

**MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENTAL MUTAGEN SOCIETY**

**February 27, 2008**

*Hotel Argentina, Dubrovnik, Croatia*

***Officers present:***

Eugenia Dogliotti	President
David Kirkland	Vice-President
Micheline Kirsch-Volders	Past-President
Robert Baan	Treasurer
Francesca Pacchierotti	Secretary

***Officer excused:***

Jim Parry	Executive <i>ex officio</i>
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***Invited:***

Jasna Franekic Colic, Verica Garaj, Nina Dumancic	EEMS 2008 Local Organizers
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***1. Approval of Agenda***

Agenda was accepted.

***2. Minutes of last meeting***

The minutes of the last Executive Committee Meeting (September 9, 2007) were approved.

***3. Report from the President***

***3.1 Initiatives for Society financial reinforcing***

ED briefly illustrates her program for the next couple of years. Main goals are: to enlarge the membership by attracting young scientists from fields, close to, but not traditionally included in environmental mutagenesis; to keep and strengthen the recent policy of promoting participation of young scientists to the society meetings; to maintain an equilibrium between basic vs applied research; to reinforce the financial asset of the Society.

Strategies to reach this last goal are discussed: possible funding sources to be explored are proposed, such as private foundations, EFSA, EU. MKV will try to identify contacts within EU.

DK reports that ECETOC declined to become a sustaining sponsor of the Society, choosing rather to support specific symposia within the annual meeting, as it is going to do for 2008.

If the most likely investment of companies and others is going to be in the annual EEMS Meetings, then these meetings should become an opportunity to raise some profit to be reinvested into society activities. Facilitating scientific/technological development in some European countries, also by organizing courses and other tutorial activities, could be another goal achievable by reinforced finances. Increasing the Young Scientist Travel Award budget, or covering the costs of free access to audiovisuals produced by companies to train people in mutagenicity testing could be additional initiatives to invest some budgetary surplus.

Eventually, this strategy implies a stronger involvement of the Society Executive into meeting organization, similarly to the EMS. Differences with EMS are pointed out by RB, regarding the much higher membership fee in the US Society and the much lower heterogeneity in science development among US regions than among the European countries. Similarly to EMS, a long term possibility could be to employ a professional company of Congress Management. For the short term, a business manager and a webmaster could be looked for willing to accept their commitment for a small honorarium; this would be a good way to get the continuity/consistency necessary to optimize fund raising for the annual meeting and to effectively manage the website beyond the turnover of Secretaries.

**It is agreed that ED and FP will draft a guideline document, to be finally approved by the Executive, tentatively at the next meeting in September, on the organization of EEMS Annual Meetings.** This document could become a reference for starting discussions with potential local organizers. It would include issues like choice of venues, reimbursement of invited speakers, modalities on how to share a net income between local organizers and EEMS and more.

### *3.2 Initiatives for strengthening relationships with national societies*

To increase the membership, the possibility of subscribing as individual members should be better advertised, involving in this campaign Special Interest Group leaders and national councillors. The individual fee should be fixed around 20 euros or so, while the share paid by national Societies for each of their members could remain 7.5 euros. Benefits for members should be also advertised, like free possibility to post job opportunities in the EEMS website with automatic notification to members, or slightly reduced registration fees at annual meetings. **It is agreed that FP will send a message to Councillors encouraging them to**

**advertise the possibility of job posting among members of their Society.** It could also be interesting to collect some statistics about participation to annual meetings by nationality to be related with the dimension of the respective national EMS.

**To reinforce the role of National Councillors, it is agreed to require the National societies to include them in their Executive Board, and to specify this in EEMS rules.**

**It is also agreed that ED will write a letter to the Councillors inviting them to promote nominations for the Young Scientist and the Young Scientist Travel Awards 2008.**

**It is agreed to shorten the time of presentations in the Young Scientist Session of 2008 Meeting in order to have 10 speakers, each one nominated by a different national society. In ED's letter, Councillors will also be asked to write a concise profile of the speaker from their country to be published in the Book of Abstracts.**

#### *4. Report from the Secretary*

##### *4.1 Newsletter*

The 49 issue has been just posted on the website and a message has been sent to all members to let them know about. The message also draws the attention on the forthcoming deadlines for the nominations for Frits Sobels, Young Scientist and Young Scientist Travel Awards. In addition to the usual content, the Newsletter also contains three pieces contributed by David Kirkland, Lutz Mueller, Veronique Thybaud and Peter Kasper reporting updates on mutagenicity testing strategies and regulatory issues, including a preliminary announcement of the next planned IWGT Workshop to be probably organized as a satellite of 2009 ICEM.

The opportunity to keep issuing the Newsletter is briefly discussed, considered that the periodicity of two issues/year might not compete with the continuous updating offered by the modern technology of a lively website. The decision of interrupting the production of the Newsletter is postponed, at least after No. 50 has been released.

##### *4.2 Website*

With the assistance of the past Secretary Marlies De Boeck and NewLink company, FP has been familiarizing with management of the website. She has updated the files after change of the Executive Committee, introduced a new menu item on ICEM 2009, including its on-line pre-registration form and used the "Other activities of interest" section to announce meetings and courses pinpointed by members.

The job posting opportunity will have to be better advertised; the possibility is also foreseen to offer young post-docs seeking a re-location a tool to post their CV.

**To launch the forum section, it is agreed that ED will contact senior members of the Society who might be willing to contribute a piece on some controversial topical issue possibly inviting replies from other members.**

### *5. Report from the Treasurer*

RB provided the report of the EEMS accounts from January to December 2007. In addition to the membership fees from the different local Societies, in 2007, the return after the Basel meeting and the contribution to the construction of the new website from Basel meeting organizers were the main incomes. They allowed not only to cover much of extra expenditures in 2007, but also to increase by approximately 6% the saving account with respect to the end of 2006. Expenses included payment of the auditors, the Frits Sobels Award, the Young Scientist Award and 8 Travel Awards to the Basel meeting

To capitalise on the financially successful experience of the 2007 Basel meeting and possible future meetings, a database of meeting sponsors, with contact details and type of sponsorship received could be set up. Local organizers could have access to it and should commit themselves to implement it with their own experience.

### *6. Report from the Vice-President*

DK illustrates a revision of the 2008 provisional financial budget prepared on the basis of new information on prospective sponsorship and some reassessment of costs. The revised estimates raise income over expenditure by approximately 20,000 euros. This proposal is going to be discussed in the second part of the meeting with local 2008 organizers.

### *7. 2008 Awards*

The Award Committee in charge at the end of 2007 needs to be partially renewed because some of its members have completed two two-year terms. **It is decided that DK will ask those who just completed the first term (Angelo Carere, Hannu Norppa, Harry Vrieling and Bernadette Schoket) if they are willing to serve two more years and will contact Andrea Hartwig, Jan Topinka and Alain Sarasin to propose them to join the Committee as replacement for Peter Jenkinson, Rudolf Stetina and Ilse-Dore Adler.**

Regarding the Young Scientist Award, ED points out that according to the present rules it is hard for the youngest candidates to compete with the eldest who obviously have a heavier CV. MKV suggests that in the future we might consider additional Awards for youngest investigators, like, for instance, one dedicated to presenters of the Young Scientist Session of the Annual meeting.

### ***8. Future meetings***

ED reports about her contacts with Gunnar Brunborg regarding the possibility to organize the 2010 EEMS meeting in Norway. He asked about the average attendance as well as details on the preparation of the scientific program and handling of financial aspects. With these information he will discuss the possibility in a meeting of NordEMS to take place soon and will be back with an answer in a short time.

### ***9. Organization of 2008 meeting (with local organizers)***

#### ***9.1 Scientific Programme***

MKV will contact P. Farmer to have a title and a detailed program of the ECNIS Pre-conference workshop.

At the opening ceremony, speeches of ED and JF are foreseen. JF will ask Radman the title of his lecture.

MKV will contact S Kirtopoulos to check about the status of the organization of Symposium I on Biomonitoring. She will point him out S Geraskin, who expressed to the local organizers his interest to give a talk, as a possible speaker.

VG will contact P Stambrook proposing him to give the keynote lecture of the 22<sup>nd</sup> and will ask him for a title.

ED will ask A Lehmann for the title of his presentation as 2007 winner of the Frits Sobels Award.

DK will contact Herceg to confirm the policy of two-night only reimbursement to all speakers. If, as a consequence, the program of the Symposium will need to be rearranged, DK will suggest Herceg to look for European speakers, to balance the invitation of non-European ones.

JF will contact I Matic to complete the program of Symposium VII. ED will also contact I Matic to discuss about the possibility to include Prof Pavelic, who expressed to the local organizers his interest to give a talk, among the speakers of Symposium VII.

Session VIII dedicated to Young Scientists promoted and sponsored by local societies will have up to 10 speakers. In exceptional cases, upon request of a local society with limited financial resources, Young Travel Award could be offered by EEMS to support the participation of the speaker. One of the two Croatian Young Scientists already selected for Symposium VIII will be moved to one of the other Symposia, where her/his abstract would best fit.

ED will select an additional speaker for Symposium XI.

A few more chairpersons are still to be appointed. They will possibly be selected among the speakers of the Symposium, to not increase the reimbursement costs.

Symposia III and XI will be presented in the program as organized by the Special Interest Groups on “Immune response and genotoxicity” and “DNA repair” and chaired by L Mueller and V Pletsa plus ED, respectively,

The poster sessions will start at 16.45, 30 min later than what initially foreseen, expecting that people will also enjoy the beauty of the location during lunch breaks.

To select the abstracts for short oral presentations to be recommended to the Symposia organizers, a Committee is established with DK, ED, JF and VG.

A simplified list of topics under which submit the abstract will be proposed. They will be the same as the 5 tracks offered by the last ICEM meeting: DNA damage and repair; Mutational mechanisms; Environmental mutagenesis/carcinogenesis; Mutagenesis and human disease; Risk assessment.

### 9.2 Finances

Costs of catering and rooms for the ECNIS Pre-conference workshop will be covered by ECNIS.

If ECNIS could finish its workshop in time for the main conference to start in the same main lecture room, the renting cost of that room for the first day could be shared between ECNIS and EEMS. MKV will check about this possibility.

For people attending the main conference, participation to the ECNIS workshop will be free of charge. These people will only have to indicate their intention to attend the Workshop in the EEMS meeting Registration Form.

MKV will contact companies to get free bags for the conference. DK will do the same for pens and pads.

It is agreed that RB will reimburse travel expenses to speakers from the EEMS account after receiving the equivalent money from local organizers upon issuing a corresponding invoice.

The Roche company has agreed to sponsor the overall conference with 10,000 euros, in return for reimbursement costs of three participants from the company, for a total of approximately 4,500 euros. DK will send to ND the details of this special agreement.

DK and ND will prepare a revised budget based on DK's proposal. Further indications for budget revision are to include the cost of water in the estimate of working lunch costs and to add the cost of the main lecture hall for the first day.

### 9.3 Logistics and other organizational issues

Hotel Croatia, venue of the 38<sup>th</sup> EEMS Meeting was visited by the Executive Committee. In spite of being presently under renovation, it is clearly very well suited to host the meeting, with a beautiful main conference hall seating up to 800, a smaller one for up to 200 people and the possibility to arrange the stands of exhibitors close to the lecture hall and the poster session in a large open space at the above floor. It is expected that about 150 posters could be displayed at the same time on two-face boards, thus probably making unnecessary their turnover. Posters with even and odd numbers will going to be manned by authors on the first, and the second poster session, respectively.

ECNIS will need a small room for a management meeting in the morning of the 21<sup>st</sup> plus the medium size lecture room for the afternoon of the same day.

EEMS will need a room for the Executive Committee and the Council meetings on the 21<sup>st</sup> equipped with power point projector. ED will check about the possibility to bring herself a projector to save money, but ND will anyway book one just as a backup. ND will try to obtain this room without additional costs.

ND will arrange to rent more poster boards in order to accommodate a total of 160 posters.

Four types of invitation letters will be prepared by ND and DK: one for invited European speakers offered waiving of Registration Fee, two-nights accomodation and up to 500 Euros to cover the cheapest air fare on the market; one for invited non-European speakers, offered waiving of Registration Fee, two-nights accomodation and up to 1000 Euros to cover the cheapest air fare on the market; one for invited speakers from industry offered waiving of Registration Fee and two-nights accommodation; one for non-speaker

Chairpersons, offered waiving of Registration Fee. In the letter the speakers will be asked to send their abstract by the same procedure and with the same deadline as everybody else.

DK will be sent the updated list of speakers by local organizers and will point to which category each of them belongs.

The letters will be sent by local organizers.

JF will contact I Matic and B Kaina to check whom of their speakers are from private companies.

For the free afternoon, ND will arrange the offer of a short boat cruise reaching Dubrovnik that could end up with a guided tour of City walls and return to Cavtat by bus. She will get a cost estimate and will include the option in the registration form, specifying the minimum number of participants for the trip to be confirmed.

It is agreed that abstract submission will be on-line. FP will contact NewLink to ask them to arrange the procedure, including the possibility to visualize the text before final “sending” and an automatic reply to the indicated e-mail for confirmation of receipt. FP will also check the costs of this functionality to be linked to the already established conference website. FP will rephrase the text for the abstract page of the Conference website.

The deadline for Abstract submission will be May 30. This will give approximately two months to complete the scientific programme with the selected short oral presentations.

The proposed registration form is discussed and some changes agreed. Section B on Registration to ECNIS Workshop will be changed into a simple box where the intention to participate should be indicated. Section D addressed specifically to exhibitors will be extracted to become a separate form. The cancellation policy in the section Booking and Payment Conditions will be clarified to pertain to registration fee only. The registration form will be revised by ND and sent to everybody for final checking. In the meantime the correspondent page in the website will be revised with some sort of “coming soon” message.

## ***10. Any other business***

*Nihil*

*Francesca Pacchierotti, EEMS Secretary*