

	<p>Minutes Alternet Council meeting Virtual – 10-11 December 2020</p>
<p>Venue</p>	<p>CESAM, Aveiro (Portugal)</p>
<p>Contact</p>	<p>tscottkulfan@gmail.com</p>

<p>Council Participants</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maurice Hoffmann, Council Chair, INBO 2. Ana Lillebo, Council Vice-Chair, CESAM 3. Jiska van Dijk, MB Chair, NINA 4. Allan Watt, MB Vice-Chair, UK-CEH 5. Alison Hester, James Hutton Institute 6. Ben Delbaere, DC 7. Davide Geneletti, DICAM 8. Enzo Falco, DICAM 9. Diana Hummel, ISOE 10. Eeva Primmer, SYKE 11. Bridgett Emmett, UK-CEH 12. Eszter Kelemen, ESSRG 13. Eeva Furman, SYKE 14. Johannes Peterseil, EAA 15. Jørgen Rosvold, NINA 16. Kiga Krauze, ERCE-UNESCO 17. Stefan Klotz, UFZ 18. Mart Kulvik, IAES 19. Miki Kertesz, MTA-OK 20. Nicholas Dendoncker, ILEE 21. Rob Alkemade, PBL 22. Sonja Jaehnig, IGB 23. Thierry Caquet, INRAE 24. Ulf Grandin, SLU 25. Reinier Hille Ris Lambers, WENR 26. Joan Pino, CREAM 27. Mihai Adamescu, UNIBUC 28. Robert Kanka, ILE-SAS <p><u>Also present</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 29. Tyler Kulfan, Alternet Secretariat 30. Patricia Lito, CESAM

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">31. Adriana Cliville Morato, CREAM32. Floris Van den Broeck, INBO33. Marie Vandewalle, UFZ34. Juliette Young, UK-CEH35. Petteri Vihervaara, SYKE |
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Day 1:

The 2020 meeting of the Alternet Council commenced at 13.00 on Thursday, 10 December 2020. The meeting was held virtually and hosted by CESAM. The meeting was recorded with permission from all those present.

1. Welcome and start meeting – (Maurice)

-no docs

Chair welcomed all, thanking host CESAM and offering a special welcome to the representatives of prospective member: DICAM of University of Trento.

2. Approval of the agenda (Maurice)

-DOC00, Agenda

No objections to agenda or supplementary points were raised. No changes to the order of the agenda points were raised. Council agreed to follow the proposed agenda.

Decision: Agenda unanimously approved.

3. Roundtable introductions, top priorities

-no docs

Each Council member/representative offered a brief self-introduction, and their expectations of the meeting.

Eeva Furman recommended an agenda point to discuss information and updates from institutes in a round-table format. Eeva noted the new director general of SYKE has been named and that Eeva Primmer will take over as Council representative for SYKE. Eeva Furman will lead an initiative via PEER and will oversee close collaboration with Alternet.

Alison Hester announced Kerry Waylen will become more involved as her deputy Council representative for James Hutton Institute.

4. 13.20-13.30 DECI: Council Meeting minutes of the Paris meeting of 2-3 dec 2019 (Maurice)

-DOC01, Paris minutes

No comments on contents of Paris minutes.

Decision: Minutes were unanimously approved. The minutes will be finalized and shared on the Alternet website - membership area.

5. Transition of the Alternet Consortium into the Alternet Association, state of affairs (Maurice)

- DOC02, Alternet Association Statutes
- DOC03, Alternet Association, internal rules

At the Council meeting in Ghent 2019 it was decided to establish a legal entity. On 31st of December, the Alternet Consortium will cease to exist and be replaced with the legal Alternet Association; this Association was legally founded on 31 October as an international non-profit organization.

Contributions of members is the most important element of the internal rules in contrast with the contents of the statutes. This concerns in-kind and cash contributions and appoints a level of flexibility. Maurice shared a presentation on the statutes and internal rules, both of which were previously shared with the representatives and directives. The Association's objective, composition, liability, and internal rules concerning cash and in-kind contributions were reviewed. The importance of in-kind contribution is emphasized more strongly and quantified in the internal rules, in contrast with the prior MoU.

The distinction between founding, effective, and associate members were elaborated. Members cannot be held personally liable for the obligations of the Association. Ben Delbaere asked for clarifications on how the statutes apply to himself, a natural person. Maurice stated that in Ben's case "legal persons with full legal personality" applies, as his consultancy firm with VAT number is a legal entity which Ben represents.

Maurice updated on the process of establishment. Seventeen subscriptions to the Association have been received by partner institutes. Seven others have confirmed intent to subscribe but have not yet provided the final approval of their directors. The only institute lacking confirmation is DCE; they do not intend to join the Alternet Association.

The account number (for cash payments, etc.) has been transferred from the consortium to the Association. In conclusion, the transition has been smoothly enacted and the ability to establish the legal entity as an International non-profit is highly beneficial.

6. Change of Alternet logo, slogan and website (Maurice, Tyler)

- no docs

The Alternet logo has been redesigned by C32; the new Alternet slogan was an agenda point of the Paris 2019 meeting and the ultimately chosen slogan is: the European Science-Policy Interface on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services.

C32 also provided the script basis for a new website based upon the new Eklipse website. Tyler has designed a new Wordpress website with help from CREAM, Andy Sier, Agusti Escobar and Adriana Cliville Morato. The new domain for the website (which is hosted by CREAM) is: www.alterneteurope.eu.

Tyler will share files of the new logos. The old website will remain online until approx. the end of 2020. The new website and domain name were shared. Contact persons for each institute should be updated. Partners are encouraged to send news and photos to Tyler.

7. Governance until the first formal Association Council Meeting (2022) (Maurice)

-DOC04, Governance

According to the MoU of the Consortium, a new election of MB chair and vice-chair, a new Council Chair, and a new Vice Chair of Council were to be held. Over the past month, Maurice presented an alternative election option proposed by the MB to maintain present governance of Alternet until the first formal Association Council meeting in early 2022. The Chair, Vice Chair, etc. would be maintained until then, upon which time a formal election would be held.

Decision: Alternative 1 is approved; the present governance will remain until the first formal Association Council meeting in 2022. Maurice and Ana will maintain their positions as Chair and VC of Council; Jiska van Dijk and Allan Watt will remain Chair and VC of the MB.

8. Appointment of new and or replacing MB members in the Alternet Association (Maurice)

-DOC05, candidacies for MB

During 2020, the MB was enlarged with two new members: Adriana Cívile Morato (CREAF) to replace Andy Sier (UKCEH) for communications; and Juliette Young (UKCEH/INRAE) to represent the SPI activity, which was added as a new MB activity after a voting procedure. This was due to the increased role and interest of SPI within Alternet.

In October, Petteri Vihervaara (SYKE) expressed his wish to step down as the Infrastructure activity MB representative. A replacement for Petteri must be decided upon. SYKE has nominated Riikka Paloniemi. Eeva Primmer introduced Riikka's profile, noting her participation in Eklipse, Alternet Conferences, and infrastructure work adjacent to the work of Petteri, as well as the SPI focus of her work. Eeva Furman noted that her research has also

focused on transformation of infrastructures. Maurice invited comments and recommended the acceptance of the candidacy of Riikka. There was no disagreement.

Decision: Riikka Paloniemi is accepted as the new MB representative for Infrastructure.

Jiska spoke on the issue of new potential MB members. The next MB meeting will be in January. Meanwhile, the Association is in need of a treasurer and Jiska recommends that Floris van den Broeck of INBO (who has been acting treasurer) be officially named the treasurer of the Alternet Association and added to the MB. The following day's agenda will feature an item to discuss potential additions for budget activities including looking for funding options.

Decision: Floris van den Broeck is appointed as the new treasurer and is added as a member of the MB.

9. Financial situation – 2020 (Maurice, Jiska)

-DOC06, Overview Budget_2020

Maurice introduced the financial situation and noted that the budget will only be officially voted on and approved at the end of the meeting following the proposals of the MB. Maurice presently shared the budgetary spreadsheet and Jiska provided explanation. She highlighted ongoing contracts which will extend into 2021.

The status of the credit balance and whether spending is greater than income was questioned. The credit balance is a positive balance of €180,000; at present, spending exceeds income. This is largely due to the reduction of cash contributions from members. Activities have consistently run under by Council approved allocated budget. Presently, there is a standing spending buffer, but Alternet continues to spend more than incoming cash contributions. Reinier voiced a recommendation to use the buffer as an investment for future activities and establish a balanced budget where expenditures and income are better matched.

10. New members: DICAM, Trento, Italy (Maurice, DICAM representative)

-DOC07, presentation of DICAM

Davide Geneletti presented an introduction and overview of DICAM at University of Trento. DICAM is already familiar to many of the partners of Alternet. The decision to accept the membership of DICAM was already made by mail and their membership in Alternet is official. The expansion of the pan-European and Southern European representation in Alternet was particularly applauded and a warm welcome was extended to DICAM.

11. Call to comply with membership conditions (Maurice)

-no docs

Maurice noted with emphasis that every member must comply with cash contributions so that new and ongoing initiatives can be developed. Reaction to invoices should be promptly given.

12. Memorandum of Understanding with PEER (Partnership for European Environmental Research) (Maurice, Jiska)

-DOC08, MoU PEER-Alternet

Raoule Mille of INRAE proposed and initiated the establishment of a partnership MoU with PEER. Mark Bailey of UK-CEH has now agreed jointly with Alternet on the text of the MoU (which was presented to Alternet Council members and discussed by the directors of PEER). Maurice asked if there are any comments on the text; none were received. Eeva Furman suggested Alternet representation at PEER meetings to collaborate on a roadmap. Eeva, Raoule, and Rainier or via the MB. This question of communication with PEER will be delegated to the MB and Jiska proposed overseeing it at the MB meeting in January. Eeva can attend to present this issue as needed.

Decision: Unanimous support for the MoU as written; this final text will be presented at the next PEER meeting. The MB will take this matter up at their early-year meeting in 2021.

13. Alternet & the Biodiversity Partnership (Maurice)

-no doc, see Summer School and Eklipse presentations

Maurice provided an update on the status of the European Biodiversity Partnership in relation to Alternet, as well as a brief general overview of the BP. Jiska announced that there is a meeting planned in January with the Knowledge center on Biodiversity.

14. Alternet activities, evaluation of 2020, new activity proposals 2021 (Maurice, Jiska)

The Alternet MB prepared an evaluation report and concrete results of the Alternet activities in 2020, and prepared proposals for the activities in 2021. Jiska introduced the evaluation report and reviewed the activities of 2020. She noted that the floor would later be given to MB members to give further detail on their activities.

Due to the coronavirus crisis, many activities were cancelled or held in an altered form; however, the majority of the activities did proceed and were very successful.

-Tyler, Andy, and Adriana have been highly active with communications, especially concerning the new website and branding, Eklipse integration, the transition from representation of Andy to Adriana, and the ongoing activities of Alternet.

-Ongoing MSR projects have been supported and a new AHIA project was selected for support.

-Tyler and Petteri have completed the second draft Infrastructure promotional video.

-The Summer School was cancelled but a virtual series of Aperitif Talks were held in its place.

-Planning for the 2021 Conference has commenced under the leadership of Sonja Jaehnig and Philip Roche.

-Marie, Juliette, Maurice, Jiska, Allan, Philip and Tyler have all been closely involved in the transition to Alternet management of Eklipse and the integration of Eklipse.

-The Call Exchange is still proceeding smoothly with more institutes expressing interest in joint proposals.

-The Mobility Fund has not been used in 2020.

14.1. Alternet evaluation 2020 (Jiska, Tyler)

-DOC09.1, Alternet report 2020

-DOC09.2, Overview_Beneficiaries_AlternetActivities_2020

-DOC09.3, Alternet related papers from Web of Science and Scopus

Jiska shared a table displaying the beneficiaries of Alternet activities, which has been sent to all Council members. She asked for any errors or additions to this table to be sent to Tyler. Another document of acknowledgements of Alternet was assembled by Philip Roche and shared with the Council. 43 papers were noted that acknowledged Alternet. It was questioned why the papers of Gosselin and Varumo are not yet listed; to date they are shared on the Alternet website, acknowledge Alternet, but are not yet included in the report.

14.2. Communication (Jiska, Tyler, Adriana Clivillé Morató)

-DOC10, Communication plan

-Proposal 2021, new website and printed material

-Budget proposal 2021

Adriana presented the new communications plan for 2021. Adriana has worked actively with Andy Sier and Tyler Kulfan for approximately three months; and this team of three has actively collaborated on present, ongoing, and planned future communications work. During 2021, integration with Eklipse and the evolution of the Alternet website will be the main activities of focus. Additionally, standard ongoing communications (internal and external), review of promotional printed materials, review of the social media strategy, and production of three major newsletters are planned.

CREAF is now hosting the Alternet and Eklipse websites, which were renovated by Tyler Kulfan with a new Wordpress format. Agusti Escobar has provided a great deal of technical support, as the migration to CREAF hosting of the Alternet and Eklipse websites was overseen. Adriana has proposed more direct contact and integration with each of the Alternet partner institutes. New types of content (podcasts, videos, etc.) have also been considered. Alison expressed strong support for Adriana's proposal for regular newsletters. Adriana has also recommended establishing close contact with designated contact persons for two way communications and updates from each institute. Maurice asked if an enhanced manner of distributing information to institutes via their Council reps was considered; Adriana noted that the newsletter should help but that facilitation of internal communications should be further considered and supported.

Adriana proposes a budget of 6,000 euros for communications in 2021.

Decision: Support for the 2021 communications plan was given. Final budget allocation will be dealt with Friday morning.

14.3. Science-Policy Interface (Jiska, Juliette Young)

-DOC11, SPI-plan

-Proposal 2021, Biodiversity Partnership, IPBES, webinars, one-stop-shop on SPIs

-Budget proposal 2021

Juliette presented on the SPI activity. She spoke on the success of the 2020 UFZ SPI seminar and proposed an Alternet rotating SPI seminar series hosted by three different member institutes in 2021. There is an open call to all Alternet institutions for hosting. Each would feature 2-3 guest speakers and be interactive in nature.

The second activity presented by Juliette was the proposed one-stop-shop on SPI on the Alternet website. The goal would be to establish a state of the art webpage to understand and engage in the SPI at the European level. Fact sheets about SPIs, links to key websites, access to guideline and handbooks, summary of the main SPI activities that Alternet members could join (IPBES timeline, CBD timeline, EU timeline, etc.) would be shared. Budget options include Tyler's salary, support from a web designer, support from a research assistant, and support from an intern.

Eeva Furman expressed interest in hosting an SPI seminar at SYKE. Rob asked if engagement with the capacity-building task force of IPBES should also be initiated. Juliette agreed that this would be beneficial. Eeva Primmer recommended a seminar built around the Biodiversity Strategy; this could potentially be the SYKE-hosted seminar. Eszter (ESSRG) and Reinier (WENR) also expressed interest in hosting.

14.4. Alternet High Impact Action (AHIA) (Jiska, Philip Roche)

-DOC-12, AHIA-plan

-Proposal 2021

-Budget proposal 2021

Jiska presented on behalf of Philip for the Alternet High Impact Actions activity. Per Angelstam of SLU is working on three joint publications and has submitted a report back to Philip and the Secretariat. They are additionally working on a website and policy brief. The project of Thibault Datry was reviewed; a joint publication, online video, and policy brief are being produced. The high impact of both of these projects was positively recognized.

In 2020, another AHIA call was distributed and the project of Bede West (UK-CEH) and a team formed at the Alternet Summer School was selected. This project is ongoing and is in a starting phase.

The MB notes the success of this activity and recommends the launch of a new AHIA call in early 2021. It was noted that there are some budget issues and questions due to issues of inability to make expenditures as planned (due to coronavirus). It is proposed that support for a single proposal with 15k euros of funding be provided.

14.5. Infrastructure (Jiska, Petteri Vihervaara)

- DOC-13, Infrastructure-plan
- Proposal 2021
- Budget proposal 2021

A promotional video on infrastructures, their role in European research, and their use and facilities within Alternet institutes was produced by Tyler, Petteri, and videographer Erno Lauter. Allocation of the remaining unspent €2,500 is proposed to finalize the video.

14.6. Summer School (Jiska, Allan Watt)

- DOC-14, Summer School plan
- Proposal 2021, Peyresq, Biodiversity Partnership
- Budget proposal 2021 and confirmation Summer School 2022

Allan Watt introduced the Summer School activity, noting that everything was in place for a successful Summer School in 2020, but that the coronavirus crisis ultimately meant that the school had to be cancelled. No payments were made and no fees were received. A series of online talks were held (eight in total) in early September with support from the co-conveners and Tyler. While no substitute for the real Summer School, the talks were highly successful and very well attended. The conveners will meet in January to discuss how to proceed in 2021 per coronavirus restrictions. Allan suggests planning to hold the SS in 2021 as planned, as the Peyresq Foundation offers a high level of flexibility. He also noted the high, broad attendance that the virtual event allowed.

Allan stated that the organizers of the Biodiversity Partnership are interested in supporting the Alternet Summer School (as well as Eklipse); independence must be maintained, but financial support (potentially up to 50% of costs) would be highly beneficial. Mihai recommended looking into linkages with: <https://civis.eu/en>.

The MB proposes the holding the 2021 Summer School; supporting the planning and budget allocation for the 2022 Summer School; and to negotiate cooperation with the Biodiversity Partnership for future Summer Schools. 2021 funding has already been approved at the 2019 council meeting.

14.7. Conference (Jiska, Philip Roche, Sonja Jähnig)

- DOC-15, Conference plan
- Proposal 2021
- Budget proposal 2021

Sonja presented an update on the planning for the 2021 Alternet Conference, following a review of outputs and outreach from the successful 2019 conference (including four major publications).

Planning committees have been meeting for the 2021 conference, which will be entitled “Biodiversity and Health: Time for Transformative Change.” It will be held 18-21 May 2021 (noon to noon) in Ghent. This will include 6 half-days to accommodate the sessions for sub-topics, plenaries and specific Alternet groups. Side events will likely be planned and potential deliverables include a biodiversity-health post-2020 research framework, papers, etc.

The MB proposes a self-sustaining conference that would not require costs from Alternet; but proposes a buffer amount of money in case this goal is not fully realized. The question of proceeding with a physical conference in May, virtual hosting, and postponing of the conference are being actively considered.

Alison suggested that postponement to a more secure date in later 2021 would be preferable; Maurice noted that the topic of Transformative Change is very attractive at the moment and that there are also great benefits to hosting without delay. A combination of in-person and online may be the most convenient. The question is whether an in-person conference at a later period is better than a virtual one at a sooner period. Reinier suggested alignment with the CBD developments. Eeva recommended planning without consideration of COVID and noted that exchanging ideas from one conference to another can be highly positive, especially if the conference is delayed until later in the year when there will likely be a high number of other conferences. A number of diverse preferences for virtual, delayed in-person, and combined in-person/virtual were expressed. Some expressed mixed in-person/virtual as the worst of both worlds

There was a noted preference for all online or all in-person. Responsibility on a final decision will be delegated to the scientific committee.

Day 2 of 2020 Council Meeting: Friday, 11 December 2020

Maurice opened day 2 of the Council meeting. Over the evening, the infrastructures video was shared for viewing and will be shared again during the coffee break. Robert Kanka (ILE-SAS) arrived and was introduced.

Alternet activities, new activity proposals 2021 (continued)

14.8. 9.00-9.15 DECI: Multisite Research (MSR) (Jiska, Joan Pino)

-DOC-16, MSR-plan

-Proposal 2021

-Budget proposal 2021

Joan Pino presented the state of the art of the MSR activity, as well as plans for 2021. The two ongoing projects include the Multi-Lake Research project led by BC-CAS and the Roadmap for a European Multi-Site Research Infrastructure project led by INBO. Funding was granted for a 3rd year for the BC-CAS project but not for the INBO project.

To date, two workshops have been held for the BC-CAS project; additionally, outreach, popular dissemination, data analysis, and manuscript drafting has been conducted. The 2020 extension enabled a third telemetry workshop in Derry, Ireland and an international initiative on joint project applications. First payment was made in 2018, the second in September 2020, and the final payment of 5,000 euros is pending. Planned activities have been affected by COVID and delays in fund transfer; the next workshop is still unplanned.

The INBO project had a workshop meeting in May 2020, which was cancelled due to COVID. As the major part of the budget corresponds to face-to-face meetings, a budget reallocation has been requested for: personal costs, development costs, and publication costs in open access. 20,000 euros has been paid in June 2019 with no extension approved.

The MB has agreed that there is difficulty in the MSR initiative as it tends to support ongoing, larger projects and tends not to produce much acknowledgement of Alternet. The MB has proposed the following:

- Due to complications resulting from COVID, it is proposed that the duration of ongoing MSR projects be extended as a flexible courtesy.
- Requests to use funding for personal and subcontracting costs should be rejected
- No new MSR call was released in 2020; the MSR activity merits consideration from the Council concerning whether a new call should be distributed and how it may be revitalized
- The council is inquired to consider if a new call should be released in 2021; the previous 10k allocation for two projects and ongoing regulations and funding amounts; themed calls; and elucidation of why partners have applied (or not) in the past.

Decision: Support was given for flexible extension of ongoing projects.

Decision: Support was given for not changing what payments can be used for (i.e. personal costs); in general, funding of personnel costs are not allowed.

The questions of whether to launch a new call in 2021 and what its terms would be were raised. Reasons for not allocating a budget of 20,000 euros for 2021 to release a new call were elaborated by Jiska, who noted that Alternet MSR funding tends to represent a small amount within larger selected projects; few applications tend to be received and few acknowledgements tend to be given. Stefan Klotz noted that eliminating the MSR element of Alternet represents the loss of a critical part of Alternet's identity as an organization. If Alternet is promoting projects, proactive acknowledgement of Alternet in articles, etc. must be assured. Differences now that Alternet is an association should be considered. Stefan proposed that the Council plans a new call for a new project in 2022 and does not fund a new

call in 2021, as the projects have been extended. Eeva Furman expressed agreement with Stefan's proposal and expressed that lack of interest may come from the reality that many natural scientists are narrow in their field. Eeva suggested asking researchers how to better focus the initiative and then use this as a teaser for proposals once organized.

Maurice approved of the suggestion of Stefan. It was noted that the MSR initiative is vital for an organization largely made up of research institutes. Eeva's suggestion of reaching out to researchers on potential themes, etc. was also noted. Alison noted that linking themes with conferences would increase attractiveness and policy impact. An evaluation is to be made in 2021 and then a call is to be released in 2022. Stefan recommended that the MB produces a call in 2021 to distribute in 2022. Ulf noted that the absence of funding for salary costs limits participation.

Decisions:

-No allocation of funding for a new call in 2021 will be made.

-Evaluation of the MSR activity will be conducted in 2021.

-The MB is directed to pursue a more targeted call.

-Consideration will be given to ways of engaging researchers beforehand by asking about potential themes.

-Funding in 2022 for a new call will be provided, pending the outcomes of the evaluation.

14.9. Mobility Fund (Jiska)

-DOC-19, Mobility Fund plan

-Proposal 2021

-Budget proposal 2021

€10,000 was allocated for the mobility fund in 2020 to support travel between institutes. The €10,000 euros has never been fully used; this year there were zero applications for mobility funding. Because it is very rarely utilized, the MB recommends not allocating €10,000 for 2021.

Alison stated that the possibilities offered by this fund are beneficial and that encouragement to use should be better promoted within their institutes by the different Council representatives. Alternatively, she recommended evaluating the value of this activity alongside MSR. Renier and Eeva supported the idea of evaluation, with Eeva alternatively supporting having open funds reserved for ad-hoc MB purposes (and mobility applications could be approved on a case by case basis). Renier suggested allocating zero for 2021 as we evaluate and review. Maurice noted that ad hoc operation without approval for activity-specific funding is not how the MB functions. Maurice suggested allocating €5,000. Jiska noted that it was utilized prior to COVID, just not to the full €10,000 allocation. Ana suggested that the fund is valuable for young researchers and could possibly be used to support conference attendance/participation by young researchers.

Presently, it was agreed that a budget allocation between €3-5,000 would be appropriate for the mobility fund. The exact figure will be discussed during the budget agenda item.

14.10. Call Exchange (Jiska, Mart Kylvik)

-DOC-20, Call Exchange plan

-Proposal 2021

-Budget proposal 2021

Mart Kulvik presented on the Call Exchange, Alternet's clearing house mechanism. The call exchange is still operating on the older Alternet website and is currently listed as "under construction" on the new alterneteurope.eu website. Mart noted that certain institutes have been more engaged in the use of the Call Exchange for notating interest in calls.

To clarify, Mart posed whether the call exchange should function as a passive or active instrument; opened for feedback on progress and limitations; and how to get information systematically on upcoming calls. Attention was drawn to the Horizon call on Support to Processes Triggered by IPBES and IPCC.

At present, the Call Exchange is a passive instrument that represents what partners have found and shared. Interest can be indicated as a partner or coordinator by users. When a certain amount of interest is notated, potential partners are contacted by Tyler. Options for more active call/consortium building development were raised. Jiska noted that there is an upcoming call on the prospective Biodiversity Partnership and the role of Alternet may be considered. Kinga noted the potential for consortium building within Alternet and supported maintaining the passive Call Exchange alongside initiatives to better unify Alternet partners. She noted that funding (i.e. AHIA) could be used to push for joint proposals. Alison stated that the current system has been operating well under Mart and Tyler, and further supports exploring what can be done to support partnerships in a more organized and unified manner. Reinier supported proactive exploration, and Bridgett noted that joint initiatives are considered a top reason to belong to Alternet, but that potential coordinators of joint proposals need to step up and take proactive roles of leadership. Kinga suggested higher emphasis on screening calls, finding interesting items, and facilitating partnerships with greater structure over the next year. Ana Lillebo suggested that each host institution should identify two or three calls of top interest and overlaps could be detected. Maurice suggested notifying by mail when new calls are listed; Tyler affirmed that this is presently being done and will continue. Eeva suggested a piloting program. It was also suggested that directors be more directly involved.

An allocation of €2000 is requested for the development of a new, sophisticated Call Exchange page on the new Alternet website.

The Council agrees with the current operation of the Call Exchange and it is recommended to further facilitate coordination when calls receive a certain amount of interest. Proactivity in sharing and coordination is stressed.

14.11. Eklipse (Jiska, Marie Vandewalle)

- DOC-17, Eklipse plan
- Proposal 2021, governance, management, calls, requests, NoN
- Budget proposal 2021

Marie presented on the progress of Eklipse in 2020 and the plan forward in 2021. She reviewed the new communications and marketing materials, including the new boilerplate, logo, and website.

The wide-reaching impact of Eklipse reports and the broad range of requesters were noted. Together with the Eklipse community, the aim of creating a robust SPI mechanism has been achieved, the Eklipse niche has been established, and a successful transition to Alternet management has been overseen. The first call for paid requests was launched in 2020 and three requests were selected. Eklipse was officially handed over to Alternet on 7 December 2020, even while the extension of Eklipse as an EU-funded project has been extended through September 2022. A new call for requests will be released (with the pre-announcement launched today); spontaneous applications for requests are also now accepted.

Involvement in the next phase will be led by the UFZ team, the co-coordination team (ECB), the Knowledge Coordination Body, Methods Expert Group, Alternet, and the Eklipse consortium. The KCB presently includes four Alternet partners. A new open call for KCB members is currently open. Alternet partners are encouraged to disseminate Eklipse calls and communications.

The MB has proposed a reallocation of the €35,000 allocated in the 2020 budget to 2021 as a buffer for Eklipse operation expenses. The allocation in 2020 was unused. Recognition of the success of Eklipse and its work towards self-sustenance were noted by Maurice. Gratitude to Eklipse for Alternet secretariat costs were recognized. Support for the excellent initiative of Eklipse was presently noted. Costs and allocation will be further discussed during the budget agenda item.

14.13. Secretariat (Jiska, Maurice)

- DOC-18, Secretariat plan
- Proposal 2021...
- Budget proposal 2021

Jiska van Dijk presented the Secretariat plan. The decision to hire a half-time secretariat was made at the Council meeting in Uppsala. Tyler has served as secretariat and overseen daily operations, administration, and communications since 2017. In 2020, Tyler additionally worked half-time for Eklipse.

As Tyler has graduated with his masters and served for three years now, an increase of salary is recommended by the MB to 26,500 euros for 40% time. Maurice noted that the support provided presently by the Secretariat enables all other activities and initiatives to move forward. The first question to address in budget considerations will be if the employment of a secretariat is still supported; the second is if the increase of the budget is approved.

15. Budget allocations – 2021 (Maurice, Jiska)

-DOC-21, Budget allocation plan

Maurice presented the budget allocation proposals for 2021.

-Current credit balance: €180,000

-Expected income €71,000

-Outstanding engagement costs (ongoing contracts): €45,000

-Specific MB activity proposal amounts can be found in DOC-21

Reinier suggested consideration of commitments and costs, noting that some costs are flexible while others are somewhat inflexible and questioning intent in upcoming years regarding inflow and outflow of cash. With stable membership and fee payment without extra funding, the expected credit balance at the end of 2021 will be €50,479. Bridgett noted that if no money is ultimately spent on the conference and Eklipse buffer allocations, then these amounts will match the anticipated loss in funds and the credit balance should remain stable. Sonja anticipated that the conference might well need to use the buffer money. Jiska noted that the Biodiversity Partnership may also be an opportunity for funding the conference to some extent. Bridgett suggested to avoid double-accounting and to clearly distinguish between budget items and emergency items that should be funded from the credit balance in an emergency (for Eklipse and conference budget items). Jiska recommended removing the buffer title and making these items standard budget items. Eeva suggested that allocation for certain budget items could be halted until after the conference and activated depending upon conference costs, etc. Jiska responded that that will be very impractical for planning the different MB activities in 2021. Maurice suggested skipping the term buffer and making the full allocation for the conference proposal.

Alternet is trying to make financing progress through Biodiversity Partnership engagement and potential European funding for the Summer School (as well as engagement with Eklipse). Joan questioned whether it is time to reverse the fee reduction of past years and increasing the fee again; alternatively, a strategy for attracting new membership could be included in a 5-year plan. Alison stated that such a change should come at the end of the just agreed upon 3-year agreement. Eeva suggested that in support of the conference, etc. some of the larger institutes might be willing to pay more than the standard amounts. Maurice noted that since fees were halved, activities have actually increased because of a very active MB. Reinier suggested case-by-case funding of special activities by request to the Alternet partner institutes (i.e. contribution to this year's conference financing, etc.).

Bridgett noted a chicken-and-egg issue where cutting activities will eliminate partner interest--but so will increasing fees. Reinier suggested further post-meeting discussion following baseline agreements at the present meeting, identifying strategic activities, funding options, and establishing a 5-year plan. Eeva suggested freezing activities until June and then deciding to unlock activities following a virtual Council meeting. Bridgett suggested approving the budget but recognizing that this is the last year that we operate in this way and that 2021 sees intensive exploration and decision on alternate financing strategies. Thierry suggested that the budget be approved as a provisional budget and be officially approved at a later time (several months into 2021). Reinier volunteered to help draft the final budget.

Maurice proposes agreement on the spendings for 2021 as proposed by the MB, at risk that the credit balance may be significantly reduced and with plans for an in-between Council meeting to further deal with this issue of finances. Jiska will need help establishing a new budget or a task force to oversee financial considerations. The final budget proposal at the in-between meeting will categorize buffer allocations differently. If the conference or Eklipse activities require funds, they will be derived from the credit balance.

The priority and urgency of certain items was considered. Maurice will send an updated budget around and inquire the Council to identify their priority items. Then, the in-between meeting will be approached with general agreement about prioritization.

Decision: No definite decision at present. This issue will be considered in detail by the MB in preparation for an in-between Council meeting in February or March. Alternate options and opportunities for funding will be a major point of consideration at the in-between meeting.

16. Alternative funding opportunities for Alternet (Maurice)

-No doc

Dealt with in the previous agenda item.

17. AOB (Maurice)

-No doc

Alison noted that the legal statutes are missing an Article 26, which is referenced in the text about founding members; as such, there is no legal definition of founding members. Maurice will look into this and rectify using the official statutes that are written in Flemish.

18. Next AC meeting (Maurice)

The next official meeting will be in February or March 2021; it is expected that the next physical meeting will be early 2022. Sincere gratitude was expressed to departing MB members Petteri and Andy, as well as departing Council members such as Eeva Furman. Chair thanked the Alternet MB for all their work and for the preparation of the meeting

documents. The Chair also thanked all those present for a positive and productive Council meeting.

The meeting closed at 13.00