

Minutes of the ERF – Steering Committee meeting
4th-5th February 2016, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Chair: Sipke Joost Hiemstra

Participants: Kristaq Kume, NC Albania; Beate Berger, NC Austria; Jeanne Bormann, NC Luxembourg, Eva-Marie Stalhammar; NC Sweden; Jan Tomka, NC Slovakia, Maja Vrisk, Danijela Bojkovski, ERF Secretariat

Thursday, 4th February 2016 - ERF Steering Committee Meeting

Danijela Bojkovski welcomed all the members of the Steering Committee. Agenda of the meeting was presented. **As there were no amendments, the Agenda was approved.**

ERF Budget

The Secretariat presented the financial report for 2015. Budget for the 2016 was adopted at last GA in Balice. Budget for 2017 – draft will be discussed today and final proposal prepared for the next SC meeting at Belfast. **The SC agreed with the procedure suggestion.**

The Country contributions payments for the 2015 were presented. The total sum of the payments was lower as compared to the previous years. Members of the SC communicate with those countries, which did not pay the contribution yet. France assured that contribution would be paid, however some difficulties occurred. Unfortunately, Italy also did not manage to pay country contribution. During the year, the Secretariat will send out few reminder emails for payment of Country Contribution to those countries who did not paid yet. **SC members agreed that they will informally discuss with the countries, which are not paying the country contributions (Jeanne Bormann–Belgium, Sipke Joost Hiemstra–Spain, France, Danijela Bojkovski – Croatia, Iceland).**

The 2016 letters for payments were send out in December and few countries already paid country contributions for 2016. **SC agreed that we have to try to keep level of income, which comes from country contributions.** Obviously, the capital of ERF in bank account is quiet high, however currently we are spending more than payments collected annually. If the amount of country contributions would decrease in the future, with more spending at the same time, we would considerably lower ERF assets.

The Secretariat presented budget proposal for the 2017. Proposal is, to allocate a higher budget to restructuring ERF website, which will go along with the EUGENA portal. It was suggested to relocate resources from other budget lines to the website. ERF Chair presented that maximum amount of 10.000 € might be needed for that purpose. He stressed also the importance of investment for ERF to become more visible. **The SC agreed that investments like that are important and budget for 2017 has to be prepared in accordance with this.**

The new account procedure was presented by the Secretariat. Account was opened in August and became fully operational in November. The Secretariat staff was trained at the end of November for online banking by Rebecca Nielson from EAAP office. Account management has resulted in higher workload for the Secretariat. All the Reimbursement documents, Invoices etc. are now controlled and collected at the Secretariat. Also all the online bank transactions are prepared by Secretariat and signed by EAAP. At the end of every month all

the collected documents as well as payment confirmations and reports on every transaction has to be sent to EAAP. Since the account number has changed, Secretariat is receiving questions about that. Countries want an explanation why they are paying to the different account and they also sometimes want confirmations on the legal entity of the ERF. **SC agreed that Secretariat presents shortly the new account procedure at the GA meeting.**

Secretariat work and related issues (NC Slovenia)

Danijela Bojkovski presented forthcoming changes in Slovenia due to the Drago's retirement in October 2016. She will replace Drago's position as NC. There is no other person who would be appropriate for that position. SC members agreed that for the period of running the Secretariat, Slovenia could be represented at the GA with the alternate NC. **The SC agreed with the solution that Danijela Bojkovski in the period of running the Secretariat would not vote and she will not represent Slovenia. Alternate NC for Slovenia will be nominated.**

Assembly meeting 2016 in Belfast - organization

Sue Golinger, NC of United Kingdom is assisting the Secretariat to arrange the GA. Since Sue is not able to use Skype, Secretariat presented the proposal.

SC meeting on Friday 26th August:

- room will be provided at the Department for Agriculture N. Ireland office in Belfast. All facilities will be available in the meeting room and coffee/tea/water and sandwiches / light lunch will be brought to the room or made available nearby. Our host (Defra) will cover expenses.

GA meeting in Saturday, 27th and Sunday, 28th August in the morning:

- proposal is to hold the meeting in the Riddle Hall, near Queens University. Our host (Defra) will cover the costs of the room hire etc, coffee/tea, light/finger lunch on Saturday and coffee/tea on Sunday am.

Technical visit on the 28th August:

- afternoon trip will be organized to the Forthill farm. Arrival at the farm would be approx. 2pm departure approx. 4pm. NC will have opportunity to see the traditional breeds at the farm - Longhorn and Belted Galloway cattle, British Saddleback, Gloucester Old Spot and Tamworth pigs and Jacob sheep. Lunch will be organized at farm. Our host (Defra) will again cover the costs of bus, visit and the lunch.

Until this SC-meeting, Secretariat received four options for the dinner; however, completed offers were only two and only two could be presented. One is probably too expensive for the ERF, another one is more acceptable. We have to be aware that we cannot expect dinner for 25€ in Belfast. **SC agreed that slightly higher amount can be spent for the social dinner. Members of the SC gave mandate to the Secretariat to discuss with local organizer and choose the best solution.**

As regards to the expenses, ERFP will cover expenses for travel and accommodation for NC (A;B;C;D category) and social dinner. Dinner will be covered also for the Invited speakers. All other expenses (meeting room, coffee breaks, light lunch, farm visit) will be covered by host organization (Defra).

Accommodation for the participants - there are hotels available at the EAAP website and booking.com, though quite a few are booked up for that weekend, due to the bank holiday weekend. The Ibis Belfast City and Holiday Inn Express seem to have availability. Our host organizer proposed that NC book accommodation by themselves. Because of EAAP and bank

holidays, it would be too complicated to find one hotel for everyone. **SC agreed that delegates book their own rooms.** Secretariat will send out the email about the GA dates and accommodation availability.

Assembly meeting 2016 in Belfast – GA meeting Agenda

Last year in Balice, the General Assembly proposed that Agenda could also include specific topics and presentations by NCs or invited speakers, which would make attending the GA more attractive for NCs, observer organizations and other participants. The Secretariat and Chair had prepared a draft agenda for the Assembly Meeting 2016 in Belfast. This draft was discussed and Agenda restructured. **SC agreed** that first day is dedicated to the Secretariat and WG/TF/*Ad hoc* action group reports. The following half day would be dedicated to the proposed topics. **SC agreed that** proposed topic could be: Promoting of use of rare breeds. Draft Agenda was prepared and communication with possible speakers has to be established. **The Chair and Secretariat will prepare** short communication letter/email for the Invited speakers in order to explain the topic and invite them to present their experience.

Future ERFP development-pro's and con's of becoming a legal entity

In the last year, through different occasions few concerns were raised about the lacking legal entity of the ERFP. For that reason, Secretariat made inquiries towards different options and solutions. From ECPGR we received the documents where they explored different options connected to becoming a legal entity. SC members received the document and Secretariat shortly presented the conclusions. In order to receive other point of view and a more successful story Secretariat invited prof. Janko Drnovsek, from the Faculty of Electrical Engineering to introduce the European Association of National Metrology Institutes (EURAMET) and their experience. The power point presentation is available at the Intranet page of ERFP.

SC agreed that we need to draft a discussion paper to sum up, what was presented in the SC meeting. Jeanne Bormann will write short summary about the topic and presentations and draft conclusions. SC has to discuss this further in next SC meeting and requested the Task Force EU also to discuss this issue in their meeting.

FAO/ERFP Workshop, 12th – 14th April 2016

Beate Berger introduced progress in organizing the FAO/ERFP Workshop in Gödöllő. The meeting of the ERFP WG *Ex Situ* Conservation is scheduled in the first afternoon, FAO workshop second day, field trip last day of the Workshop. FAO invited Eastern European countries to present *In situ* and *Ex situ* conservation within their countries. Different experts will present specific important issues. FAO will cover travel and accommodation costs for the invited experts and speakers. ERFP will cover travel and accommodation costs for the WG members. For the meeting of ERFP WG *Ex Situ* Conservation, questionnaire on *In vivo* and *ex situ* conservation will be developed and sent to all NC and WG members before the Gödöllő meeting. The (first) results will be presented at the WG meeting. SC members suggested that posters could possibly be presented from other countries (who are not invited speakers). **SC agreed to ask FAO office about the possibility to present posters. Also clarification has to be done about covering the costs between FAO and ERFP. Beate Berger will contact FAO office.**

The Chair of the ERFP *Ex Situ* Conservation Sipke Joost Hiemstra became ERFP SC Chair. For that reason he would like that somebody else would take over the ERFP WG *Ex Situ* conservation. SC discussed possible candidates. **ERFP Chair will discuss with candidates if they are willing to accept the position and the WG Ex Situ will also be asked to nominate candidates before the Gödöllő meeting.**

AOB

Secretariat again proposed SC members to book hotels in Belfast as soon as possible in order to stay in the same hotel. Secretariat will send announcement to all NC within next week. **SC agreed with procedure.** The appropriate time for the registration of participants for the GA was discussed. At the end of March/April the first invitation could be send out since some NC will need to arrange travel Visa. Sipke Joost Hiemstra closed the meeting at 6.30 p.m.

Friday, 5th February 2016

Friday, 5th February 2016 - ERFPP Steering Committee Meeting

The Secretariat just received and presented all four options for the social dinner at GA meeting in Belfast. A total cost was based on 50 participants:

- Deanes restaurant - food menu – £30 per person; drinks – glass of wine – welcome – £5,50; total costs near £1.775 – 2.260€
- Ulster Museum - room hire £1200; catering/drinks £45/person; most impressive venue near the Botanic gardens; total costs £3.450 = 4.380 €
- Malone Lodge Hotel - room hire £100.00; food menu for £28 without drink; total costs £1.500 - 1.900 €
- Wellington Park - 3 course meal including arrival drink £26.95; total costs £1.500 - 1.900€

SC agreed to choose Deanes restaurant. According to the description, they are offering more traditional and gala menu. SC agreed to offer NC welcome glass of wine.

Further proceeding regarding the European Genebank Network for AnGR (EUGENA)

Sipke Joost Hiemstra introduced the process of drafting MoU following last year GA. Helpful additional comments arrived in particular from Spain and Norway. SC went through the latest draft. Chair will prepare the clean final version of MoU after the SC meeting and send it to all NCs give them the opportunity for final comments within two weeks. After that, the Secretariat will start the process of signing. **SC agreed with the procedure.**

Planning of the further ERFPP activities in 2016

The Secretariat presented the ERFPP activities in the current year. The first ERFPP *Ad hoc* action meeting on EUGENA Webportal development was scheduled one day before the SC meeting. Another *Ad hoc* group will meet in Thessaloniki, Greece. Joint meeting could be organized in June for the WG Doc -Info, TF ABS, TF EU and *Ad hoc* action ITWG-AnGR. **SC agreed that the Secretariat will contact the Chairs of the WG, TF, *Ad hoc* actions. They should indicate the main topics and desired planning of the meeting.**

Steering Committee discussed the need for further activities of ERFPP to support the ‘in situ’ conservation of AnGR in Europe. First step could be to set up an *Ad hoc* action or to establish a Task Force. Steering Committee will further discuss this issue in next Steering Committee meeting and present a proposal to the general assembly. **Sipke Joost Hiemstra will draft a concept note on this topic, to be discussed in the Steering Committee meeting in August.**

Ad hoc action proposals

The Secretariat received two *Ad hoc* action proposals and presented them to the SC members:

1. Preparation of the position papers for the 9th ITWG-AnGR; **The Steering Committee agreed with the proposal and content of the *Ad hoc* action.**
2. Writing a new textbook on the genomic applications in the utilization and conservation of farm animal genetic resources; SC finds textbook like that very

valuable for all the National Coordinators and experts involved in the field of AnGR conservation. **The Steering Committee agreed and is willing to support the content of the proposal to the maximum amount of 10.000€** SC agreed that ERF logo should be on the publication and ERF should have possibility to write a Foreword in the publication. Steering Committee would appreciate it if the content of the book could be presented by one of the authors at the ERF General Assembly in Belfast.

AOB

SC further discussed the General Assembly agenda. Presentation of the textbook (*Ad hoc* action) was added to the Agenda. Procedure for proposing *Ad hoc* actions should be repeated and NC asked to give ideas for the following year. Invitations for the GA in Belfast should be sent to the EU Commission, DG AGRI, DG SANTE, DG Research, DG Environment, ABS, AGRI committee and Organic farmers (organizations). Jeanne Bormann will help to find appropriate names, to which invitations could be sent. SC agreed that ERF Chair and Secretariat will prepare short explanation to the invited speakers and ask them to collaborate. **SC agreed with the procedure.** Agenda and speakers have to be confirmed before sending out the Agenda.

Sipke Joost Hiemstra closed the meeting at 12.30. He thanked all the SC members and the Secretariat for the organization.