

“Achieving consensus on the science of food regulations and legislation to ensure the global availability of safe and wholesome food products for all consumers”

General Assembly of the Global Harmonisation Initiative (GHI)

The General Assembly meeting occurred in Singapore during the 21st World Congress of Food Science & Technology.

Attendees: 21 GHI members (8 present and 12 online)

Place: Singapore

Date: 2 November 2022

Meeting start: 2.07pm

Meeting end: 3.12pm

Participants:

Diana Bogueva
Dora Marinova
Huub Lelieveld
Janitha Liyanage
Larry Keener
Michael Murkovic
Nathalie Persson-Andrianasitera
Vishweshwaraiah Prakash

Online:

Adina Baicu
Adriana Sterian
Dumitru Mnerie
Gunter Greil
Joe Regenstein (by proxy)
Sangsuk Oh
Livia Simon Sarkadi
Nicola Stanley
Gerhard Schleining
Pamela Tom
Mark Shamtsyan
Siân Astley (by proxy)

Not online due to difficulties with the connection:

Abenaa Akyaa Okyere
Vladimir Kakurinov

Apologies:

Abenaa Akyaa Okyere
Alina-Ioana Gostin
Hugo de Vries
María Soledad Tapia
Veslemøy Andersen

1. Opening

- Determination of a quorum
- All who attended were introduced.
- The session was recorded.
- No conflicts of interest were declared.

On-site participants present: 8

Online participants: 12

Total: 20, which is more than 50% of 37 (number of GA members) and hence, a quorum was established.

1. Nomination of a reporter

Dora Marinove was proposed and she accepted.

2. Delegates holding proxies

Huub Lelieveld - proxy of Siân Astley

Diana Bogueva - proxy of Joe Regenstein

3. Additions to the agenda

No additions proposed

4. Approval of the minutes of the General Assembly of 15 February 2022

Approval received by email from

1. Hüge de Vries

2. Mark Shamtsyan

3. Vladimir Kakurinov

4. Dumitru Mnerie

Those present and those participating online all approved but with one comment:

It was questioned whether the General Assembly meeting complies with the new GHI rules (which have not been accepted yet). Revisiting of the rules and regulations to be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

Participants are encouraged to submit suggestions for improvement of the meeting rules and regulations.

5. President's report

a. Recognitions

In 2021 Gunter Greil's contribution for supporting GHI's website for more than 10 years was recognised with a "Certificate of Excellence".

b. Ambassadors - report received from Alina Gostin

Currently there are 100 GHI Ambassadors in 68 countries. In 23 countries we have more than one Ambassador (ranging from two to four).

Many ambassadors have been active and responded to request from several working groups and translated GHI documents. The full report is attached.

Important remarks:

- i. Local authorities are reluctant to distribute GHI information.
- ii. There are no Ambassadors in countries like France, Germany, and The Netherlands, with influence on regulatory developments. The Board Members and Honorary Officers are invited to send suggestions of GHI Ambassador candidates
- iii. Ambassadors need financial support to be able to attend meetings.

c. Working groups - information received from Diana Bogueva

Diana, with help from Nicola Stanley and Gerhard Schleining, organised with the working groups (WG) the following webinars:

1. Ethics in Food Safety Practices
2. Chemical Food Safety
3. Nutrition
4. Food Safety in Relation to Religious Dietary Laws
5. Food Microbiology
6. Genetic Toxicology and Genomics
7. Reducing Post-Harvest Losses
8. In preparation, postponed until next year: Mycotoxins

Webinars appear to be successful and two African countries requested extra webinars on various topics for next year.

Two new WG have been established:

1. Consumer perception - performing well - initiated and lead by Diana
This appeared to be a very good initiative - started with 60 members.
2. Risk assessment - initiated but not yet active.

In cooperation with the WG Diana developed a Task Description for Chairs and Vice-Chairs. All current WG chairs have agreed to the description and they will comply with it. Chairs and vice-chairs must be in place by December this year, and the chairs have been asked to submit their plans for 2023 and later before the end of the year.

The GA recognised the work done by Diana.

d. Meetings, congresses, conferences

- i. The 2nd GHI congress has been postponed twice now. The current plan is to have the congress again in The Netherlands, in Rotterdam (instead of St. Petersburg, Russia), in principle from 18-20 March 2024 (depending on availability of selected venues).
- ii. GHI participated in the annual EFFoST conferences with GHI sessions.
- iii. GHI has always participate in the IUFoST Congresses with GHI sessions similar to these this year.
- iv. Various presentations by Board members and ambassadors on and around the World Food Safety Day (6 June every year).

GHI Board members are encouraged to send suggestions of how to find ways to support the attendance of GHI members/ambassadors to various international events and GHI meetings, particularly from (very) low emerging economy countries.

e. Publications

- i. The newsletter, GHI Matters is published every two months in the African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development; some members do not regularly receive the link to GHI Matters. Filiz Hazal (Membership Director) and Nicola Stanley (Communications Directors) will investigate and make improvements.
- ii. Many relevant publications prepared by GHI members are now available in the Online library
- iii. Books - report from Veslemøy Andersen
Five books of the series "Nutrition and Health aspects" have been published and four are in preparation; three volumes have editors but have not yet gone beyond that. Another seven books need discussion among the Series Editors to ensure that progress will be made. For details, see the attached report.
The book "Food safety management: A practical guide for the food industry", 2nd. ed., with 56 chapters (!) is in production; Elsevier announced 1 October 2022 as the publications date. See <https://www.elsevier.com/books/food-safety-management/andersen/978-0-12-820013-1>.

It is recognised that some delays have been due to the pandemic, which required large amounts of time to meet the new online teaching commitments.

- f. Membership report - Filiz Hazal
The total number of members on 2 November 2022 was 1373.
The number increases with about 4 new members per week.

6. Finances

Gerhard Schleining produced an extensive report and sent it to the auditors. The report contains personal data, and is therefore not attached.

7. Auditors report - sent by Vladimir Kakurinov

Mr. Pablo Juliano and I checked the accounting documents for the period 2018-2021. After reviewing the figures for the bank account, especially at the end of the year 2021 (7938.18 €), we are in agreement with the balance indicated. In accordance with these findings, we would like to ask you to discharge the Auditors for the years 2018-2021. So done.

8. Approval of the statement of account

As proposed by the auditors, the account was approved, by acclamation.

9. Approval of the actions of the Board through today and exoneration (discharge from liability) of the Board

No issues were raised and the Board is exonerated.

10. Approval of the revised GHI Constitution

In the past two years the GHI board has attempted to make the Constitution clearer and has made some changes that hopefully improve the document, based on the experience of the past 10 years. The board also decided that the English version should be the official text. However, because GHI is registered in Austria, after approval of the English text, it will be carefully translated into German for the Austrian authorities.

The revised constitution was circulated by email, with the agenda. No issues were raised and the revised constitution was approved by the members of the General Assembly.

11. Elections for the period November 2022 to November 2025

Elected board members:

Adriana Sterian
Charles Aworh
Diana Bogueva
Gerhard Schleining
Huub Lelieveld
Joe Regenstein
Maria Tapia
Nadiya Boyko
Nathalie Persson-Adrianasitera
Nicola Stanley
Sangsuk Oh
Vishweshwaraiah Prakash

The participants (present and online) who had not yet voted did so during the meeting. Thereafter Dora Marinova, Diana Bogueva and Nathalie Persson-Andrianasitera counted the votes. The differences were small, ranging from 17-23 votes per candidate. Of the 13 candidates therefore, 12 have been elected and the one with 17 votes was not.

Elected auditors:

Both candidates were elected again, by acclamation:

Pablo Juliano
Vladimir Kakurinov

*Dora Marinova, 2 November 2022
Completed, 23 November 2022*