

EFB Environmental Biotechnology Division

Meeting of the Division Board – via ZOOM, on Monday, 19th May 2025 at 17:00 CET.

Present: JSG (Chair), JC, DR, MS, MWK, JP, RM, SV.

1. Apologies for absence and welcome.

JSG welcomed all present and indicated that apologies for absence were received prior to the meeting by MH.

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

No other matters were raised for discussion.

3. Online meeting “Biotechnology in extreme environments”.

About 50 persons registered to the meeting and the session regarding Space biotechnology deserves a particular highlight as per its very good level of participation. Although it was clearly a small meeting, a significant part of the registrants attended the whole meeting. This was a good outcome, but it may not compensate the overall effort required for the organisation. The Division was acknowledged for the suggested speakers that performed well and contributed for raising the interest of the meeting.

4. Next EFB-EB regular meeting, Aveiro, Spring 2025.

(i) Registration status: the Board was informed that the latest figures considered 111 registrations (paid or confirmed that a later payment will be received). There are 11 non-paid registrations now, and about half of them are likely to be solved positively in the upcoming days.

Action: SV will confirm the status of payments with registrants from the University of Aveiro.

Action: JP will communicate a final number of participants of 112 to the catering services (deadline for final confirmation on May 20th).

(ii) Budget aspects: The budget of the conference will break even but a significant surplus will not be made, despite the most favourable conditions provided with no fees charged for the venue, reasonable catering prices and a raise of registrations compared to the previous meeting. This picture sets good basis for reasoning the conditions for the next Green Deal Biotechnology conference considering budget sustainability of the meeting and of the Division overall.

(iv) Assignment of short talks and flash posters: All submitted abstracts are currently assigned to short talks, flash poster presentations or posters. As the final programme can not be delayed further, the short talk and flash poster presentations from registrants that still have payment pending were placed at the end of sessions; if they fail to participate in the conference, the next break will be anticipated with no major complications in the line-up of sessions.

(v) Logistics: JP and SV informed that logistic aspects are being well covered with the support of some University of Aveiro services. All necessary reservations are made, and confirmations will be reinforced this week. The venue will start to be prepared on Friday with the assistance of the helpers from the University of Aveiro, and will continue for final details on Monday morning, just before the conference starts.

Action: JP will contact MS regarding arrangements for the remote talk by an invited speaker from DG ENV in session 5.

(vi) Session Chairs: Among the Scientific Committee members, the Board defined the Chairs for all sessions as follows. DR for session 1; MWK for session 2; RM for session 3; JC for session 4 before the coffee-break, including a short advertising of ECB2026; MS following for session 4 until lunch;

SV for session 4 after lunch; JSG for session 5, including a short reference to the EB Division work; DR and JC for session 6.

5. Special Issue on New Biotechnology

JC summarised the conditions for the sponsoring of Elsevier concerning EFB events and remarked that the Division has not been able to fully meet these conditions, with a limited ability to recruit submissions for Special Issues associated to conferences. Teamwork was requested from the Board to achieve 12 major contributions for a Special Issue in New Biotechnology. The Green Deal Biotechnology conference in Aveiro should be used for these recruitment efforts (for reference, one submission per Board member would be the ideal record), based on works presented in talks and posters, but always considering that invitations to submit do not guarantee publication. Both research papers and reviews can be incorporated in the Special Issues, yet reviews that just summarize on literature with little new insights are strongly discouraged. A 25% discount will be offered by Elsevier in APC for the Special Issue. The Board was let know that MH offered the possibility to act as a Guest Editor, and/or contact colleagues for this role.

6. Any other business.

The attention of the Board was driven to the need of acting as hosts and hostesses during the GDB conference, especially supporting stand-alone participants.

An invitation was made for the Board to start thinking on the next Green Deal Biotechnology conference in up to two years from now. Venues that are cost-effective and well-connected by public transports alternative to flights are particularly welcome.

7. Scheduling of the next meeting

As the whole Board will be in Aveiro for the GDB conference, the scheduling of the next Board meeting will be discussed therein.

JP. 20 May 2025