



Newsletter from the European Plant Science Organisation



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High Success of the 7th EPSO Conference 'Plants for a Greening Economy', Greece, 1-4 September 2013

The Seventh EPSO Conference took place from 1-4 September 2013 in the picturesque Greek seaside town of Porto Heli, bringing together a diverse group of researchers from across the world with the aim of providing a snapshot of the state of the art in plant science. We welcomed over 350 attendees from 50 different countries who presented, discussed, and exchanged a broad range of plant science topics: from pollen to politics, from bioeconomy to biodiversity, from epigenetics to the environment.

We were welcomed by [Prof. Athanasios S. Tsiftaris](#), the Greek Minister of Rural Development and Food, himself a plant scientist, who told us that the Greek government has decided to invest in plant science and agriculture as a pillar for the country's recovery from the economic crisis. The early signs are good as the country has enjoyed a 20% increase in agricultural exports in the first half of 2013.

The ten scientific sessions were packed with talks from top quality scientists. We saw beautiful GFP images visualising plant root development from Phil Benfey, the benefits of purple tomatoes from Cathie Martin, and how Brazil has used science to transform itself from being food insecure forty years ago, to become the second largest exporter of agricultural products in the world from Mauricio Lopes. During the science policy session the latest news on the Global Plant Council and the Horizon 2020 programme, including the Societal Challenges and the European Research Council (ERC) was presented. All slides from the science policy talks are available on the [EPSO website](#). A feature on the opportunities available for plant scientists within the ERC is presented on Pages 7-8 of this newsletter.

The conference also had a high attendance of young scientists and over 220 posters were presented, and we congratulate our [three poster prize winners](#). The over 100 students present appreciated the opportunity to interact with leading scientists. Carolina a PhD student from Mexico commented "The conference has been very useful to learn about the latest research in plant science. It has been a good opportunity to present our work, get new ideas, learn how to manage our data better, and start to think about the future too." Students also commented on the beautiful location, and great Greek food and hospitality. A photo gallery of the conference is available on the [EPSO facebook page](#).

We hope new friendships were made, new collaborations forged, and we hope you will consider joining us again for our future joint conferences with FESPB in [Dublin in 2014](#), and in Prague in 2016.

Contacts: [K Metzloff](#); [G Skaracis](#); [K Karkala](#)

EPISO representatives “This is our future, we have to engage in it”: News from the General Meeting

The [EPISO representatives at their 14th General Meeting](#) discussed the past achievements, present priorities and future challenges of EPISO. The very successful efforts that EPISO has made already in supporting and positioning plant sciences in Europe were approved and on-going activities in supporting plant sciences in Europe were enthusiastically supported.

- EPISO has become a critically important and recognized voice in the public and in the policy arena for plant sciences globally.
- EPISO has a proven track record in efficiently engaging with EU policymakers for the benefit of plant sciences
- EPISO is today an important contributor to the evolution and improvement of EU Framework programs.
- EPISO has developed a strong partnership with national and international institutions on public outreach raising the visibility and recognition of plant science in Europe and internationally.



Following the meeting several representatives produced videos from which you can enjoy the compilation [on our website](#).

Three of the ten Board seats were open for election and we congratulate Ton Bisseling and Bruce Osborne to their second term and Svend Christensen to his first term! The continuing Board members are Eva-Mari Aro, Jos-Pio Beltran, Aldo Ceriotti, Eckhard George, Martin Parry, Christophe Plomion and Tomas Vanek.

To further improve and strengthen our work, the representatives discussed European and global research and science policy: mainly the first input to the Horizon 2020 Work Programmes 2014–16 and support EPISO provides for consortia building for your proposals upon publication of the 1st call in December 2013 (page 3). In addition they discussed engaging actively in shaping the European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability (page 4) and contributions for the Joint Programming Initiatives on ‘Food Security, Sustainable Agriculture and Climate Change’ (FACCE-JPI) as well as ‘Healthy Diets for Healthy Life’ (HDHL-JPI).

There was immense interest and support for the Fascination of Plants Day, which will happen again around 18 May 2015 (page 7). The EPISO workshop ‘Horticulture for the 21st century’ and an update on the various [Working Groups](#) were presented. New from this General Meeting will be activities to involve more members as ‘supporting scientists’ and the Board was charged to develop the concept for the EPISO Early Career Scientists Network to start 2014/15, which will become the network of the best Personal Investigators / young Professors across the EPISO membership.

In parallel discussion groups they will brainstorm (1) how best to link with SMEs, extension services and farmers for H2020 projects, (2) Education and outreach activities, (3) Agricultural technologies, and (4) Basic plant science in H2020.

We very much look forward to great activities with you in the coming year and beyond to boost plant science and its contribution to our society in Europe and globally!

Contact: [Karin Metzloff](#)

Abstract submission and EPISO Support Grant Applications open for the Plant Biology Europe FESP/EPISO 2014 Congress

Abstract submission is now open for the [FESP/EPISO conference in Dublin, 22-26 June 2014](#). The deadline for oral submissions is 31st January 2014 for Oral submissions and 21st March 2014 for poster submissions.

Students from any European country and scientists (junior & senior) from the recent EU Member States and Eastern European countries can apply to EPISO for an [EPISO Conference Support Grant](#). The number of grants will be distributed equally between the two groups. Preference will be given to applicants from

[EPISO member institutions](#) and [Personal members](#). The EPISO Conference Support Grant covers 4 nights’ accommodation in shared rooms (booked by EPISO) and the conference registration fee will be waived. Recipients of a support grant will have to pay their own travel costs. Students also have to send a copy of their student card when submitting the support grant application form. Students and scientists receiving an EPISO Conference Support Grant are required to submit a poster abstract and encouraged to use social media to communicate about the conference. The Application form will be available from 14th November on at www.epsoweb.org and <http://europlantbiology.org/>.

Contacts: [Karin Metzloff](#), [Bruce Osborne](#)

**EPISO General Meeting**

June 2014, Greece



Contact [Karin Metzloff](#) for more information

**FESP/EPISO Conference**

22-26 July, Dublin



Contact [Karin Metzloff](#) for more information

**EPISO Blog**

Calling Young Plant Scientists



Contact [Calum MacKichan](#) for more information