

Minutes from
The 7th Management Committee and WG1, WG2, WG3, WG4 and
WG5 meeting

April 22-24, 2009, Belgrade, Serbia

The 7th Management Committee Meeting was held on Thursday, April 23, 2009.

- **Welcome-** Patrick Butaye, the Chair of the COST ACTION B28 welcomed the participants to the 7th Management Committee Meeting.

- **Adoption of the Agenda.** The Agenda was approved by the MC members by voting.

- **Adoption of the Minutes of the 6th MC meeting in Bucharest.** The Agenda was approved by the MC members by voting.

- **Report of the Chair of the Working Group 1 - J. Schrenzel (replaced by Tanja Kostic)**

A very useful collaboration among the members of this WG was reported. It has already led to joint research project proposals in the 7th Framework program of EU, but unfortunately, these proposals were not accepted. Similarly, a planned workshop on the detection techniques in the SPR and Raman spectroscopy fields did not take place due to the technical problems from the side of an Italian company that promised to organize the meeting at its premises.

Dr. Kostic reported that the Booklet has already been published by Wiley-Blackwell in 2009 with ISBN: 978-3-527-32275-6. The book has the following title: "Detection of Highly Dangerous Pathogens. Micro array Methods for the Detection of BSL3 and BSL4 Agents". The Editors were: Tanja Kostic, Patrick Butaye, and Jacques Schrenzel. Since several formats of arrays have been developed now, not only for BSL3/4 agents but also for other bacteria and viruses, the members of WG1 decided to submit a new COST proposal aiming at a validation methodology for arrays within a short time. The title of this COST Action proposal will be announced in due course. Members of this WG and other WGs are invited to participate and to find new partners for this proposal. Dr. Piskin mentioned that a proposal for a 5 days training course on Array technologies has been submitted for FEMS and with an eventual co-financing of by the COST B28 Action has been submitted, but has not been accepted.

- **Report of the Chair of the Working Group 2 - C. Muller**

The activities were evaluated quite high with respect to the collaborative activities with other WGs. Two contributions from the members of this group were submitted for the joint Booklet of WG2 and WG3, which is now in the final stage of its preparation and will be sent to Wiley soon. Most recently, several new researchers from Spain, the Netherlands, Denmark, and Romania have joined this WG. Several new papers have been published in collaboration with other WGs, recently.

- Report of the Chair of the Working Group 3 - J. Stulik

Dr. Stulik expressed his satisfaction with the fact that members of this group were able to increase considerably their research activities also in collaboration with the members of other WGs. The collaboration activities with WG2 and WG4 members are particularly valuable and should lead to new findings in the related research areas and the joint research papers. With respect to the joint WG2 and WG3 Booklet, ten contributions were obtained from the WG3 members and two from WG2 members. All contributions were submitted to a thorough reviewing, and at present, they are finalised by the responsible editors prior sending them for an offer for publishing in Wiley. It was approved that this book will be financed by the COST Action B28 and published by Wiley as the first booklet.

A proteomics course was organized by WG3 members from Hradec Kralove, Czech Republic, for one week in October 2008. The course was well evaluated by both participants and lecturers. It was reported that a joint application for a Marie Curie Fellowship in the research of tularemia was not accepted. However, another proposal was submitted in the framework of 7th FP EU in the field „Neglected Infectious Diseases“.

- Report of the Chair of the Working Group 4- S. Panaiotov

WG 4 established quite some collaborative activities with other WGs. The collaboration activities with WG1, WG3 and members are particularly valuable and will lead shortly to the joint research papers in the related research fields. It was decided that the writing up of the WG4 booklet did not progress. Another concept, together with WG5 was proposed and approved. A booklet, based on the agents, will be written up, including a part on molecular epidemiology, a part that fits most with the partners of WG 4 and 5. During the WG5 meeting, responsibilities were assigned. Editors will be S. Panaiotov, M. Elschner, S. Cutler and P. Butaye. For each chapter (dealing with an infectious agent or a group of infectious agents) responsible was assigned and a list of co-authors was made. To this latter list other co-authors may be assigned by the responsible if he esteems it to be valuable. Papers will have to be submitted before the end of August 2009. It was decided that the booklet will be reviewed by a panel of reviewers selected by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the COST ACTION B28 and the Chairs of the individual WGs. The booklet will be published also by Wiley as the other volumes

- Report of the Chair of the Working Group 5- M. Elschner

An intensive collaboration among the members of this WG and also with other WGs was reported. Members of this WG together with other WG members have organized for the third time the “BSL3 /BSL4 Training Course” at the Institute of Virology, University Medical Center, Goettingen on 26 – 29 May 2009. The training course has found a very good response among participants and it was proposed that it has to be organized again in the last year (2010) of this COST Action B28. More detailed data will be communicated later on. This was approved by the MC Members.

Some members of WG1 and also some other WG members met in Ghent in November 2008 to deal with the Green Paper that is dealing with the legal aspects of working and exchanging BSL 3 and BSL 4 agents. At this meeting, a reply was prepared from the scientific point of view. This group will also prepare a Booklet that will deal with BSL3 and BSL4 training activities, which they esteem necessary for people working under

these circumstances. This book will also be proposed to Wiley and the cost of this book will be carried by COST. Further plans were made to continue this course beyond the COST Action. Alternative financing by DG SANCO was proposed.

Annual Report

The Chair of the COST ACTION B28 Patrick Butaye reported on the Annual Report of the COST ACTION B28 in Vienna. He mentioned that the report was well received and approved. By the end of the year, a communication will be sent to the WG chairs for preparing the last annual report.

Operation of COST B28 web site <http://www.cost-b28.be/>

It was mentioned that the web site is a very useful tool for dissemination of information on the activities accomplished within the COST ACTION B28. WG chairs were asked to update regularly their part of the web site. For the general maintenance of the web site, Veterinary and Agrochemical Research Center, in Brussels (BE) is responsible. Costs for this maintenance comprise 2000,- EUR/year, taken from the GASG. This sum was approved by the MC members by voting.

STSMs: current status. Report of the Chair of STSM Committee - R. Toman

-Margo Molhoek from the TNO, Rijswijk (NL) accomplished her COST STSM (COST-STSM-B28-2470) at the Department of Bacteriology and Immunology of the Veterinary and Agrochemical Research Centre at Brussels (BE) from 10/02/2008 to 16/02/2008. Her mission was aimed at getting more insight into the biosafety at the BSL3 and to improve bacteriological handling of *Brucella* species. The total budget request was 800,- EUR.

- Ivan Ivanov from the National Center of Infectious and Parasitic Disease, Sofia (BG) accomplished his COST STSM (COST-STSM-B28-3350) at the National Reference Laboratory for Measles and Rubella at the Institute of Immunology, Luxembourg (LUX) from 04/10/2008 to 29/11/2008. His mission was focused on screening (by PCR) selected pathogens of a large number of ticks from different sources and regions in Bulgaria collected during the last two years. He also investigated the prevalence BSL3 and BSL4 bacterial, viral, and protozoal agents. The total budget request was 2500,- EUR.

- Stefan Panaiotov from the National Center of Infectious and Parasitic Disease, Sofia (BG) accomplished his COST STSM (COST-STSM-B28-3432) at the Unite des Rickettsies, Universite de Medicine, Marseille (FR) from 01/10/2008 to 10/11/2008. His mission was aimed at the development of universal primer sets for identification of unknown microorganisms. He also tested blood samples with the broad-range primers for the identification by DNA amplification and sequencing of fastidious in culturing pathogens. The total budget request was 2450,- EUR.

- Maria Nica from the Clinical Hospital for Infection and Tropical Diseases, Dr. Victor Babes, Bucharest, (RO) will accomplish her COST STSM (COST-STSM-B28-4172) at the Universite Catholique de Louvain, Brussels (BE) from 24/04/2009 to 07/05/2008. Her mission will include new methods of fungal DNA extraction from clinical and environmental substrates, selection of the DNA markers for the identification of fungi,

and design of the PCR laboratory in an ISO 17025 environment. The total budget request was 1660,- EUR.

Other subjects

The chair asked for a GASG for the last year of the activities of this COST Action. This was approved by the MC.

Discussion on the place and programme of the next meetings

Dr. Erhan Piskin from the Hacettepe University, Chemical Engineering Department, Beytepe, Ankara, Turkey, expressed his interest to organize the next COST ACTION B28 "Array technologies for BSL3 and BSL4 pathogens" and the "8th Management Committee and WG1, WG2, WG3, WG4 and WG5 meetings" in Istanbul, Turkey. The proposed date of the meeting is end of March or beginning of April 2010. The MC members approved this proposal by voting. More information on the agenda, site and date of the meeting will be announced by the Organizing Committee in due course. For this meeting, The MC approved on a fund of 3000 € in order to support the organization of the meeting.

Other WGs were asked whether they might be interested in having a separate meeting alongside the year. WG4 and WG5 thought it might be interesting to have a meeting to finish up the booklet. However, this would only be done on evaluation of the actual situation of the booklet. The MC approved on an eventual WG4-WG5 meeting.

WG1 was thinking it might also be interesting to have a separate meeting on the validation approach of micro-arrays. There was not yet a complete plan on this. The MC approved on this meeting, after reevaluation of the new situation at the actual proposal of the meeting (MC will eventually approve by email).