for the first time, there were more publications found in PubMed under the keyword 'zebrafish' than under the keyword '*D. melanogaster*'. And unlike what is observed in many other scientific communities, the number of 'zebrafish' publications has not yet plateaued.

But while the size of our community and the number of our publications continue to increase, so too does global warming: 2019 temperatures were the second warmest on record, after 2016, and the political will to address this critical issue is mostly lacking. As a society with close to 1100 members, our actions carry consequences, and especially when it comes to travelling to far away conferences. For this reason, we have taken several decisions including setting up a Webinar series as a first step towards virtual conferences, and bringing the conferences to the largest communities on a rotating basis (North America, Europe, Asia-Pacific) in order to maximize participation while minimizing travel. More recently, we have decided to link the next PI conference to the main conference, and thus it will take place on June 15-16, 2021 in Montreal, Canada. Clearly, these are just the first steps, and we are looking forward to working with our members, and especially with the newly formed Committee on Environmental Sustainability, to increase our level of environmental responsibility.

Coming back to the science, it is clear that our field has come a long way since the pioneering work of the early 1980s. With close to 40,000 'zebrafish' publications in PubMed, a countless number of highly significant contributions to a large variety of scientific questions, and more than 1500 very active research groups around the world, it is important to remember what makes our community special: the generous sharing of published and unpublished reagents and their appropriate acknowledgement in the resulting publications, the open communication and productive collaborations, the tireless effort of our members to generate and effectively disseminate new tools and reagents. Of course, we need to continue our efforts along these lines and also expand our reach, for example by reminding other communities, including the lay public, about the value and significance of our research. As the largest society of zebrafish researchers, we aim to help the community reach its scientific goals and provide an environment all of us can benefit from.

Last, but not least, we would like to wish our colleagues in East Asia a prompt recovery in these unusually challenging times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Didier Stainier', written in a cursive style.

Didier Stainier  
IZFS President

International Zebrafish Society | 555 E. Wells Street | Suite 1100 | Milwaukee, WI 53202-3823 USA  
Tel: +1 (414) 918-9835 | Fax: +1 (414) 276-3349 | Email: [info@izfs.org](mailto:info@izfs.org)

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