

ECPGR Secretariat Meeting Maccarese, 18-19 November 2015

Participants:

Jan Engels
Lidwina Koop
Elinor Lipman
Lorenzo Maggioni
Stephan Weise (skype, 19 November morning)

Agenda:

- 1) Current status: Implementation of ECPGR Phase IX
- 2) Planning/discussion of upcoming tasks
Following up on previous Secretariat meeting (October 2014)
Following up on outcomes of ExCo meeting (October 2015)
Other tasks/ Points to be discussed:
 - EURISCO
 - AEGIS
 - Website
 - Publications (Bulletin, Annual Report 2015, AEGIS brochure)
- 3) Any other business
- 4) Wrap-up and conclusion

1) Current status: Implementation of ECPGR Phase IX

Lorenzo projected the presentation given at the recent ExCo meeting (Oct 2015) in order to identify points for discussion.

- It was discussed whether Stephan Weise should be more involved in the ECPGR Secretariat meeting. Lorenzo suggested that he should on EURISCO matters, but his physical participation in the entire Secretariat meeting would not be necessary.
- On the slide with the numbers of Working Group members, the total number needs to be checked as there are several members part of more than one Working Group (action: Lidwina).
- Lorenzo informed about letters of resignation sent by two WG Chairs (Cucurbits and Solanaceae).
- Regarding the EURISCO Training Workshops, it was agreed that Stephan should carry out the evaluation at the next training in 2016.
- ExCo requested more participation of the ECPGR Secretariat in the Activities' meetings.

2) Planning/discussion on upcoming tasks

- **Following up on previous Secretariat meeting (October 2014):**

- There was a pending issue regarding the definition of the term “ECPGR member countries”. Lorenzo suggested that it was not necessary to work on this definition, as it would be too complicated to establish the boundaries, such as between a non-paying member and a paying non-member.
- Regarding the reporting of the Activities for the first Grant Call, it had been decided earlier in the year that no mid-term reports were needed, but only the final reports. Elinor prepared a template and guidelines which were recently sent to the Activity Coordinators. Regarding the contracts for the next calls, it is important to provide the template together with the LoA (action: Lidwina).
- Regarding AEGIS and the signature of the MoUs, there were several countries that have signed the MoU but not yet the LoA for ECPGR Membership. Lorenzo thought that there was no need to take action at this stage since the AEGIS collection is not yet fully operating.
- Jan informed that he was working on the “Guide for the overall management of material in AEGIS”.
- Lidwina confirmed that all the reports of the Grant Activities will be contained in the publications database and will thus be available on the website.
- Elinor informed that she would no longer follow-up on the pending workplans of the WGs as this is no longer relevant.
- Regarding web statistics, Lidwina informed that it would be more useful to provide them on an ad hoc basis to find out the specific impact of a page, document, etc. A short report will be prepared however as background document for the mid-term SC meeting in 2016 (action: Lorenzo/Lidwina).
- Lorenzo requested that the “funding opportunities” webpage be continued and updated, as far as possible. This will be seen as a contribution of the Secretariat to fund-raising.
- The AR2015 will follow the same structure as the AR2014, partially based on the “Objectives” document.

- **Following up on outcomes of ExCo 7 meeting (October 2015):**

The decisions of the ExCo were discussed and all relevant tasks for the Secretariat reported in the attached table.

Some comments:

- The decision to confirm or not the WG Chairs will be taken by ExCo at their meeting before the Mid-Term SC meeting, on the basis of the feedback received through the questionnaires. The SC will be informed on the decision taken by the ExCo during the meeting.
- Regarding communication of the awards of the Activity Proposals, it was agreed that the results should be published on the website only after all WG Chairs/Activity Coordinators have been informed about the results. The text for the Third Call needs to be checked and corrected (action: Lorenzo). It was also agreed that we should give better instructions and explain that the

Secretariat is available for any assistance and that partners may send draft proposals before the deadline for feedback.

- Following the decisions of the ExCo it was decided that:

Decision 1: the ECPGR Secretariat will attend the meetings of the Activities whenever considered relevant and useful.

Decision 2: no comments.

Decision 3: Lorenzo informed about the suggestions regarding the composition of the EURISCO Advisory Group. No final list has been established yet.

Decision 4: Lorenzo informed that he will prepare a summary report of ten pages which will be then sent to the Task Force and ExCo for information/comments. Once approved, the document will be sent to the Steering Committee.

Decision 5: the letters were sent by the ExCo Chair. The Steering Committee was asked to approve the lists of Partners. Activity Coordinators of the awarded Activities will be contacted by the ECPGR Secretariat and LoAs prepared. The template prepared by Elinor will be part of the LoAs. For the EURISCO proposal we will include also the evaluation of the training. LoAs should be ready by the end of January 2016 (action: Lorenzo/Lidwina).

Decision 6: The form for re-submission is online and the deadline is 15 April 2016 (together with the submission of proposals for the Third Call which will be launched on 15 January 2016).

Decision 7: no comments.

Decision 8: The instructions should be better explained for the next call. The text and templates need to be checked and it should be explained that the Secretariat can offer more help for the preparation of the proposals (action: Lorenzo).

Decision 9: (ExCo task).

Decision 10: no comments.

Decision 11:

a) the Doodle for the dates of the Mid-Term Steering Committee meeting is ongoing and will be closed by the end of next week (27 November 2015). The results will be sent to the ExCo Chair for decision about the dates.

b) questionnaires to be sent before the end of 2015:

I. regarding the questionnaires for NCs and WG Chairs on the progress of ECPGR, there will be two questionnaires to be prepared:

- one for the NCs, Theo van Hintum, Nigel Maxted and Stephan Weise, based on the "Objectives" document with rating of the achievements ranked 0-3 and open box for indicators (action: Lidwina).

- another questionnaire will be prepared for the WG Chairs based on the TORs for WG Chairs and sent to all WG Chairs (action: Lorenzo). Lorenzo will prepare a message to send both questionnaires; Nigel and Theo will receive one single message with both questionnaires attached (action: Lorenzo).

II. regarding the questionnaires to be sent to all WG members to evaluate the Grant Scheme and mode of operation of WGs and evaluation of WG Chairs, there will be two different questionnaires, based on the relevant sections of the “Goal, Rules and ToRs..” document (action: Elinor with inputs from Lorenzo, Lydie and Jan):

- one will be sent to all WG members regarding the Grant Scheme and Mode of Operation of ECPGR with ranking on the level of satisfaction and open box for comments;

- another questionnaire will be prepared and sent to the members of each WG (with exclusion of the Chairs) for the evaluation of the WG Chairs, based on the ToRs for WG Chairs with a ranking on the level of satisfaction and open comments. This questionnaire, unlike the first one, will be anonymous.

c) Background documents for Mid-Term SC meeting:

I. Technical and Financial reports about progress in Phase IX (action: Elinor/Lorenzo/Lidwina).

II. Upon receipt of the results of the questionnaires (deadline end of January) the ECPGR Secretariat will prepare the reports both as rough data and in the form of a compiled and annotated summary to be sent to the ExCo one month prior to the SC meeting (action: Lorenzo/Lidwina/Elinor).

Agenda items for the Mid-Term SC meeting:

A representative of EC will be invited to the Mid-Term SC meeting. ExCo and ECPGR Secretariat will explore the appropriate person to be contacted (action: Lorenzo).

Regarding the hosting arrangements, Lorenzo will verify with Bioversity the possibility and conditions for a continuation of the hosting of the ECPGR Secretariat also for Phase X (action: Lorenzo).

• **Other tasks/Points to be discussed**

AEGIS

Record keeping

The “Record keeping” document has been revised upon the comments received by Julian Jackson. This new version will be circulated again to the SC with a new deadline. Jan will send a message to the SC and inform on the same message that “Benefits sharing” paper has been approved and is available on the website now (action: Jan).

Crop-specific standards

Jan informed that the process is ongoing but owing to his reduced working time in 2016, his main activity will be to provide technical and scientific support to questions and review the drafts produced. Elinor will follow-up with the Chairs

and WGs regarding the process and deadlines. Elinor will send a message by end December to the Chairs not having responded so far to find out about their WG status regarding the crop-specific standards process.

As of 2016, Jan's role will be a more "Advisory" role and he will give scientific support, while his coordinating functions will be taken over by Lorenzo and the rest of the Secretariat. Jan will be involved in writing/preparation of papers on ad hoc basis. He will also reduce his visits to Bioversity, also on ad hoc basis.

Genebank Manuals: Elinor will follow up but Jan will comment on the manuals that will arrive (at least those of the Czech Republic and Estonia are in progress).

Strategic issues

Lorenzo reported on the meeting of the Forages 2020 Activity that he attended in November in Alnarp. He met with the Director of the Greek Genebank and discussed the possibility that she organize a meeting with the Ministry to discuss the ECPGR membership. He met with other partners in the Activity Project and received feedback on AEGIS; more details can be found in his Travel Report. "Guide for the overall management of material in AEGIS": this document is still needed and will be finalized in 2016 (action: Jan).

EURISCO

(skype call with Stephan Weise, IPK)

1) C&E data

Stephan informed that the extension of EURISCO for C&E data (exchange format, database structures, import tools, check procedures) has been finalized. The mechanism is ready and can receive data. Front end/display is not ready yet but the data can already be included in the database. NIFPs can upload files with C&E data. A test was carried out with large data sets received from the Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland and these went well. Stephan is now developing the prototype for the user with three different search options.

Stephan will send an email to NIFPs in December regarding the prototype and asking for feedback. Before this he will send the prototype link to the ECPGR Secretariat (action: Stephan). As soon as the prototype has been finalized the NIFPs will be able to include the data.

He is also planning to implement a feature for the trait-wise comparison of C&E data, e.g. by country of origin or genus.

The data inserted in the database are now available only as test data. Only the data included by CGN are cleared by the NIFP and public.

Lorenzo suggested waiting for the clearance by NIFPs before publishing the data. He also hoped to receive a clearance from the legal office of Bioversity (Michael Halewood) regarding this procedure. Stephan will implement a tool so that whenever data are cleared by a NIFP, an email message will be sent to the ECPGR Secretariat and to the responsible NIFP (similar to the tracking tool now available for the AEGIS accessions).

Once all the tools and procedures are finalized, Stephan will prepare a message with clear description of the process of the inclusion of C&E data to be sent to NCs and NIFPs (action: Stephan).

Stephan was going to travel to Schiphol on Monday 23 November 2015 to attend the Genesys meeting. The purpose of the meeting was on how to incorporate C&E data into Genesys, i.e. possibly with the same exchange format used for EURISCO. He also informed that EURISCO data are imported from time to time into Genesys but not automatically.

There was a short discussion regarding the CCDBs and EURISCO. Many CCDBs accessions are not listed in EURISCO and the CCDBs also contain different information which is not possible to transfer into EURISCO (crop-specific details, additional passport descriptors, crop-specific standards, etc.). Stephan informed that there would be a possibility to synchronize part of the data included in the CCDBs with EURISCO using the EURISCO infrastructure. This would require funds and Lorenzo informed that the ExCo expressed no interest in investing in this.

Stephan reported on the training workshop in Albania. He informed that more data were added to EURISCO after the workshop from a few countries. The C&E exchange format was presented and possible use cases were shown. No evaluation was carried out but he agreed that this would be done after the next training in 2016. The Secretariat will assist him in preparing the survey (action: Lorenzo/Lidwina). The training will take place in France in 2016 but not before May.

Stephan will send us soon his travel report of the TDWG meeting that he attended, based on the Bioversity template for Travel Reports that will be provided by the Secretariat (action: Lidwina/Stephan).

Stephan will launch the EURISCO Newsletter by the end of this year. He will send a draft to Elinor for proofreading before publishing (action: Stephan/Elinor). He plans to produce two newsletters each year of one/two pages. The issues will be published on the EURISCO website and we will include a link on the ECPGR website (action: Elinor/Lidwina).

In summary, Stephan informed that he would need the Secretariat support for:

- EURISCO Newsletter from Elinor
- Legal issues regarding data transfer from Lorenzo
- Arrangements for the training in France and evaluation of training from Lidwina.

Website

Elinor informed about the changes implemented during summer 2015:

Public awareness pages were checked and updated.

Publication catalogue contains now also reports that have no ISBN number.

The page with all links was checked and updated.

New pages were created for project reports during Phase VIII and Phase IX.

The reports for Phase IX will be linked directly to the database.

Jan suggested investigating if it would be useful to use a DOI, unique identifier for public domain (action: Lidwina).

Regarding the “Funding Opportunities” webpage it was agreed that Elinor will continue updating this page but that the members of the ECPGR Secretariat will also check from time to time and inform Elinor when they learn about new proposals (action: ALL).

The “News” for information on new AEGIS accessions will be published when a new country flags accessions and if there are high numbers of new accessions flagged by existing countries. No news about unflagging of accessions. Information about the reasons for unflagging is provided in the tracking tool on the EURISCO website implemented by Stephan.

Regarding the restructuring of the AEGIS webpages, this discussion was postponed.

Publications

Bulletin

No feedback was received on the last and previous issues of the bulletin.

It would be good to have an extended time for the statistics report about readership and Elinor will investigate about this feature, if at all possible (action: Elinor). Although we have not received any feedback it was agreed that the bulletin is a very good tool to keep the NCs informed about recent activities/developments and it is a good exercise for us to keep all information on record and can serve as a reference for the preparation of ARs.

Annual Report

The 2015 Annual report should be finalized by end of March 2016 (action: Lorenzo/Elinor).

The Mid-term progress report one month before the Mid-term SC meeting (action: Lorenzo/Elinor).

AEGIS Brochure

It would be good to have a brochure for AEGIS similar to the latest one produced for ECPGR. A text needs to be prepared (action: Elinor). The layout is in progress (action: Lidwina). As soon as a draft is available, this will be sent to Jan and Lorenzo for comments.

3) Any other business

EURISCO

Regarding the “unflagging” of accessions in EURISCO, it was mentioned that it would be very useful if there would be a pop-up message or any other feature in EURISCO warning the NIFPs that they should follow the proper procedures for the unflagging of the accessions. A message will be sent to Stephan with this request (action: Elinor/Stephan).

AEGIS

Jan’s current contract ends at the end of the year and it is necessary to renew this contract but with less hours (action: Lorenzo to inform HR).

GRANT SCHEME

A reminder will be sent to the Partners in the Activities under the First Call regarding the submission of the technical and financial reports. Some are due by the end of 2015, others in 2016 (COCHEVABRAS and ECOPHISPY: end March 2016; GeDiPa (final report): end 2016).

Next ECPGR Secretariat meeting should be scheduled for the end of 2016.