

8th WORKSHOP

Meeting of Working Groups & Steering Committee Meeting

**Institute of Agricultural Engineering in
Bonn, September 7th – 8th, 2006**

**“TOOLS FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ASSESSMENT OF
AGRICULTURAL/BIOSYSTEMS ENGINEERING PROGRAMMES,
TUNING SUBJECT-AREA LINES & DISAPPEARING RARE KNOWLEDGE”**

MINUTES

Participants:

Prof. BRIASSOULIS Demetres (Coordinator, Agricultural University of Athens)
Prof. AHOKAS Jukka (University of Helsinki)
Prof. AYUGA Francisco (Polytechnic University of Madrid)
Prof. BIRZIETIS Gints (Latvia University of Agriculture)
Prof. CROSSLEY Peter (Cranfield University at Silsoe)
Prof. CRUZ Vasco (University of Evora)
Prof. FEBO Pierluigi (University of Palermo)
Prof. KIC Pavel (Czech University of Agriculture Prague)
Prof. LAKOTA Miran (University of Maribor)
Prof. NAVICKAS Kestutis (Lithuanian University of Agriculture)
Prof. NILSSON Christer (Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences)
Prof. NOZDROVICKY Ladislav (Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra)
Prof. PANAGAKIS Panos (Agricultural University of Athens)
Prof. RATH Thomas (University of Hannover)
Prof. SCARASCIA-MUGNOZZA Giacomo (University of Bari)
Prof. SINDIR K. Okay (Ege University, Faculty of Agriculture)
Prof. MAGETTE Willem (Biosystems Engineering Department in Dublin)
Dr. COMPARETTI Antonio (University of Palermo)
Dr. FEHRMANN Jens (Dresden University of Technology)
Ms. NIKOPOULOS Effie (Agricultural University of Athens)
Mr. RUIKUIZA Raimundas (Lithuanian University of Agriculture)

Thursday, 7th September 2006 (all day)

1. Opening of the 8th USAEE Workshop

The 8th and last USAEE Workshop took place right after the joint AgEng/CIGR World Congress held between the 3rd to 7th of September in Bonn, Germany. The USAEE TN was presented by its coordinator, Prof. D. Briassoulis, in one of the congress's parallel sessions and in a plenary EurAgEng session (in parallel to CIGR congress), in an effort to disseminate and promote the outcomes and activities undertaken during the previous years to a wider audience and other interested target groups. The success of this TN can be seen through the words of EurAgEng's President, Prof. B. Day, who mentioned that " ... *EU Network USAEE has made major progress in defining core curricula that should be recognized by the supreme body for engineering qualification accreditation in Europe, FEANI. The Society is working closely with USAEE to ensure that the benefits of all their hard work in defining the necessary core curricula are available to members throughout Europe*" (please refer to the EurAgEng Newsletter Autumn 2006 – Conference 2006).

Dr. J. Ferhmann opened the 8th USAEE Workshop and welcomed the participants as well as presented the agenda and the time schedule of all the events to be followed. All partners were invited to participate in the discussions.

2. Briefing on administrative issues - Synopsis of activities undertaken

The morning session started with Prof. P. Panagakis reference to the activities undertaken especially during the last year, namely the developments on the new revised report re-submitted to FEANI in June 2006 (decision is still pending) and the draft Recognition Implementation Plan prepared in cooperation with Prof. W. Magette (Accreditation Committee Working Group co-leader). The last was forwarded during summer to EurAgEng's Executive Board. It was mentioned that at this point the success of the venture will depend on the voluntary support of a significant number of EurAgEng members along with members of the USAEE Steering Committee, who will be asked to act as members in the reviewing panels.

USAEE TN members were formally informed that the ERBEE proposal was not selected for a European co-financing, but the TN coordinators' intention is to re-submit a new revised proposal in the forthcoming November. Other financial and administrative issues were also discussed reminding partners that the lifetime of this project will be topped off by the end September 2006 (end of eligibility period).

An oral presentation was made by Prof. K. Navickas, who attended the TECHNO TN coordinators meeting (4-5 September 2006 in Brussels), acting as an USAEE delegate. That meeting was based on the topic "Responding to

challenges for European Technology Oriented Socrates Thematic Networks: Implementing changes in institutional and disciplinary co-operation". He explicated the main goals of this TN and pointed that probably issues on Multilingualism, 3rd level of Education (European PhD) as well as students expectations from the European Reforms might also interest our TN and could be included in the new ERBEE proposal.

This session was concluded with an overview presentation made by Prof. P. Panagakis on the implementation of the first lines of the TUNING Template. The first two TUNING lines were prepared at a preliminary basis on the topics: *Introduction to the subject area* and *Degree profile(s)* as well as data and figures derived from the processing of the questionnaires on employability, distributed in January 2006 around the USAEE partnership and other interested bodies, were as well demonstrated. It was mentioned that the final version of this report-deliverable will be included in the 8th USAEE proceedings taking into account also partners' feedback.

3. Presentations on "Tools for Quality Assurance and Assessment of Agricultural/Biosystems Engineering programmes, Tuning subject-area lines & Disappearing rare knowledge"

The fifteen participating institutions presented in an alphabetical order the status of the Quality assurance process and Qualifications Framework used by their own institution as well as other institutions in their country offering curricula in Agricultural/Biosystems Engineering. They also described the university's day-to day responsibility for Q.A. in education and research (through Faculty staff committees as well as special University scientific committees) and in brief made reference to the Standard Assessment procedure for students already implemented by their institutions/departments and where applicable to the Code of Practice for education and research.

All presentations were concluded with a preliminary mapping of the first two subject-area lines of the TUNING Template as well as to the current status of Disappearing rare knowledge undergoing in their own countries, focusing especially on the following issues: historical farm buildings & new purposes, agrotourism and agricultural museums.

4. Final developments on the Recognition Process

The first day of the meeting was closed by Prof. W. Magette, co-leader of the AC WG, who presented one of the major deliverables of the USAEE TN within Task 4, on the topic "Defining common accreditation strategies and procedures and establishing the bodies/committees to carry out the accreditation of the departments, which are to meet the core curricula requirements". He gave the key points of the procedure to be implemented and mentioned the processing applications for Recognition. He ended his

speech pointing out that this effort might be a good first step towards accreditation.

Friday, 8th September 2006

5. WG1, WG2, WG3 Sessions

The second day of the meeting went on with the three WGs sessions. These assemblies were open not only to WGs members, but also to all USAEE partners, in order to decide and evaluate the progress made so far and finalize the project's outcomes and deliverables.

Final evaluation and discussions took place on various matters, such as the:

- ✓ Deliverables of the dissemination year and the deadline for partners' feedback/contribution. This was set by the 30th of September 2006. Feedback was requested on:
 - WG1 Deliverable
 - Preliminary Report on the first two TUNING lines
 - Dissemination activities undertaken at a national level
- ✓ Developments on the FEANI and EurAgEng Recognition. Prof. P. Febo was nominated Vice-President of EurAgEng, on 3 September 2006, and will be member of its Executive Committee. He mentioned that the next AgEng meeting will take place in the forthcoming March and he promised to bring in its agenda the Recognition procedure.
- ✓ All partners attended this session promised to continue to disseminate the USAEE outputs beyond the end of the project's eligibility period (sustainability actions).

Prof. P. Panagakis presented the semi-final version of the USAEE web-based database and comments/suggestions were requested. The new revised version was agreed to be forwarded at first to the WG3 members and in continuation the new semi-final version to the Steering Committee so as to finalize the database and post it on the corresponding web-site (www.eurageng.net/usaae-tn.html).

6. Steering Committee Session

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The last USAEE Workshop was closed at 12:30 a.m.

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