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*Evaluation of Medicines for Human Use*

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## **COMMITTEE ON HERBAL MEDICINAL PRODUCTS (HMPC)**

Presentation ESCOP – 16 September 2009  
Report

### **List of ESCOP representatives**

Peter Bradley, Joan Hodge, Philip Hodge, Rachel Mills, Simon Mills

On 16 September 2009, the HMPC Chair welcomed representatives from ESCOP and Dr. Simon Mills, ESCOP Secretary, expressed his thanks for the opportunity to meet the HMPC with a view to presenting the Supplement to ESCOP Monographs Second Edition.

Dr Peter Bradley (ESCOP Scientific Committee member) reminded members of this year's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of ESCOP, the European Scientific Cooperation on Phytotherapy, which was celebrated during a Symposium organised in Cologne on 18 June 2009. ESCOP was indeed created in 1989 upon the identified need to gather together experts in the field of herbal medicines to foster a unique movement towards the elaboration of recommendations on their therapeutic uses at a European level. The first meeting of the ESCOP Scientific Committee took place in London in August 1989.

Dr Bradley then evoked key dates and influential figures in the long process that led to this year's launch of the Second Edition Supplement. Thanks to the financial support from the European Union through its BIOMED programme and the intensive work of many specialists, the early monographs published in English, French and German were submitted to the European Commission. This initiative benefited from the kind interest expressed by Mr Fernand Sauer and the advice of the former CPMP to adopt the format of the Summary of Product Characteristics. By the end of the 1990s ESCOP had published 60 monographs in English on the medicinal uses of plant drugs.

In November 2003, ESCOP Chairman Professor Fritz H. Kemper had the pleasure to present the Second Edition of ESCOP Monographs to the members of the CPMP Working Party on Herbal Medicinal Products of the EMEA. These monographs were acknowledged at that time as an essential basis to the assessment carried out for the preparation of so called "core-data" documents on individual herbal substances published on the Agency's website.

Dr Bradley thanked all those who contributed in the past to the elaboration of now a total of 107 monographs, counting the 35 monographs that can be found in this 2009 Supplement with 27 new and 8 revised monographs. Drafts are prepared by two subcommittees, involving delegates from 15 countries with the assistance of numerous external experts on herbal medicine. They are then circulated to an independent Board of Supervising Editors for appraisal. ESCOP prides itself in the composition of its Scientific Committee which integrates the expertise of individuals from different backgrounds across academia, industry and healthcare professions, such as medical doctors, practising phytotherapists, pharmacognosists, pharmacologists and regulatory affairs specialists .

Dr Bradley finally invited all HMPC members to join the ESCOP representatives and receive their own copy of the 2009 Supplement.

The HMPC Chair thanked ESCOP's generosity in providing all MLWP members and (alternate) members of the HMPC with their individual copy. He remarked the importance of ESCOP as a reliable partner over the last 12 years since the establishment in June 1997 of *the ad hoc* working group on herbal medicinal products at the EMEA.

The new addendum to the Second Edition of ESCOP Monographs will be very helpful to the work of the HMPC and there is no doubt that all concerned Rapporteurs are keen to study the 27 new released texts and their referenced scientific literature.

Beyond the publication of the ESCOP Monographs, the HMPC Chair praised the structural function played by ESCOP until today, in Europe and beyond. In gathering experts amongst the best, ESCOP indeed has been a 'think tank' in the field of herbal medicines for the last 20 years. HMPC members joined the Chair in wishing ESCOP a continued prosperous development in the future and a maintained collaboration towards a greater recognition of the importance given to herbal medicines by European citizens.

The HMPC Chair thanked again ESCOP representatives for their presentation.