

Executive Report of the CETAF 51st General Assembly May 11-12, 2022, Frankfurt, Germany

Report drafted by Michelle Price (CETAF Vice-Chair), CJBG, Geneva, 12 May 2022

The meeting began with a presentation on the Senckenberg Museum by Prof. Dr. Angelika Brandt (Head of Marine Zoology Department at Senckenberg Research Institute and Natural History Museum). The meeting was formally opened at 9h30 by Michelle Price (CETAF Vice-Chair, acting Chair). A total of 33 of 39 voting members were present at the opening of the meeting, and one joining at 9h45.

The following items were approved in the CETAF Business and the annual reporting session:

- The amended Agenda for CETAF51 (33 votes cast, 33 votes in favour)
- The records (minutes and annexes) of CETAF50 virtual meeting hosted by MNHN Paris, 17-18 November 2021 (distributed on 15th March, Annexes 1-6 available on the website) (33 votes cast, 33 votes in favour)
- CETAF Executive Committee Report (April21-April22) and CETAF EC Work Plan 2022-2023 (34 votes cast, 34 votes in favour)
- Report from the Treasurer - CETAF Annual Accounts 2021 (34 votes cast, 34 votes in favour)
- The Auditors of the CETAF Accounts for 2021 (V. Demanoff, MNHN, Paris and P. Warth, SMNS Stuttgart) recommended the financial reports for approval
- Discharge of the Executive Committee (34 votes cast, 34 votes in favour)

The CETAF General Secretariat Report (May 2021- April 2022) detailed the activities of the secretariat and gave an overview of the work plan for 2022-2023.

The CETAF Elections (2023-2027) were opened during the meeting. Nominations are sought for the 4 legal positions (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) and 4 general member positions. The deadline for nominations is the 31 December 2022 and nominations should be sent to the CETAF EC Secretary, Gila Kahila Bar-Gal, (gila.kahila@mail.huji.ac.il). The list of nominees will be sent to the membership on the 31 January 2023 and the elections will be held in the spring of 2023 at CETAF 53.

Applications for associated membership, approved by the CETAF EC, were received from 3 institutions: The Institute of Life Sciences and Technology, Daugavpils University, Latvia (Dr. Rolands Moisejevs); Orto e Museo Botanico dell'Università di Pisa, Italy (Dr. Giovanni Astut); Icelandic Museum of Natural History, Reykjavík, Iceland (Dr. Ragnhildur Guðmundsdóttir).

Updating on CETAF activities and CETAF linked projects included presentations on the following:

- Service Contract: Red List of Taxonomists in Europe (Contractor Pensoft; Partners: IUCN and CETAF) – L. Penev (<https://red-list-taxonomists.eu/>)

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- TETTRIs – CETAF CL6 proposal on Taxonomic Capacity Building – A. Casino • CETAF E-SCoRe Award (prize to be awarded on the 25 May 2022 during the Empowering Biodiversity Research meeting in Tervuren) G. Kahila Bar-Gal (<https://cetaf.org/template/activities/cetaf-initiatives/e-score-award/>)
- BiCIKL – L. Penev (<https://bicikl-project.eu/>)
- SYNTHESYS+ - V. Smith (<https://www.synthesys.info/>)
- MOBILISE COST Action – C. Voreadou (www.mobilise-action.eu)
- DiSSCo Prepare - D. Koureas (<https://www.dissco.eu/dissco-ppp/>)
- Biodiversity Genomics Europe (BGE) – D. Koureas

Updating and information on the DiSSCo Governance Model was done by D. Koureas, following the DiSSCo Interim General Assembly that was held in March of 2022 where the DiSSCo governance model 3 was selected by the voting members.

CETAF working groups and initiatives session, focusing on achievements and outlooks, were as follows:

- e-Publishing group – L. Bénichou, MNHN Paris
- ISTC / BioCASE – A. Güntsch, BGBM Berlin
- Digitization – H. Rainer, NHM Vienna
- Earth Sciences / GeoCASE – R. Walcott, NMS Edinburgh
- Legislation and Regulations Group – D. Neumann, LIB Hamburg
- European Journal of Taxonomy (EJT) – I. Gérard, RMCA Tervuren
- Collections - L. Willemse, Naturalis, Leiden
- European Initiatives Advisory Board – V. Demanoff, MNHN Paris
- Scientific Research Group - G. Kahila Bar-Gal, NNHC Jerusalem

The final item on the first day of the meeting was the *CETAF think tank on the strategic pillars and topics for the CETAF strategy and strategic development plan 2025-2035*. Meeting delegates were invited to contribute ideas on the focus areas that CETAF should include in the new iteration of the CETAF strategy that will be used to identify the CETAF strategic pillars, and on the specific topics that should be incorporated into the new CETAF strategy. Contributions from this activity will be used by the CETAF EC to prepare a consultation document and develop a workshop for CETAF 52.

Day 2 of CETAF51 included two main topics, developing taxonomy training with CETAF via the Distributed European School of Taxonomy – DEST, and the development of the new CETAF Business Plan.

The CETAF training platform DEST was presented by the new coordinator, Catherina Voreadou, NHM Crete and two invited speakers gave presentations under this item:

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- Training and Capacity Building funding resources (ERASMUS+), Nadia Manzoni, European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture
- Collaborations for training and capacity building (European Schoolnet), Agueda Gras Velazquez, Science Programme Manager/Head of the Science Education Department, EUN

A CETAF training survey was conducted to gather information on training capacity in CETAF member institutions. This was followed by an interactive session on developing DEST and the DEST training capacity/platform. Four breakout groups focused on different elements of the DEST strategy: 1. DEST strategy for the benefit of the CETAF Community (convener: C. Voreadou, NHM Crete); 2. Development of new training courses (convener: P. Mergen, RMCA Tervuren), 3. Funding of DEST activities and support of DEST trainees (convener: C. Paleco, RBINS, Brussels), 4. Dissemination of DEST activities (convener: G. Babocsay NHM Hungary, Budapest).

A session on the renewal of the CETAF business model to secure long-term sustainability was run, with invited speakers as follows:

- What does a Business Model for financial sustainability need to respond to? Markus Pasterk, Senior Advisor, X-officio
- Creating partnerships. Birdlife and Heidelberg Cement Dr. Carolyn Jewell, Global Biodiversity and Natural Resources Senior Manager, HeidelbergCement and Dr. Shane Sparg, Conservation Partnerships Manager, BirdLife

The meeting then focused on reflections on the CETAF vision and goals for 2025-2035. The current CETAF objectives are: 1. Promote scientific research and access to European natural history collections; 2. Enable the formation of partnerships to exploit funding opportunities; 3. To be a voice for taxonomy and systematic biology in Europe. The current CETAF Vision is *CETAF is the leading body in taxonomy, systematics and natural history collections world-wide advocating the value of taxonomy to science and society.* The current CETAF mission is *Exploring and Documenting Diversity in Nature.*

The next CETAF General Assembly (CETAF 52) will take place in Jerusalem, Israel on the 22-24 November 2022.