

EAFP General Assembly
Belfast, 6th September, 2017

MINUTES

More than sixty members including the EAFP council attended the General Assembly.

President

The President started out with welcoming EAFP members, stating that the GA is for both members and non-members alike, but in the case where voting was going to take place, only members could vote.

The President passed on apologies to the delegates for the treasurer, Klaus Knopf, who unfortunately could not attend the conference for family reasons. He acknowledged the hard work of Bartolomeo Gorgoglione, acting both as EAFP web master and administrator of the EAFP Facebook site. A new, fully functional, more visible and better-organised EAFP website has been created and launched compared to the previous website. The council board election was organised via the EAFP website and the president expressed his awareness that some changes and improvements are required. He thanked Sarah Poynton for her great idea of organising a gathering of branch officers that took place during the lunch on Tuesday and the report of the meeting will be distributed to all branch officers.

He also acknowledged the necessity for changing the EAFP statutes for several reasons; the manner of voting should be changed such that the option for "postal voting" should be omitted and replaced by "electronic voting", and the web master should be included into statutes as a non-council member. Hence he invited members to suggest changes of the statute.

Vice president

The Vice president highlighted the importance of the sustaining members and gave an update on the recruitment drive regarding new sustaining members. Their contribution to the organisation is enabling different activities such as the student award and the small grants scheme. He also reported on the meeting of the council with branch officers as an important means of communication and improvement of the functioning of the EAFP.

General secretary

The General secretary gave an update regarding membership, which for 2017 is 842 members, 38 members more compared to 2016 with a significant increase noticed in each conference year. Currently the membership can be divided into 699 regular members, 85 student members, 8 honorary members, 33 library members and 17 sustaining members.

The elections of the EAFP council, President, Meetings secretary and Treasurer had been announced via the EAFP bulletin, the website, the Facebook page as well as the newsletter. The Election was done electronically via the EAFP website. There were two candidates, Jose Garcia and Sven Bergmann for the EAFP president. The first poll finished with an equal number of votes for each candidate (64) and the second poll was organised where Jose Garcia received 59 votes and Sven Bergmann 52 votes. Jose Garcia will therefore take up the position for a second term as the EAFP president from the period of 2017-2021 together with Ivona Mladineo as Meetings secretary (her second period) and Klaus Knopf as the Treasurer (his second period) who were elected unopposed. The General secretary apologised for any inconvenience during creating the account and voting via the EAFP web page and promised that efforts will be put forward in order to eliminate mistakes and improve the ballot.

The General secretary ended with thanking the EAFP branch officers for their invaluable work.

Treasurer

On behalf of absent Treasurer, the General secretary provided information on the account balance and income and expenses for the period 31/08/2015 to 12/08/2017:

31/08/2015: 172,981.02 €

31/08/2016: 166,279.27 €

31/08/2017: 165,405.48 €

Compared to EAFP assets on the 31/08/2015, the sum on the account decreased by 7,575.54 €. Taking into consideration that the final payment for the necropsy manual (6,153.00 €) was a transitory item, there was an actual account deficit of 1,422.54 €. Collected membership fees are 2.7% (1,193.41

€) less than expected due to bank charges, variable exchange rates and ATF fees in Germany.

An external auditor (Norbert Krämer, Berlin) confirmed proper documentation of the bank movements from 1st August, 2015 to 30th June, 2017. The Treasurer greeted the EAFP branch officers for their excellent work and the plea that for all bank transfers the sender and reason must be specified.

Publications-officer

The Publications-officer reported that submitted manuscripts in the first third of this year were relatively low compared with previous years but the number of accepted manuscripts increased. Published articles by topic have changed a little bit compared the last two periods, each of four years, where parasitology and bacteriology are decreasing while histology is slightly increasing. The mean time from submission to print prolonged from around 4.1 to 5.8 months. Keynote speakers were requested to submit short review articles of their keynote presentation. In the last year, reports of UK, German, French and Finnish branch meetings were published. He acknowledged all subject editors, referees, web master, and EAFP administration at CEFAS etc.

Free demo submission system SCHOLASTICA was trialled and planned to be introduced into the bulletin processing.

He reported that IF slightly increased and set the hypothesis that the bulletin available online for members will be a progress while open access would raise the impact factor.

He informed members that Nigel Balmforth from 5M publishing would like to contact potential authors and/or editors associated with the EAFP. He also proposed to use the EAFP logo on the publications and offered the discount to EAFP members for books.

Finally, the PO requested members to vote for the best picture during a Best Picture competition from the Bulletin between 2011 – 2015, which will be organised via the website and Facebook page.

Meetings secretary

The Meetings secretary reported on the current EAFP conference having 515 participants from 40 countries.

In total, 479 presentations had been accepted, out of which 217 were oral and 236 poster presentations. Four keynote presentations covered the topics: Sea lice (Frank Nilsen), Vaccines (Geert Wiegertjes), Mollusc diseases (Isabelle Arzul) and Eel diseases (Olga Haenen). Awarded students held their presentations in different sessions, the winners of which were: Sari Aaltonen, Reka Borzak, Ivana Bušelić, Lorenzo Garcia Munoz, Jerko Hrabar, Yeon-Hwa Jin, Sandro Klafack, Henry Lane, Muhammad Bilal Bin Majeed, Mohamed Shaalan, Emmanuelle Zoccola, Yeni Leal Acosta and Diana Sandor. There were 36 oral sessions and 7 workshops: Neglected viral diseases affecting freshwater fish farming, ParaFishControl Industry forum, Student writing, Target Fish, Myxozoa, Emerging skin diseases, and Vivaldi as well as preconference WS Histopathology organised by Barbara Nowak, Diane Elliott, Patricia Noguera, and Heike Schmidt-Posthaus with participation of Jeff Wolf, an expert on artefacts in fish histology, who gave a keynote on toxicology. For the first time the mobile phone app was used and the abstract book was published only on the USB stick and not printed.

MS acknowledged the local organisation committee represented by Marian McLoughlin, Simon Doherty, Michael Welsh, Chris Armour, John Kane and Richard Kennedy as well as Happening conferences & events, the agency that managed different technical aspects of the conference as well as council board members, reviewers, chairpersons and all EAFP members and participants for the successful organisation of the 18th conference.

The venue of the next conference, Porto in Portugal was presented by Aurelia Saraiva and local supporting agency Skyros.

Jerri Bartholomew announced the ISAAH conference which will be held in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada – 2nd to 6th September, 2018

After the council reports, the President invited members for discussion:

Paul Midtlyng had three comments considering the Facebook page as not promising social media, complained that the abstract deadline should be later, e.g. May and that during the conference there was no time for poster discussion despite it being an important means of scientific communication and also on poor accessibility to abstracts due to electronic abstract book.

The Meeting secretary explained that it is hard to postpone the abstract deadline significantly because the whole reviewing procedure and generation of the programme must be completed by July because of the summer holidays.

Mikolaj Adamek noted a preference to have printed copy of abstract book to make notes on it. In contrast *Brit Hjeltness* welcomed the electronic abstract book whereas *Britt Bang Jensen* suggested opening the possibility of downloading the abstract book for printing and asked how sponsors took up with electronic advertisement. *Marian McLoughlin* informed the GA that MSD endorsed the Abstract book by sponsoring USB sticks. *Bart Gorgoglione* suggested the abstract deadline be brought forward to April with requests to reviewers to complete reviews as soon as possible and also that the abstract book could be distributed through the web or e-mail for printing. *Francesc Padros* proposed that delegates, who want to have a printed copy, notify local organisers, pay an additional fee and the printed copy could be included in their conference bag. *Sarah Poynton* suggested offering a choice of abstract book during registration.

Britt Bang Jensen expressed concern of the submissions to the Bulletin and suggested special issues dedicated to some specific topics i.e. diseases of cleaner fish. The Publications officer stressed the fact that IF is very low and therefore the Bulletin is not attractive for submissions, however there are a number of developments underway to improve this, i.e. the move to electronic versions of the Bulletin. He called for manuscripts on methodology development, case reports etc. *Paul Midtlyng* commented that we miss elemental scouting and suggested that student awards should include vet students enrolling fish health programmes as well. *Bart* supposed that an open access of the journal would improve the IF and also comment that the SGS is too small an amount of money to perform research for some projects. *Britt Bang Jensen* mentioned that during reviewing conference abstracts, she noticed excellent abstracts and proposed considering the possibility of approaching authors with a request to write articles for the bulletin. *David Verner Jeffrey* consented on the electronic form of the bulletin and proposed attraction of early career papers by establishment of a "student committee". *Olga Haenen* sustained the idea of open access and offered to put ppt.slides into the membership only area of presentations from the workshop she organised. The *President* welcomed all ideas and suggestions. *Dirk W.Kleingard* endorsed the meeting of branch officers and council members and considered it as a base for future work. He

also mentioned that there is a lot of money on the EAFP account and proposed to spend some sum of funds for sponsoring local meetings. He also mentioned difficulties with registration during the ballot and commented that it should not be possible to see the score during the election. He also suggested the possibility to vote without registration.

Britt Hjeltness disagreed with idea to spend money and reminded members on the conference in Dublin, 2001 during the 11th September event and another one in Malta in 2003 with the death of the local organiser right before the conference. *Kantham Pappana* warned on the same timing with other meetings and called the EAFP to work on improvement of the status of non-veterinarian fish health experts. The *President* emphasised that the EAFP is supporting all persons working in the field of fish health and welfare. He also presented the need of changing the statutes; the webmaster should have a council position as a non-council member without a limited period of serving and without elections. The duties of the webmaster should be defined. The changes should encompass the necessity of electronic media. The EAFP needs changes and changes will be accepted. The draft of the new statute will be sent to an established committee for preparation of the new statute: David Hoole, Dirk Willem Kleingeld, Paul Midtlyng, Ariadna Sitja-Bobadilla and Jose Garcia.

The General Assembly was adjourned after three hours with the President thanking the participants for their attendance.

October 8th, 2017

General secretary