**GEN Board Meeting 2021 # 5**

**MINUTES draft 18-19/10/ 2021**

**Board Meeting Part A**

**Chair opened 10.03 GMT**

**In attendance:** Bjorn-Erik Lonn (BEL), Yulia Gracheva, Eva Eiderstrom, Xiaodan Zhang (arrived 10.16) , Chin-Yuan Chen, Takashi Fujisaki, Hiroyuki Kobayashi

**In attendance- non director**

Kate Harris (KH) (Secretariat).

Xiaohui attended

**Apology:**

Vinicius Ribeiro

Please note decisions are underlined and actions are placed in **bold font.**

1.1

Quorum present and acknowledged

1.2

Chair’s welcome

The Chair recognised the busy, productive time with member meetings, webinars and partner meetings.

Recent presentations included those involving India, Turkey and the Ukraine.

The Chair acknowledged the Secretariat for her hard work with meetings and the UNEP ecolabelling training.

The Chair highlighted the main focus of today’s Board meeting which was to choose the future brand for GEN.

1.3

Meeting draft agenda approved.

Additional agenda items for future meetings were discussed. These included the upcoming PEF and the potential impact on eco labels. Further information is wanted in regards to the “green deal” and the European Commission.

BEL outlined the current work and suggested for Eva to contact Riika who is leading a group of ecolabels in discussion with the European Commission.

Ineke Vlot (SMK) and Johanna Wurbs from Blue Angel are also members who are involved in this work.

GEN will continue to monitor the perspective of the recognition of ecolabels by EU.

**Action: Eva to contact the European Commission via above members and provide future update.**

1.4

Minutes and actions noted and approved.

The actions register was reviewed. It was noted that the Secretariat has completed most actions from the previous meetings.

**2.1**

**Secretariat report:**

The Secretariat noted the new team members including a new volunteer grant writer.

It was highlighted that GEN had been successful in receiving German ministry funding for the calendar year of 2021.

The Secretariat shared the work plan dashboard and highlighted suggested 2022 priorities including procurement policy, common core criteria, new members, database and new website.

**Action: The Secretariat was asked to share the work plan and provide additional narrative for members as a report prior to the AGM.**

**2.2**

**World Ecolabel Day (WED) analytics**

The statistics on world ecolabel day were presented by the Secretariat- noting it was less than a week ago and therefore too early to look at full impact. Current data suggests a successful launch of the Look Closer campaign.

The Secretariat was asked to ensure that GEN members are surveyed in order to capture the WED initiatives and to present a comparison of data of WED 2021 in comparison to WED 2020.

It was also noted that continual promotion of the Look Closer Campaign will be required in 2022.

**Action: KH to survey members in regards to 2021 WED activities and provide comparison to 2020 activities.**

**KH to continue to promote video in 2022 through a campaign.**

**2.3**

**AGM 2021 Agenda**

AGM agenda was reviewed and supported with the adoption of one change.

It was recommended that the nominations for Directors be done earlier in the agenda due to the variation in time zone and the optimization to have a majority of members present.

The nominations process was discussed and a review of all members and terms was confirmed.

It was noted that succession planning for Board Directors including the Chair position, would need to be discussed and planned for in 2022.

The need for Board Directors to have geographic diversity as well as diverse capabilities and skills was also highlighted.

It was suggested to approach sub committee members for potential future nominations and to design a guideline for sub committee members.

It was noted that Chen and Xiaodan are on their third – and final term.

Eva is on her first term.

Yulia will be going on to third term (if appointed at the AGM).

Vinicius and Giri Going into second term (if appointed at the AGM).

**Action: The Secretariat is to table a future agenda item regarding the concern for Board and Chair succession planning due to large turnover over the next 3 years.**

**KH to move the nominations agenda item before the break – see agenda AGM Part 1.**

**KH to discuss possible future Board Director positions and opportunities with sub – committee members.**

**2.4**

**Website analytics**

The website statistics were noted and assumed as read.

The Secretariat highlighted that whilst growth in social media continues, the data also reinforced the need for a new and improved website. This is a scheduled activity for 2022.

There were no further questions.

**3.1** Brand and logo-

Yulia presented the GEN strategy as a reminder of goal 1 “go to body for ecolabelling information and accreditation”.

The next iteration of logos for consideration were then reviewed. (design provided by Republic of Everyone).

The revisitation and progression of new brand designs was linked back to the intent of the strategy as an expressed desire to continue to progress our excellence and reputation as a global organisation.

Yulia highlighted the next version of possible logos and feedback was sought.

There was no agreement on the proposed new logos (option 1 being a rework of the modernized new brand and option 2 being a small refresh of our existing logo).

The new brand narrative was supported and endorsed by the Board, noting that there is more work to be done in finding the appropriate terminology referring to the GENICES “verification” or “accreditation”.

**Action: The Secretariat was asked to request Republic of Everyone for an additional draft design for consideration.**

**The suggested design was to have:**

* **the GEN globe without the font “global ecolabelling network” as a surround.**
* **have the “Global Ecolabelling Network” copy next to the globe, using the font “Raleway” as suggested in a previous design.**

The Board agreed to present the narrative and “GEN story” at the Brand and By- laws workshop.

It was noted that the brand is very reliant on the direction of the By- laws.

**Action- Yulia and the Secretariat to present the narrative and GEN story as a part of the Brand and By laws workshop.**

Part A meeting closed at 13.08 GMT

**Part B**

**Meeting B opened.**

**Apologies: Vinicius Ribeiro, Xiaodan Zhang**

All others present.

Secretariat and Kate Harris and Xioahui were also in attendance.

Meeting re- opened with agenda item 3.2 to discuss on how to proceed with the brand work and how to present at the Brand and By-laws workshop.

Decision: It was decided to present the narrative to members before the logos.

Logos should be presented as a way of demonstrating the work done by the Sub Committee but highlight that it is not for member decision.

The Board will remain the party to make the decision on the logos and brand refresh.

**Action**

**Sub Committee to share the high-level GEN strategy followed by the detailed narrative (presented by Secretariat).**

**Yulia will then present the slides with some of the logos.**

**Logos are for information not decision and will be used as a test for ambition and reaction as guidance for the by- laws and rigor of GENICES moving forward.**

**4.1** GENICES tracking

The Secretariat asked for all audits to be confirmed in order to decide which members were to be awarded GENICES at the upcoming AGM.

GECA, TUV Rheinland, SMK- Milikieur, EPEAT, TCO Development were all confirmed as completed.

Sri Lanka is yet to be confirmed and the Secretariat will be notified post audit.

Green seal will be postponed due to illness of auditor.

The Indonesian / Green Label will not be concluded prior to the AGM.

CQC and Philippines will need to be followed up due to no response regarding their GENICES audit. chased.

The planning for the 2022 GENICES was postponed to next board meeting post AGM due to uncertainty of completing some of the AGM 2021 audits.

**Action: Green seal- scheduled for Monday. (Subject to Vinicius being able to complete)**

**Action: Secretariat to remove Anna lasso as the main GENICES contact for UL.**

**Action: Secretariat to provide alternative email for ECO choice South Africa to Eva as no response to book in audit.**

**Action: Chen & Giri to confirm if certificate should be granted to Sri Lanka at AGM.**

**Action: CQC and Philippines will need to be followed up in order to ascertain commitment to GENICES in 2022.**

**Finance**

**5.1**

Unpaid membership fees were discussed.

GAO has chased outstanding payments.

The Board asked if the CQC, Colombia and Kazakhstan have registered for the AGM. The Secretariat confirmed that they had not registered at this stage.

Bank fees were also discussed.

A question was raised as to who pays for the bank transfer fees and clarification was sought.

GAO confirmed that invoices stipulates that the member pays for any bank transfer fees.

Decision

It was agreed that exchange rate variability is one appropriate reason to apply for fee reduction as per the recent impact in the change of the US dollar.

The exchange rate should be considered at time of invoicing and should not be applied as a reason retrospective of the invoice being received.

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5.2 2021 Income and expenses- Budget versus actual.

GAO discussed the current budget versus actual.

The Secretariat was asked to provide a more detailed estimated forecast of expenses for the remainder of the year so that the budget versus actual can be as accurate as possible.

**Action: The Secretariat is to provide a more detailed forecast of expected expenditure from current until the end of the calendar year. This is to be provided within the next three days due to the upcoming AGM and associated reporting.**

5.2 Budget for 2022

The 2022 budget was presented.

Minor changes/ amendments were suggested.

There is allocation in the communication budget for the intended new website.

GAO will allocate them accordingly on to the line items on the budget moving forward.

5.3 Nominations

It was noted that there was an error in the nominations letter. The letter sent to members mentioned that there were four board positions including the Chair position rather than the three available.

Chair appointment/ nominations will be removed from letter and the Chair will acknowledge the mistake at the AGM in order to remove any confusion.

**Action: Nominations committee is to edit the letter accordingly to reflect the three available positions at the upcoming AGM. The Secretariat will update the Members AGM pack and resend.**

6

SC updates

BEL gave an update on the current ISO work and current working group draft out for comment until the 29th of October. Comments to be resolved in the WG scheduled from the 23rd November until early December.

The TC 207 Plenary is 16 and 18 November and will be held virtually.

BEL provided clarification that in the standard ISO 14021 moving forward, claims will be referred to only as self-declared claims. Possible new work on certified single-issue claims is signalized.

Chen gave summary of member coordination survey which continues to recommend development of common core criteria.

Eva informed the Board that she was unable to attend the AGM due to other organisational commitments. BEL will present bylaws update at the AGM on behalf of Eva.

Giri spoke to fundraising.

Giri will present two slides at the AGM in order to request greater involvement from members as to what projects members are keen to pursue.

7.1

Database

The Secretariat highlighted that the Origin pilot had been very slow to progress. Lack of movement is more due to GEN members lack of progression.

Origin has followed up with our members.  
Secretariat will continue to encourage.

The Secretariat flagged that there is an opportunity to adapt the learnings from the European Commission project in order to create a bespoke database for all GEN members, however noted that it would probably be expensive.

Board Directors acknowledged that it would be significant work but should be considered.

Secretariat informed the Board that the company behind the database research for the European Commission will present a brief project overview in the GENFast meeting.

Eva left at 1300pm

7.2 General business

Nil further business.

Meeting closed 1305