

## Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting of the COST Action

# CA18202 - Network for Equilibria and Chemical Thermodynamics Advanced Research

Lisbon, Portugal

August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021 16:40 WEST

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ACTION Status at date:

- Action parties: 31 COST countries
- CSO approval: 04/06/2019
- Start date: 02/10/2019

## i. Agenda and Materials

The MC meeting agenda is in Annex 1. The MC meeting was organised to take some necessary decisions and indications following previous MC meeting (held online on March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021, minutes in Annex 2, approved by email).

## ii. Participants and Hosting Team

Meeting was hosted in Lisbon. Participants are listed in attendance list (attached online by GHM who was present at meeting).

## iii. Pre-requisites for the Decision Making

During the meeting, the participants acknowledged and agreed to comply with the Rules of Procedure for the MC from Annex I COST Action Management, Monitoring and Final Assessment (COST 134/14: [http://www.cost.eu/download/COST\\_Action\\_Management\\_Monitoring\\_and\\_Final\\_Assessment](http://www.cost.eu/download/COST_Action_Management_Monitoring_and_Final_Assessment)).

Before any decision was taken, the Action Chair (AC) verified that the minimum of 2/3 (21) of the parties present; the necessary quorum to approve decisions was NOT achieved (16 members present in Lisbon, 4 connected online through Zoom platform) allowing the MC meeting to officially take place in accordance with Article 9 of the Rules of Procedure for the MC (see [http://www.cost.eu/download/COST\\_Action\\_Management\\_Monitoring\\_and\\_Final\\_Assessment](http://www.cost.eu/download/COST_Action_Management_Monitoring_and_Final_Assessment)), but postponing approval of decisions through e-vote.

### 1) Welcome to Participants

MC meeting started on time. The AC (Demetrio Milea) welcomed the participants, including those who connected online at link sent via email to MC parties not physically present in Lisbon.

### 2) Verification of the presence of two-thirds of the Participating COST Countries or, if applicable, a quorum

According to Pre-requisites of point iii., 31 Member Countries (and 2 MC Observers from NNC) are parties of the Action. Quorum is represented by 21 Members

Member		Member		Member	
Albania (AL)	A	France (FR)	P	North Macedonia (MK)	A
Austria (AT)	A	Germany (DE)	P	Poland (PL)	P
Belgium (BE)	P	Greece (EL)	O	Portugal (PT)	P
Bosnia and Herzegovina (BA)	P	Hungary (HU)	P	Romania (RO)	A
Bulgaria (BG)	O	Iceland (IS)	A	Serbia (RS)	P
Croatia (HR)	A	Ireland (IE)	O	Slovakia (SK)	P
Czech Republic (CZ)	P	Italy (IT)	P	Slovenia (SI)	P
Denmark (DK)	A	Lithuania (LT)	P	Spain (ES)	P
Estonia (EE)	A	Malta (MT)	A	Switzerland (CH)	P
Finland (FI)	O	Moldova (MD)	A	Turkey (TR)	P
				United Kingdom (UK)	A

P = Physically present; O: Online Present; A = Absent

Members present were: 20

Members absent were: 11 plus the 2 NNC representatives.

AC announced that quorum was reached to have a regular meeting, but not for approving decisions. As such, AC declared that MC Meeting could officially take place and that all votes and decisions taken will need to be approved through e-vote that will be launched asap.

AC acknowledged all MC Member Representatives who were present, either physically or online, for their great efforts in support of the Action and for their sense of responsibility.

Concerning absent members, AC informed that he received explanations from some members, who could not attend either for serious institutional and/or personal issues, while some other members were not able to connect to the platform to attend online.

Nevertheless, AC could not avoid to mention the absence and/or lack of interest of some Members Representatives, which causes systematic difficulties in Action Management, in relation to delays in approving decisions that, as in the case of the present Meeting, cannot be done instantly, but need time because of the e-vote required timing.

### **3) Adoption of Agenda**

AC read the Agenda (Annex 1), previously sent by email to all MC Members.

AC launched the vote for the Adoption of Agenda.

**Agenda was unanimously adopted.**

### **4) Approval of minutes and matters arising from last meeting**

AC sent minutes (Annex 2) of previous MC meeting (March 26<sup>th</sup>,2021) by email.

MC members approved minutes by email.

Any matter was brought to discussing by any of the participants.

### **5) Update from Action Chair**

#### **a. Status of Action: start and end dates of Action, participating COST countries, participating NNC/IPC institutions and Specific Organisations**

AC informed participants about:

- On May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021, United Kingdom joined the Action
- With this new membership, CA18202 NECTAR consists of 31 Member States (18 ITC) + 2 NNC members.
- AC remembered that 7 Member Countries (Cyprus, Latvia, Luxembourg, Montenegro, The Netherlands, Norway, Sweden) plus 1 Cooperating Member (Israel) and 1 Partner member (South Africa) are still not represented in the Action. In line with what previously stated concerning the presence/absence and the real involvement of some members, AC, while urging present MC members to check for possible new MC memberships, warned them to try to verify the concrete and real interest for the Action and the real intention to fulfill Action goals by potential new MC representatives, otherwise any new membership would have more negative effects than beneficials.

- AC informed that: i) a new version of Vademecum has been recently launched; ii) rules and duties of members and various managing organisms (e.g. CG) have changed; iii) “Code of Conduct” has been changed; iv) new networking tools have been included as eligible for funding.
- Concerning last point (new networking tools), AC informed that COST recently launched two “Virtual Networking Tools”, namely Virtual Networking Support (VNS) Grant and Virtual Mobility (VM) Grant, to support “Virtual Activities”. After a brief discussion, MC agreed that these options could potentially be exploited, but firmly remarked that “in-presence” activities have to be preferred in the spirit of COST.

## **b. Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM): review of completed reports and new applications**

AC invited STSM Coordinator, Prof. Matteo Tegoni, to report about STSM. STSM Coordinator recalled:

- the scopes and the rules for STSM according to Vademecum
- that the evaluation criteria established for NECTAR STSM, underlining that the topics and the activities of the STSM MUST contribute to the fulfillment of the scientific objectives of Action and WG(s) and that priority is given to STSM applications of PhD students and ECI, of applicants from ITCs, and to maintain an adequate gender balance
- that it has been established for NECTAR that a maximum contribution of €1500 for a maximum of 30-days STSM will be given, to maximize the number of STSM funded
- that 4 STSM calls have been launched since the Action start till present time, for a total of 25 STSM positions mainly granted to ECI
- that, due to pandemic, some budget is still available to support new STSM, so that an extra call will be launched asap for “last minute” STSM to be concluded before the end of GP2, following the criterium “first-come, first-serve” and subject to availability of funding, but always provided that requests comply with COST rules for eligibility and the scientific plan is in accordance with the activities of CA18202 NECTAR COST Action
- that new calls will be open as soon as GP3 budget is available
- that it is highly recommended for beneficiaries to present results at a COST meeting
- no final approval (i.e. payment) of STSM will be given until STSM material has been provided to the Science Communication Manager according to STSM calls, including dissemination material

## **6) Update from the Grant Holder: Action budget status**

GHSR informed that, due to pandemics, some activities “in presence” have been cancelled and/or turned into online activities, with a reduction of expenditures.

However, according to email received by GH from COST Science Administration on Aug 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021, “underspending funds must be returned to the COST Association” and that “there cannot be “carry overs” into the next Action Grant Period starting on 01/11/2021 since funding from different programmes cannot be mixed”. In the same email, GH has been also informed that “in order to efficiently manage the end of the GP and avoid additional workload on your side to send back unspent funds after the Final Financial Reports, COST will pay the balance of all expenses to COST Actions **after the submission and validation of the FFR** (pending liquidity available on our part)”. As a consequence, some payments could be delayed.

## 7) Monitoring of the Action

AC already informed MC about the Number of Member Countries and NNC already involved in Action, and gave further details about the distribution of Action active components among various WGs, as well as in terms of gender balance and involvement of ECIs.

ITC Coordination Manager then referred about the status and involvement of ITC in Action.

From the whole description, it emerged that Action is in an excellent status concerning the roles of ECIs, the participation of ITC, and gender balance.

AC also informed MC that Nov 1<sup>st</sup> is the deadline for the submission of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Progress Report for the COST Action Monitoring and Final Assessment.

AC summarized activities scheduled for GP2 in various Networking Tools as follows:

### i. Meetings

Since last MC meeting, no further meetings took place, except WG and TG internal meetings, which are regularly scheduled monthly, approximatively.

### ii. TS

TS Coordinator informed MC that, as agreed during last MC meeting, the 1<sup>st</sup> ISMEC-NECTAR Training School on the Determination, Analysis and Use of Thermodynamic Data, SOLvE, has been co-organized online from July 26<sup>th</sup>, to 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021, allowing 16 Action participants, most of them ECIs, to be trained. Considering the success of the TS and the great interest of the topic for the Action, TS Coordinator proposed MC to make a new edition of the TS for next year. **AC will launch e-vote.**

### iii. STSM and ITC Conference Grants

STSM Coordinator already reported about STSM. ITC Coordination Manager referred that, due to pandemic and the significant reduction of “in-presence” meetings, nobody applied for the ITC conference grants during the 2 calls launched.

### iv. COST Action Dissemination

Within this NT, part of budget was dedicated to support Open Acces publishing. AC informed MC that, at present time, only one request was received and is eligible for funding, being the topic of interest for NECTAR and the result of a collaboration between 3 Member Countries.

## 8) Implementation of COST policies on:

### a. Promotion of gender balance and Early Career Investigators (ECI)

AC already reported to MC about the status of Action concerning the promotion of Gender Balance and ECI. Despite the excellent results already achieved, AC warns MC to keep the attention high towards these aspects and to continue in the same direction of the last two GPs.

### b. Inclusiveness and Excellence

AC expressed the same concepts as before even concerning Inclusiveness and Excellence.

## 9) Follow-up of MoU objectives: progress report of WGs

As done during previous MC meeting, AC reminded MC what are MoU general objectives, as well as the GP2 goals, warning WGs leaders and co-leaders to take all necessary actions to fulfill those objectives, especially in relation to the deliverables to be released for the end of GP2.

WG leaders, co-leaders, or WG representatives described individual WGs activities and results obtained, underlining that, in some cases, some goals have been only partially reached due to pandemics and despite the great efforts of all Action participants.

AC warned that, though all WG activities presented lie within the scopes of NECTAR COST Action, they sometimes do not concretely fulfill them in terms of deliverables, advising WG leaders and co-leaders to be more careful in future concerning the matching between WG activities and GP goals and deliverables.

AC also recommended, once again, a higher interaction between WGs and CG, as well as a more efficient coordination among various WGs, evidencing how, in addition to pandemics, the scarce communication that sometimes occurred till present time negatively affects all the activities of the Action.

In this light, MC members evidenced the need of a deeper involvement of CG, suggesting, as a corrective action, to also increase the number of CG meetings on a regular basis, even to support WG leaders to promote a higher involvement of all WG members in Action activities (not only WG activities, but also Dissemination and Communication with the support of SCM and WG5) and to take all necessary initiatives to improve cooperation within and between WGs. In this light, AC announced the intention to further promote CG and individual in-presence WG meetings during GP3, according to budget availability.

## 10) Scientific Planning

### a. Scientific strategy (MoU objectives, GP Goals, WG tasks and deliverables)

On the basis of reports provided by WG leaders and Coordinators/Managers about the status of the Action, with special reference to GP2 and issues caused by pandemics, AC proposed to better define the Scientific Strategy of NECTAR Action for next GP3 as soon as the situation concerning the next GP budget and timeframe will be more defined from COST. In this light, AC asks MC to receive mandate to define, always within MoU objectives, the details about Goals, WG tasks and deliverables for next GP3, with the support of CG during a next CG meeting. **AC will launch e-vote.**

### b. Action Budget Planning

AC informed MC that, at present time, no official communication has been received from COST neither about the timeframe of next GP3, nor about the budget assigned, but that he has been informed unofficially by SO that, on the basis of the actual number of NECTAR members, allocated budget for next GP3 should be around 167k€ including FSAC. On that basis, and considering the experience of previous GPs and new VNT, AC proposed to keep approximatively the same networking activities planned for GP2, but including at least 5 (one per WG) individual WG meetings, as well as a small budget to dedicate to VNT. In this light, AC proposed to have at least 1 end-GP meeting, 5 individual WG meetings, 1 TS, 20 STSM and 2 ITC Conference Grants with, in addition, a proper budget for COST Action Dissemination, OERSA and VNT.

Concerning the latter, MC remarked again the importance of “in-presence” activities with respect to VNT, even recognizing that these options could potentially be exploited.

According to discussion, AC proposed the following WBP for next GP3:

<b>A. COST Networking Tools</b>	
(1) Meetings	90'000.00
(2) Training Schools (TS)	15'000.00
(3) Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM)	30'000.00
(4) ITC Conference Grants	2'500.00
(5) COST Action Dissemination	5'000.00
(6) Other Expenses Related to Scientific Activities (OERSA)	850.00
(7) VNT	2'000.00
<b>B. Total Science Expenditure (sum of (1) to (7))</b>	<b>145'350.00</b>
<b>C. Financial and Scientific Administration and Coordination (FSAC) (15% of B)</b>	<b>21'802.50</b>
<b>Total Grant (B+C)</b>	<b>167'152.50</b>

Present MC members generally approved both the networking tools and the WBP, asking AC to **launch e-vote for the official approval.**

However, remarking the unofficial nature of communicated budget, AC asked mandate to remodulate the officially assigned budget, if necessary and if not significantly different from that considered for the above WBP, according to Action needs (always remembering that final WBP needs to be approved in any case by MC). **AC will launch e-vote.**

### **c. Long-term planning (including anticipated locations and dates of future activities)**

AC and MC agreed that, in the uncertain scenario caused by pandemics, any long-term planning is premature at this time. However, AC proposed to indicate at least the location of next final GP3 meeting in order to allow the organizers to prepare it in the best possible way. In this light, AC will send an email to MC members to ask for candidatures for next final GP3 meeting location. AC asks MC to give mandate to CG to analyse proposals received and to take the final decision for locations of planned meetings. **AC will launch e-vote.**

### **d. Dissemination planning (Publications and outreach activities)**

Then, AC asked SCM to report about dissemination, publication and outreach activities.

SCM presented the activities performed together with WG5 about:

- information on webpage and social media
- communication via social media (reminding the social media where NECTAR is active, i.e. Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn)
- preparation of a NECTAR communication short guide, that was sent to all the NECTAR participants
- organization of calls for short videos promoting young collaborators (on the occasion of world youth skills day and the 1st ISMEC-NECTAR Training School SOLVE).



Next, the SCM once again presented the key points that are needed for WG-5 for an efficient promotion of NECTAR participants' activities, and main rules when publishing the papers (with the participation of 3 NECTAR countries).

Further, the SCM encouraged the participants to send WG-5 additional materials for the promotion, i.e. a video/interview/poster/success story about the research, like STSM and/or education video/poster related to NECTAR topics. Specific calls were promised.

At the end of the presentation of WG-5 activities, WG5 co-leader presented the organization of the information on NECTAR webpage and its future modifications.

## **11) Requests to join the Action from:**

### **a. COST Countries**

No further requests to join the Action from COST Countries were received since last MC meeting.

### **b. Institutions in Near Neighbouring Countries, International Partner Countries, and/or Specific Organisations: EU agencies, European RTD Organisation, International Organisations**

No further requests to join the Action from other Institutions and/or Specific Organisations were received since last MC meeting.

## **12) WGs' and other leadership positions changes and nominations**

AC remembered MC the discussion during last MC meeting about the opportunity, highly suggested by COST, to change leadership positions during Action. In line with what already done for WG5, AC thus proposed to acknowledge co-leaders work switching the roles of remaining WG leaders with WG co-leaders, underlining the precious and equalitary role of both leaders and co-leaders in leading WGs, remarking that WGs inner roles (Tasks and TG leaders) won't change if not decided in full autonomy within WGs. MC approved and, as such, **AC will launch and e-vote** to officialize new WG leaders and co-leaders positions as detailed below:

- WG1: Olga Iranzo WG1 leader; Montserrat Filella WG1 co-leader
- WG2: M Amelia Santos WG2 leader; Petr Herman WG2 co-leader
- WG3: Arunas Ramanavicius WG3 leader; Slobodan Gadzuric WG3 co-leader
- WG4: Winfried Plass WG4 leader; Aleksandar Cvetkovski WG4 co-leader

## **13) AOB**

No other point was found to be relevant to be further discussed.

## **14) Location and date of next meeting**

AC confirmed that he will send an email to Action Participants for the presentation of candidatures for final GP3 meeting. Meanwhile, other online meetings will be held, in relation to Action needs.

## 15) Summary of MC decisions

From the 31 COST Member Countries of the Action, 20 (twenty) were present and represented by their corresponding MC members. MC meeting was valid to make proposals and take decisions, but, being the quorum (21 – twenty-one) to approve such decisions not reached, AC will launch e-vote to ask approval on:

- **Decision 1:** Minutes of Present MC meeting.
- **Decision 2:** Make a new edition of the SOLvE TS for next year.
- **Decision 3:** Give mandate to AC to define, always within MoU objectives, the details about Goals, WG tasks and deliverables for next GP3.
- **Decision 4:** Approve WBP for GP3 according to the proposed scheme.
- **Decision 5:** Give mandate to AC to remodulate the officially assigned budget, if necessary and if not significantly different from that considered for the above WBP, according to Action needs (always remembering that final WBP needs to be approved in any case by MC).
- **Decision 6:** Give mandate to CG to analyse proposals received and to take the final decision for locations of planned meetings.
- **Decision 7:** Switch the roles of WG leaders with WG co-leaders for WGs 1-4.

## 16) Closing

In conclusion, AC thanked all people present for their active participation to the meeting, acknowledging the excellent work done by everybody.

Meeting was officially closed.

## List of Annexes

- Annex 1 – Agenda
- Annex 2 – Minutes of MC meeting of March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021

### Minutes prepared by:

- *Action Chair*
- *Action Vice-Chair*

**COST Action CA18202**

**Action Title: Network for Equilibria and Chemical Thermodynamics Advanced Research**

**Draft Agenda  
Management Committee Meeting  
Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal  
August 27, 2021 16:40**

1. Welcome to participants
2. Verification of the presence of two-thirds of the Participating COST Countries or, if necessary, setup of an hybrid meeting.
3. Adoption of agenda
4. Approval of minutes and matters arising of last meeting
5. Update from the Action Chair
  - a) Status of Action: start and end dates of Action, participating COST countries, participating NNC/ IPC institutions and Specific Organisations.
  - b) Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM): review of completed reports and new applications
6. Update from the Grant Holder: Action budget status
7. Monitoring of the Action
8. Implementation of COST policies on:
  - a) Promotion of gender balance and Early Career Investigators (ECI)
  - b) Inclusiveness and Excellence (see below list of Inclusiveness Target Countries)
9. Follow-up of MoU objectives: progress report of working groups
10. Scientific planning
  - a) Scientific strategy (MoU objectives, GP Goals, WG tasks and deliverables)
  - b) Action Budget Planning
  - c) Long-term planning (including anticipated locations and dates of future activities)
  - d) Dissemination planning (Publications and outreach activities)
11. Requests to join the Action from:
  - a) COST countries
  - b) Institutions in Near Neighbouring Countries, International Partner Countries, and/or Specific Organisations: EU agencies, European RTD Organisation, International Organisations
12. WGs' and other leadership positions changes and nominations
13. AOB
14. Location and date of next meeting
15. Summary of MC decisions
16. Closing

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## Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting of the COST Action

# CA18202 - Network for Equilibria and Chemical Thermodynamics Advanced Research

online: <https://videoconf-colibri.zoom.us/j/83765639942?pwd=aFFSNjh3ODVpWHd1Z2JlQ0g0bXJTUT09>, online  
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7) Meetings and other networking Activities for GP2 .....	5
i. Meetings.....	5
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ACTION Status at date:

- Action parties: 29 COST countries
- CSO approval: 04/06/2019
- Start date: 02/10/2019

## i. Agenda and Materials

The MC meeting agenda is in Annex 1. The MC meeting was organised to take some necessary decisions and indications following previous MC meeting (held online on Feb 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021, minutes in Annex 2).

## ii. Participants and Hosting Team

Meeting was hosted online on Zoom platform. Participants are listed in attendance list (attached online by GHM who was present at meeting).

## iii. Pre-requisites for the Decision Making

During the meeting, the participants acknowledged and agreed to comply with the Rules of Procedure for the MC from Annex I COST Action Management, Monitoring and Final Assessment (COST 134/14: [http://www.cost.eu/download/COST Action Management Monitoring and Final Assessment](http://www.cost.eu/download/COST_Action_Management_Monitoring_and_Final_Assessment)).

Before any decision was taken, the Action Chair (AC) verified that the minimum of 2/3 of the parties present, the necessary quorum was achieved allowing the MC meeting to officially take place in accordance with Article 9 of the Rules of Procedure for the MC (see [http://www.cost.eu/download/COST Action Management Monitoring and Final Assessment](http://www.cost.eu/download/COST_Action_Management_Monitoring_and_Final_Assessment)).

### 1) Welcome to Participants

MC meeting started on time. The AC (Demetrio Milea) welcomed the participants who connected online at link sent together with agenda and invitation.

### 2) Verification of the presence of two-thirds of the Participating COST Countries or, if applicable, a quorum

According to Pre-requisites of point iii., 29 Member Countries (and 2 MC Observers from NNC) are parties of the Action. Quorum is represented by 19 Members

Member	Member	Member
Austria (AT)	France (FR)	North Macedonia (MK)
Belgium (BE)	Germany (DE)	Poland (PL)
Bosnia and Herzegovina (BA)	Greece (EL)	Portugal (PT)
Bulgaria (BG)	Hungary (HU)	Romania (RO)
Croatia (HR)	Iceland (IS)	Serbia (RS)
Czech Republic (CZ)	Ireland (IE)	Slovakia (SK)
Denmark (DK)	Italy (IT)	Slovenia (SI)
Estonia (EE)	Lithuania (LT)	Spain (ES)
Finland (FI)	Malta (MT)	Switzerland (CH)
	Moldova (MD)	Turkey (TR)

P = Present; A = Absent

Members present were: 22

Members absent were: 7 plus the 2 NNC representatives.

AC announced that quorum was reached and declared that MC Meeting could officially take place and that all votes and decisions taken were valid.

### 3) Adoption of Agenda

AC read the Agenda (Annex 1), previously sent by email to all MC Members.

AC launched the vote for the Adoption of Agenda.

**Agenda was unanimously adopted.**

### 4) Approval of minutes and matters rising of last meeting

AC sent minutes (Annex 2) of previous MC meeting (Feb 5<sup>th</sup>,2021) by email.

AC launched the vote for the Approval of Minutes.

Minutes were unanimously adopted.

Any matter was brought to discussing by any of the participants.

### 5) Update from Action Chair

AC informed participants about:

- New MC membership request from Albania.
  - AC launched the vote to approve new MC membership of Albania.
  - **MC membership from Albania was unanimously adopted.**
- With this new membership, CA18202 NECTAR consists of 30 Member States (18 ITC) + 2 NNC members.
- AC remembered that 8 Member Countries (Cyprus, Latvia, Luxembourg, Montenegro, The Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom) plus 1 Cooperating Member (Israel) and 1 Partner member (South Africa) are still not represented in the Action, and urged MC members to check for possible new MC memberships, provided that potential new MC representatives showed concrete interest for the Action and real intention to fulfill Action goals.
- AC recalled all process that brought to the approval of the proposal to submit to COST for a budget top-up request for GP2, as approved by e-vote launched on Feb 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021 (Screenshot in Annex 3), and communicated that on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 SO officially announced that the topup request was approved in the presented form.

### 6) Follow-up of MoU objectives: progress report of WGs

AC reminded MC what are MoU general objectives, as well as the GP2 goals, warning WGs leaders and co-leaders to take all necessary actions to fulfill those objectives, especially in relation to the deliverables to be released for the end of GP2.

In particular, AC recommended higher interaction between WGs and CG, as well as a more efficient coordination among various WGs, evidencing how the scarce communication that sometimes occurred till present time negatively affects all the activities of the Action.

AC also recommended a higher involvement of all WG members in WG activities, urging WG leaders to take all necessary initiatives to improve cooperation within and between WGs.

## 7) Meetings and other networking Activities for GP2

### i. Meetings

AC informed MC that, according to the approved WBP changes, the 2<sup>nd</sup> NECTAR Conference will be held in presence in Lisbon in end-August / earl-September, keeping the characteristics of the successful 1<sup>st</sup> NECTAR Conference held in Belgrade (RS) during GP1.

Accordingly, the 2<sup>nd</sup> NECTAR Conference will be in the form of MC/CG/WG/Dissemination Conference, for 3 (three) days (presumably from August 26<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>), meaning 3+1 refundable days.

As done for the 1<sup>st</sup> NECTAR Conference, even in this case AC proposed to MC to reduce the flat rate to 100 (one hundred) € per day, in order to maximize participation, which is expected to be around 80 people.

AC also warned participants to try to reduce the travelling costs as much as possible, for the same reasons.

AC launched the vote to organize the meeting as above-described, including the reduction of the flat rate. **MC unanimously approved.**

### ii. TS

AC informed MC that, according to approved WBP changes, SOLvE TS proposed in Belgrade was cancelled in its original form, but that proposers will organize anyway a virtual SOLvE School in a similar form within the activities of the ISMEC Group (the International Group for the Thermodynamics of Complexes, [www.ismecgroup.org](http://www.ismecgroup.org)).

Tarita Biver, one of the organizers, gave further details.

AC thus informed MC that there still was the possibility to co-organize and support this TS free of charge for NECTAR, with the possibility for 15 ECI selected by NECTAR (through a committee led by TS Coordinator) to participate.

AC launched the vote to co-organize the TS as above-described. **MC unanimously approved.**

### iii. STSM and ITC Conference Grants

AC informed MC that, according to approved WBP changes, new calls STSMs and ITC Conference Grants will be launched soon.

## 8) Eventual budget changes

AC informed MC that, according to approved WBP changes, new WBP for GP2 will be as follows:



<b>A. COST Networking Tools</b>	
(1) Meetings	60'800.00
(2) Training Schools (TS)	0.00
(3) Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM)	30'000.00
(4) ITC Conference Grant	1'000.00
(5) COST Action Dissemination	10'500.00
(6) Other Expenses Related to Scientific Activities (OERSA)	850.00
<b>B. Total Science Expenditure (sum of (1) to (6))</b>	<b>103'150.00</b>
<b>C. Financial and Scientific Administration and Coordination (FSAC) (15% of B)</b>	<b>15'472.50</b>
<b>Total Grant (B+C)</b>	<b>118'622.50</b>

## 9) WGs' and other leadership positions changes

AC informed MC about the opportunity, highly suggested by COST, to change leadership positions during Action. In this light, AC communicated that these changes will be made in occasion of 2<sup>nd</sup> NECTAR Conference, which will be the last scheduled meeting for GP2 and will be immediately before the 2<sup>nd</sup> Action progress report.

Nonetheless, WG5 leader, Isabel Cavaco, asked to be replaced in her position, for professional reasons. As such, AC proposed to appoint the actual WG5 co-leader, Natalia Busto, as new WG5 leader.

AC then suggested to appoint Alvaro Martinez-Camarena, who is actually taking care of the Action website and is actively involved in all communication and dissemination activities, as WG5 co-leader.

AC launched the vote to approve the above proposed changes in leadership positions. **MC unanimously approved.**

## 10) AOB

No other point was found to be relevant to be further discussed.

## 11) Location and date of next meeting

AC confirmed that next meeting will be held in presence in Lisbon, presumably from August 26<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>.

## 12) Summary of MC decisions

From the 29 COST member countries of the Action, 22 (twenty two) were present and represented by their corresponding MC members. 7 (seven) were not present.

The following decisions were taken:

- **Decision 1:** Minutes of last MC virtual meeting of Feb 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021 have been approved.
- **Decision 2:** Albania has been admitted as new member of CA18202.
- **Decision 3:** Dates, venue and form of 2<sup>nd</sup> NECTAR Conference have been approved as presented.
- **Decision 4:** Participation of NECTAR to SOLvE TS has been approved.

- **Decision 5:** WBP for GP2 as per approved topup has been confirmed.
- **Decision 6:** New WG5 leader will be Natalia Busto, new WG5 co-leader will be Avaro Martinez-Camarena
- **Decision 7:** Except for necessary virtual MC meetings, next MC meeting will be held in Lisbon during the 2<sup>nd</sup> NECTAR Conference.

### 13) Closing

In conclusion, AC thanked all people present for their active participation to the meeting, acknowledging the excellent work done by everybody.

Meeting was officially closed.

### List of Annexes

- Annex 1 – Agenda
- Annex 2 – Minutes of MC meeting of Feb 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021
- Annex 3 – Screenshots of e-vote

### Minutes prepared by:

- *Action Chair*
- *Action Vice-Chair*



**COST Action CA18202**

**Action Title: Network for Equilibria and Chemical Thermodynamics Advanced Research**

**Draft Agenda  
Management Committee Meeting**

**online :**

**[https://videoconf-  
colibri.zoom.us/j/83765639942?pwd=aFFSNjh3ODVpWHd1Z2JlQ0g0bXJTUT09](https://videoconf-colibri.zoom.us/j/83765639942?pwd=aFFSNjh3ODVpWHd1Z2JlQ0g0bXJTUT09)**

**, Portugal**

**March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021, 16:30**

1. Welcome to participants
2. Verification of the presence of two-thirds of the Participating COST Countries or, if applicable, a quorum
3. Adoption of agenda
4. Approval of minutes and matters arising of last meeting
5. Update from the Action Chair
6. Follow-up of MoU objectives: progress report of working groups
7. Meetings and other networking Activities for GP2
8. Eventual budget changes
9. WGs' and other leadership positions changes
10. AOB
11. Location and date of next meeting
12. Summary of MC decisions
13. Closing

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Register of legal Entities Brussels:  
0829090573

## Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting of the COST Action

# CA18202 - Network for Equilibria and Chemical Thermodynamics Advanced Research

online: <https://cost-eu.zoom.us/j/82011324368?pwd=NXBPQU11TFNBVklOTnBkZVJIS1BVdz09>,  
online

February 5, 2021 14:30 CET

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7) Eventual budget changes.....	4
8) AOB .....	4
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### ACTION Status at date:

- Action parties: 29 COST countries
- CSO approval: 04/06/2019
- Start date: 02/10/2019



## i. Agenda and Materials

The MC meeting agenda is in Annex 1. The MC meeting was organised by AC to take some necessary decisions and to adopt, if agreed, indications coming from previous CG meeting (held online on Oct 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020, minutes in Annex 2).

## ii. Participants and Hosting Team

Meeting was hosted online on Zoom platform. Participants are listed in attendance list (attached online by AO who was present at meeting).

## iii. Pre-requisites for the Decision Making

During the meeting, the participants acknowledged and agreed to comply with the Rules of Procedure for the MC from Annex I COST Action Management, Monitoring and Final Assessment (COST 134/14: [http://www.cost.eu/download/COST\\_Action\\_Management\\_Monitoring\\_and\\_Final\\_Assessment](http://www.cost.eu/download/COST_Action_Management_Monitoring_and_Final_Assessment)).

Before any decision was taken, the Action Chair (AC) verified that the minimum of 2/3 of the parties present, the necessary quorum was achieved allowing the MC meeting to officially take place in accordance with Article 9 of the Rules of Procedure for the MC (see [http://www.cost.eu/download/COST\\_Action\\_Management\\_Monitoring\\_and\\_Final\\_Assessment](http://www.cost.eu/download/COST_Action_Management_Monitoring_and_Final_Assessment)).

### 1) Welcome to Participants

MC meeting started on time. The AC (Demetrio Milea) welcomed the participants who connected online at link sent together with agenda and invitation.

### 2) Verification of the presence of two-thirds of the Participating COST Countries or, if applicable, a quorum

According to Pre-requisites of point iii., 29 Member Countries (and 2 MC Observers from NNC) are parties of the Action. Quorum is represented by 19 Members

Member	Member	Member
Austria (AT)	France (FR)	North Macedonia (MK)
Belgium (BE)	Germany (DE)	Poland (PL)
Bosnia and Herzegovina (BA)	Greece (EL)	Portugal (PT)
Bulgaria (BG)	Hungary (HU)	Romania (RO)
Croatia (HR)	Iceland (IS)	Serbia (RS)
Czech Republic (CZ)	Ireland (IE)	Slovakia (SK)
Denmark (DK)	Italy (IT)	Slovenia (SI)
Estonia (EE)	Lithuania (LT)	Spain (ES)
Finland (FI)	Malta (MT)	Switzerland (CH)
	Moldova (MD)	Turkey (TR)

P = Present; A = Absent

Members present were: 25

Members absent were: 4 plus the 2 NNC representatives.

AC announced that quorum was reached and declared that MC Meeting could officially take place and that all votes and decisions taken were valid.

### **3) Adoption of Agenda**

AC readed the Agenda, previously sent by email to all MC Members.

AC launched the vote for the Adoption of Agenda.

Agenda was unanimously adopted.

### **4) Approval of minutes and matters rising of last meeting**

AC remembered participants that last meeting minutes were approved by e-vote.

Any matter was bringing to discussing by any of the participants.

### **5) Actual GP2 situation of the Action**

AC informed participants about:

- Action start, end and Grant Periods (GPs): Action started on Oct 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019 and will end on Oct 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, originally divided in 5 Grant Periods (GP1: Oct 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019 – April 30<sup>th</sup> 2020; GP2: May 1<sup>st</sup> 2020 – April 30<sup>th</sup> 2021; GP3: May 1<sup>st</sup> 2021 – April 30<sup>th</sup> 2022; GP4: May 1<sup>st</sup> 2022 – April 30<sup>th</sup> 2023; GP5: May 1<sup>st</sup> 2023 – Oct 1<sup>st</sup> 2023).
- Due to pandemics, actual GP2 will end on October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022.
- Participating members: Action grew in terms of new participants since last MC meeting of March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020 held in Belgrade (RS) (29 COST countries + 2NNC members at the date of this meeting vs the 24 members + 2 NNC registered in occasion of last MC).
- It was agreed that all MC members should have a more active role contacting and inviting people working in the topic of NECTAR from Member Countries still not present in the Action, aiming at the expansion of the network.
- According to last evote launched on Oct 8<sup>th</sup> 2020 after CG meeting of Oct 2<sup>nd</sup> (minutes in Annex 2), WBP for GP2 was modified and approved.
- An AC meeting is planned on Feb 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020, in which SO will communicate latest news about COST decisions in relation to COVID19 pandemics. It was anticipated by SO to AC that there will be some actions aiming at attempting to refund people who could not attend to Belgrade meeting due to pandemics, as well as the possibility to apply for a topup of actual budget for GP2. AC will inform MC about main info and will eventually launch evotes if any decision will need to be taken by MC.

### **6) Meetings and other networking activities for GP2**

AC informed participants about:

- COVID19 has changed the expectations of networking activities for GP2, so that WBP has been changed accordingly.
- Extra STSMs have been planned and new calls will be launched soon.
- The TS, in the form it was originally planned, has been deleted, hoping to be able to organize something online.
- ITC Grants will be promoted again
- Further budget has been allocated to dissemination activities

- 2<sup>nd</sup> NECTAR meeting (MC/CG/WG/Dissemination) originally planned to be held in presence in Faro (PT) on March 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> 2021 cannot be held in actual form.

On this basis AC proposed MC to postpone 2<sup>nd</sup> NECTAR meeting (MC/CG/WG/Dissemination) from March to end August / earl September, and, to facilitate trips, he proposed to move from Faro to Lisbon, keeping the organization of the event to Portugal. AC finally proposed to exploit period originally planned for 2<sup>nd</sup> NECTAR meeting (i.e., March 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> 2021) for the organization of a Virtual meeting (MC/CG/WG/Dissemination) managed by WG5 leader.

AC launched the vote concerning the above-proposed changes of activities. **MC unanimously approved all AC proposals, but scheduling Virtual Meeting on next March 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021 instead of previous dates (March 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> 2021).**

Meeting details will be communicated during next MC meeting.

## 7) Eventual budget changes

AC informed participants about budget changes approved by MC according to evote launched on Oct 8<sup>th</sup> 2020 after CG meeting of Oct 2<sup>nd</sup> (minutes in Annex 2).

AC communicated participants that he will inform MC as soon as he will have info from AC meeting concerning topup requests.

AC asked MC to give him full mandate make a proposal to submit to SO and COST Association to negotiate the top-up request. AC communicated that the proposal should be, in any case, approved by MC. **MC unanimously approved.**

## 8) AOB

No other point was found to be relevant to be further discussed.

## 9) Summary of MC decisions

From the 29 COST countries parties of the Action (on the 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021), 24 were present and represented by their corresponding MC members. 4 were not present.

The following decisions were taken:

- **Decision 1:** 2<sup>nd</sup> NECTAR meeting (MC/CG/WG/Dissemination) will be postponed from March to end August / earl September, and will be held in Lisbon.
- **Decision 2:** A Virtual meeting will be organized next March 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> 2021 by WG5 Leader.
- **Decision 3:** MC gave AC full mandate make a proposal to submit to SO and COST Association to negotiate the topup request.

## 10) Closing

In conclusion, AC thanked all people present for their active participation to the meeting, acknowledging the excellent work done by everybody.

Meeting was officially closed.

## List of Annexes



- Annex 1 – Agenda
- Annex 2 – Minutes of CG meeting of Oct 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020

**Minutes prepared by:**

- *Action Chair*
- *Action Vice-Chair*

## ANNEX 1- AGENDA

**COST Action CA18202**

**Action Title: Network for Equilibria and Chemical Thermodynamics Advanced Research**

**Draft Agenda**

**Management Committee Meeting**

**online: <https://cost-eu.zoom.us/j/82011324368?pwd=NXBPU11TFNBVkiOTnBkZVJIS1BVdz09>,  
online, Italy**

**February 5, 2021 14:30**

1. Welcome to participants
2. Verification of the presence of two-thirds of the Participating COST Countries or, if applicable, a quorum
3. Adoption of agenda
4. Approval of minutes and matters arising of last meeting
5. Actual GP2 situation of the Action
6. Meetings and other networking Activities for GP2
7. Eventual budget changes
8. AOB
9. Summary of MC decisions
10. Closing

## ANNEX 2- MINUTES OF CG MEETING

### CA18202 NECTAR Core Group Meeting

#### Minutes

02 Oct 2020

The meeting started at the schedule time.

**Present:**

Action Chair, Demetrio Milea  
Action Vice Chair, Sofia Gama  
STSM Coordinator, Matteo Tegoni  
SCM (Science Communication Manager),  
Elzbieta Gumienka-Kontecka  
ITM (Industry Transfer Manager), Oreste Todini  
(P&G)  
ITC Conference Grant Coordinator, Emel Yildiz  
WG1, Montserrat Filella, Olga Iranzo  
WG2, Petr Herman, Amelia Santos  
WG3, Slobodan Gadzuric, Arunas Ramanavicius  
WG4, Aleksandar Cvetkovski  
WG5, Isabel Cavaco, Natalia Busto

**Absent:**

TSC (Training Schools Coordinator),  
Enrique Garcia-Espana  
EOM (Equal Opportunities Manager),  
Eva Anna Enyedý  
WG4 co-leader, Winfried Plass

1- Actual GP2 situation of the Action

The Action Chair reported the last news from COST Association: delay on the payment of the first 50% budget for GP2 and intensive encouraging on the realization of web activities. Fast check on the stage of the Grant Agreement Period Goals (GAPG) described on "Work And Budget Plan CA18202 Grant Agreement Period 2 01/05/2020 to 30/04/2021".

- GAPG1 – Ok (Social media +/- active)
- GAPG2 – Ok (Accomplished)
- GAPG3 – Ok (work in progress)
- GAPG4 – Work in progress (WG1)
- GAPG5 – Work in progress (WG2)
- GAPG6 – No news in the beginning of the meeting
- GAPG7 – No news in the beginning of the meeting
- GAPG8 – Eventual organization of a Web Training School
- GAPG9 – Work in progress (WG1)

2- WGs leaders/co-leaders: Brief report (5-10 min) on news for respective WGs

- a. Ongoing activities
- b. Planned short term activities (GP2)
- c. Deliverables

WG1 – Compilation of hydrolysis products of relevant elements. Also evaluation of literature on low valence elements, in particular, Cu<sup>I</sup>. A lot of data collected and some manuscripts planned. Regular monthly meetings on Zoom, since March.

WG2 – From the 3 original "tasks" defined in Belgrade:

Task 1, Macrocycles: the standard procedures for the study of macrocycles are defined. The next step will be the experimental validation of the methods by different research groups.

Task 2, DNA: validation of different software/computation setups by the use of the same data by different research groups evaluating the results obtained. Not many options for validation of experimental procedures.

Task 3, Peptides: nothing seems to be going on... the responsible for this Task (Katalin Várnagy) is being silent to Petr's emails.

Recommendations:

To realize soon a web WG meeting.  
Better communication between WG2 members.

WG3 – Several studies were done relative to the synthesis of new ionic liquids, and weak interaction studies, in particular involving pharmaceutical compounds. Several publications just accepted on the mentioned topics. STSM approved on WG3 topics.

Recommendations:

To realize soon a web WG meeting.  
Creation of eventual Task Groups  
Better communication between WG3 and CG and other WGs.

WG4 – No particular news.

The necessity to create a Task Group (TG) specifically dedicated to Software Development emerged. Prof. Silvia Berto, expert in the field, was named as coordinator of this TG.

Recommendations:

To realize soon a web WG meeting.  
Better communication between WG4 and CG and other WGs.

New stakeholders: ITM is trying to involve the software company that works already for them (P&G) as well as its colleagues in Cincinnati more dedicated to that topic.

Recommendations: preparation of a small informative sheet that can be used to present the Action and its interests on a "industrial" point of view.

WG5 – Social media more or less working

Collaboration platform: not working...

Recommendations:

Organization of a web meeting where we use the platform and see what are the difficulties and how it works in general.

### 3- Actions and contingency plan for WGs activities delays

Main problems seem to be the result of low organization inside WGs.

- 1) There are some WG way too big to allow that everybody can be present in the meetings. Try to find a structural point for it to work as dividing in "active" and "observers" elements. VC will check the members and will try to create and evaluate the interactions between members in order to be possible to organize people.
- 2) Organize WG meetings online
- 3) Find an effective way of work, namely, division of the work in individual Tasks
- 4) Make the platform work, between the max of people possible

### 4- Proposal for redistribution for planned GP2 Networking Tools and eventual budget remodulation

From the actual GP2 Networking Tools, some activities were already canceled, due to COVID-19 contingencies. In particular, the ISMEC conference and the Summer Training School, both postponed to next GP.

During the discussion, the presents agreed on a redistribution of the money considering:

- 1) A substantial increment on the number of STSM

2) Increase the budget for OA publications, to be approved for financing by CG

3) Increase the ITC Conference Grant budget

The discussion resulted in the following **new** Budget plan:

**(1) Meetings 45,000.00** (5-6 March 2020, Faro)

**(2) Training Schools 0.00** (eventually a web training school organized by Valencia)

**(3) Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM) 30,000.00** (ca. 20 STSM, 7 already approved)

**(4) ITC Conference Grant 1,000.00**

**(5) COST Action Dissemination 11,000.00** (for dissemination and OA)

**(6) Other Expenses Related to Scientific Activities (OERSA) 600.00**

Total Science Expenditure (sum of (1) to (6)) 87,600.00

The actual budget plan, after approval of all the CG, will be sent to the MC for approval by e-vote.

5- Dates for GP2 activities/calls

1) Launch of the 2<sup>nd</sup> STSM call ASAP

2) Launch of the ITC Conference grant ASAP

3) Organization of a Web Training School / Web Seminar possibly in Valencia (under evaluation)

4) NECTAR meeting, 05-06 March 2021: several things still to define depending on COVID situation. More details in next weeks.

6- General discussion and thoughts (COVID-19 contingency plan)

Already discussed among the all meeting when the approach of all the other agenda items.

7- AOB

CG members and AC reported strong disappointment and serious complaints among NECTAR community for COST Association behavior and management of “Belgrade” (in particular) and COVID (in general) situation.

AC reported about an “open letter” written by other ACs reporting same “mood” within other Actions.

The necessity to undertake an “integrated and visible complaint action” among ACs emerged, hoping for a productive response and concrete actions from COST Association. CG gave mandate to AC for that.

## CA18202 MC approval for budget topup request and WBP change

### Description

Dear MC members,

During the Chairs meeting that I had last 9 Feb 2021, it emerged that COST has some extra budget for supporting additional activities of the running Actions during this current Grant Period (until end of October 2021).

I have been asked to decide, if needed, to submit a **top-up request** as soon as possible and no later than **25/02/2021**.

At moment, we have no idea about the possible budget, we just know that the evaluation and approval of our potential requests will be based on different elements, i.e.:

- The current number of countries (incl. NNC).
- The current expenses and forecasted level of Actions expenditures (*Please update your upcoming activities in e-cost till the end of the GP as soon as possible!*).
- The underspent from last GP.
- The impact of the new planned activities in the Action objectives.
- Other indicators: i.e. ITC expenditure, etc...
- The overall evaluation of the requests from all the Actions.

So, we have been asked to **be realistic in our forecast and requests**. We need to avoid high underspent at the end of the GP, so, **if there is not a clear need, we should not request any budget**.

As explained in the meeting, it is not guaranteed that all our requests can be covered now.

Once the top up is approved by MC, we will need to amend the current WBP.



On the basis of the above considerations, and after a long and fruitful discussion with SO about various options and possible requests, we thought it could be reasonable to request a topup of 15550€ to dedicate to our end-of-year MC/CG/WG/dissemination Meeting to be held in september.

The reasons behind that can be resumed as follows:

- 1) we already had, recently, amended original WBP for GP2 due to pandemics, with cancellation of TS and reallocating face to face meeting budget to STSMs, ITC Grants, Dissemination and other activities.
- 2) on that basis, all other networking activities are very well covered in terms of budget (even in terms of STSMs, we are not sure if we will be able to spend all budget, we still have another call to launch).
- 3) During CG meeting before MC votes on budget amendments, we agreed that a big final meeting is "necessary" and almost mandatory for various reasons. Among them, I just cite the scientific ones, related to the necessity to disseminate internally and externally our activities, to discuss about results and future within and between WGs, and to properly plan GP3.
- 4) Objectively, with vaccination campaigns and after summer and before starting schools, the COVID situation should be good enough for travelling (last september pandemics curve was lower than in other periods of this crisis, and there was no vaccine yet).
- 5) Actual budget allocated for meeting was already underestimated because of the uncertainty of pandemics, and waiting for the possibility (as it seems to be now) of topup. For example, budget was calculated not taking into account travel expenses. Furthermore, after more than one year of travel bans, we expect many participants and more activities.



On the basis of the above considerations, and taking into account that Lisbon is cheaper and easier to reach than Faro in September, always considering an average of **80 attendants** (53 are only actual MC members, last year despite cancellations we almost reached this number) and in the view of allowing more people to attend, our intention is to reduce the flat rate (as done in Belgrade) to **100 € per day** and make a **3-days meeting** (i.e. up to 4 reimbursable days) that, considering an average cost of flight tickets of 300€, would result in an estimated budget of 700€ per participant and, therefore of 60800€ (including LOS).

From the difference between that amount and the actual allocated budget it comes the topup request of **15550€**.

After these premises, you are asked to vote if you are favourable or not to request for that topup amount to allocate in the new WBP as above described.

Due to the time restriction, I kindly ask you to vote asap and not lather than this week, remembering you that:

1) Votes will be counted per country (in case of disagreeing votes between MC members of a country, the vote for that country is null).

2) No vote = approval

Best regards

Demetrio

**Start** 15/02/2021 12:48

**End** 22/02/2021 23:59