

Annual general meeting of the Icelandic Ecological Society

Meeting minutes

Date: 28. April 2022

Time: 17-17:30

Board members attending were Freydís Vigfúsdóttir (chair), Starri Hreiðmarsson (chair of the meeting), Filipa Samarra (treasurer), Isabel Barrio and Edda Elísabet Magnúsdóttir (meeting secretary). In total of 17 members attended the meeting.

1. Annual report of the society

Freydís summarised the activity of 2021 and the 2021 online conference with emphasis on the special session on invasive species during the 2021 conference which contributed to the state of knowledge in the field, enhanced networking and provided an important insight into the next steps regarding the matter in Iceland.

Freydís explained financial activities in 2021-2022 and summarised the main jobs of the board during the 2021 as summarized in the Vistís Annual report. Finally, Freydís summarised the contributions of board members to the Vistís Annual meeting 2022.

Freydís explained how many members we have at the moment (59 to date) which has decreased from approximately 90+ in 2021. She raised the topic of encouraging ex-members to refresh their membership.

Ingibjörg Svala Jónsdóttir (former chair and meeting attendee) commented specifically on that and asked why the numbers were so low now. Isabel explained that the new system for registration via NSO may be partly responsible since people forget to renew their membership, particularly for the fact that the grace period gives you the opportunity to continue without registering for few months. Ingibjörg Svala suggested that we might need to make special efforts to reach out to ecologists in Iceland that may not be happy with predominant use of English instead of Icelandic within the society. Also, a special effort might need to be done to reach out to students and regularly remind members to renew their membership.

Freydís agrees that we should take up that discussion about what we can do to improve the number of members given the new NSO

Sandra Granquist comments that possibly by having some carrots such as not having to pay or pay less for attending conferences if you are a member. She also comments that in the Swedish NSO society which she used to be a member of, members were frequently reminded to renew their membership. Possibly we might need to do better there.

2. Financial report audited by elected auditors.

Filipa Samarra presented the financial report for the year 2021. Copies were not printed out as handouts, however, Filipa announced that attendees could get a copy via email if requested. She explained that the members fees for 2021 were not included in the financial report for 2021 since the calendar year for the last payment year was not finished until February 2022. The amount arriving from membership fees was sent to the Society in February and is around 190,000 ISK.

Filipa explained that the student grants could not be used in early 2022 since the Oikos conference was postponed due to Covid 19.

The surplus for 2021 was 730,586 ISK while the final surplus of 1. December 2021 was 4,225,835 ISK. That money will mostly be used to support students for the next Oikos conference and/or other student academic activities organised by Vistís. All attendees at the meeting approved the financial report.

3. Changes to the societies' statutes if any were received formally.

Starri explained that he and Freydís reviewed the statutes of the society prior to the annual general meeting and discussed whether the statutes should be changed due to the merge of the society to NSO. They concluded that that would not be necessary since the current statutes state that the Society will become a member of NSO. Also, the statutes cannot be changed at this stage since no changes were suggested before the meeting.

Ingibjörg Svala pointed out that the statutes of the society have not been made available to the members of Vistís online and could thus not have had the chance to make any suggestions for changes.

Freydís points out that the rules for electing board members might be too complicated and might need to be reviewed before the next AGM.

4. Board election

Freydís offered attendees to volunteer to run for chair. No attendee responded. Freydís volunteered to continue as chair and was voted with full support of the meeting attendees. Jón S. Ólafsson formally steps down and Starri and Freydís advertised for new volunteers for the board. Guðbjörg stepped down and volunteered to continue, she was re-elected with full support of the meeting attendees. Sandra Granquist volunteered to join the board instead of Jón S. Ólafsson, she was elected with full support of the meeting attendees.

5. Election of the auditors for the next year's audit.

Hildur and Bryndís were re-elected as auditors of the financial report with full support of the meeting attendees.

6. Decision of the annual fee amount.

Due to the fact that we do get substantial support from the NSO we can continue to keep the fee low. Isabel points out that the Icelandic Ecological Society has the highest member fees of all the NSO societies. Haseeb Randhawa (meeting attendee) suggested that the society could offer students to become members free of charge. Freydís, however, suggested that the fee should not be changed, which is 21 Euros. No one opposed. Freydís did put into context that the amount raised via members fee was used to support this annual meeting, so the member fee directly supports students.

Hildur Magnúsdóttir (meeting attendee and auditor) asked how many students had been supported last year. Filipa and Freydís explained that since the Oikos meeting in 2022 was postponed several students dropped out and now only 3 will attend the Oikos meeting this year and will be supported.

Filipa mentioned that the surplus from the Harpa Oikos meeting 2020 has still not been used and that we should need to use that for some student activity. Planning such activity got

delayed due to the Covid 19 pandemic. One suggestion is to use the funds to get some speaker from abroad to have a seminar in Iceland.

Hildur Magnúsdóttir mentioned that next year, the conference will be for 2-days and the surplus will come in handy at that time as well.

7. Other things.

Freydís points out that we need to encourage students to become members. They should benefit mostly from that since the society supports students as mentioned above.

One student attending (Theresa) asks where the 2-day conference will be held. Freydís points out that the location of the meeting has not been decided yet, previously it has been in Hólar and Stykkishólmur, but next meeting will be outside of Reykjavík. That is something that the board needs to decide on. Guðbjörg Ásta suggests Laugarvatn which has feasible accommodation, Freydís also mentions that now Hólar can now host fewer guests than before, Sandra suggests Hvammstangi. All very good ideas.

We specifically thank the Marine and Freshwater Research Institute for hosting this meeting, wonderful accommodations.