

GHI Information Meeting IFT Annual Meeting – Chicago, IL , July 17, 2016

Attending:

Joe Regenstein
Rick Stier
Pamela Tom
Aurora Saulo
Tatiana Kouchma
Huub Lelieveld
Larry Keener
Shridhar Sathe
Veslemøy Andersen

Nancy Maragioglio (Elsevier)

Apologies for not participating:

Pablo Juliano
Dominique Taymans
Ping-fan Rao
Vlasta Piližota
Cindy Stewart
Daphne Llewellyn Davies
Vishweshwaraiah Prakash

Absentees were due to not being at the IFT meeting or due to duties as speaker or chair.

Aurora, the meeting organizer and US Ambassador from Hawaii, opened the meeting, followed by introductions of the attendees. Special thanks to Aurora for organizing the meeting and coordinating activities with the IFT staff.

The meeting as stated was convened to provide an overview of GHI activities and accomplishments during the years since the last meeting in Chicago (2015).

Website

It was pointed out that of the many accomplishment for that interval that perhaps the most significant of these involved the GHI relaunch and the radical upgrade of the organization's website. It was noted that these activities were driven by initiatives of the GHI Executive Director Julie Larson Bricher with assistance of Gunther Greil, Webmaster. The updated website provides a very professional presence for the organization on the internet. Julie also produced a new set of slides that introduces GHI. These can be downloaded from the website.

The website has also a revised membership application form, developed by Nila Ghasemkhani, Membership Director. This new form makes it much easier to identify experts in specific areas and regions. In the coming months all members will be asked to register again, where needed Nila will help members with this.

Books and Publication Projects

Huub Lelieveld reported that following the first GHI book published in 2010, "Ensuring Global Food Safety – Exploring Global Harmonization", in December 2015 the second book, "Regulating Safety of Traditional and Ethnic Foods" was published. Currently a series of 26 books is in preparation: "Nutrition and health aspects of traditional and ethnic foods" that series will cover the entire globe. The series editors are Veslemøy Andersen (GHI Ambassador Norway), Jamuna Prakash (GHI Ambassador India) and GHI Board Members Vishweshwaraiah Prakash and Huub Lelieveld. The first volume will be about the Nordic Countries (Scandinavia, Finland and Iceland) and will be published in 2017, to be followed by Western Europe (2nd volume) and Eastern Europe (3rd volume). Like the first two GHI books, also this series will be published by Elsevier. Anybody willing to contribute to these books or

knowing potential authors or editors for these books is encouraged to inform the series editors (editors@globalharmonization.org).

New proposals

There was likewise discussion of book proposals.

1. Food Standards – Bernd van der Meulen (GHI Board)
2. Claims of traditional foods - Vladimir Kakurinov (GHI Ambassador Macedonia)

Anybody interested in contributing to these books is invited to inform the proposers, bernd.vandermeulen@wur.nl or vladimir.kakurinov@globalharmonization.net.

Free books for GHI Ambassadors

Huub asked Nancy to explore free e-books for all GHI Ambassadors. The ambassadors will promote the books in their region and several will (and did) write reviews in local publications. GHI will probably have about a hundred ambassadors by the end of 2017. Nancy will investigate whether this can be realised.

Ambassadors

Huub provided a comprehensive review of the Ambassador program and the commitment of the organization to rapidly expand the number of Ambassadors during the remainder of the current year. Every fortnight the Director Ambassador Programme, Alina Gostin, will invite all Board Members to suggest ambassadors for five countries with > 1 million inhabitants that still have no GHI Ambassador. There was also discussion of the number and geographical placement of Ambassadors in the US. It was noted that the organization formerly had two Ambassadors in the South eastern U.S. GHI has disengaged the services of the Ambassador from Georgia because of complete lack of communication. The plan going forward in the US would be to confirm an Ambassador for the North East region and also for the far west region. It is envisioned that there would be between 4 to 6 US Ambassadors. Joe Regenstein expressed interest in becoming Ambassador for the North East region. **Action:** Huub to inform Alina Gostin.

There was discussion of the roles and responsibilities of the Ambassadors especially insofar as reporting progress and activities in their respective regions. A number of Ambassadors declined the idea of quarterly reports and would resign their post if such a requirement were imposed. Larry noted that some mechanism must be developed and provided whereby the activities of the various Ambassadors may be reported and tracked. Huub supported reporting when there is something to report and leave it to the Director Ambassador Programme, to keep in touch with the Ambassadors and ensure that reports are obtained about once a year or more often when needed.

Veslemøy Andersen (Ambassador Norway) mentioned that requiring GHI documents to be translated into all languages for publication on the Ambassador's webpages is overdone and an unnecessary burden for ambassadors in countries where English is the second language, like in North-Western Europe. Only for documents intended for popular magazines translations would make sense.

Courses and Congresses

Rick Stier (Course Director) provided an update on development with courses and related activities. It was noted that Rick would look aggressively at developing courses as a means of generating revenue for the organization. A number of ideas were floated including the

production of Webinars. Tatiana (GHI Ambassador Canada) also indicated that she would be willing to assist in this area as she has considerable experience with producing and presenting internet training courses. Huub also raised the prospect of convening GHI congresses in the (near) future as opposed to joining other standing conferences and proposed to appoint an experienced Congress Director. Tatiana has experience and find this a good idea, she is certainly willing to help realise this. **Action:** Huub to propose to the Board.

Working Groups Update

Progress of the GHI Working Groups is difficult to follow and therefore Julie will distribute a management tool to help the WG Chairs with their planning and reporting. Huub reported about a few WGs:

WG Nomenclature

This WG is lead now by two Chairs, Dmitri Chr. Kulyov (St. Petersburg, Russia) and Roger Fenwick (Norwich, UK). The group is making progress and shall circulate a first list of expressions for comments by GHI Members in course of this year.

WG Nutrition

This WG is Co-Chaired by Vishweshwaraiah Prakash (India) and Iuliana Vintila (Romania). They have got support from a Dutch specialist, Bert Schwitters. There is now a final draft for a publication “Substantiating Regular, Qualified and Traditional Health Claims”, that will be circulated to all members of the WG and thereafter to all GHI Members for comments.

WG Education

This WG is Co-Chaired by Jamuna Prakash (India) and Amalia Mitelut (Romania). They want to develop an education programme for all food handlers world-wide, including those who still are illiterate. During the recent meeting in Vienna in association with the ISEKI Conference, Jesus Frias (Ireland) and Gerhard Schleining (Austria) agreed to join this WG and to ensure co-operation between ISEKI and GHI to make optimal use of resources.

For the WGs to make progress it is important that the Board shows interest in that progress. So far Huub was the only Board Member in contact with the WGs. In a recent Board meeting it was agreed that the responsibilities will be distributed over all members of the Board and that the Board members regularly communicate with the Chairs of the WGs. One of the reasons for slow progress by the WGs is the lack of possibilities to meet other than by electronic means. If travel costs could be made available, progress would be much faster.

GHI Finances

Overview of GHI Financial and its structure was provided. It was also noted that the organization urgently needs funding in order to sustain progress. It was noted that a possible source of funding was the small to medium sized food processing enterprises. Huub reported recent success at fundraising in this sector: he asked two owners of small companies (5 and 10 employees) for support for GHI because of travelling costs of people wanting to go to the GHI meeting in Dublin. They responded with donations of €200 and €500. The idea is that if all officers ask – referring to the new website – people of small companies they know for a small amount, we may already have significant income. There

are millions of small companies and $1000 \times \$100 = \$100,000$. Achieving official charity status in the US was also raised and discussed as an important development insofar as receiving funding from US-based organization. Huub plans to direct CEOs of some multinational companies (Unilever, Cargill, Ajinomoto, etc.) to the GHI-Financials page on the website.

Other business

Before the meeting Atef Idriss, GHI Ambassador in Lebanon, in a discussion with Huub proposed a Working Group on “Harmonization of food security integrated with the safety component”. He intended to discuss this during the GHI meeting but apparently could not make it to the meeting. Huub shall ask him to write the proposal down and submit it to the Board.

Larry Keener and Huub Lelieveld, 29 July 2016.