

**Minutes of the ENA General Assembly Meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2019**

(09:00 – 13h35) at Puscha congress hotel, Kyiv (Kiev), Ukraine.

**Present:**

Umut Sakarya (SUSBIR - Turkey), İsmail Hakkı Kocaoğlu (SUSBIR - Turkey), Tatyana Boyadzhieva (BAOPN - Bulgaria), Patrick Svensson (LRF-T - Sweden), Maja Persson (LRF-T - Sweden), Tim Edwards (NFU/HTA - United Kingdom), Jan Veltmans (LTO - Netherlands), Zoltán Sinkó (MDE - Hungary), Tim Van Hulle (AVBS - Belgium), Markus Guhl (BdB - Germany), Miet Poppe (AVBS - Belgium), Mateusz Milczyński (ZSzP - Poland), Pavel Halama (SŠČR - Czech Republic), Luigi Pagliani (ANVE - Italy), Arttu Haverinen (TP - Finland), Jovan Topalović (SLHS - Serbia), Milka Glavendekić (SLHS - Serbia), Stanislav Dontsov (UPIA - Ukraine), Albano Moreira da Silva (Portugal), Harm Horlings (ANTHOS - Netherlands, Certifications and Labels WG Chair), Leon Smet (Anthos - Netherlands, Promotion WG Chair), Willy De Nolf (AVBS – Belgium, **Treasurer**), Henk Raaijmakers (LTO - Netherlands, ENA **Vice-President**), Jan-Dieter Bruns (BdB – Germany, ENA **President**), and Josep M. Pagès (ENA **Secretary General** -SG in the text-).

**1. President's Welcome.**

President Bruns opened the meeting welcoming all delegates, thanking the Ukrainian organisation for having ENA and gave an optimistic view of the nursery sales season; despite the competition between nurseries, prices are rising because costs are also increasing.

**2. Apologies for absence.**

Jaume Riera (ES), Henning Roed (DK), Caroline Föllmi (CH), Dora Aebi (CH), Nikos Thymakis (GR), Maria Fall (NO), Olav Folkvord (NO), Patrick Farrell (IE), Lucien Verschoren (BE) and Emmanuelle Bougault (FR) had sent apologies.

Albano Moreira da Silva explained that he was in the meeting not representing the Portuguese organisation (APPP-FN) but in an individual capacity.

**3. Agreement of the Agenda.**

The agenda was adopted.

**4. Minutes: approval of the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 24 of January 2019 in Essen (DE)**

The minutes of the last General Assembly meeting were approved and agreed as a true and accurate record.

**5. Matters arising from the minutes not included on the agenda.**

There were no matters arising.

**6. ENA 2018 finances update.**

The Treasurer explained that the financial tax consultant had compiled the final accountancy of 2018, that was different from the accounts statement approved at the last General Assembly

meeting because of the Green Cities project accountancy. SG explained that when the last GA was held, ENA had not yet received all invoices related to Year 1 of the Green Cities project. Most invoices related to activities carried out in 2018 were received in 2019. In the accountancy, these invoices were registered as related to Year 1 (2018) because ENA had to justify to CHAFAEA (European Commission) all activities carried out in 2018 and their costs. It was remarked that there are no financial issues, and that an external auditor checked and found the statements correct.

As the GA had approved in January account statements of 2018 that were not up to date, the Treasurer asked to approve the updated accounts. **The GA approved the updated account statements of 2018.** The budget approved for 2019 remains the same. **The 2018 final account statements will be shared with ENA members.**

#### **7. Update on the Italian associations regarding their participation in ENA**

The President introduced that a new Italian association (AVI) would like to join ENA. ENA is organised, and has been working until today, as an international organisation having one nurseries' organisation member in each country, although it is not clearly written in the ENA statutes or internal regulations. The Italian delegate from ANVE explained the history and facts of both associations, emphasising that ANVE covers the entire country and has representatives from each region in the board. The Netherlands informed that, although appearing as two organisations, they complement each other (growers and traders) and work together, and the United Kingdom has a similar arrangement (HTA + NFU).

It was agreed on:

- **Sending a letter to AVI**, asking them to contact ANVE to explore the options to be represented in ENA.
- **Better defining the membership options**, to avoid further conflicts (number of associations per country, level of representation, voting rights, their representatives in ENA, etc.).

#### **8. Research Projects participation (H2020 call)**

Both projects, SAFE -on plant health- and Grow4Green, were rejected by the EC.

##### **a. Grow4Green**

The main objective of the GROW4GREEN thematic network is to summarise, present and share innovative knowledge and good practices that growers and advisors can apply to maximize their role in driving the delivery of ecosystem services in green infrastructure. The score was good (12/15), therefore the leader and the 14 participant organisations in the proposal would like to submit it again. The involvement of the nursery sector, not sufficiently reflected in the proposal, was mentioned as a shortcoming.

**The GA agreed on participating in the project, that will be improved and resubmitted.**

**A technical questionnaire for nurseries in the goal countries of the project will be sent to ENA members.**

## 9. EU Legislation Working Group:

### a. IAS Invasive Alien Species.

The Vice-president asked the **members to quickly react when receiving a draft list of IAS**, and he was optimistic on the influence that ENA can do through Dr Hoffman -the ENA representative in the IAS Committee- and through many other contacts including COPA-COGECA.

Germany demanded that nurseries should have a compensation from the EC for the plants that are being forbidden.

Serbia asked about the production of *Fallopia* species in European nurseries. They are very invasive in Serbia and Montenegro, and under risk assessment by the EU. Only 20% of invasive *Fallopia* in Serbia are *F. japonica*, and 80% a hybrid between *Fallopia japonica* and *Fallopia sachalinensis* that produces a small amount of seeds.

The Vice-president welcomed this scientific data and asked **all members to share information with ENA**.

### b. Plant health: *Xylella fastidiosa*.

The Vice-president explained a simulation made in the Netherlands to document all necessary measures and resources necessary to contain and eradicate any possible outbreak of *Xylella* in the country. He also referred to the past discussion between the Belgian and Spanish organisations regarding the origin of the disease found in a few olive trees, that is now concluded.

Italy informed that they are eradicating the disease, except in the Apulian containment zone. The subspecies found in Tuscany was Multiplex, different from the Apulian subspecies, and it seems to be a new strain.

The Netherlands is trying to find an insurance, like in Germany and Italy. In Italy, the premium is 3.5% of the insured value (the entire nursery); 0.5% is for the phytosanitary risks. The maximum coverage is € 2 million per nursery. 70% of the premium is subsidised by the EC, like the weather insurances, meaning that nurseries finally pay 1,2% only. 25 Italian nurseries participate in the pilot insurance. In the Netherlands, the premium is almost 10%, so nobody insures because it is too expensive. Germany is starting a compensation pool, funded by the sector, because the insurance is too expensive; German farmers prefer CAP funds to be distributed by cultivated area and not used for insurance purposes.

**It was agreed on sharing the information of the existing insurance policies that cover pests**. The Italian delegate offered to invite their insurance broker to a next ENA meeting.

Portugal gave an update on the *Xylella* outbreak in the North. The city nurseries near the first outbreak detected, were also infected, and they are afraid that the disease might be spread. The nurseries suffer now an extremely severe control and authorities advise nurseries to produce under a closed insect-proof environment, which is impossible for tree nurseries. He asked for funds from the EU to compensate affected nurseries.

The vice-president concluded that *Xylella* is a threat for the coming years and asked nurseries to work at their highest standards to prevent it.

**c. EU Plant Health Regulations (including Plant Passport)**

The list of Regulations approved, drafted and pending were displayed. Many countries (Poland, Czech Republic, Bulgaria) mentioned that they are still waiting for information on the Plant Passport from their national plant health authorities, and other countries expressed that nurseries had not enough information either. The Vice-president reminded the GA about the draft on Plant Passport guidelines produced by ENA. Many questions arose, including the concerns regarding writing the 'country of origin' on each label, and it was agreed that **delegates would send their concerns to ENA** along the week, to bring them to the EC Plant Health Unit.

**10. Sustainability and environmental certifications and labels.**

Harm Horlings, WG Chair, recapitulated his proposals, meetings and options, from creating a lowest common denominator for all certifications to simplify nurseries management, to have an umbrella certification, that was not approved by ENA. He had prepared a 'sustainability ambition' document that had been shared with ENA members before the meeting, based on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. He suggested to ask ourselves how we are going to deal with fertilizers, pesticides, water, plastics, etc. and he proposed to follow the document and start working for the next GA meeting, although some points are more political than directly involving nurseries.

**The delegates agreed on the document produced**, confirmed that sustainability is an important issue and that is necessary to explain that nurseries are green in their production systems, controlling the narrative.

It was agreed on:

- **Sharing the document on the ENA website, as a starting position or guideline.**
- **Delegates will inform ENA about the current or planned initiatives in each country** (peat reduction, sustainability award, climate mitigation, funding obtained to work on it, or any other aspect), in order **to produce a join document** to share with all ENA members.

Finally, the President thanked Harm Horlings for all his work through these years, and as this could be his last meeting as a delegate, invited him to join the next summer meeting as a guest.

**11. Promotion Working Group: "Green Cities for a Sustainable Europe".**

**a. Project 2018-2020 update**

Leon Smet, Promotion WG Chair, informed the GA about the project coordination meeting held the previous day.

The Project is in its second year, each of the seven participating countries is working on its own program, which is mainly website, public relations, advertising, organising meetings and seminars, to share knowledge with stakeholders and professional influencers on cities and urban planning. A 'green cities' award is now being planned, that will be awarded next year in early October.

**b. Proposal for the next call 2021-2023**

The WG chair expressed his optimism about asking for a successful new proposal. 15 countries had confirmed in writing their interest to participate: currently participating countries BE, BG,

DK, DE, FR, NL, UK and new countries CZ, IE, PL, PT, RS, UA, TR. The Italian delegate also revealed their possible participation. The new call will open in early 2020 and it will state the exact rules; however, the new application should be almost ready by then. The participation of non-EU countries will depend on the rules, and all participants were informed that they will have to fund ENA beforehand for the activities carried out in their countries. The GA agreed on:

- To continue the current Green Cities project.
- **To work on the preparation of the new proposal call in order to submit it in early 2020.**
- To increase the overhead expenses in the new proposal compared to the current project, to more efficiently cover the ENA costs and some country expenses like travelling to coordination meetings.

## **12. 'European Umbrella Green Sector' organisation**

SG reported a meeting held in May with many European Green Sector organisations (ELCA - European Landscape Contractors Association-, IFLA -International Federation of Landscape Architects- WUP -World Urban Parks-, EILO -European Interior Landscape Organisations and EFGRW -European Green Walls and Roofs Organisation-), in order to explore the options to cooperate. The aim would be to share information, not to create a new structure, to promote the European Green Year 2020 -although it might be delayed for a year-, to implement together an activity in the European Green Week 2020 (a series of top-level conferences held every spring in Brussels), and to keep our organisations in close contact.

**The General Assembly agreed on cooperating with this 'European Umbrella Green Sector' group.**

## **13. Alliance for the Defense of European Agriculture**

SG informed the GA that Fepex, the Spanish member, at the Secretaries meeting had proposed to join this new organisation. As no further information had been received, the proposal was left on the table.

## **14. The direction of ENA**

Vice-president Henk Raaijmakers made a presentation on the current situation of ENA, and made proposals for the future to improve ENA, mainly, to become important influencers in the EU. A long discussion followed the presentation, the delegates generally agreed with the diagnosis and the proposals, and shared many ideas: to have someone based in Brussels to negotiate at a political level, to meet more often, to have direct communications among members without going through the SG, to give more services to the members if ENA has financial benefits, to sell the nurseries database to fund ENA, to organise yearly events in Brussels -like the first political table-, to raise the membership fee -at least for some countries-, to cooperate with other organisations, to get EU funds, to have projects that leave something even after they have ended -like the 'green cities' website-, to use and work together with the larger member organisations because they already have the means to influence, to ask for the most important issues for each country, to have two-way communication, to contact international organisations like EPPO and IBMA regarding pest control, to use the country contacts to interact with MEPs, to think about rising fees, etc.

The GA agreed on:

- **To send out the presentation to ENA members.**
- **To send out a questionnaire to all members asking for their main concerns and issues.**
- **With members input, to produce the roadmap for ENA.**

**15. State of Industry.**

*See report.*

**16. Date of Next General Assembly Meeting.**

It was agreed on having the next **General Assembly meeting on Thursday the 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2020 at 09h30 at IPM in Essen (Germany).**

The ENA President thanked BdB for also organising the **European Nurseries Reception the previous evening (Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> of January 2020).**

**17. Next General Assembly summer meetings:**

**It was agreed on having the 2020 summer General Assembly on July 2 at 08h00.** President Bruns presented the program for the entire 2020 summer meeting and recommended to arrive at Munich airport. On Wednesday 1 July 2020 in the afternoon, a 'Green Cities' project meeting will be convened. Post-meeting visits are planned until Saturday 4 July 2020 at lunch time.

It was agreed on convening the **2021 summer meeting in Turkey**, and the GA was reminded that in **2022 the summer meeting will be held in the Netherlands**, at Floriade.

German delegates asked how many delegates might be interested in attending the evening barbecue they organise for ENA members at Baumschultechnik Nurserymachinery 2019. *(NOTE: the barbecue was cancelled after the GA meeting.)*

Although it won't be possible to meet with the MEP Mr Poch as previously agreed, because he was not re-elected, it was agreed on keeping the **next Secretaries Meeting in Bad Zwischenahn (Northern Germany)**. An influent MEP will be invited to be there. Mr Bruns offered to organise the transfers from Bremen, Hannover, Hamburg and Düsseldorf airports.

**18. Press release.**

It was agreed that the board will decide on its content.

**19. AOB (any other business).**

- It was agreed on producing shorter minutes, reporting mainly on decisions made.
- It was agreed on **producing a guideline for the membership options, to be discussed** by the GA.

The President thanked all for their participation, the Ukrainian Plant Industry Association and particularly Stanislav Dontsov for the organisation, and adjourned the meeting at 13h35.