



AGRINATURA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

March 19, 2015

Meeting place:

Institut des Régions Chaudes, Montpellier SupAgro
Agropolis campus, Montpellier, France

MINUTES

GA Members:

DE NEERGAARD Andreas (University of Copenhagen, Denmark), del DEBBIO Stefano (IAO, Italy), HAUSER Michael (AGRINATURA Association President; BOKU, Austria), HABERMANN Birgit (BOKU, Austria), GLÖBL Josef (BOKU, Austria), MANSKE Günther (ZEF, Uni Bonn, Germany), MIRA da SILVA Luis (Technical University of Lisbon, Portugal), ABRANTES Graça (Technical University of Lisbon, Portugal), PETITHUGUENIN Philippe (CIRAD, France), SERS Jean-Michel (CIRAD, France), PILLOT Didier (AGRINATURA Association Vice-President; Montpellier SupAgro, France), RAMSPERGER Barbara (University of Hohenheim, Germany), Rødel BERG Torsten (Aarhus University, Denmark), POULTER Guy (AGRINATURA-EEIG Director; NRI, University of Greenwich, UK), van der MHEEN Jennie (WUR, Netherlands), LOFFLER Huub (WUR, Netherlands), WESTBY Andrew (AGRINATURA-EEIG President; NRI, University of Greenwich, UK), HAWKINS Richard (ICRA, Netherlands), GLYNN Carolyn (SLU, Sweden), GIULIANI Alessandra (HAFL, Bern, Switzerland), HEATH Simon (ICA)

Joint Secretariat:

ALÉ Nelida (AGRINATURA-EEIG Business Manager)

Apologies:

OPOČENSKÁ Martina (AGRINATURA Association Secretary General, CULS Prague), BODNÁR Ákos (Szent Istvan University, Hungary), CHALOUPOKOVÁ Petra (CULS Prague, Czech Republic), CHANCELLOR Timothy (NRI, University of Greenwich, UK), WURZINGER Maria (BOKU, Austria), VAN DAMME Patrick (Ghent University, Belgium)

I. Opening session

1. Opening of formal GA session

Welcoming of the newcomers after the workshop was held in the morning, which hopefully result in active joint projects between members in the area of agriculture and climate change, the President Michael Hauser thanks Montpellier SupAgro and Agropolis for hosting of the GA. He apologizes for the absence of the Secretary General who got sick.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda is approved without any change.

Related document: Agenda of GA meeting Montpellier 2015 (At. 1)

3. Approval of the Minutes of GA meeting Vienna 2014

The Minutes were approved.

Related document: Minutes of GA meeting Vienna 2014 (At. 2)

II. AGRINATURA Activity Report (D. PILLOT)

The Vice-President Didier Pillot reviews the main fields of activities as presented in the rolling workplan. These activities are classified as follows:

- The policy advocacy actions for Agricultural Knowledge for Development
- Strategic alliances, partnerships and networks with and between stakeholders, both in the N. and in the S.
- Promote and Organise Joint Projects between members and participate into International Programmes.
- Provide support for evidence-based policy making (capitalisation).

The presentation leads to a discussion about the relative importance of these four domains. Philippe Petit-Huguenin recalls that the “strategic workshop” in 2013 led to encourage the Alliance to do more on advocacy, but it was not clear what was to be done respectively by the Association and the EEIG in this regard. He promotes the idea that the recognition of the Alliance is now well established and that the EEIG should now concentrate on project activities, which will require that the Association takes really the lead in policy advocacy.

Others argue that promotion of joint projects is important to extend the involvement of some members in AKD.

Michael Hauser and Didier Pillot explain that, after an active phase just after the merging of NATURA and ECART into AGRINATURA, at the moment of the last GCARDs and during the preparation phase of H 2020, the advocacy component of the activities have been slightly less important during the last year.

More information is then given on 6 on-going projects carried by the Association, the EEIG or directly by members. These projects have components where the participation of more members can (should) be organised.

- PAEPARD (presented by Remi Kahane) is now at a stage where calls for research projects are launched in collaboration with the Farmers Organisations in the 4 regions of

Africa. Calls are being launched (see www.paepard.org) to which AGRINATURA members are encouraged to respond on various topics:

- Control of aflatoxin (3 consortia)
 - Indigenous vegetables (2)
 - Processing local soybean (2)
 - Better value of livestock
 - Recycling wastes in agriculture
 - Developing the potential of urban agriculture.
- “*Online tools for improvement of African HEIs graduates*” is a recent Edulink funded project lead by several East-African Universities (presentation by Dr Bebe Bockline at the AGRINATURA science days 2014). The objective is to set up an information platform to link up the education in the universities with the professional world outside the universities. Support from European scholars as facilitators on 10 different topics (horticulture, animal systems, agricultural development, natural resources management, etc...) is required. The secretariat will soon extend a call to identify AGRINATURA members interested in providing such a service in one or several sectors (funding available - invitation will be extended by the secretariat).
 - ASK Asia (*Agriculture, Skills, Knowledge in Asia*) is a research project coordinated at CULS Prague which brings together several AGRINATURA members to assess the specific professional skills of graduates from Asia who have had part of their studies in Europe. The conclusions will be presented and discussed in a workshop on September 21 and 22, 2015 in Prague.
 - *IntensAfrica* (presented by Philippe Petithuguenin) is an initiative coordinated by Wageningen University and CIRAD to build consistency between national efforts of 13 EU countries with African partners about diverse pathways for sustainable intensification, for instance:
 - The “*Conventional*” pathway”: intensification through inputs, genetics, energy and machinery
 - The “*Organic Agriculture*” pathway
 - The “*Agroecology*” pathway
 - The “*Sustainable Intensive Agriculture*” pathway One output is to organise the presentation of European efforts in this area in order to build a mega-programme for research that could be supported by the European Commission.
 - CDAIS (*Capacity Development in Agricultural Innovation Systems*) presented by Richard Hawkins) is a project still under construction to develop innovation platforms in eight countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Funding is also coming from the EU. CIRAD, ICRA, IAO, BOKU, ESA Lisbon, NRI will take responsibilities at various levels to provide trainings in the project. A broader range of training expertise may be required from AGRINATURA members in the coming year (a call will be launched by the secretariat).
 - *National Information Platforms for Nutrition* (NIPN) is a project being negotiated by AGRINATURA -EEIG with the European Commission to support the establishment of National Information Platforms for Nutrition in at least seven African and Asian

countries strongly affected by under nutrition. In this framework 3 full-time positions will open for 4 years in Montpellier (Agropolis having taken the lead of the response to the EC's offer) and a list of short-term consultants to be mobilized occasionally on the project will have to be established. AGRINATURA members are called to suggest CVs for these positions. Experts can contract on individual basis or, when possible be seconded by their university. There also, calls will be extended by the secretariat.

This being presented and discussed, the activity report is approved unanimously by the Assembly.

Related documents: Presentations of projects (At. 3,4,5,6)

III. AGRINATURA Association matters

1. Financial report 2014 and Budget 2015

The Vice President presents the accounts of 2014, which show an excess balance of 16.835 Euros. This excess balance is however entirely due to financial movements linked with the CGIAR monitoring, and an equivalent amount will have to be paid in 2015. The budget 2015 is then presented with a deficit of 13.190 Euros, corresponding to this situation.

Would this effect be completely eliminated, the AGRINATURA financial results are globally balanced. However, this has been achieved after several years of structural deficit and only at the cost of a strong reduction of the expenses and investments in communication, participation to conferences, and visibility in general that would be extremely dangerous on the long term. The Board hence proposes to elaborate on a financial reform on the next months.

In the meantime, the Assembly is informed that AGRINATURA-EEIG will also face this year a strong deficit (around 1MF) that will also require reorganising its economic model.

On these basis, the financial report 2014 and the 2015 budget are unanimously approved. The Board is encouraged to go on with structural revision of the economic model in due time to elaborate the new economic model in due time before 2016 budget is prepared.

Related document: Financial report 2014 (At. 7), Budget 2015 (At 8)

2. Internal Life, approval of new BD members

The President reports on the last Board meeting (held the day before) that it has reviewed the options for putting in place a system of Board mandates, designation of Board members and election of President and Vice president that can be consistent with the fact that from now onwards, both the Association and the EEIG should have the same President. Indeed, according to the current Statutes, the Association's President is elected for 3 years non-renewable when in the EEIG's Articles of Association, the President is elected for 2 years.

A formal reform of the Statutes will then be necessary. The Board proposes that new Statutes are prepared and proposed for validation at the next GA.

After an active discussion on the respective advantages of a presidential mandate of “2 years renewable once” or “four years non-renewable”, members vote for “four years non-renewable” as preferred option.

The President also proposes the nomination of two additional Board members, so that the term of all members does not start and end at the same moment. Following a suggestion by the Board, Alessandra Giuliani (Bern University, Switzerland) and Carolyn Glynn (SLU, Sweden) are unanimously elected to serve as Board members.

3. Membership

Following the point raised by the Vice president, the Assembly approves that IAM Bari, having not paid its fees for the least three is considered as not being member from 2015 onwards years (after a last recall letter).

4. Next Assembly (GA and MAM): date and location

Following a call directly launched by the President, Luis Mira proposes to organise the GA 2016 in Lisbon. This proposal is approved by the Assembly and Michael Hauser thanks ISA and Luis Mira for their kind offer.

IV. Closure of the meeting

The time devoted to the GA being over, the President proposes to close the meeting and the Assembly gives him the power to take the necessary decisions with regard to the confirmation of the memberships currently in question (new members and members having not paid on the last two years).

V. The list of attachments

- Agenda of GA meeting Montpellier 2015 (At. 1)
- Minutes of GA meeting Vienna 2014 (At. 2)
- Paepard presentation (R Kahane) (At. 3)
- Online platform (EduLink) presentation (M. Opocenska) (At. 4)
- CDAIS presentation (R. Hawkins) (At. 5)
- Intens' Africa presentation (Ph. Petithuguenin) (At. 6)
- Financial report 2014 (At. 7)
- Budget 2015 (At. 8)