

GHI Leadership Meeting
25 March 2019, 18:00 – 19:00
(Leiden, the Netherlands)

1. Participants / Invitees

The Leadership meeting was open to everyone attending the Congress. Attendees included:

- Board Members, including Global Councillor and Chair Supervisory Board
- Directors (Ambassador Programme; Communications; Membership)
- Ambassadors

Participants

Adina Baicu

Adriana Sterian

Alina-Ioana Gostin (Reporter)

Ana Sanhueza Martín

Atef Idriss

Bernd van der Meulen

Dumitru Mnerie

Esmeralda Paz Lemus

Gerhard Schleining

Huub Lelieveld (Chair)

Joe Regenstein

Liviu Gaceu

Marco Leon Felix

Marie-Laurence Lemay

Michaela Pichler

Mona Popa

Nathalie Persson-Andrianasitera

Sangsuk Oh

Vishweshwaraiah Prakash

4 young scientists





2. Points of discussion

- A brief introduction by each attendee was given.
- Huub talked about the importance of each Leadership member and their role within the GHI.
- Finances: we get some money from donations, books, which then we can use to help for example ambassadors attend GHI conferences.
- It is in plan to facilitate meetings in the future.
- Huub talked about Working Groups (WG) and the need to increase the number of members in each WG.
- Huub provides as example the case of toxicity of chemicals. Too much vitamine A is harmful, too little makes you blind. The general public must be made to understand such matters.
- Another example is the presence of minutes amounts of antibiotics that lead to governments to seize and destroy healthy food, because most regulations require absence. And judges do not know what a parts per billion are, but know that it is not zero.
- Still another example of food being seized destroyed, albeit being safe for consumption, when food is distributed while the forms are not fully correct. This still happens even in Europe.
- Communication for preventing safe food from being destroyed is very important; nowadays social media is better for communicating information than traditional methods such as leaflets.
- It was discussed to (re)activate the GHI Tweeter/Instagram/ LinkedIn accounts. It was highlighted by attendees that it is important to keep a professional look and message within social media to be perceived as a serious professional organization. We want authorities and consumers to trust the information disseminated which is science-based. Communications Director, Adriana Sterian will look into this and might have a new colleague (from China) to assist with social media communication.

- Dumitru Mnerie talked about the GHI volunteer recognising certificate that he recently developed and that was adopted by the GHI board.
- Atef Idriss raised the point of how to increase recognition of those involved within GHI activities and Huub said he is open to suggestions.
- Overall, everyone can subscribe to the GHI Newsletter, but not everyone can become a GHI member; members need to be scientists. Importantly, the GHI members do not represent their employer, they may join only as individuals (scientists).
- Prakash explains that the neutrality of GHI is very important. He also highlights the important role of Ambassadors in case of food safety issues in the country/region they are acting as such. Ambassadors can identify local experts and respond to inquiries on these issues, for example, after discussing with chairs of WGs and other GHI professionals.
- Ambassadors are also instrumental in the development of the Global Incident Alert Networks (GIAN).
- Huub explains that GHI develops this GIAN system to allow persons (e.g. whistle blowers) to report anonymously information that may lead to food safety issues. They may do so by completing a form designed to keep the person anonymous. For example, the melamine incident in China would have been avoided if people would not have been scared to signal malpractices the illegal use of melamine in milk was known 1 year before the incident that killed many and made very many children ill).

3. Feedback

- Positive feedback was provided by attendees of this congress who are looking forward to the next 2nd GHI World Congress (proposed in 2 years time).
- It was inquired whether presentations, congress proceedings, photos from the 1st Congress can be provided to attendees and/or disseminated on the GHI website or the congress webpage.
- It has been also suggested to increase publicity in advance and on many more platforms for the next (2nd) GHI Congress to reach a wider audience.

Alina-Ioana Gostin, 7 April 2019.