

**Minutes of the International Coffee Genome Network
(ICGN) General Assembly
Held on 16th September 2006, Montpellier, France.**

Introduction

The ICGN General Assembly took place in conjunction with 21st ASIC International Conference on Coffee Science in Montpellier on 16th September 2006. The list of participants is provided in Annex 1. There were three main items on the agenda as follows (Annex 2):

- Renewal of coordination and secretariat,
- Review of workings groups
- Review of the steering committee.

The General Assembly was held in two sessions:

Session 1 dealt with review of the responsibilities with regard to coordination, secretariat and working groups, and was chaired by Charles Agwanda (Kenya) and N.S. Prakash (India).

Session 2 discussed the review of the steering committee and was chaired by Alan Andrade (Brazil) and Philippe Lashermes (France).

Ehsan Dulloo (IPGRI) and Serge Hamon (France) served as rapporteurs.

Session 1a - Coordination and Secretariat

Prof. André Charrier served as the coordinator of the ICGN for the last 2 years and his mandate comes to an end at this meeting. He provided a brief report of his activities during his term in office and informed the assembly of his intention of going on retirement as from the 1st January 2007. He expressed thanks to all the members of the ICGN who helped him in carrying out this task and in particular the people in Agropolis Montpellier as well as IPGRI staff based in IPGRI/INIBAP office in Montpellier who provided the secretariat support for the work. A vote of thanks was given to Prof Charrier by Prof Giorgio Graziosi on behalf of all the members of the ICGN.

Ehsan Dulloo (IPGRI) also thanked Prof. Charrier for his contribution and went on to announce that IPGRI will become Bioversity International as from 1st December 2006. He explained that IPGRI agreed to host the secretariat of ICGN at no cost for a period of one year until this meeting. IPGRI provided staff time to assist the coordinator in his tasks, developed the website for the network, helped in the

organizations of network meetings and helped the coordinator in developing COST proposal which was submitted to EU.

While IPGRI is very committed to the work of the network, it cannot continue to provide the kind of support as in the past unless resources for its coordination are found. However it would be able to continue to provide limited support to the new coordinator, whose priority should be to prepare project proposals for running the network. Ehsan Dulloo emphasized that another prerequisite for continuing to provide the secretariat is that the new coordinator should be located in or close to IPGRI-INIBAP office in Montpellier for it to function efficiently.

Session 1b -Renewal of Coordination mandate

The chair invited proposals from the Assembly for the position of the ICGN Coordinator. Two propositions were made.

- a. Florent Engelmann was proposed as a potential candidate. Dr Engelmann has a very good profile for this job given that he has worked in the past worked for IRD, IPGRI, CIRAD and thus understand the working of these institutions. He has also done some work on coffee and has considerable experience in the management of networks. He is currently available to take on this work and can commit time to fulfill the duties of ICGN coordinator.
- b. In addition, it was proposed that the coordination work could be done in rotation by the Working Group Coordination, based on experiences of other genomic networks.

The pros and cons of these two propositions were discussed and subsequently *the Assembly agreed to change the role of ICGN Coordinator to Executive Secretary* to place more emphasis on the execution of the tasks of the network as decided by the Steering Committee.

The Assembly thereby approved the nomination of Florent Engelmann as the Executive Secretary of ICGN.

Session 1c -Working Groups

The General assembly discussed the renewal of the 6 workgroups for the next 2 years. Prof. André Charrier informed the Assembly of the resignation and of the changes of position of some of the coordinators of the working groups. These were Elizabeth Johnson (WG1) and Giorgio Graziosi (WG4). In addition there were still pending agreements on whom of the 4 names of the coordinators of WG6 would take on the responsibility as coordinators..

WG1 - A proposal was made for Prof Thomas Borsch (University of Bonn) to replace Liz Johnson.

Since he was not present, it was agreed that the Executive Secretary will contact Thomas Borsch for his confirmation to serve as Coordinator for WG1.

WG 2 – Dr. Chifumi Nagai informed the Assembly that Ray Ming is still very active in coffee research and may continue to serve as coordinator.

It was agreed that the Executive secretary will contact Dr Ray Ming for confirmation.

WG4 - Giorgio Graziozi gave some explanations for the reasons of his resignation. He has been nominated by the International Coffee Organization as the representative of the industry representative to the Steering Committee.

Two persons namely Diana Fernandez and Alexandre de Kochko were nominated to serve as his replacement on an annual rotation basis, the first term to be served by Ms Fernandez.

WG6 - Four persons were listed as coordinators. Lucas Mueller was considered as the coordinator for this WG given his extensive bio-informatic experience with regard to other genomic consortiums. However there were concerns regarding his time availability to devote to this task, considered as being one of the most important part of the network.

It was agreed that Executive secretary will contact Lucas Mueller for confirmation. Felipe Da Silva (Brazil) was proposed as the alternate coordinator. Confirmation of his acceptance would also be sought.

After discussion the Assembly reconstituted the coordinators of the 6 working group as follows:

WorkGroup	Coordinators	Representative to the Steering Committee
1- Markers and Genetic diversity	Charles Agwanda Thomas Borsch (<i>pending confirmation</i>)	Charles Agwanda
2. Markers and genetic mapping	Thierry Leroy Ray Ming (<i>Pending confirmation</i>)	Thierry Leroy
3. BAC Libraries & physical maps	Juan Carlos Herrera Philippe Lashermes	Philippe Lashermes
4. EST & transcriptional profiling	Alan Andrade Diana Fernandez (Oct. 2006/Sept. 2007) Alexandre de Kochko (Oct. 2007/Sept. 2008)	Alan Andrade
5. Tools for functional analysis	Hervé Etienne H.L. Sreenath	H.L. Sreenath
6. Bioinformatics	Lucas Mueller (<i>pending confirmation</i>) Felipe Da Silva(<i>pending confirmation</i>)	Lucas Mueller (<i>pending confirmation</i>)

Session 1d – Increase WG activities

The Assembly discussed the ways for making the working group more active (see presentations of Working groups in Annex 3). Several suggestions were made by participants including the need for members in the network to share more information, maps, ESTs and other materials to the network (Leroy, France), the development of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (Jayarama, India). Alan Andrade (Brazil) suggested that the only way to motivate the participation of members would be to prepare projects and get donors to fund activities. Vincent Pétiard (Nestlé) argued that in order for donors to be interested, they need to see that the network is already working well in the first place. A lot of information exists in many countries. In the case of Indonesia, for example, where Nestlé has provided much support, it is necessary to request them through a formal letter to share their genomic information with ICGN. Robin Buell (USA) suggested that it would very helpful for ICGN to prepare a white paper on the activities of ICGN and to have it published in a journal.

The Assembly agreed that the preparation of a white paper should be carried out as a matter of priority. It was decided that the Steering committee should take this as a priority task.

A formal letter to share their genomic information with ICGN on the C. canephora genetic map will be send to Indonesia by the executive secretary.

Session 2a – The current composition of the Steering committee

The Assembly discussed and reviewed the composition of the steering committee which, up to now, was constituted as representatives from each WG (6), ICGN Coordinator (1), IPGRI (1), Growers representative (1), Consumer representative (1), industry (1).

Prof Charrier informed the Assembly that the steering committee was not fully constituted and there were no representatives from growers, consumer and the industry. He has now received requests from India and Brazil to represent the growers. He also received nomination from International Coffee Organization (ICO) in the person of Prof G. Graziozi as representative for the industry. He added that it is difficult to obtain a member from the consumer category who can represent the different regions of the world.

Session 2b – New structure of the Steering committee

After much discussion, the Assembly reviewed the constitution of the Steering committee as follows:

- a. **WG** - Representatives of the 6 Working Groups (6): One coordinator of each working group will serve on the steering committee.
- b. **Chair of the Steering committee** - It was decided that one WG coordinator will serve as chairperson of the Steering Committee on an annual rotation.

- c. **IPGRI** - IPGRI will continue to serve on the Steering committee as long as it can continue to support the work of the ICGN.
- d. **Industry** - It was decided that the number of representatives of the private industry should be increased to 2, with complementary roles. ICO has chosen Georgio Graziozi (linking research to industry) and the second representative (linking industry to research) has to be nominated. As regards the latter position, Dr. Vincent Pétiard (Nestlé R&D Center, Tours, France) mentioned that he did not volunteer to be the second representative of the industry; however, he suggested that ICGN contact Dr. Dominique Crouzillat, researcher in Nestlé R&D Center, to see whether he would be interested in taking up this position.
- e. **Grower representative** - It was agreed to rotate the representative of the growers from each of the continent where coffee is grown. Brazil has been nominated to serve first for a term of two years.
- f. **Consumer representative** - As there were no nominations received, it was agreed that Executive Secretary will contact networks in Europe and America's to represent the consumer group.
- g. **Honorary member** - The Assembly also accepted a proposition that the outgoing ICGN Coordinator Prof. André Charrier to serve as Honorary member in an advisory capacity.
- h. **Coordinator abolished** - The Assembly abolished the membership of the Coordinator to the steering committee. The Executive Secretary will serve as the secretary of the Steering committee. He will organize and facilitate the organization of the Steering committee meetings.
- i. **ICGN meetings** - Meetings of the assembly will take place every two years in conjunction with ASIC Conference. If other opportunities and/or need to meet arise, the ICGN secretariat will organize additional meetings (e.g. during SOL meeting or PAG conference, etc....).