

# Cost Action A35: PROGRESSORE

Minutes of the fourth Management Committee meeting, Zaragoza,  
26-27 September 2008

## **Friday 26 September**

### **1. Welcome to participants**

Gerard Béaur (GB) welcomed the Management Committee to the meeting, and introduced the COST-officer in attendance, Julia Stamm (JS).

### **2. Adoption of agenda**

It was agreed to revise the agenda so that the discussion of future plans for the Action could take place that afternoon.

### **3. Report of the COST officer**

The MC received a short report from JS. Her predecessor had regarded the action as one of the most successful of the current Cost Actions and his report had been very positive. She expressed satisfaction with the management of the Action.

### **4. Network of Networks, 'New perspectives on landscapes'**

Annie Antoine reported on the COST network of networks 'New perspectives on landscapes'. A final meeting would take place in November 2008 which was intended to develop a new research programme.

### **5. Financial report and budget planning for 2008-09**

GB reported that a work plan had been circulated to members of the Committee during the summer. A financial report had been sent to Patrick Svensson and Vicente Pinella for comment and certification. Their report was read to the meeting.

The Action had received €25,000 in 2007-8 and spent €20,000. Five workshops and three STMS had been funded although it would have been desirable to have funded more of the latter. Income from COST had been received in better time than in 2006-7 although at the moment there a deficit on the account until a further vote was received. The expectation was that €20,000 would be received in 2008-9 although the timing of this made it impossible to hold the Girona conference in May as arranged. It would therefore have to be deferred to September. Following a discussion of the best dates, the conference was provisionally fixed for 7-8 September 2009. JS undertook to find at least €50,000 extra to help fund this meeting. It was agreed that the revised date would be circulated as soon as Rosa Congost had been able to make the necessary arrangements at Girona.

### **6. STSM**

Four proposals for STSM awards had been received. The applications from Ronan Tallec, Massimiliano Grara and Gábor Czoch were approved. That from Gergely Kunt was felt not to fall within the range of the Action and was not funded.

### **7. Publications**

GB reported on meetings of the Editorial Board held in Paris and Lisbon. The first volume (ed. Vivier) was nearly completed and it had been hoped to bring copies to the meeting. However, discussions were taking place with Brepols over the cover

illustration, the question being whether it should be specific to each volume or a single illustration common to all twelve volumes. The Committee felt that there should be individual covers and asked for its opinion to be relayed to the publishers.

GB said that three volumes were nearly complete: they were the ones edited by Vivier, Pinella and Langsteiner. This led into a technical discussion of the presentation of the volumes. It was held that only Word files need to be sent to GB. The layout of pages would now be undertaken in Paris.

Anne Lise-Head König raised the question of the numbering of the volumes and whether they should be numbered in publication order or according to a pre-ordained scheme. After an inconclusive discussion, it was thought that the first four volumes should bear the numbers already allocated and that the remaining volumes should be numbered in publication order so as to avoid the problem of ‘missing’ volumes.

There was some discussion of the need to secure adequate English texts. It was felt that there was the need for copyediting. However it was unlikely that there was sufficient funding available to do all papers in all volumes, and editors were therefore asked to identify papers which had an especial need of attention. GB undertook to write to volume editors outlining how much money he could make available.

It was agreed in principle that the 2009 conference papers should be published in some form. The possibility of allocating some money from the project to subvent publication was discussed and JS said that she thought that a balance could be held over for this purpose.

## **8. Dissemination.**

There was a discussion of the means of dissemination. It was agreed that fuller details of the publications needed to be added to the Action’s website. The national professional societies should be asked to place links to the series on their own websites. Brepol’s had not yet given the series prominence on its website and it was proposed that once the first four volumes were in print, they be asked to prepare and circulate an advertising leaflet.

The meeting then broke for lunch

## **9. Preparation of the final conference in 2009**

The minutes of the Restricted Core Group meeting held on 20 June 2008 were circulated and formed the basis of a discussion led by GB. He stressed the need for the conference to have relevance to contemporary conditions and to be capable of being of interest to policy makers. There was a need for us to play to our strengths. It was argued by Rui Santos that the impact of the conference would not be limited to the conference itself and that the conference could be seen as being a dry run for the conference publication.

After exhaustive discussion, the four themes contained minutes of the June meeting were adopted as the basis for the conference, with the provisos that individual people could move between themes and the themes themselves, when they met, could adjust the themes to play to their strengths.

Coordinators were nominated as following: Theme One (Natural Resources), provisionally Peter Moser; Theme Two (Farm and labour), Rui Santos; Theme Three (markets and demand), Jose Vicente Serrao; Theme Four (place of rural society), Phillipp Schofield/Nadine Vivier.

## **10. Future plans**

GB led a discussion of the possibility of making a FP 7 proposal in the future. The desirability of maintaining some form of network was agreed. Following on the circulation of a proposal for a Rural History Conference by Richard Hoyle on behalf of the British Agricultural History Society, there was some discussion of the desirability of establishing a European association for Rural History. Rival models were discussed, with some of those present preferring a European society over a federation of national societies which, it was suggested, would disadvantage those countries where the national society was either traditional and non-academic in its interests or small and under-developed.

## **Saturday 27 September**

### **11. Working group reports**

The reports of the four working groups were received and approved for the four working group meetings which took place in 2008. The presenters of the reports (Mats Morell, group 1; Patrick Svensson, group 2; Anne-Lise Head König, group 3; Peter Moser, group 4) were thanked for their presentations. A feature noted for more than one working group was the cross-fertilisation of themes and participants across the groups, a result which was considered most encouraging.

Further action: All final reports from these working groups are to be submitted to GB for posting on the Action's website.

### **12. Website**

It was agreed that the Action's forthcoming publications should be fully identified on the Action's website.

### **13. Final conference: Girona, September 2009**

In preparation for this meeting it was agreed that draft introductions to the volumes presently or soon to be in preparation should be circulated in due course, with each co-ordinator of the four sessions at Girona to gather this and relevant material from the four working groups, as appropriate. Further, co-ordinators of the four working groups should also look to make available relevant material and help identify papers and texts of particular relevance to the four identified themes for Girona (as below).

Various possible approaches to the Girona meeting were discussed and a range of potential topics explored. After some initial discussion of general themes the Management Committee broke for brief meetings within the four groups identified in GB's working paper.

The management committee reconvened after lunch and received reports from the four groups. The main themes identified were as follows:

Group A (**Peter Moser** and Richard Hoyle)

Themes: (i) landscapes and rural societies, their changes and continuities; (ii) the rival use of rural landscapes; (iii) natural resources and sustainability; (iiii) land and pollution

Group B (**Rui Santos** and Gérard Béaur)

Themes: (i) reflection of historical trends and instances of state intervention in forms of agriculture; (ii) models of agricultural organisation, with some reference to comparative contexts, e.g. large v. small-scale agriculture; (iii) future of peasantry and kind of farmers; (iiii) training and employment

Group C (**Patrick Svensson** and Jose Vicente Serrao)

Themes: (i) factors driving change in the rural economy, this to incorporate state policy and to reflect diversity across European rural societies; (ii) role of change in consumption; (iii) performance and way of intensification, alternative models; (iiii) state protection

Group D (**Phillipp Schofield** and Nadine Vivier)

Themes: Changing structures of power in and beyond the European countryside, to include discussion of (i) interaction between formal institutions and landholders/land occupiers; (ii) urban-rural relations; (iii) the impact of the non-landholding sector within rural society; (iiii) standard of living.

The four themes were welcomed by the MC; certain overlaps were acknowledged but were considered to be complementary rather than problematic. It was agreed that at a later stage draft presentations would be circulated in order to avoid any repetition across themes.

#### **14. Girona conference: format**

It was agreed that the basic structure for the conference as established in GB's working paper would be generally adopted but that the organisers of each of the four themes could, within reason, arrange their own session as they saw fit.

Presentations would need to be pre-circulated and careful attention paid to reaching the proposed audience for this final meeting.

Possible issues in relation to publication were discussed but no conclusion was reached at this stage.

#### **15. Time and place of next meeting**

It was also agreed that a MC meeting linked to consideration of the relevant themes would need to follow in the first half of 2009, most likely Paris in March.

draft RWH/PRS  
8/9 October 2008