Minutes

Exploring and documenting diversity in nature

CETAF A.I.S.B.L

CETAF 39 General Meeting, 3 - 4 May 2016

Hungarian Natural History Museum, Budapest, Hungary

Host
Magyar Természettudományi Múzeum

Director
Dr. Zoltán Korsós
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Venue
Hungarian Natural History Museum

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Notes: Course of the meeting was according to the approved agenda.

Annexes:
- Annexes to the minutes (numbered 1 to 11)

Authors
Ana Casino (General Secretary), Karsten Gödderz (Project Assistant),
1st Revision: **Michelle J. Price (CETAF Chair)**; *2nd Revision*: EC Members

Participants (49 representatives, from 30 Members and 18 countries)

Gergely BABOCSAY (Hungarian Natural History Museum, Budapest), Laurence BENICHOU (National Museum of Natural History, Paris), Björn BERNING (Upper Austria State Museums - Biology Centre, Linz), Irene BISANG (Swedish Museum of Natural History), Olof BISTRÖM (Finnish Museum of Natural History-LUOMUS), Wiesław BOGDANOWICZ (Museum And Institute of Zoology), Thierry BOURGOIN (National Museum of Natural History, Paris), Angelika BRANDT (NORe Consortium), Steven DESSEIN (National Botanic Garden of Meise), Johanna EDER (Staatliches Museum für Naturkunde Stuttgart), Jiří FRANK (National Museum Prague), Patrick GROOTAERT (Royal Institute of Natural Sciences-RBINS), Guido GRYSEELS (Royal Museum for Central Africa-RMCA), Borislav GUEORGUIEV (Bulgarian Consortium-Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research), Michel GUIRAUD (National Museum of Natural History, Paris), Anton GÜNTSCH (Botanic Garden and Botanic Museum, Dahlem), Peter HAASE (Senckenberg Natural History Museum), Eva HÄFFNER (Botanic Garden and Botanic Museum, Dahlem), Elspeth HASTON (Royal Botanic Garden of Edinburgh), Christoph HÄUSER (Museum für Naturkunde, Berlin), Urmas KõLJALG (Estonian Consortium - University of Tartu), Zoltán KORSÓS (Hungarian Natural History Museum, Budapest), Dimitris KOUREAS (Natural History Museum of London), Jiří KVACEK (National Museum Prague), Annette LEINGÄRTNER (Staatliches Museum für Naturkunde Stuttgart), Cornelia LÖHNE (Zoological Research Museum Alexander Koenig), Ivo MACEK (National Museum Prague), Karol MARHOLD (Slovak National Taxonomic Facility - NaTAF), Fridtjof MEHLUM (Naturhistorisk Museum, Universiteetet I Oslo), Patricia MERGEN (Royal Museum for Central Africa-RMCA), Jesús MUÑOZ (CSIC-RJB), Eva-Maria NATZER (Bavarian Natural History Museum – Munich), Beáta PAPP (Hungarian Natural History Museum), Alan PATON (Royal Botanic Garden of Kew), Claes PERSSON (Göteborg Natural History Museum), Michelle PRICE (Conservatoire et Jardin Botaniques de la Ville de Géneve), Isabel REY (CSIC-MNCN), Erik RINDAL (Naturhistorisk Museum, Universiteetet I Oslo), Celia Santos (CSIC-MNCN), Nikolaj SCHARFF (Natural History Museum of Denmark), Leif SCHULMAN (Finnish Museum of Natural History-LUOMUS), Erik SMETS (Naturalis Biodiversity Center, Leiden), Vince SMITH (Natural History Museum of London), Isabella VAN DE VELDE (Royal Institute of Natural Sciences-RBINS), Ernst VITEK (Naturhistorisches Museum of Vienna).

From the General Secretariat: Ana CASINO, Karsten GÖDDERZ

New Members: Patrik MRÁZ (Faculty of Science, Charles University Prague)

Observers and Guests: Tamar DAYAN (Steinhardt Museum of Natural History, Tel Aviv)

Day 1: Tuesday 3rd May (13.00 – 17.45)

OPENING OF THE CETAF39 GENERAL MEETING

The CETAF 39 meeting was officially opened by Michelle J. Price, Chair of CETAF, at 13:00. She welcomed the participants and outlined the aims of the CETAF 39 General Meeting. She also

thanked the Hungarian Natural History Museum and the Director of the museum, Zoltán Korsós, for hosting the meeting in such a marvellous setting.

WELCOME ADDRESS

Zoltán Korsós (Director of the Hungarian Natural History Museum) gave a welcome address to the CETAF General Meeting on behalf of the Natural History Museum, giving a brief overview of the museum's rich history.

1. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:** The proposed agenda of CETAF39 and the invitation to attend the meeting were circulated to the members on the 18th February 2016. The **Agenda** was voted on and approved without changes (***Annex 1***).

2. **APPROVAL OF THE RECORDS OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes from the CETAF38 meeting, held on 13th-14th October 2015 and hosted by the Geneva Consortium were distributed to the membership on the 15th December 2015 together with the reminder for nominations of candidates for the CETAF EC and Proposals of topics for the CETAF symposium at BioSyst.EU. The **CETAF38 Minutes** (***Annex 2***) (including its associated annexes available electronically via the website) were voted on and unanimously approved.

3. **REPORT FROM THE CHAIR AND THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:** Michelle Price (MP-Chair) (Conservatoire et Jardin Botaniques de la Ville de Genève, CH) presented the **Report from the Chair and the Executive Committee** (***Annex 3***) for the twelve months reporting period from CETAF37 through CETAF39. The Chair thanked the coordinators and members of the Working Groups (WG) for their hard work and their contributions to the CETAF strategic development plan, as the active groups represent the core business of CETAF. MP-Chair mentioned the new work plan for the General Secretariat (GS) and took the opportunity to thank the Evaluation panel whose report was considered by the CETAF Executive Committee (EC). The application of CETAF to join the European Commission consultation forum on ABS has been accepted. The application of CETAF to become a new member to the ERA Stakeholders Platform has been submitted for informal feedback and will be submitted formally to the European Commission once the final version has been approved by the CETAF EC.
   The Report was voted on and approved without objections.

4. **FINANCIAL REPORTS**
   4.1 CETAF ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2015: Ernst Vitek (EV-Treasurer) (Naturhistorisches Museum Vienna, AT), presented the annual accounts for 2015 and explained the main differences to the planned budget: (i) higher travelling costs due to the EC approved trip to Washington D.C. to attend the GRBio workshop (A. Casino, P. Mergen), (ii) higher salary costs due to legal obligations caused by the personnel turnover in the Secretariat, (iii) an added budget for refining the website, and (iv) the amount dedicated to promotional material (leaflets, posters etc.). However, due to lower expenditures in other areas the accounts for 2015 would have been balanced if all member fees had been paid on time as

the negative net balance 2015 and the outstanding member fees for 2014 are even. The **CETAF Annual Accounts 2015** (***Annex 4.1***) were approved unanimously.

4.2 AUDIT REPORT ON CETAF ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2015: Olof Biström (Finnish Museum of Natural History-LUOMUS, FI) on behalf of both Auditors (himself and Erik Smets, from Naturalis Biodiversity Center, NL) handed over the signed report to the Chair who read the report to the membership stating that all accounts were in order and recommended by the auditors for approval. The **Audit Report 2015** (***Annex 4.2***) was voted on and approved. MP-Chair thanked the auditors for their services this year and in previous years as both auditors will not be able to continue due to retirement and candidacy for the EC, respectively. The Chair asked for candidates to be nominated as auditors that would then be approved the following day.

4.3 FINANCIAL REPORT FROM THE FIRST TRIMESTER OF 2016: Ana Casino (AC-CETAF GS) (CETAF Secretariat, Brussels, BE) presented the first quarterly report of 2016. For similar reasons as outlined under 4.1, salary expenses were a bit higher than expected. CETAF GS thanked once again NHM Stockholm for the transferring of funds to support ABS activities (namely ABS workshops). During the first semester 2016, some of those funds were used to cover traveling expenses of the ABS core team to attend the Workshop held in Munich, on the 24th February. There were no questions and the **Financial Report from the First Trimester** (***Annex 4.3***) was approved.

5. **DISCHARGE OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:** Patrick Grootaert (RBINS, BE) explained that the discharge of the EC is an obligation for a legal entity under Belgian law. With the annual reports for 2015 approved by the memberships, he recommended that the EC Members should be discharged from their responsibilities for the current reporting period. The CETAF EC was unanimously discharged by the general meeting.

6. **CETAF GENERAL SECRETARIAT ACTIVITY REPORT 2015:** AC-CETAF GS presented the activities of the GS since CETAF38. The internal dealings of the GS led to the selection of new Staff for the Secretariat and AC-CETAF GS took then the opportunity to introduce Karsten Gödderz to the meeting, as the new Projects Assistant. Issues outlined in the report included information on the renewal of the host agreement with RBINS, the production of a **CETAF Impact Report** (***Annex 5***) for 2015 (a printed version of which was distributed among the members), the refining of the structure of the website and the creation of a permanent webpage for the stable identifiers initiative. Ongoing projects include the creation of webpages for ABS and the CETAF Strategy, the exploitation of the Members data contained in the CETAF Passports and the production of a CETAF presentation toolkit explaining what CETAF and its essence are, to facilitate the role of those who may act as ambassadors for CETAF in the future and the dissemination of information on CETAF within each member institution.
   In a similar fashion, the external activities such as outreach towards third parties, collaborators, partners, advisors and interested bodies and prospective CETAF members were outlined. As mentioned under agenda item 3, the approval of the CETAF application to become a member in the ABS Consultation Forum can be considered as a major success that the GS is hoping to reproduce with the pending application to become a new member of the ERA stakeholder's platform. Besides this, further efforts have been made to

integrate CETAF into European Projects. While the RESPONSIF application was highly regarded (over the threshold) but ultimately unsuccessful (due to lack of funds in that Call), the GS is partner to the new proposal BIOTALENT (under Programme ERASMUS+), coordinated by RBINS.

Furthermore, the GS staff participated in over 20 events (apart from the skype and preparatory meetings for most of those events) and disseminated multiple calls and public consultations among the members.

Vince Smith (VS-London, UK) thanked the GS for producing the impact report as it might help advocacy work within institutions to explain what CETAF is and does. Nikolaj Scharff (NS-Copenhagen, DK) also indicated the interest of measuring the impact of its work, identifying and using key performance indicators and benchmarks to measure activities against. AC-CETAF GS, MP-Chair and Thierry Bourgoin (TB-Paris, FR) replied together that this impact report was a first version that might become a tool for some members seeking to showcase the impact of CETAF but that it will have to be developed and improved for future iterations. The impact will have to be measured against the targets outlined in the strategy short-, mid- and long-term goals. But while the impact of documents like this within the institutions and the scientific community would ultimately have to be evaluated by the institutions, the impact on the society at large is difficult to measure. VS-London suggested to also focus on the outcome of the WGs, the lobbying activities and the work on the acquisition of additional funding as these are topics where the impact becomes easily visible. This would also highlight common activities working towards the common set of goals of CETAF.

To foster the reporting on the impact of the work of CETAF and its member institutions it was recommended that the individual institutions communicate their own achievements more regularly to the GS thus enabling GS to use them on further reports. The Community space on the CETAF website could be a helpful tool to facilitate this. Members were invited to provide feedback on the impact report and to state the inclusion of what information would be most beneficial to them to help develop it into a regular publication.

7. **PRESENTATION OF THE CETAF COMMUNICATION PLAN:** AC-CETAF presented the newly developed Communication Plan (***Annex 6***). The plan was presented as a framework for all internal and external communication actions. This means, on the one hand, to facilitate the internal flow of information between CETAF members and the GS and, on the other hand, to expand the knowledge of what CETAF is and stands for to the general public as well as to disseminate information of CETAF's actions and initiatives and promote the importance of natural history collections among different audiences.

   The communication plan provides a matrix of implementation to tailor any communication action to key message, target audiences, objectives and available tools.

   Measuring the results of the actions might be possible for web-based actions for example, by counting visits (Google analytics). A qualitative measurement, however, is more difficult. One example given was to ask for the visibility of implemented actions at target audiences via questionnaires.

   Irene Bisang (IB-Stockholm) pointed out that collection managers should become a specific group within the target audiences to be addressed separately. This could also help

to strengthen their position within the community. MP-Chair replied that collections managers would be added to the current communication plan.
Erik Smets (ES-Naturalis) indicated that the order of the key messages is maybe too self-referential. The messages on the importance of taxonomy and collections for society should be mentioned before referencing the tool for achieving this goal that is CETAF. This change (though any action had not been prioritised within the Plan but just listed) was voted on and approved and the order of the key messages would be changed in the current communication plan.
It was then mentioned by several members that a repository of a) strategies and annual reports, and b) a collection of 5-6 key achievement numbers like publications in relation to the collections, species identified, etc. could be created. This would allow both the internal strategies and the key indicators to be used for internal and external advocacy as well as to showcase the efforts and the production within the CETAF community. While this might not be the core business of CETAF it is a relatively easy measure to implement via the website and might become enormously valuable for publicity purposes and the sharing of knowledge between the members. It was agreed to create a repository for documents in the community space on the CETAF website and that the EC should create a short list of four to five key figures each member should provide yearly to showcase the production of CETAF members (inked with performance indices mentioned in the strategy document). This list will be approved inter-sessionally and then a simple interface to enter the data will be created on the CETAF website.

8. **CETAF ELECTIONS:** After three years of service the current EC was discharged and MP-Chair expressed her gratitude for their hard work and dedication. Elections for a new EC were held as per the List of Candidates (Annex 7). As agreed at CETAF38 to the process will follow in a cascade, one position after the other, via secret ballot. Eva Natzer (EN-Munich) and Gergely Babocsay (GB-Budapest) volunteered as vote counters with the assistance of Karsten Gödderz (KG-CETAF), the ballots will be archived at the GS. For the Election of the Chair, the current Vice-Chair (Christoph Häuser, CH-Berlin) took over and chaired the election process. Once elected, the chairing was transferred again to MP-Chair. The process was completed smoothly, except for one ballot for the position of treasurer that was submitted for the voting on the secretary. The meeting agreed to invalidate the vote for the secretary and transfer it to its correct place under the vote for the treasurer. The new EC resulting from this Election is composed of Michelle Price (MP-Geneva), CETAF Chair; Thierry Bourgoin (TB-Paris), Vice-Chair; Erik Smets (ES-Leiden), Treasurer; Cornelia Löhne (CL-Bonn), Secretary; and as Ordinary Members: Jiři Kvaček (JK-Prague), Jesus Muñoz (JM-Madrid), Nikolaj Scharff (NS-Copenhagen) and Vince Smith (VS-London) .

9. **OBJECTIVES FOR CETAF AND THE CETAF GENERAL SECRETARIAT 2016-2017:** MP-Chair and AC-CETAF GS presented the **CETAF General Objectives 2016** (***Annex 8***) and the **CETAF General Secretariat Objectives 2016** (***Annex 9***) respectively. Both are directly derived from and contribute to the achievements of the targets outlined in the CETAF strategy.
With the new EC now in place the members will meet soon after CETAF39 to draw up their work plan and define the specific objectives for the next 12 months that will be proposed

at CETAF40. Some future focus area were highlighted, such as the role of the Executive Committee in supporting the activities of the working groups as an important pillar for CETAF activities and the lobbying activities of the GS. .
Other clear-cut goals are the application to become a stakeholder for the ERA to influence the roadmap for the next funding period, developing collaborations with strategic partners and contributing to the promotion of CETAF and its objectives. For the latter it will be important that members contribute to calls for information from the GS, promote CETAF products, tools and publications within their own institutions and encourage the participation of their staff in CETAF activities and WGs. If the EC, the member institutions and the GS work together cohesively on these objectives then CETAF can be something much bigger than the sum of its parts, namely a collaborative network, a community spirited organisation that impacts on the public as well as the political domain and the private sector, and works on the big questions that our societies currently face.

For the GS the main objectives can be split into two categories: 1) running the secretariat –i.e. handling financial and administrative obligations, updating the website, organising meetings, collating and disseminating data, topics, events etc. – and, 2) putting the parts of the CETAF Strategy into action that touch directly on the competences of the GS. AC-CETAF GS gave a few examples of how the GS develops its tasks in accordance with the strategy and how the objectives complement the achievement of those targets, such as the development of an ABS helpdesk or the promotion of the stable identifiers which directly contribute to the strategic focus areas on collection access and biodiversity informatics.

Before the meeting was officially closed for day one, MP-Chair brought up one item for reflection and open informal discussion during the dinner: the 20th Anniversary of CETAF.

MP-Chair, on behalf of the CEATF EC and GS, proposed that in addition to the General Assembly on October 18th and 19th, CETAF should hold a special event day open to a larger and different public on October 20th. The event was outlined in a paper distributed to the members during the discussion (***Annex 10***).
The format is open for discussion but the event should be devoted to one interesting, collection-related topic that can draw an audience and put CETAF at the forefront of scientific discussion.
Because of the logistics of organising such an event, the membership was asked if it was prepared to give its approval for the organisation of such an event. The proposal was approved and ideas surrounding the organisation of an event and the identification of the target audience were discussed. In a subsequent vote it was approved that 10.000 € of the CETAF reserve fund shall be dedicated to the organisation of this event. Most of the concerns raised by the floor dealt with the short timeframe for the organisation of this event and the necessity to engage the commitment of interesting speakers and panellists in just six months. Accordingly, the EC committed to circulate a draft document on the topic within two weeks after CETAF39, with a proposed planning and structure of the event. VS-London suggested

that each member institution takes on the task to convene one speaker to make the organisation feasible and take pressure off of the organisers in Madrid.

To narrow down the search for ideas it was further agreed that the broader topic should address the societal relevance of collections. The target audience should consist of media, decision makers, scientists in a broad sense, ERA stakeholders, NGOs, and business partners. And key speakers should be convened among the targeted audiences (for example BBC journalists, Greenpeace, etc.) Jesus Muñoz (JM-Madrid) indicated that the economics of collections should be addressed somehow if decision makers were to be targeted. AC- CETAF GS proposed to address private sector and start to investigate the means and channels with which to address it from our scientific prospective. Leif Schulman (LS-Helsinki) welcomed this idea and suggested that a representative from the EU funded FlyHigh project could be invited as this project combines the taxonomy of flies and plants with businesses that conduct research on the use of insect proteins as fodder; a good example of collaboration between scientific research and private business. Other relevant examples were tabled in this same line (IKEA supporting the Catalogue of Life–CoL, and the interesting developments in the sector of massive and 3D digitization).

In relation to CETAF40, MP-Chair tabled a proposal that the CETAF strategy group should produce a condensed version of the CETAF Strategy that the directors of each institution could sign. AC-CETAF GS proposed to collate a document with a vision 20 years into the future of collections in general and CETAF in particular from the members, to create an internal report of how CETAF members see their future and derive from that contributions to the advancement of the CETAF strategic development plan.

The Chair officially closed day one of the CETAF39 General Assembly at 17:45 and the hosts informed the meeting of the guided **tours to Mineralogical, Paleontological, Anthropological, Vertebrate Zoological collections and the Library**.

Day 2: Wednesday 4th May (9.00 – 15.45)

4.2 ELECTION OF NEW AUDITORS: Following the agreement reached the day before, Eva-Maria Natzer (EMN-Munich) and Fridtjof Mehlum (FM-Oslo) volunteered to become auditors of the CETAF accounts. Both were unanimously elected and they were thanked by MP-Chair.

10. FUTURE DIRECTIONS OF THE CETAF WORKING GROUPS AND INITIATIVES: The most recent activities as well as future actions of the following WGs were presented:

European Journal of Taxonomy (EJT): TB-Paris presented the progress made with the **EJT:** 1) It received its impact factor (IF: 1.36) in June 2015 placing EJT as the best journal of taxonomy; 2) since, the rate of submission is going up significantly (more than a paper

per day is submitted); and 3) Naturalis recently joined the EJT consortium and more institutions were invited to join the team.

CETAF Strategy Group: MP-Chair presented the proceedings of the group which accomplished its major task with the adoption of the CETAF Strategy and Strategic Development Plan at CETAF38. Future steps for the group will be to draft a condensed version of the strategy to be signed by CETAF Directors, and a summary paper to be published in a targeted journal. It will also be the task of this WG to evaluate how the impact of the strategy could be measured in the future. VS-London thus indicated that ensuring the signatures of Directors takes time and a first draft should be circulated as soon as possible and MP-Chair committed to doing this. MP-Chair indicated that the CETAF strategy and Strategic Development Plan should be made more visible on the current CETAF website. In the near future, a webpage on the CETAF site will be published, similar to the one on the stable identifiers

European Initiatives Advisory Group: AC-CETAF then presented the outcomes of the meeting held on 27 April in Brussels on the functioning and future of this group. Most of the initial WG's tasks are also undertaken by the secretariat. So as not to lose the valuable expertise the members provide, the group members agreed that the content of the WG needed to evolve and three main line of actions were proposed: Responsible Research and innovation (RRI), Societal Challenges, and Permeability with Industry. Input from the current members on how to develop these lines of actions was encouraged, as well as new members joining this group, the Terms of Reference of which will be circulated soon.

CETAF Training and e-Learning Group: Isabella Van de Velde (IVV-Brussels) introduced the actions and future plans of the group, which included the very recent submission of the BIOTALENT proposal under the ERASMUS+ framework. It was further indicated that the e-learning platform DEST will be needing a new supervisor due to retirement of IVV-Brussels and inquired if CETAF could maybe provide support. IVV-RBINS will send a detailed proposal to the EC outlining what is required for this position and for the maintenance of the platform. Once discussed by the CETAF EC it will be circulated to the membership for consideration.

Information, Science and Technology Commission (ISTC): Anton Güntsch (AG-Berlin) reported on the joint ISTC/Digitisation meeting in Bratislava on 12 April and informed the membership of the progress made on the stable identifiers. Members were invited to join this initiative and to volunteer for a test of best practices regarding geo-referencing, under the coordination of Naturalis. BGBM Dahlem-Berlin and RBG Kew will be partners in this test but more are always welcome. Stuttgart volunteered to host the next ISTC WG meeting in the Spring of 2017.

CETAF Earth Science Group: Johanna Eder (JE-Stuttgart) continued with the presentation of the ESG that, during its kick-off meeting in Stuttgart on 16th-18th February 2016, has recently setup a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). A MoU was considered to be internal to the group and an important tool to ensure the commitment of CETAF institutions to sending a delegate to the ESG meetings and participating in future activities. Focus areas highlighted were the initiative to make more collection data available via GEOCASE, to collaborate with other CETAF groups on data standards and

collections, and the high societal relevance of a survey of documented catastrophes in Earth Science collections.

Regulations and Legislation Group: Cornelia Löhne (CL-Bonn) presented the results of the core team of this group, which up until now has mostly focused on Access and Benefit Sharing, as this is the expertise of its core members. To be prepared for different legal challenges in the future new members were invited to join the group and thus add new expertise. Concerning ABS, CL-Bonn thanked JB-Stockholm for funding the brochures and workshops, and AC-CETAF GS for her permanent support to the group. In the near future, a webpage on the CETAF site will be published, similar to the one on the stable identifiers. Two training events were held in September 2015 and February 2016, and others will be conducted (the next will be at the SPNCH conference in Berlin in June). Also, a side event at the next CBD COP in Mexico is envisaged. IVV-Brussels suggested that the ABS training events could be included on the DEST platform, with the possibility of developing an online offer in the future. Discussing future policy issues, CL-Bonn urged members to contact their own Governmental contact persons or any other key persons concerning the upcoming issue of ***genetic information*** vs. ABS legislation within the CBD. The way it is pushed forward now – mostly with industry as a user of genetic information in mind – it might render future research on genetic resources in developing countries practically / financially / administratively impossible as it is contrary to how researchers are working today within natural sciences. VS-London suggested that a common position statement addressing this issue should be drafted by CETAF as such a document would carry more political weight. It was generally agreed that this is essential. Christoph Häuser (CH-Berlin) mentioned that environmental policy delegates often have no connection to research policy issues. Hence, the national ministries dealing with research should be contacted and invited to contact their environmental counterparts to highlight this problem.

CETAF Digitization Group: The final presentation came from Elspeth Haston (EH-Edinburgh) pointing out that the group is building on the work done for the SYNTHESYS project and aims to put the elements concerning digitisation from the CETAF strategy into action. One major issue for the future will be the long-term preservation and curation of digital data. Furthermore, a gap analysis concerning the digitisation process will be carried out.

11. CETAF MEMBERSHIP

11.1 APPLICATION: A NEWLY CREATED CONSORTIUM FROM THE CZECH REPUBLIC: Patrik Mráz (Charles University, Prague) presented the application of the newly formed Czech Consortium consisting of NHM Prague – already CETAF member – as well as the two new applicants, the Faculty of Science of Charles University and the Institute of Botany of the Czech Academy of Sciences. He outlined that both new institutions are research leaders in the Czech Republic and that the consortium offers an increased size of collections, more tools, more specialists, an increased coverage of biodiversity expertise and data and thus becomes a strong partner for common initiatives. SD-Meise asked if there are any indications about the formation of consortia by current members of CETAF, and whether CETAF has internal rules to assess such a request.

MP-Chair indicated that, informally, consortia were formed by institutions linked under the same administration or from members that were not large enough to join individually but that no formal rules have been established by CETAF. The new CETAF EC will work on this issue.

The representatives of the consortium were then asked to leave the room for an internal discussion. A question on the membership category and fee of the new Czech member was raised. MP-Chair transmitted the position of the EC, namely the maintaining of the same Membership category, based on the current operational budget and staff devoted to Collections management. After the discussion, the application of the new Czech Consortium – following recommendation for approval by the EC – was approved unanimously, and the new Member of CETAF was warmly welcomed into CETAF.

11.2 CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP: MP-Chair pointed out that NHM Senckenberg has returned to CETAF as Full Member and RMCA-Tervuren has adjusted its Membership category accordingly to its current budget and staffing situation. The EC has also received considerable interest from Tel Aviv and Bucharest to join CETAF. Tamar Dayan (Tel Aviv, Israel), invited to CETAF39 as an observer, presented briefly the Steinhardt Museum of Natural History, Tel Aviv which is considered as a national research infrastructure in Israel and fulfils the role of a national natural history museum. It houses collections with over 5 million individual specimens. She insisted on her willingness to join CETAF in the near future.

12. UPCOMING MEETINGS: The upcoming CETAF40 in Madrid (18-20 October 2016) had already been discussed at length during day one of the meeting, AC-CETAF GS presented the potential hosts for CETAF41 and CETAF42. The Zoological Research Museum Alexander Koenig in Bonn is considering hosting the CETAF41 meeting and the Natural History Museum of Crete has proposed to host the CETAF42 meeting. MP-Chair invited proposals for future general meetings (CETAF43 and 44).

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

ESFRI: Christoph Häuser (MfN) presented the proposal for the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) where respective national research funders come together to discuss and agree on long term developments of research infrastructures. Receiving a place on the ESFRI roadmap could be the most important project in the long run to bring CETAF to another level. However, this is not an application for a direct research grant. It is an extensive undertaking to convince research funders (governmental level) to engage in long term investment in our institutions. The ESFRI roadmap is updated every two years and will be presented next during ICRI-2016 (Cape Town, South Africa, 3-5 October 2016), for proposals for the next call the submission date will most likely before Spring 2017. People with skills to support the national task forces, the design study or the science case were invited to participate, as this is one huge opportunity to persuade member states that collections are worth more than the current investment they receive.

There are task forces currently set up for 17 countries. It should be the goal to likewise activate the missing ones, as (political) support from as many as possible states is necessary for the proposal to be eligible, together with the (economic) commitment from at least one of them. Several updates were provided by Dimitris Koureas (DK-London), coordinator together with AC-CETAF GS and Maarten Heerlen (MH-Leiden) of the proposal construction. In essence, CETAF members were encouraged to contact their national contact points to ensure the inclusion of this RI within the respective national roadmaps, and to broaden the participation to other scientific organizations in order to strengthen the national support to this initiative. He also pointed out the platform used for collaborative work (Teamwork) and the meetings to be held (every 6 weeks).

14. RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION (RRI): ACTION PROGRAMME FOR CETAF:

AC-CETAF GS presented RRI with its five dimensions societal engagement, open access, science education, gender equality, and ethics. Those principles, included into research design, shall ensure that science contributes to societal well-being. Including RRI into research organizations structures becomes increasingly important for calls on both the European and national levels. For example, open access will become a standard in the new Horizon 2020 work programme and all activities carried out under H2020 must comply with ethical principles. While, in theory, all the five dimensions are compelling and legitimate, difficulties are encountered when translating them into practical measures within the research organizations.

Natural History Museums are, however, the perfect institutions for the implementation of RRI, as they are places of confluence for the five key elements. This is why the RESPONSIF proposal – as presented by DK-London – was submitted and highly regarded by the evaluators though, unfortunately, it was not funded due to budgetary constraints. Nevertheless, this well-regarded proposal indicates that this is a path worth pursuing and CETAF already possesses a basis from which to develop future actions.

The GS organised a breakout session to brainstorm among the members, to gather best practices, to identify barriers as well as possible lines of future actions within CETAF. KG-GS explained the structure of the breakout session. In four rounds of discussions each delegate discussed different aspects of RRI, led by a coordinator in changing groups. To end the session the 5 coordinators AG-Berlin for open access, CL-Bonn for ethics, IVV-Brussels for gender equality, GB-Budapest for science education and Jiří Frank (JF-Prague) for societal engagement, each gave a brief summary of the most important results from each discussion table. Those results will be collated by the GS, analysed in collaboration with the coordinators and condensed into a document which will then be circulated for comments among the members. If the early results are encouraging, the GS will coordinate, together with the EIAG group an intersessional refining process with the intention to further advance this issue and to present the outcomes of this process at CETAF40.

CONCLUDING REMARKS AND FORMAL CLOSURE OF THE CETAF39 GENERAL MEETING

To conclude, the Chair thanked everyone for their active participation in the discussions, thanked the members of the outgoing EC for their hard and successful work and the hosts of CETAF39 for their excellent organisation. She informed the participants that a **Resume Report** (***Annex 11***) on the decisions and outcomes of the meeting had been circulated to the members (not only the participants) so that all were aware of the objectives achieved, the results produced and the commitments assumed during the current meeting.

The CETAF 39 General Assembly was officially closed at 15:47.

LIST OF ANNEXES

Annex 1 – Agenda of CETAF39

Annex 2 – CETAF38 Minutes (and associated annexes)

Annex 3 – Report from the Chair and Executive Committee

Annex 4 – 4.1 CETAF Annual Accounts 2015

4.2 Financial Report from the Frist Trimester 2016

Annex 5 – CETAF Impact Report 2015

Annex 6 – Communication Plan 2016 – 2019

Annex 7 – Candidate list and election results

Annex 8 – CETAF General Objectives 2016

Annex 9 – CETAF General Secretariat Objectives 2016

Annex 10 – Document on CETAF40 special event

Annex 11 – CETAF39 Resume Report – Decisions and Outcomes