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## FOREWORD

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### **ALAGO Special Publication: Selected Contributions from the XIII Congress**

It is a great honor for us to introduce the first publication with contributions from a Congress of the Latin American Association of Organic Geochemistry (ALAGO).

The XIII Congress was held in Santa Marta in the Caribbean coast of Colombia between 12 and 15 November 2012 as part of a biennial series that started in 1988 in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil). Then followed Caracas (Venezuela), Manaus (Brazil), Bucaramanga (Colombia), Cancun (Mexico), Isla Margarita (Venezuela), Foz de Iguazú (Brazil), Cartagena de Indias (Colombia), Mérida (Mexico), Salvador de Bahía (Brazil), Isla Margarita (Venezuela), Montevideo (Uruguay), Santa Marta and recently Búzios (Brazil) in November 2014.

But before going into further detail about this special publication we would like to tell you more about our association. ALAGO was founded in 1988 by a group of geochemists from both the university and industry to create a space for exchange of information and updates between scientists and others interested in Organic Geochemistry in Latin America and the world. Indeed, since the first one in Rio de Janeiro, ALAGO congresses gathered researchers and professionals from almost all the countries in Latin America but also from North America and Europe and more recently also from Asia. Quickly the range of disciplines widened to include basin analysis, petroleum system modelling, stratigraphic modelling of source rocks, non-conventional resources, environmental forensics, etc... and more generally all new techniques related to geochemistry and the oil and gas industry. This gave ALAGO the opportunity to organize workshops on specific subjects like Basin Modelling in 2005 (Buenos Aires, Argentina) or Biodegradation in 2007 (Bogotá, Colombia) gathering the most recognized experts in each discipline to discuss their advance and application.

Students have always been of importance to the association that promoted their active participation in congresses, courses and field trips. They found a place to

meet internationally recognized researchers (the same who wrote the books they are studying with!) and professionals (who often later became their colleagues!).

This exchange between students, researchers and professionals has always been characterized by the highest technical level of presentations and courses. Consequently it also benefitted from the support of oil and gas companies, research institutions, and service companies and laboratories.

Today we can state that ALAGO is known as the place to meet all those who are at the leading edge of organic geochemistry and related disciplines in the oil and gas industry and environment, learn about the latest techniques and tools, and find future talents. But above all, we are proud to say that it is a welcoming community where members can confidently share with each other no matter who they are. Quoting words from a well-known author that contributed to this Special Publication, ALAGO friendships are for a lifetime.

This Special Publication is made up of selected contributions presented during oral and poster sessions at the XIII Congress of the Latin American Association of Organic Geochemistry held in Santa Marta. A total of 197 participants made their way to the Caribbean coast of Colombia to attend between 12 and 15 November 2012, with over 16 countries being represented (7 Latin-American countries, 6 European, 1 Asian, USA and Canada).

Among participants, a quarter were students, half of the professionals came from the Oil and Gas Industry, and the remaining from universities, research institutions and governmental organizations. Great hospitality received them.

A great number of abstracts were submitted for consideration by the Scientific Committee, who accepted 145 of these for presentation at the meeting: 51 oral

presentations and 88 poster presentations. We would like to thank the Scientific Committee for their hard work and commitment in reviewing all the abstracts.

The talks were divided between 6 plenary sessions from Tuesday through to Thursday: 1- Basin Analysis and Conventional Petroleum System (2 sessions, 18 talks), 2- Hydrocarbons Biodegradation, Forensic Geochemistry and Biochemistry (8), 3- Non-Conventional Petroleum Systems (9), 4- Advances in Analytical Techniques and New Applications in Organic Geochemistry (8), 5- Coal characterization and Fine Facies Sedimentation Modelling (8). Six conferences of 40 minutes each took place at the beginning of each session.

Posters were presented in parallel and divided in five themes: 1- Conventional Petroleum System (18 posters), 2- Non-Conventional Petroleum Systems (11), 3- Advances in Analytical Techniques and New Applications in Organic Geochemistry (29), 4- Hydrocarbons Biodegradation, Forensic Geochemistry and Biochemistry (16), 5- Fine Facies Sedimentation and Petrography (14).

Five pre-congress courses were taught on Sunday and Monday, all of which were well attended. Two post-congress field trips proved to be extremely popular and were held in parallel on Friday.

The success of the XIII ALAGO Congress was also dependent upon the donations from our sponsors. We are extremely grateful for the support we received from: ECOPETROL, GEMS S.A., HRT Petroleum, ANH, PACIFIC Rubiales Energy, Weatherford, OGX, Schlumberger, Nexen, Emerald Energy, Hocol, US BioSolutions Colombia S.A.S., Leco Corporation and Khymós S.A.

We do not want to forget all those who contributed behind the scenes to make this a successful and friendly event: the organizing committee, judges, field trip leaders and staff, logistics and administrative staff, Hotel Itairona staff, and people at Contactos the official operator.

The contributions that are presented in this Special Publication of *Geologica Acta* were selected based on four main criteria listed in order of importance: i) Quality and novelty of the technical content, and recognition during the conference (the awarded best student and professional speaker presentations are included); ii) Theme of the paper, trying to respect the proportion of communications (both talks and posters) related to each; iii) Balance between the proportion of main authors

from University/Research Institutions and Industry; iv) Representativeness of countries in authors' provenance or theme.

An initial selection of ten submissions was made which resulted in a final seven being considered after submission deadlines and revision. They are divided by theme in 4 related to analytical organic geochemistry and applications (including hydrocarbons generation and expulsion, source-oil correlation and biodegradation), 2 related to basin analysis and petroleum system modelling, 1 related to non-conventional resources and 1 to environmental geochemistry. Among the first authors, 4 are coming from university and investigation institutions and 3 from the industry. The total number of co-authors is 29, originally from Argentina (3), Brazil (6), Colombia (5), France (2), Germany (1), Peru (1), Spain (4), USA (4) and Venezuela (3).

We hope that this selection reflects the XIII ALAGO Congress in terms of participants and technical quality that is also attested by the international reputation of several authors.

There are a great number of people to remember for their participation. We are deeply grateful to all the authors for their effort and cooperation to achieve a great result. They had to work in a limited time frame and articles go far beyond the initial presentation content in most of the cases. The objective of publishing within one year after the first invitation is achieved, congratulations!

Our thanks also go to the reviewers who greatly improved the initial versions and took time to make a thoughtful review: Ing. N. Chigne, Dr. J. A. Curiale, Dr. D. Garcia, Dr. A. Gomez Borrego, Prof. Dr. J. A. Gonzalez-Perez, Dr. A-Y. Huc, Prof. Dr. M. A. Krüge, Prof. Dr. K. Peters, Dr. R. di Primio, Prof. Dr. V. E. Ramos, Dr. E. Vaz dos Santos Neto, Prof. Dr. H. Villar, Dr. B. Wygrala and 2 anonymous reviewers. Thanks for your contribution!

We should not forget people at *Geologica Acta* for their support since we started to work together.

Finally, it is now time to let you read these articles, hoping that you will enjoy them and benefit from it. But above all, we hope this special publication will provoke your interest in the Latin American Association of Organic Geochemistry.

Dr. Roger Baudino  
Prof. Dr. Albert Permanyer