



**Minutes of EAFE Annual General Meeting
Held at the Mediterranean Palace Hotel, Thessaloniki, Greece, 21st March 2005**

Participants: Members of EAFE and EFARO

From the Bureau

Present: Evelina Sabatella (ES), Vice President
Luc van Hoof (LH), Secretary
Hans Frost (HF), Treasurer
Erik Lindebo (EL), Rapporteur

Apologies: Philip Rodgers (PR)

1. Apologies for Absence

Due to an urgent family matter, PR was unable to attend the meeting in his capacity as President. ES therefore conducted the meeting on his behalf.

2. Adoption of the Minutes of the AGM held in 2004 in Rome

The minutes were distributed among participants and were presented to the AGM for comments. No comments were forwarded, and the minutes of last year's AGM were adopted.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4. President's Report

ES presented the President's Report.

First, may I apologise for not being with you today. This is only the second EAFE Conference that I have missed since our Inauguration in 1989.

We have again continued to develop contacts with industry representatives, notably Europeche, and to try to persuade the European Commission to make greater use of EAFE as an unrivalled source of expertise in the economics of fisheries. Most important, we have continued to seek ways of creating a system of working groups to channel economic advice to interested bodies. Apart from contacts with the industry, progress remains limited.

As part of this I attended the inaugural meeting of the North Sea Regional Advisory Council (RAC) in December. EAFE has obtained Observer status in this body and we have offered to

form a Working Group based on the Corporate Members of EAFE interested in the North Sea. However, the discussion and advice relating to this group and the other RACs appears set to continue to be based on scientific advice and I am not especially hopeful that a new mind-set will emerge. Certainly at present there is little or no funding likely to become available for economic input to the RACs.

We are pleased to be able to welcome today the representatives from the EFARO Group of Directors of Fisheries Research Institutes for a joint workshop on promoting further collaboration between scientists and economists. I wish the venture every success and would like to thank Antoine Dosdat and Luc van Hoof for the tremendous amount of work they have put into organising the session.

During the year I wrote to all paid-up members suggesting a new structure for EAFE based on a regional format, mirroring the new Regional Advisory Councils. What little response I received was in support of the idea, with only one member expressing doubts. However, very few members expressed a desire to join the working groups by sending their CVs. In the circumstances I have felt it better not to bring forward the changes to the rules as I had intended. EAFE, to my mind, is at a crossroads. I cannot see any change likely in the foreseeable future which will result in genuine economic advice (as opposed to financial impact analysis of scientific decisions) being brought into the fishery management process. FOI, which has been incredibly generous to EAFE by providing a Secretariat for many years and some funding for EAFE activities, will not be able to continue to do so after next year because of structural changes. So EAFE has to work out what it wishes to do and how it is to be funded. I have decided that this ought to be guided by a new President with time to consider the situation and to get a new structure and funding established. It will take longer than the year remaining to me under the Rules and so I will not be seeking re-election.

The proposal for an ERA-net under the 6th Framework Programme that would have allowed economic subjects to be given limited consideration within a broad fisheries package was rejected but has been re-submitted this month.

I would like to express my thanks to the Bureau members for the help and advice they have given throughout the year.

I would also like to thank Venetia and her team for their efforts in welcoming the Conference to Thessaloniki. Conferences are never easy to organise but it has been particularly difficult this year with the merging of the EFARO/EAFE workshop and the Conference proper.

Philip Rodgers
President EAFE, 15th March 2005

A member asked to the reason for the modest interest in the creation of working groups suggested by the President. HF suggested that it may have been due to a conflict in interest, since most members are individual members who have other priorities, such as funded projects and teaching.

The President's report was then adopted.

5. Treasurer's report

HF presented the Treasurer's report. HF announced that he did not wish to continue as Treasurer, although he was willing to continue for one more year in transition of finding a replacement. Candidate members/organisations will be considered over the next few months by the Bureau and the corporate members.

It was noted that EAFE still had healthy savings. At the time of reporting, 116 out of 201 members (names on the website membership list) had paid. HF was asked what the trend of membership was, to which he responded that it was rather steady (with a slight downward trend over many years) and that the number of corporate members had increased.

HF suggested that the sending of invoices may be brought forward to late autumn and that giro (post) banking services were to be cancelled, since no one seemed to use this service anymore. Further, HF had been asked about the possibility of paying fees by credit card. Since credit card companies charge processing fees of 15-20%, this possibility did not seem feasible at this time. HF commented that he preferred electronic transfers (home banking) when possible. He did not rule out discussions about a future option of credit card payments, although members may in such cases be asked to pay higher fees to cover the extra cost.

The current accounts had not yet been audited and would be done in the next few months. Two volunteers from the conference were sought for this and Hazel Curtis of Seafish obliged. HF suggested that he could convince Henning Jørgensen to continue.

The Treasurer's report was adopted.

6. Election of Officers

President:	New election	Evelina Sabatella
Vice-President:	New election	Luc van Hoof
Secretary:	New election	Erik Lindebo
Rapporteur:	New election	Jim Watson
Treasurer:	Re-election	Hans Frost (1 year)
Auditors:	New election	Hazel Curtis & Henning Jørgensen
Website editor:	FOI secretary	Elsebeth Vidø/Erik Lindebo

The EAFE website (www.eafe-fish.org) will be updated with details of the new Bureau shortly.

7. Next year's conference/AGM

ES suggested that the next conference could be in collaboration with the IIFET conference in Portsmouth, hosted by Cemare. The format could be a special one-day workshop or special conference session for EAFE member. ES would contact Cemare to work out whether such an arrangement would be acceptable.

Future EAFE conference organisation and structure was also discussed, and here a biennial conference (rather than annual) seemed to be favoured. That would mean that the next EAFE

conference proper would be in 2007. It was also suggested that EAFE could organise workshops on specific topics in between the biennial conference, with the collaboration of corporate members.

HF noted that the initial objective of the EAFE conference (back in 1988/89) was to strengthen European fisheries economics, and in this regard, the Association has been extremely successful. HF stressed that it is important to maintain the aim of strengthening the regional association and pursuing greater influence in DG Fish. HF further noted that papers and presentations are now of the standards of IIFET and perhaps new objectives should therefore be sought (perhaps in collaboration with our North American counterparts).

Further discussions along these lines will continue between the Bureau and the corporate members, since feedback from the corporate members will be essential to ensure that EAFE's future strategy will satisfy the wishes and needs of its members.

8. Any other Business

There was no other business and the AGM was closed.

Erik Lindebo
29th March 2005