



# The European Ornithologists' Union

*Equal partnership among avian biologists throughout Europe  
for the advancement of European ornithology*

## Minutes of the General Meeting

held in Strasbourg (France)

on Tuesday, 23 August 2005, 14:05 – 15:20

**Secretary** until 08/2005

Dr. Wolfgang Fiedler  
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The General Meeting was attended by 80 delegates (see appendix 1 / list of participants)

### 1. Conduct of the meeting

The General Meeting agreed without objections about the following topics of conduct as they were proposed by the Council:

**Order of business:** The President, as Chairman of the General meeting and with the agreement of Council, has ruled that items 5 and 6 on the agenda (both starting "Discussion...") will be taken together.

**Voting:** The President, as Chairman of the General meeting and with the agreement of Council, has ruled that all of those present at the meeting should be allowed to express their opinions but that, if there needs to be a formal vote, this will be restricted to those members who paid subscriptions in 2003 (the last year that subscriptions were collected).

**Votes on changes to the statutes:** Council **recommends** to the General Meeting that, despite details of the proposed changes to the statutes not being circulated to members until they arrived at the Strasbourg conference, these proposals may be voted upon at the General Meeting.

### 2. Minutes of the General Meeting 2003

The minutes of the General Meeting 2003 in Chemnitz (Germany) are available on the EOU website. They accepted unanimously by the General Meeting.

### 3. Report from the Council (given by Liz Pasztor)

Liz Pasztor gave this report. The last issue of the Journal "Avian Science" was produced in autumn 2003 and consisted of talks from the plenaries held at the EOU conference in Chemnitz in 2003. The president thanked Beat Naef-Daenzer and the editorial board for their work as well as the local organizers of the Chemnitz Conference (Society of Saxonian Ornithologists, Kai Gedeon and Hartmut Meyer) who made publication of the last issue possible by dedicating a part of the conference budget for printing of the plenaries issue.

<http://www.eou.at>



Although the EOU could not in the end solve the problem of financing the publication of the journal, Liz Pasztor thanked Kate Lessells and Chris Perrins for their efforts to find a professional publisher and to evaluate the possibilities of an electronic journal.

The President reported, that after a thorough discussion of the situation and the priorities of EOU, convened by Jeremy Greenwood, the council had decided that no membership fees would be collected as no journal was being produced. Council members agreed that the main aim of the EOU given in the statutes continues to be communication between European ornithologists. This at present can be done via the conferences and the EOU website. This discussion provided a firm basis to implement and recommend changes in the statutes of EOU as they are on the agenda of this meeting.

Special thanks were given to Elisabeth Wiprächtiger (Switzerland) who led the bureau of membership affairs of the EOU for the last years.

In EOU conferences the scientific program and the general outline was organised by the EOU while all other things were organised by the local hosts, who had also raised funds to cover the costs of the conference, the invitation of plenary speakers, and to support low income participants by reduced fees and travel reimbursement. The hosts at the 2005 meeting had been able to raise significant funding, which had helped to keep the conference fees very low. Liz Pasztor gave special thanks to Yves Muller and Jacques Blondel for their Fundraising work. The scientific program was arranged by Arie van Noordwijk with support from Jeremy Greenwood, Wolfgang Fiedler, the BTO office, and Nikita Chernetsov. The EOU 2005 was being attended by 350 delegates (100 with reduced fee payment).

The report of the Council was accepted unanimously by the General Meeting.

#### **4. Treasurer's Report and adoption of the accounts**

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See appendix 2 / treasurer's report and budget

The accounts had been checked carefully and accepted by the auditors Reinhard Mache and Helmut Sternberg.

The Treasurer's report was accepted unanimously by the General Meeting.

#### **5. Proposed changes to the statutes and plans and priorities for the future**

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This agenda item was presented by Jeremy Greenwood and a number of resolutions were passed by the General Meeting, as follows.

Following decisions made at the Chemnitz meeting in 2003, particularly the decision to cease publishing the journal, it has been necessary for Council to consider the future working of the Union and changes to its Statutes. A paper was circulated among the General Meeting which presents Council's proposals. The final version of the statutes is attached as appendix 3 to this paper.

##### **The journal**

The EOU is currently unable to attract enough members to make the publication of a journal possible without substantial external support. The decision to cease publication was thus made by circumstances rather than by the Union. It requires the General Meeting to agree to change several of the statutes. The changes in the Statutes proposed mean that (1) the EOU is not obliged to publish a journal, (2) the EOU may publish a journal if it wants to, (3) and, if it does so, the Editor will be an Officer of the Union and will be elected or appointed in the same way as other Officers.

*The General Meeting **resolved** (unanimously) that the following changes to the Statutes be adopted:*

- 2(2) Change this to: "To this end, the EOU shall hold conferences and other meetings at different places in Europe, promote communication between European ornithologists (such

as by maintaining a web-site), seek funds to support collaboration among European countries, and engage in other activities designed to advance ornithology in Europe (such as publishing a journal)."

- 3(3) Remove the second part of the first sentence (from the comma onwards).
- 3(4) Insert at the beginning: "If the Union publishes a journal,"
- 6(1) Replace the current list of officers (in parentheses) with: "(President, Past President, President Elect, Secretary, Treasurer and, if a journal is being published, Editor)". And delete the last sentence.
- 6(6) Delete last sentence
- 9(2) Insert, after "The Journal": ", if one is published,"
- 9 (1) and 9(3) Remove this entirely

## **Membership**

*Subscription level:* Council has concluded that, so long as the EOU does not engage in expensive activities (like publishing a journal), its costs will be too low to justify collecting subscriptions. The most effective way of implementing this is to continue with a membership subscription in principle but for the General Meeting to set the fee to be zero at present. (A non-zero subscription can be set in future, by a General Meeting).

*Life Membership:* The statutes allow the EOU to have Life Members but the Union does not have any. Because processing Life Memberships adds complications to managing affairs and because everyone can be a life member if the normal subscription is zero, Council believes that the statutes should be modified to remove the Life membership category.

*Sustaining Membership:* The statutes refer to Sustaining Members but do not define them. Council believes that this is a potentially useful membership category that should be retained. This means that it needs to be defined.

*The General Meeting **resolved** (unanimously) that the following changes to the Statutes be adopted:*

- 3(1), 3(2) Delete references to Life Members
- 3(2), 3(3) Insert a new clause between these: "Membership is open to any person who supports the objectives of the EOU and who registers with the Council her or his wish to be a member. It is the responsibility of each member to notify the Council of any change of address or e-mail address. A member may resign at any time by notifying the Council."
- 3(3) (As currently numbered) Change this to: "Ordinary members may be required to pay a subscription. If so, membership lasts from 1 January to 31 December and ends if the subscription is not paid or if the member resigns at least 6 months before the end of the year. If members are not required to pay a subscription, membership lasts until the member resigns or fails to provide a current address." [Note: This incorporates the change already proposed to 3(3) in Appendix 2].
- 3(3), 3(4) (As currently numbered) Insert a new clause between these: "Sustaining Membership is open to any member who pays more than the basic membership subscription."
- 6(6) Delete ", for keeping the membership list" and insert before "subscription": "any"
- 10(3) Delete second sentence and add: "The maximum subscription fee shall not exceed 50 Euro p.a."

*Management of the membership list; communication in practice; current membership:* Especially if the EOU has a zero membership fee, it is necessary to ensure that the management of the membership list and communication with members is simple and cheap. This shall be achieved by the following four resolutions, which are all accepted unanimously:

The General Meeting **accepted** that, given the limited resources of the EOU, communication with individual members will normally be by e-mail rather than by the postal services.

The General Meeting **asked** Council to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to discover the new e-mail address of any member whose former e-mail address becomes unavailable, though it accepts that it is primarily the individual member's responsibility (under Statute 3.3) to notify the Treasurer of any change of e-mail address.

The General Meeting **resolved** (unanimously) that, for the purposes of establishing EOU membership at present, all those who held membership in 2003, all those who have applied to the Secretary or Treasurer to be members since then, and all those registered at this EOU conference in Strasbourg (with the exception of any who have said that they do not wish to be members), are deemed to have registered their wish to be members of the EOU in terms of Statute 3(3) (as revised at this meeting).

The General Meeting **resolved** (unanimously) that the current subscription be set at zero.

### **Finances**

The current statutes are predicated on the assumption that the EOU will publish a journal and will therefore have a large budget. They allow the General Meeting to agree the size of that budget but allow Council discretion to spend up to Euro 5000 more than that. Given that the EOU budget is now much smaller, some modification is needed. The changes to the statutes proposed are designed:

1. To allow the General Meeting to determine the direction of the EOU's activities by defining its priorities (as well as by limiting expenditure).
2. To modify the financial constraints on Council in light of the much-reduced size of the budget.
3. To allow Council to raise and spend funds on specific projects (even if they are unbudgeted).

The General Meeting **resolved** (unanimously) that the following changes to the Statutes be adopted:

- 5(6) Change "the programme and the budget" to "the programme, the budget and the priorities"
- 10(4) Replace this with: "Outgoings are according to the budget and the list of current priorities determined by the General Meeting. Council may spend 10% more than the budget or Euro 5000 more than the budget, whichever is the greater."
- 10(4), 10(5) Insert a new clause: "Beyond the limits of 10(4), Council may spend funds received for designated projects within the Objectives of the Union."

### **Other desirable changes to the Statutes**

**Council's power to determine membership:** Statute 3(1) refers to Council being responsible for electing members. This means that lists of new applicants should periodically be circulated to Council, with votes being taken on any member to whom any Council member objects. Given that Council is rarely (if ever) likely to turn down a member, this is a lot of work for no real purpose. Council believes that this need for election by Council should be dropped. It is, however, desirable that the EOU should still retain the right to exclude from membership anyone who, by her or his actions or statements, has brought the name of the EOU into disrepute or has undermined its objectives.

*The General Meeting **resolved** (unanimously) that the following changes to the Statutes be adopted:*

- 1a. Remove the second sentence of Clause 3(1).
- 1b. Add a new clause to Section 3: "Council has the power to exclude from membership any person who, by his or her actions or statements, brings the name of the EOU into disrepute or undermines its objectives."

**Termination of the EOU:** Statute 12(2) could be inconveniently restrictive – "same" and "societies" could be interpreted narrowly by lawyers and the EOU may wish to divide the funds between more than one other organization.

*The General Meeting **resolved** (unanimously) that the following change to the Statutes be adopted:*

*12 (2). "an ornithological society with the same objectives as" is substituted with "one or more organizations with similar objectives to".*

**Organs:** In Statute 4, "the Congress" is referred to. The EOU does not have a "Congress"; it is thought by senior members that this was a drafting error when the Statutes were drawn up.

*The General Meeting **resolved** (unanimously) that the following change to the Statutes be adopted:*

*4. Reference to "the Congress" be dropped.*

To tidy up, the General Meeting is asked to agree two other things, as proposed by the Council:

*The General Meeting **resolves** (unanimously) that the Statutes be renumbered to take into account all the changes agreed at the meeting and that Clause 12(3) should be extended by adding "Further changes were made by votes on 23 August 2005 at the EOU General Meeting in Strasbourg, in accordance with clauses 5(2) and 5(3)."*

## **6. Plans and priorities for the future**

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The General Meeting **agreed** about the following priorities for the future:

- development of the website
- next conference
- subsidizing attendance and organization of conferences (this includes to develop strategies for getting funds)
- think about "how to help people to publish" (comments from the floor: highly welcome, especially a session during the next conference is welcomed)
- develop connexions with national societies and other ornithological organizations

## **7. Location of the next Conference and General Meeting 2007**

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The next Conference and General Meeting 2007 is invited to Austria by Hans Winkler and Herbert Hoi (KLIVV, Konrad Lorenz Institute for Ethology, Vienna). Date and location are not yet decided. It is important that any overlap with other conferences is avoided.

Kate Lessells will become head of the scientific planning committee (SPC). Members of the SPC will be Lukas Jenni, Etinne Danchin, Tibor Szep, Natalia Ivotschenko (plus three members more which will be appointed in autumn 2005). Also the local organizers will be represented in the SPC.



## 8. Election of the auditors, new officers and members of council

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### Board and Council

Liz Pasztor expressed the wish to step down from the Office as EOU President for personal reasons and the President-Elect, Jeremy Greenwood, agreed to enter office as EOU President 2 years earlier than scheduled. Lukas Jenni (Treasurer) and Wolfgang Fiedler (Secretary) had served the full period they were elected for and did not agree to be nominated for re-election. 6 Council members served the full period of 4 years in Council and cannot be re-elected immediately, according to the statutes.

The nominating committee (head: Jacques Blondel) had nominated a President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer and 8 Council members (see table below). No more nominations were made during the General Meeting. The General Meeting elected all nominated officers and council members unanimously.

<i>Elections at the general assembly of the EOU 2005</i>					
Position	name	from country	entered office	to be in office until	election in 2005
President	Jeremy Greenwood	UK	2005	2009	yes
President-Elect	Tolmasz Wesolowski	Poland	2005	2009	yes
Past President	Liz Pasztor	Hungary	2005	2009	no
Past President	Jacques Blondel	France	2003	2007	no
Secretary	Herbert Hoi	Austria	2005	2009	yes
Treasurer	Peter Becker	Germany	2005	2009	yes
Council Member	Emilio Barba	Spain	2003	2007	no
Council Member	Marco Cucco	Italy	2005	2009	yes
Council Member	Bruno Faivre	France	2003	2007	no
Council Member	Magne Husby	Norway	2005	2009	yes
Council Member	Anvar B Kerimov	Russia	2003	2007	no
Council Member	Indrikis Krams	Latvia	2003	2007	no
Council Member	Kate Lessells	Netherlands	2003	2007	no
Council Member	Esa Lehtikoinen	Finland	2005	2009	yes
Council Member	Paulo Marques	Portugal	2005	2009	yes
Council Member	Tomasz Osiljuk	Poland	2005	2009	yes
Council Member	Peter Pechacek	Germany	2005	2009	yes
Council Member	Luc Schifferli	Switzerland	2005	2009	yes
Council Member	Karel Weidinger	Czech Rep.	2003	2007	no
Council Member	Pavel Zehndtjiev	Bulgaria	2005	2009	yes

A list of Council members with e-mail addresses is attached as appendix 4.

The president thanked to the former officers and council members for their contribution to the EOU.

### Auditors

Reinhard Mache and Helmut Sternberg were re-elected unanimously as auditors.

## 9. Any other competent business

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No other business was brought to the agenda.

# Report of the Treasurer and the EOU Office 2005

## Office

Elisabeth Wiprächtiger continued to take care of the EOU office. She collected the membership fees 2003, did the accounting and kept the membership list. I thank her very much for working so hard for the EOU.

## Members

On 30 June 2005, the EOU had 585 members. These basically represent the members registered by the end of 2003. The following table gives an overview about the number of members per category.

Members by the end of 2003	Number
Members in high-income countries	229
Members in low-income countries	105
Students	36
Libraries	38
Combined membership with Ala	150
Combined membership with DO-G	27
Total	585

Membership per country was as follows:

Country	Nb	Contry	Nb
Australia	2	Japan	2
Austria	4	Jordan	1
Belarus	1	Latvia	2
Belgium	8	Luxembourg	2
Bulgaria	1	Malta	1
Canada	4	Maroc	1
Chile	1	Netherlands	27
Colombia	1	Norway	9
Croatia	2	Poland	30
Czeck Republic	4	Portugal	3
Denmak	10	Romania	4
Estonia	3	Russia	30
Finland	16	Slovakia	3
France	27	Slovenia	2
Germany	107	South Africa	2
Gibraltar	1	Spain	22
Greece	3	Sweden	8
Hungary	12	Switzerland	158
Iceland	2	Turkey	4
Ireland	1	UK	33
Israel	2	USA	14
Italy	15		

## Financial Statement

As decided at the General Assembly in 2001, the financial year of the EOU is from mid-year to mid-year. The financial statement thus covers the period 1 July 2003 – 30 June 2005.

Incoming resources were mainly from the membership fees due in 2003, received after 30 June 2003. For 2004, no membership fee was asked, because the financial situation of the EOU did not allow to continue to produce its journal *AVIAN SCIENCE*. Another important

income was the contribution from the organisers of the Chemnitz conference to produce the last issue of *AVIAN SCIENCE*. This contribution of Euro 7050.- has been accounted within the expenses to produce *AVIAN SCIENCE*, thus does not appear under "Revenues". We thank the organisers for this important help.

The main expenses were the publication costs of the 3 issues (2 fascicules) of *AVIAN SCIENCE*. Including the support of the organisers of the Chemnitz conference, expenses were Euro 18022.56.

The current assets of the EOU are Euro 3220.74 (Euro 3655.74 minus 435.00).

### **Profit & Loss Statement** **1.7.2003-30.6.2005**

#### **Expenses**

Print Avian Science	10'972.56
Reprints costs	313.99
Office running costs	2'107.55
Banking and legal costs	288.57
Results on rates	260.34
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>13'943.01</b>

#### **Income**

Membership Fees	-6'004.52
Reprints income	-277.45
Sponsors	-67.94
Publication sales	-357.11
Interest	-38.38
Results on rates	-5.57
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-6'750.97</b>

<b>Profit(-) / Loss(+) from Profit &amp; Loss Statement</b>	<b>7'192.04</b>
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### **Balance** **30.6.2005**

#### **Assets**

Clients	.-
Bank account TKB Euro	3'655.74
Bank account TKB CHF	.-
Bank account Singen Euro	.-
Loss	7'192.04
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>10'847.78</b>

#### **Liabilities**

Suppliers	.-
Profit brought forward	10'412.78
Transitory liabilities	435.00
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>10'847.78</b>

### **Budget**

Given that the EOU will have no foreseeable income during the next two years and given assets of Euro 3220, we can only propose priorities to spend possible revenues, provided that they are not earmarked. These are:

- Running the website
- Subsidizing the attendance of young people and ornithologists from low-income countries at conferences
- Providing financial support for low-income countries to organize conferences

18 August 2005, Lukas Jenni (Treasurer)