

**Minutes of the ERFP – Steering Committee meeting  
13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> March 2017, Ljubljana, Slovenia**

**Chair:** Sipke Joost Hiemstra, NC the Netherlands

**Participants:** Kristaq Kume, NC Albania; Beate Berger, NC Austria; Jeanne Bormann, NC Luxembourg; Eva-Marie Stalhammar, NC Sweden; Jan Tomka, NC Slovakia; Gasan Osojnik & Danijela Bojkovski, ERFP Secretariat

**Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> March 2017 - ERFP Steering Committee Meeting at 2:00 p.m**

D. Bojkovski and SJ Hiemstra welcomed all the members of the Steering Committee. Agenda of the meeting was presented.

**As there were no amendments, the Agenda of the SC meeting was approved.**

**ERFP Budget**

D. Bojkovski presented the financial report for 2016. In order to keep track of ERFP Budget on different expense items (Assembly/WG/TF/Ad hoc etc.) and to fulfil EAAP requirements for monthly reporting, Secretariat monitors the ERFP financial status in two different ways. A difference can be observed between the balance based on costs and revenues in a certain ERFP Budget year on one hand, and actual account balance (ERFP account at EAAP) in the end of the year on the other hand. ERFP Budget monitors costs and revenues in a certain year, but sometimes payments are not executed in the same year (example of the textbook). Another example is payment of country contributions in December for the following year, which will be revenues for the following year. The members of the SC discussed how to present the financial figures. **SJ Hiemstra will consult the financial officer of the Dutch rare breed organization and inform Secretariat on the suggested approach.**

Members of the SC were informed that 2016 account management costs still has to be paid to EAAP.

**The SC approved current budget and balance for 2016, with remark of outstanding expense for account management.**

**Country contributions payments**

The Country contributions payments for the 2016 were presented. The total sum of the payments was higher than in 2015 and comparable with previous years. In the previous year's members of the SC agreed to communicate to those countries, which are not paying the contribution. France assured that contribution would be paid, however some legal difficulties occurred (ERFP cannot issue the formal Invoice). The letters for country contribution payments for 2017 were sent in December 2016 and few countries already paid contributions for 2017.

**The SC agreed that we have to keep at least the current level of income from country contributions payments. The ERFP Secretariat will send out reminder emails to the countries which did not pay the contribution yet (at least twice before GA). Country contributions will be discussed again at the GA, to remind NCs on this topic.**

It was suggested, to amend the letters for country contribution payments. Description of the ERFP activities and what the countries can benefit from the network should be included in the letter. The capital of the ERFP in the bank account is quite substantial; however, currently we are spending more than we are receiving from country contributions. If the amount of country contributions would decrease in the future, with more spending at the same time, we would considerably lower ERFP assets.

**The SC approved the suggestion to amend the next Country contribution letter.**

**Secretariat – end of term:** The term of the ERFP Secretariat will end in 2018 at the ERFP Assembly meeting in Dubrovnik. At the meeting, new ERFP Secretariat has to be elected followed by the transition period and hand over of the Secretariat by the end of the year. Current Secretariat will continue the management of the ERFP finances until the end of the year 2018. At the General Assembly in Tallinn, the end of the term and tender for the new Secretariat will be announced. Interested institutions have to send the proposals to the Secretariat by the end of the 2017. The financial matters of the Secretariat work were discussed. At the moment 17.000 € is allocated to the ERFP Secretariat, which is insufficient to cover all the operational costs.

**The SC agreed to informally discuss with the countries and identify possible candidates and interest for the next Secretariat.**

The Secretariat presented budget proposal for 2018 as a preliminary budget. In May and June, when meetings of the all WG/TF/*Ad hoc* action will be finished Secretariat expects more inputs from the meetings and information about the budget implications.

**The SC agreed that ERFPA budget for 2018 has to be prepared prior to the GA considering all the input from WG, TF, *Ad hoc* groups.**

#### **Collaboration with other networks**

D. Bojkovski and SJ Hiemstra presented collaboration with other similar networks. In 2017 common actions of those networks were undertaken through the letter to the DG AGRI offering our collaboration in preparing EU Agrobiodiversity Strategy and a letter to the Horizon 2020 identifying major research topics for the conservation and sustainable use of GRFA. There is an opportunity to better connect four networks in Europe (ERFP, ECPGR, EUFORGEN, MIRRI) in order to find common interest and synergies. We could learn from each other how our networks are organized, identify differences and similarities and find successful way that would enable us to develop joint and strong agro-biodiversity network.

**The SC agreed to invite two networks (ECPGR, EUFORGEN) to present their organisations and activities at the GA in Tallinn.**

#### **Report from the CGRFA**

D. Bojkovski presented the process of preparing the position papers and discussion on the EU and ERG level. For the CGRFA Session three working documents for AnGR were prepared by FAO. One related to the Report of the ITWG-AnGR and others to the Status of the implementation of the GPA and Review of the GPA for AnGR. Output of the CGRFA related to AnGR is as follows:

- Report of the ITWG-AnGR was endorsed by the Commission,
- Commission called countries to continue to implement GPA,
- Commission stressed importance of DAD-IS.

And request from FAO to:

- Improve linkages between DAD-IS and other databases,
- Explore why so many breeds in DAD-IS have unknown risk status,
- Include domestic honeybees and potentially other pollinators in DAD-IS,
- Invited countries to continue raising awareness of the provision of ecosystem services.

Commission also requested from FAO to improve species mapping and phenotype description, review methods for identification and valuation of ecosystem services provided by AnGR and to publish results of the projects under the Funding Strategy for the implementation of GPA on the FAO Web site. Furthermore, the draft resolution for AnGR was slightly amended and CGRFA agreed to submit the resolution on AnGR to the FAO conference. Identification and valuation of ecosystem services of AnGR was discussed and the need to strengthen the work on this topics. That topic could be included in the work of the the future WG *In situ* conservation. **SC discussed and suggested that ecosystem services of AnGR could be an interesting topic for the next GA (2018).**

#### **ERFP General Assembly meeting 2017 in Tallinn, Estonia – organization**

The Assembly will be organized with the help of the National Coordinator from Estonia Haldja Viinalass. She joined the SC meeting via Skype and informed the SC on organizational matters:

- SC meeting (25<sup>th</sup> August 2017) and Assembly meeting (26<sup>th</sup>–27<sup>th</sup> August 2017) will be held at the Ministry of Rural Affairs of the Republic of Estonia; the Ministry will kindly provide meeting rooms for our Assembly.
- The Estonian Ministry has allocated 6.000 € to cover the meeting costs for the GA. The rest of the expenses will be covered by the ERFPA.
- For the field trip few destinations are offered and SC has to decide among different options.
- Local organizers made preliminary booking for 45 people at the Tallink City Hotel (price 110 €).

**Steering Committee agreed that best option for the field trip is to visit the horse farm with native breeds, which is 60km away from the Venue of the Assembly meeting.**

To the participants, Tallink City Hotel will be offered as one of the possibilities. Since the price for the suggested hotel is rather high, National Coordinators will be informed that individual booking of other hotels is also possible over the various internet pages (example: Booking.com....etc).

### Assembly meeting 2017 in Tallinn

Last year the GA was very intensive and quite long. It was suggested to shorten the Agenda. D. Bojkovski and SJ Hiemstra proposed shorter time slots for the WG/TF/Ad hoc action reports (8 minutes discussion, 2 minutes questions). Maybe template “.pptx” for the WG/TF/Ad hoc action reports could be prepared.

**The SC agreed to invite up to three authors of the textbook to present the interesting topics from the book. Two speakers can be reimbursed by ERF. SC also decided to invite other networks (ECPGR, EUFORGEN) to present their organizations.**

**SC agreed that Chairs of the WG/TF/Ad hoc action should send their annual reports** to the Secretariat prior to the Assembly, in order to include proposals in the plans and financial budget for the 2018. Secretariat will provide a template for the annual reports of WG, TF and Ad hoc actions.

SJ Hiemstra informed SC about the request of the chair of the EAAP Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources to ERF to cover the costs of an invited speaker for the joint ERF/EAAP session. **The SC approves reimbursement for the travel and accommodation costs of the EAAP/ERF invited speaker, however they agree that speaker should hold the presentation at the GA as well.** This presentation should be tailored for the NC and related to the AnGR conservation.

### AOB

- J. Bormann suggested facilitating preparation of a special issue of Animal Frontiers, which could be dedicated to AnGR. She will discuss possibilities with Andrea Rosati (EAAP General Secretary). Possible topics could be ABS and other policy issues (paper prepared by the TF EU matters), and also topics related to the new textbook.
- The article for PAN European Networks was reviewed and finalized.

SJ Hiemstra closed the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

### Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> March 2017 - 9:00 p.m.

SJ Hiemstra presented status report on EUGENA – 7 states (Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Italy, Spain, Slovenia, and Romania) have signed the MoU. Few countries reported legal constraints due to the “legal wording” of MoU. All NCs should be aware, that tailor made solutions (revisions of the MoU text) may be possible, meeting specific country needs. The same case we had with Spain, where their legal office suggested few changes, which were accepted by Chair and Secretariat.

**Further procedure to find out obstacles in specific countries will be discussed at the WG Ex Situ meeting in Belgrade. Secretariat will also send out email to countries, which did not sign the EUGENA MoU yet, to find out what is the status in their countries and offer them help if MoU “wording” can be improved.**

### Composition of the ERF Steering Committee

According to the ERF Terms of Reference, the term of office for Kristaq Kume, representative of “South region” will end in 2017. The SC discussed the potential candidates from South Region and suggested Srdjan Stojanović from Serbia as possible candidate. **Outgoing member Kristaq Kume will contact Srdjan Stojanović and inform the Secretariat about his willingness to accept the position.** ERF Secretariat will also prepare letter for all NC that term will end for Kristaq Kume and new candidates can be proposed from the South Region. New member will be elected at GA.

### End of term for the Chair of WG Documentation and information

The term will also end in July 2017 for the current Chair of the WG Documentation and Information Christina Ligda. **The Secretariat will announce information to NC and WG members and send out letter for nominations of new candidates.** It is important that experts in the WG are nominated by their NC and their nomination is supported.

### EU reference centre (EURCs) for endangered breeds

Jeanne Bormann presented the new EU Animal Breeding Regulation (2016/1012) which enables the establishment of the European Reference centres. The main responsibility of such centre for AnGR would be scientific and technical contribution to the establishment or harmonization of the methods used by breed

societies, third parties designated by breed societies, competent authorities or other authorities of the Member States for the preservation of endangered breeds or the preservation of the genetic diversity existing within those breeds. The reference centre has to be an established legal entity, with employed staff and proven track records. **The SC agreed that current structure and organization of the ERFP does not comply with the given conditions, but a potential future reference centre for AnGR should at least be linked to ERFP. Added value and benefits of such a reference centre and the role of ERFP should be discussed at the GA. The topic of EU reference centres will also be discussed at the meeting of the TF EU matters in June in order to get prepared for the GA.**

**Ad hoc action proposal: Development of the ERFP communication tools**

The Proposal for the above mentioned *Ad hoc* action was presented by G. Osojnik. The main goal of the action is to develop the roadmap and plan for Communication matters of ERFP (Website, Social media, Templates (e.g. letters and ppt), promotional material, etc...). *Ad hoc* action was proposed at the last GA in Belfast and proposal was already approved by the SC.

**AOB**

No other business was discussed.

Sipke Joost Hiemstra closed the meeting at 12:30 a.m. He thanked all the SC members and the Secretariat for the organization.