# EFB Environmental Biotechnology Division

Minutes of an online meeting of the Division Board held Wednesday, 9 September 2026

**In attendance:**

- Joanna Surmacz-Gorska (Co-Chair)
- Joana Pereira (Co-Chair)
- Marcella Fernandes de Souza (joined late)
- Monika Harnisz
- David Richardson
- Rita Mota
- Agnieszka Kuźniar (joined late)
- Mauro Di Fenza
- Felice Quartinello (left early)

**Apologies:**

- Anna Parus (connectivity problems)
- Marta (attending a summer school)

## 1. Welcome and Apologies

Joanna welcomed members following the summer break and expressed hopes for a productive academic year ahead. Apologies were noted from members unable to attend at the start of the meeting. It was also noted that some participants might need to leave early due to other commitments.

## 2. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

No matters arising from the previous minutes were reported.

## 3. Special Issue of New Biotechnology

Monika reported that the Special Issue was currently marked as closed on the journal website. Available information indicated that several submissions had been received, with one manuscript accepted and at least one still under review. The Board discussed the lack of response to earlier requests to extend the submission deadline.

Members agreed that continuity should be explored by reopening or relaunching the Special Issue for future editions of the Green Deal Biotechnology conference. The possibility of cooperating with another journal was briefly discussed, although the strategic relationship between EFB and New Biotechnology was noted.

**Action:** Monika will contact the journal officer again to clarify the status of the Special Issue and explore options for reopening or continuing it in connection with future conferences, copying relevant Board members in the correspondence.

## 4. Green Deal Biotechnology Conference 2027

Marcella presented the draft conference theme and session descriptions prepared for the conference website and call for abstracts. Members agreed that the conference identity should clearly connect environmental biotechnology with the Green Deal objectives and upcoming policy targets.

The Board agreed that the session descriptions should be harmonised in structure and style. Members also discussed encouraging stronger integration between sessions and generating shared outputs from the conference, including synthesis discussions at the end of the sessions, possible follow-up publications or perspective papers.

Marcella provided updates on venue planning, funding opportunities and sponsorship activities. The Board agreed to continue developing the programme, identifying keynote speakers and strengthening engagement with both

academic and industrial stakeholders. The importance of beginning speaker invitations and sponsorship contacts well in advance was noted.

David provided an updated on the Division's financial position. The Board agreed to review any decisions regarding participant support or related initiatives at a later stage as the conference planning progresses.

**Actions:**

- Marcella will revise and harmonise the session descriptions and complete preparation of the website materials.
- Board members will provide suggestions for keynote speakers through a shared document.
- Marcella will continue discussions regarding sponsorship opportunities and external funding possibilities.
- Joana will share previous conference planning templates and timelines to support preparation activities.

## 5. Collaboration with Proteinn Club

An update was requested regarding possible collaboration with the Proteinn Club. Progress has been slow due to delays in communication with key contacts. The Board agreed that discussions should continue and that a reminder should be sent.

**Action:** Follow up with Proteinn Club contacts and report progress at the next meeting.

## 6. Any Other Business

Members discussed strategies for increasing industry participation and sponsorship. It was agreed that industrial partners, equipment suppliers and commercial representatives should be approached before the end of the year, as organisations plan future sponsorship activities during this period. Existing industrial contacts should be used wherever possible.

## 7. Scheduling of the Next Meeting

The Board agreed that the next meeting should be held during the first week of November 2026.

**Action:** Anna will circulate a scheduling poll for the first week of November.

*Joanna thanked all participants for their contributions and wished everyone a productive start to the new academic year.*