



**Minutes 82<sup>nd</sup> EFG Council meeting**  
*Belgrade, Serbia – 20-21 May 2023*

**List of actions**

Item No	Action	Person responsible	Deadline
EFG Council Meeting, Belgrade, Serbia, May 2023			
2	<i>Each delegate to identify one sponsor for the European Geologist journal.</i>	Council	Nov 23
2	<i>Secretariat to share Vatsquare guidelines on EurGeol fee calculation with National Associations.</i>	Secretariat	asap
3	<i>Board and Secretariat to implement support actions for Ukrainian geologists introduced by Executive Director.</i>	Board/Secretariat	Nov 23
3	<i>Board to review potential partnership with Geothermal Ukraine.</i>	Board	Q3 23
4	<i>Secretariat to set up a survey to explore collaboration opportunities between National Associations and EFG.</i>	Secretariat	Q3 23
8	<i>Delegates to provide comments on the proposed strategic plan by the end of June 2023.</i>	Council	End of June 23
9	<i>Secretariat to organise a community building workshop during the November 2023 Council meeting.</i>	Secretariat	Nov 23
11	<i>Secretary General to circulate supporting information about Roberto Rodrigo Fernandez and call for an e-vote.</i>	Secretary General	June 23
15	<i>Board and Secretariat to take into consideration new approach for NA reports when preparing the agendas of the spring and autumn Council meetings.</i>	Board/Secretariat	Q3 23
16	<i>Board to send an answer to MCG delegate asking him to provide further evidence for his allegations in order to be able to lead a thorough investigation. Board furthermore to ask MCG delegate to withdraw from his accusations in case he doesn't provide any evidence or to become himself subject of an investigation.</i>	Board	asap
16	<i>Secretariat, Board and delegates present onsite and online during the Sunday session of the EFG Council meeting to maintain strict confidentiality concerning the discussions around the issues raised by MCG delegate.</i>	All participants	ongoing
16	<i>Secretariat and Board to seek legal advice on this issue.</i>	Secretariat/Board	asap
16	<i>Secretariat to record future meetings for protocol purposes. Delegates to provide consent for recording upon registration.</i>	Secretariat	ongoing
16	<i>Regulation Authority to put forward for vote the proposal for a limited service duration for ILB members.</i>	RA	Nov 23
16	<i>Secretary General to inform Chair of the ILB of renewal of the committee and send out call for new members.</i>	Secretary General	asap



**Day 1: Saturday, 20 May 2023, 9:00-17:00 CET**

Chairperson: EFG President

<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>Document reference</b>
<p><b>Welcome words &amp; approval of the agenda</b> – EFG President</p> <p>The EFG President welcomed the delegates and presented the agenda of the meeting.</p> <p>The President welcomed the invited participants from Bosnia and Hercegovina, Montenegro and Northern Macedonia as observers.</p> <p>Apologies were received from the Belgian and the Maltese delegations.</p> <p>All delegations present were entitled to vote. The Lithuanian Geological Society (absent) communicated their intention to pay their fees in August 2023. The waiver of the UAG fees was scheduled to be discussed under the Treasurer’s report.</p> <p>No proxy votes were received.</p> <p>The following amendments to the agenda were proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The Board proposed to discuss the email sent by MCG to Council on 12 May 2023 during the AOB item on Sunday morning.</li><li>- It was also proposed to discuss the performance of the International Licensed Body (ILB) under the AOB item.</li><li>- Furthermore, the Greek delegations asked to present the AGG report on Saturday afternoon to accommodate their travel schedule.</li></ul> <p>The agenda was APPROVED unanimously.</p>	05-23-00
<p><b>Minutes of previous meetings</b></p> <p>The minutes of the November 2023 Council meeting were APPROVED unanimously.</p> <p>The Secretary General presented the progress on the actions from the last Council meeting. Most items are in good process or completed.</p> <p>The Board was unable to further discuss the KNGMG proposal on the budget committee due to a change of the Dutch delegate’s email address which has been communicated by KNGMG only recently.</p> <p>The Ukraine crisis is due to be addressed in a dedicated agenda item.</p> <p>The progress on actions was NOTED.</p>	05-23-01
<p><b>President’s report</b> – EFG President</p> <p>The President provided an overview of his activities since the last Council meeting in November 2023.</p>	05-23-02a



<p>Being it his last report as the EFG President before handing over to the President-elect, the President thanked the Board, the Executive Director and the Secretariat for their dedicated work.</p> <p>The President highlighted a workshop that IFG, EFG and INTRAW will be organising during the upcoming EU Raw Materials Week and which will be dedicated to forensic geology in mineral tracking.</p> <p>In his recommendations, the President asked Council to support the President and the Board; to obtain information from all sides prior to taking any decision or making judgements; to modernise some EFG rules and procedure; to remember that not all National Associations (NAs) have professional staff; and that the EFG Secretariat aims to perform all tasks as well as possible.</p> <p>The President finally announced that he will be applying for the IUGS Presidency and asked for the National Associations' support.</p> <p>Further details on the President's report are provided in the written report (see reference number in the right column).</p> <p>The President's report was ACCEPTED.</p>	
<p><b>Treasurer's report – EFG Treasurer</b></p> <p>The Treasurer reported that in December 2022, a Financial Committee was set up to advise the Secretariat team and Board on decision-making. This Committee is formed by the last two Past Presidents due to their proven deep knowledge and experience in EFG; and their expertise in the development of projects with European Organisations and Institutions; and by the EFG Treasurer.</p> <p>Concerning the National Association fees 2023, as of 18 May, 98 % of the fees had been settled. It was proposed to waive the fee for the Ukrainian Association of Geologists (UAG).</p> <p>The Treasurer reported a deficit in core activities and a surplus in project final results resulting in an overall deficit of €17,084.</p> <p>The Treasurer underlined the importance of developing new strategic income streams in order to diversify the income resources (workshops, events, training) to ensure a better balance between projects and other activities. He mentioned that some strategic investments have already taken place with the investment of the 50K reserve, but are expected to yield in the medium-term (investment in YourMembership management system). As a not-for-profit organisation, EFG is expected to reinvest accumulated profits (reserves) which are currently at an optimum level. He also emphasised that over the past years, the trend has been towards profit generation. The deficit during the last period should therefore not be considered as a cause for concern.</p> <p>The Treasurer reported that core non-personnel costs were under reasonable control: 10% (€19,282) lower than budgeted (€96.7K vs €107.5K). An</p>	11-22-02e



overspending occurred concerning the Board and ED travel costs and costs associated with Council meetings and other activities such as conferences, field trips and workshops (room hire, catering, transport etc.).

There was an overspending on personnel costs which is explained by the investment on strategic activities that resulted in a higher time investment on core activities compared to project activities. The new Popsy software is expected to improve monitoring.

The Treasurer suggested to explore the possibility of moving to a long-term view on budgets, moving to 3-5 years rolling business plans and associated monitoring as recommended by the immediate Past-Treasurer.

A small surplus was observed concerning the European Geologist journal. The Treasurer asked all delegates to identify one sponsor to increase the Journal's income.

**Action:** *Each delegate to identify one sponsor for the European Geologist journal.*

The balance sheet shows a €16,693 increase in relation to 2021 (higher bank balances; higher deferred project income). The capital reserves comply with strategic reserves objectives of accumulated reserves over €200,000. The €50,000 strategic fund reserve was drawn down from the balance sheet. The Treasurer reported that EFG has, all in all, a strong solvency and liquidity position.

Forecast for 2023 budget:

Some variances are expected from the 2023 Budget:

- Positive variance from project incomes: Expected Project Income for 2023 (€160,395), 34% higher than budgeted (€119,413).
- Income expected from VAT return (see presentation by Vatsquare): EFG is expected to receive a VAT return of €84,334.34 due to its VAT refundable position. This fact was not included in the 2023 budget since the investigation was not planned when the original 2023 budget was calculated.
- Overspending for personnel costs: Further investment in strategic sustainability is needed this year and will need to be covered from accumulated reserves.

Provisional 2024 Budget:

The Board suggested and committed to presenting a medium-term rolling Strategic Business Plan and Budget for 2024 at the November 2023 Council meeting.

Provisional NA membership fees and title renewal fees 2024:

The Board proposed to increase the 2024 NA fees by 10%, in accordance with the evolution of the inflation rate, to €82,500 in total.

There will be no project supplement for the EurGeol renewal fee. According to the Vatsquare report, the 2024 provisional budget will include 21% VAT on EurGeol renewals and new titles.



Delegates provided the following feedback on the report:

The Italian delegation acknowledged the efforts made to minimise expenses but asked how to recover the deficit of €17,000 and if the Board considers minimising travel costs to maintain the situation under control.

The Treasurer replied that the Board decided to invest in topics that arose as new opportunities for future activities and that were not planned in advance such as the new YourMembership platform.

The Italian delegation also pointed out that CNG does not ask their members for an increase of 10 % of the fees as the inflation is now going down.

The UK delegation commented on the dependency on project incomes and welcomed the idea of a 3-year budget and business plan. He emphasized that it will be easier for National Associations to approve a 10 % increase of fees if there is a better understanding of the work programme.

The President underlined that prices are rising in Brussels and that not only salaries are concerned but also rent, electricity or other reoccurring expenses. He urged the National Associations to share this burden.

The Executive Director emphasized that the adaption to the inflation was indeed a backward-looking measure as we were already hit by it and mentioned his plan on the diversification of income streams to be presented later during the meeting.

The Portuguese delegation asked why VAT is considered to be included in the EurGeol title fees and that this measure is not applied in Portugal. The Treasurer mentioned that this will be explained during the report from Vatsquare.

The President reminded that EFG needs to pay taxes in Belgium and that if the VAT is not added to the title fees, it will need to be settled by EFG.

The Irish delegation asked whether the total deficit versus the budget was not rather €50,000 and if the 2024 budget is expected to cover those €50,000. He enquired whether most of the deficit comes from personnel costs which is rather an APEX and should be included in the 2024 budget.

The President emphasized that the spending of the €50,000 was planned in past years as a strategic investment. Indeed, the deficit mostly comes from personnel costs.

The Executive Director added that the staff had to work on strategic projects and that he did not book enough time on projects which will need to change in 2024. He also pointed out that the budget needs to be adapted more dynamically to adjust to arising opportunities or events.



Council ACCEPTED the Treasurer's report and unanimously APPROVED the 2022 audited accounts and the report of the Auditor, and discharge is granted to the officers.

The general meeting empowers JPS ATN, represented by Mr. Verstraeten Jean-Pierre, certified accountant, to file the accounts with the clerk of the commercial court.

The 2023 National Association fee of the Ukrainian Association of Geologists (UAG) was waived.

The approval of the 2024 NA fees and the EurGeol title fees was postponed to the November 2023 Council meeting.

Review of the VAT situation:

A report was commissioned to the Vatsquare consultancy, to analyse the VAT status of EFG. Belgian VAT return of EFG for the first quarter of 2023 (including the corrections for 2020-2022) results in a VAT refundable position of €84,334.34. The VAT advisor at Vatsquare, who connected virtually to the meeting was invited to explain this section in detail.

Before 2022, EFG considered itself as a VAT-exempt taxpayer without the right of deducting VAT. EFG paid VAT on incoming invoices for services provided by consultants amounting to ca. €2.100 per month. The total amount paid between 2020 and 2022 amounts to €131.771,23. These amounts were paid but no VAT was deducted and no VAT declared on other transactions.

In January 2023, Vatsquare was asked to review EFG's VAT status. EFG was a partial and mixed VAT taxpayer:

The membership fees are VAT exempted but other activities such as sponsorship invoices, the EurGeol title fees, mentoring or admin services are taxable. The EU Horizon projects are outside the scope of VAT. Free services such as webinars or newsletters are also outside the scope of VAT.

Due to the change of VAT status, it is now possible to recover the VAT for consultancy services. The new status comes along with new obligations: It is necessary to fill VAT returns and listings on a quarterly basis.

The change was notified to the Belgian VAT authorities on 31 March 2023. In March and April, corrections for past years were reviewed to submit them for a VAT return. The deadline for submitting it is 20 July 2023.

According to these recalculations, only €44.000 out of the €132.000 should have been paid between 2020 and 2022. €91.000 could be recovered.

In the future, EFG will be in a payable position of around €6.000 instead of €11.000 per quarter. The VAT return may either be refunded or pushed forward to settle future VAT payment positions. If a credit is asked, the refund is expected by 30 September 2023.

The VAT adviser emphasised that all numbers were based on estimates as the real numbers were not yet known.



Delegates provided the following feedback:

The Italian delegation enquired whether the VAT on EurGeol title fees should be applied retroactively.

The VAT adviser replied that VAT taxable means that the fees are within the scope of VAT and that she provided guidelines to the EFG accountant and Secretariat.

The External Relations Officer pointed out that EFG will pay those fees retroactively, not the National Associations.

The Italian delegation stressed that adding the VAT to the title fee will increase its cost and might lower the interest of potential applicants.

The External Relations Officer emphasised that it was important to put EFG in line with the VAT regulation in light of a potential audit.

This was confirmed by the VAT advisor.

The Irish delegation asked for further clarifications on the EurGeol title fee and potential VAT exemptions in other countries.

The VAT adviser highlighted that the fee was subject to VAT in Belgium but that it depends on the country where the National Associations are based if the title fee is exempted from VAT or not. Vatsquare provided a full report to the account and the Secretariat which may be shared with the National Associations.

**Action:** *Secretariat to share Vatsquare guidelines on EurGeol fee calculation with National Associations.*

The Irish delegation emphasised that IGI recently lost four members, some of them specifically because of the membership cost. He reminded that this was an important risk for EFG and the National Associations.

The Dutch delegation enquired about the risks of being audited by the Belgian authorities on accounts prior to 2020.

The VAT adviser replied that the normal prescription period amounts for VAT audits amounts to 3 years. In exceptional cases, Belgian authorities may ask for an audit on accounts from 3 to 7 years, but the risk is very limited.

VAT may only be recovered for a period of 3 years, meaning for the period between 2020 to 2022.

The External Relations Officer underlined that an audit might cause reputational issues and that it was important to clarify EFG's VAT status. He presented the possibility of recovering VAT on the past 3 years as an important advantage for the EFG budget.

The Estonian delegation asked whether the VAT recovery was included in the budget presentation which showed a deficit number.

The President clarified that the official Vatsquare report was only received few days ago and therefore the amount of the VAT recovery was not yet included.

Council thanked the VAT adviser for her work and detailed presentation.

**Ukraine crisis**

05-23-03



<p>The Executive Director presented a list of suggested next actions which had been identified in collaboration with UAG and the organisation Geothermal Ukraine which involved a former EFG delegate from UAG:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promoting Ukrainian organisations, knowledge and activities</li><li>• Continued offer of coaching for UA geologists looking for new opportunities</li><li>• Identifying possibilities for access to EU-funded projects and support</li><li>• Telling the story of geological potential in Ukraine to policymakers</li><li>• How can contribute to eventual recovery and rebuild and what we can offer</li></ul> <p>The proposed support actions were NOTED.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>Board and Secretariat to implement support actions for Ukrainian geologists introduced by Executive Director.</i></p> <p>Complementary to this, the UAG delegates presented their association’s report highlighting the active participation UAG aims to take in the post-war reconstructions. The UAG delegates underlined Ukraine’s significant resource potential and expressed their support to the country’s EU integration via the participation in EU funded projects and relevant partnerships.</p> <p>The Geothermal Ukraine representatives introduced the association which is working on the development of geothermal energy resources in Ukraine. They proposed EFG to set up a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen the collaboration. They mentioned the start of their collaboration with the EFG Panel of Experts on Geothermal energy.</p> <p>The coordinator of the Panel of Experts on Geothermal energy expressed his interest in the collaboration and mentioned training materials for Ukrainian geologists which were developed in Hungary, and which could be used due to several geological similarities in both countries.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>Board to review potential partnership with Geothermal Ukraine.</i></p>	
<p><b>Brussels Secretariat</b></p> <p>The Executive Director provided an overview of the Secretariat’s activities since the last Council meeting. All details are provided in the PowerPoint slides.</p> <p>The Executive Director underlined the importance of the impact generation dashboard which shall be guiding the Board’s and Secretariat’s activities in the future. He introduced 3 critical activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supporting Board’s work on developing new 5-year organisational strategy</li><li>• Crafting new Business Development opportunities into new 3-year Business Plan</li><li>• Installation of the new membership management software, YourMembership</li></ul>	05-23-04



<p>He highlighted the recent arrival of a person from the US Fish and Wildlife Service who joined EFG for a nine-month assignment as the Interim Director of Stakeholder Engagement. She comes to EFG through the Senior Executive Service Career Development Program of the U.S. Department of the Interior.</p> <p>The Executive Director formulated a series of requests towards the National Associations. He invited delegates to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Consider how to ensure more two-way interaction with the National Associations' individual members to increase community engagement.</li><li>- See EFG as a Hub and to seek for stronger connectivity with the Secretariat and different committees.</li><li>- Inform the Secretariat what is useful for the National Associations.</li></ul> <p>Delegates provided the following feedback on the presentation:</p> <p>The Irish delegation enquired why the US Fish and Wildlife Service offers EFG the opportunity to work with one of their employees for such a long duration. The Executive Director confirmed that it is indeed more common to implement similar assignments within the US but that this opportunity arose from a personal connection.</p> <p>The Italian delegation suggested to set up a survey to evaluate how EFG and the National Associations can increase their collaboration.</p> <p>The Executive Director confirmed that it was possible for the Secretariat to set up a survey but also suggested to free up time during the Council meetings to allow for more discussion. He recommended pre-recording National Association presentations as videos and invited delegates to consider this proposal which was to be tabled on Sunday.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>Secretariat to set up a survey to explore collaboration opportunities between National Associations and EFG.</i></p> <p>The report was ACCEPTED.</p>	
<p><b>Report from the Business Development Unit</b></p> <p>The Head of the Business Development Unit (BDU) provided an overview of the current projects with EFG involvement and proposals submitted over the past months. Those proposals aimed at diversifying the project portfolio of EFG, covering topics related to drinking water and climate change. He underlined the strong competition in the Horizon programme which resulted in the rejection of six of those proposals, two still being under evaluation. The head of the BDU also reminded delegates about the advantages of participating in EU funded Horizon projects which offer 25 % of overheads which represent direct revenues for EFG.</p> <p>The Hungarian delegation reminded Council about three other projects with EFG involvement not mentioned by the Head of the BDU: ENGIE, TIMREX and TRIPGIFT.</p> <p>The head of the BDU thanked the Hungarian delegation for the comment and confirmed that he did not mention those projects which are not managed by the BDU as they generate low revenue for EFG. He underlined that ENGIE is</p>	05-23-05



<p>indeed a good example of a low-revenue project which however generates high impact for EFG and the profession.</p> <p>The report was ACCEPTED.</p> <p>The Executive Director reported on other business development opportunities which can help EFG diversify income streams and lower the heavy reliance on projects. He suggested that ca. 30 % of other income streams can be considered as healthy.</p> <p>The Executive Director presented a proposal for a Business Development Plan for 2023 to 2025. This plan would encompass three stages:        In 2023, the focus will be put on the development of the training academy, industry engagement, an expanded EurGeol offering and the enlargement of EFG through new Association members.        In 2024, actions will be put in place to develop Green finance accreditation, coaching, think tank services and merchandising.        For 2025, the plan foresees the organization of congresses, collaboration with charitable foundations, the syndication of EGJ contents and geotourism accreditation.</p> <p>The report was ACCEPTED.</p>	
<p><b>EFG Board Elections</b></p> <p><b>EFG Board Elections report</b></p> <p>The External Relations Officer's terms coming to an end, the Elections Supervisory Committee chaired by the Vice-President had called for the election of the new External Relations Officer in spring 2023.</p> <p>By the deadline, only one application had been received from Pavlos Tyrologou (AGG). According to the Supervisory Committee, the supporting documentation was complete, and Council was invited to proceed with the election.</p> <p>The report was ACCEPTED.</p> <p><b>External Relations Officer election</b></p> <p>Pavlos Tyrologou introduced his main activities over the last term and his objectives for the upcoming term to Council.</p> <p>The related e-vote opened right after the presentation and closed at 23:59 CET. Pavlos Tyrologou was unanimously re-elected as the External Relations Officer with 16 votes in favour (see result in Annex 2).</p>	05-23-06
<p><b>Getting impact for geoscience</b></p> <p><b>EFG Strategic positions</b></p> <p>The Executive Director provided an update on the development of 12 strategic positions which are under development by the EFG Panels of Experts. Once finalised, those positions will allow the EFG Board, Secretariat and Panel members to speak with a common voice and increase engagement with</p>	05-23-07



different types of stakeholders. He showed the positions on minerals and natural hydrogens as examples.

The report was ACCEPTED.

#### **EuroG4 Strategy**

The Executive Director explained a joint proposal for a public relations strategy gathering various European Geoscience organisations and encompassing various layers. The proposal was developed in collaboration with EuroGeoSurveys and involves the development of a joint story-book of geoscience-related EU projects, a GeoAmbassadors scheme, a European Geoscience Day and a joint press office. EFG and EuroGeoSurveys co-organised a workshop in March 2023 to discuss this proposal with other organisations such as EAGE and EGU which was well received. One of the suggested follow-up actions from this workshop was to set up joint working groups involving the policy and comms specialists from all organisations.

The report was ACCEPTED.

#### **Report from the Interim Director of Stakeholder Engagement (DSE)**

The Interim DSE presented actions implemented since her arrival in February 2023 until the end of April as well as upcoming actions until the end of July. The impact pyramid was presented as a baseline and she outlined input provided to the overall strategic development of EFG. She also explained in detail efforts made to develop a Public Relations strategy using the human resources which are available.

The Interim DSE also introduced the rebranding efforts undertaken. In autumn 2022, the Secretariat received a mandate from the Board to redesign the EFG logo with the support of a subcontractor. The science communications agency Scienseed was selected for this task.

The Interim DSE invited delegates to provide input concerning the redesign of the EFG logo by answering a list of questions focusing on the internal and the external view on the geoscience profession. She informed delegates that a survey will also be conducted within the broader EFG community to collect further input.

The report was ACCEPTED.

#### **EFG Strategy 2023-2027**

The President-elect presented the draft proposal for the new EFG Strategic Plan. He reemphasised the need to diversify income streams as pointed out by the Board and the Executive Director in previous sessions.

With a view to generating higher impact for EFG, the proposal suggests to focus on actions relating to branding, the consolidation of core operations and expansion of relationship building.

The President-elect also stressed the importance of increasing the involvement and commitment by the National Associations to implement parts of the strategy.

05-23-08



Further details are provided in the slides in the supporting documents.

The following feedback was provided by delegates:

The Hungarian delegate expressed her support for the strategy proposal and in particular opening the scope of EFG to other continents. She suggested starting with Africa following orientation of the EU policy, which is reflected in projects involving African bodies, e.g. CRM-geothermal.

The UK delegation acknowledged the stronger involvement of the National Associations requested by the proposed strategic plan but reminded that most of the activities will need to be implemented by the Secretariat. He questioned the availability of capacity considering that the current budget situation does not allow for hiring additional staff. He therefore recommended to prioritise. The Executive Director emphasised that the Public Affairs strategy is crucial to gain more impact and that a full-time policy officer will be needed to implement it. He stressed that more money will be needed to increase EFG's capacity and that low-impact activities will need to be ceased. He also underlined the importance of focusing and prioritising.

The Italian delegation underlined the importance of being ambitious while focusing. Engaging the National Associations can be a method of optimising cost. He underlined that the National Associations need clear guidelines on how to engage.

The Executive Director emphasised the need to mobilise the 45.000 individual members of the National Associations and that the 'how' is the most difficult part.

The Interim DSE stressed the importance of branding to make sure to connect the European geoscience community to EFG in order to be successful in the next five years.

The Dutch delegation mentioned he was not surprised about the low response rate concerning the call for new Panel of Expert members. He underlined the need to put a stronger emphasise on how EFG panels are different from others that make similar recommendations and to better define the angle that EFG offers.

The Hungarian delegation reemphasises the ambitiousness of the proposed strategic plan. She expressed her optimism considering that most of the proposed actions generate income and will progressively allow to increase the staff number.

The President-elect underlined that he is indeed ambitious but is reliant on others' support to implement the plan, therefore he put the National Associations in the middle of the strategy. He welcomed all suggestions for improvement.

The UK delegate mentioned the identity crisis geology is having and the downturn of student numbers in several countries across the world which opens the question of how to engage young people and show them the importance of geoscience. She expressed considerable concerns that EDI-related topics were not addressed in the current draft.

The President-elect reassured that the young generation and EDI will be addressed in the strategy.

The Portuguese delegation expressed her support for the proposed strategy. She stated that overall a stronger emphasis should be put on geoeducational topics.



<p>The Chair of the Regulation Authority agreed on the crucial importance of education and EDI and the need to set KPIs.</p> <p>The Greek delegation also expressed her support for the proposal and suggested to offer additional incentives to the NAs to stay engaged.</p> <p>The Irish delegation suggested to join forces with existing initiatives such as the EIT RawMaterials Academy or the GGGP initiative. He was not in favour of implementing activities in Africa due to historical reasons.</p> <p>The UK delegation proposed to take into consideration comments concerning the strategy proposal.</p> <p>It was agreed to compile all comments from delegates by 30 June and to incorporate them into a written proposal to put forward for a vote in November 2023.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>Delegates to provide comments on the proposed strategic plan by the end of June 2023.</i></p> <p>There was a general agreement that the Board can start to prepare working plans and implement the strategy considering there we no overall objections.</p> <p><b>Public affairs strategy</b></p> <p>The Interim Director of Stakeholder Engagement outlined the proposed public affairs strategy. She identified the creation of a collective voice for geosciences by the G4, timely and frequent responses to the EU institutions and the promotion of policy development driven by science as the most desired outcomes. She presented a strategic focus along 3 main paths encompassing the development of a GeoAmbassadors programme, a public relations coalition of the G4 and building the EFG brand. Especially the first year was introduced as challenging (setting realistic priorities, expanding &amp; diversifying funding, right-sizing the organisation).</p> <p>The report was ACCEPTED.</p>	
<p><b>Community engagement</b></p> <p><b>EurGeol portal</b></p> <p>The EFG Project Officer provided an update on the migration to the new membership platform (YourMembership). He mentioned constraints due to the outdated regulations which impose conditions that are not fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and not necessarily software friendly.</p> <p>He introduced three main phases: In the short term, the aim will be to ensure reliability for EurGeols and the Secretariat by transitioning to the new YourMembership platform. In the medium term, simplification through the update of the regulations will make the process more user- and software-friendly. In the long term, the title should be made future-proof.</p> <p>The Turkish delegate expressed his support to the digitalisation of applications. He enquired about the role expected from the NVCs considering they have been managing the application process for years.</p>	05-23-09



<p>The Vice-President expressed her confidence that the new software will solve past issues.</p> <p>The German delegation reminded that the EurGeol and the Competent Person concept should not be mixed up as a EurGeol is not necessarily a Competent Person.</p> <p>The Hungarian delegation suggested that the NVC could upload the application while the platform filters whether anything is missing.</p> <p>The President reminded about potential GDPR issues whenever a public account is created.</p> <p>The Turkish delegation confirmed the importance of data protection. He underlined that allowing applicants to fill the form electronically and transferring it directly to the NVC and the EFG Secretariat would simplify the process.</p> <p>The report was ACCEPTED.</p> <p><b>Training Academy</b></p> <p>The Project Officer and the President-elect introduced the proposed outline for EFG's new Training Academy.</p> <p>It was stated that the Academy will require an implementation in the EFG regulations.</p> <p>Further details are provided in the reference documents.</p> <p>The Hungarian delegation suggested to invite the most relevant and successful courses of the training endorsement programme to join the Academy.</p> <p>The President-elect replied that this was indeed foreseen in the operational rules.</p> <p>The Portuguese delegation underlined the importance of industry support which is in general too low.</p> <p>The report was ACCEPTED.</p> <p><b>EFGeoClub proposal</b></p> <p>The Project Officer introduced the EFGeoClub concept. Further details are provided in the reference documents.</p> <p>The Chair of the Regulation Authority expressed her support for the idea. She mentioned that many young people are interested in a junior title and that it would allow to involve them in the EFG community.</p> <p>Due to the lack of time to conduct the workshop during the Belgrade Council meeting, it was agreed to organise it in November 2023 in Brussels.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>Secretariat to organise a community building workshop during the November 2023 Council meeting.</i></p>	
<p><b>EFG Projects</b></p> <p>The Project Officers introduced the projects with EFG involvement and their current status.</p> <p>Further details are provided in the reference documents.</p>	05-23-10
<p><b>National Association reports</b></p>	05-23-12



To close the day, the Greek Association of Geologists (AGG) presented their National Association report.	
<b>End of Day 1</b>	

## Day 2: Sunday, 21 May, 9:00-13:00 CET

Chairperson: EFG President

Agenda item	Document reference
The EFG President welcomed the delegates for day 2 of the Council meeting.	2023-05-00
<b>NA reports</b> (5 minutes each)  The Observers from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Northern Macedonia were invited to introduce their associations.  National Association reports were presented for the following countries:  <i>Onsite:</i> Czech Republic Estonia Finland France Germany Hungary Italy Ireland Portugal Serbia Slovenia Spain Sweden Turkey UK  <i>Online:</i> Austria Bulgaria Poland Romania Switzerland  All presentations are available as reference documents.  Apologies for absence had been received from the Belgian delegation who informed Council that a new Belgian association, the ASBL GBLsp (GEOLOGICA BELGICA LUXEMBURGA Scientia & Professionis) replaces BLUG/ULBG as the new EFG member for Belgium and Luxembourg.	05-23-12



<p><b>Medal of Merit Committee report</b></p> <p>The Secretary General reported that two valid nominations were received by the deadline, both being of almost equal quality. The Committee proposed to nominate Roberto Rodrigo Fernandez for the EFG Medal of Merit 2023. The Portuguese delegation enquired for additional information on the candidates. According to the usual procedure, it was agreed to circulate information on Roberto Rodrigo Fernandez and to decide on the award through an e-vote.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>Secretary General to circulate supporting information about Roberto Rodrigo Fernandez and call for an e-vote.</i></p>	05-23-11
<p><b>Regulation Authority</b></p> <p>The Chair of the Regulation Authority provided an update on the activities since the last meeting. She underlined that the review of the regulations and several other items had to be postponed due to an internal reorganisation within the Regulation Authority.</p> <p>Further details are provided in the supporting documents.</p> <p>The report was ACCEPTED.</p>	05-23-13
<p><b>Update on 2 Motions approved by Council</b> <b>Update on Working Group on future European Geologist</b></p> <p>The Vice-President mentioned that after the approval of the two motions by Council, a call for a new Task Group within the Future European Geologist Working Group has been launched. By the deadline (1 April) only one application has been submitted. Afterwards four more persons expressed their interest. A meeting was due to be scheduled shortly after the Council meeting.</p> <p>The Vice-President confirmed that concrete results may be expected by November 2023.</p>	05-23-14
<p><b>Future meetings</b></p> <p>The Executive Director suggested to use collective intelligence during Council meetings to make the most out of them in light of the limited time available. He proposed to free up time by turning the National Association reports into videos that can be shared and commented on online. Alternatively National Association reports could be delivered only once per year, each spring, to allow for workshops during the autumn meeting.</p> <p>The Spanish delegation suggested to organise workshops in smaller groups on Sunday morning. The Portuguese delegation expressed her concerns on the idea of transforming NA reports into videos. According to her, it is important to know what is going</p>	05-23-15



<p>on in the different countries and collect best practices which may be inspiring for others. She suggested to alternatively transform staff or Board reports into videos to give the floor to National Associations.</p> <p>The Turkish delegation supported the idea of organising short workshops of two hours and suggested to transform the NA reports into a poster sessions. The Italian delegation expressed support for the idea but found it challenging for the NAs to prepare posters. He suggested to extend the meeting duration and distribute the NA reports more equally across different periods of the meeting to avoid a long session.</p> <p>The Chair of the Regulation Authority suggested to organise a hybrid session with the NA reports before the Council meetings.</p> <p>The Swedish delegation suggested to extract common challenges from the NA reports and discuss them more broadly during the meeting.</p> <p>The Estonian delegation proposed to handle technical topics such as the budget after the Council meeting in an online session.</p> <p>The Turkish delegation suggested to discuss the budget and technical topics in Brussels and give more focus to the NAs during the spring Council meeting.</p> <p>It was agreed to try a new approach at the next meetings, allowing the NAs to present their reports during the spring meeting and to prerecord them or present them in an online session, to give more time for workshops during the autumn meeting.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>Board and Secretariat to take into consideration new approach for NA reports when preparing the agendas of the spring and autumn Council meetings.</i></p> <p>It was agreed to organise the autumn Council meeting in Brussels on 18 and 19 November 2023 in connection with the Raw Materials Week.</p> <p>The Irish association will host the 2024 spring meeting and a more detailed proposal will be presented in November.</p> <p>Concerning future workshops, the Executive Director suggested to vary the topics and also consider water, geothermal or overarching topics in addition to mining.</p>	
<p><b>Miscellaneous items</b></p> <p>Three items had not been table in advanced and were introduced:</p> <p><b>a. <u>Email by delegate of Malta Chamber of Geologists, from 12 May 2023</u></b></p> <p><b>Section removed for confidentiality reasons. Reported below is the extract from the list of actions requested.</b></p> <p>This section has been removed from the public minutes upon the Council's request for confidentiality.</p>	<p>05-23-16</p>



The complete version is available to any EFG Board member, Delegate, Official or Secretariat member who was present during the Sunday morning session of the Council meeting (21 May 2023).

Any individual who was not present at this Sunday morning session may request a copy and receive it after signing a confidentiality agreement.

Extract of the list of actions:

**Action:** Board to send an answer to MCG delegate asking him to provide further evidence for his allegations in order to be able to lead a thorough investigation. Board furthermore to ask MCG delegate to withdraw from his accusations in case he doesn't provide any evidence or to become himself subject of an investigation

**Action:** Secretariat, Board and delegates present onsite and online during the Sunday session of the EFG Council meeting to maintain strict confidentiality concerning the discussions around the issues raised by MCG delegate.

**Action:** Secretariat and Board to seek legal advice on this issue.

**Action:** Secretariat to record future meetings for protocol purposes. Delegates to provide consent for recording upon registration.

**b. ILB renewal**

The Secretary General mentioned that according to the regulations, the EFG Licensed Bodies should be renewed every 5 years. Lately, this rule has not been followed.

He mentioned that two of the current members of the International Licensed Body (ILB) have been active since around 20 years. The team has worked in a very dedicated and efficient way apart from a recent exception concerning Chinese applications to the Italian association SINGEOP.

The communication from the ILB chair has not been clear and the Secretary General got the perception that he was trying to find obstacles by all means to reject those applications.

He pointed out that the ILB should provide evidence for considering an application as non-valid and allow the applicant to correct their application. This procedure has not been followed in this particular case. SINGEOP has not been informed about the status of the applications since more than one year.

Considering the long-standing involvement of the ILB Chairperson, the Secretary General suggested to impose a maximum service duration similar to the rules which apply for Board members.

He also asked Council to renew the ILB committee and subsequently proceed with a call for new members.

Council unanimously APPROVED both proposals.






<p>The Chair of the Regulation Authority suggested to mention in the call the need for committee members to have demonstrated experience with the EurGeol criteria and with digital tools.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>Regulation Authority to put forward for vote the proposal for a limited service duration for ILB members.</i></p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>Secretary General to inform Chair of the ILB of renewal of the committee and send out call for new members.</i></p> <p><b>c. <u>PERC members</u></b></p> <p>The German delegation explained that a German association of certified mining surveyors applied to become a member of PERC in order to ensure their members qualify as Competent Persons in the field of geology and reserves estimation. This raises concerns within the BDG because the members of this association are no professional geologists. He underlined that EFG delegates in PERC will have to vote on the application of this association in the future and he asked Council to get acquainted with the situation to make sure the EFG delegates to PERC are aware of these concerns.</p>	
<p><b>Conclusion and Formal Council meeting closure</b></p> <p>The President thanked delegates for attending the meeting, both onsite and online, and closed the 82<sup>nd</sup> EFG Council meeting.</p>	





**Annexes:**

**1. E-vote: By-election to Regulation Authority**

Do you agree to to appoint Pascale Marchal Griveaud to the Regulations Authority?		
Yes	 100%	17 votes
No	 0%	0 votes
Abstention	 0%	0 votes

**2. E-vote results: Election External Relations Officer**

One nomination for the EFG External Relations Officer position has been submitted to the Elections Supervisory Committee. Please cast your vote on behalf of your National Association.		
Pavlos Tyrologou	 100%	16 votes
Abstention	 0%	0 votes