

Report of the 21st ERFP Assembly of National Coordinators - 29th and 30th August 2015 in Balice near Krakow, Poland

Chair: Catherine Marguerat-König

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

Saturday, 29th August 2015

Welcome and opening by the host country

Elzbieta Martyniuk, National Coordinator (NC) for AnGR of Poland, welcomed all participants and presented the technical staff which helped to prepare the meeting. Robert Eckert, director of the National Research Institute of Animal Production, presented interesting facts about the hosting institution, agriculture and animal production in Poland.

Welcome

Catherine Marguerat-König, Chair of the ERFP Steering Committee, welcomed the Assembly in Balice. She thanked the director of the National Research Institute of Animal Production, Elzbieta Martyniuk and the technical staff for hosting the ERFP Assembly Meeting and for sponsoring of all meeting costs, the social dinner and the technical visit. Likewise, she thanked the ERFP Secretariat for preparing materials. She presented the agenda of the meeting.

This agenda was approved by the Assembly.

Report from the ERFP Secretariat

In the "Annual Progress Report 2015" ERFP Secretariat gave an overview of the work of the ERFP SC and main topics of its two meetings. In the presentation work and activities of the Secretariat as well as WGs, TFs, *Ad hoc* actions were presented and collaboration with other institutions.

Presented Annual Progress Report 2015 was approved by the Assembly.

"Financial Report 2015" was presented by the Secretariat. Detailed financial situation of ERFP was described in the presentation. As per 24th August 2015 the remaining funds were 291,961.51 €. The expenses in 2015 summed up to 40,473.45 € and the incomes through country contributions were 50,900.00 € (all amounts as per 24th August 2015). Secretariat kindly invited those countries who were not able to pay yet, to do that in the future.

Catherine Marguerat-König invited countries to pay the country contributions according to its abilities. She suggested NCs to check the budget line within the country anticipated for international collaboration. She clarified that all NCs will receive a draft of a new contribution letter 2016 in November 2015 by e-mail. They are asked to check the data and content of the contribution letters to avoid mistakes. After that they will receive a hard copy of contribution letters.

Presented Financial Report 2015 was approved by the Assembly.

After that Secretariat presented amendments in the ERFP Rules for Reimbursement proposed by the Steering Committee. Amendments are linked with the reimbursement of meals, maximum costs which can be reimbursed for travelling to the GA, WG, TF, *Ad hoc* action meetings, and total costs of travelling with the private car.

Presented Rules for Reimbursement was approved by the Assembly

Elections

The current situation was explained by the ERFP Chair. According to the ERFP ToR the term of office for Catherine Marguerat-König, Chair; Nina Saether (SC) and Elzbieta Martyniuk (SC) will end at the Assembly Meeting 2015 in Balice. The current ERFP Chair recommends the election of the new Chair first, followed by the elections of members of the SC. **The process was accepted by the General Assembly.**

Catherine Marguerat-König presented all the achievements in the last three years: well established structure of the ERFP, rules were defined and accepted by all NCs, various projects and reports completed. She thanks all NCs for support and WG Chairs for their work. New candidate for the ERFP Chair is Sipke Joost Hiemstra from The Netherlands. The candidate introduced himself to the GA.

General Assembly elected Sipke Joost Hiemstra for the new Chair of the ERFP.

They agreed that Catherine Marguerat-König will Chair the GA meeting until the end.

Other proposals are presented to the GA. Special thanks was given to the Elzbieta Martyniuk for her valuable work from the establishment of the ERFP until today. The candidate for her replacement is Jan Tomka (Slovakia). The candidate introduced himself to the GA. **General Assembly accepted Jan Tomka (Slovakia)** representing the East Region in the ERFP Steering Committee.

The next member who is leaving SC is Nina Sæther from Norway. The proposed candidate for the North Region is Eva-Marie Stålhammar from Sweden. The candidate introduced herself to the GA. **The General Assembly accepted Eva-Marie Stålhammar (Sweden)** for the representative of the North Region in the ERFP Steering Committee.

Since Sipke-Joost Hiemstra was elected as an ERFP Chair, a new representative is needed in the Steering Committee. The proposed candidate is Beate Berger from Austria. The candidate introduced herself to the GA. **The General Assembly accepted Beate Berger (Austria)** as the new member of the SC.

Further proceeding regarding the ERFP account holder

The current situation regarding the progress of negotiations with EAAP concerning the ERFP account holding was explained. After few letters and interventions, EAAP finally opened the new account and sent all the information regarding the account details and draft of the new contract just before the SC and GA meeting. EAAP remains account holder. Account is opened in the same bank under the name of the EAAP, but it is a separate account. The new account will therefore still be under the supervision of the EAAP, since ERFP is not a legal body. In the new situation the Secretariat will have an electronic access and transparency will be increased. Final payment will remain in the hands of the EAAP. Steering committee believes, that contract with EAAP and all procedures, as well as money transfer should be completed by the end of the year.

Reports from the ERFP Working Groups

Documentation and information

Christina Ligda shortly presented the work of the Working Group. Working group had a meeting on 26th - 27th May 2015 in Ljubljana, Slovenia. The main topics of the meeting were maintenance and development of DAD-IS, report on Status of Updating EFABIS - Breed classification, updating and uploading of gene bank data from national databases (incl. CryoWEB) to EFABIS, Register of gene bank collections at European level and activities and plans of the WG Information and Documentation. The main activity after the meeting in Ljubljana was to develop the survey in order to assess the current status of EFABIS and the possible improvements. The results of this survey were presented to the GA.

The presentation is uploaded on the ERFP homepage.

Ex situ conservation

Sipke Joost Hiemstra gave the report of the Working Group on “Ex situ Conservation”. Working group had a meeting on 26th - 27th May 2015 in Ljubljana, Slovenia. The main agenda items of the meeting were EUGENA Memorandum of Understanding, Access to gene bank data at European level and Model Material Transfer/Acquisition Agreements. Draft version of the MoU was sent to NCs and to the WG Ex Situ, after the workshop in Ljubljana, just before holidays. Comments were received from Spain and later on from Germany. Draft is almost finalized, few legal “wording” still has to be agreed and changed. Legal aspects were also presented by representative of Germany. Jan Hendrick Schneider (Germany) presented dilemmas connected with wording in legally non-binding instruments in international law. The presentation will be uploaded at the ERFP Website and all NCs can have a look and discuss wording within their countries.

After GA, amended document should be sent to the NC. **The General Assembly agreed** that NCs should have sufficient time (2 months) to discuss the MoU within their countries and to provide further comments.

When ERFP member countries agree on the text of the MoU the signing process will start between ERFP Secretariat and participating countries. Question arises from NCs who is expected to sign the contract. Explanation: The MoU should be signed by a ‘government representative of a participating country’ and the ERFP Secretariat. Within countries there should be agreement about participating gene banks in EUGENA.

Catherine Marguerat-König thanked to the Working Groups for their valuable work. She specified that members of a Working Group should be experts in the respective task and should be nominated by their National Coordinator. She invited NCs, who did not nominate experts in the Working Group yet to nominate experts in the future. Each country can have one representative in Working Group. NCs can send the nomination to the Secretariat and Working Group Chair.

Reports from the ERFP Task Force

Access and Benefit Sharing

Elzbieta Martyniuk shortly presented the Global developments and implementation of the Nagoya Protocol through the Implementation of the EU Regulation 511/2014.

At the moment 64 countries ratified the Nagoya Protocol. Team of technical and legal experts on Access and Benefit sharing of the CGRFA had a Joint meeting with the ITWG-AnGR in Rome, 27th – 30th November, 2014. Outcome of this meeting were presented at the CGRFA meeting. The Commission welcomed the document on ABS Elements and invited Members to submit further information on use and exchange practices, relevant voluntary codes of conduct, guidelines and best practices, and/or standards and community protocols on ABS specifically addressing GRFA and requested the Secretary to continue compiling this information, for consideration by the ITWGs and the Commission.

Furthermore, she reported about the work of the Task Force ABS. One of the main issues was to finalise the contribution for FAO on “voluntary codes of conduct, guidelines and best practices, and/ or standards in relation to access and benefit-sharing for all subsectors of genetic resources for food and agriculture”. Based on the contribution Task Force is planning to publish the paper in a journal.

Task Force ABS collaborates with WG Ex situ conservation on development of MTA and MAA for EUGENA and follows developments related to the Nagoya Protocol at global and European levels.

Collaboration with EU

Jeanne Bormann gave a presentation on the final report of the Task Force “Collaboration with EU”. The Task Force group had three kick-off meetings. She presented the final report and gave suggestions in the end. Presentation will be uploaded at the ERFP Website. **Steering Committee approved** that the Task Force

“Collaboration with EU” will continue its work and put the ERFP in the appropriate position within the EU institutions.

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Secretariat presented amendments and clarifications within the ToR where procedure for *Ad hoc* actions was amended and clarified. **The General Assembly approved the amendments.**

ERFP Plan and Budget 2016

Secretariat presented the conclusions and plans for the year 2016 and Budget Proposal for the year 2016. This Plan and Budget Proposal **was approved by the Assembly.**

Progress report by EAAP WG-AnGR

Sipke Joost Hiemstra presented the latest activities of the Working Group AnGR of EAAP. The Working Group proposed a sessions on “Strategies of national gene banks for AnGR in Europe for long term conservation purposes and to support in situ conservation of endangered breeds” in collaboration with ERFP and FAO. The Working group is also involved in the Session 9 “How can we tip the balance between market and non-market outputs from livestock farming systems” (co-chair Christina Ligda). Sipke Joost Hiemstra encouraged again all NC to participate in those sessions. Next year the Working Group will organize a Challenge session on Access and benefit sharing during EAAP Belfast.

Report from the *Ad hoc* action

Review Group for the Draft Second Report on State of the World’s Animal Genetic Resources

The goal of the *Ad hoc* action was to provide inputs to FAO secretariat on the Draft Second Report on the State of the World’s AnGR. Members of the group divided the Draft Second Report into sections and prepared comments for FAO. Members of the *Ad hoc* action group met in Ljubljana following the joint meeting of WGs and TF ABS. The group prepared a joint document with comments to each chapter of the Draft Second Report SoW AnGR. The report was sent to FAO in June 2015.

FAO Report

Roswitha Baumung presented the content and key findings of the **Second State of the World report on AnGR**, which provides a comprehensive assessment of livestock biodiversity and management. Comments received from the ERFP were valuable and included in the report. By the end of the year the full report with annexes in English will be available on the CD ROM. Brief leaflets and brochures will be printed. Material will be mailed to all NCs and they will be asked how many copies they need.

Status and development of Domestic Animal Diversity Information System DAD-IS was presented by Roswitha Baumung. The Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in its 15th regular session stressed the importance of DAD-IS as the international clearing house mechanism for information on animal genetic resources, urged FAO to ensure long-term support for DAD-IS maintenance from the Regular Programme and invited donors to provide *ad hoc* support to enable the development of DAD-IS. DAD-IS has been relying on project funds for many years which came to an end in January 2015. Further, the maintenance of DAD-IS was secured during the last years mainly thanks to the skills of one person, who left the organization in January 2015. Another reason is partly outdated technology (PEDs module). Therefore the system cannot be maintained in this way any longer. Development alternatives were proposed and assessed by independent external experts and FAO’s AGAG team and Statistics division.

An option based on available in house expertise was recommended as the most sustainable one regarding the financial resources and avoiding dependency on one person. Based on this assessment FAO, in collaboration with an external IT expert, developed a project proposal. For the project, a phased approach was chosen to allow

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flexible refinement and reorientation as new requirements (e.g. requests from the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture) or technologies emerge. Roswitha presented the main outputs and benefits of the first phase of the planned project:

- Maintenance of the old system DAD-IS:3
- Reaching a consensus on development needs via a broad needs assessments involving all NCs with a special focus on countries having their own national nodes already in place
- Providing improved reporting tools
- Providing a prototype of the new system
- Preparing for phase II project (finalization – change of system)

National Coordinators will be closely involved in the development of the new system. EFABIS and the current version of DAD-IS will be maintained throughout the first phase of the project. National Coordinators will have the chance to test a prototype of the new system before further decisions are taken.

Option paper will be prepared on the **possible review of the GPA**. The ITWG-AnGR may recommend to the Commission the review and possible update of the GPA. The review process will include various elements such as regional and sub-regional consultations, involving Commission Members and relevant stakeholders, to review the status of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture at national, regional or global levels, as relevant, and identify areas of the GPA that require updating, as well as any possible gaps in the GPA. E-consultation involving the collection of comments and suggestions will be organized involving the NCs and other stakeholders in the last quarter of 2015. Options paper will be prepared by FAO based on the key findings of the *Second Report on the State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources*, other aspects listed by countries as part of the reporting process for the Second Report, review of responses received by countries/regions that reviewed the draft Second Report and outcomes of regional and sub-regional consultations.

AOB

Nina Saether - following the example of the Review Group for the Draft Second SoW Report - suggested an **Ad hoc action** for study and preparation of comments on the working documents for the next ITWG-AnGR. The documents will be published six weeks before the ITWG-AnGR, therefore group members could meet beforehand, again possibly jointly with other groups. **The General Assembly approved an idea** of the *Ad hoc* action. Detailed proposal has to be improved by the SC.

Catherine Marguerat-König looked ahead to the next ERFP Assembly Meeting in Belfast in 2016. She asked if the structure and content of the meeting should be changed. Jan Hendrick Schneider proposed more presentations from different countries. Maybe countries would like to report to GA what is happening in the field of the AnGR within their country. Other NC can get the idea, what more could be done and improved within their countries. One and a half day of meeting with more presentations from different topics outside of the GA could be more interesting to other participants as well. **The General Assembly approved idea** that GA is organized as it was in the past: one and a half day of meeting and half day of technical visit. The Agenda could also include specific topics which would be attractive for NCs observer organizations and other participants.

At the end Catherine Marguerat-König thanked all persons involved in the work of ERFP and local organizers, who supported this year GA. Sipke Joost Hiemstra thanked the outgoing Chair and two members of the SC. After that, the General Assembly Meeting was closed.

Sunday, 30th August 2015

Technical Visit

Technical visit was organized at the Institute's Research Centre in Chorzelow

http://www.izoo.krakow.pl/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=250&Itemid=201.