

Minutes of the Business Meeting
XXV International Grassland Congress, Kentucky, USA
Monday 15 May, 2023 4.30pm

1) Opening and Welcome

Dr Derek Woodfield welcomed attendees at the IGC Business Meeting and acknowledged the tremendous efforts of the USA Organizing committee in organizing this congress. In particular he acknowledged the significant contributions of Tina Bowling and her family in ensuring the XXV IGC was well organized, and congratulated Dr Ray Smith on his tireless efforts to make this Congress a success.

The tight timeframe between the XXIV Congress in Kenya and this Congress created unique challenges for the USA Organizing committee with sponsorship very difficult to obtain. This resulted in approximately 50% of the budgeted sponsorship received and impacted on the number of scholarships that could be offered to assist participants from developing countries.

2) Review and Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the XXIV IGC were provided to all attendees.

Motion: That the minutes of the XXIV IGC business meeting were a true and accurate record.

Moved: D Woodfield/Peter Ballerstedt

CARRIED

3) Acknowledgement of IGC Continuing Committee Members and their service:

Derek Woodfield thanked members of the Continuing Committee (CC) for their contributions since the last Congress in Kenya in 2021.

Appointed in 2015 and serving to 2027

Region III [South America]	Dr Fernando Ortega, Chile
Region VI [East Asia]	Dr Joung-Kyong Lee, South Korea
Region VII [Middle East]	Dr Hayatullah Esmati, Afghanistan – need a replacement until 2027
Region VIII [Mediterranean]	Dr Serkan Ates, Jordan – need a replacement until 2027
Region X [Northern Eurasia]	Dr Iveta Gutmane, Latvia – need a replacement until 2027
Region XI [Africa]	Dr. Babo Fadlala, Sudan

Appointed in 2013 and finishing their terms in 2023

Region I [Canada, USA]	Dr Ray Smith, USA
Region II [Central America]	Dr Fernando Ibarra Flores, Mexico
Region IV [South-East Asia]	Dr P. K. Ghosh, India
Region V [Oceania]	Dr Derek Woodfield, New Zealand
Region IX [Europe]	Dr Christian Huyghe, France

Appointed in 2021 and finishing in 2023

Kenya Organising Committee	Dr Elkana Nyambati, Kenya
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Derek pointed out that due to the virtual Congress in Kenya that the terms of all CC members had been extended through to 2023. This has contributed to an unusual number of vacant CC positions to fill this year with 3 of the 6 committee members elected through to 2027 being unable to complete their terms (Dr Esmati (retired), Dr Ates (no longer in Region VIII) and Dr Gutmane (resignation)).

A call was made for former CC members to help with identifying suitable nominations to fill the 8 vacancies. Dr Gavin Sheath offered to assist in this process.

4) Review and progress of resolutions passed at the XXIV IGC in Kenya.

The IGC Resolutions Committee (Dr Fernando Ortega, Dr Joung-Kyong Lee & Dr Serkan Ates) presented the resolutions and updated the progress since IGC XXIV to attendees. [Updates provided are in blue.](#)

Resolution 1 – The members of the XXIV IGC congratulate the Kenyan Organizing Committee for their perseverance in putting together an excellent Congress in the face of an unprecedented pandemic that caused its delay until 2021 and ultimately resulted in a move to a virtual congress. The congress plenary sessions were informative and the volunteer oral and poster presentations provided an excellent overview of grasslands around the world.

Resolution 2 - We thank the sponsoring organizations for their financial and in-kind support of the XXIV IGC particularly given the global financial situation associated with Covid-19. Sponsorship is a critical component in minimising registration costs for delegates, therefore, we recommend that the IGC continuing committee appoint a sub-committee to assist the XXV IGC Local Organizing Committee in identifying the appropriate contacts for sponsorship. [The short duration between Kenya and USA meant that all IGC CC members were asked to actively support in obtaining sponsorship.](#)

Resolution 3 – That the XXV IGC Organizing committee make every reasonable effort to enable participants from as many countries as possible to attend by keeping costs low (including a range of accommodations), providing delegate sponsorship, and make every effort to promote the Congress Internationally. [Half of the sponsorship income for IGC XXV was committed to supporting participants from other countries.](#)

Resolution 4 – That ten dollars USD per attendee earned during the XXV IGC Congress should be provided to the IGC Continuing Committee as start-up funds for the next congress and to support early career researchers attending the congress. [This was budgeted as part of the XXV IGC budget.](#)

Resolution 5 – The Continuing committee should commission a study on the Global future of grasslands and present this at the 100th anniversary of the IGC in 2027. The study would involve all relevant stakeholders. [Potential authors from each region are being identified by the IGC CC members.](#)

Resolution 6 – That the term of the current IGC Continuing Committee members be extended until the next in-person IGC Congress 14-19 May 2023 in the USA since our constitution requires that “new members shall be nominated from the participating delegates in attendance at the Congress”. Consultations with past IGC CC Chairs provided the recommendation that new members should be nominated from those physically attending a Congress. [IGC CC where possible have served out the additional term.](#)

Resolution 7 – That the IGC fully support the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists initiative for 2026 including providing representatives to the IYRP Global and Regional Support Groups. [This initiative was actively supported and remains a focus for IGC members. Several initiatives are part of the program for XXV IGC.](#)

Resolution 8 - That the incoming IGC Continuing Committee consider the need for updated Country Pasture Profiles and lobby FAO for resources to update and reinstate a full set of publicly available Country Pasture Profiles. If successful, IGC will:

- Identify potential authors to build on the previous work;
- Work with authors to develop suitable guidelines and specifications for this new series; and
- Put together a business case for the publication of the Country Pasture Profiles as an e-book (the prior electronic versions could apparently not be cited as a scholarly work).

The CC was not able to make any progress with this resolution as there is no longer a Grassland/Rangeland group within FAO with whom to engage. We recommend that this action be dropped.

5) No Constitutional amendments

The CC considered one constitutional change but after discussion with several former IGC Chairs it was decided not to proceed with this change. No other resolutions were received prior to the 6 months preceding the IGC 2023.

It is an ongoing challenge to identify committee members with the time and energy to drive the development of IGC. Suggestions included giving each IGC CC member a clear role and that consideration should be given to opening nominations to include people who were not physically present at the IGC.

6) Update on IGC Past Proceedings Project

Dr Ray Smith updated attendees on the archiving of IGC papers from past proceedings. There have been >170,000 downloads of the papers uploaded to date by the Univ of Kentucky library. The congresses with electronic papers have all been uploaded (2001 Brazil through 2021 Kenya) and work is progressing on the older IGC proceedings that will need to be scanned before they can be uploaded. The Forage and Grassland Foundation (USA based) has contributed to this effort, but the majority of funding has come directly from the University of Kentucky library budget. The entire proceedings collection can be viewed at <https://uknowledge.uky.edu/igc/> or by using any search engine and keywords and/or author names. Ideally, include “International Grassland Congress” in your search.

Dr Smith also noted that the history of IGC written by Drs Vivien Alen, Garry Lacefield and Roger Wilkins and Ray Smith is being updated after each IGC with a separate Annex being made available to IGC attendees. The Annex covering the XXIV IGC in Kenya was available at the 2023 Congress. Go to the IGC Publications page to download a pdf of the History or to purchase a hard copy. <https://www.internationalgrasslands.org/publications/>

7) Announcement of venue for XXVI IGC in 2027 (100th Anniversary IGC)

Derek Woodfield informed attendees that the IGC CC had accepted a bid for the 100th anniversary IGC to be held in Leipzig, Germany. The bid was very strong with support from a range of German Institutes and from the European Grassland Federation.

Dr Woodfield also invited attendees to consider nomination for IGC 2031

8) New IGC Resolutions – Dr. Fernando Ortega

The Resolutions Committee for IGC 2023 is composed of: Dr Fernando Ortega, Dr Joung-Kyong Lee and Dr Serkan Ates. This committee is charged with bringing IGC resolutions to the business meeting on 19 May for discussion and approval.

9) Permanent IGC Secretariat

Dr Woodfield informed attendees that the IGC CC had accepted a proposal to establish a permanent IGC Secretariat to improve continuity between IGCs. IGC will seek sponsorship support to cover the cost.

10) Other Business

There were a number of questions and recommendations around closer alignment of IGC and the International Rangeland Congresses. The joint meetings in China and Kenya were successful and the groups have much in common. While the venue is a key deciding point, declining membership in both Grasslands and Rangelands communities along with the huge cost of running these events suggests closer alignment is warranted.

11) Close of Meeting: 5.25pm