Minutes for SC – meeting June 16th 2015.

Public-Private Partnership for pre-breeding Steering Committee (PPP-SC)

Meeting: 14th PPP SC meeting
Purpose: Evaluation of project proposals and decision of projects funding for phase 2
Date: 16th June 2015
Time: 10.30-15.00
Place: Graminor, Björke Försöksgård

Participants:
Country representatives:
Birgitte Lund, NAER, DK (BL)
Tuula Pehu, MMM, FI (TP)
Thoroddur Sveinsson, LBHI, IS (TS)
Magne Gullord, LMD, NO (MG)
Anders Nilsson, SiI, SE (AN)

Plant breeding entities representatives:
Annette Olesen, Lantmännen, SE (AO)
Idun Christie, Graminor, NO (IC)
Marja Jalli, MTT, FI (MJ)
Ahmed Jahoor, Nordic Seed, DK (AJ)
Nordic Academia representative:
Rodomiro Ortiz, SLU, SE (RO)

Observer, Baltic Countries representative:
Måt Koppel, Jögeva, EST (MK) Unable to attend

Secretariat:
Annette Hägnerfelt, NordGen (AH)

Idun greeted all welcome to Graminor and she gave a short presentation of the company.

Minutes:
1. Opening of meeting & welcome (AN)
AN opened the meeting and greeted all welcome. A short presentation of everybody followed since this meeting is the first for the new coordinator Annette Hägnerfelt.

2. Agenda, adjustment, (AN)
The Agenda was adopted. Birgitte Lund was chosen to adjust the minutes.

3. Minutes from last meeting (circulated) (AN)
The representative from MMM, Finland stated that at last meeting under paragraph 6, a decision was taken to send a question to NMR regarding whether non-Nordic entities are allowed to participate in PPP projects, which was supported by IC. AN noted that this is already accepted since the Baltic States can take part. However - this question is important to clarify since changes in existing PPP-partners Nordic owner structure can change in future. Decision: The PPP secretariat shall give NMR a written request before next meeting.
Minutes was adopted with this change.

4. New coordinator (AN)
Annette Hägnefelt was greeted welcome again as new coordinator by Anders Nilsson.

5. Updates from secretariat: (AH/AN)
- **Updates on contracts** - AH informed that new contract proposals were sent out the 15th of June to the respective project leaders regarding BarleyII, Ryegrass and the new 6P project. The Apple contract is still to be written.
- **Budget follow ups** - Accumulated May 2015 everything looks OK in comparison with budget 2015. AN continued to comment on the cost for the administration (covered by NMR) that was overdrawn with approx. 500 TDKK in 2014. NordGen has funded this with their regular budget. In the coming period 500 TDKK from the budget of Part A and 5% of Part B will be set aside to cover costs for the administration for every year 2015-2017. RO remarked that PPP comprises about 3.000.000 Euro and that the Nordic countries will get much valuable research & development within Plant Breeding done for this amount of money. TP claimed that it is necessary for the Ministry in Helsinki (MMM) to receive a correct specified requisition from NordGen to ensure the payment from MMM.
- **Follow up on funding acquisition** - AN explained thoroughly the appended excel file regarding funding for 2015-2017. It is important to note the amount set aside for increased project administration (427 TDKK) in 2014. Requests from project leaders have to be properly justified in order for compensation to be paid. AN then concluded that there are approx. 4.200 TDKK to be allocated for the 3rd Call.

6. Update on funding contribution from the countries (All)
- Sweden: AN stated that contacts with responsible officer at the Swedish Board of Agriculture (SJIV) indicate that the commitment will be fulfilled.
- Denmark: BL also concluded that the fund is granted, but it is important to get a correct requisition before payment to NordGen can be done.
- Island: TS informed that there is no other indication than that the Ministry will give funding in line with the agreement. A requisition for money was done.
- Finland: Recently a new government was installed and there is no expectation for funding of Part B. TP also remarked that discussions on EIP-funding of Part B had been disregarded as the PPP-projects don’t have a direct involvement of farmers, as demanded for EIP. AN had received the same arguments but had claimed that farmers organizations had been involved in the evaluation of the first phase of the PPP and also participated in the workshop leading up to the prolongation of the PPP.
- Norway: There is no funding of Part B to be expected at present.

7. 3rd Call - proposal: (All)
The proposed text of the 3rd Call was thoroughly discussed and minor changes were agreed. The revised document will be sent to the Steering committee for approval and thereafter checked with SJIV with regard to the Swedish contribution from EIP-funds.
It was questioned if companies outside of the traditional breeding industry such as Christian Hansen, Denmark, could become eligible as a partner to the PPP. It was noted that any Nordic company involved in agriculture, horticulture or fruit breeding could join but that the issue would be if the intent would be for pre-breeding for food and agriculture of varieties for Nordic growers. Another issue discussed was how to view the eligibility of micro-breeders. Here the SC concluded that the size of the breeding effort would be a decisive element.
Further, it was asked if Finland can influence decisions on projects funded from Part B now when they don’t participate in its funding. It was concluded that all members of the SC have the right to influence on decisions on projects in Part B.

The time frame of the 3rd Call was discussed. If a new project consortium wishes to use its funding also for 2018, the SC will have no objection to this, indicating that a continuation of the PPP is expected. However, there are no firm commitments for funding from the countries after 2017 at present.

To increase the interest for the PPP from the countries to continue the funding of the PPP it is important that project owners and the secretariat inform on results from the PPP, preferably also to media and the general public. The importance of quick and solid results from ongoing projects was stressed.

For pre-breeding three years is a very short time frame. As hitherto the indications on further development will be an important aspect in the evaluation of received proposals. The SC decided not to maximize the number of pages for proposals.

8. Updating flow chart (AH)
The flow chart is important and shall be updated regularly since the Steering committee has especially asked for this information.
Decision: AH will do this.

9. Update from members on PPP related issues. (All)
- In Sweden plant breeding was put on the Swedish agenda with the report from the official investigation on competitiveness of Swedish agriculture that was made public earlier this year. The book – “Bortom GMO” - with Roland von Bothmer as one of three authors is another example. It was decided that the secretariat will send one copy to each member in the SC.
- In Norway a totally new organization, NIBIO, is established after the merger of Bioforsk, Skog og Landskap and the institute on Agric Economics. NIBIO will have about 700 staff members and will be effective from the 1st of July.
- Iceland – there are also discussions on merging of institutes.
- Denmark has a focus on breeding for organic market and for protein crops and there are specific efforts intended to this purpose. Also environmental questions like nitrogen leakage are emphasized. Additionally, special contribution for micro breeders could come as well as for advanced breeding methods through Crop Initiative Denmark (CID). A new strategy for genetic resources is also discussed. AN confirmed that also in Sweden a more relaxed attitude can now be heard regarding GMO from NGOs. Nordic Seed recently made an application regarding Protein Crops (field beans) in the CID scheme.
- In Finland the merger of institutes for environment, agriculture & food, forestry and fishery is effective. A new minister is appointed. A new policy regarding genetic resources is prepared with aquatic genetic resources also included. The reorganization of the institutes will result in reduction of personnel. Forest economy has much more value in Finland than plant production and a reduced budget for research on plant production is expected.

10. Next meeting topic: Decision on projects, 3rd Call.
Next meeting will be in Copenhagen the 27th of November at 10.00.

11. Any other business. (All)
No other questions were raised.
12. Visit at Graminor and barley project.
The meeting ended with very interesting presentations held by Stein Bergersen and Muath Alsheikh.

Anders thanked Idun and her colleagues for their hospitality in connection with 14th PPP SC-meeting.

Meeting ended at 15.30.

Arnette Hågnerfelt
Secretary

Anders Nilsson
Chairman

Birgitta Lund
Adjustment