

Meeting of the members of the European Society for Evolutionary Biology, 29 August 2009 Torino, Italy

Present: officers: Siv Andersson (chair), Dieter Ebert, Allen Moore, Patsy Haccou, Isabelle Olivieri, Tadeusz Kawecki, Sarah P Otto, Nico Michiels

Members: Louise Johnson, Jacqui Shykoff, Leo Beukeboom, Roger Butlin, Alessandro Minelli, Hinrich Schulenburg, Ellen Decasestecker, Nico Michiels, Renate Wesselingh, Meral Kençe, Max Reuter, Ophélie Ronce, Nicolas Perrin, Manfred Milinski, Ralph Tiedemann, Jes Søe Pedersen, Jacek Radwan, Bradley Anholt, Christoph Vorburger, Paul Schmid-Hempel, Regula Schmid-Hempel, Martijn Egas, Bas Zwaan, Xavier Vekemans, Mark Brown, Stéphane Cornet, Thomas Schmitt, Sverre Lundemo, Michael Ritchie, David Nash, Nina Wedell, Kate Lessells

SA opens the meeting and welcomes everyone.

1. Secretary's report

DE presents the secretary's report and outlines the changes that have taken place during the last few years. He introduces the past and current officers present.

Membership increases steadily as usual.

The next congresses will be in Tübingen in 2011 and Lisbon in 2013 and the proposals of the organisers have been accepted by the council.

In 2012 there will be a joint four-day meeting of the North American evolutionary societies and ESEB in Ottawa in July.

Any proposals to organise future congresses will be welcomed by the officers.

The new council is introduced and the function of councillors is explained. Councillors and officers can be approached by any member about issues they wish to discuss.

DE points out that there are three councillors from the Netherlands, in opposition to the constitution.

He outlines the new contract with Wiley-Blackwell and emphasises that it is now up to date and in line with the new electronic times.

2. New ESEB constitution, registration legal status

DE explains the history and situation of the previously non-existent official constitution and mentions that there is now an official presence list that everyone has to sign and which will be attached to the officially approved minutes. The constitution in English and Dutch was available on-line for the members to submit any comments.

Martin Egas has found an inconsistency between articles 4.2 and 8.2. This will be amended as follows in article 8.2 of the Dutch version: 'De algemene vergadering kan besluiten om het bedrag van de jaarlijkse contributie te wijzigen. De leden kunnen in categorieën worden ingedeeld die een verschillende contributie betalen.' In the English version this article will read: 'The general meeting may decide to change the annual membership dues. The members may be classified in categories that each pay a different contribution.'

Article 16.3 is ambiguous about the precise moment when the newly elected councillors take office. This will be rephrased as follows in the Dutch version: 'De benoemde personen worden in de eerstvolgende algemene vergadering bekendgemaakt.'; the English version will become: "The appointed candidates will be announced at the general meeting."

Article 12.6 of the English version is inconsistent with the Dutch version and a final sentence will be added reading as follows: "Blank or invalid votes or abstentions will be counted in determining the quorum."

The proposal to implement these changes is unanimously accepted

The new ESEB constitution with changes is accepted unanimously.

The proposal that Patsy Haccou is appointed to carry out the formal registration with the notary is accepted unanimously.

TK thanks **DE** for his hard work on this and all other subjects for the society.

3. Financial report

PH presents the financial report and explains the accountant's report for 2007 and 2008. The discrepancy between the years is caused by a new way of keeping the books and does not reflect any actual financial changes. The financial situation of the society is very sound and no major changes are expected. The costs in the 2009 budget for the secretary's assistant are in fact intended for an assistant to the Editor in Chief, and will be substantially lower than in the budget because of cost share with the publisher.

Ralf Tiedemann reports on behalf of the financial committee that the accountant's report has been found correct. The financial report and the report from the finance committee are accepted unanimously.

4. Report of the Editor in Chief of the *Journal of Evolutionary Biology*

AM presents the editor's report and explains the necessity of employing a new editorial assistant to take over journal-related duties from the current assistant.

Starting 2009 the online version of the journal appears 12 times a year, which reduces publishing delays considerably. Since issue ?? the printed journal has also featured a cover image supplied by authors.

Submission rates have increased steadily over the years and look like levelling off at around 700.

Acceptance rates are down so the number of published papers remains more stable.

Handling times are remarkably fast; the single biggest limiting factor is return of revisions by authors.

Submissions come from around 40 countries worldwide with the US the main contributor.

For the future AM is working to increase the quality of submissions and make the journal attractive to more authors. In collaboration with Wiley-Blackwell there will be a pilot project to offer Open Access at very reduced cost, which will include a printed version as well. AM points to the What Would Darwin Do campaign and thinks that Darwin would be less concerned about Open Access and more about the future of scientific societies.

AM has organised Meet the Editor sessions at the SSE and the ESEB congresses in collaboration with other editors of major journals and these were highly successful.

There is a new data archiving project entitled DRYAD that JEB is subscribing to, to ensure that important data that has been used to produce published papers is made available to the community. The important biology journals will all cooperate in this to ensure long-term data storage.

All innovative papers are very welcome at JEB and everyone is encouraged to submit reviews, target reviews, methods papers and the like.

The deciding editors and the board of editors are thanked and AM explains that the deciding editors can and do use the best suited reviewers, whether from the board or outside. Handling times are extremely fast.

5. Other business

TK reports on the Outreach initiative approved by the council to promote evolutionary biology in local communities and societies.

TK reports on the travel grants scheme approved by the council: a yearly fund of 10,000 euros has been allocated to enabling people with too little financial means to attend the ESEB congresses and also the SSE congress; the SSE council will discuss a reciprocal scheme.

Paul Schmid-Hempel proposes to appoint a sort of travelling ambassador for evolutionary biology, who could represent not only ESEB but also other evolutionary societies and who could e.g. lobby in Brussels.

DE proposes to find someone among past ESEB officers

SO is worried that this might be an objection in case ESEB wants to register as a charity; this need to be investigated by **PH**.

Bas Zwaan feels that lobbying does not fall under the Outreach initiative and should be a separate undertaking.

TK invites anyone with suggestions or ideas to send him or Paul Schmid-Hempel an email.

SA closes the meeting and thanks all those present for attending.

