



Minutes of the Third Management Committee Meeting of COST Action CA15223 “Modifying plants to produce interfering RNA”

*Poznan, Poland
16/02/2018*

1. Welcome to participants

The 3rd iPLANTA MC meeting started at 11.30. The participants were welcomed by Prof. Bruno Mezzetti, Chair of the Action, and by Dr. Jeremy Sweet, Vice Chair of the Action. Bruno Mezzetti chaired the MC Meeting.

2. Verification of the presence of two-thirds of the Participating COST Countries or, if applicable, a quorum

CSO Approval: 26/02/2016

Start of the Action: 27/10 /2016

End of Action: *26/10/2020*

Total number of COST Countries having accepted the MoU: 31

The quorum (2/3 of COST Countries participating in the Action) was reached: 25 country representatives (PT, IT, PL, DE, ES, BE, IE, HR, NL, TR, UK, HU, DK, MK, CZ, NO, BG, SI, FR, SK, CH, LV, EE, EL, RS) out of 31 attended the meeting (COST doc. 134/14 B.2 “COST Action Management, Monitoring and Final Assessment” Annex I, Article 8).

3. Adoption of agenda

The agenda (**Annex 1**) for the 3rd Management Committee (MC) meeting was adopted.

4. Approval of minutes and matters arising of last meeting

The Chair asked the MC members to approve the minutes of the 2nd MC meeting held in Rome (IT) on 17/02/2017. The agenda was approved with unanimity.

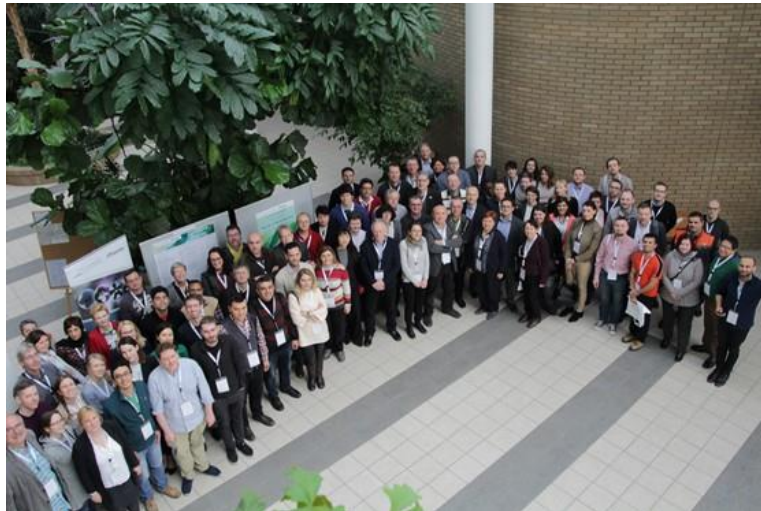
5. Update from the Action Chair

a) Status of Action: start and end dates of Action, participating COST countries, participating NNC/IPC institutions and Specific Organisations

The Chair reported that the action started the *27/10/2016* and will end the *26/10/2020*. The participating COST countries are 31, contacts with NNC/IPC institutions and specific organizations were started and their involvement will be discussed. The Chair thanked the WG leaders for the fruitful activities carried out during Grant Period 2 of iPLANTA and the local organizer of the second iPLANTA conference for the great contribution given in the organization and management of a successful event. During GP2, the 5 WGs organized in total 4 different meetings and the 2nd International Conference which has seen the participation of more than 100 highly qualified experts on RNAi and related technologies. A compilation of all the abstracts and presentations from all the meetings was made available on the web page. To increase the visibility of the activities carried out in GP2, all abstracts and reports produced in the last year will be collected in a printed booklet to be distributed to iPLANTA partners and stakeholders. Finally, the

Inclusiveness Target Countries: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Croatia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Republic of Serbia and Turkey.

Chair invited all partners to stay connected with the accounts opened for the project on Twitter (@IPLANTA1) and on Facebook (group COST iPLANTA).



Group photo of the 2nd iPLANTA Conference – Poznan (PL), 14-16 February, 2018

b) *Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM): review of completed reports and new applications*

Chairs of STSM program reported on the activities carried out during GP2 indicating the number of STSMs approved, ECIs involved, destinations and type of research carried out. All budget available was used and an increase of budget for GP3 was requested.

6. Update from the Grant Holder: Action budget status

The Chair reported that the full budget available for the first grant period was used for the organization of the 1st school, 3 WG meetings, the 2nd iPLANTA conference in Poznan and the STSM program. The Chair reported that after all these activities there is still the available a proportion t of budget to be spent before the end of GP2 (April, 30 2018). Being difficult to organize other WG meetings in such a short time, the Chair proposed to attempt to spend the remaining budget on the following activities:

- to organize a core group meeting in Brussels on March 23, 2018 to organize a communication plan and the plan of activities for GP3.
- to start the preparation of a communication message to be used for the preparation of a video and podcasts.
- to start the organization of the event at the EU Parliament in 2018 to disseminate aims and outputs of the action.

After a short discussion the three activities were approved by the all MC delegates.

7. Update from the COST Association, if a representative is present

The representative of COST Association was not able to attend the meeting.

8. Monitoring of the Action

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Report on MoU achievements deliverables

The Action Chair reported that the activities organized in the first period of the Action were in fully in line with the achievements and deliverables included in the MoU. However, in this first period it resulted difficult to have a large number of experts participating to the events organized for GP2, probably for the reason that the Action still was not too well know and the difficulties in the organization of some events. In order to facilitate the activities planned for the next year it has been proposed and accepted to promote the direct involvement of new experts to assist WG leaders in a better management of the new events, both for the definition of broader topics and involvement of a larger number of experts. In addition, WG4 leader Justus Wessler has been unable to participate in recent iPLANTA events due to pressure of work and has agreed to stand down as WG leader. The Chair and vice chair proposed **that Vera Ventura (University of Milan) is appointed as new WG4 leader and Kit Greenop and new WG4 vice leader** and this was approved by the MC. Dr Ventura and Greenop accepted this appointment.

9. Implementation of COST policies on:

a) Promotion of gender balance and Early Career Investigators (ECI)

To be monitored we reached a good standard – to be further increased

MC country delegates please keep enlarging the involvement of scientists with high expertise on this technology

The Chair opened a discussion on possible strategies to implement COST policy of gender balance and ECI.

In general, it emerged that the large network created by iPLANTA has a proper gender balance and in future activities the appropriate gender balance will be maintained in experts invited for meetings and selected for STSMs. About ECI, it was underlined that iPLANTA network already involves several ECIs but after a discussion all agreed to promote further ECI contributions to future activities by giving a priority to ECI experts invited to future meetings and selected for STSMs.

b) Inclusiveness and Excellence (see below list of Inclusiveness Target Countries)

The Chair opened a discussion on the IPLANTA strategies for Inclusiveness by indicating the importance of stakeholder participation and also the involvement of experts from Target countries. From the discussion emerged the importance to include in the program of next meeting the participation and contribution of experts representing different types of stakeholders (SMEs., national/international agency, policy makers,..) and maintain the high participation of experts from target countries. In order to increase excellence, the following criteria for the organization of events were confirmed:

1. The MC delegates the CG to assess and select abstracts, following criteria of excellence and topic correspondence, for COST support of the presenter.
2. WG meetings will limit COST invitations and reimbursement to active participants submitting abstracts selected by the CG only.
3. MC meetings –active members with abstract submission and selected by the CG have priority for COST invitations and reimbursement.
4. All MC meetings will be combined with WG scientific meetings/conference. In cases where no MC members from a country present an abstract for the scientific meeting, only one MC member will be COST invited and reimbursed.

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10. Follow-up of MoU objectives: progress report of working groups

WG1 and WG 2 – Technology and applications of RNAi

The WG1 and WG2 were organized into 5 sessions, and 21 communications were selected for oral presentations.

The first invited keynote speaker, ANDRZEJ T. WIERZBICKI, addressed the issue of the mechanisms of RNA-directed DNA methylation and thus gene silencing exhibited by long non-coding RNAs produced by specialized RNA polymerase POLV. Overall, the exiting knowledge about the mechanisms of RNA-directed DNA methylation provide a strong support for non-coding transcripts that act as key factors controlling the structure of chromatin, and thus accessibility of genes for expression.

Different methods were presented for the comparison of the establishment of RNA silencing in plants. Data onf efficiency of RNAi in barley were presented. Generally, siRNA-based specific gene silencing of agro-economical important genes is more efficient than a miRNA approaches. Data were also provided on the constructions of viral-like particles based on cytoplasmic polyhderosis virus for efficient delivery of double-stranded RNA in insects.

RNAi has shown to be a feasible strategy to silence brassinosteroid regulator genes in barley, to control plum pox virus gene in plums, to be used against Colorado potato beetle, and in strawberry to silence the rapid alkalisation factors (RALF) family genes that affect flowering and flower structure. It was proved that the siRNA having one or two mismatches to retrotransposon loci, still work as efficient silencers of retrotransposons and retro-elements.

RNAi and new genome editing technologies (CRISP/CAS9) were compared and discussed. The advantages of RNAi were highlighted by the fact that RNAi may silence only partially the activity of a given gene, and thus provides a good tool in the case of essential genes.

Dr. HAILING JIN ((Department of Plant Pathology and Microbiology, Center for Plant Cell Biology, Institute for Integrative Genome, Biology, University of California, Riverside, CA 92521), the second invited keynote speaker at this iPlanta Cost Conference presented data on the cross talk between sRNAs derived from infectious fungus *Botrytis cinerea* and host plant (*Arabidopsis thaliana*). Plant derived sRNAs were transferred from the host plant to the fungal cells, and targeted botrytis DICER 1 and DICER 2, inhibiting the generations of sRNA effectors to supress grey mould disease. On the other hand *B. cinerea* sRNAs were transferred to host plant and supressed the host immunity genes for successful infection. New results on miRNA biogenesis regulation in plants were also provided.

During the conference the cutting edge approaches of RNAi application via spraying of double stranded RNA directly on plants were highlighted. Different examples where this new technology was experimentally applied were presented, for example in barley as a cereal model, *Arabidopsis* against pathogenic fungi, and or in potato against Colorado beetle.

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WG3 Biosafety :

What following is from the minute – it can be reduced

The WG3 meeting was held last September 2017 in Gent (BE) jointly with the IOBC-WPRS Working Group Conference on “GMOs in integrated plant production”

The first day of the workshop organized by the WG3 consisted of 1) a scientific session in the framework of the workshop “**Modern Biotechnology in Integrated Crop Management**”, organized by the West Palearctic Section of the International Organization for Biological Control (see www.eigmo.info) and 2) a practical demonstration of work with RNAi and insects at Ghent University (laboratory of Prof. Guy Smagghe).

The joint session was attended by ca 50 people and was opened with an invited lecture (via web) presented by Prof. Xuguo Zhou (University of Kentucky) on early-tier risk assessment of transgenic RNAi plants on non-target arthropods. The main focus was on selectivity of dsRNA. In fact, while for several non-target organisms studied no adverse effects by specifically designed dsRNA are reported and the taxonomical proximity between non-target and target organisms is a first indicator for possible similar RNAi effects, recent preliminary research results indicate that in certain cases, non-target effects can be observed even between different insect orders.

During the laboratory visit practical insight into different methods of dsRNA application in insects (e.g. feeding, microinjection) was given. About 20 people visited laboratories and it was possible to actually deliver dsRNA extracts into larval bodies via microinjection. Further, a visit was paid to the mass rearing of different insect species used for laboratory bioassays.

During the second day the scientific session was exclusively attended by the participants of the iPlanta COST action and included four presentations on general biosafety issues associated with RNAi. Two more presentations concerned PPV resistant HoneySweet plum cultivar obtained with RNAi mechanisms. Both presentations focused on possible benefits of this RNAi plant cultivar.

During the following round table (chair: Salvatore Arpaia) future perspectives of RNAi GM plants in Europe were discussed. It was communicated that EFSA is about to release its opinion on the request for import and processing of maize MON 87411 which is the first case of a RNAi-based insect resistant crop under discussion for possible approval in the European Union. The current major knowledge gaps about RNAi technology were discussed. They may represent relevant challenges for the biosafety assessment of RNAi applications, e.g. lack of genome sequences of many potential non-target organisms, doubts about the amount of dsRNA necessary to trigger silencing in a cell, lack of information on possible RNAi amplification mechanism in insects.

An upcoming call for preparing a cooperative Ph.D. student program (expected to start in 2019) was presented, where iPLANTA COST Action consortium could consider to submit an application. There was consensus that this topic should be brought up during the next general iPLANTA conference in Poznan in February.

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During an internal WG3 meeting the discussion was introduced by a short presentation from A. Dietz-Pfeilstetter summarizing the expected deliverables of WG3, and the different biosafety aspects addressed in presentations at the first and the second WG3 meeting.

The subsequent discussion resulted in a number of decisions and plans for future activities:

- Solicit information from WG1 and WG2 for preparing case studies for risk assessments of RNAi plants and the consequent development of specific biosafety protocols. Case studies should not be limited to insect resistant RNAi plants, but also addressing, e.g., virus resistance and fungal resistance. Case studies should be preferably based on data produced by iPLANTA participants;
- Increase number of people actively involved in iPLANTA activities. In particular, only a limited contribution on food safety issues was received for this meeting. It was proposed to contact Gijs Kleter (Wageningen University) who might involve colleagues in this area of expertise. S. Arpaia will contact him.
- Start making a plan for publication of reviews. In this respect, it was decided to wait for the availability of the upcoming EFSA report on "Literature review of scientific information on RNAi that could support the environmental risk assessment of RNAi-based GM plants". A small group constituted by Jeremy Sweet, Guy Smagghe and Salvatore Arpaia (who are also involved in writing the EFSA report) will take the lead and organize the possible structure of the review. Within this scope a small meeting will be organized after the completion of the EFSA report (tentative date and location: January 2018, Rome).
- Apply for possible joint projects by members of the iPlanta Consortium, e.g. the above mentioned Ph.D. program.
- Solicit further applications for STSM with the deadline of 30 September 2017.
- Plan the next WG3 meeting. Given the good additional attendance generated by the joint meeting with IOBC this year, it was proposed to organize next working group meeting back-to-back with the European Congress of Entomology (Naples, Italy, 2-6 July 2018) where a symposium on the applications of insecticidal RNAi is already planned. In order to proceed, S. Arpaia will contact the organizers to evaluate this possibility;
- A proposal was made to start considering one of the deliverables foreseen for the COST action, to compile a review on targets and off-target of known dsRNA and miRNA sequences.

WG3 also organized a SGM at EFSA, Parma, Italy on 22 January 2018 to discuss the EFSA report on "Literature review of scientific information on RNAi that could support the environmental risk assessment of RNAi-based GM plants" and how this report could be used to produce a number of scientific publications. This meeting was attended by Salvatore Arpaia (IT), Jeremy Sweet (UK), Olivier Christaens & Guy Smagghe (BE), Kaloyan Kostov & Teodora Jambozova (BU), Fernando Alvarez & Yann Devos (EFSA). It was agreed that shorter review papers discussing the results of the literature search and considering topics such as non-targets, off targets and resistance should be priorities. Approaches would be made to journals for their views on these topics and drafts prepared after EFSA has accepted the report.

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WG4 RNAi socio-economics and WG5 Communication and public acceptance – Joint meeting

WG4 and WG5 of the COST action iPLANTA organized a Joint Meeting on “Benefits and Costs associated with using RNAi technologies & Building our communication plan to reach all stakeholders”. The joint meeting lasted two and a half days from Wednesday 18th to the early afternoon of Friday 20th October, including the meeting of the Core Group of the action. For the meeting 27 experts were invited, of which four were not able to attend for last minute problems and one followed part of the meeting with a presentation via teleconference. The meeting was attended also by researchers of Italian research centers and researchers and PhD students of the Faculty of Agriculture of Milan University.

Following the summary of the discussion to be revised – reduced

From the discussion emerged the following priorities to be considered in the future activities of the 2 WGs:

1. Focus on consumer science studies and develop a framework of existing technology, starting from the study already available on RNAi patents and integrate the knowledge from the scientific results to their socioeconomic impacts. A better definition of the field of work is needed by identifying at least some of the more interesting case studies.
2. Define a strategy to improve market knowledge of the new products of the technology, this by involving stakeholders from agriculture and food industry and the consumer.
3. Start with a study on scientists’ perceptions of the technology and try to identify the attitude and coherence in their acceptance and communication. A common position and message to explain science related to the technology has to be found.
4. A clear definition of the different potential applications for all NBTs should be made available, by clearly describing the power of gene editing for specific applications and the role of RNAi in achieving new results thanks to new knowledge of plant cross talk.
5. Identify the pipeline of products from NBT applications, including RNAi to prepare a ‘basket of products’ to be studied in terms of socioeconomic impacts and communication to the consumer.

Taking in consideration these priorities the discussion continued by identifying the activities to be carried out by the different WGs in order to implement the socioeconomic studies and communication plan.

1. WG1&2 should work mostly on the definition of the different potential applications all NBT now available (Priority 4) and clearly identify the capacity offered by RNAi in solving important problems in EU agricultural systems. Data should be provided to implement the framework of the existing technologies (priority 1) and to be used for the socioeconomic studies (WG4) and communication plan (WG5).
2. WG3 activities should address the implementation of knowledge on the risk factors that can be associated with the different kinds of RNAi products and identify and propose the most appropriate approaches for risk assessment and possibly develop cost analyses of the risk assessment for such new products. Case studies proposed by WG1&2 should be taken in consideration. Inputs from WG1&2 experts on the design of new RNAi products with reduced potential risk should be provided and then transferred to WG4&5 experts for a better definition of socioeconomic studies and communication plan.

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3. Activities of WG4 should interact with all WGs in applying consumer science to the study of the new RNAi products (priority 1); in defining a strategy to improve market knowledge of RNAi products; prepare a survey to identify the perception and methods of communication adopted by the scientific community for NBT and RNAi technology. Colleagues from Milan university will prepare a survey to be delivered to the 150 experts from 31 countries already joining the iPLANTA action. In collaboration with WG1&2, analyse the different potential of the NBTs and identify a possible 'basket of products' almost ready for commercial diffusion to be analysed for their potential socioeconomic impact (priority 5).
4. The plan of activities for **WG5** was also discussed. Being fundamental the science base communication approach, priority was given to the definition of a science communication plan based on the possibility to coordinate the publication of scientific papers and review, following the open questions addressed by Hilde-Gunn Sorteberg and plan presented by Lorenzo Burgos, to be assisted by Ewen Mullins. The involvement of SMEs is also important and in order to promote their participation, it was proposed to create a network of SMEs representatives to be coordinated by Mirko Montefiori (NewPlant) and supported by representative of grower associations (Deborah Piovan) other SMEs representatives.
5. Science communication remains the most important tool for defining a new strategy for communicating the potential of new biotechnological products. Such competences should be addressed to identify the unique message to be used to identify and transfer knowledge and products derived from the application of RNAi technology.
6. Develop a dissemination plan for the new unique message, starting with the preparation of a document to be presented with a special event at the EU Parliament organized with the assistance of Dr. Ferri and Greenop of RPP EU Agency. This event should be organized at different levels, starting with the preparation of the message and event, then the event organization at the EU Parliament with the involvement of stakeholders, legislators, DG research, and the follow up to collect the feedback and continue in the dissemination of the message. Two events can be planned, the intermediate in 2018 and the final in 2020.
7. Use competences of different experts on communication, eg. Jo Roislien (Norwegian University of Science and Technology), to develop communication materials including podcasts prepared by using materials produced by different WGs and described with the simple approach of the 'story telling'.
8. Start planning the organization of demonstration events to show to the public the NBT/RNAi 'basket of products' that can be available and the potential benefits deriving from their use.

Use of all these new tools should be used for simplified education program on biotechnology, to better define the terminology, align stakeholders in their potential use, promote the starting of new founded research program, organize the future legislation on NBTs.

WG4 & 5 also contributed to the 2nd iPlanta conference with a joint session with 6 communications including the contribution from stakeholders and communication experts.

An example was presented, how RNAi technology could be a hope to control rice blast - the biggest issue for European rice cultivation. One important point of the discussion was the stakeholders and public

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perception, and acceptance of GM and RNAi technologies in Europe. From the social sciences perspective, the GM debate it is not a GM debate because it is related to other issues that are not related to scientific issues. That is why a careful and adequate strategic communication for research plan should be developed to maximize the impact of this technologies at different stakeholder levels and public at large.

With this aim, the following issues were discussed:

- an outline of the best strategies to communicate the output of scientific research focusing on target and best communication tools. Matina Tsalavouta presented as case study the communication plan of the University of Liverpool.
- the possibility to organize an event in Brussels to present to policy makers the RNAi technology and its impact for agricultural applications (Kit Greenop)
- the current state of play about RNAi field trials authorizations in US, the patterns of plants and traits introduced and the main biotech players involved (Vera Ventura)
- the relevance of R&D in agricultural productivity and disease resistance, especially for the control of rice blast in rice production.
- Suggestions for the effective communication of innovation in agriculture (Antonio Pascale)

11. Scientific planning

a) Scientific strategy (MoU objectives, GP Goals, WG tasks and deliverables). Identify obj., goals, task, del.--- for GP3:

The following priorities were discussed in line with the MoU:

- Keep focusing on RNAi technology and applications.
- dsRNA spray technology: it was agreed that this technology needs further consideration and that there should be active engagement with researchers and biotech companies involved in researching and developing this technology. WGs 1 & 2 would take the lead on this but involve WG3 and WG4 particularly in relation to considerations of biosafety and regulation. Speakers would be invited to future meetings to discuss RNAi spray applications.
- non-target and epigenetic effects: how to predict/control
- Predicting the potential commercial applications in the next short term (2020)
- Promote company/industry involvements: workshops planned for GP3
- Socio-economical impact – impact of the technology on SMEs/industries
- Communication – identify the proper message and communication tools

These issues will be considered in more depth at the SG meeting in Brussels on March 2018.

B) Action Budget Planning

C) For GP3 I propose a similar plan as GP2: group meeting and a conference may be always next February, South of EU or directly the event at the EU Parliament.

The Chair, by considering the previous discussion, proposed to maintain the criteria for science-excellence of the iPLANTA meetings decided in the 2nd MC meeting held in Rome and summarized

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consecutively:

1. The MC gives the mandate to the CG to assess and select abstracts, following criteria of excellence and topic correspondence, for COST support to the presenter.
2. WG meetings will be COST invited and reimbursed only for active participants with abstract submission and selected by the CG.
3. MC meetings –active members with abstract submission and selected by the CG have priority for COST invitation and reimbursement.
4. All MC meetings will be combined to WG scientific meetings/conference. In case none of the MC members from a country present an abstract for the scientific meeting, only one MC member will be COST invited and reimbursed from that country.
5. For implementing inclusiveness, priority in COST invitation and reimbursement will be given to Early Career, Stakeholders and ITC. For all future WG meetings at least 20% of invited experts should be evaluated according to this inclusiveness.
6. The MC gives the possible mandate to the Core Group to accept the reduced flat rate depending on the request of the WG Leader.
7. The WG meeting plan for the meetings for GP2 has to be prepared according to the long term plan of the 4 years activities of the Action.
8. The WG meetings must have clear 'topics', and selected abstracts must be in line with the selected topics.
9. WGs can plan the organization of WG workshops/meetings in combination with conferences only if they correspond to specific topics of interest for iPLANTA and with clear advantages for iPLANTA. The most appropriate approach is to have a section inside the program of the conference organized by iPLANTA with 3-4 speakers from the iPLANTA network.
10. International dissemination is important for the iPLANTA network, allowing 2 experts per year to be supported for international dissemination, but with a priority to international conferences with broad view of the objectives of the Action.
11. For the efficient running of the action, strong support is requested from the WG leaders for the Chairs of the Action.

c) Long-term planning (including anticipated locations and dates of future activities)

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The Chair opened the discussion on the plan of activities for the next GP3, from May 2018 to April 2019, by suggesting trying to combine different WG meetings in order to increase the efficiency in crosslinks and reduce administrative work.

After a discussion the MC approved the following meetings plan proposed by the WG leaders:

- International dissemination events –with respect to the rules two relevant international conferences will be identified to properly present the results of iPlanta Network. Destination and budget will be defined and confirmed or modified during the year depending on the budget available.
- July 2-3, 2018 – WG3 Meeting in Naples (IT) – Joint with International conference of Entomology and a SGM on communication.
- June -July, 2018 – WG1 Meeting – to be defined as soon as possible.
- September – WG2 Meeting and 2nd School, Rothamsted (UK). The final decision on this location will be taken after verifying the sustainability of costs for accommodation with respect to COST reimbursement rules.
- October 2018 – Wg4&5 Joint meeting and meeting at the EU Parliament.
- February – March, 2019 – 3rd Conference – MC meeting, Lisbon (PT)

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In order to better plan the ending of activities of GP2 and to build up the final program of GP3, the chair of the action proposed to organize a Core Group meeting at **COST Headquarter – next March, 2018.**

d) Dissemination planning (Publications and outreach activities)

The main discussion was focused on the definition of scientific communication activities including the preparation of coordinated reviews and of the book of the action to be published with CABI.

The preparation of videos and podcasts should be promoted with the aim to divulgate the activities of the actions, to be prepared in collaboration experts of communication.

e) STSMs planning

The iPlanta COST ACTION CA 15223 STSMs plan started with grant period 2 and was really successful with a high number (11) of STSMs approved including mostly ECIs, and together with the Training School held in Ancona (Italy), 20-22/06/2017, resulted the main tools focused to training PhD students and young researches (less than 8 years after PhD).

For GP3 the same program for STSMs applications was confirmed but postponing to May 15th the deadline for the first application and maintaining September 30th the second deadline. After a discussion it was decided to increase the budget available for GP3 up to 25000€.

12. Requests to join the Action from:

a) COST countries

No requests. If possible make contacts with Luxembourg where there is a group working on this technology

b) Institutions in Near Neighbouring Countries, International Partner Countries, and/or Specific Organisations: EU agencies, European RTD Organisation, International Organisations

The Chair of the action introduced the expression of interest to join the action from the following Neighbouring countries: Albania, Armenia and Jordan. All agreed to accept their applications if will be presented.

Expression of interest from the following international partners were also expressed:

- UC Riverside USA – Prof. Hailiing Jin, RNAi technology – applications
- Federal University of Pelotas, Brazil – Prof. Moises Zotti, RNAi technology – applications (moises.zotti@ufpel.edu.br)
- University of Michigan – Prof. Andrzej Wierzbicki, RNAi technology – applications
- University of Florida – Prof Kevin Folta, RNAi technology – applications
- University of Arkansas – Prof Aaron m. Shew, socio-economical impact.

All these partners will be invited to submit their expression of interest following rules on eCOST and the final approval will be through eCOST.

c) Organisations: EU agencies, European RTD Organisation, International Organisations

New contacts with different organization EFSA, FAO and other international organizations will be attempted.

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13. AOB

. None

14. Location and date of next meeting

The next MC meeting was decided to be held in Lisbon (Pt) next February 27- March, 02, 2019, local organizer Pedro Fevereiro.

15. Summary of MC decisions

The following decisions were approved:

- Minute of the 2nd MC meeting.
- A strategy for inclusiveness and excellence.
- Criteria for WG meetings planning and expert selection.
- Draft plan of the WG meeting for GP3.
- The budget and program for STSMs.
- Increase inclusiveness near Neighbouring Countries and International Partner Countries

16. Closing

At 14,30 the Chair of the Action declared closed the second MC meeting of iPLANTA Action.

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iPlanta

Annex 1 – Agenda of MC meeting.

COST Action CA15223
Action Title: Modifying plants to produce interfering RNA

3rd Management Committee Meeting
Poznan, Poland
February 16th, 2018

Inclusiveness Target Countries: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Croatia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Republic of Serbia and Turkey.



1. Welcome to participants
2. Verification of the presence of two-thirds of the Participating COST Countries or, if applicable, a quorum
3. Adoption of agenda
4. Approval of minutes and matters arising of last meeting (Rome MC Meeting)
5. Update from the Action Chair
 - a) Status of Action: start and end dates of Action, participating COST countries, participating NNC/IPC institutions and Specific Organisations.
 - b) Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM): review of completed reports and new applications
6. Update from the Grant Holder: Action budget status
7. Update from the COST Association, if a representative is present
8. Monitoring of the Action
9. Implementation of COST policies on:
 - a) Promotion of gender balance and Early Career Investigators (ECI)
 - b) Inclusiveness and Excellence (see below list of Inclusiveness Target Countries)
10. Follow-up of MoU objectives: progress report of working groups
11. Scientific planning
 - a) Scientific strategy (MoU objectives, GP Goals, WG tasks and deliverables)
 - b) Action Budget Planning
 - c) Long-term planning (including anticipated locations and dates of future activities)
 - d) Dissemination planning (Publications and outreach activities)
 - e) STSMs planning
12. Requests to join the Action from:
 - a) COST countries
 - b) Institutions in Near Neighbouring Countries, International Partner Countries, and/or Specific Organisations: EU agencies, European RTD Organisation, International Organisations
 - Albania
 - Armenia
 - Jordan
13. AOB
14. Location and date of next meeting (FEBRUARY 2019)
15. Summary of MC decisions
16. Closing

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