



**ecobreed**  
IMPROVING CROPS



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AGENDA

# ECOBREED 29<sup>th</sup> EB meeting & IP sub-committee annual meeting

WINZER KREMS eG, Sandgrube 13, A-3500 Krems

30 May 2023

**Tuesday, 30 May 2023 | 12:00 - 18:00**

- 12:00 – 12:30 |** Welcome and introduction  
Vladimir Meglič, project coordinator
- 12:30 – 16:00 |** Preparations for the annual meeting  
All EB members
- 16:00 – 18:00 |** IP sub-committee annual meeting  
All IP sub-committee members
- 19:00 |** Joint dinner

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## ECOBREED 29<sup>th</sup> EB Meeting

**Meeting started on Tuesday, 30 May at 12:15.**

Executive Board members present in person: Vladimir Meglič (coordinator), Paul Bilsborrow (deputy coordinator), Heinrich Grausgruber (WP2 leader), Peter Dolničar (WP3 leader), Vuk Đorđević (WP4 leader), Dagmar Janovská (WP5 leader), Werner Vogt-Kaute (WP6 leader), Mario A. Pagnotta (WP7 leader), Antoaneta G. Kuhar (project manager and WP8 leader)

Executive Board member absent: Pavol Hauptvogel (WP1 leader)

IP sub-committee members present in person: Vladimir Meglič (KIS), Paul Bilsborrow (UNEW), Heinrich Grausgruber (BOKU), Nadine Bauer (SECOBRA), Helena Valas (KIS)

IP sub-committee member absent: Pavel Horčíčka (SELGEN)

Other project members present: Andreja Žibrat Gašparič (KIS)

### Welcome and introduction

Vladimir Meglič, project coordinator, welcomed everyone to the 29<sup>th</sup> EB meeting in Krems and presented the agenda with special focus on the preparation for the annual meeting and the ECOBREED WP7 workshops at the 11<sup>th</sup> World Soybean Conference (WSRC11) in Vienna.

### Preparations for the annual meeting

#### WP7

Mario Pagnotta (WP7 leader, UNITUS) reported that KPIs in Tasks 7.1 and 7.2 have been reached. The organisation for both workshops at WSRC11 are well underway. There is a delay with the NPPC workshop and it will probably be postponed to autumn 2023.

The coordinator thanked the IFVC and KIS team for their organisation of the ECOBREED workshops at WSRC11. He opened the discussion about the participants and recipients of the ECOBREED bursaries. It was decided that the participants need to attend the orientation meeting and all the conference presentations related to the topics of the workshops as well as the workshops and wrap-up meeting organised by IFVC and KIS at the end of the conference.

Mario Pagnotta added that one workshop is still missing. To this, Heinrich Grausgruber (BOKU) said that there will be a workshop within the 22nd

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International Workshop on Bunt and Smut Diseases of Cereals in Tulln but there are not many students registered to the event. The EB members concluded that too many workshops are happening at the same time and this could be a reason for the low numbers. It was also decided that another round of announcements will be published on ECOBREED social networks.

The coordinator also proposed that the remained bursaries be used for funds to invite speakers at the final ECOBREED conference planned for beginning of 2024. All EB members agreed to this idea.

Antoaneta G. Kuhar (project manager, KIS) reported on the bursaries for WSRC11 and the signed bursary agreements. She thanked the WSRC11 organisers and IFVC for a good collaboration on this. Vuk Đorđević (IFVC) agreed that the organisation is running smoothly.

#### **WP5**

Dagmar Janovská (WP5 leader, CRI) reported that Task 5.1 is finished with only small technical issues at CRI for confirmation analysis which will be solved. Task 5.2 also completed and D5.2 finished. In Task 5.3, deliverable D5.3 is in preparation together with partners. For Task 5.4, the Chinese partner CAAS will be present at the annual meeting and be willing to provide further information and answer questions about their work. In Task 5.5 there are some open questions which will need to be discussed with partner RGA. All milestones are reached. The group prepared two Practice Abstracts with partners SMA, PRO-BIO and NATUR. Both were submitted to the Commission. There are some publications planned by UVIGO and CAAS. CRI is preparing an article for a farmer's magazine. The WP5 leader will also present a talk as an invited speaker at the buckwheat conference in Poland in July.

#### **WP2**

Heinrich Grausgruber (WP2 leader, BOKU) reported that Task 2.1 is now finished as the quality data from NPPC has finally arrived in June (missing only data from SECOBRA that was destroyed and ATK that was infested with bunt). Two deliverables are due in this task by end of June. Task 2.2 is finished and the deliverable submitted to the Commission. Task 2.3 is also finished with the deliverable submitted, but some chemical analyses will still need to be performed by UVIGO. In Task 2.4, the deliverable was finished, but the molecular markers could still be tested for yellow rust disease in Hungary (ATK) and Romania (NARDI) as we did not look for these resistance genes (i.e. Yr5, Yr10, Yr15) yet and it seems that more ECOBREED material is highly susceptible to this disease. This information will be added to the final report at the end of the project. In Taks 2.5 there will be an update at the end of the season on where which material is

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located and sharing of the material will be organised. There is no information on the perennial wheat material at RGA and this will need to be communicated soon. The Material Transfer Agreement (MTA) for UNITUS is not yet signed (additional comment: the MTA was signed during the annual meeting in Vienna). Most of the bunt material is also free for distribution. But there is an issue with the RGA perennial wheat crosses as they are not reported correctly and transparently (only species crosses mentioned, not varieties which is crucial information). The WP2 leader as well as partners from NARDI will present ECOBREED results in the Madrid conference in June.

#### **WP3**

Peter Dolničar (WP3 leader, KIS) reported that in Task 3.1 some experiments on phenotyping still need to be finished by KIS and that IHAR will do some additional Colorado potato beetle (CPB) experiments as agreed at the last EB meeting. There are two deliverables due at the end of the year on phenotyping. Task 3.2 was completed and all the deliverables are finished. In Task 3.3 there are still second year trials done in the UK (partner UNEW). Task 3.4 is completed but with additional trials from IHAR regarding CPB. The deliverable for this task was finished. In Tasks 3.5 and 3.6 there is a joint deliverable still planned and the work is in process and running smoothly. There are papers planned in WP3 but no concrete information from partners about who will publish soon. The coordinator stressed that especially young researchers involved in the project need to heed that the funding is adequately mentioned in all publications.

#### **WP4**

Vuk Đorđević (WP4 leader, IFVC) reported that the field trials are finished with only one control conditions trial regarding disease resistance screening still in the field. Some trials still need to be performed (inherited from Greek partner GEO which left the consortium). There are 8 deliverables planned till the end of the project. Also, 4 publications in peer review journals are planned (1x BOKU, 2x IFVC, 1x NARDI). The biggest logistical plan is the co-organisation of the WSRC11 and ECOBREED workshops as the team will make at least 10 presentations of ECOBREED results. Currently, there are 700 participants registered at the conference. They will also report for WP8 and provide materials for communication. Milestone 14 – registered variety was achieved (name of new variety: ECOB).

#### **WP6**

WP6 was not presented as the leader of the work package came too late to the meeting due to logistical issues.

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#### WP1, WP8 & WP9

Antoaneta G. Kuhar (WP8 and WP9 leader, KIS) presented the list of all deliverables planned from May to end of the project in February 2024. She urged all WP leaders to help and guide partners in preparing the deliverables. The 5 deliverables due in June are well underway. She also forwarded the invitations from the European Commission regarding the event "Adaptation to climate change" conference (asking Horizon projects to submit abstracts/results for this online event in June 2023) and about the email from Open Research Europe with invitation to publish ECOBREED related work there. Heinrich Grausgruber replied that BOKU plans to publish there.

The project coordinator presented Task 1.3 - *Establish an information portal for genotypic and phenotypic characterisation data of the core collections* as WP1 leader was absent from the meeting. Pavol Hauptvogel (WP1 leader, NPPC) sent an excel sheet with database for all 4 crops. Variety and accession information need to be added by crop leaders. He also prepared more than 100 pictures for each wheat variety used in ECOBREED and WP leaders agreed that this can be presented as a catalogue with the photos and a short description in PDF and uploaded to Zenodo. WP leaders agreed that such a catalogue could also be prepared for buckwheat, but not for soybean and potato.

The coordinator stresses that the database and portal for the information on varieties and accession is the most important part of this task and this should be the main focus of crop leaders. KIS will put the excel sheet on SharePoint and send the link to crop leaders to start fill in the information as soon as possible. Crop leaders will discuss this with partners within crop sessions at the annual meeting.

Antoaneta G. Kuhar (KIS) then started the discussion about the ECOBREED final conference which will be held in Ljubljana, Slovenia in January or February 2024. The WP leaders agreed that the first day will be devoted to the regular EB meeting, followed by at least 2-3 full days for the conference. The coordinator added that guest speakers for plenary sessions should be named and invited soon as only 6 months are left for planning the event. The conference must be announced soon through media and webpages of the project as well as all partners. The WP leaders agreed that the conference needs to be announced in early September. They also decided that there will be no registration fee. The WP leaders then discussed possible speakers for plenary sessions (Monica Messner, Salvatore Cecarelli, Micaela Colley, Dora Dreksler, Ferdinando Branca – BRESOV project, Isztvan Raicha, Edwin Noitin – Wageningen, Veronique Chable – INRAE, Gabrielle Berg - Graz). Paul Bilsborrow suggested to have 6 sessions and all agreed. All agreed that a tentative programme should be ready by the end of July and speakers booked.

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Antoaneta G. Kuhar (KIS) added that two more EB meetings are planned in 2023, one in September and another at the end of the year. This was followed by a short discussion about the most suitable dates.

### 5<sup>th</sup> IP sub-committee annual meeting

#### Welcome and introduction

Project coordinator Vladimir Meglič (KIS) kindly greeted all participants of the 5<sup>th</sup> IP sub-committee annual meeting that is being held in person in Vienna and hosted by BOKU.

Members attending: Vladimir Meglič, presiding, Paul Bilsborrow, Heinrich Grausgruber, Nadine Bauer, and Helena Valas.

Also present are Antoaneta Kuhar as project coordinator and Andreja Žibrat Gašparič as project supporting staff.

H. Valas continued with the meeting agenda.

#### Overall progress report

H. Valas briefly presented the main achievements in WP8 (intellectual property field) in Year 2022 and the overall progress report. ECOBREED is entering the final stage of the project and project partners are focusing on the exploitable results. IP table shows the progress in year 2022. The main activities of the Year 4 were collection and analysis of the data from Business Questioners (distributed in March 2022). Based on Individual plans of exploitation and Business Questioners we prepared 4 Business Cases that present business plans on commercialisation of the most important project key exploitable project results – 4 new crop varieties. The table of Key exploitable results is being amended in 2023. The 4 mentioned business cases and the table of key exploitable results are the basis for the final Agreement on the Use and Dissemination of the Foreground, including Exploitation. We are also finalising the Material Transfer Agreement at the four WPs that produced the key exploitable results i.e. new crop varieties: soybean, wheat, potato and buckwheat.

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The overall progress in the past year is checked in the report table:

IP category	Activity	Timeline
Ecobreed TM	registered	valid through 2022
Material Transfer Agreement	1 signed at WP2	June 2022
TM Licensing Agreement	1 signed	October 2022
WP8 IPR deliverables	D8.1, D8.2 approved	October 20
Business Case Questioners	7 received responses	December 2022
Table of Key Exploitable Results	under amendments	through 2023
Individual Plans of Exploitation	Contributions from all project partners	November 2021
IPR Exploitation	4 business cases and one partner agreement	Second half of 2022 through 2023

**Action:** IP subcommittee has taken notice and checked the overall progress report.

### 3. Review and amendments of 4 Business Cases

H. Valas presented the prepared presentations of the 4 business cases for new crop varieties suitable for organic farming. There is one presentation for each deliverable: wheat, buckwheat, soybean and potato. H. Valas has pointed out that there are still some data missing. As an example, H. Valas showed the business case for soybean, slide by slide.

Introduction challenge product range **market size assesment** business model go to market market forecastexploitation about

**Market size assesment- 2023/24**

We are reaching our market through production of basic and certified organic soybean seeds.

Seed production

	arable land in ha	seed production in tn
Austria		
Romania		
Serbia		

SIZE OF ARABLE LAND  
?? ha

CERTIFIED SEEDS IN TN  
?? tn

SOYBEAN SHELF LIFE  
1 year



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As pointed out, most of the missing data relates to the size of the arable land, estimated potential for crop production together with some market data. It would also be good if WP leaders check whole data in presentations and correct or amend where needed. These 4 presentations are important for future commercialisation activities or obtaining future financing.

**Action:** IP subcommittee has taken notice of the 4 business cases.

IP subcommittee advised to present the 4 business cases at the annual project partners meeting (taking place next day).

IP subcommittee encourages the WP leaders involved in breeding new crop varieties to examine the prepared 4 business cases carefully and amend or correct the documents.

#### **4. First draft of the final Exploitation Agreement**

H. Valas reported on the ongoing activity of preparing the final Agreement on the Use and Dissemination of the Foreground, including Exploitation. The interim plan was to focus on the 4 new crop varieties and prepare 4 exploitation agreements. This plan is now put under question as it is becoming obvious that there will be far more exploitable results on top of the 4 new crop varieties. The ECOBREED project is delivering other exploitable results (trademark, training material, workshops, presentations, field days, etc...) and project partners need to agree on their exploitation. It would therefore be advisable to see what all the exploitable results are, include them in the table of Key Exploitable Results and prepare on common Exploitation Agreement for all results and all project partners. It is clear that not all partners will exploit all the results, but the agreed conditions will apply to all project partners.

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Table of the key exploitable results in May 2023 is:

Key exploitable results	Metrics	Target audience
Pre-breeding of elite varieties of potato, wheat, buckwheat and soybean	4 early adopters	farmers, farm advisors, organic sector bodies, breeders, processors, consumers, policy makers
Foreseen new potato, wheat, buckwheat and soybean organic varieties	4 varieties	farmers, farm advisors, organic sector bodies, breeders, processors, consumers/consumer associations, policy makers
New technological methods/processes for potato, wheat, buckwheat and soybean	2	farmers, farm advisors, breeders, processors, policy makers, researchers
Traits and combinations of traits suited to organic and low-input production environments	4	farmers, farm advisors, breeders
CCP	2	farmers, farm advisors, breeders
Metrics for farmers to assess organic production systems / rotation backgrounds	3	farmers, farm advisors, breeders
Training manual for Advanced Genotyping	1	farmers, farm advisors, breeders, researchers
Training manual for Advanced Phenotyping	1	farmers, farm advisors, breeders, researchers
Data recording and management system	1	farmers, farm advisors, organic sector bodies, breeders, processors, policy makers
Efficient, ready-to-use farmer participatory breeding systems	4	farmers, farm advisors, organic sector bodies, breeders, processors, policy makers

**Action:** IP subcommittee is advising project partners to finalise the table of key exploitable results by the end of year 2023.

IP subcommittee agrees with the proposal to prepare one final Exploitation Agreement that will include all the key exploitable results for the aforementioned table.

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#### 5. Update of the MTA agreements post-ECOBREED projects (pricing)

H. Valas presented open issue related to Material Transfer Agreements. So far, all project partners were exchanging the genetic and other materials for free as background knowledge needed for the foreground. The question is what happens when the project is over and project partners will still need access to those exchanged materials for research or commercialisation purposes? What if third parties will ask for those materials?

After some discussion the IP subcommittee proposed that this issue be addressed in the final Exploitation Agreement with suggested solution that all the exchanged material between project partners remains license free after the end of financing. In cases where third parties will ask for material transfer agreements of such genetic or other materials, the project partners will charge them according to the rules in their institution.

**Action:** IP subcommittee will discuss the question of pricing with all project partners.

#### 6. AOB

V. Meglič presented activities of IP Subcommittee regarding monitoring of the past and forthcoming publications and dissemination. Project partners are following the agreed protocol on informing prior to publication although sometimes the deadlines are too short.

**Action:** Members agreed to continue monitoring all forthcoming publications and dissemination activities.

**The meeting was finished at 17:50.**