11/03/2024

# Subject │ Minutes of the Eighth 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. The Chair explained that this meeting is not taking place as the previous ones, which were co-located with the General Meetings (in Krakow in 2022 and in Florence in 2023) because, as we are in the last Action Grant Period, there is no need to plan future networking activities. The Chairs reminded that the Action will finish on May 5, 2024.

1. **Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda (**Annex 2**) for the 8th 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: 33

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

Number of parties present at the meeting: 20

The quorum (2/3 of COST Countries participating in the Action) was not reached: 20 COST Countries out of 33 attended the meeting (COST doc. “Annotated Rules for COST Actions” V1.2, Article 3.8). No MC decisions can be taken through presential vote at the meeting.

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

None of the MC members expressed disconformity with the minutes elaborated after the 7th MC meeting held in Florence on October 6th 2023. However, approval of the minutes will have to be implemented via electronic voting due to the lack of quorum.

**🡪 Action pending 1 (Action Chair, as soon as possible): launch an electronic voting to approve the minutes of the** **7th MC meeting.**

The only voting that was conducted after the last MC meeting was the mandatory approval of the Work Budget Plan (WBP) for Grant Period 5. The WBP was approved by unanimity on November 10, 2023.

The follwing action was pending from the7th MC meeting.:

* Action pending 1 (Action Chair, as soon as possible): upload the Science Communication Strategy to the COST website through the link in e-cost. The Chair informs that the Science Communication Strategy was uploaded to the COST website on March 8, 2024.

1. **Update from the Action Chair**

*Action management updates*

The Chair presented the overview of the status of the Action in relation to COST Rules and Principles, which was already shown at the previous MC meeting in Florence after the 33rd Action party (Armenia) joined the Action. The figures indicated 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. The Chair informed that the final figures would be calculated once all networking activities have been completed.

*Working Group applications*

The Chair presented the list of Working Group membership applications that have been received during the present Grant Period. The applications were reviewed by the Core Group according to the criteria approved during MCM5. In total, three applications were received, two of which were approved. The rejected application corresponded to a person with a profile clearly separated from any of the areas of interest of the Action.

*Actvities*

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

* Meetings:
  + Extended Core Group meeting, organized by EAWAG, Dübbendorf, CH, 30 November-1 December. 7 participants.
  + Special Meeting on Risk Assessment, organized by the RAVON, Nijmegen, NL, 20 February-1 March. 12 participants.
  + Final Meeting (planned), organized by UBA, Dessau-Rosslau,DE, 20-22 March. Expected 54 participants.
* Virtual Mobility Grants:
  + Cynthia Muñoz (Univ South\_eastern Norway, NO). Define trigger values for maternal transfer as an exposure route of reptile embryos, 01 December-20 March (in progress).
  + Besta Dimitrova (Institute for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research, BG). Updated review of reptilian toxicological information. 04 December-08 January (finished).
  + Frances Orton (Heriot-Watt University, UK). Extrapolate long-term, breeding output effects from developmental testing in amphibians. 04 December-15 January (finished).
  + Maria Keridoglou (University of Crete, EL). A literature review to support modelling of amphibian oral uptake of pesticides. 20 December-20 March (in progress).
  + Olga Jovanovic Glavas (Josip Juraj Strossmayer University Osijek, HR). Review of the life history trait database for model species elaboration. 08 January-05 February (finished).
  + Theodor-Sebastian Topliceanu (Ovidius University of Constanta, RO). Amphibians vs Fish. Comparison of their chronic toxicity patterns. 12 February-14 March (in progress).
  + Ana Ramos (University of Porto, PT). Guidelines for conducting a risk assessment for reptiles. 11 March-05 May (approved, pending on Grant Letter).

*Action progress*

The chair reviewed the list of Research Coordination and Capacity Building Objectives of the Action, indicating that, if the Final Meeting objectives are adequately addressed, the nine objectives (5 RCO + 4 CBO) will reach a degree of achievement above 75%.

The chair presented the list of deliverables. He reminded that, as specified by COST at the beginning of the Action, COST Actions are not static implementations of the Memorandum of Understanding, and therefore there may be changes in the deliverables motivated by the small deviations associated with the action implementation. This happens fundamentally because COST Actions do not include budget for actual research, and so the elaboration of deliverables may suffer from deviations.

The status of deliverables is as follows:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| # | Description | Prevision |
| 1 | Report with conclusions of STSMs to assess exposure routes and to extrapolate pesticide toxicity from the sub-organismal level to apical effects | Finalised or to be finished before the end of the Action |
| 2 | Final proposal on needs for developing test methods for toxicity evaluation in amphibians and reptiles | Finalised or to be finished before the end of the Action |
| 3 | Submission of a paper to an international scientific journal reporting relevant findings of WG1 on organism-level toxicity and exposure characterisation | Expected within one year after the end of the Action |
| 4 | Proposal to relate pesticide use to spatial ecology and phenology of wild amphibian and reptilian populations | Merged with #6 to produce as a paper. Expected within one year after the end of the Action |
| 5 | Proceedings of the workshop about indirect effects of pesticides on ecosystems, including a proposal to address such effects in ERA | Replaced by mesocosm studies. Expected within one year after the end of the Action |
| 6 | Report on the options for refinement of pesticide risk assessment of amphibians and reptiles | Merged with #4 to produce as a paper. Expected within one year after the end of the Action |
| 7 | Submission of a paper to an international scientific journal reporting relevant findings of WG2 on ecosystem-level assessment of risks of pesticides to amphibians and reptiles | Finalised or to be finished before the end of the Action |
| 8 | Structure of the life history trait database for selection of focal species of amphibians and reptiles | Finalised or to be finished before the end of the Action |
| 9 | Completed life history trait database and proposal for focal species of amphibians and reptiles | Finalised or to be finished before the end of the Action |
| 10 | Report with conclusions of STSMs on chances of inter-taxonomical surrogacy and potential to use replacement methods | Finalised or to be finished before the end of the Action |
| 11 | Proceedings of a workshop about implementation of individual-based, landscape models in ERA | Finalised or to be finished before the end of the Action |
| 12 | Submission of a paper to an international scientific journal reporting relevant findings of WG3 on reduction and replacement methods to be used in ERA of amphibians and reptiles | Finalised or to be finished before the end of the Action |
| 13 | Proposal of detailed pesticide environmental risk assessment scheme for amphibians and reptiles | Finalised or to be finished before the end of the Action |
| 14 | Proceedings of the Final Workshop, including proposals for retrospective assessment, future research steps, and possible coordinated actions | Finalised or to be finished before the end of the Action |

1. **Action budget status and budget amendment**

The Chair, acting also as Grant Holder Scientific Representative, presented the details on the budget status of the current Grant Period. It is expected that meetings will cost more than it was budgeted, while mobility grants (STSM and VMG) will cost less than planned. It is indicated that these estimates are highly susceptible of deviations, since the majority of the previsions corresponds to foreseen expenditures, and not to actual ones. In fact, the recorded payments so far make a total of 13.083,62 EUR, which means less than 14% of the Grant Period budget excluding FSAC.

Anyway, because the prevision of expenses among different WBP sections (i.e. meetings, mobility, dissemination and OERSA) is deviated from what is included in more than 10% of the Grant Period budget, the Chairs requests from the MC the approval of a budget amendment, as follows:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Original budget (€)** | **Amended budget (€)** |
| Meetings | 61,200.00 | 78,808.00 |
| Mobility (STSM+VMG) | 30,000.00 | 12,000.00 |
| Dissemination | 2,400.00 | 2,400.00 |
| OERSA | 1,000.00 | 1,392.00 |

Although the budget amendment cannot be subject to MC vote because of the lack of quorum, no expressions of disconformity with the proposal are raised by the MC.

**🡪 Action pending 2 (Action Chair, as soon as possible): launch an electronic voting to approve the budget amendment for GP5.**

1. **Updates on dissemination**

The Chair informs that the Science Communication Manager, Anamarija Zagar, cannot attend the meeting because of last-minute questions. The Chairs assumes the information about dissemination.

The Chair informs that a Success Story on PERIAMAR was published in the COST website on February 2nd, making it to happen on the World’s Wetlands Day. The Chair also informs that the notepads including the action brochure in several languages, which were produced at the end of the previous Grant Period, need to be distributed. Some of them are going to be sent to Dessau for distribution among participants in the Final Meeting. For the rest of the copies, the plan is to have reception points in different countries from where the notepads can be distributed. It is agreed that a plan should be elaborated to make the notepads arrive to relevant events like SETAC Europe Congress (May 2024 in Seville) or the World Congress of Herpetology (August 2024 in Borneo).

1. **Finalization of the action**

The Chair informs that the Final Report (FR) must be submitted by June 4 (i.e. one month after finalization of the Actions). Although the FR must be encoded by the Action Chair using the specific online tool in e-cost, there are several sections where the input from all Action participants is necessary, including outputs, dissemination or impacts. It is agreed to establish a system to compile information relevant to include in the report. The MC agrees that an Excel file designed to provide information as requested for the FR is probably the best option, although other tools can also be explored. A system will be designed and discussed in the final meeting, to start compiling information shortly after the meeting.

**🡪 Action pending 3 (Action Chair, due on March 22nd): design an excel file to compile the information necessary to incorporate to the Final Report.**

1. **AOB**

There were no any other business.

## LIST OF ANNEXES

**Annex 1 – List of Participants**

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**Annex 2 – Agenda**

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