



Minutes of the 25th ECPGR Executive Committee meeting

13 February 2023 (h 15:00-16:30)
Online (Teams)

Present:

Marianne Lefort (Chair)
Birgitte Lund (Denmark)
Petra Engel (Italy)
Pavol Hauptvogel (Slovakia)
Beate Schierscher (Switzerland)
Lorenzo Maggioni (ECPGR Secretariat)

Evaluation of revised Grant Scheme proposal 'Euro-Potatoes' for the Sixth Call of Phase X

The approval of the proposal from the Potato Working Group was pending, since a slight revision of budget, scope and partners composition were requested to the Activity Coordinator. The submitted revisions were approved and B. Schierscher was invited to look into the remaining pending issue related to the participation of a Swiss partner.

The approved proposal is given in the table below. The full proposal and Letter of Award has been published on the ECPGR website (see [Outcomes of the Sixth Call](#)).

Title of approved proposals	Working Group	Coordinator	Budget
Get Potatoes United – Collaboration Action for Updating the Virtual European Potato Collection (Euro-Potatoes)	Potato	Veli-Matti Rokka, Finland	€ 30,000

Preparation for the meeting of all Working Group Chairs with the ExCo

The meeting is scheduled online for 8-9 March 2023. The draft agenda was presented by the Secretary. The first day of the meeting will focus on the ECPGR Table of priorities for Phase XI, with a presentation by the Secretary of the amendments proposed by the Working Groups, followed by discussion. The second day will be mainly dedicated to discuss the revised draft ToRs of ECPGR, specifically those sections related to the Working Groups. P. Engel accepted to introduce the draft document, with special attention to the Working Groups' section. The draft agenda was approved by the ExCo (see Annex 1).

Also the draft template for reporting by the WG Chairs on the past Phase X was discussed. The template was prepared by the Secretariat on the basis of a similar document used at the end of the past Phase IX. This will be largely pre-compiled by the Secretariat with available information. The template was accepted and considered sufficiently informative and concise, so that the reporting duties of the Chairs would not be too demanding.

Request to hold a meeting of the Cryopreservation Working Group

The ExCo discussed a request to hold the first meeting of the Cryopreservation WG, submitted by the co-Chairs of the WG. The meeting is planned for 3-4 May 2023 in Prague, Czech Republic. The main goal of the event will be to know each other within the ECPGR Working Group and establish cooperation between European experts on cryopreservation, provide and share information on cryopreservation activities in European countries, discuss the main

elements to be considered for the elaboration of a cryopreservation strategy in Europe and a platform for sharing information for a greater expansion of cryopreservation methods, increasing their reliability and routine use.

The ExCo thought that the organization of this meeting ahead of the Steering Committee meeting at the end of May was very appropriate and approved the request. For this initial meeting, it will be possible to invite more than one member per country, with a limit of maximum 30 participants in total.

Request for support from the Bulgarian genebank

The Bulgarian genebank had submitted a request for ECPGR support for the regeneration of soybean accessions at risk of being lost due to loss of viability. Owing to insufficient expertise locally, the genebank was planning to outsource the regeneration to the legumes department in the Institute of field and vegetable crops, Novi Sad, Serbia. The cost of this operation was estimated at € 25 per 200 accessions = € 5,000.

The list contains accessions acquired mainly between 1954 and 1983, largely of foreign origin. The EURISCO coordinator compared the list of 209 accessions with other existing accessions in EURISCO and concluded that possibly 68 of these accessions might be present in other genebanks (the comparison was only based on accession name, since other details were lacking).

The ExCo considered various aspects of this request:

- ECPGR does not have an established emergency fund for this type of operations. Consequently, there are no eligibility criteria to provide this support. It is expected that many other genebanks in Europe are facing similar problems, with difficulties to identify local sources of funding. In case ECPGR started to support Bulgaria, it should be prepared to consider many other possible cases.
- It was difficult to evaluate the importance of the specific accessions and their uniqueness in European genebanks, given the insufficient information available from the passport data and the lack of characterization data in EURISCO.
- It was not clear whether it would be appropriate for ECPGR to take the role of this type of support, or other institutions like the Crop Trust or FAO might be more suitable.

Overall, there was no consensus to support this request at the time being, but the ExCo suggested that this general issue of providing funds for emergency regeneration be included for discussion in the agenda of the next Steering Committee meeting (end of May 2023). Should the SC decide to establish an 'emergency fund', the SC will need to specify the conditions for the mobilization of such funds and draft eligibility criteria. The Secretary was requested to verify the eligibility criteria whereby the Crop Trust and FAO can offer similar emergency support. The ExCo will prepare a note on this issue for discussion at the next SC meeting.

Annex I

Meeting of the Working Groups Chairs and the Executive Committee

8-9 March 2023, online

Draft agenda

Wednesday 8 March

- 13:30 – 13:50** Welcome, objectives of the meeting and introduction of the participants (*M. Lefort*)
- 13:50 – 14:20** Table of ECPGR priorities for Phase XI – Revisions requested by the Working Groups and the Steering Committee (*introduced by L. Maggioni*)
- 14:20 – 15:20** Collective discussion on Tables 1 and 2 (In situ and on-farm)
- 15:20 – 15:40** BREAK
- 15:40 – 16:40** Collective discussion on Tables 3 and 4 (ex situ and documentation)
- 16:40 – 17:10** Collective discussion on Tables 5 and 6 (use and monitoring)
- 17:10 – 17:20** Wrap up of the day (*L. Maggioni*)

Thursday 9 March

- 13:00 – 13:20** ECPGR ToRs for the Working Groups and their Chairs (*introduced by P. Engel*)
- 13:20 – 14:20** Collective discussion on ToRs
- 14:20 – 14:35** BREAK
- 14:35 – 15:30** Collective discussion on ToRs (continued)
- 15:30 – 15:45** Reminder about the expected WG report for the SC meeting, with deadline 31 March (*L. Maggioni*)
- 15:45 – 16:15** Any other business
- 16:15 – 16:30** Wrap up of the day (*L. Maggioni*)