

Minutes of the meeting

ERFP – Working Group Documentation and Information,

21-22 June 2016, Bled, Slovenia

Attending:

23 participants:

WG members: Christina Ligda (Chair), Filomena Afonso, Montse Castellanos, Eleonore Charvolin, Zhivko Ducheve, Martin Emisle, Rita Hoving, Ante Ivankovic, Bozidarka Markovic, Gasan Osojnik, Ligija Ozolina, Grazyna Polak, Anna Renberg, Natalia Rieznykova, Srdjan Stojanovic, Enrico Sturaro, Tamas Szobolevski, Ján Tomka, Sebastian Winkel, Mesut Yildirim (*please complete, if a name is missing*)

Roswitha Baumung, Fabio Gritta, Nicola Selleri (FAO)

Minutes kept by Enrico Sturaro

Welcome - Opening - Objectives of the meeting

The meeting was opened by the chair, participants introduce themselves, the agenda was presented and agreed.

The meeting started with an update of WG docu&info activities since the last annual meeting.

1. The WG prepared the needs assessment survey in order to identify the NCs assessment of the utilization of EFABIS based on their activities. The results of this assessment were presented in ERFP Assembly, Balice, August 2015.

The survey showed that mainly National nodes are used to fulfill countries obligation for documentation and the reasons to use national node were: language; specific fields; cover the needs for a national system. The overall experience with the system is positive and the suggestions include: 1) maintain the regional database, 2) reduce the amount of required data, 3) increase the data quality, 4) improve the web interface, and 4) introduce data exporting tools

2. The second activity refers to the ERFP ad hoc action “**socio-economic parameters for trends and risks**”

The objective of this ad hoc action was presented: elucidate the additional factors that shape the general environment (physical and socio-economic environment), where a breed is raised and may affect the dynamics of the breed. The WG was informed on the main conclusions from the meeting in Thessaloniki, February 2016. In the scope of the ad hoc action it is also aimed to review existing methodologies in Europe. In this respect, few responses received already (where some indicate the use of additional parameters of socio-economic context aiming to use such parameters as modulating factors).

Presentation of current results of the ad hoc action “ socio-economic parameters for trends and risks”

Enrico Sturaro presented the work that has been done by the ad hoc group, explained the criteria chosen and the form that was circulated to collect breed examples. The results of the breed cases were presented and discussed.

The discussion pointed out some improvements that can be made in the questionnaire for better understanding of the range of values (explain which cases fall in each category, i.e. assesment of GENE BANK), the definition of the parameters (i.e. economic viability), insert a notification to distinguish the cases of breed that data do not exist, and to simplify include only one point – on who compiles the data, as in most of the cases the responses have not a single source of data, but several. In general it was agreed that special attention is needed to assure that a common understanding of the definitions is achieved. It has been suggested in order to have a more objective score for the questions on breeding program / cooperation level, to score each point separately and get a final score.

The point on cultural value was questionned as a parameter that is not easy to be assessed objectively. It is not always the same understanding on what cultural value is consisted off. It should be clarified in the form that cultural value is not only connected to the activities / events organized around a breed, but can be a more general appraisal on the connection of the breed with the area.

In general it has been argued that it would be difficult to implement a similar approach at European level for all breeds, as such parameters require that detailed data of this context are kept at breed level, which is not the case. However, it has been agreed that it is useful to elaborate further, and test the questionnaire, and analyse the data to develop a report/article on possible implementations of such approaches. It has been also discussed in connection with the EFABIS fields, and possible changes. The question of who is expected to fill in the information and on how often such approach needs updating it was also questionned, in connection with the cost and efforts and expected outcome.

In the question of changes in EFABIS fields, it was explained that the idea is to use the results of the action to have a multi-indicators approach for the evaluation of the prospects of a breed. Some of these parameters already exist in efabis, and are presented in a descriptive way, these could be modified or in order to keep all existing information, add new fields according to the suggested indicators. This could be proved also a positive step towards increasing the use of the regional database. There are also other solutions for implementing such approach in regional level, not necessarily incorporated in the regional database, but developing this process through the ERFP web portal.

It was clarified in the meeting, that the first part of the form on the numerical data is expected to be filled directed from EFABIS, while only the socio-economic are additional parameters.

Concerns were expressed on how the need for additional parameters will be covered, when currently the annual statistics are characterized by the low completeness of population data (almost 60% of the recorded breeds are without population data).

Concerning the proposed variables, it was argued that subsidies are a main driver for the increase of local breeds population and consequences of cutting of subsidies when a breed reaches a certain population level is not easily foreseen. Education of the breeders is an important factor that influence trends of breeds and should not be neglected.

The example of Abondance cattle breed from the work of RAMAGE Consortium on multicriteria approach for the characterization of breeds (using 5 score evaluation) was explained.

The WG could contribute towards the better utilization of existing data in EFABIS and work towards developing proposals for transforming existing fields to standardized variables (scores) that are more suitable for analysis.

The countries will be reminded to send information on existing methodologies to complete the ones already collected.

Revision of European fields in EFABIS

Zhivko Ducheve presented the list of the European specific fields in EFABIS, in order to form the WG proposals and suggestions on specific changes (removing, modifying the type, or adding new fields) in respect with the developments on DAD – IS.

The list that was provided included 3 parts: The first part refers to the breed characteristics (colour, genetic features, specific role, etc), the 2nd on population data that are updated annually and the last part is the fields related to gene bank data. It has been mentioned that for these fields for several breeds data were missing.

Several comments and suggestions were proposed during the meeting, focusing on the ways to ensure a better representation of the data, i.e. be able to make visible different parts of the database depending on the available information. It has been mentioned that concerning the completeness of the database, countries that have national nodes are more motivated to update their data. The proposals will be further elaborated and specified by a group that is consisted for this purpose. The EFABIS outputs will be also reviewed. This proposals / suggestions will be also discussed with the EAAP WG on AnGR.

Report of the final conference on EU Preparatory Action on genetic resources

Sebastian Winkel presented a short report on the EU Preparatory Action on genetic resources, focusing on the proposed recommendations in the final conference held in Brussels in 9th June, that are relevant with the work and aims of the ERFP WG Documentation & Information.

Several NCs and members of the WG have participated in the final conference, and ERFP has sent a document with comments to the final report. Filomena as member of the ERFP Task force "EU collaboration" explained that the group has not enough time to send comments to the report. There was some discussion on the level of information that are available on the European map, and whether additional information can be added.

ERFP website - EUGENA

Sipke-Joost Hiemstra presented the work that is going on EUGENA ad hoc action, the developments on the MoU, the EUGENA webportal and connection with the ERFP website and possible re-structure.

In connection with the above, the new Horizon 2020 EU project IMAGE (Innovative Management of Animal Genetic Resources) was presented, the main objectives and links with the EUGENA action.

The presentation and discussion focused on ways to integrate common work for the EUGENA web portal, IMAGE portal and ERFP webportal. in order to ensure compatibility and sustainability of the outcomes in the long term.

Future targets of the WG - Workplan for 2016-2017

The WG in the next period will work on the following tasks:

1. review and develop suggestions / proposals for the European fields, structure or adding new, in view of DAD-is developments .
2. review the outputs, focusing on clarifying where is needed the terms used, definitions etc. Suggestions will be presented in ERFP assembly.
3. re- structure of the ERFP webpage in connection with the objectives of EUGENA ad hoc action and IMAGE project.

Specific teams will work on the above and recommendations will be discussed in the Assembly in August

4. a proposal on transboundary breeds will be formulated by Eleonore Charvolin, to be presented in the Annual Assembly in August. The idea is to examine what data and information are currently available on transboundary breeds in Europe and elaborate further analysis with this information. In France, a work has started on two cattle breeds (Salers and Aubrac). In this context, the on going project on Busha cattle has been also mentioned for consideration.

Developments in DAD-IS - Summary of the 21 and 22 June 2016

In the afternoon session (21), Roswitha Baumung, Fabio Gritta and Nicola Selleri presented a brief introduction to DAD-IS and its future development, the expectations of the new DAD-IS, focusing on the improved flexibility and friendliness. The FENIX platform and some sample applications were presented. The presentations are available on the web page, together with the summary of the webinars that give detailed information on the new possibilities.

The main objective of this session was to define the requirements from ERFP perspective, and assess the needs of NCs. The discussion and questions focused on the differences between virtual and physical node at regional level, the different possibilities that are offered by the Fenix technology, and how to continue with the European specificities in the regional database.

Virtual country nodes and a virtual European node will be maintained either through the current system or through the FENIX system, depending on the national coordinators' preference.

ERFP should develop specific proposal and recommendations for the European fields in EFABIS, reports and tools, the ERFP WG documentation and information will provide suggestions towards this direction. For the national nodes it is more complicated as this is a decision of each individual country. Probably agreements will be made by each country separately.

The session continued on Wednesday (22) mainly to answer any questions and concerns of the participants.

It was stated clearly, that the virtual national nodes can have both interface and content in the local language, if the respective country provide a translation (as it is now). It was also clearly stated, that at this stage FAO cannot develop new (virtual) national nodes for countries that does not have already a national node.

There was a question if FAO can also redevelop the CryoWEB system using Fenix and put it on FAO servers.

There was a long discussion about the transboundary breeds and how to link a national population to a transboundary breed name. In that regard, when a NC tries to link breed to a non-existing transboundary name, there should be automatic alert to the DAD-IS moderator in order to register new transboundary name and alert to all participants, that a new name was added. There should be also alert to all countries linked to a breed, when a new country link also a breed to the same name. There was a proposal, to keep the brand name in a new field, separated by the transboundary name.

It was also stated that there should be a manager of the regional node, who will have to go through training by the Fenix team.

Fabio Gritta also presented the Google analytics tool, which will be used in the new DAD-IS to monitor the usage of the system (The same tool is being used up to now also for regional EFABIS)