

## **EFB Environmental Biotechnology Division**

Meeting of the Division Board held online (ZOOM) on Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024 at 17:00 CET.

Present: JSG (Chair), JP, LC, MH, MS, MWK, RM.

### **1. Apologies for absence and welcome.**

Apologies for absence were received from DJR, JC and SV due to other commitments.

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

MV communicated her unavailability to continue being part of the EB Division Board considering time constraints and other professional demands, on the beginning of April 2024. MV was the website and social media secretary, a position that has to be active as per the importance of efficient communication for the Division activity. Upon the Chairs invitation, MWK agreed in assuming this position in the Division Board.

**Action:** MWK will revise the website and start by updating the Board composition.

### **3. Thematic issue of the Bioeconomy Journal.**

There are no remarkable updates since the last Board meeting. The difficulty in finding authors willing to contribute with high-quality papers were highlighted, highlighting that this is mostly due to the newness of the Journal and related absence of an Impact Factor. At the moment, two papers are already accepted and two more are in final revision stages. MS shared plans to submit one paper by the end of April and MH shared the intention to submit one paper as well, but likely not ready by the end April, which is the official deadline. LC confirmed that there is tolerance regarding the deadline, but remarked that submission intentions should be sent to the Guest Editors with the tentative title, general outline and a foreseen timeline. This relates to the application of the Journal for indexing, requiring records on the activity of the Journal.

### **4. EB Board participation and contribution to the ECB**

No relevant details were available to discuss, but it was noticed that several Board members will participate in the Congress. The Board was made aware of complications in registration, which involve the application of extra fees for multiple invoicing in group registrations.

### **5. EFB-AFOB meeting on “Plastics: challenges and biotechnological solutions”.**

There were 98 participants in the meeting, and even for the very late final session, which was that under the responsibility of the EB Division, 60 participants were recorded, which is found an overall success. JP highlighted some presentations that she found very interesting, whose speakers can be important contacts to invite for next meetings, including as sponsors.

**Action:** JP will keep this topic in the Agenda for the next Board meeting so that JC impressions can be shared with the Board.

### **6. Next EFB-EB regular meeting, Aveiro, Spring 2025.**

After confirmation of tentative dates with the Plant, Agriculture and Food Division to prevent clashing with their flag event (G4G meeting), the *Green Deal Biotechnology 2025* was definitively scheduled to 26-28 May 2025. JP and SV proposed a sub-title for the meeting that combines the keywords ‘sustainability’, ‘recovery’ and ‘valorisation’ as aggregating terms, but could not find an interesting alternative including the term ‘circular bioeconomy’ directly. The validation or alternative suggestions of the Board are welcome until the next EB Board meeting. The venue was secured for free at the University of Aveiro: amphitheatre with videoconference possibilities, if necessary (maximum of 120-176 persons), with a lobby for poster panels and coffee breaks, at a short walking distance from the lunch venue. After working on preliminary ideas for topics/sessions discussed in the last Board meeting, 6 main topics were presented for discussion focusing on: bioremediation;

resources valorisation; sustainability assessment; nutrient cycling; industrial symbiosis; artificial intelligence and genomic edition integration. MH and MWK were integrated in the committee. Following steps include the refinement of the topics, including the assignment to each topic of committee responsible persons that will contribute to develop on sub-topics, suggest invited speakers and search for topic-specific sponsoring.

**Action:** JP will share the organisational working file in a collaborative online platform with the committee members for contributions, in principle until the next Board meeting.

**Action:** JP and SV will contact the Central Office to onset formal organisational procedures.

#### **7. Any other business.**

No other specific businesses were raised for discussion.

#### **8. Scheduling of the next meeting**

The next meeting of the Board was tentatively scheduled for the week between the 8<sup>th</sup> and the 12<sup>th</sup> of July, by 17:00 CET.

**Action:** By mid-June, JP will circulate a poll to find the most suitable day of the week proposed for the Board meeting.

**JP. 23 April 2024**