



EUROPEAN NURSERYSTOCK ASSOCIATION

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ENA Secretaries Meeting

Brussels | FEPEX – EUCOFEL office | 38, rue de la Loi / Wetstraat (*) 4th floor
10h15 Thursday 7th June 2018 (till 14h15)

Minutes of the ENA Secretaries Meeting held at 10h15 on Thursday **7th June 2018** at the FEPEX – EUCOFEL office, 38, rue de la Loi – Wetstraat 4th floor, **Brussels**.

Present:

Miet Poppe (BE), Anneke van Dijk (NL), Patrick Farrell (IE), Markus Guhl (DE), David Brown (UK), Edoardo Sciutti (IT), Alba Ridao-Bouloumié (ES), Harm Horlings (NL - Certifications and Labels WG Chairman), Tim Edwards (UK - President) and Josep M. Pagès (ENA Secretary General -*SG in the text*-).

1. President's Welcome.

The President welcomed the Secretaries and WG chairman.

2. Apologies for absence.

Maja Persson (SE), Caroline Föllmi (CH), Boyana Vasileva (BG), Nikos Thymakis (GR), Jyri Uimonen (FI), Dragana Skočajić (RS), Grzegorz Falkowski (PL), Luis Martín (ES), Emmanuelle Bougault (FR), Leon Smet (NL), Romain Manceau (FR), Miray Engin (TR) and Jan-Dieter Bruns (DE – Vice-President) had sent apologies.

3. Adoption of Agenda.

The agenda was agreed on without changes.

4. Minutes: approval of the minutes of the previous Secretaries meeting held on 12th December 2017.

The minutes were agreed on.

5. Matters arising from the minutes.

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

6. Promotion Working Group: "Green Cities for a Sustainable Europe" project 2018-2020.

SG informed the meeting that the project had started, that participants had held 2 coordination meetings, an agreement between ENA and each of the participants (ENA members in BE, BG, DE, DK, FR, NL and UK) had been signed, a contract between ENA and Horticonsult to act as Implementing Body (IB) had also been signed, a new bank account dedicated to the project had been opened and the procedure to finance the project and the payment method had each been established. A newly created logo for the campaign was shown and the participants were informed that a new project website was being designed. A first activity, a zero measurement to demonstrate the awareness of the Green Cities concept among professionals in each participating country, has also been made and the first action in France was carried out last week.

On the other hand, it was mentioned that some issues had not been solved yet, like the application of VAT to the project (waiting to hear back from the tax office in Belgium). Alba Ridao-Bouloumié (ES) offered her help using her financial advisor in Belgium. ENA has incurred some unbudgeted costs (legal advice, tax advice) that will be charged to the project. Secretaries were advised to look at the bank money transfer costs. The President also informed that ENA was looking to take out indemnity insurance and complained that Horticonsult had not given the best advice to ENA regarding this and other issues. It was pointed out that having another IB was an option and it was agreed that these concerns regarding the IB will be put to the next participant's coordination meeting. The President stressed that these were lessons learned and will be very useful for the projects to be developed in the future, i.e. to ensure any future applications identify more money to cover ENA's likely costs. It was agreed the project accomplishments and activities will be periodically reported to all ENA members and to the General Assembly.

7. Environmental and sustainable certifications and labels.

Harm Horlings (NL - Certifications and Labels WG Chairman), introduced the meeting to be held just after the Secretaries meeting. He introduced that EMAS (the EU Eco-Management and Audit Scheme) might also be taken into account and he emphasized again that having a European sustainability certification on top of the national certification might help the European trade of nursery stock.

8. EU Legislation Working Group:

The President mentioned that Marc Van Hulle (WG Chairman) was not very well and he has not been working the last few months. It was agreed on to wish him well on behalf of all.

a. IAS Invasive Alien Plants

The President summarized that creating lists of Invasive Alien Species (IAS) is a continuous process, that needs to be carefully followed because any species can be easily added to the list but it's difficult to take them off the list. He added that ENA is now member of the EC WG on IAS, in which it is represented by Dr Marco Hoffman. Dr Hoffman participated in a first meeting that was summarized as follows:

- EC admitted that the communication in the first year was not sufficient.
- Climatic zones will not be taken into account to classify the species on the list.
- Comments by several stakeholders (incl. ENA) on the Delegated Act had been taken very seriously, although not fully accepted.
- EC is worried about sales of IAS via internet.
- EC is open to make exceptions on specific varieties of species on the list; e.g. sterile varieties.
- 3 taskforces were established (Engagement of stakeholders, Sectorial communication and Community engagement).

Because Marco Hoffman doesn't have enough time to fully participate in these taskforces and because Copa-Cogeca and LTO are already participating in them, it was agreed on cooperating with these two organisations instead of participating directly.

SG reminded the participants that there was a new opening to become member of the EC WG on IAS, that might be used by ENA member organisations.

A working procedure was discussed and finally agreed on: when new species are proposed for the IAS lists, Dr Marco Hoffman will make a first review and highlight the areas of concern and ENA will inform all our members. If a big enough problem were coming up, an ENA WG might be initiated; meanwhile ENA will rely on Dr Hoffman's advice and ENA members' replies.

b. *Xylella fastidiosa*

SG said that there were no significant changes in the situation in France.

Regarding Italy, Edoardo Sciutti (IT) informed that the Demarcated Area (DA) had been redefined and was established because the buffer zone had gone North by 20 km, although this had not been officially published yet. Last week, the EC officers inspected the zone: the EC wants strict measures to be applied, accurately following the regulations. EC evaluated the monitoring and considered it suitable. Italy had been fined by the EC for not taking appropriate measures. With the new map, many nurseries in the area might be included in the DA. They were waiting for the official map. They were relying that the regional plant protection organisation might give the plant passport authorisation to those nurseries, although it was uncertain. The EC authorities didn't care about nurseries being blocked in application of the official measures.

Regarding Spain, Alba Ridaou-Bouloumié (ES) recapped that the Balearic Islands are a containment area and that official eradication measures were being applied to the outbreaks in Alicante (almond trees), Madrid (olive trees) and El Ejido - Almeria (a few *Polygala myrtifolia* plants arrived from Portugal).

Regarding the Xf-free certification proposal of the XF-Actors project, Eduardo Sciutti (IT) opined that it is mostly to be used for basic/propagation material. He believed that it's a good protocol of management but not a *Xylella*-free certification.

Harm Horlings (NL) pointed out that the mesh size written in the proposal would prevent the entrance of any insect but would make growing plants quite difficult. For this reason, it was agreed on asking for further developments and experiences.

c. *Anoplophora* spp. outbreaks in Europe.

IT informed that there was an outbreak in Pistoia that was well managed by the authorities. Some nurseries were blocked, plants cut down, a demarcated zone was established and no more symptoms had been seen. They are monitoring the area with traps.

UK had an outbreak a few years ago, that was eradicated (cost ~ £10M). In Border Inspections there are occasional interceptions of *Anoplophora* in pallets from China.

UK reminded that *Castanea* and *Quercus* need ZP Plant Passport to enter the UK because of *Thaumetopoea processioneae* and *Cryphonectria parasitica* and advised nurseries exporting to the UK to strictly follow the EC phytosanitary rules.

Patrick Farrell (IE) questioned if professional operators were aware of Plant Health Regulations. SG informed that the EC had the same feeling and that for this reason, an EC Rising Awareness WG was established, in which ENA participates.

Finally, SG reminded the participants that the EC Plant Health Unit had asked for data of imported plants -of certain species- from outside the EU and thanked all for their cooperation. It was agreed on asking the EC why they need this information.

9. New member application (Czech organisation)

SG informed that an application from the Czech organisation Svaz školkařů ČR, z.s. (the Nursery Association of the Czech Republic) had been received. It was agreed on inviting them to the next General Assembly meeting and to ask them to make a presentation of the Czech nursery sector. It was agreed on sharing the application form with all ENA members and to propose the CZ organisation membership to the GA, with the smaller of the two categories.

10. ENA reception in Brussels, next autumn.

Tim Edwards reminded that he is not going to be President in autumn and the new President should take a major role in this. Markus Guhl (DE) made two proposals: 1) an open meeting with invitations to a couple of MEPs and one or two keynote speeches from our side and perhaps one MEP and a following get together, or 2) to invite exclusively three or four MEPs to a dinner to discuss intensively with them one or two important issues of our sector.

Possible themes of discussion were pointed out: Plant Health, IAS, CAP, Brexit.

The President informed that the Vice-President wanted to include a discussion on Brexit and the UK Plant Health Regulations after Brexit in the meeting today and potentially in the GA, but the Brexit agreement is in negotiations now and therefore unknown, although it might be a discussion issue at the time of the autumn event.

Alba Ridao-Bouloumié (ES) recommended a lunch preceded by a meeting at the European Parliament, opened to many MEPs and with the possibility of having languages' interpretation, as a better option to make a great event. SG remarked that, for this first edition, we should be unpretentious. Alba Ridao-Bouloumié (ES) offered her full cooperation from her Brussels' office to produce a successful event.

Markus Guhl (DE) volunteered to ask the better way to organise this event and to identify the more interesting MEPs to invite. A few potential dates were identified: 15 or 16 October 2018 and 6 or 7 November 2018. He will present a proposal at the next GA meeting.

11. Next General Assembly meeting preparation, other items to include in the Agenda

a. Financial report.

The Secretaries were informed that, due to the volume of the Green Cities Project financial movements, the accounts of 2018 will not be ready for approval at the January 2019 GA meeting.

It was agreed on carefully looking at the Belgian laws about the period to officially file the financial accounts and to discuss at the GA meeting to change the ENA Domestic Regulations. An option might be to allow electronic voting approval if the summer General Assembly meeting is held after the official deadline to file the accounts, at least for the duration of the Green Cities or a similar size project. The budget might be discussed and approved at January's GA and the GA might receive an advance draft of the previous year accounts. Instead of electronic approval, after receiving the draft accounts of the previous year, the GA might give permission to the ENA Board of Directors to approve them.

b. Elections.

Meeting participants were informed that the General Assembly will elect a new Board of Directors (President, Vice-president and Treasurer). President Tim Edwards cannot be re-elected after his 2 terms mandate. The new President will propose a Secretary-General to the GA. President Tim Edwards explained that he has been working with Vice-President Jan-Dieter Bruns who has agreed to be put forward to be nominated for President. They both have made approaches and have found somebody who is willing to be nominated for Vice-president. The current Treasurer and Secretary-General are also willing to continue. President Tim Edwards reminded all that, however, everybody is invited to put forward nominations.

c. State of industry.

SG reminded all participants to send their state of industry of the last season before the next GA meeting.

d. New address.

SG informed that AVBS, the ENA member in Belgium where ENA is officially based, had recently moved to a new office at Kortrijksesteenweg 1144 J, 9051 Sint-Denijs-Westrem (close to Gent, Belgium). For this reason, it was agreed on proposing the GA to approve a modification of the Registered Office in the Articles of the Association.

e. Participation.

David Brown (UK) reported that 42 participants were booked for the next summer GA meeting.



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12. Date of Next Secretaries Meeting.

The next Secretaries meeting will be scheduled in autumn, adjacent to the event in Brussels.

13. AOB

a. Edoardo Sciutti (IT) informed that their organisation elected a new President, Mr Leonardo Capitanio, who sent greetings to all. President Tim Edwards asked to send back our greetings and our congratulations.

b. SG informed all that ENA had been invited again by Flormart to have a meeting in Padova (Italy, on 19, 20 or 21 September 2018) such as last year. As there is no need to organise a formal meeting, it was agreed on asking ENA members if they are going to be there and, if there is a good reply, to meet up.

c. SG informed the secretaries that the Turkish member (SÜSBIR) would like to propose an employee exchange program between nurseries in the European countries. It was considered a good idea, although in the past, the bureaucracy and the legislation barriers ruined the “apprenticeship” initiative developed within ENA. It was pointed out that it should be very simple: to have on the website a list of nurseries willing to cooperate and a list of people interested in participating. It was agreed on asking Turkey to make the proposal to the GA and to ask the EC if there is a program to facilitate these exchanges.

d. Patrick Farrell (IE) asked how other countries are managing the employment of workers from non-EU countries, because it is a big issue in the nursery stock sector in his country, where they need skilled labour. €9,55/hour is the minimum wage in Ireland. The President volunteered to look for a summary he had recently read.

The President Tim Edwards thanked Alba Ridao-Bouloumié (ES) and her organisation (Fepex-Eucofel) for the meeting room and for the lunch preparation, thanked all Secretaries for their participation and adjourned the meeting at 14h00.