

With the help of the API staff, we have come together for an ambitious program similar in format to our meeting last year. It is our hope that the plenary sessions will provide a useful framework for all of us to share our experiences and seek and receive support in resolving any problems from the vast scientific intellect that has gathered here.

Let me thank you once again for joining us, we are all looking forward to a productive two days.

With that in mind, I'm eager to listen and learn so I'd like to introduce our colleague and friend Dr. Patrick Beatty of ChevronTexaco, chair of the Consortium's Technical Committee who will be our moderator for the day's meeting.

Patrick....