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European Network of Prosecutors for the Environment - ENPE

Meeting of the Board of Directors

04 April 2025

10.30hrs – 12.30 hrs CET MS Teams

Attended: Rob de Rijck (Chair, FP, Netherlands); Anne Brosnan (England, UK); David Smith (Ireland); Lars Magnusson (Sweden); Antonio Vercher Noguera (Spain).

Guest: Kateřina Weisssová (Czech Republic).

Secretariat: Shaun Robinson (England, UK).

Apologies: Jean-Philippe Rivaud (France).

Minutes

1.0 Minutes and actions from last Board meeting (16/01/25)

Action superseded– J-P R to ask AB & SR about ENPE contribution to AFME meeting (now November 2025)

NEW ACTION – SR to share Life logo needed for RdR's presentation

NEW ACTION – SR to forward exchange regarding Chinese delegation invitation / Bratislava

It was noted that the permanent representative for our new Bulgarian Full member, Mr Danail Shostak, has already contributed to an ERA training event by checking the translation of slides into Bulgarian (Sofia; March 19-21) – this was very welcome news.

2.0 ENPE AISBL update

New ENPE Full Member confirmed – Supreme Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Bulgaria (contact - Mr Danail Shostak)

Kateřina Weisssová, attending as a guest, was formally welcomed as a Board member. KW will be registered as such (AISBL) in due course. She must also be registered as an Ultimate Beneficial Owner (UBO) if she holds a role as a director on the ENPE board.

NEW ACTION – SR to initiate this as needed (via Troef accountants).

KW thanked RdR and the Board for the invitation and was very happy to contribute. RdR mentioned the vacant position of treasurer. All board members were asked to consider this position.

RdR noted that it would be helpful to identify possible new board members as well as KW. Are there any other members who could be approached (1 or 2 more). If so, how to proceed?

AB said it was a good idea. Good to have young people involved. Consider who might fit the bill and approach them. Perhaps join as an 'Observer board member' first and then step up. Succession planning is important. AB has already thought of a replacement for herself from the (UK, England) Environment Agency.

NEW ACTION – SR & RdR to draw up a shortlist, all ENPE board members to share ideas.





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3.0 ENPE funding position current & forward look (2025-27)

SR summarised the position for funding going forward (spreadsheet). Bottom line figure is most important. Categories were explained. Around €473k was being sought from the Commission.

RdR added that the funding decision was imminent. There had been an overspend due to cost increases, and membership expansion.

RdR explained his '200 trips' summary based on €600 per trip.

€12.5k was needed as cash contribution from ENPE (5% of total budget) in order to receive EC funding.

DS asked if members could be asked to contribute to travel costs? This was something to consider.

SR said ENPE needed to be strict e.g. a 'cut-off point' on booking, to minimise costs?

KW asked about fees. How much would they be? SR said that there were different levels of membership, so potentially, different fees payable. It was a delicate topic.

AB said that ENPE shouldn't be running out of money. Overspending is an issue. SR agreed.

RdR noted that ENPE are required to have a closer look now based on affordability and the rules.

The idea of 'voluntary fees' was raised. Some organisations are richer than others. No obligation to contribute. AB said that voluntary payment isn't a fee. A contribution – with suggested amounts included. flexibility in payment.

NEW ACTION – RdR, KW & SR, with AB contributing as necessary, to look into this in more detail, including options from members (numbers) and spending; fees (see below)

KW gave an example from the Czech Republic. She suggested that it would be sensible to find out what the options were as a non-profit organisation, to resource funds (e.g. payments from contributing to projects).

SR suggested using EU guidance (for EU MS volunteer rates) on the basis to apply fees.

LM asked what would the costs cover (for the members)? KW agreed this was a key question. What are we getting back for our fee? What 'deal' is this?

SR said it was a good question. At least attendance at the annual conference.

RdR said it would be worth revisiting the EC funding, based on the cash/ 'in-kind' contribution and what they are expecting.

AB noted the possible changing of nature of ENPE once fees are involved (e.g. possible tax liability).

NEW ACTION – SR check with IMPEL/ RE: fees – nature of network (business/ charging VAT)/ donation – the difference (VAT/ Tax/ Legality considerations)

AV said many organisations have no budget for fees of this type. Asking for funding will not be looked at favourably. An additional burden. In Spain, there are associations, ideologically based. Asking for funding does not fit comfortably with the ideologies. Particularly at this time (global/ EU economic challenges).





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Perhaps look at other groups outside of EU for funding streams e.g. UN? Find out in a more general level, our perspective has shifted – UN funding? More extended – look at alternative funding sources (UNEP)?

DS said ENPE could also look into fee/ donations.

4.0 DG ENV/ Ecocrime Directive

RdR updated on the 19/01/25 ENPE meeting with DG ENV (SR & RdR) confirming that it was very positive. They want ENPE to support them in implementation of ECD.

New contact point (Claudia Fusco) is very focussed. She asked whether there are more topics our specialists could look at. RdR had pointed out illegal mining and deforestation. Illegal water abstraction could also be a relevant theme.

M. Fusco is keen for ENPE consultation on funding beyond the next three-year programme (2027 onwards). Consultation welcomed on: [EU's next long-term budget \(MFF\) – EU funding for external action](#)

NEW ACTION – all Board members to consider the options and share any thoughts before 06 May (RDR & SR And KW to include as part of the assessment) – SR to send reminder (early May?)

RdR reported on the Taiex multi-country workshop - environmental compliance 18.03.25. This included discussion around joint training around ECD.

ERA are keen to work with ENPE and RdR is in contact with Dr Luisa Cortat, ERA, who is due to attend the conference in Bratislava. Rob will contact her to discuss a joint training exercise

NEW ACTION – RdR to contact Luisa, in Bratislava to discuss this potential joint event.

DS asked about ERA training – do they charge? AB didn't think so, but very popular. SR/ AB noted that trainers (inc. ENPE members) get paid a fee (and travel & accommodation). Good training material developed which can be used.

RdR raised the possibility of using fee for ENPE funds? Worth considering.

RdR provided background to Lammert's (Dutch ex-MP) request for ENPE opinion on Ecocide from The Working Group of the National Criminalisation of Ecocide – what were the Board's thoughts?

AB said it was not an easy subject to prosecute. An attractive topic but not high priority.

AV agreed with AB. More crimes, esp. environmental crimes being described all the time. New ideas, strategies, options without clarity. Possibly dangerous to introduce Ecocide – cause confusion.

KW had looked at this topic internally. Possibly a high-level survey/ questionnaire from our ENPE members? That is, to see how each member is proceeding?

RDR said that given other ENPE priorities, this might not merit too much energy at this time

NEW ACTION – RDR to draft a reply for the board to consider and send back to Mr Lammert





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5.0 4 Networks conference

SR updated on this. Good ENPE representation (36+ attendees) leading a couple of sessions.

AB asked about a EU-US Liaison meeting in the margins - was Joe Poux attending? SR noted JP as a key presence.

RdR had asked JP but not received a reply as yet.

DS suggested virtual representation from US, if travelling was not permitted. A good idea, all agreed.

NEW ACTION – SR to set up EU-US liaison (invite all participants) – EC, Europol, Eurojust, (draft agenda)

SR said that the Gaia awards would need to be presented in the ENPE-led breakout sessions (no room in plenary) and noted Namibian application (outside EU award?).

AV explained background. WLC prosecution had been presented at Marrakech conference. AV noted it was very impressive in relation to the other results. ENPE recognition via the Gaia award – might be a good boost to them.

NEW ACTION – SR to update and confirm on Gaia awards (ENPE breakout session)

6.0 ENPE Working Groups update [

- WG chairs meeting – feedback had been good. RdR suggested that the detail was covered at the next meeting with SR continuing with organising the WG meetings as agreed.

7.0 Events Forward look [not covered]

- Gi-TOC April 08 2025; Paris (RdR)
- Argentina visit 15-16 May 2025 (RdR & AV)
- Malaysia UNWASTE conference 21-25.04.25 (H McCann)
- 4Networks Conference, Slovakia 21-22.05.25 (covered item 6.0)
- EJTN General Assembly, Gdansk, Poland 11-12 June 2025 (TBC)
- DG JUST 2nd Transposition Workshop (ECD) 12.06.25 (KW)
- Eurojust Western Balkans Criminal Justice project 18-19.06.25

7.0 AOB

No AOB items - meeting closed 12.28hrs.

