

## **Protocol from the forty-third PlantLink steering committee meeting**

Date: 30 August 2022, 13:00-16:30

Place: SLU Alnarp

### **Agenda**

*Present:* Federico Gómez LU (director); Erik Alexandersson, SLU (assistant director); Thomas Moritz, Copenhagen University (chairman); Anna Mañourová, SLU (coordinator); Erik Andreasson, SLU; Mariette Andersson, SLU (deputy director); Allan Rasmusson, LU; Johanna Osterman (PhD student SLU); Abraham Ontiveros Cisneros (PhD student LU)

*Absent:* Leif Bülow, LTH (vice-chairman); Alf Ceptilis, Lantmännen Lantbruk AB; Rajni Hatti-Kaul LU; John Yong SLU; Karl Magnus Adielsson, Region Skåne

*Note:*

Erik Andreasson and Allan Rasmusson joined the meeting online shortly before 3 pm, being involved in the discussions of points 6, 9, 10, 11 and 12. Their absence has been announced in advance.

### **1. Opening of the meeting**

Thomas Moritz opened the meeting. The order of the agenda points had been changed so that “New board committee members” are discussed in a presence of Erik Andreasson and Allan Rasmusson, who joined the meeting later via Zoom.

### **2. Election of the person in charge of verifying the minutes**

Abraham Ontiveros Cisneros (LU) was elected as the person responsible for verifying the minutes.

### **3. Minutes of the previous meeting (Annex 1)**

Thomas Moritz reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting, noting that many of the items will be addressed under separate agenda items. The minutes were placed on record.

### **4. News**

- PlantLink Day on the 5<sup>th</sup> of October – discussed below.
- NordPlant annual meeting + Göte Turesson centennial anniversary taking place on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of November in Lund.
- Nordic Food Forum in Trondheim on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of September – Federico Gomez will introduce PlantLink and promote PL Day there.
- EPSO seminar – open mainly to EPSO scientist but anyone from LU and SLU may sign up.
- New PhD courses: NOVA PhD course at SLU Alnarp/Lund: “Common Data Standards and Integrative Analytic Methods for Plant Phenotyping”. The deadline for application is on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October.
- PlantLink strategy meeting will happen on the 6<sup>th</sup> of December in Lund with different stakeholders to discuss the future of PL.

### **5. Economic report – by Andreas Gustavsson Fredlund**

Andreas Gustavsson Fredlund gave an insight into a financial status report for 2022 and a quick prognosis for 2023. No major deviations from the proposed budget were noted. The salary of Federico Gomez (new director) has been fixed, however, some adjustments need to be made in the case of Erik Alexandersson (new assistant director). In conclusion, although salary costs will be slightly higher than expected, the financial prognosis for 2023 is still positive.

#### **6. New Board Committee – by Thomas Moritz**

The steering committee for the SLU side is continuing until 2023 (namely Erik Andreasson, Mariette Andersson and John Yong). LU representatives must find a proper replacement for Rajni Hatti-Kaul until the next meeting. An additional reminder will be sent out before the steering committee meetings to remind everyone of the exact date and time.

#### **7. PlantLink day – by Erik Alexandersson and Federico Gómez**

Morten Ambye Jensen (Aarhus University) cancelled his presentation. Instead, two more speakers will present; Walter de Miliano with a topic on sorghum (Breeding Sorghum for Northern latitudes and some yield and quality results of some Dutch bred sorghums), and Eslam Selah presenting lupin as an alternative to soya (Lupinta company). Each speaker will have a 20-minute slot. Apart from Karin Petersson from Oatly, all other keynote speakers confirmed their topics and attendance. An introductory dinner is planned for the 4<sup>th</sup> of September (four speakers confirmed their presence) and an informal mingle on the 5<sup>th</sup> after the event (six speakers are confirmed).

#### **8. PlantLink media strategy – by Anna Maňourová**

Despite the holiday period, the number of visitors to the web pages and pageviews is still rising. The fascination of Plants Day was the most read article and gave PlantLink (PL) a lot of attention. The Researcher in Spotlight series is highly appreciated too. A new concept “Story of success” will be tried to share experiences of prosperous companies/start-ups linked to LU and SLU. The audience on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter is growing, mainly due to our PL’s higher activity. Hopefully, PL Day will help to address and engage more people.

#### **9. Future strategy and new contacts for PlantLink – by Federico Gómez**

Key contacts: Sweden Food Arena (PL + industry linkage), Food Science Sweden – Federico Gómez will be part of the steering group, and Robert Brummer (chair of the steering committee) is one of the PL Day keynote speakers.

Calls: Vinnova, Mobiliser, SIP/Region Skåne circular food systems, Formas communication

Three pillars of the future strategy:

##### **1) Research**

Unfortunately, no one applied for the writing grant proposed the previous time; the intended money can be kept for future courses. NordForsk application will be released in May, and the decision will be announced in December. Marie-Curie’s PhD industry program is under development now.

##### **2) Innovation and education**

Master students + industry matchmaking, mentored by supervisors from LU and SLU. The intention is to include small/medium size companies. Partnership Alnarp may provide monetary support. Mariette Andersson added that it is difficult to find master projects, and there is a lack

of information on where to find the opportunities. Federico Gómez will prepare an announcement to see what the response rate is. Erik Alexandersson suggested going for incentives.

Possibilities for future funding → Region Skane application, the deadline is on the 20<sup>th</sup> of October.

### 3) People and society

Formas application → the call starts at the beginning of September and finishes at the end of October. Ideas on how to communicate and popularise the Agrifood system in the region. Erik Alexandersson suggested including plant blindness. Erik Andreasson would use the experiences from crisp potatoes experiments, including videos, field visits etc. Another idea is a teachers' portal or students' video competition.

S.I.P preparatory projects next-generation strategic innovation program. Sweden Food Arena is involved. Can PlantLink get into a consortium with someone? Crop Booster - P might be brought to the table for the SLU side, Siri Caspersen is the person to contact. The deadline is on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November.

The Formas and S.I.P calls should be included in the PL newsletter; an extra newsletter might be created for the calls.

## **10. Progress report on NordPlant – by Erik Alexandersson**

Erik Alexandersson introduced the NordPlant Day happening on the 30<sup>th</sup> of November in Lund and explained more about the NOVA PhD course as well as the NordPlant project PlotCut3. Because the funding of NordPlant is finishing in 2023, there might be a possibility to continue financing through a joint NordForsk application around Marie Curie's PhD programs. 6P2 and NordPlant will discuss the future of plant phenotyping in the Nordic countries at the NPPN annual workshop in Båstad in November. Additionally, Erik Alexandersson showed a video of the PlotCut3 project.

## **11. Other points**

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of December, there will be a strategy meeting in a form of an open discussion about future directions and the continuation of PlantLink. Deans of both universities and other key people will be invited. Erik Andreasson suggested that PL may take an example from similar organisations not necessarily from the same field. A 10-year PL report might be used as a summary documenting the achievements of PL throughout its existence. More will be discussed during the next steering committee meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> of October.

## **12. Next meeting**

A Short meeting will be held before PlantLink Day on the 5<sup>th</sup> of October at 10:00 am.

## **13. Closure of the meeting**



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