



EUROPEAN NURSERYSTOCK ASSOCIATION

www.enaplants.eu

Minutes of the ENA Secretaries Meeting held at 11h00 on Tuesday **30th May 2017** at the Representation of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia to the European Union, Rue Montoyer 47 - Montoyerstraat 47, **Brussels**.

Present:

Alba Ridao-Bouloumié (ES), Markus Guhl (DE), Miet Poppe (BE), David Brown (UK), Mina Tsonkova (PL), Marc Van Hulle (BE – Legislation WG Chairman), Emmanuelle Bougault (FR), Helma Hoff (NL), Nikos Thymakis (GR), Jan-Dieter Bruns (DE – Vice-President), and Josep M. Pagès (Secretary General -*SG in the text*-).

1. President's Welcome.

Vice- President Jan-Dieter Bruns welcomed all participants, explained that the President Tim Edwards was absent for last minute health reasons and wished him all the best, looking forward to meeting him in Finland, and ended giving the floor to the SG.

2. Apologies for absence.

Tim Edwards (UK – President), Maja Persson (SE), Stanislav Dontsov (UA), Leon Smet (NL – Promotion WG Chairman), Caroline Föllmi (CH), Harm Horlings (NL), Elaine M. Farrell (IE), Boyana Vasileva (BG), Luigi Pagliani (IT), Jyri Uimonen (FI), Edoardo Sciutti (IT) and Milka Glavendekic (RS) had sent apologies.

3. Agreement of the Agenda.

The agenda was agreed on without changes and the organisation of the planting tree ceremony, closing the 25th anniversary of ENA, was decided: Marc Van Hulle (BE – Legislation WG Chairman) was going to read the President's speech, and it was also agreed on mentioning *Xylella fastidiosa*, IAS and PPP as big concerns for nurserymen at the lunch with the MEP Mr Karl-Heinz Florenz.

4. Minutes: approval of the minutes of the previous Secretaries meeting held on 17th November 2016.

The minutes were agreed on.

5. Matters arising from the minutes.

Regarding the financial situation, SG updated the participants that the membership fee for 2017 had been received from Ukraine, Hungary, Finland, Switzerland, Spain, France, Netherlands (50%), Sweden, Belgium, Germany, Norway and Poland.

SG also asked the secretaries to prepare a well written report of the state of the industry in each country for next summer meeting.

6. Internal ENA policy on participating in external events and endorsing activities.

ENA is being invited at increasing frequency to participate in events such as, forums, symposia, meetings, etc. and/or to sponsor or endorse them. For this reason, a proposal with the principals to agree on had been sent to all ENA members. It was agreed on all the principles of the proposal written

below and, following David Brown (UK) suggestion, it was also agreed on consulting the ENA member organisation in the country, if they were not the organiser.

- *The application for participation or endorsement will be submitted to ENA in writing, in a timely fashion.*
- *The participation or endorsement must be approved by the ENA board of officers. The decision will be taken case-by-case for each invitation received.*
- *ENA has no obligation to participate and the decision to do so will depend on the availability of an appropriate person.*
- *In principle, all travelling and accommodation costs will be met by the inviting organisation, except that the ENA board of officers considers it an event of general interest for ENA or that other reasons justify any costs that must be met by ENA.*
- *The endorsement will have no cost for ENA.*
- *Ideally, participation or endorsement in events will be planned and will be given with the intention of achieving an objective that has been discussed and has the support of ENA's General Assembly, rather than being impulsive, ad-hoc and in reaction to an unforeseen opportunity.*
- *If the invitation doesn't come from the ENA member in the country, the ENA member organisation will be consulted before deciding.*

It was agreed on submitting the proposal to the GA for approval and, once approved, to include it in the ENA internal rules.

Marc Van Hulle (BE – Legislation WG Chairman) informed the group of the meeting held the previous day with AVBS officers, where ENA is officially based, in which he participated with the ENA Treasurer Willy de Nolf and the ENA SG, to better coordinate the official paperwork that ENA must fulfil. It was agreed on carefully looking at the wording of the statutes and, if necessary, to improve it to clearly allow the Vice-President to sign official papers in the absence of the President, and to allow ENA officers direct access to the bank account.

ACTION:

- To submit the Internal ENA policy on participating in external events and endorsing activities to the GA.
- To study the ENA statutes and, if necessary, to prepare a proposal for the GA to change them in the terms mentioned (SG, ENA officers).

7. Promotion Working Group: "Green City" proposal.

SG informed the meeting that a new proposal had been presented with seven participating countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Denmark, France, United Kingdom and the Netherlands) after inviting all ENA members to participate, as previously agreed. The proposal has a more unified and more European approach, including a European award for the final year of the period 2018-2020, investing a total of 2,1 million €, out of which around 1,7 M€ (80%) should come from the EC. The proposal is now being evaluated by CHAFEA and the outcome should be known in late September. SG finally mentioned that the application had no cost for ENA nor for the participants.

8. Environmental and sustainable certifications and labels.

SG recapped that Harm Horlings (Certifications and Labels WG Chairman), had met with FSI, MPS and FTFP and that he finally proposed to the GA to have an upper level label, like “Fair Trees Fair Plants”, on top of the other national or private labels as the quickest, easiest and cheapest way of having a common one. SG informed that, unfortunately, the FTFP Foundation announced last month that it will close down and, consequently, this is not an option anymore. Harm Horlings is still working on a proposal for the GA with an easy and affordable way for European nurseries to have a common certification and label.

9. EU Legislation Working Group:

SG reminded the participants, regarding Plant Passporting according to the new Plant Health Regulation, that all plants for planting will need to be accompanied by a Plant Passport in case of movements between professionals, but not for selling to the final consumer (however, if final destination is, for example, a fruit grower, then there is also a need for a plant passport because the fruit producer is also considered to be a ‘professional’). SG informed that the EU harmonised format of the plant passports still needs to be decided. The EC started working on it, during discussions with the Member States, and after having a Commission proposal ready, they will organize stakeholder consultation, via the Commission’s stakeholder webpage, and this might be around summertime.

Nikos Thymakis (GR) warned the meeting participants of **plants without Plant Passport that might be going out from Demarcated Areas for *Xylella fastidiosa*, posing a great risk** for the place of destination, and he asked to do something to protect the nursery production and business.

Marc Van Hulle (BE – Legislation WG Chairman) alerted that some countries, within and outside the EU, were asking for a confirmation that plants are free from *Xylella fastidiosa*, and he defended that **the Plant Passport should be, within the EU, the only guarantee that plants are healthy, without any extra confirmation.**

ACTION:

- To ask for and to share the information of the EC’s draft on implementing the harmonized Plant Passport (SG, ALL members).

a. CN Codes

Marc Van Hulle (BE – Legislation WG Chairman) reminded the group that the new customs codes of the Combined Nomenclature entered into force on 1st January 2016. Most participants mentioned that the implementation was not difficult and Marc Van Hulle’s opinion was that the statistics will be more detailed but they will have the disadvantage of not being comparable with previous years. None of the members had seen their national statistics of external trade in 2016. It was agreed on looking for them and that no changes to the CN codes were necessary.

ACTION:

- To look for the detailed EU statistics of external trade in 2016 (SG).

b. Invasive Alien Plants

SG informed the participants that, as agreed, ENA submitted the feedback to the EC regarding the Draft Commission Implementing Act updating the List of invasive alien species (IAS) of Union concern, and asked the participants **to contact their national representative in the IAS Committee to lobby against listing *Asclepias syriaca*, *Gunnera tinctoria* and *Pennisetum setaceum*** that will be voted on during the next meeting of the IAS Committee, scheduled on 19th June 2017.

Helma Hoff (NL) said that the list is going to be voted approving or disapproving the entire list, not the individual species included. She also pointed out the problems arising in the Netherlands because the authorities have begun to control IAS, being a big concern and having public discussions on the media, although mostly on animal IAS at this time.

It was agreed on informing the GA of the result of this meeting, to express our concerns to the MEP Mr Florenz, including the lack of the economic and social impact, the lack of transparency of the process and to advocate to use national and regional lists.

ACTION:

- to send the list of IAS committee participants to be lobbied by national organisations (SG).

c. Plant Protection Products

Marc Van Hulle (BE – Legislation WG Chairman) introduced Dr Bruno Gobin, chairman of the Commodity Expert Group ORNAMENTALS in the Minor Uses Coordination Facility. Bruno Gobin pointed out that the **registration of PPP is a national issue because it is made under national legislation and at the national level and, therefore, getting PPP registered is up to each country.** For ornamentals, as a minor crop (in all EU countries except in the Netherlands), it is necessary to convince national authorities that PPPs are necessary. He advised ENA members to have a good relationship with national authorities and to work together with them. He added the example of Belgium, where they make trials, often apart from the companies, to get approvals for ornamentals, involving the authorities, researchers, registration authorities and the growers. In 2010, the Mutual Recognition opened new possibilities: within each of the three climate zones it should be easy to register a product in a country that is already registered in another one in the same zone.

Bruno Gobin added that they meet twice a year, to define the needs of the ornamental sector, and to study how to better ask for a registration: for a single specie or for a group -in Belgium they have five groups (pot plants, perennials, cut flowers, ornamental trees, forest trees) and they make trials on representative species of each group; in Germany, there is only one “ornamentals” group, whereas in Italy a registration is necessary for each specie-. This makes the mutual recognition more complicated.

He explained that the Minor Uses Coordination Facility (www.minoruses.eu) was established by the EC and they maintain the European Minor Uses Database (EUMUDA) as a key structure to include all the trials, identify minor uses gaps, share this information and cooperate to find

solutions. Companies may also contribute but they often don't. They also invite companies to show what new PPPs have or are coming.

Bruno Gobin summarized that they meet, they exchange data and they try to make this data accessible to be used for Registration (efficacy trials, toxicity trials, break down studies of water, soil, etc. and residual analysis of everything are necessary). Anyway, he mentioned that in each country might be different what the authorities ask for registration of ornamentals. In his opinion, for ornamentals, only efficacy trials should be asked for, but because of the large range of species, there are more difficulties.

He added that all active ingredients approved before 1991 need to be re-registered at the EU level, and consequently, the registered products for ornamentals need to be re-registered again. Because of all this, companies are often more focused on re-registering PPPs than on developing new ones.

Finally, he advised ENA member organisations **to lobby each country's authorities, to make trials and to share the information**. Politically, ENA might lobby the EC asking for automatic re-registering of minor uses. He reasoned that ENA cannot participate in the MUCF because they use confidential information from the trials that cannot be shared.

Marc Van Hulle (BE – Legislation WG Chairman) thanked Dr Bruno Gobin for the explanations given and asked the SG to resend the PPPs Minor Uses information to all ENA members.

ACTION:

- At the national level, each country organisation needs to mark its priorities and deal with national authorities.
- At the EU level, to ask all ENA members for information of PPPs needed, to list a few PPPs and mark our ENA priorities (SG, ALL members).
- To inform the GA.

d. *Xylella fastidiosa*

SG commented that the *Xylella fastidiosa* Working Group had not been very active, with a few exceptions. Some proposals asking for a modification of the EU Decision on *Xylella* had been received, but a dynamic dialogue on the proposals had not been established. David Brown (UK) remarked that he asked for scientific evidence supporting a proposal but it had not been submitted.

SG informed that the EC is concerned about the new findings north of the infected zone in Apulia (IT) and the very low eradication speed; for this reason, the EC is pushing Italian authorities. The EC is also late in publishing the update of host plants and Demarcated Areas and they have already begun discussing the **modification of the Decision**, to allow planting resistant varieties in the infected areas and even to soften the requirements for nurseries; i.e. reducing the area of 200m around nurseries. The text -not publicly available- **will be on the table of the next Plant Health committee meeting** in June and it will probably be voted in the July committee.

Nikos Thymakis (GR) asked for more control by the authorities, doing more sampling and more often, but some meeting participants opposed to an **increased rate of controls**. Asking EC for more information and a larger budget for sampling in countries, was also proposed.

Alba Ridao-Bouloumié (ES) expressed the concern of their nurserymen that are having restrictions to sell plants to Corsica (FR) and asked ENA to consider taking the appropriate actions so that the EU principle of free movement of goods is guaranteed. Although ENA had previously declared that it is against any additional measure implemented by the EU Member States preventing the free circulation of goods within the EU, there was not unanimity in the group to initiate this action now. Nevertheless, Alba Ridao-Bouloumié (ES) informed that the Spanish organisation is going to directly send a letter to the EC asking for the enforcement of the European law in Corsica. It was agreed on drafting a **letter to the EC complaining about the national rules to enter plants into Corsica (FR) and about the slow eradication rate in Apulia (IT)**, and to circulate the draft to the ENA members before the GA.

David Brown (UK) recommended asking EFSA for a new Pest Risk Assessment, based on new developments since the first one was made.

Finally, it was agreed on preparing a proposal with all the suggestions discussed to let the GA decide on how to proceed.

ACTION:

- To prepare a proposal for the GA, including all previous propositions.

e. EU Fertilizers Draft Regulation.

SG informed the meeting participants that in the European Parliament ENVI Committee, on the same day, there was a voting on the 853 amendments tabled, including the biodegradability criteria for coating agents.

It was agreed to keep an eye on the output of the voting and inform the GA.

10. Next meetings

a. Date of Next Secretaries Meeting.

As many ENA members are going to be in Padova (IT) in September, attending the Flormart's invitation, it was proposed to convene an ENA Secretaries meeting there. Nevertheless, and because it will be many months earlier than the January's GA, if necessary, a Secretaries meeting could be convened in Brussels or online before the GA.

It was also agreed on proposing the **Thursday 25th January 2018 to have the ENA winter General Assembly at IPM-Essen.**



EUROPEAN NURSERYSTOCK ASSOCIATION

www.enaplants.eu

Markus Guhl (DE) offered, on behalf of his organisation, to organise the ENA reception on the previous evening -Wednesday 24th January 2018- at the BdB booth in IPM. Finally, it was agreed on having an ENA secretaries' dinner on that Wednesday evening.

b. Summer'18 General Assembly: expressions of interest

SG informed the participants that the Ukrainian Plant Industry Association from Ukraine and the Horticultural Trades Association from the United Kingdom had expressed their interest in hosting the summer 2018 ENA General Assembly in their respective countries. It was agreed on proposing to the GA to have the 2018 summer meeting in the United Kingdom and the 2019 summer meeting in Ukraine.

11. AOB

Helma Hoff (NL) proposed to discuss the **consequences of BREXIT** at the next GA. David Brown (UK) argued that there won't be new information by the end of June; in fact, they are going to have elections and a new government next week. Alba Ridao-Bouloumié (ES) claimed that a lot of information had already been published by the EU to have a debate and Helma Hoff (NL) maintained that a discussion might begin, asking each country for their viewpoints and expectations. It was agreed on letting the ENA officers decide on the inclusion of this topic in the next General Assembly.

SG thanked the BdB for the meeting room, the lunch and the planting tree ceremony organisation, thanked all for their participation wishing them a safe trip back home and adjourned the meeting at 15h50.