

EFB Environmental Biotechnology Division

Meeting of the Division Board held on ZOOM on Tuesday 6th June 2023 at 5:00 PM CET.

Present: JSG (Chair), JC (Co-chair), JP, MWK, SV.

1. Apologies for absence and welcome.

Apologies for absence were from DS, CM, LC and LA.

2. Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting not covered below.

The Board was informed that the EFB is still assessing alternative venues for ECB 2024, with the final decision being expected soon.

3. EB Division event(s) in ACB 2023.

CM informed the Board via email that contacts have been made towards securing her participation in the Conference, including with the AFoB. Dissemination of the conference through the marine biotechnology network has also been made.

4. Environmental biotechnology meeting in Poznan, in November 2023.

The organization of the meeting was reported as progressing at a good pace, with no major issues to report. Insurance against liability in case of accidents is now being addressed and it is expected to be secured within a short timeframe.

The Board was informed that five keynote speakers were already secured: Łukasz Chrzanowski (Poznań University of Technology, PL) for session 1; Sergio Enrique Moya (CIC biomaGUNE, ES) for session 2; Marcella Fernandes De Souza (University of Ghent, BE) for session 5; Katie Field (University of Sheffield, UK) for session 6; Jim Philp (OECD, FR) for the opening session. The need to secure high-profile keynote speakers for sessions 3 on bioelectrochemistry for energy and water recovery, session 4 on marine biotechnology, session 7 on wastewater treatment and the closing session was stressed. Options were discussed as well as the strategy for invitations, aiming for a rapid response.

The appeal for help from each Board Member to recruit groups to register and attend the event was renewed. In this context, JC noticed that three participants from the same institution already registered for the meeting and the Board approved the offer of a 10-min talk to these participants. It was reinforced that this group participation package can be highlighted by the Board members in their efforts to recruit registrations.

Considering the specific requirements of the meeting organization, the Board decided that dedicated meetings should be scheduled for the purpose joining the Board members involved in the organizing committee, supported by JP. The first of these meetings was scheduled for July 4th by 10:00 CET, and the possibility of inviting the Special Issue Editors (see item 5) to join this meeting was discussed.

5. Thematic issue of the Bioeconomy Journal.

The Board was informed that four excellent guest editors were secured, two from Asia and two from Europe. In principle, one thematic issue call for papers will be launched in New Biotechnology and the Bioeconomy Journal.

Some strategies to secure submissions to the thematic issue were discussed after negotiation with the publisher, namely APC waiving or partial waiving in certain conditions. The Guest Editors will be

asked to recruit at least two papers, yet only one can be from their own group. All board members are invited to contribute with a submission.

6. EB Board composition.

Board members agreed to contact colleagues that might be interested to join especially from fields where reinforcement is needed, such as wastes, plastics, soil and nature-based systems for wastewater treatment.

7. Activities for 2024.

Activities for 2024 were discussed as detailed in item 8, after informing the Board that no further suggestions were made concerning activities following the circulation of the Agenda of the present meeting.

8. Regular activities of the EB Division, with assignment of coordinators.

The Board agreed to include a regular but short item in the EFB Newsletter on a hot topic where the Board members hold expertise. Board members are invited to suggest such item, and Mireia Santaularia at the Central Office should be contacted for support. The typical request from each Board member can be one sentence about the topic and one slide/image that can illustrate it. The organization of short training/networking online workshops for early-career scientists was also approved. These should have a very low participation fee, with the purpose of securing attendance after registration to compensate for organization efforts and investment. Tentatively, the first workshop was scheduled for February-March 2024 and should address the incorporation of ecotoxicological assessment in environmental biotechnology research.

Action: JP will prepare a draft of the Ecotoxicology workshop structure for further discussion.

9. Any other business.

Contributions to the EFB June Newsletter were requested (formal deadline: June 14). The Board agreed that information on the thematic issue and confirmed speakers at the Poznan meeting will be included.

Action: JP will prepare the contribution regarding the Poznan meeting, including information on confirmed speakers, registration calendar and group registration packages.

Action: JSG and JC will prepare the contribution concerning the thematic issue.

10. Scheduling of the next meeting.

The Board agreed with having online meetings every two-three months. A reminder of the meeting will be sent in the morning of the scheduled day. The next meeting was scheduled for September 27 2023 at 15:00, 16:00 or 17:00 CET.

Action: JP will launch a Doodle poll to define the best time slot for the next Board meeting.

JP. 08 June 2022