

**Minutes of the *ecopa* Board Meeting,**  
**October 1, 2009, Airport Hotel,**  
**Budapest, Hungary (14.00h – 17.00h)**

Attendance

Dr. Isabella De Angelis , Prof. Vera Rogiers, Dr. Odile De Silva, Dr. Bernward Garthoff, Mr. Roman Kolar, Prof. Peter Maier, Prof. Horst Spielmann, Mr. Stijn Budts

Absent

Prof. Walter Pfaller

**Minutes last Board Meeting**

The minutes of the Board Meeting of February 25, 2009 were approved.

**Updates on START-UP**

The recent state of the START-UP project was explained by VR. The reports for the expert meetings are finalized.

The report of the first Workshop, on Refinement, is finished, but still needs some corrections. The report of the second Workshop, on Reduction, is in preparation.

The third Workshop, on Replacement, will take place on October 2 – 3, 2009, also in the Airport Hotel in Budapest. VR said that it is good that this event takes place in Hungary, because there certainly is interest, but there is little activity in the fields of 3Rs. Quite a number of people will attend this workshop, coming from the pharmaceutical industry.

VR indicated important to start planning the final steps of the project, since the final report has to be delivered by the end of February 2010 to the EC. Recommendations must be made to the EC, but it is important to highlight certain parts, otherwise it might very well not be read in whole.

To make this work, help is needed from the organizers of the different pre-meetings and workshops.

VR proposes that first the organizers and the Executive Board each make a set of recommendations, afterwards it all will be put together. These recommendations should be ready by December 10, 2009.

Workshops and their organizers, to make the recommendations:

Pre-meeting in Madrid: JC

Pre-meeting in Basle: PM (there will be a publication of this, but it will differ from the report)

Pre-meeting in Alicante / eSI: BG and VR

Workshop Refinement: Annalaura Stamatii, Isabella De Angelis, Hannah Tähti

Workshop Reduction: WP, Gerhard Gstraunthaler

Workshop Replacement: Gisbert Sponer, Christiane Buta and Lajos Balogh...

By January the first version of recommendations (the ones from the organizers and Executive Board) must be ready. ODS will review this first draft.

### **ecopa news**

An article, entitled “Review on the implementation of the embryonic stem cell test”, has been published in ATLA. This article is about the EST and is product of a user workshop organized by BG and Michael Schwarz for the ReProTect project, last year in Frankfurt. Some Board Members have contributed to this article.

For reference: ATLA **37**, 313–328, 2009

### **ecopa messenger**

*ecopa* messenger 21 is being prepared. As usual, input is needed, mainly from two sources: the NCPs and the EU projects.

### **Agenda**

Dates for the next Board meetings are to be appointed by the new Board. This can be discussed on the Annual Meeting.

### **Annual Meeting**

The next Annual Meeting (AM) will take place from Friday November 27 to Sunday November 29, 2009, at the Sheraton Airport Hotel, Brussels.

The first draft of the program was discussed.

Mr. Madelin will not be able to do the opening lecture, since he is in China now. If nobody of DG Sanco can do the opening lecture, it can be asked to Manuel Hallen. Then Ruxandra Draghia-Akli (DG Res.) could be asked for the lecture on ‘Support for EC’.

Session 4 will focus on the work of *ecopa* within FP6 and 7 projects. A short explanation of the project and results can be given, then focus on the role of *ecopa* in the project.

At the end of this Session, there can be an introductory slide with all other projects *ecopa* was in and what *ecopa* did. Odile De Silva will present this. Then for some of these projects, some highlights can be presented. For ForInVitox, Odile De Silva can present, for AcuteTox Peter Maier and for Biosym Flavia Zucco. It should also be clarified that the old Board will still be involved until the projects end.

Then it was discussed why it actually is important for *ecopa* to be in EU projects. VR has tried to get *ecopa* in two future projects, being ROAD and Alternet. However, these projects were not chosen by the EC. The reason for *ecopa* to be in projects is that this way *ecopa* can be upfront with new developments and have a certain control function. Also, this can bring funds, which are important to keep *ecopa* alive. RK said that if Board Members then speak in the projects, it must be clear that they speak in name of *ecopa* and not (only) from personal point of views.

The role of *ecopa* and function of its Board Members is not always the same in each project, explained BG, because each project is managed differently. JC added that the Work Packages are written by the coordinators and that only afterwards partners are chosen. It could be thought of to make a set of rules under which *ecopa* will take part in a project or not.

It was discussed that in the first Session, the Executive Board will give statements and that in the second Session the 4 stakeholders will give their visions. It was also decided to do no Science Fair this year.

For the stakeholders possible speakers were proposed:

- Animal Welfare:     - Sonja Van Tichelen  
                          - Emily McIvor  
                          - Katy Taylor  
                          - Janne Kuil
- Regulatory:       - Jan-Willem van der Laan  
                      - Jon Richmond  
                      - Betty Hakkert  
                      - Peter Casper  
                      - Manfred Liebsch  
                      - Olejniczak  
                      - Someone from Norway can be asked  
                      - Dagmar Jirova
- Industry:         - Tim Rowan  
                      - Ravenzway  
                      - Olde  
                      - Someone from Colipa can be asked
- Academy:         - Argelia Castano  
                      - Rossibi  
                      - Francelien  
                      - Lisbeth Knudsen  
                      - Tuula Heinonen

To moderate the Round Table, Adrian Smith will be asked, but if he can't do it, someone from another NCP will be asked.

It was discussed to do no Board Meeting on Friday, but a meeting with the NCPs. The NCP representatives can come then and present some of their highlights as well as the general working of the NCPs within *ecopa*.

PM can moderate the questions and discussions of the NCPs.

On Sunday attention should be given to what has been done in the last year, since that's stipulated in the statutes. The most important thing at this moment are the financials.

Each platform can present one highlight on Sunday.

### **Financial status *ecopa***

There still is enough money to pay the upcoming Annual Workshop, but afterwards it might be necessary to find new financial sources and support.

The annual fees of the NCPs must be paid again.

### **Financial status START-UP**

1528298	START-UP	€ 28.708,79
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The 3 pre-meetings are fully paid.

The Refinement Workshop has been fully paid, they did not use the full budget available (i.e. € 44.000). For the Workshop on Reduction the first payment of € 17.600 has been paid, they also informed us that they would not need the full budget. For the Workshop on Replacement also the first payment has been done. From their calculations they estimated that they also would not need the full budget.

The first payment of €17.600 for the Refinement Workshop is done. For the workshops 40% (=€17.600) is provided before the workshop, 40% after receiving all the bills for the first amount and the remaining 20% percent (if necessary) is paid at the end of the project, if necessary.

The problem, however, is that according to the EU FPs rules only 80% funding is received from the EC actually causing a preliminary gap of about €15.000. Therefore it is important that only the money really needed, is used.

### **Elections 2009**

PM explains that the best way to do the elections is if the nomination committee, composes a possible new Board, or maybe two, out of the candidates as a first proposal. This way a proposal can be made for a well equilibrated new Board, containing all 4 stakeholder parties. It is impossible to let everybody just vote on Sunday and then try to get an equilibrated Board, that would take too long. This proposal for procedure can then be discussed on Friday afternoon.

In general, there are enough candidates, except for the post of president where there is little interest.

If people are not elected by the NCPs, then perhaps the Board still can recommend other people.

A standardized form with information, such as contact details, affiliation, experience..., about all candidates will be sent around to the NCPs. If people have informed us that they do not wish to serve in certain functions, this will be included, so that the NCPs know this.

### **Future *ecopa* work**

VR explained that the EC issued a new call, Call for Alternative Testing Strategies (identifier: FP7-HEALTH-2010-Alternative-Testing). *ecopa* could take part in this call, which would be a way to continue the work and stay active in the scene. However, it is for the new Board to decide whether *ecopa* will take part in this or not. The deadline is in February, so after the elections, the new Board should make a decision soon.

It would be good if the new and the old Board Members would meet up about 1 or 2 weeks after the elections, to team up and discuss these things. If then the new Board decides to take part in this call, the old Board still can help them, so that things go smoothly.

Then also other practical things can be discussed, so that the change and handing over of the work goes well planned and the new Board is well at height of what must be done within *ecopa*.

HS raised attention to the T4 (Transatlantic Think Tank for Toxicology), which is also funded by the Zbinden/Doerenkamp foundation. He asked whether this could be accepted as an associate member in *ecopa*. The other Board Members said that this does not directly have a

connection to *ecopa*, since it's not an NCP and not all 4 stakeholder parties are present, however they can apply for membership and explain what they stand for and how *ecopa* and T4 can work together. HS reasoned that it would be interesting to have a connection to what happens in the USA. VR said that it then must be decided by the statutes how this could be arranged, but that they would have to pay a membership fee as well. But this will also be left to the new Board, since otherwise most probably the discussions would still be ongoing, when a new Board is elected, which would make it more difficult.

RK raised the fact that, beside of the Dutch platform, the Belgian Platform seems to be inactive for a while now. The fact is that Mr. Beaufays does not work for BPAM anymore and that the people of BPAM, when asked, said that there is no platform anymore. Mr. Beaufays told the general secretary that the Board of the Belgian platform is reforming.

At the moment there is not a very good view on which platforms are still active and which are more or less inactive. VR proposed that perhaps the new Board can do a quality check, however one must be careful that there still are enough platforms associated to *ecopa* afterwards. If *ecopa* would have only about 4 NCPs, for example, *ecopa* wouldn't be heard anymore by other groups, regulators, industry..., even if those 4 NCPs would be very active. Also, the *ecopa* Board always refrained of mingling in with country organizations/NCPs.