

COST Action CA18201

Action Title: An integrated approach to conservation of threatened plants for the 21st Century

Minutes of the 5th Management Committee Meeting

Venue: University of Malta, Valletta Campus, Valletta, Malta

Date: 13 September 2022

Beginning of the meeting: 9:00 A.M.

End of the meeting: 12:00 P.M.

- MC members & WG members present in person: AL Aida Dervishi, AL Dhimiter Peci, BE Sandrine Godefroid, CY Loukia Vassiliou, DE Elke Zippel, EE Tiiu Kull, ES Carolina Sanchez Romero, GR Filippos Aravanopoulos, IS Rannveig Thoroddsen, IT Aronne, Giovanna, IT Edy Fantinato, IT Marta Galloni, LU Laura Daco, LT Rita Verbylaite, MN Snežana Dragičević, MT Adrian Bugeja Douglas, MT Sandro Lanfranco, MT Andrea Francesca Bellia, PL Marcin Klisz, PT Sílvia Castro, NM Renata Kjushterevska, SI Peter Glasnović, SR Maja Lazarević, TR Meleksen Akin, NM Cvetanka Cvetkoska, UK Sarah Dalrymple, BG Karlina Danova, PL Alicja Kolasinska, SR Predrag Lazarević, PT Joao Lourerio, CZ Hana Pankova, GR Theodora Petanidou, TR Murat Sarginci, BG Ivaylo Tsvetkov, PL Justyna Wiland-Szymanska.
- Representatives from NNC present in person: UA Taras Parpan
- Other participants present in person: Action Chair Ziva Fiser

1. Welcome to participants, verification of the quorum and adoption of agenda

Action Chair Živa Fišer opened the meeting and welcomed the participants

Opening greetings from the local organizers, University of Malta, Dean of the Faculty of Science Emmanuel Sinagra. The action chair then presented the schedule of the meetings between 13 and 16 October 2022:

Tuesday, 13rd September

- morning: MC meeting (9.00-12.00)

-afternoon: WG2 meeting (13.30-16.30)

Thursday

-morning: WG5 meeting (9.00-12.00)

-afternoon: WG3 meeting (13.30-16.30)

Wednesday

-morning: WG4 meeting (9.00-12.00)

-afternoon: WG1 meeting (13.30-16.30)

Friday

- morning: Field trip to Dingli cliffs (8.30-16.30)

- afternoon: Core Group Meeting (13.30-16.30)

2. Adoption of agenda

Agenda was accepted without any disapprove.

3. Verification of the presence of two-thirds of the Participating COST Countries

Not enough MC members from COST countries were present at the meeting, therefore the quorum was not met. There was one representative from one Near Neighbour country was present at the meeting (Ukraine).

4. Approval of minutes and matters arising of last meeting

Minutes of the ZOOM MC meeting (18 October 2021, Bologna, Italy) were approved without any disapprove.

2. Information to the MC

a) Recap of the minutes of the last meeting, e-votes and matters arising since the last meeting
E-votes: there were 2 votes since the previous meeting: inviting additional participants to the WG meeting in Malta and lowering the daily allowances for the meeting in Malta, which was later changed to original amount due to the high costs of accommodation in Malta.

b) Action Membership: New Specific Organisations and COST Members represented in the MC
No new organisations or MC members joined the Action.

c) Action Participation:
Regarding new WG members, there have been several applications, which are listed below:

Yaşar Selman	GÜLTEKİN	Turkey (TR)	15/01/2022
USTUNER	BIRBEN	Turkey (TR)	28/01/2022
Arianna	Lucarini	Italy (IT)	08/02/2022
Fiona	White	Italy (IT)	10/02/2022
Jordi	Bou	Spain (ES)	16/02/2022
Pedro	Garcia Caparros	Spain (ES)	30/03/2022
Irina	Titirică	Romania (RO)	02/05/2022
Darius	Danusevicius	Lithuania (LT)	06/07/2022
Carlos	Guadaño	Spain (ES)	09/07/2022
Ibrahim	Alshomali	Jordan (JO)	20/08/2022
Sara	Lopes	Portugal (PT)	06/09/2022
Faheem Shehzad	Baloch	Turkey (TR)	07/09/2022
Muhammad	Nadeem	Turkey (TR)	08/09/2022

d) Budget status: summary from the Grant Holder.



Action chair presented the status of the activities from the WB plan for GP3. WG1 meeting planned for March 2022 was postponed to end of September 2022. Training Schools Flower biology and pollination ecology, Species Distribution Modelling and Practical Training on Cryopreservation were cancelled; some of them will hopefully be done in GP4. TS on IUCN Red List training and Genetic monitoring were successfully performed. Due to the cancellations of the 3 training schools we will likely be left with uspent money.

For grant period 4, from 1st November 2022 - 31st October 2023 we received the budget of 187.000 EUR. All members are invited to propose activities to WG leaders. By the end of October the plan should be submitted to COST Association.

e) Update from the COST Association (if representative is present)

No representative of the COST Association present at the meeting. There has been a change of the Science Officer – the new Science Officer is now Angelo Basteris.

There have been several changes in COST since Nov 2021, which were already presented at the previous meeting, but a very brief recap was given at the meeting: New WG membership tool. MC Substitutes and MC Observers from IPC and NNC have been made automatically WG members. Grant Awarding Coordinator. COST Actions will be able to award several types of grants to support the following networking activities: Mobility of researchers and innovators, Attendance of conferences organised by 3rd parties, Capacity building (limited to young researchers and innovators from ITC or NNC), Dissemination of COST Actions' work and results. (NEW). Annotated Rules for COST Actions: Merge 3 current documents: Vademecum, Action Management and Dissemination Guidelines.

3. Follow up and discussion on the

a) Action management: structure, leadership positions and other supporting roles.

All leadership positions were briefly presented. The action chair informed the participants that we can ask for an extension of the action with the budget. We can ask for the extension as soon as we start with the new grant period. More participants should be attracted to some WGs.

b) Implementation of the COST Excellence and Inclusiveness Policy

We are doing well with ITC and with gender balance, we are not doing well with young researchers which should be improved.

c) Grant Awarding by the Action

Aida Dervishi presented the grants awarded in GP3:

Andrea Francesca Bellia	VM	Communication and dissemination of Action outputs, and management of web and social media pages and fora
Edy Fantinato	VM	EU Red List Analysis
Sara Cvetanoska	ITC	Plant assessment process for the national red list according to the IUCN methodology in North Macedonia

Theresa Milena Grooss	STSM	Environmental predictors of <i>Minuartia smejkalii</i> population dynamics in garden cultivation
Nikolaos Tourvas	STSM	Use of genomic tools for the conservation and management of forest reproductive material under climate change
Alice Dalla Vecchia	STSM	Exploring the resource-use strategies of endangered <i>Utricularia</i> species and <i>Aldrovanda</i> for better conservation strategies
Katerina Iberl	STSM	Genetic patterns in critically endangered species, <i>Gentianella praecox</i> ssp. <i>bohemica</i>
Manica Balant	STSM	Does hybridization with evolutionary closely related but ecologically divergent and widespread species threatens endemic <i>Salvia</i>
Sanne Evers	STSM	The effect of climate and plant cover on the population dynamics of <i>Dracocephalum austriacum</i>
Adelade Clemente	VM	Construction of a mega database of European seed and gene banks-matching of plant names against the World Flora Online Taxonomic
Olivia Holmes	VM	Implementation of the final phase of development of a seed collection protocol that takes into account recent advances in scienc
Ward Fonteyn	STSM	Accounting for extreme climatic events in tree species distribution modelling to inform climate-smart forestry practices
Hannah Branwood	VM	Collecting and compiling detailed data of past and ongoing plant translocations in Europe
Regina Schimpf	STSM	STSM 2: Translation of conservation genetics/genomics results in the management of plant genetic resources
Xiaqu Zhou	STSM	Investigating climate change microrefugia for European forest plant species by using microclimate data in SDMs

d) Progress of each working group

Each of the WGs presented the updates of their activities. The detailed progress will be discussed at separate WG meetings.

e) Science Communication Plan

Andrea Francesca Bellia presented the communications team and the past activities: four popular science articles were published, six presentations at conferences and several scientific papers, workshops for children at Fascination of Plants Day, one seminar in Coimbra, one workshop at a conference in Budapest and article with the title Towards a Sustainable Europe which described ConservePlants was published by COST.



The communications team is planning to increase its activities in the coming period.

- f) Progress on MoU Objectives, WG tasks, deliverables, and Goals for the current GP.

The objectives were presented, but most of them were also included in the presentations of WGs. We need to work more on a web page – this was the major concern of the reviewer.

4. Planning

- a) Revision of Work and Budget Plan of the current GP (if applicable)

Participants were asked for ideas for last minute events (since we will have unspent budget). All participants are invited to claim reimbursement as soon as possible in order to set the costs of this event.

- b) Draft plans for the following GP(s).

To be discussed on the core group. All participants are welcome to participate with ideas.

- c) Upcoming activities

Preparation of the dissemination material, poster. Participants were asked to contribute with pictures and short descriptions, to be uploaded to the google drive. Coimbra meeting is planned for end of September 2022.

5. Monitoring and Reporting to the COST Association

The last report to be submitted to the COST association will be at the end of the action.

6. AOB

Venue of the last MC meeting – participants were invited to propose any ideas or willingness to organize the meeting. From the point of view of the project July would be a good option and Silvia Castro could provide the organization in Coimbra (Portugal).

Marcin Klisz launched the initiative to offer support to researchers from Ukraine within the framework of this COST project, by hosting STSM candidates in our research institutions. Also other activities that are not necessarily including money, but other support, like translations of materials in Ukraine language, or other similar activities.

Sarah Dalrymple proposed to ask Ukrainian colleagues what are actually their needs.

Taras Parpan highlighted that the problem should be that the initiative should regard only women, since men are not allowed to exit the country.

7. Summary of MC decisions

No MC decisions.



8. Closing

Action chair thanked the local organisers for the organisation of the event, MC members for their attendance at the meeting and invited the participants to attend the WG meetings.