20/01/2022

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

1. **Welcome to participants**

The participants were welcomed by Manuel Ortiz Santaliestra, Chair of the Action.

1. **Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda (**Annex 1**) for the 5th Management Committee (MC) meeting was adopted.

1. **Verification of the presence of two-thirds of the Participating COST Countries**

Total number of COST Countries having accepted the MoU: 32

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

Number of parties present at the meeting: 26 (**Annex 2**)

The quorum (2/3 of COST Countries participating in the Action) was reached: 26 COST Countries out of 32 attended the meeting (COST doc. 134/14 REV3 “COST Action Management Monitoring and Final Assessment” Annex I, Article 9).

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

The MC approved the minutes of the 4th MC meeting held online on October 4th 2021 without modifications.

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

* Election of Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha (Spain) as Grant Holder, and consequent appointment of Manuel Ortiz Santaliestra as GH Scientific Representative. Approved by unanimity on 07 December 2021.
* Approval of the Working Budget Plan for Grant Period 3. Approved by unanimity on 18 January 2022.

Matters arising at last meeting, which needed further action from the MC were:

* Make the Science Communication Strategy available to PERIAMAR participants. The Science Communication Strategy was sent by email to PERIAMAR participants on November 1st 2021.
* Request information from all PERIAMAR participants about project proposals, publications and other outputs resulting from interactions among PERIAMAR participants. This request was made by email by the Chair, in order to provide information relevant to the Second Progress Report (PR2).
* Send to the Chair information about project proposals, publications and other outputs resulting from interactions among PERIAMAR participants. Upon reception of the request from the Chair, PERIAMAR participants sent information about several publications, ongoing research projects, submitted project proposals, student training and communications presented in congress resulting in some extent from the Action networking. That information was incorporated to the PR2, which was submitted on December 5th 2021 and is currently under evaluation by COST.
* Ask the webmaster to update the STSM list and reports in the website. The Chair explains that this action was postponed as it became evident that the changes to be incorporated to the website would be numerous. Therefore, it was considered to wait until everything was set, to communicate all necessary website changes to the webmaster at once. This will be done after this meeting.

🡪 **Action pending 1 (Chair, as soon as possible): liaise with the webmaster for incorporating all necessary changes to the website, including new organizational structure and core group, and update of activities.**

* Add dissemination videos to YouTube Channel. This task was completed by the former Science Communication Manager.

1. **Update from the Grant Holder and approval of the Grant Holder rules for participation in CA18221 activities**

The Chair, as GH Scientific Representative, informs that he will be temporarily assuming the role of GH Manager while the arrangements are made within the GH Institution to appoint the person assuming the role in a stable manner. The Vice-Chancellor of Scientific Policy of the University of Castilla-La Mancha, Prof. Antonio Mas, has been appointed as GH Legal Representative and GH Financial Representative. The Chair acknowledges the work from the University of Uppsala as PERIAMAR GH until the end of the previous Grant Period.

The Chair presents the rules elaborated by the Grant Holder for participation in CA18221 activities. These rules are meant to guarantee the fulfilment of the Grant Agreement while compiling with the requirements of the Spanish Tax Law about tax withholdings from quantities paid to reimbursed diets. The Chair informs that breaching the rules could suppose a reduction of the amounts received by Action Participants with regards to the requested amounts as travel reimbursement or grants, because of the tax withholdings applied to the payments. The rules were sent to all MC members before the Grant Holder was elected and after their review by COST financial department.

The Grant Holder rules for participation in CA18221 activities (**Annex 3**) are adopted by unanimity.

1. **Update from the Action Chair**

* **New COST rules for Action implementation**

The Chair explains that COST has generated new rules for implementation of COST Actions because of the transition from the EU Framework Program H2020 to Horizon Europe. The new rules are detailed in the document COST Annotated Rules, available from cost.eu website and replace the former Vademecum. After attending a series of webinars organised by COST to explain the new rules, the Chair summarizes the main changes that may affect PERIAMAR.

The main changes include (non-exhaustive list):

* New definitions for Affiliation and Young Researcher or Innovator (which replaces the former ECIs).
* Consideration of Greece as an ITC.
* New networking tools (Virtual Mobility and Dissemination Grants).
* Open to participation as WG members of people from all around the world, and full participation of COST countries without necessity of nominating MC members.
* Removal of MC substitutes. MC members can now appoint their substitutes.
* New mandatory leadership position: Grant Awarding Coordinator, who replaces the former STSM Grant and ITC Grant Coordinator and manages all Grants supported by the Action.
* No limitation in the participation of experts from IPC in meetings or training schools.
* Training schools and STSM can take place anywhere in the world.
* New method for calculating maximum amounts that can be requested as Local Organising Support.
* **Overview of the workplan for Grant Period 3**

The Chair shows an overview of the activities planned for Grant Period 3, which has been just approved by the MC, although the dates and places are provisional and will depend on the possibilities for travelling and holding physical events. Special emphasis is made for the Action Participants to submit proposals for hosting STSM, as a call for proposals will be launched soon.

🡪 **Action pending 2 (all, deadline to be set): send proposals/topics for STSM that could be hosted at everyone’s institution.**

The planned deliverables, according to the amendment of the Action chronogram that has been explained in the PR2 include:

* Completed life history trait database and proposal for focal species of amphibians and reptiles (task 3.1)
* Reports with conclusions of STSMs carried out to
  + assess exposure routes of amphibians and reptiles to pesticides (task 1.1)
  + extrapolate pesticide toxicity from the sub-organismal level to apical effects (task 1.2)
  + explore chances of inter-taxonomical surrogacy (task 3.3)
  + explore potential to use replacement methods for exposure and toxicity assessment in amphibians and reptiles in pesticide ERA (task 3.4)

It is stressed the importance of having STSM to cover these topics during the present Grant Period.

There are also two publications planned to be submitted during this GP:

* Distribution of European herpetofauna in agricultural areas (task 2.1).
* Exposure refinement based on biology and ecology (task 2.2).

Jelka Crnobrnja-Isailović explains that the European Congress of Herpetology is planned to take place in Belgrade on 5-9 September 2022. She proposes the organisation of a symposium within the congress that could deal with aspects related to PERIAMAR. The Chair explains that, for the action to cover travel expenses of the participants, there should be some event organised by PERIAMAR; in this context, a meeting is planned to take place right before or right after the congress. Jelka adds that it could take place also simultaneously.

🡪 **Action pending 3 (Jelka, Dusko, Manuel, deadline to be set): liaise for possibly organising a symposium on PERIAMAR-related topics during the SEH congress and a PERIAMAR WG meeting on those dates in Belgrade.**

1. **Election of leadership positions**

There are three mandatory leadership positions that need to be elected.

* WG1 Leader. Cecilia Berg manifested that she could not make her new job compatible with the role as WG1 Leader. The Core Group, after evaluating the list of WG1 members, proposed Andreas Focks (University of Osnabrück, Germany) to candidate as new WG1 leader. No other bid was received for this position.

Andreas Focks is elected as WG1 Leader by unanimity.

* Science Communication Coordinator. Cristina Borca manifested that she could not continue as Science Communication Manager because of professional reasons. The Core Group proposed Anamarija Žagar (National Institute of Biology, Slovenia) to candidate as new Science Communication Coordinator. The bid of Anamarija was supported by the Science Communication Committee. No other bid was received for this position.

Anamarija Žagar is elected as Science Communication Coordinator by unanimity.

* Grant Awarding Coordinator. This is a new figure meant to replace the former STSM and ITC Conference. The Core Group proposed Dan Cogalniceanu (Ovidius University of Constanta, Romania) to candidate as Grant Awarding Coordinator, as he has been holding the role of STSM Grant Coordinator so far. No other bid was received for this position.

Dan Cogalniceanu is elected as Grant Awarding Coordinator by unanimity.

The Chair acknowledges, on behalf of the whole MC, the work that both Cecilia Berg and Cristina Borca have dedicated to PERIAMAR over the last two years and wish them the best success for the future.

The Core Group decided to open the possibility to appoint additional leadership positions in form of WH co-leaders to help WG leaders in the organization of the WG activities and ensure representation of WGs in the Core Group meetings. Miguel Carretero explained that this task in WG2 had been assumed already by Anamarija Žagar. However, since she already holds a leadership position, it is not considered necessary to appoint her (but this can be considered in the future). No proposals in this context have been received from WG4, while WG1 leader has just been elected, hence the possible appointment of a WG1 co-leader is left for the future. Annette Aldrich proposes Valentin Mingo (Corteva, Germany) to be appointed as WG3 co-leader.

Valentin Mingo is elected as WG3 co-leader by unanimity.

1. **Approval of Working Group membership criteria**

The Chair explains that, under the new COST rules, Working Group members need to be approved after submitting an application. Consequently, there is need for the MC to set some criteria for WG membership approval. A draft was elaborated by the Chair and is discussed during the meeting.

The criteria for evaluation and approval of WG membership applications (**Annex 4**) are adopted by unanimity.

1. **Mandates to the Core Group**

The following mandates to the Core Group are approved by the MC:

* Mandate the Grant Award Coordinator the coordination of evaluation, and eventual approval, of Grant applications. Approved by unanimity.
* Mandate the Core Group the decision on Grant amounts on proposal of the evaluators, based on the request of the applicant, the duration and location of the event (for STSM, ITC Conference or Dissemination Grants). Approved by unanimity.
* Mandate the Core Group the approval or refusal of WG membership applications against criteria set by the Action MC. Approved by unanimity.
* Mandate the Core Group the approval of lists of meeting and training school participants to be invited and reimbursed. Approved by unanimity.
* Mandate the Core Group the selection of providers for dissemination items. Approved by unanimity.

1. **AOB**

There were no any other business.

1. **Closing**

The Chair thanks everybody for participating in the meeting.

## LIST OF ANNEXES

**Annex 1 – Agenda**

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**Annex 2 – List of Participants**

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**Annex 3 – Grant Holder rules for participation in CA18221**

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**Annex 4 – CA18221 Working Group membership criteria**

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