

Minutes of the *ecopa* General Assembly – 23rd November 2020

Participants:

Participants with right to vote:

- Marianna Norring, Fincopa (MNO)
- Philippe Hubert, Francopa, President (PHU)
- Christiane Buta, SET (CBU)
- Isabella De Angelis, IPAM (IDE)
- Jenny Sandström, 3RCC (JSA)
- Adrian Smith, Norecopa (ASM)

Other participants:

- Costanza Rovida, CAAT Europe, Secretary (CRO)
- Philippe Vanparys, Consultant, Treasurer (PVA)
- Tuula Heinonen, FINCOPA, Vice-President (THE)
- Luisa Bastos, Eurogroup for Animals, Deputy Treasurer (LBA)
- Victoria Schiffer, RepRefRed (VSC)
- José Sánchez-Morgado, Trinity College (JSM)
- Bogdan Sevastre, RoCAM (BSE)
- Rufino Juarez Lopez (RJL)
- Stefano Lorenzetti, ISS (SLO)
- Kristina Wagner, SET (KWA)

1. Welcome from the President

The President, PHU, welcomed the participants and presented the agenda.

Next year, the General Assembly will be held during the World Congress in Maastricht (NL) in August 2021.

2. Financial situation

The Treasurer, PVA, presented the financial situation. Details are in Annex I.

3. Election of the new board

Only *ecopa* full members were eligible to vote. Full members are the platforms whose governing bodies comprise members of all four pillars. Voting took place using the poll option on the Zoom platform.

The board should have two representatives per pillar.

The General Assembly elected the following members of the new board:

1. Kristina Wagner, Animal welfare
2. Marianna Norring, Animal welfare
3. Tuula Heinonen, Academia
4. José M. Sánchez Morgado, Academia
5. Philippe Hubert, Government
6. Stefano Lorenzetti, Government
7. Aurora Dadone, Industry

8. Costanza Rovida, Industry

The next step was the election of the President and Vice-President among the elected board members. The General Assembly elected:

- Costanza Rovida, as President
- Stefano Lorenzetti, as Vice President

The new board then elected the Treasurer, the Deputy Treasurer, the Secretary and Deputy Secretary, as follows:

- Luisa Bastos, Secretary
- Kristina Wagner, Deputy Secretary
- Rufino Juarez Lopez, Treasurer
- Philippe Vanparys, Deputy Treasurer

4. Reports from National Platforms

FINCOPA

Regular board meeting during the year. Fincopa is an active participant in some OECD working groups. THE is part of the PARERE group. Another important activity is advanced training about 3Rs. Fincopa is regularly involved to give opinion on animal experiments.

FRANCOPA

A short presentation of the Francopa's activity is given in Annex II. There was also the publication of a book in French on alternatives to animal experiments.

IPAM

A short presentation of IPAM's activities are reported in Annex III. The main focuses were the ALTEX meeting report of the *ecopa* Symposim 2019 and the involvement of young students in 3Rs. It has been established an annual award to the best master thesis with high impact on the 3Rs. In 2020, live events are replaced by webinars with quite satisfactory participation of people

Norecopa

A short presentation of Norecopa's activities is given in Annex IV. The main focus of the last year has been on refinement, with translation of the PREPARE guidelines and creation of a Refinement Wiki. Norecopa has also constructed an interactive map of European 3R centres.

SET

A short presentation of SET's activities is given in Annex V. SET in Germany has a long history, being active since 1986, It receives financial support from the industry and from the German Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection to support research in the area of 3Rs.

3RCC

The Swiss 3R Competence Centre (3RCC) is only two years old but it has a central role in funding 3R research in Switzerland.

RepRefRed

The Austrian centre was established in 2016 thanks to the collaboration of the three main universities and with the support of the industry and the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research. One of the missions is to inform scientists on the opportunities of 3R. The education program is addressed also to children.

ROCAM



The Romanian centre is small but very active in the education program with specific training for lab technicians.

5. Proposals for new projects

Ecopa is an important institution with the potential to speak out for the promotion of 3Rs. The scientific community is split and discussion among parties is difficult. *Ecopa's* mission is to break the barriers and improve dialogue and collaboration among the parties involved in research and other scientific activities. There are many existing 3R centres and *ecopa* is absolutely complementary with its unique opportunity to act as an umbrella of national organisations, both for coordination and for pushing forward the positions of members on the international scene. It is also unique because of its focus on research and development on Replacement (actually nowadays more generally on Non-Animal Methods).

The first urgent action is to increase visibility with renovation of the website. ASM is now in charge of the maintenance of the website and confirms the difficulty of working on a system with an old architecture. The General Assembly decided to restructure the website and make it more accessible, with an official mandate to the new board to invest money in it. The new board was also asked to organise regular maintenance of the website with expansion into social media such as LinkedIn. LBA will collect 2-3 proposals from company experts in the organisation of websites, and do the best to achieve maximum benefit with the lowest cost.

SLO proposed that *ecopa* re-started its newsletter. There are problems with the management of email addresses for distribution, due to the General Data Protection Regulation (2016/679). *Ecopa* might be able to use existing mailing lists of the National platforms and CAATwalk by CAAT-Europe.

It is important that members of *ecopa* contribute both to the website and to the newsletter, with, for example, links between the websites and specific places in the newsletter.

Another important challenge for *ecopa* is to increase its financial support. The following possibilities were discussed:

- Participation in EU calls for research
- Organisation of training schools and webinars with either a participation fee or industrial sponsors
- Promotion of private sponsorship through crowdfunding

6. AOB

The next *ecopa* General Assembly will be during the 11th World Congress on Alternatives and Animal Use in the Life Sciences in Maastricht in August 2021.

In 2022, the *ecopa* board will support BSE to organise a symposium and host the *ecopa* General Assembly in Romania.

7. End of meeting

The meeting started at 14:30 and ended at 17:30.

The next meeting of the board will be in December.

Annex I - [Financial Situation](#)

Annex II - [Francopa Presentation](#)

Annex III - [IPAM Presentation](#)

Annex IV - [Norecopa Presentation](#)

Annex V - [SET Presentation](#)