06/10/2023

# Subject │ Minutes of the Seventh Management Committee Meeting of COST Action CA18221: “PEsticide RIsk AssessMent for Amphibians and Reptiles”

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

The participants (**Annex 1**) were welcomed by Manuel Ortiz Santaliestra, Chair of the Action.

Total number of COST Countries having accepted the MoU: 33

Total number of COST Countries intending to accept the MoU: 0

Number of parties present at the meeting: 22

The quorum (2/3 of COST Countries participating in the Action) was reached: 22 COST Countries out of 33 attended the meeting (COST doc. “Annotated Rules for COST Actions” V1.2, Article 3.8).

The agenda (**Annex 2**) for the 7th Management Committee (MC) meeting was adopted.

1. **Approval of minutes and matters arising of and after last meeting**

The MC approved the minutes of the 6th MC meeting held in Krakow on September 23rs 2023 without modifications.

The following decisions were taken by the MC by written procedure after last meeting:

* Extension of the Action CA18221 for six additional months. Approved by unanimity on 14 February 2023.

There were no matters arising at last meeting that needed further action from the MC.

1. **Update from the Action Chair**

*Action management updates*

The Chair presented an overview of the status of the Action in relation to COST Rules and Principles. During this Grant Period, Armenia joined the Action as the 33rd party.

Considering the list of current WG members, the Action includes a 51.8% of members coming from Inclusiveness Target Countries, a female:male ratio of 46.5:53.5, and a 25.9% of young researchers and innovators.

During the course of the Grant Period, we received an offer from COST Association to increase the budget. After discussion within the Core Group, it was agreed to request that increase to organize the Training School on “Applying scientific research to support environmental risk assessment of PPPs” and to increase funding of STSMs.

COST Association approved an increase of 34,978.40 euros (including FSAC), for a total GP budget of 194,542.05 euros.

*Working Group applications*

The Chair presented the list of Working Group membership applications that were received during the Grant Period. The applications were reviewed by the Core Group according to the criteria approved during MCM5. In total, 10 applications were received, four of which were approved. The six rejected applications corresponded to persons with a profile clearly separated from any of the areas of interest of the Action.

*Working Group applications*

The list of activities conducted during the grant period was presented as follows:

* Meetings and workshops:
  + Special meeting on monitoring, organized by EAWAG, Dübbendorf, CH, 5-6 June. 17 participants.
  + WG 3-4 joint meeting, organized by the University of Osijek, Osijek HR, 26-27 June. 18 participants.
  + Modelling Workshop, organized by the University of Osnabrück, Osnabrück DE, 14-15 September. 12 participants.
  + Third General Meeting, organized by the Sistema Museale of the University of Florence, Florence IT, 05-06 October. 54 participants.
* Training Schools:
  + Applying scientific research to support environmental risk assessment of pesticides” organized by the Sistema Museale of the University of Florence, Florence IT, 03-04 October. 24 participants.
* Sort-term Scientific Missions:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Holder | Host | Topic | Dates |
| Peter Vermeiren | RifCon (DE) | Proof-of-concept model regarding exposure and accumulation of currently used pesticides in sand lizards | 14 Nov-28 Apr |
| Enerit Sacdanaku | CIBIO-Univ Porto (PT) | A metanalysis of the herpetofauna studies with ecological mesocosms and their application to ERA of pesticides | 05 Feb-04 Mar |
| Besta Dimitrova | National Institute of Biology (SI) | Metanalysis of toxicological data to assess reptilian sensitivity to pollutants | 05 Feb-18 Mar |
| John Howieson | Univ Aveiro (PT) | Identify endpoints potentially useful for extrapolation and calculation of assessment factors | 06 Feb-17 Apr |
| Frances Orton | CTGB (NL) | Update of the database on amphibian ecotoxicological literature and review information on chronic endpoints indicative of reproductive effects, including quality assessment | 20 Feb-31 Mar |
| Eirini Trypidaki | Univ Porto (PT) | Improvements and updates on the Atlas of Amphibians and Reptiles of Europe | 15 Mar-15 Jun |
| Myrto Roumelioti | CIBIO-Univ Porto (PT) | Estimating indirect effects of pesticides on amphibian and communities | 19 Apr-16 Jun |
| Ana Marques | Univ Osijek (HR) | Identification of endpoints potentially useful for extrapolation and calculation of assessment factors | 24 Apr-21 May |
| Sabina Vlad | CIBIO-Univ Porto (PT) | The effect of pesticides on the reproductive success of lizards | 01 Jun-15 Jul |
| Simeon Lukanov | Univ Porto (PT) | Update on the taxonomy and distribution of European amphibians and reptiles through the combined use of GIS analysis and interactive applications | 03 Jul-12-Aug |
| Miruna Vizireanu | CIBIO-Univ Porto (PT) | The effect of pesticides on the reproductive success of lizards (Post breeding period) | 15 Jul-02 Sep |
| Ana Marques | Univ Castilla-La Mancha (ES) | Methods for histological evaluation of amphibian skin following dermal exposure to pesticides | 24 Jul-24 Sep |
| Samuel González López | INTA (Argentina) | Evaluating the Risk of Pesticide Exposure for Amphibians Using Residue Data from Water Sources in an Extensive Agrarian Region | 31 Jul-31 Oct |
| Jelena Corovic | CIBIO-Univ Porto (PT) | Assessing the indirect effect of pesticides at individual level with lizards in mesocosms - post breeding period | 01 Sep-30 Sep |
| Raluca Bancila | Univ Porto (PT) | Analysis of spatial data on European herpetofauna | 01 Sep-15 Oct |

1. **Update from the Science Communication Committee**

Lennart Weltje, on behalf of the Science Communication Committee, presented the activities of the Committee. It was informed that the Communication strategy for the action was finished before the previous General Meeting, although it has not been uploaded to the website. The activities conducted during the GP, including elaboration of some STSM videos and distribution of news throughout social networks were shown.

The Action Chair mentioned that we were contacted by COST Association for the elaboration of a Success Story that is expected to be published in October.

**🡪 Action pending 1 (Action Chair, as soon as possible): upload the Science Communication Strategy to the COST website through the link in e-cost.**

1. **Action budget status**

The Chair, acting also as Grant Holder Scientific Representative, presented the details on the budget status of the current Grant Period. The estimated expenses in meetings, pending on checkout of the General Meeting, will be 96,468.78 euros. The expenses in the Training School are estimated in 11,433.40 euros. The STSMs expenses have been 50,900 euros. We are preparing the brochures that were planned in the WBP, but given that there will be money left, the proposal is to incorporate the brochure as part of a notepad that will be distributed for action visualization. There is no definitive budget for this.

1. **Amendment of Grant Period 4 budget**

As informed by the Chair, it is expected to be some underspend funds that will be used to elaborate the pending dissemination materials. For this reason, it is necessary to allocate the unspent budget from meetings and STSM to the section of dissemination. Because this involves more than 10% of the Grant Period budget (which is what the Core Group can transfer without further MC permission), it is necessary that the MC approves the budget modification. The following modification is proposed:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Original budget (€)** | **Amended budget (€)** |
| Meetings | 90,251.00 | 96,468.78 |
| Training school | 19,416.00 | 11,433.40 |
| STSMs | 52,500.00 | 50,900.00 |
| Virtual mobility grants | 3,000.00 | 0 |
| ITC Conference grants | 2,000.00 | 0 |
| Dissemination | 2,000.00 | 10,364.82 |

The budget amendment for Grant Period 4 is approved by unanimity.

1. **Planning of activities for Grant Period 5**

The Chair informs that the allocated budget for the next Grant Period (GP5, from 01/11/2023 to 05/05/2024) is 159,500 euros, which means 138,695 euros excluding FSAC. The list of proposed activities generated by the Working Groups during the general meeting was reviewed and the total costs of these activities were estimated. After some discussion about the necessity of adjusting the activities to the available budget, an agreement is reached to include the following activities in the Work Budget Plan to be submitted to COST Association within the next few days:

* A Core Group meeting (extended to some members of WG4) to merge all risk assessment scheme proposal and outline the final deliverable, before the end of the current year.
* A Special Meeting on Risk Assessment (in February of March), to incorporate to the outlines risk assessment document the results of the grants that will take place during the Grant Period and prepare the final meeting of the Action.
* A general meeting that will be Action Final Meeting, where results of granted activities will be presented, as well as the risk assessment document proposal. The meeting will serve to discuss and finalise the risk assessment proposal and will take place in March or April.
* An online Management Committee meeting in January or February to check on the needs of budget modification of other managerial issues.

The physical locations for the meetings will be proposed during the next days and included in the WBP for MC approval. It is envisaged that places will located in central-western Europe, where the number of participants that can reach using train is maximized.

* 15 Virtual Mobility Grants or STSMs with the following topics:
  + Improvement of acute toxicity comparisons between amphibians and other taxa
  + Investigation of changes in toxicity of substances as a function of metabolic processes
  + Comparison of chronic toxicity data between fish and amphibians
  + Extrapolate long-term, breeding output effects from developmental testing in amphibians
  + Testing long term exposure of aquatic amphibians to pesticides
  + Efficacy of vegetation buffer strips as a risk mitigation measure for amphibians
  + Clarification of soil exposure scenarios in amphibians and reptiles
  + Define trigger for the maternal transfer as a relevant exposure route
  + Status and roadmap for integration of population models in risk assessment
  + Survey on applicability of population models for risk assessment
  + Pilot analysis on Dutch monitoring project
  + Review on availability of pond water quality and monitoring data
  + Review the life history trait database for model species elaboration
  + Updated review of reptilian toxicological information
  + Identification of relevant protocols for toxicity testing in reptiles

Preference is given to virtual grants over STSM, if the topic can be addressed without the need of travelling.

* A dissemination material that could eventually include digital materials as action outputs (e.g. USB-sticks)
* An amount, included as OERSA, to cover shipping costs of dissemination materials.

1. **AOB**

There were no any other business.

1. **Closing**

The Chair acknowledges the work of Marta Biaggini as organiser of the Second General Meeting and of the Training School that took place right before meeting, and thanks the Museo di Storia Naturale La Specola for providing the necessary structure to host these events. In addition, the contribution of all participants having attended the meeting was acknowledged.

## LIST OF ANNEXES

**Annex 1 – List of Participants**

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**Annex 2 – Agenda**

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