

## **Report from the ETF Executive Committee – The General meeting, 07.02.09**

### **The situation.**

During 2008 the ETF there were no new country members, but a few people joined as individual members. The ETF now has eight country members and 12 individual members.

The financial situation is under the control of Leon Bouten, and apart from a few individual members all membership fees have been paid.

This is very important for the federation as the fees, the only money that we generate, allows us to continue to keep the ETF running and allows us to make plans for the future. These fees allow us to run the ETF as a network with the executive committee, general meetings, and to give some support to the competitions. If we had more money then we could do more.

The Executive committee is always looking for ways to keep the committee running costs down by using e mail, telephone and some letters to communicate instead of holding face to face meetings. Last year we held a successful telephone conference meeting, and in November sent out a Newsletter.

Contact with members and the sub committees are also done by e mail and when we send information out to a member country we send this information to two contacts of that country for them to send out to their membership and to their boards.

As we send out few letters we decided not to invest in envelopes with logos, instead we have had labels printed for this use. In this way we hope to be acting in an economical manner.

Last year the magazine “Breakthrough” published an article about the ETF and the European situation.

### **WTC08**

The WTC was the big event in 2008, and, unfortunately the ETF were almost invisible during this event.

It was an unfortunate and unforeseen outcome of handing over the running of the event to Reed Exhibitions, as agreed at the General meeting 2007. Reed Exhibitions and “Breakthrough” magazine were responsible for the arrangement and the financial aspect of the show. The ETF were in a weak situation with little money, a new President and an Executive committee busy with a lot of work in re establishing the federation. Our offer of help to the Reed organisation was in fact turned down as it

was not needed. However, the WTC 08 was a big success because of the numbers of entries in the competition, and the number of European taxidermists from about 25 different countries, and the enormous number of visitors. The seminars were very good and well attended and it is true that some things could have been differently, perhaps in a better way, but no one is more aware of this than the Austrian hosts, who worked like horses, and treated their guests with great hospitality and respect.

Thank you to Austria – hopefully the ETF has more to offer the next time, if it comes.

The ETF Trophy, 500eu cash and a diploma, designed by Ole Hoegh Post, a creative taxidermist with the Zoological Museum in Copenhagen, went to Zsombor Punkosti from Hungary. Unfortunately he was not present to collect his prize. This was fortunate as the diploma was not present either. The money and diploma and monet were sent to him after the event and he was glad to receive the prize and now we have a new individual member.

There has always been a lot of trouble and confusion with the trophy, so maybe it is time to re consider if the trophy is needed or not, or if we ca use the money in a better way. (This is a personal consideration of the President).

### **The Competition group**

Tom Larsen the coordinator of this group has sent out a “brainstorming” document to see what feed back it creates. Ideas, opinions and proposals for both the competitions and about the ETF in general were being looked for in the feed back from this document. The group will present their results at the General meeting.

Iginio Bressan is preparing the next ETC and will probably have important news on this to tell us at the General meeting.

### **The Statute Group**

The Statute Group have prepared a new proposal for new statutes which can be debated at the General meeting. The new proposals are based on the original statutes rather than the more complicated recent statutes. It is hoped that after discussion and debate on this subject at the General meeting, a new set of statutes will be presented for confirmation at the GM 2010.

### **Stakeholders meeting**

On September 29<sup>th</sup> 2008, Vagn Reitz, Denmark, Jan van Hout, Holland, and Robert du Buysere, Belgium, attended the Stakeholders meeting in Bruselles. There were also delegates from France and Great Britain attending this meeting.

6 of the 35 participants were taxidermists and represented taxidermy. Other groups of interest represented areas in falconry, the fur trade, animal trade, pet care, hunters, animal parks, and different types of nature protection. These stakeholders were invited to this meeting with the EC Wildlife Trade Regulations - the Cites Regulation people. The aim was to hear opinions from the stakeholders about the current regulations. These opinions were as varied as the stakeholders present at the meeting. The most interesting thing for the taxidermists there was that the chairman, who was very attentive, was very interested in the different labelling systems for stuffed animals as a tool for proofing the legality of the animal. After the meeting Jan and

Vagn sent a report about the labelling systems in Holland and Denmark to the commission. Hagen has sent information about the micro chip system in Germany. The taxidermists and the ETF were not directly invited at first, but due to our network we succeeded in getting access to the meeting. This is the first time that taxidermists have been part of an EU meeting and, hopefully, this will be the start of meaningful and fruitful dialogue with the EU.

On [www.ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/pdf/summary\\_record.pdf](http://www.ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/pdf/summary_record.pdf) you can see the full 50 pages of the report from the meeting.

The findings of the meeting were presented at the Member States expert meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> December 2008. The outcome of this meeting is unknown.

### **What do we get for our membership fee?**

We get access to a network of taxidermists. Since the ETF was founded, the contacts between taxidermists both in Europe and world wide has developed.

The competitions, that we now have, are the fruit of this network even although the ETF are not directly involved.

We now have a contact list of e mail addresses for taxidermists in different European countries which is useful for gathering and sending information on many different topics such as legal matters. This is also useful when dealing with countries out with the ETF. One would think that taxidermists in the ETF would be better informed than taxidermists in countries not in the ETF. Membership of the ETF and access to it's network gives any national association access to more contacts and information than if they were not members. Although this is an invisible bonus it is a very important value for the 5eu fee.

Furthermore, a European Federation can be a watchdog for it's members. If there are changes proposed by the EU in legal areas involving taxidermy then we can spread this information very quickly and have a chance to be heard before legislation is made. We hope that the Stakeholder's meeting can be the beginning of a permanent contract with the Commission.

### **Aims for the next year:**

- ☼ Finishing the proposals for new ETF statutes to be presented at the GM 2010.
- ☼ Preparing EC 2010 – and during this work create rules for the coming Championships. The Competition Group, Associazione Tassidermisti Italiana, the Executive Committee and all individuals with an interest in the event.
- ☼ Trying to get more member countries – contacting former member countries – the Executive Committee and individual members of former countries.  
It is the intention to invite non member countries of the ETF to attend the next GM, in 2010, as guests.
- ☼ Updating the home page, especially with links to the home pages of member Countries and other important links.  
There will be a contact list with 2 contact people from each member country.

## **The President**

The idea that the presidency between the member countries every second year seems to be a little too ambitious, perhaps the idea is unrealistic. At this time there are no candidates for presidency, and as part of the work with re-establishing the ETF is not finished, I am prepared to continue, as President, for the next two years. If another candidate appears I will give my full support to him/her.

If I am elected for another two years then my conditions must change. The idea of changing the presidency meant that the president's member country would share the expenses of the president, as the DZK has done for me. It is fairer that most of the presidents expenses are covered by the ETF spreading the financial burden on all of the member countries.

## **Thanks**

I want to thank my two colleagues in the executive committee for a trustfull co-operation in the ETF work during the year in spite of the problems with the computers and e mail.

Also thanks to me colleagues in the Statute group for a very effective effort, and the Competition group for the many hours they have spent in this thankless task of finding the way to the perfect competition. Also, thanks to all the members and others with whom we have had a positive contact with during the year.

On behalf of the Executive committee

Vagn Reitz.