

## **ETP Plants for the Future becomes a membership based ETP, 18 April 2008**

### **1. What was the main reason you decided to establish a membership based ETP?**

Companies, farmers and academia active in the plant sector all see a major role for the 'Plants for the Future' ETP in the coming years to foster the implementation of the Strategic Research Agenda (published 2007) towards our Vision (published 2004) at European, multinational and national level, to provide general statements on policy issues crucial for the plant sector, and to encourage strong education and communication activities for our sector. The second phase of our ETP, developing the SRA, was supported by an EU grant which ended last year. For several reasons the European Commission decided to provide such support only once. So it was up to the P4F stakeholders themselves to convert our ETP into a membership based ETP or to cease its existence. As you can see, we jointly decided for the first option enabling a strong interaction of the stakeholders with partners from the research, policy and public arena to ensure competitiveness of the European plant sector to contribute to address major challenges for society in Europe and beyond in the coming decades.

### **2. What were the formalities you had to go through?**

We took the time, nearly one year, to have a thorough analysis of the current situation and future opportunities for our sector and which role the P4F ETP could play in there. All stakeholder groups engaged in this discussion jointly and among their own members. Finally we decided for a membership based P4F ETP consisting of all three stakeholders, industry, farmers and academia.

### **3. Did you encounter any specific problems?**

As you can imagine we faced several challenges. To build on the strength of our ETP we aimed to continue the ETP driven by all three stakeholders jointly and therefore addressing the needs of them equally and being supported by them equally. This was crucial for us and we finally succeeded. Second, we see a high responsibility of the plant sector for society as you can witness in the ongoing discussions about climate change, food supply, health, energy, environment etc. Therefore we will continue our discussion with public bodies to engage these much more in our ETP in future.

### **4. How are you going to organise your legal entity and finance your activities in practice?**

We decided for a collaboration between the members of the P4F entity which will not be registered as a legal entity for the time being. The ETP structure encompasses

- The steering committee to oversee the global directions, to meet annually as the TP members meeting, with members (the financial contributors to the ETP), experts (decided upon by the members, for instance on SME issues) and observers (representing ETP partners).
- The elected management team (members are from all three stakeholder groups) to assist the coordinator and to represent the TP.
- The coordinator for operational leadership, day-to-day operational activities, the primary contact and the representation to the "outside world".
- Task forces that will complement the permanent bodies on a temporary basis being responsible for developing and leading agreed activities.

In addition to the core financing provided by the P4F ETP members, we will apply for third party financing for specific tasks and activities.

### **5. Why did you find it necessary/ useful to establish a membership based ETP?**

Answered before already

### **6. How do you see the future of your ETP?**

As explained before, the goal of our ETP is to create a competitive plant sector in Europe to address five challenges for our society:

- Healthy, safe and sufficient food and feed
- Plant-based products – chemical and bioenergy
- Sustainable agriculture, forestry and landscape
- Vibrant and competitive basic research
- Consumer choice and governance

The Vision paper and the Strategic Research Agenda are finalized, therefore the focus will be on the implementation (based on shorter term action plans), monitoring and updating of the SRA. The SRA is not limited to research, but encompasses as well aspects of society, law, education, communication and many more. The P4F ETP will work in the coming three years with a focus on promoting and advocating strategic and internationally competitive research. Education, communication and innovation embracement (including general policy statements) will be complementary tasks.

To achieve this we will work closely with our partners such as related ETPs from the Knowledge-Based Bio-economy area (KBBE), ERA-Net Plant Genomics and Plant-KBBE, research councils and political bodies at European, multi-national and national level. We will encourage the development of national support groups or Technology Platforms.

### **Contact and links**

Web site: [www.plantsforthefuture.eu](http://www.plantsforthefuture.eu)

Documents and Publications: <http://www.epsoweb.org/Catalog/TP/TP%20Documents.htm>

Vision link: <http://www.epsoweb.org/Catalog/TP/Plants%20for%20the%20future-Dec04.pdf>

SRA link: Summary: [http://www.epsoweb.org/Catalog/TP/Launch\\_25June07/TP\\_SRA\\_Summary.pdf](http://www.epsoweb.org/Catalog/TP/Launch_25June07/TP_SRA_Summary.pdf)

Full SRA: [http://www.epsoweb.org/Catalog/TP/SRA\\_PART\\_II.pdf](http://www.epsoweb.org/Catalog/TP/SRA_PART_II.pdf)

Contact:

Karin Metzloff, Coordinator of the 'Plants for the Future' ETP

[plantTP@epsomail.org](mailto:plantTP@epsomail.org)

'Plants for the Future' ETP

c/o EPSO

Rue de l'Industrie 4

1000 Brussels

Belgium