**Hybrid Annual General Meeting**

**Thursday 1st June 2023, 2.00 – 5.00 pm CET**

[COMET Louise](https://en.comet-meetings.com/lieux/comet-louise)

Place Stéphanie, 20 – 1050 Bruxelles

*Zoom link was provided to online participants*

**MINUTES**

|  |
| --- |
| 1. **Welcome, reminded of antitrust rules and adoption of the agenda**

The President, Robert E. Jones (Mosa Meat), welcomed the participants (see **Annex I**) and especially J. Athanatos (Nestlé), who participated in a Cellular Agriculture Europe meeting for the first time. The attendees were reminded of the antitrust rules (see **Annex II**). The proposed agenda was adopted.1. **Adoption of the minutes of the 14th November 2022 Extraordinary Annual General Meeting**

The minutes of the 14th November 2022 Extraordinary General Meeting were endorsed (see **Annex III**).1. **Chairman’s report**

Issues highlighted by R. E. Jones in his report (see **Annex IV**) included:* Members’ resignation: Resignations were recently submitted for financial reasons or because some companies have decided to deprioritise Europe. The President wished to remind the members of the provisions of the by-laws applicable to resignations (see **Annexes V and VI**), stressing that a six-month notice applies to all companies. For example, a company who submits its resignation to the secretariat before 30th June shall remain a member until 31st December and shall pay its due for the entire year.
* Members’ involvement at EU level: while some members have deprioritised Europe in their strategic plans, the high number of negative amendments submitted to MEP Emma Wiesner (Renew, Sweden)’s draft report on a protein strategy[[1]](#footnote-1) clearly show that long-term actions are needed on the EU scene to create a more favourable ecosystem for cellular agriculture. As an example, R. E. Jones mentioned a work visit of Mosa Meat’s premises in Maastricht organised on 29th June for the staff of the Eurogroup for animals and invited members to organise similar study visits of their plants. In response to J. Athanatos (Nestlé)’s question about the association’s presence in the United Kingdom (UK), R. E. Jones underlined that he was chair of the Alternative Proteins Association (APA)[[2]](#footnote-2) working group on cultivated foods. APA was engaging with the UK Food Standards Agency (FSA) as well as with the Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Labour shadow cabinet, together with the Good Food Institute. H. Lester (Gourmey) added that the executive summary of Deloitte’s audit report on the novel foods authorisation process shall be available in the coming weeks. Like J. Athanatos, members agreed that the UK usually had a pragmatic approach when it comes to regulatory approvals in the food sector and that a first authorisation in the UK could have beneficial consequences on the continent.
* Italy’s proposed ban of *“synthetic foods”:* R. E. Jones stressed that the main objective of the “Alleanza italiana” of complementary proteins producers was twofold: (i) kill the bill and (ii) avoid any contagion to another member state.
* The next physical meeting of the global coalition on cultivated foods shall take place during the Singapore International Agri-Food Week[[3]](#footnote-3) (between 31st October and 2nd November).
* Global coalition sponsorship of the Food Systems Pavilion at COP28 will be on the agenda for the next Executive Committee call. In response to C. Dammann (Bluu Seafood, association Vice-President and Treasurer)’s question, R. E. Jones indicated that the date of that thematic day has not been set yet. He then pointed out that badges granting access to the blue zone were hard to get. If Cellular Agriculture Europe is granted the observer status for COP28 - we should have the response in the course of June 2023, it should be given one or two badges maximum.

**Actions agreed:*** **All members were invited to help the association recruit new members and to connect potentially interested companies with the secretariat.**
* **All members were invited to come to Brussels more often and to plan meetings with i.e., their national Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), Permanent Representations to the EU or other stakeholders like relevant Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs), in coordination with the secretariat.**
* **Members who wish to meet with MEPs were invited to apply for a European Parliament accreditation[[4]](#footnote-4).**
* **Members who plan to go to Singapore for the SIAW were invited to inform the secretariat.**
* **Members who plan to attend COP28 in Dubaï were invited to approach their national authorities (i.e. Ministries for Agriculture, Environment or Economic Affairs) to obtain a badge granting access to the blue zone.**
1. **Life of the association**

Following a presentation delivered by C. Rey (secretariat) (see **Annex VI**), the following topics were discussed:* Board partial election: Together with the other Board members, C. Rey warmly thanked B. Loberant (SuperMeat) for her great involvement and dedication to the Board. B. Loberant then thanked the other Board members for the good collaboration over the past years. She also confirmed her commitment to lead the Regulatory Affairs Committee to success.

C. Dammann and H. Lester had the opportunity to explain the reasons why they applied for (re-)election to the Board. There were no other candidates in the room or connected online. The following members were therefore elected by the General Assembly:* + Mr Christian Damman
	+ Ms Hannah Lester

The General Assembly and the secretariat congratulated them on their (re–)election.* Toolbox for members: Like N. Baldwin (Higher Steaks), some members wondered how secure Slack was and asked the secretariat how to migrate its data from a US-based server to the Eu.

**Actions agreed:*** **Secretariat to resend the Slack invitations to O. Cohen (Meatable)**.
* **Secretariat to look for information on the migration of the association’s data residency to the EU.**
* Educational programme: upon C. Einsenhauer (Bluu Seafood)’s suggestion, it was agreed to organise a webinar dedicated to a regulatory update on the Asia-Pacific region, especially Japan and Korea.
1. **Financial matters**

C. Dammann and C. Rey jointly delivered the financial presentation (see **Annex VII**):* Presentation and approval of 2022 accounts: C. Rey first stressed that the 2022 accounts had been audited. She then drew the participants to the following aspects:
	+ Expenses: the final secretariat fee proved to be higher than what was initially foreseen and this is mainly due to the extension of the contract hours for the Communications team and the Secretary General’s excess hours. R. E. Jones pointed out that the Board had been informed in advance about the possible excess hours and agreed to extend the contract time of the secretariat in 2023.
	+ Income: The auditor recommended to include Peace of Meat/Steakholder Foods’ unpaid due for 2021 as a “doubtful debt”. In response to O. Cohen’s question, R. E. Jones reminded that the entity Peace of Meat signed the constitutive act of the association as a founding member and was acquired by MeaTech3D while the association in creation was still waiting for the publication of the Royal Decree, which proved to be a long and painful process. In this context, it was thus decided not to modify the constitutive act and MeaTech3D was aware of Peace of Meat’s commitment with the association.
	+ The General Assembly unanimously approved the Cellular Agriculture Europe accounts for 2022.
* 2023 forecast: The members were reminded of the general recommendation, applicable to all associations, which consists of having 50% of the annual costs within the reserve in any given year. The participants noted that this should still be the case at the end of 2023 despite the several members’ resignations and agreed that the association should attract new ordinary or associated members.
* Proposed budget 2024:
	+ Expenses: Referring to the general recommendation according to which an association should have a reserve that covers six-month operating costs in a given year, C. Rey invited the members to carefully review foreseen expenses as the anticipated reduced income (€251,000), due to five members’ resignations, is not sufficient to have a balanced budget.
	+ Income: Like E. Duthoit, the participants agreed that the association urgently needed new ordinary or associated members. In response to C. Eisenhauer’s question on the possibility of welcoming companies based outside the EU, Israel, Switzerland or the United Kingdom, R. E. Jones stressed that this would first imply a modification of the by-laws, which is a time-consuming process. B. Loberant (SuperMeat) also reminded the members that European companies who applied for membership at AMPS-Innovation[[5]](#footnote-5) were rejected as not being based in the USA. B. Loberant also added that the Japan Association for Cellular Agriculture (JACA)[[6]](#footnote-6) was not an industry association *per se.*
	+ Following a discussion and while appreciating C. Rey’s warning on the financial situation of the association, the General Assembly endorsed the budget for 2024, with the understanding that the Board shall assess the situation and review the association’s expenses at the end of the year.
1. **Committees’ reports**

Following a presentation delivered by F. Femia, A. Barnoux and C. Rey (see **Annex VIII**), the following topics were discussed: * Communications Committee
	+ Members were reminded they can ask for their access to Slack and the Members' section of the website by contacting COMM@cellularagriculture.eu
	+ The participants were informed of the update of the website FAQ now including 21 questions; while 15 Q&A will be kept for internal use.
	+ The website has already 0.9K users more compared to the whole year 2022; and social media, all channels included, have doubled their number of followers vs. the same period in 2022. F Femia reminded the focus is now on Twitter and LinkedIn as agreed by the Communications Committee previously.
	+ Upcoming actions for the Communications Committee, incl. on events, online presence and materials development were presented.

Actions agreed:* **A. Barnoux will send a new call for interest to fill in the position of Communication Committee Chair.**
* **The Secretariat will explore the possibility to develop a list of independent scientific experts who could be quoted in media/comms materials during a crisis.**
* Regulatory Affairs Committee:
	+ Commenting on EFSA’s intention to open its current Guidance document on novel foods for comments, N. Baldwin indicated that EFSA should organise a technical meeting and was of the opinion that Cellular Agriculture Europe should be represented there. The members agreed.
	+ The participants noted the members’ request for a guidance document on tasting events. Like R. E. Jones, they agreed that such work shall be considered very carefully.
	+ Commenting on the activities of the sub-committee on classification, labelling and hygiene, H. Lester stressed that its next piece of work is to conduct a gap analysis between the current legislative framework applicable to meat and adaptations needed for cellular agriculture products.

**Actions agreed:*** **The Regulatory Affairs Committee will assess who should attend the next EFSA Stakeholder Forum when the draft agenda is available.**
* **Upon R. E. Jones’ suggestion, it was agreed to apply again for the Codex observer status. C. Rey was thus asked to prepare a new application dossier.**
* Strategic Planning Committee:
	+ Commenting on the “*End the slaughter age*[[7]](#footnote-7)” European Citizens’ Initiative, R. E. Jones stressed that its authors genuinely wanted to support cellular agriculture without comprehending the potential negative impact of their inflammatory language against conventional agriculture and animal husbandry. He added that the Italian team behind this petition could be helpful in working against the Meloni goverments proposed ban in Italy.
1. **Next meeting**

R. E. Jones proposed to agree on the date of the 2024 General Meeting offline. This was agreed.1. **AOB**

There was no other business. R. E. Jones thanked the participants, the secretariat and closed the meeting. \*\*\* |
|  |

1. See <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/AGRI-AM-746842_EN.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See <https://www.alternativeproteinsassociation.com/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. See <https://sginternationalagrifoodweek.com.sg/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See <https://ec.europa.eu/transparencyregister/public/staticPage/displayStaticPage.do;TRPUBLIC-ID-prod=gTSLnZUm8pRYgupJ5YNDKXLewKGCyuySNZhvOuCDw2mEY0b-Z-9I!2041958471?locale=en&reference=EP_ACCREDITATION>. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. See <https://ampsinnovation.org/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. See <https://www.jaca.jp/top-en>. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. See <https://endtheslaughterage.eu/en/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)