
EXECUTIVE REPORT

of the CETAF43 General Meeting, 25-26 April 2018

Authors

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1

1. DETAILS

1.1 Meeting Statistics

52 attendees from 31 of the 32 CETAF members (59 institutions), plus 5 guests, Constance Rinaldo (BHL), Peter Schalk and Olaf Banki (Species2000 and CoL+), and Gila Kahila Bar-Gal and Rivka Rabinovich from the National Natural History Collections, Jerusalem, IL.

31 voting institutions present

1.2 Meeting Host: Natural History Museum, London, UK

NHM London Science Director: Ian Owens

CETAF Representative: Vince Smith

1.3 Aims of the CETAF42 General Meeting:

- Reporting and approval of the CETAF Annual Accounts 2017
- Approval of new version of CETAF Bylaws and CETAF Statutes
- Presentation of CETAF achievements for 2017-2018
- CETAF workshop on the CETAF Research Agenda for Biodiversity and Geodiversity Sciences - CETAF preparing the Systematics Agenda 2030

2. MEETING DECISIONS AND ACTIONS

2.1 Decisions taken

The Agenda for CETAF43, the records of CETAF42 (NHM Crete), the CETAF Accounts 2017, the financial report for the 1st trimester 2018, the Chair and Executive Committee report (2017-2018) and CETAF Executive Committee Work Plan 2018-2019, the CETAF and CETAF GS objectives for 2018-2019, the updated CETAF Statutes and Bylaws, and the discharge of the CETAF EC, were all approved. The meeting agreed the change of the title of General Secretary to Executive Director, the change to a four-year reporting and reviewing cycle within CETAF and, after the CETAF EC elections in the spring 2019, a four-year mandate for Executive Committee members.

The CETAF Governing Board approved the Terms of Reference of the **CETAF Collections Group** (formerly the CPB) - *Coordinator*: Christiane Quaiser (christiane.quaiser@mfn-



berlin.de) and **CETAF e-Publishing Group** - Coordinators: Laurence Bénichou (laurence.benichou@mnhn.fr) and Isabelle Gerard (igerard@naturalsciences.be). It also approved the nomination of the CETAF Executive Committee as an additional part of the CETAF Delegation to GBIF, which currently consists of the CETAF Chair (Head of Delegation) and the CETAF Secretariat Executive Director (additional delegate), with additional delegates to be added, if necessary, for specific requirements.

2.2 Actions for CETAF

- CETAF supporting DiSSCo and CETAF engagement in the Coordination Team
- CETAF supporting the Distributed European School of Taxonomy (DEST) via the development of a consortium to undertake organisational, administrative and financial tasks
- CETAF signing strategic alliances with relevant stakeholders
- CETAF broadening its membership
- CETAF strengthening involvement in activity groups
- CETAF further disseminating its mission, internally and externally

2.3 New Member

The application submitted by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, The National Natural History Collections (NNHC HUJI) was approved by the Governing Board. The Director of this new CETAF Member gave a presentation on the collections, facilities and projects of the institution.

2.4 CETAF Chair and Executive Committee Elections

The Nomination period for the CETAF Chair and Executive Committee was opened on the 25th April and will run until 31 December 2018. Nominations for candidates, with their prior consent are to be sent to CETAF EC Secretary, Jesús Muñoz, RBG Madrid, ES (jmunoz@rjb.csic.es). The list of candidates will be circulated in January 2018.

3. REPORTS

3.1 CETAF Working Groups and Initiatives

- **CETAF Information Science and Technology Commission (ISTC) – Anton Güntsch (BGBM-Berlin) (9.1)**. During the last year, the **ISTC** shifted its focus from setting developing and prototyping the CETAF stable identifiers to supporting adoption across institutional information systems. The members also realised that some effort will need

to be devoted to monitoring the quality of data services which prompted a workshop that will be held on 19-20 June in Copenhagen. *Contact:* a.quentesch@bgbm.org.

- **Digitization Group - Elspeth Haston, RBG Edinburgh) (9.2).** The group had an in-depth discussion at their last meeting on what “digitised” a specimen actually means and will compile use cases with information about the definitions and standards used in different institutions/countries. They also completed a detailed gap analysis on digitisation resources and will be looking for ways to use existing knowledge, expertise and processes to help other institutions develop digitisation policies. *Contact:* E.Haston@rbge.ac.uk.
- **CETAF Collections Group - Christiane Quaiser (MfN Berlin) (9.3).** The new CETAF Collections Group now has – thanks to the collaboration of numerous CETAF institutions – a defined work plan, which has been developed according to the priorities of members. Training, storage and management, law & regulations, digitisation are some of the main topics this group will tackle, in close collaboration with other working groups. *Contact:* christiane.quisser@mfn-berlin.de.
- **Legislation and regulations Group - Chris Lyal (NHM London) (9.4).** The group was entirely focused on the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol. They were heavily involved in the drafting of the sectorial guidance documents which will hopefully be available by mid-2018. The CETAF Code of Conduct is again under consideration by the EC but it is already having an impact with its tools, and as a document to show to national regulators. *Contact:* dirk.neumann@zsm.mwn.de, and c.lyal@nhm.ac.uk.
- **Earth Sciences Group - Johanna Eder (NHM Stuttgart) (9.5).** The group has drafted a first publication and created a virtual exhibition from the results of their survey on geohazards. Further contributions are equally important on this topic, in addition to a survey on the availability of type specimens. For 2018, the effective incorporation of Earth Science Collections into DiSSCo is one of the major goals. *Contact:* - johanna.eder@smns-bw.de.
- **e-Publishing Group – Laurence Bénichou (MNHN Paris) and Isabelle Gérard (RMCA Tervuren) (9.6).** For the group, the CETAF43 meeting was the inaugural moment. Its terms of reference were approved by the membership, meaning the group can start defining its work plan which will initially focus on online publishing and open access. *Contact:* laurence.benichou@mnhn.fr and isabelle.gerard@africamuseum.be.
- **Research Assessment Group – Michelle Price (CJB Geneva) (9.7).** Due to lack of volunteers to take on the coordination of the Research Assessment WG it was closed during the meeting. Some of its topics - which focused on providing e-publishing and the creating of a taxonomy specific journal list – will in part (e.g. discussions around the impact factor in publishing) be taken over by the e-Publishing WG.
- **CETAF Monitoring Group - Livia Schäffler (ZFMK Bonn) (9.8).** The group met for the first time at CETAF42 and is now in the process of engaging partners, outlining a common strategy and developing harmonised approaches for monitoring. There is a

window of opportunity to receive funding for monitoring activities, generated in part through a recent high-profile publication on biodiversity loss in Germany, which received widespread attention, including high political circles. **Contact:** W.Waegele@zfmk.de, and L.Schaeffler@leibniz-zfmk.de.

- **European Initiatives Group. Vanessa Demanoff (MNHN Paris) (9.9).** The group gave an update on the process regarding the development of the 9th Framework Programme that will follow on from Horizon 2020. The first indications point towards it being built on three pillars: fundamental science, global challenges built around 5 clusters, and open innovation. It will also work towards getting results of projects into both, economy and society. **Contact:** ana.casino@cetaf.org

4

3.2 CETAF Initiatives

- **European Journal of Taxonomy, EJT – Laurence Bénichou (MNHN Paris) (12.1.a).** The nine member strong EJT consortium is stable and active. Output continues to increase with a total of 98 articles published from 1 Jan – 30 Sep. of 2017. A special issue “The DNA Library of Life” came out in Feb. 2017. The EJT now has a contract with PLAZI to render the EJT articles machine readable, thus increasing the connectivity of the taxonomic, publication and specimen data held within the EJT articles themselves. CETAF members that are interested in discussing the EJT and their potential integration into the consortium can contact laurence.benichou@mnhn.fr.
- **Distributed School of Taxonomy, DEST – Jesús Muñoz (RJB Madrid) (12.1.b).** A new Consortium is forming under the leadership of RJB Madrid with contributions from CETAF (Administrator) and a number of CETAF members (NATURALIS, RBINS, NHM Oslo, NHM Crete, and CJB Geneva), for the running of this initiative and the programming of training courses in the field of Taxonomy and Systematics.
- **BioCASE – Anton Güntsch (12.1.c)** - The technical components of BioCASE are open source and the support given by the BioCASE secretariat should encourage all CETAF members to use this service, if applicable. Currently, 70 provider installations worldwide feed substantial amounts of records into GBIF and/or Europeana.

3.3 CETAF current and future strategic partnerships

- **SPNCH (Ana Casino)** – A final MoU has been approved by SPNHC (Linda S. Ford, Chair) and will be circulated to CETAF Membership for approval intersessionally. It focuses on the development of joint activities with a special focus on the common issues of collections and ABS. Barbara Thiers (NY Botanical Garden) will become the new Chair.
- **BHL (Constance Rinaldo)** – A partnership agreement, that was approved intersessionally prior to CETAF43, was signed during the meeting by Constance Rinaldo and Michelle Price, representing BHL and CETAF respectively.

- **CoL+ (Olaf Banki)** – The project will seek to further engage with CETAF and will develop a collaboration agreement to leverage on each other efforts, in relation to the taxonomic backbone, contribution of taxonomic expertise and aspects related to open access to specimen data.

3.4 Ongoing projects and new proposals

- **BIOTALENT, Catherina Voreadou (NMH Crete) (12.2.a).** The BioTalent project has reached its mid-term and is running smoothly, with the delivery of the expected outcomes, including an analysis of training needs and the development of a dissemination plan, the course content, development of the tailored platform and identification of audiences. The flyer for the course was handed over to CETAF members who were asked to act as channels to disseminate information and attract participants. Registration will be open in September 2018. For more information on BioTalent see: <http://biotalent.myspecies.info/> Contact: isa.vandeveld@naturalsciences.be.
- **NaturalHeritage.be, Patricia Mergen (RMCA Tervuren) and Patrick Semal (RBINS Brussels) (12.2.b).** This Belgian project, conducted by the three Belgian CETAF partners and CETAF itself, is under the BRAIN-be call by the Belgian Science and Policy Office. It intends to develop a new interoperable database system and a portal for Belgian natural history collections in which modules from different natural science disciplines are to be interconnected. It is an important project that works towards DiSSCo.
- **ICEDIG, Leif Schulman, (LUOMOS, Finland) (12.2.c).** The project started on 1 January 2018 and will run for 27 months. An initial Kick-off meeting took place in Montpellier in January, the first milestones (website in place, International Conference held in Helsinki in March, major guidelines drafted, etc.) have been met and the planned deliverables have been completed, as scheduled (DMP, Communication and Dissemination Plan).
- **Behind the Scenes guide to Natural History Heritage– BETHS, Isabel Rey (MNHN Madrid) (12.3.a).** This new proposal was submitted to H2020 Call on Digital Assets by 10 partners including CETAF and CETAF members. If successful, it would work for 48 months to build a prototype for a novel platform for managing and curating images of collection specimens, giving access to these to the public in a contextualised way.
- **ENVRI-FAIR, Wouter Addink (NATURALIS) (12.3.b),** is a proposal in which CETAF is an associate participant, based on its role as a full member of the BEERi. The goal of the project is to form a more coherent, interoperable cluster of Environmental Research Infrastructures. CETAF/DiSSCo will work in the WP on Biodiversity/ Ecosystems towards the implementation of FAIR principles in this domain. For 4 years, under the leadership of the Forschungszentrum Jülich, 37 partners will work towards this goal.
- **Synthesys+, Vince Smith (NHM London) (12.3.c).** A forth iteration of the **SYNTHESYS** project was submitted in March 2018. The research and access component of

SYNTHESESYS+ has a strong focus on digital activities including a new workpackage on Virtual Access, potentially providing funds to support significant collections digitisation across the consortium. The proposal also incorporates community plans to sustain these activities after SYNTHESESYS is over. To that end, a new leadership model was integrated to include European and international organisations. If successful, a start in early 2019 is envisaged, with the results of the evaluation due in August.

3.5 CETAF workshops and workshop outcomes

- The CETAF set of **recommendations on e-publishing (13.1)**, representing the outcome of the several workshops held on this topic, will be circulated among CETAF membership, with the aim of seeking input from experts in both nomenclature and publishing. The finalized CETAF document on e-Publishing will be presented at the upcoming CETAF44 in Bratislava.
- **CETAF Membership Benefits (13.2)**. A detailed list of the benefits of CETAF membership (with explanatory examples) constitutes a key tool for promoting CETAF and CETAF membership. The flyer was presented and printed copies were handed over to members. Members were encouraged them to make use of this material at any event that they may participate in.

4. UPCOMING CETAF MEETINGS

CETAF44 Bratislava, Slovakia, 14-15 November 2018

CETAF45: Tartu, Estonia, Spring 2019

CETAF46: Autumn 2019 (option for Naturalis-Leiden / RMCA-Tervuren)

CETAF47: Spring 2020 (option for Naturalis-Leiden / RMCA-Tervuren)

CETAF49: Frankfurt, Germany, Spring 2021

MNHN Paris has offered to host one General Assembly though no dates have been fixed yet.

Information

All presentations given and reports or documents presented at CETAF43 are available in the CETAF member space that is accessible via the CETAF website (<http://cetaf.org/>) in the folder "CETAF43 (London, UK)-April 2018", or via the link <https://cetaf.org/admin/workbench/group/cetaf-community-group/162> (please login first).

All presentations given by the working groups are available in the CETAF43-All Presentations.zip that can be downloaded from the [CETAF website member space](#).