

**Minutes of the ENA General Assembly Meeting held on Thursday 30 June 2022, (09h30 – 12h45) at NAKTuinbouw, Roelofarendsveen, the Netherlands.**

**Participants:**

Miet Poppe (AVBS - Belgium), Tatyana Boyadzhieva (BAOPN - Bulgaria), Václav Hurt (SŠ ČR - Czech Republic), Pavel Halama (SŠ ČR - Czech Republic), Tomi Tahvonen (Taimistoviljelijät ry - Finland), Emmanuelle Bougault (Val'hor - France), Markus Guhl (BdB - Germany), Val Farrell (IHNSA - Ireland), Luigi Pagliani (ANVE - Italy), Fons van Wezel (ANTHOS - Netherlands), Grzegorz Falkowski (ZSzP - Poland), Mateusz Milczyński (ZSzP - Poland), Jovan Topalović (SLHS - Serbia), Patrick Svensson (LRF-T - Sweden), Maja Persson (LRF-T - Sweden), Umut Sakarya (SUSBIR - Turkey), Harm Horlings (**Sustainability WG Chair**), Lucien Verschoren (AVBS - Belgium, **Attracting Young People WG Chair**), Leon Smet (Anthos - Netherlands, **Promotion WG Chair**), Willy De Nolf (AVBS - Belgium, **Treasurer**), Tim Van Hulle (AVBS - Belgium, **Vice-President**), Henk Raaijmakers (LTO - Netherlands, **President**), and Josep M. Pagès (ENA **Secretary General** -SG in the text).

**1. President's Welcome.**

President Raaijmakers welcomed all participants and explained the origin of NAKTuinbouw, the Netherlands Inspection Service for Horticulture, a foundation in which the different sectors are represented.

**2. Apologies for absence.**

Dora Aebi (CH), Caroline Föllmi (CH), Nikos Thymakis (GR), Albano Moreira da Silva (PT), Jaume Riera (ES) whose term as a delegate is over, Raúl Ferrer (ES), Luis Martín (ES), Jan Veltmans (NL), Jan-Dieter Bruns (DE), and Maurizio Lapponi had sent apologies.

**3. Agreement of the Agenda.**

The agenda was adopted.

**4. Approval of the minutes of the previous GA meeting held online on 27 January 2022 (previously distributed).**

It was agreed to change Gant for Ghent, the city name in English, on page 6. With this amendment, the minutes of the last General Assembly meeting were agreed on and approved as a true and accurate record.

**5. Matters arising from the minutes.**

SG informed all about So'Green, which has been working on the group's vision, has included the idea of having a shared calendar of activities, as discussed in the GA meeting last summer, and plan to meet physically at GalaBau in Nuremberg next September.

**6. ENA finances: to receive 2021 annual statement of accounts and 2022 budget discussion and approval.**

The written report was distributed, and the SG summarised the 2021 financial statements explaining the most relevant figures. The general costs were € 22.091,61, and the income € 28.000,00, entirely from the membership fees, resulting in a surplus of € 5.908,39.

The Green Cities Europe project accounts and the Certificate of Financial Statements by an external financial auditor were also shown. All eligible expenses, € 913.786,98, were covered by the € 730.809,19 grant from REA/EC and the € 189.996,29 from 13 contributing members.

Although the final result for the period was € 14.012,95 for both the general activities and the project, it was recapped that, in the end, the project will have no profit.

The assets and liabilities on 31-12-2021 amounted to € 1.519.051,83, and the outstanding debts will be settled with the grant received and the contribution to receive from the 13 members participating in the European project.

The budget for 2022 was presented with the expectation of closing the accounting year with no profit or loss. The remuneration for the secretary general and the membership fees will remain the same as in the previous year, and it was agreed on discounting 100% of the membership fee for the Ukrainian association.

The GA approved the closing account statements of 2021 and the budget for 2022.

**7. Promotion WG: Green Cities update and future campaign.**

Leon Smet informed the GA that all 13 countries participating in the Green Cities campaign were organising their activities, although there are some joint activities like the Award (the ceremony will be held in Paris, France, in early December) and the European Conference held the day before. He was pleased that REA approved the campaign implementation and finances for year 1 (2021) and happy that the message was spreading among governments.

He explained that after two subsidised campaigns in row, ENA has no option to apply for a new one. However, a working group has been meeting online to think about new strategies, involving other organisations in the chain like garden centres, new markets to tackle, the final consumers, and how to proceed after this campaign finishes at the end of 2023.

The President advocated keeping a low-cost Green Cities campaign for 2024 for all interested ENA members, with the key actions like the website and the award, and meanwhile working on planning a new campaign targeting the final consumers in the following years. ENA will study the costs that a Green Cities campaign 2024+ might have. Some elements of the self-financed campaign might be done jointly with other organisations, like ELCA and IFLA in SoGreen, and some elements done by ENA and its members only. All ENA members would be invited to participate, not only the current participants. The ENA General Assembly should approve the Green Cities future campaign in the summer 2023 meeting.

**8. Attracting Young People WG.**

Lucien Verschoren informed all about the WG activity, getting information from different countries through the ENA members, and suggested looking for more significant objectives, like an Erasmus+

project, to engage young people in our sector. A WG online meeting, open to all members, will be convened next November or December. The main goal is to attract people from outside the sector to come work in it, and promoting international internships would make the sector more attractive. The delegates from Ireland and Germany came up with additional ideas.

#### **9. Legislation WG.**

SG informed all that ENA had applied for membership to the EC Advisory Group on Sustainability of Food Systems (which will replace the Advisory Group on Food Safety, Animal and Plant Health from 15 July 2022) and was recently accepted. He highlighted the importance of giving feedback to the European Commission on all legislative proposals that concern our sector. Regarding the revision of the Plant Health Regulation, three main discussions were open: the provisions for the attachment of PP -Plant Passport- to trade units, the electronic PP (the NPPOs of the MS are pushing for it, and SG believed they like it because all data would go through the government computers) and the use of PP on distance sales.

It was agreed to have an online meeting soon with those interested to discuss and form a joint opinion. Two consultations are now open in the EC (legislation for plants produced by certain new genomic techniques and sustainable use of pesticides), and all were advised to answer directly on the revision of the plant and forest reproductive material legislation questionnaire.

#### **10. ENA Working Group's guidelines.**

The President argued the need to structure the work of the WGs to make them efficient, and proposed the following guidelines:

- The General Assembly constitutes the working groups, which have a consultative character.
- The General Assembly nominates the Chair of a working group.
- The working group must have at least a Chair and three members from different countries. The names and contact details of each participant will be communicated to the Chair and the Secretary General and shared with the rest of the participants.
- The Chair of a working group submits to the Secretary-General (SG) a detailed programme of action with limited objectives, which may be realisable in the short and middle to long term.
- The working groups will be composed of members and experts nominated by the member organisations for a period of at least two years.
- The SG may attend all meetings of the working groups in an advisory capacity, but his presence is not indispensable. The members of the Board have the right to participate in WG meetings and deliberations.
- The Chair of a working group will organise at least two physical or online meetings a year and will give an update to the two General Assemblies every year.
- The Secretary-General will receive a draft agenda before the meeting and a list of actions and decisions taken after the meetings.
- Projects and costs involved, or ENA capacity, will have to be approved in advance by the Board of ENA.

- The work will be voluntary (unpaid), although travel expenses might be reimbursed exceptionally with the Board's prior approval.
- The Board, the President and the SG can always be asked for help if needed.

The guidelines were agreed on, and these will entirely replace the chapter VI. WORKING COMMITTEES of the ENA Domestic Regulations.

#### **11. Establishing an Advisory Group to the ENA board (EU & non-EU; N, S, E, W).**

The President proposed to have an Advisory Group for the ENA Board to be consulted when the Board needs some help collecting extra ideas or discussing opinions, from four different parts of Europe (N, S, E, W) and one from outside the EU. The General Assembly agreed on the following volunteers: Tomi Tahvonon (Finland, North), Val Farrell (Ireland, West), Luigi Pagliani (Italy, South), Mateusz Milczyński (Poland, East), and Umut Sakarya (Turkey, non-EU).

#### **12. The 3 billion trees EU initiative.**

Vice-President Tim Van Hulle explained the meetings held with the European Commission Unit in the Directorate-General for Environment responsible for the 3 billion trees initiative. The EU is only a facilitator of this initiative and doesn't finance it, so the Vice-President recommended each organisation to think what can be done to help plant the additional 3 billion trees by 2030. It is an opportunity for nurseries, but it needs planning, and Tim Van Hulle offered to convey the members' questions and proposals to the EC.

The President asked to share with ENA the initiatives in each country. In Belgium, they already have programs financed by the Government; in Ireland, there are difficulties in harvesting timber due to regulations imposed by the greens, hindering plantings; in Bulgaria the association is preparing the participation in a subsidised LIFE project and offered the other ENA members to participate together; and Italy has a plan financed by their Government with 300 million Euros called Urban Forestry to plant trees in cities, so the association is looking how to increase production and to have 'growing contracts' with the cities to meet their needs.

It was stated that the number of trees is not realistic because of the amount of additional young plants and land necessary every year. As money or land might be a constraint, nurseries should sign a contract with their customers before committing to producing plants.

#### **13. European nurseries' statistics.**

86% of ENA members had sent their data, which was less than in the past.

The President encouraged every country to supply the best figures possible in order to discuss with the EU or other organisations, as we need to know our potential and be able to show it.

			Country	# Nurseries	Production area (ha)	# workers	Production value	Year
EU	ENA	BE	Belgium	905	5.380	1.383	€ 378.000.000	2020
EU	ENA	BG	Bulgaria	63	515	800	€ 14.000.000	2018
EU	ENA	CZ	Czech republic	248	3.198	7.200	€ 72.300.000	2021
EU	ENA	DK	Denmark	93	2.200	1.500	€ 110.000.000	2021
EU	ENA	FI	Finland	70	327	500	€ 35.500.000	2021
EU	ENA	FR	France	1.239	12.262	7.150	€ 596.292.000	2019
EU	ENA	DE	Germany	1.536	17.160	29.000	€ 1.307.000.000	17/21
EU	ENA	GR	Greece	1.044	1.420	9.580	€ 54.000.000	2022
EU	ENA	HU	Hungary	360	2.670	3.100	€ 68.000.000	2020
EU	ENA	IE	Ireland	173	925	1.050	€ 48.000.000	2021
EU	ENA	IT	Italy	7.459	15.890	32.500	€ 1.265.000.000	2015
EU	ENA	NL	Netherlands	2.929	17.187	6.237	€ 900.000.000	20/21
	ENA	NO	Norway	166	210	500	€ 24.000.000	2017
EU	ENA	PL	Poland	3.239	6.998	18.000	€ 350.000.000	2021
EU	ENA	PT	Portugal*	1.240	1.996	5.222	€ 547.000.000	2019
	ENA	RS	Serbia	410	1.100	1.000	€ 25.000.000	21/22
EU	ENA	ES	Spain	20.402	10.186	18.603	€ 900.000.000	2022
EU	ENA	SE	Sweden	118	516	350	€ 105.000.000	19/20
	ENA	CH	Switzerland	340	858	1.970	€ 195.805.306	2021
	ENA	TR	Turkey	970	5.500	53.000	€ 690.000.000	2021
	ENA	UA	Ukraine	110	1.900	2.000	€ 30.000.000	2020
EU	ENA	UK	United Kingdom	1.000	10.000	12.000	€ 1.350.000.000	2016
	ENA			44.114	118.398	212.645	€ 9.064.897.306	

#### 14. The market situation in each country.

The participants from Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Serbia, and Sweden, described the situation in their countries.

*This information is included as an annexe to these minutes.*

#### 15. ENA strategy.

Vice-president Tim Van Hulle proposed a strategy for the future of ENA, he had prepared in cooperation with the Board, that was open for discussion and improvement and to be approved by the General Assembly in a next meeting. *This information is included as an annexe to these minutes.*

The President pointed out that having a directory of politicians and decision-makers, created with the cooperation of all ENA members, would give us access to a powerful network.

He invited all to manifest their concerns and proposals and asked everyone to take the proposal back to their organisations for further input. Several proposals were voiced to improve the financial income for ENA, doubling the membership fees –although there is a risk of losing a few members–, charging companies to participate in the knowledge platform, charging the organisations benefiting from participating in a project or activity, having a sponsorship program –without losing our independence–, providing consulting services to the members or nurseries, adjusting the

membership fee to the inflation. Other proposals to strengthen ENA were: using the National Secretary of the President to support the Secretary General, extending the duration of the Presidency to 3 years, improving some elements of communication (website).

The President asked everyone to think about the strategy, the vision, the mission, and to email ENA their suggestions, comments, disagreements, and alternatives by the end of September, in order to have an online meeting to refine the document.

As the budget will need to be adjusted to this strategy, the President mentioned that around 50% more will be needed to proceed to the next steps.

The President will bring the proposal of extending the term of the Board to 3 years and the other agreed parts of the strategy to the following General Assembly meeting for approval.

#### **16. Next meetings.**

- Next General Assembly Meeting: Thursday, 26 January 2023, 09h30, at IPM, Essen, Germany.
- European nurseries reception: Wednesday, 25 January 2023, 18h00 hosted by BdB at IPM.
- Summer meeting 2023 in Turkey: Umut Sakarya informed all that it will be held in the Istanbul area, in June, with visits to nurseries and a tourist option, and they will submit a proposal at the next General Assembly meeting.
- Summer meeting 2024: Hungary had offered to host it.

#### **17. AOB.**

- Glyphosate: prohibitions differ depending on the country, and it was agreed to look for the official status in the EU.
- Peat: to share all information regarding the reduction and possible prohibitions. It was pointed out that exporting plants with peat to other countries, like China, should not be allowed.
- France: they are interested in sharing the information on the plastic tax implementation.
- In Sweden, some nurseries want to calculate their plant production carbon footprint.
- A proposal was made to have another worldwide round table, like the one held in Sicily in 2013.
- The new policy for WGs will be implemented in the following months.
- If we had an online Knowledge Platform, nurseries might be there too. The link to the nurseries in each country is included in the Members section of the website, if provided by the country.
- Although supermarket trade insists they want everything recyclable, it seems more like greenwashing than a real need.

As this was Harm Horlings' last meeting, the President thanked him for all the time and energy used for ENA and the Sustainability WG, his commitment to the sector, and his unconditional support to ENA, wishing him health and happiness for the coming years. Harm Horlings commented that he had been active in ENA for more than ten years, he valued most the contact between the several countries, especially remembered the summer meeting in Norway for the marvellous landscapes visited and the changes provoked, and finally hoped that ENA would guide the sector to improve its sustainability.

President Henk Raaijmakers thanked all for their participation and adjourned the meeting.