



## Meeting with SCNAT regarding a possible CHIPP Membership Berne, 1 June 2010

### Participants:

- SCNAT: President Monard, Secretary General Pfister, MAP Manager Preiswerk [MAP = Platform Mathematics, Astronomy, Physics].
- CHIPP: Pohl (MP), Ruder (JPR).

After an introductory mutual presentation of the two organisations an open and fruitful exchange of views takes place. SCNAT is very positive about a possible CHIPP membership and sees the CHIPP goals (as stated in the CHIPP Convention) and activities (as presented by MP) perfectly matching and mirroring the SCNAT goals. Monard and Pfister express their appreciation about the CHIPP work and would be absolutely willing to present a CHIPP request for membership to their 'Delegiertenversammlung' (one meeting per year in spring). The only element they would like to get a positive feedback is the question whether or not the Swiss Physical Society – already a member of SCNAT – would not be opposed of such a request. MP will take care of this aspect (see below) and keep SCNAT informed.

On a specific question, MP states his (and the CHIPP Board's) conviction that a membership in SCNAT will lead to an increased and better CHIPP involvement in general science policy questions and will open up additional possibilities for outreach. But it will also strengthen the SCNAT, which is a very important aspect in the context of Switzerland as a producer of excellent science. According to MP, the SCNAT is a very lean and effective organisation, disposing of a large number of specialised committees and broad expertise, the output of which is very often injected in the political decision making process (where CHIPP is most often absent at present). SCNAT agrees to all three statements and sketches the two membership categories

- category 'SCNAT Committee' (Kommission): a SCNAT Committee is rather close to the strategy bodies of SCNAT (Delegiertenversammlung, Vorstand) and works with a SCNAT mandate. Its members are elected for a three year mandate by the Platforms and membership rarely exceeds 20 persons. The possibility of requesting SCNAT funds through the Platform (small amounts) exists.
- category 'SCNAT Association' (Gesellschaft): a SCNAT Association is an autonomous interest organisation of the scientific field concerned, profiting from the SCNAT label and being linked to the SCNAT strategy body through the participation of its President in the 'Delegiertenversammlung'. The number of its members is not limited. The possibility of requesting SCNAT funds through the Platform (small amounts) exists.

The two categories also have different rules regarding the question of 'legal personality': a Commission has a legal personality - but only through SCNAT, and will have to refer for most matters to the Secretary General or even the Delegiertenversammlung. On the other hand, the Association can only be accepted if it has acquired a legal personality beforehand (for instance by becoming a 'Verein').

After an open discussion, CHIPP and SCNAT agree that the Association seems by far the more appropriate way to proceed (like the SPS who is an SCNAT Association). It would preserve the full autonomy and freedom of activity of CHIPP (which would be partly lost in the case of a Commission) and also avoid a situation, where only a subset of CHIPP Members would belong to SCNAT.

Next steps:

- 1 CHIPP will have to contact SPS to make sure that there is no objection or resistance from that side [a first contact has taken place on 2 June where the SPS expressed no strong concerns against a CHIPP membership in SCNAT but invited CHIPP to keep a close contact and to inform SPS about future steps];
- 2 CHIPP will have to acquire first the status of a legal entity by transforming itself into a 'Verein' [JPR is working on the issue by collecting the relevant information about the process].
- 3 CHIPP will continue the dialogue with SCNAT (Preiswerk).
- 4 The next round of discussion within CHIPP will take place at the forthcoming CHIPP Board meeting in August.

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