

ERIAFF CC NOTES - 18 JUNE 2026 - Overview

The meeting, led by Samuele Pii of the ERIAFF Secretariat, covered a range of strategic topics including Secretariat initiatives, annual conference feedback, working group updates, and a detailed proposal for launching a LinkedIn profile to enhance network visibility and engagement. Samuele highlighted the Secretariat's proactive role in the Biotech Act 2 consultation and previewed a memorandum with the Joint Undertaking to strengthen bioeconomy innovation networks. Danielle and Emma reviewed the Amsterdam conference survey, noting successes and areas for improvement. Participants proposed creating a host manual to improve future conferences, emphasizing cultural and communication aspects. Working group coordinators shared progress on collaborations and digital tools. The LinkedIn proposal, presented by Anna Papakonstantinou and Elisabetta Cecchi, detailed goals, content strategies, administration plans, and a test phase to be refined before a final decision at the July Coordination Committee meeting. The team plans to engage working group coordinators actively in this pilot. Samuele also addressed upcoming Coordination Committee scheduling, emphasizing readiness for new funding opportunities and the importance of timely decisions on key initiatives. The meeting concluded with appreciation for the communication team's efforts and encouragement for member participation in advancing the network's visibility and collaboration.

Detailed Summary

Secretariat Initiatives Update

Samuele Pii from the ERIAFF Secretariat shares recent activities including participation in the public consultation on the Biotech Act 2, submitting a general contribution on behalf of the network despite short deadlines. He emphasizes the importance of responding to Commissioner Ansen's invitation and the network's proactive engagement. Additionally, he previews an upcoming memorandum with the Joint Undertaking to strengthen alliances with regional networks in bioeconomy innovation sectors, promising future opportunities for member regions.

- Samuele Pii explains the Secretariat submitted a contribution to the Biotech Act 2 public consultation despite a short deadline.
- He notes the contribution was based on prior working group proposals and was signed by the Secretariat.
- Samuele highlights the importance of responding to Commissioner Ansen's invitation to participate in consultations.
- He previews a memorandum of understanding with the Joint Undertaking to enhance cooperation among regional networks in bioeconomy innovation.
- Samuele commits to sharing the memorandum draft with the Coordination Committee when available.

Annual Conference Survey Results

Danielle and Emma present the survey results from the recent annual conference in Amsterdam, highlighting strong attendance, positive overall evaluations, and effective knowledge sharing. They note some challenges such as no-shows at field visits, privacy law restrictions on sharing contact information, and mixed feedback on networking opportunities and catering. They offer constructive lessons learned and tips for future organizers, including starting preparations earlier and balancing conference duration.

- Danielle and Emma report 158 attendees with a majority from the Netherlands and other European countries.
- The conference received an overall rating of 4.5 stars with positive feedback on venue and content.

- They identify issues with no-shows at field visits and challenges due to privacy laws restricting contact information sharing.
- They suggest future conferences build flexibility into the program and start preparations earlier.
- They note the importance of balancing conference length and enhancing networking opportunities.

Proposals for Conference Improvement

Participants including Minna S and Francesca Ricardi propose creating a host manual guide for annual conferences to capture lessons learned and cultural considerations, suggesting the communication working group lead this effort. They emphasize the value of ongoing communication between conferences to increase media coverage and network engagement. The idea of having professional moderators and sharing best practices across different regional contexts is also discussed.

- Minna S proposes a digital host manual guide for annual conferences to be collaboratively developed and updated.
- Francesca Ricardi supports the manual idea and suggests including cultural timing differences and keynote speaker strategies.
- They advocate for active communication plans between conferences to raise the network's profile.
- The importance of professional moderation during conferences is highlighted as a positive aspect.
- Participants agree on sharing experiences to ease future conference organization.

Working Groups Updates

Working group coordinators provide brief updates: Francesca Ricardi reports the Agricolology working group has restarted and maintains observer status in relevant committees; Tiina Paakkari describes collaboration between Forestset and Missions working groups on forming consortia for Horizon Europe projects; Elisabetta Cecchi announces new access for coordinators to upload documents to working group pages and plans to transform the website into a platform for networking and opportunities.

- Francesca Ricardi confirms the Agricolology working group is active and engaged with external platforms.
- Tiina Paakkari reports promising progress on joint projects inviting regional actors to form consortia for Horizon Europe calls.
- Elisabetta Cecchi announces upcoming access for working group coordinators to upload documents to their pages.
- Elisabetta outlines ambitions to develop the website into a networking platform with increased social media presence.
- She invites members to join the growing communication working group.

LinkedIn Profile Proposal Introduction

Elisabetta Cecchi introduces a proposal related to creating a LinkedIn profile for the network to enhance communication and visibility. She invites Anna Papakonstantinou and Maria to present the detailed proposal and accompanying video. The presentation aims to be discussed further with a decision expected at the next Coordination Committee meeting in July.

- Elisabetta Cecchi introduces the LinkedIn profile proposal as a new communication tool.
- Anna Papakonstantinou and Maria are tasked with presenting the proposal and video.

- The proposal is positioned as a preliminary step with final decisions deferred to the July meeting.
- The initiative aims to increase the network's social media presence and engagement.
- Members are encouraged to consider involvement in communication activities related to this proposal.

LinkedIn Profile Proposal Details and Implementation Plan

Anna Papakonstantinou elaborates on the LinkedIn page goals to strengthen visibility and expand networking opportunities, emphasizing LinkedIn as the leading professional platform. The proposal includes collaborative content creation with communication and working group members, structured posting with photos and videos, and a soft launch approach to test and measure engagement. Elisabetta Cecchi outlines soft guidelines for usage, a distributed administration model, and alignment with the website as a content repository. A test LinkedIn page has been created for initial posting and feedback, with plans to finalize the approach by the July or September Coordination Committee meeting.

- Anna Papakonstantinou explains LinkedIn's role in improving visibility, showcasing best practices, and promoting activities.
- She details content types including photos, short videos, event invitations, updates, and press releases.
- Elisabetta Cecchi presents soft guidelines and a distributed admin structure to coordinate posts and monitor engagement.
- A test LinkedIn page has been created with Anna, Maria, and Elisabetta as admins to trial posting and workflow.
- Samuele Pii supports starting the test phase promptly and aims to finalize decisions by the next Coordination Committee meeting.
- Francesca Ricardi appreciates the ambitious communication plan and notes the potential for increased network visibility.
- Javier Gonzalo congratulates the communication team on this important visibility tool.
- The team plans to send an email to working group coordinators to invite participation and explain the LinkedIn test phase.

Next Steps and Coordination Committee Scheduling

Samuele Pii discusses upcoming Coordination Committee meeting scheduling, noting a break in August and resumption in September. He emphasizes the importance of timely decisions on the LinkedIn profile and annual conference hosting, encouraging readiness to leverage new funding opportunities. The meeting concludes with thanks to the communication team and encouragement for members to engage with the new initiatives.

- Samuele Pii announces skipping the August Coordination Committee meeting and scheduling the next for September.
- He stresses the need to finalize decisions on the LinkedIn profile and annual conference hosting soon.
- Samuele highlights the importance of preparing the network for upcoming funding opportunities in the new multi-year financial framework.
- He thanks the communication team for their concrete improvements and encourages member engagement.
- The meeting closes with no further questions or comments.