

EFB Environmental Biotechnology Division

Minutes of an on-line meeting of the Division Board held on Monday 13th October 2025

In attendance: Jeff Cole, David Richardson, Monika Harnisz, Marcella Fernandes de Souza, Mauro Di Fenza, Rita Mota, Felice Quartinello and Marta Wozniak-Karczewska. Joanna Surmacz-Gorska in the Chair.

1. Apologies for absence and welcome.

Apologies were received from Sonia Ventura, Anna Parus and Joana Pereira.

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

As a result of the previous call for help with Division organisation, Joanna thanked Rita for volunteering to help with industrial liaison designed to increase participation and support of industry in our meetings.

3. Response to the call for volunteers to help with Division leadership.

To report that Joana Pereira has agreed to replace Jeff Cole as Vice-Chair of the Division.

Minutes of the current meeting will be prepared by Jeff pending the appointment of a new Honorary Secretary.

4. Progress in organising a thematic issue of New Biotechnology.

Noted that as a result of extending the submission deadline until the end of December, 8 manuscripts have been promised. None have yet been received. Agreed that the call for papers should not be limited to contributions from the Aveiro Green Deal Biotechnology meeting, but should be open to all topics of current interest to environmental biotechnology. Monika agreed draft an entry for Mireia to add to the October EFB Newsletter.

5. Progress in planning the next Green Deal Biotechnology meeting. Ghent as the possible venue.

A meeting during the following week has been arranged for Marcella and Ewa (EFB Office Manager) to discuss the possibility of organising a third “Green Deal Biotechnology” meeting in Ghent in 2027.

6. Environmental Biotechnology topics in the ECB2026 Congress. Keynote speakers and topics for Streams 2 and 4. [David]

David reported that stream 2 includes topics of direct interest to environmental biotechnology. He called for volunteers from the Board to help assess abstracts as they are submitted and serve as symposium Chairs during the Congress. Jeff requested that urgent priority should be given to the assessment of abstracts submitted from our Asian Federation of Biotechnology partners so they could apply for travel grants and visas to attend the Congress.

7. Call for proposals for other Division activities: topics and volunteer organisers.

The Board was asked to propose topics for new meetings to supplement the activities of the Division in the European Congress of Biotechnology and the Green Deal Biotechnology series. Possibilities discussed might be a meeting focused on marine biotechnology or joint meetings with other EFB Divisions.

8. Roles for each member of the Division Board

Jeff reported that David Richardson has agreed to serve as Division Treasurer. Noted that we need a new Honorary Secretary, possibly with an additional person to organise DOODLE polls to fix dates for future board meetings.

Agreed that it would be desirable for every member of the Division Board to have a defined role. Three Board Members currently have no agreed roles and were asked to suggest what these might be. Possibilities include help with recruiting industrial sponsorship, meeting organisation, recruitment of leading European Groups to register their members for our meetings and help with advertising the Division on social media.

9 Invitation to leading groups of environmental biotechnologists to serve as Scientific Advisors for our future meeting.

The success of the Aveiro meeting was due to both excellent work by Sonia and Joana with the local organisation and to excellent lectures by high profile keynote speakers. The Board agreed to identify and invite other leading environmental groups that were not represented in Aveiro to consider serving as scientific advisors to the Board and to participate in future scientific meetings.

10. Any other business.

Division funds. Noted that as a result of the success of the Aveiro meeting earlier this year, the Division now holds limited funding to support payment of our €1,500 pa contribution to EFB Central Office expenses and to support Division meetings. The Board was asked to submit to the Division Treasurer proposals for how these funds might be used.

Agreed that the Division will normally commission the EFB Central Office to provide administration for our scientific meetings on a shared financial responsibility basis.

11. Scheduling of the next meeting.

Agreed that the next meeting should be organised after the discussion between Marcella and the EFB Office about the location and organisation of the next Green Deal Biotechnology meeting. This might be towards the end of November or early in December.

JAC 13 October 2025