

Minutes of the ESEB Members' Meeting 2019

Turku, Congress Centre Logomo, Room 'Logomo Hall', 24.08.2019, 1.30 – 2.30 pm

Attendees:

Officers: Ophélie Ronce (President, Chair), Astrid Groot (President-elect), Nina Wedell (Past President), Sara Magalhães (Vice-President), Koen Verhoeven (Executive Vice-President), Wolf Blanckenhorn (*JEB* Editor-in-Chief), Mike Ritchie (*EL* Officer), John Pannell (Secretary), Craig Primmer (outgoing Congress organizer), Lukas Kratochvil (incoming Congress Organizer)

Members: 128 signed the lists attached

Ophélie Ronce opened the meeting at 1.30pm and welcomed everyone. OR noted that ideas, suggestions and comments by the members can be forwarded to the ESEB officers at any time.

The Officers introduced themselves.

1. Minutes of the last Members meeting in Groningen 2017

- 1.1. JP reported that the minutes have been approved online by the Steering Committee and signed by the President and the Secretary.
- 1.2. The Council recommended to elect a new distinguished fellow in 2019 and to confer this fellowship to Roger Butlin for his outstanding service to the Society. JP explained that beside being a renowned scientist, Roger Butlin was President, Congress Organizer, and member of the *Evolution Letters* oversight committee of ESEB. Roger Butlin also initiated and serves on several ESEB committees.

On request by JP, the Membership unanimously approved to award Roger Butlin a Distinguished Fellowship of the Society.

2. Secretary's Report

2.1. Presentation of new Officers and Council members

JP briefly introduced the new Council members and pointed out that detailed information about the Council is available at the ESEB website. The Council members serve for four years and many are also involved in ESEB initiatives. John Pannell invited the Membership to forward any suggestions or ideas to the Council members at any time.

2.2. Membership status and new membership categories/VAT

JP explained that differences in the membership fees are due to different VAT in each country. He pointed out that previous issues in the membership system have been solved. JP reported that the membership category for master students (Pre-PhD Student Membership) had been unsuccessful and will be stopped in 2020. An ESEB lifetime membership will be available from 2020 onwards and the dues will correspond to 20 years of a regular membership, currently about € 500.

ESEB Membership remained stable with some minor up and downs due to congress and non-congress years.

2.3. Evolution Letters (EL)

As a jointly owned journal by SSE and ESEB, *EL*'s business is overseen by a committee (Oversight committee) of representatives from both societies. Currently, Mike Ritchie serves as an ESEB representative. JP reported that submissions increased in the last year and the journal is running well. He pointed out that the journals are the main contributors to the Society's income, and thus submitting high-quality manuscripts to the journals of ESEB will support the Society and its activities such as the congress.

2.4. ESEB initiatives

JP briefly presented the Initiatives of the Society: Conference travel stipends, Equal Opportunities Initiative, Godfrey Hewitt mobility grants, Global Training Initiative, Outreach Initiative, and the recently launched Progress Meetings in Evolutionary Biology. He reported that the Society established a new initiative, the Policy Committee, which will be chaired by Kayla King. The main task of the Policy Committee will be to deliver expertise to inform politicians or the EU Commission on issues where evolutionary biology can be of help. Volunteers for this committee are welcome.

JP announced that two new Special Topic Networks will start in September:

- Agashe *et al.*, "Synthesizing micro- and macro- evolutionary processes shaping prokaryotic genomes"
- Fricke *et al.*, "The evolutionary ecology of thermal fertility limits"

The currently running networks, "European Drosophila Population Genomics Network (DrosEU)", "Linking local adaptation with the evolution of sex differences", "ADAPT – Ancient DNA studies of Adaptive Processes through time", and "Ecological Genomics of coevolutionary interactions" continue after positive evaluation.

Further information on all Initiatives is available at the ESEB website.

2.5. Upcoming congresses

- **ESEB2021**

In 2021, the ESEB congress will take place from 22. – 27. August in Prague, Czech Republic. The organization is running well.

- **ESEB2023**

JP reported that the Officers received a solid bid from Barcelona. The chair of the organizer committee, Toni Gabaldon, is supported by local colleagues and the Spanish Society for Evolutionary Biology. The Council supports this proposal as Barcelona is an attractive place to meet, the proposed congress centre is located near the city centre, and the planning seems to be well structured.

The Membership had no objections or questions concerning the proposal.

On request by JP the Membership approved that Toni Gabaldon will join the ESEB

Steering committee from 2021-2023 as congress organizer of ESBE2023 in Barcelona.

3. Executive Vice-President's Report

3.1. Annual reports 2017

KV reported that the Society is in a healthy and stable state and presented the Annual Financial Report 2017. KV explained that the expenses include office and journal costs, budgets of the Society's Initiatives, and the conference support, which had been the largest

expense. In total, the expenses summed up to € 560,272, while the *Journal of Evolutionary Biology* profit share comprises most of the income. The total income, including also the profit share of *Evolution Letters*, membership fees and interest, had been € 303,819. KV pointed out that the Society's annual accounts closed with a negative balance in 2017, as this had been a congress year.

On request of KV, the members approved the presented Annual Financial Report 2017 with no dissenting votes.

3.2. Annual reports 2018

KV explained that the expenses are similar to the previous year, but included an exceptional support of the joint meeting in Montpellier. Therefore, and in contrast to non-congress years in which there is a positive balance, the expenses and revenues broke even.

On request of KV, the members approved the presented Annual Financial Report 2018 with no dissenting votes.

The members unanimously granted discharge to the officers in duty.

3.3. Presentation of the new Policy Plan 2019-21

As a non-profit organisation ESEB is obliged to establish a policy plan, which states the goals of the Society as outlined in the Constitution, and describes the activities planned to accomplish them. KV presented the ESEB Policy Plan for 2019-21 and highlighted the following points:

- The Society supports ESEB congresses with 100.000 € per year
- The Conference Travel Award will have an annual budget of 15,000 €
- The EMPSEB meeting will be supported with up to 15,000 €
- The EvoKE network will be supported with up to 10,000 € per year
- The Equal Opportunities Initiative will have an annual budget of 15,000 €
- The Global Training Initiative will have an annual budget of 12,000 €
- The Godfrey Hewitt Mobility Award will have an annual budget of 10,000 €
- The John Maynard Smith Prize will have an annual budget of 5,000 €
- The Outreach Initiative will have an annual budget of 20,000 €
- The newly established Policy Committee will have an annual budget of 10,000 €
- The Progress Meetings in Evol. Biol. Initiative will have an annual budget of 15,000 €
- The STN initiative will have an annual budget of 60,000 €
- The Stearns Graduate Student Prize will have an annual budget of 250 €

KV explained that the total support for all Initiatives and Prizes might be higher than the Society's income, but as a non-profit organization ESEB is obliged to keep its capital restricted to reserves needed to cover unforeseen events. The current capital of about 600,000 € will allow ESEB to support the increased activities for some more years in case the income would decrease due to the changing publishing landscape. In addition, this capital will enable ESEB to cover unforeseen issues concerning ESEB congresses with up to 250,000 € as decided by the Council in 2017.

KV pointed out that the capital is losing value over time due to low interest and inflation. In addition, the Society has no control over the use of its money by the bank. Like other societies (e.g. SSE, UK Genetics Society), ESEB can invest this capital which will allow more control and help to maintain its value in the long term. The Officers and the Council decided to invest 500,000 € of the Society's capital in a sustainable, green and ethical portfolio with a neutral

investment profile (neither defensive nor offensive). In case of need, the capital invested can be withdrawn within days.

Despite approval of the investment plan, the views on investing had been diverse among the Council members. The Officers therefore requested also the opinion of the Membership present. The following questions were raised by participants.

Q1 by S. Charlat, CNRS Lyon, FR: Which investment portfolio/bank has been selected? KV: The investment portfolio is offered by ASN, the largest 'green' bank in the Netherlands, with a strong reputation in ecologically and socially sustainable banking. Companies in the portfolio have to meet a certain standard set by ASN e.g. concerning human rights and climate.

Q2 by A. Frantz, iEES, Sorbonne University, FR: Is there a risk? Will there be a conflict of interest concerning the independence of science and the companies we invest into?

KV explained that the money will lose value due to inflation if kept in the saving account. The envisioned neutral investment profile of the portfolio will reduce the risk. JP noted that there is always an inherent risk associated with investing, but in the long term the chosen portfolio has a high probability of maintaining the value of the capital.

Q3 by L. R. Rodrigues, University of Stockholm, SE: Why not invest in the Initiatives of the Society directly?

KV explained that the Society needs to keep a substantial reserve to cover for unforeseen events as well as to prolong the support of the running initiatives in case the revenues of ESEB decrease. This capital will be invested in order to maintain its value, which would otherwise decrease due to inflation if the reserve is kept in the saving account.

Q4 by O. Paulo, University of Lisbon, PT: Is it the right time to invest as we may be entering a period of uncertainty and perhaps recession?

C. Macias Garcia, UNAM, MX, commented that the assets of the society should be protected against financial uncertainty, which cannot be achieved by a bank account currently.

Jukka Jokela, EAWAG/ETH Zurich, CH, expressed a strong positive view on the investment plan.

On request of OR, the majority of members approved the presented Policy Plan 2019-2021 including the proposed investment. There had been 15 dissenting votes and 12 members abstained. The balance of members approved the plan.

4. *Journal of Evolutionary Biology (JEB)* Editor in Chief's Report

Wolf Blanckenhorn pointed out that *JEB* is the Society's journal established at the time when ESEB had been founded.

He reported that the journal receives about 600 submission per year, of which 1/3 are published. In about 1/3 of the publications the first author is a PhD student. Due to higher competition in the publishing landscape, submissions have decreased over the last few years. Wolf Blanckenhorn confirmed that *JEB*'s review process is fast, it offers fast track to and from other journals, and the manuscript format is of secondary importance initially. He further noted that a new Forum section has been launched for publications of science policy and related topics.

He invited the Membership to consider publishing more high-quality papers as well as reviews in *JEB*, but also to consider more special issues based on ESEB conference proceedings

5. Other business

JP thanked the outgoing officers, Anna-Liisa Laine and Jacintha Ellers, for their excellent service for the Society.

JP announced that several Initiatives are looking for interested members to join the committees.

JP encouraged all members to send ideas and suggestions to the officers at any time.

OR closed the meeting at 2.30 pm and thanked all members present for attending. All participants were asked to sign the participation list.


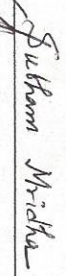




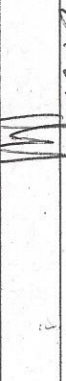
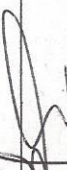
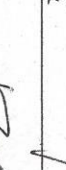







The minutes have been adopted by the Secretary and the President (Chair).

Location, Date


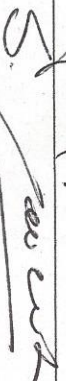

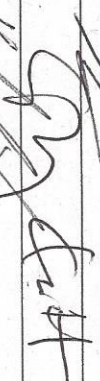




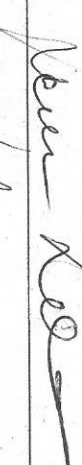

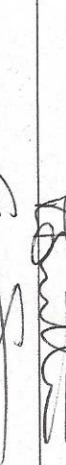





ESEB President Ophélie Ronce

ESEB Secretary John Pannell

PARTICIPATION LIST 1

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SUBHAM	MRIDHA	University of Zurich, Switzerland	
KATHAKI	Eunel	Univ. Glasgow UK	
SULIA	SOARES	Institute for Bee Research Hohen Neuendorf	
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DANIEL	ELSNER	University of Göttingen, M.	
Piermin	Nietlisbach	Univ. of British Columbia, Vancouver	
Alexander	Nater	University of Konstanz, Germany	
Marcel	Visser	NIOO - NL	
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Delphine	Silard	INRA Montpellier FRANCE	
Pierik	POUGNOT	Czech Academy of Sciences	
Milan	VRITIK	Czech Academy of Sciences	
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Qui Blaine	EVANNO	INRA - Rennes - France	
Hanna	Kotko	Univ. Zurich, Switzerland	

PARTICIPATION LIST - continuing



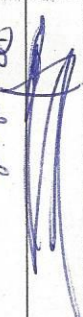






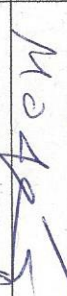





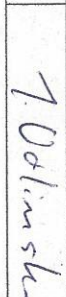
First Name	Name	Affiliation	Signature
Sean Baptiste	Boule'	TNHV	
STEFAN	LAURENT	APLIPZ	
Aida	Andrés	UCL	
Emily	KNOTT	University of Sydney	
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BILJANA	STOJKOVIC	Univ. Belgrade, Serbia	
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Liselotte	Sundström	Univ. of Stockholm	
Eger	BROWN	U. Sheffield History	
Sylvain	CHARLAT	CNRS	
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Martine	Maan	Univ Groningen	
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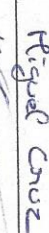









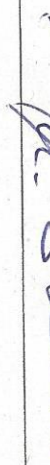
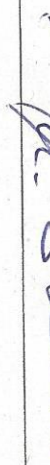
First Name	Name	Affiliation	Signature
Constance	AKS	UNIVERSITÄT FRIEDRICH WILHELM UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN	[Signature]
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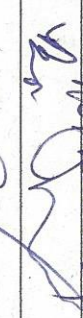

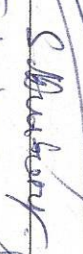

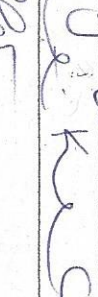






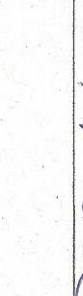
PARTICIPATION LIST 2

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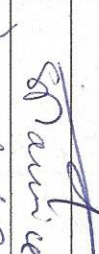


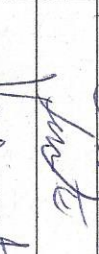





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Sarah	Buxbaum	Wageningen University	
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Sandrine	MAO RICE	U. Montpellier (France)	
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Tadum	Kawachi	U. Lausanne	Tadum Kawachi
Ute	Mariath	ESEB	Ute Mariath