

Minutes of the ERFP Steering Committee meeting

June 10th 2025, virtual meeting

Participants:

Chair: Danijela Bojkovski, Slovenia

National coordinators, members of the SC:

Rachel Davis, UK

Georgia Hadjipavlou, Cyprus

Ante Ivankovic, Croatia

Gita Jansone, Latvia

Nina Svartedal, Norway

Secretariat:

Coralie Danchin, and Eleonore Charvolin-Lemaire (Inrae) (France)

1. Presentation of the Agenda and follow-up of the previous SC

Danijela Bojkovski welcomes the participants and introduces the agenda. The agenda of the SC meeting is approved. The secretariat informs that all points requiring follow-up have already been included in the agenda.

2. Follow-up of the Working Groups: main outcomes of the meetings incl. Action plan

The secretariat sent an evaluation form to the WG participants. The overall assessment is that the meeting was good, with good possibility for networking. These physical meetings are valuable for exchanging experiences and building relationship among participants. Suggestions for improvements will be shared with ERFP chairs. According to the SC, a way to achieve these improvements will be to remind the chairs not to push the agenda artificially. Also, it might be more profitable to start with the meetings of each WG so their inputs can be shared in the joint meeting. A reminder will be also sent to all the participants that the ERFP WG chairs are volunteers.

The SC members met twice since the last SC to review the action plan. The ERFP WG chairs are mandated to reunite their group so the action plan can be reviewed from a WG perspective. All the dates are set. The secretariat will assess all the documents and present it at our next General Assembly.

The secretariat warns the SC that the WG budget might be exceeded due to the high number of participants. Danijela Bojkovski would like to include in the reimbursement rules a deadline for sending the information to the secretariat. After discussion, the first step will be to have the secretariat send a reminder after each event. In any way no reimbursement

should be sent after the end of the fiscal year. If the situation is not improved, the Reimbursement rules will be changed and set a time limit.

3. Preparation for the General Assembly

The secretariat presented provisional agenda which SC approved. The proposal leaves room for NCs or guests to present AnGR projects from their country. A priority will be set for new NC to present the work in their country.

The secretariat will send a registration link, the CV of SC candidates and the EAAP program as soon as these documents are made available, along with a strong encouragement for NC to propose discussion topics:

- Budget voting

Country contributions were raised during the 2023 General Assembly after the voting of the “majority of NCs present” according to the minutes. There is no specifications about whether some countries were against or did not vote. According to the ToR, “*Voting at the Assembly is by majority vote of the NCs except voting on financial matters where **consensus** is required*”. The secretariat investigated the matter, and it seems that the word consensus is avoided when you want clear rules since the exact meaning of it is debated among paralegals, as some interpretate it as “majority” and others as “unanimity”. In order to avoid any misunderstanding, a proposal will be made at the General Assembly to make clearer rules. It will also be emphasized that country contributions are voluntary.

The following text:

“The Assembly is chaired by the Chair of the Steering Committee. Voting at the Assembly is by majority vote of the NCs except voting on financial matters where consensus is required. Voting can also take place by means of email when it is deemed necessary to do so.”

Will be replaced by:

“The Assembly is chaired by the Chair of the Steering Committee. Voting at the Assembly is by majority vote of the National Coordinators present. National Coordinators who are unable to attend the Assembly may submit their vote in advance by email on agenda items distributed beforehand. In exceptional cases that arise between Assemblies and require urgent decision-making, voting may take place by email, subject to prior agreement among the National Coordinators that the matter warrants such a procedure.”

Finally, the secretariat will reach out to Christina Ligda to know how she wants to solve the issue of the 2023 vote since all the countries but one that paid their contribution used the new fee.

- Secretariat renewal

The normal procedure will be launched at the GA, following the ToR's Annex 3. A proposal will be made to amend the ToR in case where no candidates apply. The SC members will review the amendment before the GA so it can be sent to all NCs in the preparation documents. If there are no candidate and the amendment is validated, the current secretariat will have to submit a proposal to the SC by May 15th, 2026, so it can be reviewed by the SC during the usual meeting that is held in June.

4. 2025 Elections

A candidate has been found to replace Nina Svartedal, the information will be sent to all NCs, and it will also be reminded that all NCs can be candidates.

Rachel Davis (UK) informs the SC that she will retire this fall; she proposes Marcus Bates as her replacement. According to the ToR, SC members are elected *ad personam* which means he will need to be elected too, and his CV must be circulated to NC.

5. Follow up of the work by the EURC EAB

Cf. slides, an update is done to the NCs that were not present during the WG where some of the work done by the EURC EAB was presented.

One of the works was about defining "endangered breeds". References and key criteria have been collected, and the next step is to begin drafting guidelines. The ERFP network will participate in drafting guidelines and may result in documents with EU-specific and Europe-wide content. An email was sent to National Coordinators and ERFP experts to invite participation in the drafting group. A few responses have been received so far.

Other actions were presented during the working groups, including those related to in situ and ex situ conservation and breeding programs.

Finally, an update was given on the *Breeding Wisely* webinar series. The first webinar was held on 27 May, focusing on the translated infographics. Around 80 people registered, although actual attendance is unknown. The next webinar will take place on 22 June, with two more planned for the fall and winter. Information is available on the Reference Center's website and LinkedIn.

6. AOB

No AOB.

The next SC will be held physically August 22ND 2025