

## ESBA General Assembly 2020- minutes

**25.11.2020**

**Start ca 17:05**

### **1. Opening and welcome**

### **2. Meeting order**

• Present people, in order of presentation:

Herbert Gruber (representing ASBN)

Sven Aluste (from EME)

Rikki Nitzkin (representing RCP)

Hugues Delcourt (from [www.rbfcp.be](http://www.rbfcp.be) )

Jean Luc (representing Pailletech)

Marián Ontkóc (from ArTUR)

Mikk Luht (representing EME)

Zuzanna Kierulfová (representing ArTUR)

Mary Rawlinson (representing SBUK) (later replaced by Cypren Edmunds)

Marian Smiatek (representing OSBN)

Maciej Jagielak (from OSBN)

Dittmar (from BiWeNa)

Peter Fleischhans (from ASBN)

Wiebke Kaesberg (from UpStraw programme)

Pozzi (most likely a student from Italy, joined meeting without audio or video)

Eileen Sutherland (from SNaB / SBUK)

Michael Fischer (representing BiWeNa)

Reinhart Appeltauer (from <http://www.sonnenklee.at/> ) (joined from 17:55)

Cypren Edmunds (representing SBUK) (joined at 18:27, later replaced by Phil Christopher)

Phil Christopher (representing SBUK) (joined at 20:03)

Wouter Klijn (representing SBN) ((joined at 20:05)

Bjorn Kierulf (from Ecococon) (joined at ca.20:00)

• Who is present and legally represents how many votes (article 4. ESBA statutes):

a. full member representatives (one vote per organization) that have voting right (paid their membership fee):

Present from the beginning;

1. Herbert Gruber (representing ASBN)

2. Rikki Nitzkin (representing RCP)

3. Mikk Luht (representing EME)

4. Mary Rawlinson (representing SBUK) (later replaced by Cypren Edmunds, later replaced by Phil Christopher)
5. Michael Fischer (representing BiWeNa)
6. Marian Smiatek (representing OSBN)

Present in later part of the meeting;

7. Wouter Klijn (representing SBN) ((joined at 20:05)

b. full member representatives (one vote per organization) that have no voting right (did not pay their membership fee);

Zuzanna Kierulfová (representing ArTUR)

c. associate members (no voting right)

Jean Luc (representing Pailletech)

• Meeting process (chairing and taking notes in preparation of minutes)

chairing: Herbert Gruber

notes: Maciej Jagielak

### **3. Agenda adaptation**

No change

### **4. Summary of ESBA situation 2019-2020**

#### **Herbert presents news:**

-map/database - result from UP STRAW, map/database links to national websites if organisations have their own databases

-page/form for entering new houses (different for individual, different for organizations)

<https://strawbuilding.eu/how-to-add-your-straw-bale-house-to-the-database/>

-research database

<https://strawbuilding.eu/category/parent/research/>

#### **Hugues:**

-about 400 positions in the UP STRAW Zotero database (you need to subscribe, but it's free)

<https://www.zotero.org/groups/2187655/upstraw/library>

-hosting now is 20e a year, and paid by upstraw - how to transfer

-link will be in the chat...

-it is possible to just put a link on ESBA website, not necessary to transfer

-the articles are not translated, but there is an English summary

## **Herbert:**

### Communication/website

- ESBA - website mostly focused on English, but in future translations are necessary
- already there is a translation programme (WPML) installed
- there is a need for cooperation with members in field of translation

### STEP course

- A meeting with all ESBA members who wanted to give courses. This year - difficult, but ACTeco helped with online courses
- for STEP course - there is an upgrade of course books and presentation coming (will be available to full members in 2021)

## **Zuzanna:**

ACTeco [www.acteco.eu](http://www.acteco.eu) is about creating online courses and it is an online platform for eco-building

Two year project, for now the courses are open or for free (EU project), hope for expansion (possibility of offering new courses by organisations and companies)

Slovak organisation is preparing materials for vocational schools, ASBN is focusing on international courses

## **Herbert**

Platform on which ACTeco is working on is called **Learndash**.  
There is a plan to adapt courses for younger students (schools).

## **Dittmar**

JUMP! Training for change

[www.trainingforchange.eu](http://www.trainingforchange.eu)

## **Herbert**

### JUMP

Tool box - database of games, methods, values and videos for training  
4 modules, 8 Units (Learning Outcomes) are ready, session plans are drafts

### UP STRAW interreg

-the biggest straw building related EU programme

<https://www.nweurope.eu/projects/project-search/up-straw-urban-and-public-buildings-in-straw/>

### Action Groups

- need to reanimate groups
- invitation to publish information in newsletter
- a common newsletter with news from all members is planned 4 times a year

**Zuzanna**

ESBA is an associate partner in ACTeco, so is expected to spread news

**Herbert**

There are a lot of possibilities (need of work) to make the database more “handy” searchable  
For communication group this is one of the priorities

**Hugues**

UP STRAW is going to be finished next year and there will be a lot of information coming, a lot of results will possibly move to ESBA

**Wiebke**

Big thanks to all who participated in making those databases

**Hugues**

Big thanks to Jean Luc who started the UP STRAW programme

**5.Members presentation on their organisations' situation****Jean Luc**

Struggled with publication for ESBA.

Market reaction during covid was surprisingly good. Paille-Tech is in a better situation than in previous years.

**Mikk**

Competence center project is in the final phase.

New projects are about to start. It's difficult to run courses, not possible to make international courses.

Mikk's company is representing Ecococon, built 3 houses this year.

“Traditional straw bale” and courses were organised in summer, but now it's again less interest.

Sven built 2 small houses with courses. He ran 5 different sb courses - good for a Corona year. He also participated in training in Austria. Sven managed to learn Sketchup with help from Herbert and provided designs for interested people.

**Dittmar**

BiWeNa is a small organisation sustained by courses. They work in Verden in the EcoCenter. There are a lot of organisations there. EcoCenter is self governed, was in past a military base. The location in Verden is divided in three areas: The EcoCenter, the NZNB and the Hall 57.

The NZNB is probably still the biggest directly plastered sb building in Europe.

BiWeNa is a partner in several projects, offers different level courses and has a permanent exposition.

This year's courses were also full, although there was some rescheduling.

**Wiebke** (presenting UP STRAW update instead of FASBA, presenting Plankstetten Abbey)  
The biggest sb project in Germany, kindergarten by the abbey part of UP STRAW.  
Documentation on ARTE.

**Rikki**

RCP has a new logo and website  
RCP is going to offer full STEP in Spanish, collaborative effort of 7teaching centres  
First public building in straw planned with public tender procedure  
RCP has now only minimal funds

**Wiebke**

How to handle the increasing amount of questions about straw bale building?  
In Germany there is a 'forum' with an expert once a month.

**Rikki**

Private forum for members  
Secretary  
FB page (monitored)  
Once a month a video conference on different subjects - members only

**Cypren**

SBUK going through the pandemic trying to maintain their position. The organisation is stable, an annual general meeting coming soon. Mostly busy with UP STRAW - developing visitors' centre near Hastings, involved in Constrawtium. Constrawtium tools have been stolen at the very beginning of the works! :( It is important to continue with communication about UP STRAW, as more and more people are getting interested in low carbon construction. We have a volunteer joining us as 'Members' Secretary'. We are also working standards and also will be in charge of translating French rules into English.

**Zuzanna**

No STEP course, no day of open sb houses :(  
Started making an online platform. ArTUR had to buy a plot which is next to the Ecocenter, that requires collecting money and consumes time. Ecocon HQ has moved to Slovakia.  
As architects they try to manage building process to lower costs, to make sb more accessible in contrast to company built houses.  
They are building a big house for a hockey player (good for publicity).

**Marian**

We work mostly as a communication platform. 85 members, not all of them active, different professions. Normally 3-4 meetings a year, this year only once face-to-face, one planned as an online meeting. At the moment working on the website, including a database of houses...  
We wrote an Erasmus plus application this year with ArTUR, but it was not successful.  
Started cooperation with a governmental organisation and applied for LIFE programme.

**Maciej**

Single family housing is going strong, members have work. Meetings have been canceled, so that was a drawback for OSBN as an organisation.

### **Hugues**

There was no organisation in Wallonia, so they initiated one in the frame of UP STRAW. It consists of about 10 people, mostly architects.

There is also a Flemish association, and they are in contact.

The Wallonian association is not formalized, no status or membership, members are members of ecocluster.

### **Jean Luc**

There is no legal structure but it is a factual organisation with a charter.

### **Wouter**

Quite a change and struggle after the death of Marcel, and trouble in his company. But SBN is stable. Related problems in UP STRAW were also overcome.

Covid stopped courses.

In the UP STRAW renovation project of the sports hall in Roomley has been completed.

Since the Tilburg project there is more interest in blown-in straw. 10 projects have been done last year in this technology.

Wouter supports the idea of multi-location ESBG.

### **Phil**

Project Hastings is nearly complete, some landscaping to do. Phil represents SBUK.

### **Herbert - ASBN**

Year started with 27 people wanting to participate in STEP.

Had to switch to online platform ACTeco, later in summer it was possible to meet. It was not possible to make workshops on clients' sites, but a new building was built in the training centre.

There are also more courses offered besides STEP (tiny house, off-grid, introductory courses and in the future Jump!)

Government help for non profit organisations during corona.

Crowd funded magazine 20 years of SB building in Austria

<https://www.yumpu.com/de/document/view/64715432/20-jahre-asbn-und-strohballenbau-20-years-of-straw-bale-building>

## **6. Membership applications/ Introduction of new members (if present)**

Wallonian organisation RBfCP - Réseau belge francophone de la construction paille  
[www.rbfc.be](http://www.rbfc.be)

wants to join to be in touch, cooperate. This is a factual organisation, but not formalised (not an registered NGO). Information presented by Hugues Delcourt. Application to join as an associate member.

**Vote: 6 out of 6 for accepting RBfCP - Réseau belge francophone de la construction paille as a new associate member**

Ecococon wants to join as an associate member. Bjorn Kierulf introduced the company, and it's goal: "Make strawbale mainstream in a short time". Production is now in Lithuania and HQ in Slovakia, there is a second production line planned in Slovakia. What is the benefit of joining ESBA? Companies cannot work in a vacuum. There are a lot of people (professionals) needed to make strawbale more widespread. A need for a platform for cooperation.

**Vote: 7/7 for accepting Ecococon as a new associate member**

(vote was conducted with 7 people voting because Wouter Klijn joined the meeting)

**Coffee break**

**7.Open discussion on ESBA future and strategy**

**Marian (OSBN):** Organize more meetings to have a communication platform. Cooperation in EU projects with ESBA and ESBA members. Hope to join the map soon.

**Rikki:** I don't have much expectation from the action group. I would like to see more things happen, especially newsletter group and joining databases.

**Wouter:** In the past we put a lot of time into UP STRAW, and soon we will have a chance to shift actions from the project to ESBA.

STEP training development. MOOC course to start from. More cooperation on European level, synchronization of activities.

**Phil:** Happy that some parts of UP STRAW project will become part of ESBA. More cooperation or even simply conversation.

**Michael:** As a treasurer of ESBA would like to receive answers to emails.

**Marian (ArTUR):** It's great there is a map and database. I can add some papers. Now professionals are talking at university level about clay/straw as "normal". ESBA is at the right place at the right time.

**Mikk:** We are all in similar situations and it's obviously super busy. There could be a list of things to achieve by 2021, realistic goals, that we could achieve and celebrate when achieved. List for organisations - maybe one "small" thing per member.

**Hugues:** It will be nice to do lobbying at European level. For example UP STRAW is doing a yearbook, which could be used for promotion.

**Herbert:** Newsletter - of ESBA can reach a lot of people if it is distributed to all contacts of member organisations - it will be a big win for everyone. Newsletter will be a kind of "the best of" news from different countries. Win-win. 4 times a year.

JUMP - possibility to improve "soft" skills of sb trainers.

There is a chance of a second application for Jump!. Start of work on January 2nd. All ESBA members invited.

Last but not least: We want to establish ESBA as a straw and clay building organisation.

**Dittmar:** We are mostly addressing people who know about sb, but we should address all the others too, as they have the money... Building a new world with straw bales needs to include human aspects (how we treat each other ect).

**Zuzana:** we need a magazine, and we need to communicate. Let's meet quarterly.

**Peter:** More closely knitted network, more planning.

## **8.Budget**

Michael presents the budget report.

What to do with non paying members. Vote.

### **Decision:**

**-delete non paying non contacting members and offer new forms of membership**

**Vote: 6/7**

Additional decisions:

-try direct contact whenever possible

-Maciej: will write down packages, board will work on the packages

## **9.Action plan for 2021 and beyond**

## **10.ESBG organisation- NL or Eu or.....?**

**Wouter:** there was a location... maybe the sports hall that has been renovated.... But it has not been jet discussed in the board of SBN, just an idea.

**Herbert:** ESBG summer 2021

**Michael :** it's a bit too late to set up a date in August!

**Herbert:** will make a doodle



## **11. Working groups- actions and reactivation**

### Communication group

New volunteers:

Zuzanna

Herbert

Dittmar

Michael

Marian Smiatek

Phil Christopher

Meeting - at the beginning of January.

## **12. Newsletter**

Already talked over

## **13. ESBA address change**

Solved for now. Possible future move to Austria, together with change of profile to Earth and Straw.

## **15. Discussion on possible/necessary future change in Status ?**

Hard to do right now. Will be necessary if we are to change location to another country and/or change the focus for a wider scope of building methods.

## **16. Board Elections**

Presidents/Co-Presidents:

Herbert Gruber, [ASBN](#), AT **votes: 6/7**

Zuzana Kierulfová, [ArTUR](#), SK **votes: 7/7**

Secretary:

Maciej Jagielak, [OSBN](#), PL **votes: 7/7**

Treasurer:

Heinz Michael Fischer, [BiWeNa](#), DE **votes: 6/7**

Board-Members:

Rikki Nitzkin, [RCP](#), ES **votes: 6/7**

## **17. Next meeting and closing**

GA every quarter of year (or other meetings, to makes things more simple)

**END of meeting.**