



13th International Symposium on Biological and Environmental Reference Materials (BERM 13)

25–29 June 2012

Vienna, Austria

Announcement and Call for Papers

A. Introduction

The 13th International Symposium on Biological and Environmental Reference Materials (BERM 13) is the continuation of a series of BERM Symposia which was launched in 1983. These symposia have been held on a regular basis since then. Locations have mostly alternated between Europe and the USA, although BERM 11 in 2007 was held in Japan. The IAEA has been actively involved in BERM Symposia since their inception and this is the first time that the symposium is being organized by the IAEA. The IAEA has a specific interest in biological and environmental reference materials (RMs), and is a main producer of RMs characterized for radionuclides or stable isotope amount ratios. It also provides a number of RMs of marine origin, characterized for trace elements and organic contaminants. The IAEA has recently consolidated its activities related to RM production under the subprogramme “IAEA Products for Science and Trade”, and has strengthened its collaboration with various organizations, such as the International Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM), the Institute for Reference Materials and Measurements (IRMM), the Joint Research Centre (JRC), the European Commission (EC), the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) in the USA, as well as with a number of the IAEA Collaborating Centres. In this way, the IAEA ensures that it is able to provide laboratories in its Member States with the highest quality materials for calibration and quality control of measurement results produced by laboratories all around the world.

B. Objectives of the symposium

The BERM Symposia are major, well-established international events which provide participants with a unique opportunity to interact with key players from around the world that are involved in RM

development, production, distribution and use. RMs are one of the most important tools in assuring quality and supporting international comparability of measurement results, and thus play a significant role in lowering barriers to trade.

The symposium will cover developments in the field of RMs since BERM 12, which took place in 2009, and will also address future trends and needs related to RMs. It has the following main objectives:

- To provide a forum for the exchange of information on recent developments of new RMs;
- To address issues related to international standardization and accreditation in the area of RMs;
- To address scientific and technical developments related to methods that are used in RM production;
- To address issues related to the availability of RMs and their role in lowering barriers to trade, specifically in least developed and developing countries.

C. List of topics

The IAEA welcomes high quality contributions on RM development, production, application, and standardization, as well as on related areas. Both academic and practice-based papers under the umbrella of the following topics are welcome:

- Recent developments, current trends and future needs for RMs
 - RMs for food nutrition and food safety,
 - environmental RMs,
 - microbiological RMs,
 - pharmaceutical RMs,
 - isotopic RMs (radionuclides and stable isotopes),
 - clinical RMs,
 - RMs for qualitative testing,
 - RMs related to classes of components of living organisms (-omics), e.g. genomics, proteomics, metallomics,
 - RMs for emerging technologies (nanotechnology, biotechnology, etc.),
 - RMs for emergency preparedness;
- Selection and proper use of RMs;
- The role of RMs in assuring harmonization and comparability of measurement results;
- Availability and distribution of RMs, with special emphasis on the needs of developing economies and least developed countries;

- Education and training.

D. Target audience

The symposium will be of interest to producers as well as users of RMs and their assessors. RMs are used in practically all measurements, which means that the target audience for this symposium is therefore very broad and is not limited to a specific scientific area. Apart from traditional fields, such as analytical chemistry, this symposium should be of interest to scientists from all kinds of disciplines because of the strong connection between the development of new analytical methods and instrumentation and RM production and use. Moreover, government officials, including policymakers and officials responsible for the assessment of environmental contamination, would benefit from attending the symposium.

E. Programme structure

The opening session will include welcoming addresses by IAEA representatives and the Chair of the BERM Steering Committee. Each day will start with plenary lectures addressing the main topics of the symposium. Parallel sessions will include oral presentations, discussions and a summary on the specific topics covered during that day. A special session on the last day of the symposium will be dedicated to RMs for emergency preparedness.

There will be poster sessions, and sufficient time will be dedicated to discussion and interaction with colleagues.

F. Extended synopses, papers and symposium proceedings

Papers on issues falling within the topics defined in Section C may be submitted as contributions to the symposium. All papers — other than invited papers — must present **original** work and must not have been published elsewhere.

F.1. Submission of synopses

Persons who wish to present a paper or poster at the symposium must submit an extended synopsis in accordance with the guidelines below:

- It should be written in English;
- It should be a maximum of 800 words (not exceeding 2 A4 pages, including figures or tables and a few pertinent references);
- It should indicate to which of the topics outlined in Section C above it relates;

- It should be written using the template available from the symposium website (see Section P);
- It should be submitted by **31 January 2012** in hard copy through a competent national authority of the participant's country (Section M) together with the attached Form B (Form for Submission of a Paper) and Form A (Participation Form). In addition, the synopsis must be submitted in Microsoft Word format to the IAEA scientific secretariat by email: BERM13.papers@iaea.org.

F.2. Acceptance of synopses for oral presentation and poster presentation

Only synopses that have been received by the above deadline and through the appropriate official channels will be considered by the selection committee.

Given the number of synopses anticipated and the need to provide ample time for discussion, the number of papers that can be accepted for oral presentation is limited. Authors who prefer to present their papers as posters are requested to indicate this preference on Form A.

Authors will be informed by **mid-March 2012** whether their papers have been accepted for oral presentation or poster presentation. The synopsis, if accepted by the selection committee, will also be reproduced in unedited form in the "Book of Extended Synopses" which will be distributed to all participants at the symposium.

The Secretariat reserves the right to exclude papers that do not comply with its quality standards and do not apply to one of the topics in Section C above.

Furthermore, **selected** contributions will be published as full papers in the Proceedings of the Symposium. Authors of selected papers will be notified accordingly by **mid-March 2012** (deadline for submission of full papers: **14 May 2012**).

F.3. Proceedings

The proceedings of the symposium will be published by the IAEA as soon as possible after the symposium.

G. Participation

All persons wishing to participate in the symposium are requested to register online in advance. In addition, they must send a completed Participation Form (Form A), the Form for Submission of a Paper (Form B) (if applicable), and the Grant Application Form (Form C) (if applicable) as soon as possible to the competent official authority (Ministry of Foreign Affairs or national atomic energy authority) for subsequent transmission to the IAEA.

A participant will be accepted only if the Participation Form is transmitted through the government of a Member State of the IAEA or by an organization invited to participate.

Participants whose official designations have been received by the IAEA will receive further information on the symposium at least three months before the meeting. This information will also be available on the symposium website (see Section P).

H. Expenditures

No registration fee is charged to participants.

The IAEA is generally not in a position to bear the travel and other costs of designated participants in the symposium. The IAEA has, however, limited funds at its disposal to help meet the cost of attendance of selected specialists from Member States eligible to receive technical assistance under the IAEA's technical cooperation programme. Such assistance may be offered, upon specific request, provided that in the IAEA's view the participant will make an important contribution to the symposium. In general, not more than one grant will be awarded to one country.

If governments wish to apply for a grant on behalf of one of their specialists, they should address specific requests to the IAEA to this effect. Governments should ensure that applications for grants are:

1. Submitted by **31 January 2012**;
2. Accompanied by a duly completed and signed Grant Application Form (Form C);
3. Accompanied by a completed Participation Form (Form A).

Applications that do not comply with the above conditions cannot be considered.

Approved grants will be issued in the form of a lump sum payment that usually covers **only part of the cost of attendance**.

I. Distribution of documents

A preliminary programme will be posted on the symposium website as soon as possible. The final programme and the "Book of Extended Synopses" will be available free of charge upon registration at the symposium.

J. Working language

The working language of the symposium will be English.

K. Accommodation

Detailed information on accommodation and other administrative details will be available on the symposium website well in advance of the symposium.

L. Visas

Designated participants who require a visa to enter Austria should submit the necessary application to the nearest diplomatic or consular representative of Austria at least four weeks before they travel to Austria. Since Austria is a Schengen State, persons requiring a visa will have to apply for a Schengen visa. In States where Austria has no diplomatic mission, visas can be obtained from the consular authority of a Schengen Partner State representing Austria in the country in question.

M. Channels of communication

The Participation Form and, as applicable, the Form for Submission of a Paper, and the Grant Application Form, should be sent to the competent national authority (Ministry of Foreign Affairs or national atomic energy authority) for official transmission to the IAEA.

N. Key deadlines

Submission of Form B and synopsis (max 800 words):	31 January 2012
Submission of Form C:	31 January 2012
Notification of acceptance of synopsis:	mid-March 2012
Submission of full paper (only upon request by the IAEA):	14 May 2012

O. IAEA secretariat for the symposium

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Subsequent correspondence on scientific matters should be sent to the Scientific Secretary, and correspondence on administrative matters to the Conference Services Section.

P. Symposium web page

The IAEA web page for the symposium is as follows:

<http://www-pub.iaea.org/MTCD/Meetings/Announcements.asp?ConfID=41983>

It will be updated regularly with new information, and participants are encouraged to check it on a regular basis.