

EOU General Meeting held on Sunday 23 August 2009 at 13.40 in Hall A of the EOU conference centre, Irchel Campus of the University of Zurich

Council President, Jeremy Greenwood, took the chair and welcomed people to the general meeting.

1. Attendance and apologies for absence

84 members signed the attendance list. There were no apologies of absence except from those council members who could not attend.

2. Minutes of the previous general meeting of 24 August 2007

The minutes are posted on the [EOU website](#). Chairman asked for any comments regarding these minutes. None was raised and the minutes were approved as correct record of the meeting.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

Members were asked to raise any matters arising from the minutes that do not appear elsewhere on the agenda of the current meeting. No members raised any matters.

4. Treasurer's report

The Treasurer, P. Becker, presented his report on behalf of Council (posted on the [EOU website](#)). As a result of the financial arrangements that were put in place at the 2007 General Meeting and of the careful financial management of both the 2007 and 2009 conferences the financial position of the EOU is sound. The contribution made by the Vienna conference had been used to subsidize attendance by students and participants from "middle income" countries. The anticipated contribution from the surcharge on the Zurich conference fee was more than euro 5000, which would enable EOU to pursue some of its work more actively in future. The Treasurer recommended that the current position of having no regular membership subscription were maintained. His report was accepted by the meeting, without dissent.

5. Report of Council

The President, Jeremy Greenwood, presented the report on behalf of Council.

Historically, it has usually been possible for Council members to meet in between conferences while they were attending other conferences (such as the IOC). There were no such conferences in 2008 and, because Council was concerned not to incur the cost of getting even some of its members together, it was decided not to hold a special meeting but to rely on e-mail. Partly as a result of not holding any meetings between conferences, EOU affairs were not taken forward as effectively as had been hoped. The new Council will address how its performance can be improved.

The serious work of organizing the Zurich conference and its programme had been done by the Local Organizing Committee (led by Verena Keller) and by the Scientific Programme Committee (led by John O'Halloran), requiring rather little input from Council as a whole. The president thanked Verena, John and all their colleagues most warmly. The programme included contributions from 5 plenary talks, 17 symposia with 5 presentations each, 2 workshops, 95 orally contributed papers and 118 posters.

There were 381 registered participants from 40 countries. The arrangements that were worked out to support attendance at the conference by students and by people from lower income countries had apparently been successful. Providing opportunities for ornithologists from all across Europe to interact and for students to experience the value of such meetings are key roles for EOU. Thirty six percent of participants were financially subsidized. The conference fee had been waived for 24 people, 5 funded by the SCOPES programme of the Swiss National Science Foundation and 19 by the EOU.

Despite the world's recent financial turmoil, Indrikis Krams and Maris Strazds have developed their invitation to the EOU to hold the 2011 conference in Latvia (see below). Efforts have been made, especially by Tomasz Osiejuk, to develop the EOU website but much remains to be done. The entire contents of Avian Science (the EOU's journal, not currently being published) will be put onto the website as soon as possible.

Members were asked to raise any pertinent issues not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda. None was raised and the General Meeting accepted the report without dissension.

6. How frequent should conferences be?

It had been suggested to Council to consider holding conferences less often than the traditional frequency of once every two years, and the chairman invited the meeting to decide on this issue. The General Meeting agreed with Council's proposal, who had discussed this issue earlier during their first meeting, that the present interval of two years is preferred. Also, all agreed that it was important to try to reduce overlap with other conferences, especially the Evolutionary Biology and the Behavioural Ecology conferences.

7. Arrangements for future conferences

7.1 2011 conference

Maris Strazds presented a proposal for a conference in Riga, Latvia, in 2011. The conference will be jointly organized by University of Daugavpils, University of Latvia and the Latvian Ornithological Society (LOB). There had been no other offers to host a conference in 2011. The meeting welcomed and unanimously approved the proposal to hold the 8th Conference of the EOU in Riga.

7.3 General

The chairman invited members to raise ideas for events and arrangements for future conferences. It was mentioned if EOU cannot do more of support to lower-income-country participants by not only waive conference fees, but, in addition, help with reducing travel costs. A member suggested that a number of lower-income-country participants would benefit from reduced travel costs if holding conferences more often in Eastern Europe. However, as the chairman remarked, hosting a conference is very costly itself and not many countries in Eastern Europe might be willing or able to organize and offer this.

8. Election of new Officers and Council members

Chairman thanked the people retiring from the council at this meeting: Peter Becker (Treasurer), Marco Cucco, Herbert Hoi (Secretary), Esa Lehikoinen, Paulo Marques,

Tomasz Osiejuk, Liz Pasztor (Past President), Peter Pechacek, Luc Schifferli and Pavel Zehindjiev.

Presidency passed on from Jeremy Greenwood to Tomasz Wesołowski. Council further proposed the following persons be elected to fill vacancies: Timothy Coppack (Switzerland) as Treasurer, Götz Eichhorn (France) as Secretary, Leonida Fusani (Italy) as chair of the Scientific Programme, Barbara Helm (Germany) as President-elect, Verena Keller (Switzerland), Toni Laaksonen (Finland), Stojan Nikolov (Bulgaria) and Hans Ulrich Peter (Germany).

These candidates were elected unanimously by the meeting. Information on retiring members and candidates for election had been posted on the conference website, as had an invitation for further candidates to come forward.

9. Any other business

Members were asked for any other items of business but none was raised.

The new president, Tomasz Wesołowski, thanked Jeremy Greenwood for leading the EOU over the past 4 years. He gave cordially thanks to the local team for organizing the conference and closed the meeting.