

**Dear Members,** We wish you and your family a happy and healthy new year 2023! The new year will certainly bear new challenges but also many great opportunities and new chances to meet each other!

### Section meeting in September!

The annual symposium will take place in [Saarbrücken at Saarland University](#) within the week of the **18<sup>th</sup>- 22<sup>nd</sup> of September**. The final date will be announced end of January and a new website launched for registration and updates. Stay tuned! The section meeting is organized by [Julian Hegemann](#), [Kenan Bozhüyük](#), [Alexey Gurevich](#), and [Christine Beemelmans](#). We are more than happy to welcome you at the Campus of Saarland University in September! We also would like to announce that the [Hendrik Wolff Prize](#) for outstanding achievements in mass-spectrometric methods in microbiology and natural product chemistry will be awarded again during the group meeting (application deadline: summer 2023).



### Promote our VAAM section group!

We would also like to ask your help to advertise the VAAM section to your group members or students by distributing our VAAM flyers (e.g. student members are eligible for travel grants to conferences and other promotions).

**Deadline January 31, 2023:** VAAM Research Award, the VAAM Innovation Award and the VAAM Doctoral Awards!!

**Update:** Use our new email address: [natural\\_products@vaam.de](mailto:natural_products@vaam.de) to send us comments, suggestions and news!

**The microbe of the year 2023:** *Bacillus subtilis* the all-rounder among bacteria is beneficial to health, its enzymes are being used in laundry and its spores can even heal cracks in concrete! In livestock farming, *Bacillus subtilis* is also used as an alternative to antibiotics. Since *Bacillus subtilis* is robust and grows quickly, it efficiently converts organic substrates into biotechnological products in numerous production processes. For example, *Bacillus subtilis* produces vitamin B2 (riboflavin), as well as pantothenic acid (vitamin B5) and  $\gamma$ -polyglutamic acid - as thickener, humectant or cyroprotectant in the food and cosmetics industries.



**Method of the Year by Nature Methods:** Long-read Sequencing, which has enabled reading genomes, transcriptomes and epigenomes in many different organisms spanning the whole tree of life and which enabled the [first complete human genome in 2022](#).

### Congratulations to the winners of the [PHOENIX Pharmazie Wissenschaftspreis](#)

The price, which has been awarded the 25<sup>th</sup> time in 2022, has been awarded in the categories of pharmacology and clinical pharmacy (Prof. Dr. Charlotte Kloft), pharmaceutical biology (Prof. Dr. Harald Groß), pharmaceutical chemistry (Prof. Dr. Tanja Schirmeister) and pharmaceutical technology (Prof. Dr. Andreas Bernkop-Schnürch). We congratulate all winners and would like to highlight the contribution by Prof. Harald Groß, which related to our section topic: “*Genetic Engineering in Combination with Semi-Synthesis Leads to a New Route for Gram-Scale Production of the Immunosuppressive Natural Product Brasilicardin A*” (*Angewandte Chemie Int. Ed.* 60, 13536 (2021)).



**Meet A Member:** Kenan Bozhüyük studied bionformatics at Goethe University Frankfurt a.M. and completed his PhD thesis in the group of Prof. Helge Bode. He established various synthetic biology methods to re-engineer natural products biosynthesized by modular megasynthetases. He then moved to the group of Prof. Barrie Wilkinson in the Department of Molecular Microbiology at the John Innes Centre, Norwich (UK) as a postdoctoral fellow. In 2020, he moved to the Max Planck Institute for Terrestrial Microbiology in Marburg as a project group leader and in 2022 founded the startup company **Myria Biosciences AG** (Basel, Switzerland & Marburg, Germany), where he also serves as CSO. In June 2023, he will join the Helmholtz Institute for Pharmaceutical Research Saarland as Helmholtz Young Investigator Group Leader.



We wish you a happy and successful New Year 2023!

Nadine Ziemert and Christine Beemelmans

You want to get introduced in our Newsletter or write a note about a breakthrough publication important for the community? Send an Email to the speakers via our **new email: [natural\\_products@vaam.de](mailto:natural_products@vaam.de)** and we are happy to include you.  
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