# Subject │ Minutes of the SECOND Management Committee Meeting of COST Action CA16224 “European Raptor Biomonitoring Facility”

Ciudad Real, Spain  
22/02/2018

1. **Welcome to participants**

The participants were welcomed by Guy Duke, Chair of the Action. The attendance list is provided at **Annex 1**.

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

Total number of COST Full and Cooperating Members having accepted the MoU: 26

Total number of COST Full Members intending to accept the MoU: 0

The quorum (2/3 of COST Countries participating in the Action) was reached: 21 of the 26 Parties were represented at the meeting (COST doc. 134/14 REV 2 “COST Action Management, Monitoring and Final Assessment” Annex I, Article 9).

1. **Adoption of the agenda**

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

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

The meeting adopted the minutes of the last meeting. There were no matters arising other than those addressed by the other items on the agenda.

1. **Update from the Action Chair**
2. **Status of the Action**

The start date of the Action is 17/10/2017.

The end date of the Action is 16/10/2021.

25 of the 36 COST countries are parties to ERBFacility, plus Israel (the sole *Cooperating Member State*), giving a total of 26 Parties (**Annex 2**).

There are currently no participating NNC/IPC institutions and Specific Organisations (see Item 12).

1. **Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM)**

There are at present no completed STSM reports or new STSM applications. Planned STSMs for GP1 for WGs 1, 2 and 3 are to be postponed to GP2 following Working Group discussions and planning at the first General Meeting held 19-22 February in Ciudad Real, to allow sufficient time for the calls, applications, evaluations and implementation.

Following resignation of Dr Igor Eulaers, **MC approved Dr Oliver Krone as the new STSM Coordinator.**

Dr Lucia Forzi provided further advice on how to frame calls for STSMs. She confirmed that it is acceptable to mention in the call text the names of Host Institutes that are able to offer services and expertise for STSM applicants, as long as applicants are free to choose the Host. It was agreed this would help potential applicants who did not have particular Hosts in mind. Note that Russian and international institutes can act as Hosts.

**AP1: STSM Coordinator and Core Group to draft selection criteria for each Call.**

1. **Update from the Grant Holder**

A budget of €76000 was allocated for GP1. Mr Pablo Sanchez Virosta, representing the Grant Holder, informed the meeting that there was no information as yet on expenditure for GP1. The main item of expenditure for GP1 is the current GM1 and MC2 meeting and the costs of this meeting would be known within a few weeks. The Chair requested participants to submit reimbursement claims as soon as possible within the 30-day deadline.

1. **Update from COST Association**

Dr Lucia Forzi (COST Science Officer) made a presentation (**Annex 3**) on COST, including COST policies, monitoring and evaluation of COST Actions (see Item 8) and some reminders on details of COST Actions.

1. **Monitoring of the Action**

Dr Lucia Forzi made a presentation on monitoring of the Action (**Annex 3**, slides 12-14).

There are three formal monitoring reports. The first (end month 12) is the responsibility of the Chair and is largely focused on success in promulgating COST policies.

**AP2: Chair to draft first monitoring report by 16/10/18**

Dr Forzi advised that it is important to keep an up-to-date list of all publications and joint projects emerging from the Action, in preparation for the subsequent monitoring (scientific) reporting. She suggested that all publications cold be listed and linked on the Action website.

**AP3: Science Communications Manager to keep up-to-date list of publications and joint projects emerging from the Action and to post publications/projects and relevant links to the website**

Lucia also reminded the MC that an extra €10,000 can be made available in the final Grant Period to support final publications.

MC discussed issues of inclusiveness and authorship of publications arising from the Action. It was agreed that co-authorships should be discussed and agreed early on by Task Groups.

**AP4: Working Group Leaders to ensure co-authorship of publications is agreed early on by their respective Task Groups.**

1. **Implementation of COST policies on:**
2. **Promotion of gender balance and Early Career Investigators (ECI)**

The Chair noted that the raptor biomonitoring community suffers from an inherent gender bias towards male participants. This is reflected in the gender make-up of the Action. 12 of 44 MC full Members are female and 7 of 19 MC Substitutes are female. The Core Group has given attention to this in seeking to recruit additional female members to the MC.

Gender balance for leadership positions is fairly good: 3 of 7 Core Group members are female (including 2 of 4 WG Leads) (pending election of new STSM Coordinator).

The number of ECIs (<8 years since award of PhD) among the MC Members and Substitutes is not yet known. The Core Group gave attention to inviting ECIs to GM1. Eight of the participants at MC2 identified themselves as ECIs.

1. **Inclusiveness and Excellence (see below of Inclusiveness Target Countries)**

12 of the 26 Parties to the Action are Inclusiveness Target Countries (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Estonia, Croatia, Hungary, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Republic of Serbia, Turkey).

MC discussed how to proceed with the selection of participants for Working Group (WG) and Task Group meetings. Dr Forzi advised that this is at the discretion of Working Group leads, with the focus on ensuring the necessary expertise, with due regard to COST policies on geographical balance, ICTs, gender and ECIs when drawing up participant lists for WG meetings. MC agreed that WG Chairs will draw up lists of candidates for meetings (having regard to COST policies) and these lists will be approved by the Core Group.

**AP5: Working Group Leaders to draw up list of WG participants for approval by CG.**

1. **Follow-up of MoU objectives, progress report of Working Groups**

MC noted that MoU objectives had been largely met through the current first General Meeting (GM1) in Ciudad Real 19-22 February. MC also noted that progress reports from the WGs had been comprehensively discussed during the GM1. MC noted that the three STSMs planned for GP1 would be postponed to GP2 and mandated the Core Group to consider the possibility of convening a Task Group meeting in April should accounts from GM1 indicate a shortfall in spend for GP1.

**AP6: Core Group to consider possible Task Group meeting for April 2018 if GP1 funds allow.**

1. **Scientific planning**
2. **Scientific strategy (MoU objectives, GP goals, WG tasks and deliverables) and Action budget planning**

The scientific strategy (MoU objectives, GP goals, WG tasks and deliverables) was discussed at length in the preceding GM1.

The Chair presented the suggested activities and draft budget for GP2. There was some discussion about whether workshops might start and end at lunch-time, allowing participants to arrive on the morning of the first day or the meeting and depart in the afternoon of the last day, thereby reducing accommodation costs. However, it was felt that on balance it was better to start meetings in the morning and end in the afternoon, with participants travelling the day before and, if necessary, the day after.

Following discussion and some minor amendments to the draft budget, a provisional work programme and budget totalling €152,812 was approved for GP2 (**Annex 4**). This includes €51000 for Working Group meetings, €23000 for short-term scientific missions, €6000 for publications, €2680 for external events, €50000 for GM2 and €19932 (15%) for Grant Holder allowance. Assuming 26 Parties to the Action, the total of €132,880 (excluding the 15% GH allowance) is €10,270 over the available budget (excluding 15% GH allowance) of €122,610. MC2 mandated Chair and Core Group to adjust the budget down to within the €1422,610 budget (i.e. €141,000 including the GH allowance) by either placing one or more Working Group meetings back-to-back with the Second General Meeting (GM2) or postponing a Working Group meeting to GP3.

**AP7: Core Group to consider whether one or more workshops could be run back-to-back with GM2 in February 2019 and, if not, whether to delay one of the WG workshops until early in GP3.**

**AP8: Chair and Core Group amend GP2 work programme and budget (WPB) as mandated, Chair to then submit WPB for MC approval in eCOST.**

Dr Lucia Forzi noted that budget for GP2 can be increased if other countries join the Action. MC members are encouraged to suggest to the Chair suitable participants from COST countries not already party to the Action.

**AP9: MC members to send to the Chair any suggestions for new MC members from COST countries not yet party to the Action.**

1. **Long-term planning (including anticipated locations and dates of future activities)**

It was suggested by Lucia and others that the next General Meeting (GM2) might be a little earlier in the year to allow more time to deal with any over/under spend before the end of GP2. However, given the schedule of Working Group activity, it was argued that it would be difficult to convene GM2 any earlier than late February.

**AP10: Core Group to plan for GM2 in February 2019**

A request was made for possible hosts for future meetings and workshops (in GP2 and beyond). Offers to host meetings were made as follows:

* Florence Museum (via Paola Movalli)
* Northern Greece (Anastasios Saratsis)
* Estonia (small meeting; Madis Leivits)
* Copenhagen (small meeting; Igor Eulaers)
* Israel (small meeting; Oded Berger-Tal)
* Macedonia (Blagica Sekovska)
* Danube, Romania (Emmanuel Baltag)
* Berlin (Oliver Krone)
* Antalya, Turkey (Tamer Albayrak)
* Scopello, Sicily (Paola Movalli)

**AP11: Core Group to consider offers (and other possible venues) and finalise locations for GP2 meetings.**

1. **Dissemination planning (publications and outreach activities)**

MC noted that a sum of €4500 was allocated for website development in GP1 and encouraged timely use of these funds before they lapse.

**AP12: Chair and Core Group to take forward dissemination planning and website development to ensure budget for website is used by end of GP1.**

1. **Requests to join the Action**

MC approved the Siberian Environmental Center as a Near Neighbour Country (NNC) participant of the Action.

MC declined the request from the National Veterinary School of Sidi Thabet, Tunisia, to join the Action as a NNC participant.

MC discussed whether to invite other NNC Institutions to join the Action. It was agreed that the Vice Chair will identify an Albanian Institution to joint the Action, and András Kovács will identify a Georgia institution to join the Action.

MC approved the US Geological Survey and the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary as International Partner Country participants of the Action.

**AP13: Chair to inform the above institutions of the respective MC decisions.**

**AP14 : Vice-Chair and András Kovács to identify suitable NNC institutions in Albania and Georgia, respectively.**

Dr Lucia Forzi confirmed that there was no need for MC to approve ECHA and EFSA as Action observers and that the Chair can initiate the process to invite them as observers.

**AP15: Chair to invite ECHA and EFSA to become observers of the Action**

1. **Any other business (AOB)**

Prof Richard Shore suggested that there should be consideration by the MC of risk management for the Action. MC agreed that the Core Group should take forward action on this.

**AP16: Core Group to draft a risk register, monitor it periodically and report back at next MC meeting.**

Dr Rui Lourenço outlined the opportunity for PRIMA funding focused on agriculture in Mediterranean countries. Deadline for first stage proposal (10 pages) is 17 April. If successful, deadline for second stage proposal (up to 70 pages) is 15 September.

**AP17: Dr Lourenço to circulate further details, including countries that are eligible; any interested members to make contact with Dr Lourenço.**

1. **Location and date of next meeting**

The next MC meeting (MC3) will be convened back-to-back with GM2 in February 2019, location to be confirmed (see Item 11(b).

The Chair thanked Dr Lucia Forzi for attending the meeting and for her valuable input and thanked MC members for their contributions. He thanked the Vice-Chair, WG Leaders, STSM Coordinator and Science Communications Manager for their contributions to the GM1 and MC2 and looked forward to working closely with all for implementation of the remainder of GP1 and for GP2. The meeting closed at 12:30.

**SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS**

NB: deadlines were not agreed during the MC meeting but are suggested by the Chair

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| **no** | **ACTION** | **WHO** | **Deadline** |
| 1 | **STSMs**: STSM Coordinator and Core Group to draft selection criteria for each Call. | Oliver Krone, Core Group | Apr 2018 |
| 2 | **Project Monitoring**: Chair to draft first monitoring report by 16/10/18 | Chair | Sep/Oct 2019 |
| 3 | **Website**: Science Communications Manager to keep up-to-date list of publications and joint projects emerging from the Action and to post publications/projects and relevant links to the website. | Science Comms Manager | ongoing |
| 4 | **Publications**: Working Group Leaders to ensure co-authorship of publications is agreed early on by their respective Task Groups. | WG Leaders | Apr-Sep 2018 |
| 5 | **Working Groups**: Working Group Leaders to draw up list of WG participants for approval by CG. | WG Leaders | Apr 2018 |
| 6 | **Task Group meeting**: Core Group to consider possible Task Group meeting for April 2018 if GP1 funds allow. | Core Group | Apr 2018 |
| 7 | **WPB GP2**: Core Group to consider whether one or more workshops could be run back-to-back with GM2 in February 2019 and, if not, whether to delay one of the WG workshops until early in GP3. | Core Group | Apr 2018 |
| 8 | **WPB GP2**: Chair and Core Group amend GP2 work programme and budget (WPB) as mandated, Chair to then submit WPB for MC approval in eCOST. | Chair, Core Group | Apr 2018 |
| 9 | **Action Parties**: MC members to send to the Chair any suggestions for new MC members from COST countries not yet party to the Action. | MC Members | ongoing |
| 10 | **GM2**: Core Group to plan for GM2 in February 2019. | Core Group | Apr 2018 to Feb 2019 |
| 11 | **Meeting venues**: Core Group to consider offers (and other possible venues) and finalise locations for GP2 meetings. | Core Group | Apr-May 2018 |
| 12 | **Dissemination**: Chair and Core Group to take forward dissemination planning and website development to ensure budget for website is used by end of GP1. | Chair, Core Group | Apr 2018 |
| 13 | **NNC/IPC participants**: Chair to inform Siberocenter (Russia) and Sidi Thabet (Tunisia) of MC decisions. | Chair | Apr 2018 |
| 14 | **NNC participants**: Vice-Chair and András Kovács to identify suitable NNC institutions in Albania and Georgia, respectively. | Vice-Chair, András Kovács | Apr-May 2018 |
| 15 | **EC/Agencies**: Chair to invite ECHA and EFSA to become observers of the Action. | Chair | Apr 2018 |
| 16 | **AOB/risk register**: Core Group to draft a risk register, monitor it periodically and report back at next MC meeting. | Core Group | Ongoing |
| 17 | **AOB/funding opportunity**: Dr Lourenço to circulate further details (PRIMA), including countries that are eligible; any interested members to make contact with Dr Lourenço. | Dr Rui Lourenco | Mar-Apr 2018 |

**List of Annexes**

**Annex 1** – Attendance list

**Annex 2** – Agenda

**Annex 3** – Science Officer presentation

**Annex 4** – Provisional budget for GP2 as approved by MC2