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AGENDA

ECOBREED 25th EB Meeting

Martonvásár, Hungary, 30 May 2022

Monday, 30th of May | 13:00 - 21:00

13:00 – 14:00 | Introduction & general items

14:00 – 19:00 | Preparations for the Annual Meeting and meeting with SAG

19:00 – 21:00 | Working dinner

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Executive Board members present in person: Vladimir Meglič (co-ordinator), Pavol Hauptvogel (WP1 leader), Heinrich Grausgruber (WP2 leader), Peter Dolničar (WP3 leader), Vuk Đorđević (WP4 leader), Dagmar Janovská (WP5 leader), Werner Vogt-Kaute (WP6 leader), Marianna Mayer (ATK), Peter Miko (ATK), Marjana Vasilević (IFVCNS), Antoaneta G. Kuhar (project manager and WP8 leader) and Andreja Žibrat Gašparič (KIS).

Executive Board member connected by Zoom: Mario A. Pagnotta (WP7 leader)

Introduction & general items

The coordinator (KIS) welcomed everyone present and explained what the 25th EB meeting is about: the executive board (EB) needs to discuss the annual meeting that is taking place at Martonvásár in the next two days, to look at some general items to discuss, look at applicants for bursaries and how to select students, and about the termination report for the Greek partner (GEO) of the project.

This is now the fifth year of the project, the project partners must know what was done already and what is still missing, so that next year the final report will be easier to prepare. Another report is due this autumn at the end of September.

The EB members congratulated Dagmar Janovská (CRI) is now responsible for genetic resources in the European commission.

The amendment process:

Peter Miko (ATK) asked about the official date of the ending of the project. The coordinator said that the project was extended for 10 months, and it will now end at the end of February 2023.

Mario Pagnotta (UNITUS) asked about when the amendment is due, and the project manager informed him that the date is 4 July 2022.

The project manager (KIS) reported on the amendment process: First a letter to the project officer was sent, extension for 10 months was greenlighted by the PO, and the amendment session was initiated end of April. The document was returned but there was a mistake on the part of the EU commission. The

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commission left the issue of Darko Marić (previous task leader of Task 4.5) for the future. Also, duration of WP 5 was also discussed but then everything was cleared. The amendment was signed by director of KIS, and it is now at the EU commission, who will respond probably in the next two weeks. No surprises are expected, and the amendment will be accepted (content & finances were accepted, there were no major issues).

Periodic report 3 was due end of April 2022; with the extension of the project, we divided the periodic reporting period into two parts – now periodic report 3 will be due in 17 months, the same goes for periodic report 4 (due at the end of the project).

Termination report:

Nikolaos Volakakis (GEO) was also one point of the amendment as he left the project. The termination report must be sent to the EU commission in 30 days after the announcement. The EB members need to: 1) do a termination report in a template (similar to technical report); 2) insert the amount of money that GEO utilized; 3) Volakakis (GEO) must prepare last statement on his resources.

20 June 2022 is the due date for the termination report. GEO was in WP 2, WP4, WP8, WP9. We should set internal dates for the termination report for GEO in the executive board. Paul Bilsborrow (UNEW) and Vladimir must check the report before it goes to the commission.

It was decided that the internal report should be sent by Monday, 13 June 2022. Then checked by Paul and Vladimir and then sent to the commission.

Beneficiary termination report of the EU commission – the template was presented by the project manager (prepared in Word, uploaded in PDF, explanation of the work carried out by the beneficiary, all WPs, use of resource etc. – same as technical report but only prepared for one member of the project; and also define who will do the job that was planned for the Greek partner).

Applicants for bursaries:

Heinrich Grausgruber (BOKU) then presented the applicants for bursaries: c. 49 people registered for the summer school, finally there were selected based whether they were in a master study (no PhD as this is for a summer school for master students). Many applicants come from India and African countries.

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The EB member discussed how many will get the bursaries and consider that there will be future bursaries in the future. Coordinator suggested that around 10 students should be chosen for the summer school. Eligible are only students who are enrolled in European universities.

The EB members then discussed which students could be eligible for the bursaries (suggestions – to choose candidates from Greece and other not so wealthy countries, not candidates from wealthier countries like Luxemburg or Belgium, all PhD students are excluded; also excluded some students affiliated to BOKU and one has terminated her request due to personal reasons). With these conditions, 13 students were chosen for bursaries.

Mario Pagnotta (UNITUS) mentioned that another 4 events are planned in WP7; this means 15 bursaries planned in WP7 for each event (60 planned bursaries for all the events).

The coordinator also mentioned that gender balance must be considered in bursaries as this is also in the contract. Also, not too many chosen students should be from one country.

After a short discussion on the set conditions for choosing students for bursaries, the EB members decided to choose 6 female and 8 male applicants for the bursaries which is in line with the gender balance conditions.

Then it was decided that Heinrich will inform the chosen students that they were selected for the ECOBREED bursaries. It was decided that ECOBREED will cover 200€ for their accommodation and that they should be all in the same accommodation (easier for invoices) and this should be one of the conditions by accepting the bursary. The Project manager then needs an offer from the accommodation and the student need to sign a contract for covering risks (for example, if a student decides not to come or decide not to take the test at the end of the school) before they come to the summer school in Vienna. This contract is also required by the EU commission and must be presented to the audit group. The final list of applicants will be sent to all EB members by the Project manager.

Preparations for the Annual Meeting and meeting with SAG

Peter Miko (ATK) explained the organisation of the annual meeting and where the meetings will be held in the next two days. Hybrid options will only be available on the Monday EB meeting and the Thursday SAG meeting in the small lecture

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room at ATK. The project members will take a group photo on Tuesday afternoon. He also presented the additional programme to the annual meeting. Also, parking arrangements were discussed for project members arriving by car.

Coordinator explained that Primož Titan (RGA), one of the members of the project, will not attend the meeting but will join per Zoom in session held in the small meeting room.

Project manager will have discussions and consultations in person with project members and they can choose a time slot on Tuesday at the registration desk.

The project manager mentioned that the KIS group at the annual meeting includes the communication officer (i.e. Špela Kodre, KIS) who will also record some statements of ECOBREED project partners. These videos will be part of ECOBREED PR activities.

Marjana Vasilević (IFVCNS) has a question on WP7 – the presentation sent by Mario Pagnotta (UNITUS) will be quite short and will not last for the planned 45 minutes. The Project manager nevertheless thinks that the slot will be used for all the project members to present their activities in WP7.

The coordinator has thanked the organisers at ATK for the organisation of the annual meeting and congratulated them for an excellently planned event.

The coordinator presented the programme of the annual meeting. All the morning presentations must be uploaded to one USB (presentations sent to Antoaneta by Tuesday morning latest). The afternoon presentation must be uploaded to the computer in the meeting room. The minutes of the meeting will be documented by Andreja Žibrat Gašparič and partly by Ana Vojnović (in WP 2 and WP 3 meetings).

The morning session starts in the big lecture room. WP6 starts the morning session (Werner Vogt-Kaute), WP7 will be presented by Marjana Vasilević (without the WP7 leader Mario Pagnotta), then follow WP1 and WP8 presentations.

WP6

The coordinator asked the WP6 leader Werner Vogt-Kaute (NATUR), about his approach for the next two years.

The WP6 leader reported that the trials in 2022 will happen as planned; all partners have responded (only the potato partner from Hungary did not reply).

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He does not expect any problems. There are more varieties and some unexpected populations by partners – overall good results. The suggestions for 2023 – to repeat some trials, we want to continue the work in population on at least 3 farms per country as planned in the grant agreement (GA).

The WP6 leader also reported that only two bulletins are missing (Romania and Slovakia did not yet send texts). The Project manager warned that these bulletins have to be handed out soon. The WP6 leader also says that the bulletins have to be in two languages (English version is needed for the ECOBREED project).

The coordinator thinks that some partners are still not sure what exactly is their task in the ECOBREED project, and this has to be clearly discussed with all the partners at the meeting. We need all the details by all the ECOBREED partners. He also warned that it has to be communicated who will be making the final publication as soon as possible as the project is coming to an end.

Heinrich Grasgruber (BOKU) informed the members that a conference is planned on new breeding technologies. It is a perfect platform to present Ecobreed project results (maybe as a keynote lecture). The conference will be announced in the next few weeks.

WP6 leader thinks that the quality of data is not that high for a high-end publication.

Dagmar Janovska (CRI) informed the project members that at their institution they disseminate info only by newsletter on the webpage.

Vuk Đorđević (IFVCNS) informs the members that a journal of their institution could publish one volume on Ecobreed results although this is not an IF journal – but it is a peer-reviewed open access journal. So, there could be papers published in English in an open access journal (preliminary results, short communications and similar).

The coordinator suggests that the IP sub-committee members could act as reviewers in this journal to publish Ecobreed papers. All the content of the journal special issue on Ecobreed and the deadlines will be discussed at the next regular EB meeting in September. The special issue could then be published by the end of the project.

The Project manager had a question regarding reporting CCPs – we need to explain to partners what needs to be reported under CCPs as some partners are not sure what to report in WP6.

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Werner Vogt-Kaute (NATUR) thinks that it should be communicated that the population cannot be protected in the EU seed laws, and the ECOBREED trademark will be protected only indirectly. Coordinator commented that next year a discussion on who will be interested in the ECOBREED trademark is needed and maybe forming a consortium for registering this trademark for the future. Heinrich Grasugruber (BOKU) said that SECOBRA has some breeding lines, and some seeds could be traded with the ECOBREED trademark, and it would be great if they could use this trademark. The coordinator mentioned that Helena Valas will be available for the ECOBREED trademark discussion tomorrow. The Project manager added that the annual meeting of the IP sub-committee will take place on Thursday and all the open questions can be discussed there or after the meeting per email.

WP7

Mario A. Panetta, WP 7 leader reported that several activities are still planned for each task, but more or less there are no critical points in this WP. In tomorrow's meeting it is important to stress the importance that the updating of plans to do activities must be communicated to the WP7 leader.

The coordinator thinks that there is not that much time left – almost no educational activities in the last year and now we have to arrange all these activities in the next 10 months. Mario Panetta thinks that 10 months gives enough breathing room to arrange all the planned activities and suggests that the calendar stays as it is with all the planned events although the project will be extended.

The Project manager informed the members that there are still translations missing for announcing different types of events (translations from Romanian, Slovakian and Serbian are missing).

Pavol Hauptvogel (NPPS) reported that in Task 7.1 - genotyping training was planned but there were limitations due to Covid-19 restrictions; the training will be prepared in September 2022 in Slovakia and this is now being discussed in his institution; in Task 7.2 - phenotyping training, they submitted a new project from Slovak science agency and this project will be on the topic of phenotyping and they plan phenotyping training; in Task 7.3 - farmers' trainings are planned for June 2022 (3 trainings). The translations will be sent to the Project manager as soon as possible as the translations are prepared.

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Werner Vogt-Kaute (NATUR) said that Task 7.3 training events for farmers and Task 8. (demonstration events) need to be announced and reported differently, although they may be similar to each other in content.

The Project manager added that WP6, WP7 and WP8 are very important for ECOBREED project as these events were planned as significant parts of the project when submitting it to the EU commission. And these events need to be announced correctly on the website so that it is clear what is a training event, what is a demonstration event etc. Therefore, it is vital to correctly announce these different events in the national language and in the English translation. Especially Task 8.4 needs to be prepared differently, needs a questionnaire for participants and the result will be a huge deliverable (and this cannot be made only from some photos and list of participants of demonstration events).

The coordinator added that these issues must be communicated tomorrow to all the present project members. The events need to be announced correctly and on time as some events need more preparation (e.g., events with bursaries need at least 3 months announcement ahead) than others that are more ad hoc. Post-covid there is a lot of conferences happening and all the missed conferences will be now organised in 2022 – and they are competing for the same group of researchers. Therefore, we need to be on time with announcements and information on different types of events in WP6, WP7 and WP8. We do not want the position that no one will attend our events. So tomorrow we need to get the complete calendar of events.

Marjana Vasilević (IFVCNS) has already prepared a spreadsheet on the events and will check tomorrow with project members about these dates. She will do the best to get this info from project members.

The Project manager added that it is ridiculous that some project members still do not know what their obligations are in the project according to the GA. She thinks that most members do an excellent job although some have still not fulfilled their obligations.

The coordinator said that there is a possibility that in September a new wave of Covid-19 could again stop the events as there are planned now. For this, we need a good plan B and C to finish all the tasks in WP6, WP7 and WP8.

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WP8

Antoaneta G. Kuhar, the WP8 leader, will be presenting the lists for deliverables in the sessions. 5 were already accepted by the EU commission, one is submitted to the commission, 3 are pending, and 3 were removed.

The presentation of WP8 will start with communication as a new communication campaign is planned with two posts per week per partner of ECOBREED. Members must provide photos and info to be communicated through FB, Twitter etc. The goal is to speed up the campaign. In total, this means that each member must prepare 2 posts per year, which is not too much.

In dissemination, each partner will get a to-do list in June of what is still missing in WP8. This reminders and list will be prepared and sent to all project members by Andreja Žibrat Gašparič (KIS).

Then Task 8.4 for demonstration events will be presented together with Werner Vogt-Kaute (NATUR) and followed up by discussion.

Exploitation will include some activities that still need to be performed as well as the presentation on the current status of IP by Helena Valas.

WP1

Pavol Hauptvogel, WP1 leader, gave an overview of the work done in WP 1.

Task 1.1. and Task 1.2. are already finished.

Task 1.3. – information system: this is in preparation as the topic is very important and the task leader will be presenting his design tomorrow (e.g., password data, described data).

The coordinator added that Andreja Žibrat Gašparič (KIS) will help with Task 1.3 in the future. He does not think that there will be time for elaborate solutions. It is important to incorporate a link between the Zenodo data to the accession used. The way how to achieve this must be discussed in the meeting. But he stressed that the system must be simple and practical to use.

Pavol Hauptvogel added that funding is needed for building an information system – the software is free but for the system to work we would need special hardware system, and this is a problem in Slovakia. Nevertheless, the information

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system is planned as simple. He asked the WP2, WP3, WP4, WP5 leaders to prepare pictures of all varieties for the system.

The coordinator warned that this is more a catalogue and thinks that this is not needed for ECOBREED. The different options for the project will be discussed together with Andreja Žibrat Gašparič.

Vuk Đorđević (IFVCNS) agreed that adding pictures to all varieties is only additional work and although it may look nice, such a catalogue is not necessary for this project.

WP2

Heinrich Grausgruber, WP2 leader, reported on the tasks of WP2.

Most tasks were finished, and trials will also be finished this year as this is already the fourth year of the project. Quality analyses are also ready and this enormous task of bringing all this data together is planned for the next months.

Task 2.1 – Uroš Žibrat (KIS) offered to help with narrowing down the data.

Task 2.2 – finished tasks; bringing up a manuscript over the summer in 2022.

Task 2.3 – timetable will be presented when everything will be finished.

Task 2.4 – CPS populations are divided.

Task 2.5 – discuss how many crosses will be moved into next season and final solution for sharing the material.

What needs to be included is the quality data. *Triticum aestivum* and *T. durum* data from Austria and Italy are now available and it needs to be decided if they will move one season further.

Issue in WP2: trials in Jablje and Murska Sobota need to be communicated with Aleš Kolmanič and Uroš Žibrat (both KIS) and Primož Titan (RGA).

Pavol Hautvogel (NPPC) experts on statistical analyses of data are important as advanced phenotyping needs this.

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Heinrich Grausgruber added that Uroš Žibrat (KIS) can help with statistics as he is already part of the ECOBREED project, and he can do the data mining very sufficiently. He suggests that Pavol Hauptvogel discusses data mining with Uroš.

WP3

Peter Dolničar, WP3 leader, gave an overview of the work done in WP3.

Tomorrow they will have to have a detailed discussion about remote sensing.

Task 3.1 - phenotyping planned at KIS for 2022 and 2023.

Task 3.2 is finished.

Task 3.3 is coming to an end.

Task 3.4 will be finished in 2022.

Tasks 3.5 and 3.6: reports from fields are already coming in, especially many reports are coming from Polish project members.

The coordinator said that there are some challenges with Polish and Hungarian data and this needs to be discussed in tomorrow's sessions.

Peter Dolničar (KIS) agreed that some data from Poland is suspect (the yield was too high) and this has to be cleared up in the meeting. For Hungary, there are some issues with Task 3.1.

The IP sub-committee meeting in July 2022 will also be discussed. A venue for the meeting in Krakow, Poland still needs to be found. The focus is on young researchers, and they should make presentations.

The coordinator added that there were some unsuccessful plantings and that is why it is important to discuss what is still missing in WP3.

WP4

Vuk Đorđević, WP4 leader reported on the status of WP4.

The majority of field trials are finished. Weed competitiveness trials will still be made.

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They are waiting for seed quality analyses which are expected by February 2023. This will delay the publication on phenotyping.

Little bit delay is also in screening in data process in diseases resistance. They have one new expert in this at IFCVNS and there is some training needed for her.

One peer review publication published, two are pending at the moment. Publications and deliverables will be discussed with partners in tomorrow's meeting.

The coordinator added that Andreja Žibrat Gašparič (KIS) will make lists of partners and send it to project members on who still needs to do what on the publication front per the GA and will inform partners on their obligations.

Heinrich Grausgruber (BOKU) raises some problems in the scientific publishing world and encourages to publish more in old traditional journals that offer open access and not in newer (possibly predatory) journals.

The coordinator added that this could be discussed in the IP sub-committee meeting, but also informing other project members in the annual meeting. The project has money for open access articles.

The Project manager added that the previous project officer even expected a list of journals where we plan to publish the project results.

WP5

Dagmar Janovská, WP5 leader reported on the status of WP5.

Task 5.1 - Phenotyping and field trials are finished.

Some delays due to the cyber-attack in the end of last year at their institution (CRI).

Task 5.2 – needs to discuss this topic with partners to see what has been finished and what is pending.

Task 5.3 – two field trials still ongoing in Slovenia and the Czech Republic.

Task 5.4 – in progress, waiting for results from China.

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Task 5.5 – crossings – lot of lines and seeds and crossings between *Fagopyrum esculentum* and *F. tataricum* (info from Primož Titan (RGA) tomorrow).

Published one manuscript on phenotyping from the Czech data – special breeding on buckwheat.

List of deadlines for practice abstracts and reports on all tasks will also be discussed tomorrow.

Consultations with partners

The coordinator said that Antoaneta G. Kuhar (project manager, KIS) will have consultations for all the partners about the financial reports in the afternoon on Tuesday. There are some discrepancies with some partners – some activities were still not done or performed by some of the partners. We need properly prepared reports as there are two external audits planned – and that could happen to anyone in the project group.

Pavol Hauptvogel (NPPC) added that he has no results from audit (not yet).

The project manager added that reporting is better, but some unexpected surprises have arrived by partners regarding financial spending. The problematic partners have received some emails on Friday and Saturday and some partners need to discuss the financial issues with Antoaneta on Tuesday.

The coordinator warned that everything has to be in order by the time we come to the final report of the project. There is still some room for improvement now and for task running behind at this time.

Wrap-up on Wednesday and SAG 4th annual meeting on Thursday

Coordinator said that on Wednesday we report on the discussions that will happen in the parallel sessions on Tuesday afternoon and present them to all the other project members. On Thursday, these results will then be presented in the 4th annual SAG meeting. The Project manager added that 3 advisory group members will be present in the Thursday meeting.

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The coordinator finished that we need to think about what happens when the project ends – good results and reporting can give good support from the EU commission in future projects.

The project manager added that the review meeting in Brussels with our project officer will be end of November – beginning of December 2022 so we will need a report by then.

The next (26th) EB meeting is planned at the end of September in Prague (Monday – Friday, 26.-30. 9. 2022) with planned trip to PROBIO.

The next annual meeting will be held in Poland in 2023, but this has to be discussed with Polish project partners.

The final meeting and ECOBREED conference are planned in Slovenia in February 2024.

The meeting was closed at 17:55.