

Report of the 22nd ERFP Assembly of National Coordinators - 27th and 28th August 2016 in Belfast, UK

Chair: Sipke Joost Hiemstra

All presentations delivered during the ERFP Assembly Meeting will be uploaded on the ERFP website.

Saturday, 27th August 2016

Welcome and opening by the host country

Sue Goligher, National Coordinator (NC) for the AnGR of UK, welcomed all the participants and presented interesting facts about the agriculture sector and local breeds in the hosting country.

Welcome

Sipke Joost Hiemstra, the Chair of the ERFP Steering Committee, welcomed the Assembly in Belfast. He thanked the UK National Coordinator and DEFRA for hosting the ERFP Assembly meeting and for sponsoring the meeting costs and the technical visit. Likewise, he thanked the ERFP Secretariat for all the organizational work and preparing working materials for the meeting. He presented the Agenda for the meeting.

The agenda was approved by the Assembly.

Report from the ERFP Secretariat

In the "Annual Progress Report 2016" the ERFP Secretariat gave an overview of the work of the Secretariat and Steering Committee and the main topics of their two meetings. Work and activities of the Secretariat, WGs, TFs, *Ad hoc* actions were presented and collaboration with other institutions.

The presented Annual Progress Report 2016 was approved by the Assembly.

The Financial Report was presented by the Secretariat. ERFP concluded the financial year 2015 with funds of 287,996.98 € remaining. Furthermore, the detailed financial situation for 2016 was described. As at 15th August 2016, the remaining funds were 334,951.27 €. The expenses in 2016 amounted to 27,545.71 € and the income through the country contributions was 74,500.00 € (all amounts as per 15th August 2016). Until now, more countries paid country contributions than last year. However, the Secretariat would appreciate more country contributions in the future. Sipke Joost Hiemstra invited countries to pay the country contributions according to their abilities.

The presented Financial Report 2015 was approved by the Assembly.

The amendments in the ERFP Rules for Reimbursement, proposed by the Steering Committee were presented. Amendments are linked with the costs of taxi and Visa: "Expenses for taxis will not be reimbursed. However, exceptions may be made in justified cases, but only to the maximum amount of 30.00 € per meeting." Visa costs can be reimbursed additionally to the maximum amount for attending the meetings (€ 850 per person per meeting + Visa costs if needed).

The Secretariat has difficulties in deciding what justified cases are. Members are invited to save money by using public transport. ERFP is relying on the voluntary country contributions and we can all contribute by not using expensive means of transport.

The Assembly approved the amendments in the ERFP Reimbursement Policy.

An additional question was raised by NC about the maximum reimbursed amount for the travelling and attending the Assembly and other meetings. According to the Reimbursement Policy the maximum reimbursed amount cannot exceed 850 €/per meeting. The Secretariat explained that the maximum amount was agreed/approved at the last Assembly meeting in 2015. Participants should avoid buying tickets just a few days before travelling when they become more expensive.

Report on the new ERFP account

After years of negotiations, the EAAP opened the new account last August, while the Private deed EAAP/ERFP was signed at the end of October, 2015 for 10 years (5.000€/per year). The ERFP account is opened in the same bank under the name of the EAAP, but it is a separate account. The ERFP account will therefore still be under the supervision of the EAAP, since the ERFP is not a legal body. The ERFP Secretariat was trained at the end of November for using the online bank account and agreed with the EAAP to transfer the budget on 4th of December 2015. In the new situation, the ERFP Secretariat has electronic access for online account, preparing all the money transactions while the final payment/electronic signature remain in the hands of the EAAP. The Secretariat has to control and receive all the Original documents, prepare monthly financial reports for the EAAP and send documents by post and email to the EAAP accountant (additional work for the Secretariat).

Reports from the ERFP Working Groups

Documentation and information

Christina Ligda briefly presented the work of the Working Group. The working group had a meeting in June 2016 in Bled, Slovenia. The main topics of the meeting were:

- updating the activities since the last meeting (May 2015, Ljubljana),
- presentation of the first results of the *Ad hoc* Action and discussion on the parameters and possible implementation at regional level,
- maintenance and development of DAD-IS and implications for the regional and national nodes,
- decision on the WG Work plan for 2017,
- role of the WG Documentation and Information in connection with ERFP objectives and plans.

The main activity plan of the WG is to work on: EFABIS fields (European specificities); EFABIS Outputs / Reports; contribution to the ERFP Web site restructuring and suggestions to improve the exchange of information within ERFP (focusing on the countries feedback to the Secretariat).

Ex situ conservation

Sipke Joost Hiemstra gave the report of the Working Group on "*Ex situ* Conservation". The working group had a meeting in April 2016, in Gödöllő, Hungary. The main agenda items of the meeting were:

- the EUGENA Memorandum of Understanding,
- presentation of the *Ad hoc* Action: EUGENA Web portal design,
- latest developments and news from countries,
- results of *In vivo ex situ* conservation survey,
- election of the new Chair.

He presented the status quo of the EUGENA MoU signatures and main conclusions of the Ad hoc action and survey. After that, he gave the floor to the new elected Chair Jelena Ramljak, Croatia. She presented new WG members and the future activities and plans of the WG.

Sipke Joost Hiemstra **thanked Working Groups for their work**. He specified, that members of a Working Group should be nominated by their National Coordinator. He invited NCs, who had not nominated experts in the Working Group yet to nominate experts just after the Assembly meeting. Each country can have one

representative in the Working Group. NCs can send their nomination to the Secretariat and to the Working Group Chair by the end of September.

Reports from the ERFP Task Forces

Access and Benefit Sharing

Elzbieta Martyniuk presented the Global developments and the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol through the Implementation of the EU Regulation 511/2014. At the moment, 64 countries have ratified the Nagoya Protocol. The team of technical and legal experts on Access and Benefit sharing of the CGRFA is planning to have a meeting in September. Furthermore, she reported on the work of the Task Force ABS. TF members actively worked on the working document: Elaboration of subsector specific elements for ABS for CGRFA for the 9th Session of ITWG-AnGR. The European group whose members collaborate in the TF prepared the position paper and comments on the working document. Furthermore, jointly with TF EU matters, TF members commented on the Draft EU Guidance Document on ABS in the Animal breeding Sector. TF ABS had a meeting in June 2016 in Bled Slovenia, where the above documents were discussed. TF proposed one new member who will be added to the Member list. The main future activities of the TF ABS are: finalising and publishing the paper on ABS in a Scientific journal; collaborate with the Working Group on *Ex-situ* conservation finalizing the MAA and MTA for exchanging cryo-conserved AnGR; to contribute to the work of TTLE ABS (as defined by CGRFA 15) and to further collect information about national ABS legislation. TF ABS is also involved in a Session at the EAAP congress on ABS related to AnGR. All NCs are kindly invited to participate.

EU matters

Jeanne Bormann gave a presentation on the main activities of the TF group. One of the important activities was participation at the Preparatory action workshop in Bonn - "Implementation of the Global Plans of Action (FAO): which role for the EC?". Jointly with the TF ABS, revision and amendments on the Draft Guidance Document on Animal breeding Sector were prepared. Two main future activities of the TF are monitoring of EU legislation with AnGR relevance and topics related to the new EU animal breeding regulation. A proposal was made for setting up guidelines for the use and interpretation of the animal breeding regulation in the context of endangered breeds - stating best practice examples to be used by breed societies running breeding programs on those breeds.

Report from the *Ad hoc* action groups

EUGENA Web portal design was presented by Dace Smiltina:

The goals of the *Ad hoc* action were to provide: Terms of Reference for the Web portal for EUGENA gene bank collections, to prepare proposals for the structure / the content of the Web portal, to develop a road map for development and implementation of the Web portal and to estimate development and maintenance costs. Members of the *Ad hoc* action group met in Ljubljana following the SC meeting in February 2016. Future plans and financial proposals for the development of the portal and logo were presented. The ERFP Chair informed NCs that EUGENA and IMAGE project have some common goals.

Questions were raised by the NCs about the EUGENA logo and the need for a new ERFP logo. It was explained, that the current logo does not show who we actually are. Since the new EUGENA logo will be developed as well as the ERFP Web site restructured, it is actually an appropriate time to take a look at the ERFP logo as well.

Socio-economic and environmental parameters and their applicability into a tool to evaluate risks and trends was presented by Christina Ligda:

The goal of the *Ad hoc* action was to explain the additional factors that shape the general environment (physical and socio-economic environment) where a breed is raised and that may affect the dynamics of the breed. Members of the *Ad hoc* action group met in Thessaloniki in February 2016. The final Report will be finalized at the meeting by mid November and presented at the Agroecology Conference. After that, the paper will be prepared for the publication.

ITWG-AnGR, review group was presented by Nina Seather:

The main aim of the *Ad hoc* action was to prepare the ERG position papers for the FAO working documents of the 9th Session of ITWG AnGR. A one day workshop was organized within the joint ERFP meeting in Bled, in June 2016, where FAO working documents were discussed and the draft position papers were prepared. At the FAO meeting in Rome this group was informed about the report related to Sustainable Agricultural Development for Food Security and Nutrition, what roles for Livestock, prepared by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition. That report will be discussed at the Committee on World Food Security. The main observation when reading the report was that there is no reference to FAO's Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources. Therefore, we recommended that all NCs lobby their country representatives who will be attending the meeting and propose suggestions and text improvements (a few examples were presented).

General discussion

Didier Bouchel noted that SC had been discussing the issue of ERFP becoming a legal entity. Is there any result of that discussion? It was explained that the SC discussed this at its meeting in February. At the SC meeting, an invited speaker from a similar organization presented their experiences with becoming a legal entity. We also received a paper from ECPGR on their research done to potentially become a legal entity. At the moment, the conclusion is that the process to become a legal entity is rather complex and it was realized that ERFP is not ready for that. First, ERFP Steering Committee is planning to discuss with ECPGR and EUFORGEN if there is any option to join forces and become stronger.

Progress report by EAAP WG-AnGR

Jesús Fernández presented the members of the WG and the latest activities of the Working Group AnGR of EAAP. The Working Group proposed an EAAP session on "New legal landscape guiding access and benefit sharing of animal genetic resources" in collaboration with invited speakers from European Commission, INRA, Wageningen University & Research, EFFAB and FAO. Jesús Fernández encouraged all NCs to participate in EAAP Session 07 on Monday morning.

FAO Report

Roswitha Baumung presented the FAO activities including publishing the Second Report on the State of the World's AnGR for Food and Agriculture, DAD-IS development and the report on the 9th Regular Session of the Intergovernmental Working Group for Animal Genetic Resources and Report from the ITWG-AnGR.

The Second Report on the State of the World's AnGR for Food and Agriculture was published in January 2016 in brief and brochure versions were made available in all UN languages.

The status and development of Domestic Animal Diversity Information System (DAD-IS) was presented by Roswitha Baumung. Currently DAD-IS is under development, financed by extra-budgetary and regular programme funds. All stakeholders are closely involved in the development (Skype conferences, workshops and webinars, testing of the prototype). A new technology will be applied (FENIX-platform) to improve reporting tools, data entry and data extraction. A prototype will be available for testing by the end of 2016.

ERFP and EAAP have to decide about becoming a virtual node of the new DAD-IS, implementing the new technology, or to stay with the EFABIS physical node.

Finally, the Report of the 9th Regular Session of the Intergovernmental Working Group for Animal Genetic Resources was presented including Recommendations of the Working Group to the Commission.

ERFP activity plans and the budget 2017 approval

1. EFABIS and the new FENIX technology

Sipke Joost Hiemstra presented the first decision connected with the FAO presentation, which will have an impact on the future activities of ERFP. All NC had received an email connected to the future development of DAD-IS and EFABIS. The Assembly of NCs has to take a decision on:

- Should EFABIS node be moved to the new FENIX technology and become a virtual European node?

Decision to move the EFABIS node to the FENIX technology and become a virtual European node was approved by the Assembly.

- Whether ERFP will continue to work with a European Node Manager?

The NCs raised a few issues: whether we need Node Manager or not, is the current Node Manager able and willing to work with the new technology, what will be the costs, etc. Roswitha Baumung explained that the current European Node Manager will be trained by FAO. In one week of training, the current EFABIS node manager could become a power user. It was explained that the ERFP network will also need technical help in the future, whether that will be the current Node Manager or somebody else. It was explained that in 2017 both systems will run in parallel (DAD-IS and EFABIS with a new and an old technology).

It was accepted by the Assembly that in 2017 we need a European Node Manager.

- Countries decision to continue EFABIS national node or not has to be made before 10th September 2016

Every country has to decide on their National Node, whether they will move to the new FENIX technology and virtual node or not. A decision has to be made by 10th of September 2016. The ERFP Secretariat will send emails to all countries which have their own EFABIS National Node and will collect their responses and information about the responsible person and URL address of the National Node. Collected decisions and information will be sent to FAO (Roswitha Baumung).

- Which European fields and reporting tools?

WG Documentation and Information will work on answering these questions which have to be provided to FAO by the end of the year (also presented in the WG Report).

2. New Task Force *In situ* conservation

The proposal for the new TF *In situ* conservation was presented. One of the main objectives of ERFP is the improvement of the *In situ* conservation of AnGR in Europe. However, ERFP activities connected to the *In situ* conservation area have been limited so far. One of the recommendations of the project EU DG AGRI PrepAct was to further promote and support *in situ* conservation. Secretariat and Steering Committee received proposals to establish a permanent ERFP body for *in situ* and suggested to firstly establish a Task Force which will develop a Work plan and Objectives. The ERFP Secretariat will send an email in order to choose the TF members and Chair. NCs are invited to nominate members who have expertise in the *in situ* conservation with a short CV. The Steering committee will oversee/decide on the TF members and Chair on the basis of received nominations and CVs.

New TF *In situ* conservation was approved by the Assembly

3. Restructuring website, communication strategy (logo, promotional material, templates), social media – *Ad hoc* Action

Sipke Joost Hiemstra presented the need for more intensive work with the available communication tools. For the year 2017, an important activity will be developing the EUGENA Web portal and logo. At the same time, there is a need to restructure the ERFP Website and make it more attractive for users (also mobile friendly). Therefore, at the SC meeting it was agreed to establish *Ad hoc* action group for developing a roadmap and plan for Communication matters of ERFP (Website, Twitter, template letter and ppt, promotional material, etc...). Members of the *Ad hoc* Action group will be members of the already established group of WG Doc Info, previous ERFP Secretariat and current ERFP Secretariat (which will have a leading role). A Proposal for the new *Ad hoc* Action group has to be prepared by the Secretariat and approved by the SC. The costs for projects are difficult to estimate, however, the Assembly agreed to reserve a budget of a maximum of 20.000 € for the modernisation of the ERFP communication (Restructuring ERFP website, promotional material-including *Ad Hoc* Action).

Assembly *agreed* that more work should be done on communication matters and approved establishment of the *Ad hoc* Action group as well as further work on EUGENA logo and web portal.

4. Budget for 2017

The total budget proposal in the amount 160,300 € for the year 2017 was presented. For the Assembly meeting the allocated budget will be similar to previous years. According to the activity plan new budget lines were added for: designing promotional material and restructuring the ERFP Website (20.000 €); costs for new TF *In situ* Conservation, EUGENA logo design and portal implementation (20.000 €). Nina Saether proposed that the workload of the Secretariat should be documented. If other countries apply in future to take on the Secretariat, they should be aware of the workload. Danijela Bojkovski explained that one full time person plus a half time person are needed to carry out the work of the Secretariat. Secretariat will keep track of the work load and activities.

The Assembly approved the presented Budget proposal for 2017.

New EU Animal Breeding Regulation

Jeanne Bormann gave a presentation on the New EU Breeding Regulation (presentation can be found at the ERFP Web site). Four species specific directives & 26 implementing acts are now restructured in one legislative act - the European Animal Breeding Regulation- with some new elements. The Regulation will apply in 28 Member States in November 2018. A question was raised what ERFP could do in the field of awareness raising. The suggestion was to prepare guidelines for endangered breeds with practical cases which could be presented next year in the Assembly meeting.

UK – National Strategy for AnGR

Sue Goligher gave a presentation on the background of FAnGR in UK, government activities and work of the expert committee for FAnGR. The latest report on the New biodiversity indicator for FAnGR and the Report on trends in populations were published in 2015 using the latest data (presentation can be found at the ERFP Web site).

AOB

Jan Hendrik Schneider reported about the establishment of the national Gene Bank in Germany. At the end, Sipke Joost Hiemstra thanked all persons involved in the work of ERFP and especially the local organizer from UK Sue Goligher, who through Defra had financially supported this year's meeting. Next year the Assembly will be held in Estonia and NC Haldja Viinalass kindly invited all NCs to attend the meeting next year.

Meeting was closed at 5:15 pm.

Sunday, 28th August 2016

The topic of the Sunday session was: **"Promoting the use of rare breeds"**. The Invited speakers presented various topics which are available at the ERFP Website <http://www.rfp-europe.org/>.

- Waltraud Kugler, SAVE: Use of Rare Breeds in Europe: different ways for valorisation,
- Tim Morris, RBST: Sustaining the UK's native and rare breeds,
- Philippe Ammann, Pro Species Rara: From the Old Breed to the New Product – Chances and Pitfalls in the Marketing of Biodiversity - Products,
- Montserrat Castellanos Moncho, Spain: Spanish Logo "100% autochthonous breed": adding value to products from native purebred,
- Beate Berger, NC Austria: From Cryoconservation to Consumption - Rare Breeds and the Genebank for Farm Animals in Austria,
- Peer Berg, NordGen: Experiences and challenges in using native breeds, a Nordic perspective,
- Holger Göderz, Germany: Report from DG AGRI Preparatory Action on Genetic Resources.

Meeting was closed at 12:45 pm.

Technical Visit

Technical visit was organized at the Forthill Farm:
<http://www.forthillfarm.co.uk/>.