

# Society for Tropical Ecology - *gtö*



## 45th Newsletter

### Letter from the President

Dear members of gtö, dear friends and colleagues,

Season's greetings and happy new year 2020. Depending on your belief and culture, this new 12-months cycle of the Earth rotation starts on the 1<sup>st</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup> January or at another date later on. From my ecologist point of view, the yearly cycle of life, i.e. a 12-months rotation of our planet around the sun, begins during the passage from the 21<sup>st</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December, being based in the Northern hemisphere, supposedly entering a winter period with negative, freezing temperature, and snow. In the Southern Hemisphere, however, it's the exact opposite and living organisms might experience a very different, contrasting climate, moving toward summer conditions. In between, the tropical zone around the equator, where day length may not change that much all year round, i.e. a minimum of 30 minutes as in French Guiana, Gabon or Malaysia, where dry and wet seasons alternate, not the classical and popular four-season of the temperate zone. Surprisingly, in Cayenne, inhabitants may, however, refer to the winter season in November-December when rainfall is increasing after the long dry season of September-October, and to summer toward the last months of the rainy season in June-July. It's also the beginning of the vacation in the overseas Department that follows the European school calendar. That is the main reason why I generally prefer to wish season's greetings to my friends and colleagues, distributed all around the planet. Nonetheless, this last weeks, I couldn't turn my eyes away from the Southern hemisphere, the whole Australian continent that is still burning on this 3<sup>rd</sup> January. Dear Ozzies, I rather wished it was raining in the summer throughout the continent, after we wished it was raining in South America, and South East Asia in the last August-October, the dry season during our Northern temperate summer. Fifty years after the

### In this issue

Letter from the President.....	1
Invitation to the European Conference of Tropical Ecology 2020 Leipzig, Germany .....	5
Invitation to the 33rd annual members assembly of gtö in Leipzig, Germany 2020.....	5
European Conference of Tropical Ecology in Edinburgh, UK 2019.....	7
Winners of the Merian Award 2019.....	9
Awardees of gtö travel and research grants.....	10
Upcoming conferences / deadline for gtö travel grants Leipzig.....	11
Job announcements .....	11
Ecotropica.....	12
Social media contact .....	12
The Society for Tropical Ecology....	13
Impressum.....	13
gtö Executive Board.....	14
gtö scientific advisory board.....	15
APPENDIX I: Minutes of the 31st annual general assembly.....	16
APPENDIX II: Budgetary revenues and expenditures 2017.....	20
Membership changes.....	23
Membership application form .....	24

15-18 August 1969 Woodstock festival was ruined by heavy precipitations, human beings in these parts of the world may now scream and shout 'Rain, Rain, Rain'. But it is not falling anymore where it should, and we're instead calling for 'No Rain, No Rain' last November in Southern France when we experienced records of precipitations during the fall, a real tropical wet season. The reasons are clearcut. To take a single example, during a half-century, we lost 17 percent of the Amazonian forest, mainly due to deforestation for cattle ranching and plantations. And when the trees are gone, so is the rain, that is a simple matter of fact that we, tropical ecologists, all know. It is very simple, forests generate evapotranspiration, create rainfall and regulate both local and regional climates. Add to that deforestation across all tropical continents, and you obtain the ideal scenario for a decrease of rainfall at the global scale, an increase of the Earth temperature after several decades. The entire planet is today affected by increased temperature from the Equator to the pole, on land, and in the ocean. While I was drafting this letter on the 26 November 2019, the sky was blue in Paris, and temperature reached 10°C max, 20°C in the South of France! Overall, temperatures were 3-8°C above the average for this 'winter' season. No doubt, winter is not arriving yet here in Northern Europe, and summer is now far too hot in Australia. The planet is not anymore warming, but "hotting", even during winter. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) *"The year 2019 concludes a decade of exceptional global heat, retreating ice and record sea levels driven by greenhouse gases from human activities"*. There is little doubt now that 2019 will be the second-warmest year in history, ending the hottest 5-yr cycle (2015-2019) on record. Good bye winter.

Thus, this new 12-months life cycle is not just another 12-months cycle in the millennium, it will be a 'celebration' year of a decade that was supposed to fulfill a Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, including [Aichi Biodiversity Targets](#). According to the Plan, this ten-year interval was supposed to be framed for *"action by all countries and stakeholders to save biodiversity and enhance its benefits for people"*. Needless to say that the countries failed to fulfill their objectives. The [Living Planet Report 2018](#) showed that wildlife populations have declined by over half in less than 50 years. On the 25 September 2019, the latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) stated that *"Global warming has already reached 1°C above the pre-industrial level, due to past and current greenhouse gas emissions"* ([IPCC 2019](#)). Coming back to the Aichi Biodiversity targets, 2020 is supposed to be the year to question whether those goals were reached. I would easily answer: we've done our homework for all goals of the Convention on Biological Diversity. What about the governments? If I'm optimistic, I will further argue that we are progressing well to respond positively to Aichi's targets. If I'm pessimistic, I will acknowledge that the last UN Climate Change Conference ([COP 25](#)) failed on all levels to provide positive responses by 2020. The increased temperature, fires in South America, Central Africa, South East Asia and now Australia remind us today that politicians failed to act positively.

So, do we continue business as usual? Yes, surely, we must continue as usual to do our job as tropical ecologists, but we should also diversify our activities and reach more people, politicians especially, thus be more engaged politically speaking. It is our duty to continue doing research as we've done during the last 50 years, despite all terrible news are sent, published, tweeted, every day. A little grain of sand from Sweden named [Greta Thunberg](#) encourages all of us to do so in 2020, for her and the next generations. As ecologists, we certainly should not stop travelling by plane and using 4WD in the wild tropics (sorry Greta!), and continue meeting with other scientists from all regions. We must do so in order to carry on our daily (24/24 7/7) research activities, and to share our knowledge among our communities and do more outreach,

while attending scientific conferences and publishing in the dedicated press, but also interacting with more people outside our inner circle of influence. We should also travel and speak to other various audiences. We have the knowledge, and the power and modern media to do so. Even though it is obvious for many of us, we should certainly not stop studying, our mission being to continue evaluating “*the underlying causes of biodiversity loss*” (cf. goal A), to pursue in analyzing how to limit “*direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use*” (cf. goal B), to share our expertise with governments for “*safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity*” (cf. goal C), to show them the benefits that biodiversity brings as ecosystem services (cf. goal D), and finally share the accumulated knowledge throughout capacity building (cf. goal E) in the tropics, where it is more than needed to have an impact on governments in the next decades. (See Convention on Biological Diversity, Aichi Biodiversity Targets 2020, <https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/>)

As Executive President of the Society of Tropical Ecology, 2019 was my 1<sup>st</sup> year on duty. It has been a great pleasure to organize with the British Ecological Society and the Tropical Ecological Group (BESTEG) our annual conference in Edinburgh, Scotland, still in Europe last April. On March 2020, we'll be celebrating spring in Leipzig, back to Germany for the first time since we launched the [European Conference of Tropical Ecology](#) in Göttingen in 2016. Re-affirming our European establishment, we will then be meeting in Czech Republic (2021) and Portugal (2023), and again bi-annually in Germany (2022-24). We will have new elections in 2021. It will be important to renew our executive and advisory boards. Many of us have been on board for more than a decade, and it's crucial to bring new young faces and ideas on board, especially to achieve the Aichi Strategic goals listed above. One major task of our Society is to develop capacity building, at the global scale because we also welcome many students from the tropics at European Academic Institutions. We want to contribute granting and supporting more early-career scientists to carry on their research in the tropics, and to attend the [European Conferences of Tropical Ecology](#) to present their findings, and to meet with mentors and advisors, and other colleagues face-to-face, because there is no better way to meet someone than over a drink, a lunch or a dinner. We also want to encourage members to publish for free in our open-access e-journal [ECOTROPICA](#) that was successfully re-launched in 2019 thanks to the great work accomplished by co-editors Eckhard Heymann and Marco Tschapka, with the help of the team of subject editors. All are now waiting for your manuscripts to review, whether an original article, major paper or short communication, an essay, a book review or a field station profile. Be re-insured that you'll be more than welcome to contribute, and well treated by our editors.

In 2020, the Society for Tropical Ecology is back, and fully operational for the next decades, thanks to the dedicated team on board. I'm again impatient to meet you in Leipzig, and to continue to unify ecologists, and to strengthen collaborative science on tropical terrestrial and marine ecosystems. Our society is composed of unique fellows, and I'm sincerely proud to preside gtö, our European Society for Tropical Ecology.

Friendly yours,  
In Freundschaft,  
Avec tout mon amitié,  
Pierre-Michel Forget



Grandidier's baobab (*Adansonia grandidieri*), endemic to Madagascar, growing at Kirindy Nation Park. These trees, most of which over 800 years old, are locally known as “renala” (Malagasy for "mother of the forest") and are a heritage of the dense tropical forests that have flourished in Madagascar. They did not grow in isolation in this dry and scrubby landscape, but were part of a dense forest that has disappeared today - only 20% of primary forest remains in the country today. Picture: Pia Parolin

**Invitation to the European Conference of Tropical Ecology (#GTOE2020)  
and the 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for Tropical Ecology, 24-27  
March 2020, Leipzig, Germany.**



We are pleased to announce the next Annual Meeting of the Society for Tropical Ecology (gtö) and the fifth European Conference of Tropical Ecology (#GTOE2020). The overarching topic will be "*The future of tropical ecosystems – new insights and innovative methods*". The conference will take place from Tuesday 24 to Friday 27 March 2020, at the Campus Augustusplatz/Leipzig University, in Leipzig's historic center. The annual conference of the Society for Tropical Ecology (gtö) will provide an interdisciplinary platform for discussing major challenges and future opportunities in tropical ecology, including:

- Understanding tropical biodiversity at all spatial and taxonomical scales
- Defining resilient tropical ecosystems
- Novel approaches to understand and manage tropical ecosystems
- Conservation and restoration of tropical ecosystems

The European Conference for Tropical Ecology takes place at the Campus Augustusplatz / Leipzig University, in Leipzig's historic centre. The campus Augustusplatz is in walking distance from the central train station. There exists also a train connection from the airport Leipzig/Halle to the central train station (20min).

Leipzig has a great musical tradition, which goes back to the work of Johann Sebastian Bach and Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy and today is based on the importance of the Gewandhaus Orchestra and the Thomanerchor. Events in Leipzig in 1989 played a significant role in precipitating the fall of communism in Central and Eastern Europe, mainly through demonstrations starting from St. Nicholas Church. University of Leipzig is one of the oldest universities in Germany and was founded in 1409.

Leipzig Tourism has reserved room blocks in a number of hotels, especially for participants of the European Conference for Tropical Ecology. These hotels are located either in convenient distance to the conference venue or with good access by public transport. To get an overview of the hotels provided and to book your rooms please [click this link](#) or have a look at the conference webpage.

With best regards,



## Chairs

Alexandra Muellner-Riehl, Professor University of Leipzig, Director LZ,  
Andreas Huth, Professor Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research – UFZ, Leipzig

Please share this information with colleagues, students and all other persons who have an interest in participating, and visit the website to register: <http://www.soctropecol-conference.eu/>

## Invitation to the 33rd general assembly of gtö in Leipzig 2020

The Executive Board of the *gtö*, represented by its President, invites its members to the 33<sup>rd</sup> general assembly held on the **26<sup>th</sup> March 2020 from 17h00 to 18h30** in **room HS8**, Hörsaalzentrum Universität Leipzig, Campus Augustusplatz, Leipzig, Germany.


### Agenda:

1. Opening of the general assembly by the president and approval of the agenda
2. Election of the assembly's secretary
3. Approval of the minutes of the 32<sup>nd</sup> general assembly
4. Report of the executive board on the activities of the society in 2019
5. Report of the treasurer on the financial year 2019
6. Report of the advisory board
7. Report of the cash accountants
8. Discharge of the executive board
9. Election of new treasurer
10. Election of one additional member of the scientific board
11. Election of the cash accountants
12. Ecotropica
13. Preparation of future annual meetings
14. Price for the acquisition of new members
15. Miscellaneous

## Einladung zur 33. Mitgliederversammlung der gtö in Leipzig 2020

Das Präsidium der *gtö*, vertreten durch den Präsidenten, lädt alle Mitglieder ein zur **33. Mitgliederversammlung der gtö am 26.3.2020 von 17:00 bis 18:30 Uhr** im **Hörsaal HS8**, Hörsaalzentrum der Universität Leipzig Campus Augustusplatz, Leipzig.

### Tagesordnung:

1. Eröffnung der Mitgliederversammlung durch den Präsidenten und Annahme der Tagesordnung
  2. Wahl des Schriftführenden
  3. Genehmigung des Protokolls der 32. Mitgliederversammlung
- 

4. Bericht des Präsidiums über die Aktivitäten der Gesellschaft in 2019
5. Bericht des Schatzmeisters zum Geschäftsjahr 2019
6. Bericht des Wissenschaftlichen Beirats
7. Bericht der Kassenprüferenden
8. Entlastung des Präsidiums
9. Neuwahl des Schatzmeisters
10. Neuwahl eines zusätzlichen Mitglieds des Wiss. Beirats
11. Wahl der Kassenprüferenden
12. Ecotropica
13. Vorbereitung der zukünftigen Jahrestagungen
14. Vergabe des Preises für Mitgliederwerbung
15. Verschiedenes

## **European Conference of Tropical Ecology and 32<sup>nd</sup> annual meeting of the Society for Tropical Ecology in Edinburgh, 2019**

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for Tropical Ecology took place in Edinburgh, UK, in April 2019. For the first time, the Society joined with the British Ecological Society to hold a



Joint Meeting, hosting over 300 participants from 29 countries. The theme of the meeting was 'Unifying Tropical Ecology: strengthening collaborative science', which was celebrated by the joining of the two societies and the diversity of participants and subjects.

Throughout the conference there was an emphasis on networking, collaboration and exchange with multiple workshops, discussions sessions and social events included in the programme,

Meeting at the impressive McEwan Hall, University of Edinburgh. Photo: © British Ecological Society - UTE2019 Conference

held in the University of Edinburgh's impressive McEwan Hall. The event was organised by the BES Events Manager, Amy Everard, Chaired by gto President Pierre-Michel Forget and the local organising committee, led by the University of Stirling (Kate Abernethy, Daisy Dent) brought together members from three other Scottish institutions; the Royal Botanic Garden



Discussion round at the gtö – BES meeting in Edinburgh.  
Photo: © British Ecological Society - UTE2019 Conference

Edinburgh (Aline Finger), the University of Edinburgh (Kyle Dexter, Caroline Lehmann) and the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (Lindsay Banin). The meeting was addressed by 4 plenary speakers who gave inspiring presentations spanning different biomes and continents. Prof. Lucia Lohmann, an outstanding plant ecologist from Brazil and the new Executive Director of The Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation; Prof William Bond from

South Africa, a world authority on the ecology of open habitats; Dr Kim McConkey, an long time expert on animal-plant interactions in Asian forests and Prof. Yadvinder Malhi, a world leading researcher studying the implications of climate change for global patterns in productivity, carbon cycling and biodiversity. Participants heard 132 oral presentations during 17 thematic sessions and additional 2 evening sessions showcased 50 research posters. Four field trips on the final day saw participants visiting the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, the seabird colonies of the Scottish east coast, the Pentland Hills of the Scottish Borders, and the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park.

We thank the local organizers for this great European meeting!

**See Appendix I for the minutes of the general assembly, in both German and English**  
**See Appendix II for budgetary revenues and expenditures (“Kassenbericht”) Year 2018**

## Winners of the Merian Award 2019

At the annual meeting in Edinburgh, the best three talks of young scientists were honoured by the Merian Award. From left to right on the picture: **Leandro van Langenhove**, **David Bartholomew**, **Matthew Methcoat**, **Pierre-Michel Forget**, **Katharine Abernethy**, **Michael Pashkevich**, **Helena Teixeira**, **Samuel Robinson**. The *gtö* congratulates the winners for their excellent presentations! Photo: © British Ecological Society - UTE2019 Conference



We also strongly encourage the young members of the *gtö* who will present their research at the conference in Leipzig to sign up for the Merian Award 2020!

### Merian Awards 2019 for the best talks

1. **David Bartholomew:** The response of photosynthesis, respiration and carbon storage to long-term drought in small Amazonian trees
2. **Matthew Methcoat:** A machine learning approach to map tropical selective logging in Landsat imagery
3. **Samuel Robinson:** Impact of logging gaps on soil microbial community attributes and function in Borneo

## Merian Awards 2019 for the best posters

1. **Leandro van Langenhove:** Rapid post-fertilization plant phosphorus uptake indicate phosphorus limitation in French Guiana
2. **Helena Teixeira:** Genomic assessment of hybridization between the distantly related *Microcebus murinus* and *M. ravelobensis* species in northwestern Madagascar
3. **Michael Pashkevich:** Conserving river margins of mature oil palm during replanting has varied impacts on oil palm arthropods

## Awardees of the student travel grants to Edinburgh 2019

The following students were selected for a travel grant (200 Euro) to Edinburgh: **Amelia Hood, Ana Beatriz Navarro, Andrew Riesen Tilker, Dominik Schwab, Elena Quintero, Frederik Kiene, Malcom Ramsay, Olga Natalie Tserej Vazquez, Paulina Zigelski, Saskia Dröge, Kerstin Pierick, Badru Mugerwa**. If you are interested in applying for travel grant to the annual meeting at Leipzig, see below for more information.

## Awardees of the student research grants 2019

Eight projects of student gtö members were supported by a research grant (1.000 Euro) by the Society for Tropical Ecology.

**Dominik Schübler**, Comparative ecologic modeling to understand the role of phenotypic plasticity in explaining distributional patterns and the adaptability towards anthropogenic habitat degradation of lemurs in eastern Madagascar

**Dounia Dhaou**, Role of allelopathy in the functioning of mangroves in Vietnam

**Gino Brignoli**, Bird diversity across a human mediated disturbance gradient

**Katherine Mullin**, Assessing the effects of habitat fragmentation on amphibian populations in Madagascar's high montane forests

**Mukhlish Jamal Musa Holle**, Contribution of millipedes to ecosystem functioning in tropical forest: an Experimental study

**Nina White**, Population recovery of the mountain chicken frog following a chytridiomycosis epidemic

**Olga Tserej Vazquez**, Can plants use leaf thermoregulatory traits to buffer themselves against global warming? An examination of intraspecific variation in traits and temperatures of avocado (*Persea americana*)

**Sara Fernández Garzón**, Vertical stratification of ant's gut bacteria diversity using MALDI-TOF Mass Spectrometry for first time.

If you are a MSc or PhD student gtö member and interested in a gtö research grant, have a look at our web page: <https://www.soctropecol.eu/content/society-grants>. The upcoming deadline for research grants is **30. June 2020**.

## Upcoming events and conferences

We are very happy to announce the **future conference locations of the society for tropical ecology / gtö** for the upcoming years!

**2020: Leipzig, Germany** (see conference invitation above)

**2021: Prague, Czech Republic**

**2022: Braunschweig, Germany**

**2023: Lisbon, Portugal**

## Student travel grants – **deadline 15. February** for annual meeting in Leipzig

The Society for Tropical Ecology (gtö) grants **TRAVEL GRANTS** of 200 EUR to participate in the annual meetings of the gtö. With this contribution, the society would like to provide support to participants in need of securing their travel cost. If you would like to apply for a travel grant, please register and submit an abstract at the conference webpage and also send the abstract, a short motivation letter, a budget calculation, your CV and one brief recommendation letter to the Travel Grant Selection Committee (email: [travelgrant@soctropecol.eu](mailto:travelgrant@soctropecol.eu)).

The deadline for submissions is the **15. February 2020**. As soon as your abstract has been accepted by the conference organizers, the committee will select up to 25 students that will receive a travel grant. Students eligible to apply will need to:

- be a student member (BSc, MSc or PhD) of the Society for Tropical Ecology (gtö)
- be the first author of the conference contribution (poster or talk)
- be personally present at the venue

## International Conference on the Status and Future of World's Large Rivers | Moscow/Russia, 3-7 August 2020

This conference aims to provide a global forum for a wide-ranging discussion of key issues related to research on large rivers and to their effective and sustainable management, involving both scientists and decision makers. <http://worldslargerivers.boku.ac.at>

## 11th INTECOL International Wetlands Conference (IWC) | Ōtautahi, Christchurch / New Zealand, 18-23 October 2020

The Ōtautahi/Christchurch INTECOL Wetlands Conference Organising Committee is very honoured and excited to host the 11th INTECOL International Wetlands Conference (IWC). We are delighted to invite you to Te Pae, the new Christchurch Convention Centre located by the spring-fed Ōtākaro/Avon River, one of the two iconic rivers that meander through the city and flow into the Ihutai/Avon-Heathcote Estuary. The estuary joined an exclusive list of wetlands making up the East Asian-Australasian Flyway (EAAF) network in October 2018.

### Job announcements

**PhD position in Lemur Evolution** at the at the Institute of Zoology, **University of Veterinary Medicine, Hannover**, Germany



Photo: Gillian Olivieri

Drivers of speciation are diverse and complex. In this project we aim to combine geomorphological, ecological and genomic datasets (RADseq-based) to reconstruct and compare gene flow and the phylogeography of three nocturnal genera (Lepilemur, Avahi, Microcebus) in northeastern **Madagascar**.

Application deadline is **20th February 2020**. For informal inquiries contact **Apl. Prof. Dr. Ute Radespiel** (Ute.radespiel@tiho-hannover.de). For more details and the complete job announcement see: **[https://www.tiho-](https://www.tiho-hannover.de/universitaet/stellenmarkt/phd-position-wissenschaftlicher-mitarbeiterin-in-lemur-evolution-at-the-institute-of-zoology/)**

**[hannover.de/universitaet/stellenmarkt/phd-position-wissenschaftlicher-mitarbeiterin-in-lemur-evolution-at-the-institute-of-zoology/](https://www.tiho-hannover.de/universitaet/stellenmarkt/phd-position-wissenschaftlicher-mitarbeiterin-in-lemur-evolution-at-the-institute-of-zoology/)**).

### Ecotropica

The **first online issue** of ECOTROPICA has been published. In continuation of the volume numbering of the printed version suspended after 2014, this is volume 21. It contains five

papers - a full article, two short communications, and essay and a field station profile. See <http://ecotropica.eu/index.php/ecotropica> for these papers. We hope that the release of this volume will stimulate gtö members to submit manuscripts to ECOTROPICA, to help the journal growing and getting a good standing in the very near future. All papers published in ECOTROPICA are open access, and we do not currently charge authors for open access. Please spread the word about options to publish in ECOTROPICA amongst your colleagues and friends.

## The Society for tropical ecology has a new social media contact



I joined the gtö in 2017 as a member and since 2019 I am responsible for managing their social media platforms. I am currently doing my PhD in ecology looking at the effects of land use in northeastern Madagascar. I am excited to support the gtö in their cause and hope to increase their visibility and impact through twitter and facebook. Social media is an excellent platform to inform about the yearly gtö conference and projects funded by the gtö. Furthermore, social media can help increasing awareness on current conservation efforts in the tropics, present scientific research and give room for exchange within the research community. Get in touch with me if you have suggestions for posts!

(contact: [annemarie.wurz@uni-goettingen.de](mailto:annemarie.wurz@uni-goettingen.de))

## The Society for Tropical Ecology (gtö)

The Society for Tropical Ecology (Gesellschaft für Tropenökologie, *gtö*), founded in 1987, is Europe's largest scientific association in the field of tropical ecology. It aims to enhance the understanding of the biodiversity and function of tropical ecosystems, and to drive decision-making and management at all levels, to safeguard as much as possible of what is left in its original state and to further the development of sustainable forms of use and effective means of rehabilitation through research and its application. The society also aims to promote the conservation and rehabilitation of tropical biodiversity and ecosystems through research and its application. <http://www.soctropecol.eu/>

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## **gtö Executive Board**



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## **gtö scientific advisory board**

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Prof. Dr. Bettina Engelbrecht, Dept. of Plant Ecology, University of Bayreuth, Germany

Dr. Raffael Ernst, Senckenberg Natural History Collections Dresden, Germany

PD Dr. Sven Günter, Forestry Worldwide Thünen Institute of International Forestry and Forest Economics, Hamburg, Germany

Prof. Dr. Eckhard W. Heymann, Deutsches Primatenzentrum Göttingen, Germany – *Ecotropica* editor

Dr. Jürgen Homeier, Albrecht-von-Haller-Institut für Pflanzenwissenschaften, University of Göttingen, Germany

Dr. Alice Hughes, Centre for Integrative Conservation Xishuangbanna Tropical Botanical Garden, Chinese Academy of Sciences, China – *co-speaker of the advisory board*

Prof. Dr. Patrick Jansen, Department of Environmental Sciences, Wageningen University, The Netherlands

Dr. Chris J Kettle, ETH Zürich, Switzerland

Dr. Sarah Luke, University of Cambridge, UK

Dr. Eike Lena Neuschulz, Senckenberg Biodiversity and Climate Research Centre (BiK-F), Frankfurt am Main – *co-speaker of the advisory board and editor of the gtö Newsletter*

Dr. Pablo Oroczo-Trwengel, Cardiff School of Biosciences, Cardiff University, UK

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Dr. Simone Pfeiffer, Centre of Biodiversity and Sustainable Land Use, Georg-August Universität Göttingen, Germany

PD Dr. Marco Tschapka, Institute of Experimental Ecology, University of Ulm, Germany – *Ecotropica* editor



Board members in Edinburgh 2019.

## APPENDIX I: Minutes of the 32<sup>nd</sup> general assembly of the gtö in Edinburgh 2019

Date: 10th April 2019, Start: 16h30, End: 17h35

Place: Appleton Tower, Room 1, Edinburgh, Scotland

Minutes written by: Ute Radespiel

Present: 22 members

Agenda:

1. Opening of the general assembly by the president and approval of the agenda
2. Election of the assembly's secretary
3. Approval of the minutes of the 31<sup>st</sup> general assembly
4. Report of the executive board on the activities of the society in 2018
5. Report of the treasurer on the financial year 2018
6. Report of the advisory board
7. Report of the cash accountants
8. Discharge of the executive board
9. Election of the cash accountants
10. Ecotropica
11. Preparation of future annual meetings
12. Miscellaneous

1. Opening of the general assembly by the president and approval of the agenda

The president Pierre-Michel Forget welcomes the members and opens the general assembly. The agenda is approved by all present members.

2. Election of the assembly's secretary

Ute Radespiel is proposed by the president and elected the assembly's secretary by all present members.

3. Approval of the minutes of the 31<sup>st</sup> general assembly

The minutes of the 31<sup>st</sup> general assembly (Paris meeting) are approved by all present members.

4. Report of the executive board on the activities of the society in 2018

The president reports on the activities of the society in 2018. The board prepared the Annual meeting in Paris in 2018 (314 registrations, 26% students, 74% non-students). Afterwards, the executive and scientific board had a joint retreat meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> July 2018. In addition, both boards had a joint remote skype meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> November 2018. Besides, the journal Ecotropica was relaunched in 2018 due to the major efforts of Eckhard Heymann and Marco Tschapka (major thanks to them).

Subsequently, the board also contributed to the preparation of the UTE2019 meeting in Edinburgh. Moreover, several future meeting locations and hosts were identified and confirmed. The society web-page was renovated over the last months. The board is aiming on improving the social networking activities via twitter and facebook. One newsletter has been prepared with various contributions, was assembled by Dr. Eike Lena Neuschulz (many thanks for her engagement in this task), and was distributed on the 22<sup>th</sup> February 2019.

Discussion: So far, only P.M. Forget, Chris Kettle and Pia Parolin have used the twitter account but this could change. It would be good to have somebody surveying the twitter account to make sure that contributions are appropriate.

5. Report of the treasurer on the financial year 2018

The treasurer Holger Kurz presents the financial support for 2018 with the details of all positions (see financial report below). Due to ongoing health issues and organizational problems, it was not yet possible to draw the fees for 2017/2018. A fundamental software problem still needs to be solved (new version is ordered for 334 Euro per licence) in order to be able to deal with international bank accounts which become increasingly relevant. So far, the support of our bank was rather poor on this problem, and the new licence has not yet been delivered. He hopes to solve this issue in the near future.

The president thanks Holger Kurz for his hard work on the financial issues of the society. He also adds a note on additional funding instruments that have been established by the board: 11 travel grants have been assigned to students to visit the Edinburgh meeting. Moreover, in 2019 the gtoe will start offering research grants for Master and PhD students. News on that will be delivered soon on the webpage.

#### 6. Report of the advisory board

Alice Hughes reports on the activities of the advisory board during the last year which were largely reported by the president already (see above). She emphasizes the success of the Paris gtoe meeting last year. She emphasizes the need to further diversify the composition of the board in the future which should be planned well in advance of future elections, and she thanks the board members for their contributions to the development of the society.

#### 7. Report of the cash accounters

David Burslem and Annemarie Wurz report on the status of the bank account and the respective paperwork underlying the financial report for 2018. They were both satisfied with the presented paperwork and all papers were in very good state. No discrepancies were identified in the paperwork.

#### 8. Discharge of the executive board

Kate Abernathy proposes to discharge the board.

Yes-votes: 10

No-votes: 0

Abstention: 12

#### 9. Election of the new cash accounters for the coming year

Two nominations: David Burslem, Annemarie Wurz

Annemarie Wurz: yes: 22, no: 0, abstention: 0

David Burslem: yes: 22, no: 0, abstention: 0

#### 10. Ecotropica

Eckhard Heymann reports on the status of the journal Ecotropica. Ecotropica has been relaunched in 2018. Submissions can now be done online (cost free, open Journal Systems: [ecotropica.eu](http://ecotropica.eu), open access).

Since the beginning, the journal already received 20 submissions.

Editors: Marco Tschapka and Eckhard Heymann. Subject editors: members of the scientific board of STE/gtö, Style editor: Roger Kitching, Website: Sascha Rösner, Production: Graciela Hintze.

Types of Papers: articles, short communications, reviews, book reviews, field station profiles, essays (normally solicited). For the future: proceedings, symposium summaries, opinion/perspective (second language abstracts are acceptable)

First issue (Vol. 21, 2019) will be available soon and its content and the overall journal format is presented briefly. Still to be done: obtain DOI numbers (in 2019), obtain e-ISSN number (in 2019), some bugs still need to be solved, impact factor can be achieved in 3-4 years.

All members are asked to promote and advertise ECOTROPICA and to submit manuscripts to this newly established journal.

#### 11. Preparation of future annual meetings

Locations for the next four STE/gtö meetings are already agreed upon:

2020: 23-27 March, Leipzig (Leipzig University and Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research, hosted by Alexandra Muellner-Riehl & Andreas Huth)

2021: Early February. Prague, Joint meeting with the Czech Society for Ecology (host: Robert Tropek)

2022: probably 28 March - 1 April, venue: University of Braunschweig, hosted by University of Braunschweig/TiHo Hannover (hosts: Miguel Vences & Ute Radespiel)

2023: Faculdade de Ciências, Universidade de Lisboa (host: Jorge Palmeirim)

#### 12. Miscellaneous

A. Wurz proposes a new section on the web-page which could be integrated with twitter on new activities. Answer by R. Ernst: Such activities require regular contributions by members but if they come, integration is no problem (PM Forget will facilitate).

D. Burslem gives a brief warning about Ecotropica. Once we obtain an impact factor, submissions may go up sharply. This may cause a lot of work, which may be difficult to manage, if no charges are taken. Response by E.

Heymann: we keep the decision on fees open for the future, to remain flexible in case costs rise considerably. Also, we would like to keep membership benefits.

A. Wurz asks about the potential recipients of the planned research grants. Reply: They will be restricted to gtoe members only. However, the board is discussing about future funding possibilities for suitable applicants from tropical countries. This will be probably decided next year. V. Novotny shortly explains the scheme for the planned research grants: Deadline for first round of research grants proposals: 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019, grant amount: 1000 €, money to be used within 12 months. Travel grants will be maintained and differentiated into intra-European (200€) and inter-continental support (400€).

The president announces again the Raffle for new members at the closing ceremony tomorrow. Only present new members may win the book price.

The president closes the general assembly at 17h35 and thanks everybody for coming.

## **Protokoll der 32. Mitgliederversammlung der gtö in Edinburgh 2019**

Datum: 10. April 2019, Beginn: 16.30 Uhr, Ende: 17.35 Uhr

Ort: Appleton Tower, Room 1, Edinburgh, Schottland

Protokoll geschrieben von: Ute Radespiel

Anwesend: 22 Mitglieder

### **Tagesordnung:**

1. Eröffnung der Mitgliederversammlung durch den Präsidenten und Annahme der Tagesordnung
2. Wahl des Schriftführers
3. Genehmigung des Protokolls der 31. Mitgliederversammlung
4. Bericht des Präsidiums über die Aktivitäten der Gesellschaft in 2018
5. Bericht des Schatzmeisters zum Geschäftsjahr 2018
6. Bericht des Sprechers des Wissenschaftlichen Beirats
7. Bericht der Kassenprüfer
8. Entlastung des Präsidiums
9. Wahl der Kassenprüfer
10. Ecotropica
11. Vorbereitung der zukünftigen Jahrestagungen
12. Verschiedenes

### **1. Eröffnung der Mitgliederversammlung durch den Präsidenten und Annahme der Tagesordnung**

Der Präsident Pierre-Michel Forget begrüßt die Mitglieder und eröffnet die Mitgliederversammlung. Die Tagesordnung wird von allen anwesenden Mitgliedern angenommen.

### **2. Wahl des Schriftführers**

Ute Radespiel wird vom Präsidenten für dieses Amt vorgeschlagen und als Schriftführerin von den anwesenden Mitgliedern einstimmig gewählt.

### **3. Genehmigung des Protokolls der 31. Mitgliederversammlung**

Das Protokoll der 31. Mitgliederversammlung (Tagung in Paris) wird von allen anwesenden Mitgliedern genehmigt.

### **4. Bericht des Präsidiums über die Aktivitäten der Gesellschaft in 2018**

Der Präsident berichtet über die Aktivitäten der Gesellschaft in 2018. Der Vorstand bereitete die Jahrestagung in Paris in 2018 vor (314 Registrierungen, davon 26% Studierende). Im Anschluss hatte der neu gewählte erweiterte Vorstand eine eintägige Vorstandssitzung in Frankfurt am 9.7.2018. Des weiteren wurde ein Skype-meeting am 27.11.2018 durchgeführt. In 2018 wurde auch die Zeitschrift Ecotropica neu aufgelegt dank des hohen Einsatzes von Eckhard Heymann und Marco Tschapka (vielen Dank an die beiden).

Anschließend hat der Vorstand zur Vorbereitung des UTE2019 meetings in Edinburgh beigetragen. Ebenso wurden weitere zukünftige meetings (Festlegung von Ort und Gewinnung von Gastgebern) in die Wege geleitet. Die Web-page der Gesellschaft wurde weiter verbessert über die letzten Monate. Der Vorstand bemüht sich

weiterhin um eine verbesserte Sichtbarkeit in den Sozialen Medien via Twitter und Facebook. Schließlich wurde ein neuer Newsletter erstellt und von Dr. Eike Lena Neuschulz in unser Layout gesetzt und am 22.2.2019 verschickt. Es geht ein großer Dank an sie für ihren Einsatz in dieser Sache.

#### 5. Bericht des Schatzmeisters zum Geschäftsjahr 2018

Der Schatzmeister Holger Kurz stellt den Bericht für das Geschäftsjahr 2018 in allen Positionen vor (s. Finanzbericht unten). Wegen anhaltender gesundheitlicher Problem und Organisationsproblemen war es leider bisher nicht möglich, die Gebühren für 2017/2018 einzuziehen. Ein grundlegendes Software-Problem muss noch behoben werden (eine neue Version des von uns verwendeten Vereinsprogramms ist für 334 Euro bestellt), um auch internationale Bankkonten einbeziehen zu können, die immer relevanter werden für die Gesellschaft. Unsere Bank war hierbei leider bisher wenig hilfreich und die neue Lizenz ist bisher noch nicht geliefert worden. Er hofft jedoch, diese Probleme in der nahen Zukunft lösen zu können.

Der Präsident dankt Holger Kurz für seinen anhaltenden Einsatz für die Regelung der finanziellen Angelegenheiten der Gesellschaft. Er ergänzt noch, dass im letzten Jahr eine finanzrelevante Entscheidung vom Vorstand getroffen wurde: 11 Reisestipendien wurden in diesem Jahr an studierende Mitglieder vergeben, die mit eigenem Beitrag an der Tagung in Edinburgh teilnehmen. In 2019 wird darüberhinaus die gtoe einige kleine Forschungsstipendien ausgeben an Master- und PhD Studierende. Hierzu werden in Kürze die Informationen online gestellt auf unserer web-page.

#### 6. Bericht des Sprechers des Wissenschaftlichen Beirats

Alice Hughes berichtet über die Aktivitäten des Wissenschaftlichen Beirats während des letzten Jahres, die weitgehend schon vom Präsidenten dargestellt wurden (s. oben). Sie betont darüber hinaus den Erfolg der Tagung in Paris im letzten Jahr und drückt den Wunsch aus, die Zusammensetzung des Vorstands in der Zukunft weiter zu diversifizieren. Dies sollte im Vorfeld kommender Wahlen rechtzeitig vorbereitet werden. Schließlich dankt sie allen Mitgliedern des Beirats für ihren Beitrag zur Weiterentwicklung der Gesellschaft.

#### 7. Bericht der Kassenprüfer

David Burslem und Annemarie Wurz berichten über den Status der Bankkonten und der dazugehörigen Belege, die dem Jahresbericht 2018 zugrunde liegen. Sie waren beide zufrieden mit allen vorliegenden Unterlagen und alle waren in einem ordentlichen Zustand und vollständig. Es konnten keine Diskrepanzen festgestellt werden.

#### 8. Entlastung des Präsidiums

Kate Abernathy beantragt die Entlastung des Präsidiums.

Ja-Stimmen: 10

Nein-Stimmen: 0

Enthaltungen: 12

#### 9. Wahl der Kassenprüfer

Es gibt zwei Nominierungen: David Burslem, Annemarie Wurz

Annemarie Wurz: Ja: 22, Nein: 0, Enthaltung: 0

David Burslem: Ja: 22, Nein: 0, Enthaltung: 0

#### 10. Ecotropica

Eckhard Heymann berichtet über den Status der Zeitschrift Ecotropica. Sie wurde neu aufgelegt in 2018. Beiträge können jetzt online eingereicht werden (kostenfrei, open Journal Systems: ecotropica.eu, open access). Seit ihrem erneuten Beginn wurden 20 Beiträge eingereicht.

Editors: Marco Tschapka and Eckhard Heymann. Subject editors: Mitglieder des Wiss. Beirats der STE/gtö, Style editor: Roger Kitching, Website: Sascha Rösner, Production: Graciela Hintze.

Mögliche Beiträge: Artikel, Kurzmitteilung, Review, Buchbesprechung, Profil von Feldstationen, Essay (auf Aufforderung). In der Zukunft: auch Proceedings von Konferenzen, Zusammenfassungen von Symposien möglich (3-4 Seiten), Meinungen/Perspektiven (Abstract kann auch in zwei Sprachen publiziert werden)

Die erste Ausgabe (Vol. 21, 2019) wird bald herauskommen und sein Inhalt und das neue Journal-Format werden kurz vorgestellt.

Noch zu tun: Beantragung der DOI Nummer (in 2019), der e-ISSN Nummer (in 2019), einige technische Probleme müssen noch gelöst werden, Impakt-Faktor kann in 3-4 Jahren erreicht werden.

Alle Mitglieder sind aufgefordert, ECOTROPICA weiter bekannt zu machen und auch selber Beiträge zur Publikation einzureichen.

## 11. Vorbereitung der zukünftigen Jahrestagungen

Ausrichtungsorte für die nächsten 4 STE/gtö Jahrestagungen, die bereits vereinbart sind:

2020: 23-27. März, Leipzig (Leipzig University & Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research, ausgerichtet durch Alexandra Muellner-Riehl & Andreas Huth)

2021: Früh im Februar. Prag, gemeinsames Treffen mit der Czech Society for Ecology (Gastgeber: Robert Tropek)

2022: wahrscheinlich 28. März – 1. April, Ort: Universität Braunschweig, Gastgeber: Universität Braunschweig/TiHo Hannover (Miguel Vences & Ute Radespiel)

2023: Faculdade de Ciências, Universidade de Lisboa (Gastgeber: Jorge Palmeirim)

## 12. Verschiedenes

A. Wurz schlägt eine neue Sektion auf der Webpage vor, in der Twitter integriert werden könnte. Antwort (R. Ernst): Solche Aktivitäten erfordern regelmäßige Beiträge von Mitgliedern. Wenn diese kommen, ist die technische Umsetzung kein Problem (der Präsident wird dies unterstützen).

D. Burslem spricht eine kurze Warnung hinsichtlich Ecotropica aus: sobald wir einen impact-Faktor erhalten, wird vermutlich die Zahl der Einreichungen stark ansteigen. Dies könnte zu einem stark erhöhten Arbeitsaufkommen führen, das ohne Publikationskosten nicht zu stemmen ist. Erwiderung (E. Heymann): Wir halten die Entscheidung über Gebühren bewusst offen. Damit können wir flexibel reagieren, falls die Kosten ansteigen sollten. Mitglieder sollten aber weiterhin Vorteile aus der Zeitschrift ziehen können.

A. Wurz fragt nach den möglichen Empfängern der geplanten Forschungsstipendien. Antwort: Sie werden gtö Mitgliedern vorbehalten sein. Vize-Präsident V. Novotny beschreibt kurz die Rahmenbedingungen für die jetzt geplanten Forschungsstipendien: erste Frist zur Einreichung: 30. Juni 2019, Höhe der Förderung: 1000 €, Verwendung der Gelder innerhalb von 12 Monaten.

Der Vorstand diskutiert jedoch bereits, evtl. ab dem kommenden Jahr auch geeignete Kandidaten aus tropischen Ländern finanziell zu unterstützen. Dies muss jedoch noch weiter diskutiert werden.

Die Reisestipendien werden weiter erhalten und ausdifferenziert zwischen innereuropäischen (200€) und interkontinentalen Reisekosten (400€).

Der Präsident kündigt erneut den Raffle für neue Mitglieder an, der bei der morgigen Abschlusszeremonie stattfinden wird. Nur anwesende neue Mitglieder können das Buch gewinnen.

Der Präsident schließt die Mitgliederversammlung um 17.35 Uhr und dankt allen Anwesenden für das Kommen.

## APPENDIX II: Budgetary revenues and expenditures 2018 / Kassenbericht 2018

Statement of Revenues and Expenditures		
<b>Revenues:</b>	<b>Account balance</b>	<b>Account balance</b>
	<b>(Euro)</b>	<b>(Euro)</b>
Membership fees	420.00	
Donations	10.00	
Booksellers fees	0.00	
Annual interest	0.16	
<b>Sum:</b>	<b>430.16</b>	
<b>Expenses:</b>		
Writing back of membership fees		
Reimbursement of travelling costs (Executive Board)		858.53
Catering for Keynote speakers, Advisory and Executive Board		107.10
Office supplies		0.00
Postal charges (except Ecotropica)		0.00

Homepage costs		842.52
Merian Award		600.00
Ecotropica printing		0.00
Ecotropica revision (native speaker)		0.00
Ecotropica advertisement, shipping and handling		0.00
Legal advice for statutes (lawyer)		570.84
Conference grant		0.00
Representation costs		0.00
Account maintenance charges		109.65
Donation for BioFrankfurt - Network Biodiversity		0.00
Sponsoring Plenary Speaker		0.00
<b>Sum:</b>		<b>3,088.64</b>
<b>Annual cash flow:</b>		<b>-2,658.48</b>
Account balance giro (beginning of the year)	01.01.2018:	26,400.24
Account balance day-to-day money (beginning of the year)	01.01.2018:	25,047.32
<b>Overall account balance (beginning of the year)</b>	01.01.2018:	<b>51,447.56</b>
Account balance giro (end of year)	31.12.2018:	23,741.60
Account balance day-to-day money (end of year)	31.12.2018:	25,047.48
<b>Overall account balance (end of year)</b>	<b>31.12.2018:</b>	<b>48,789.08</b>

<b>Einnahme-Überschuss-Rechnung 2018</b>		
<b>Einnahmen:</b>	<b>Summe Einnahmen</b>	<b>Summe Ausgaben</b>
	<b>(Euro)</b>	<b>(Euro)</b>
Mitgliedsbeiträge	420.00	
Spenden	10.00	
Buchhandlungen	0.00	
Tagesgeld-Zinsen	0.16	
<b>Summe:</b>	<b>430.16</b>	
<b>Expenses:</b>		
Retouren Mitgliedsbeiträge		0.00
Erstattung von Reisekosten (Vorstand und Beirat)		858.53
Verpflegung für Keynote-Redner, Vorstand und Beirat		107.10
Bürobedarf		0.00
Porto- und Versandkosten		0.00
Internet-Kosten (Pflege, Gebühren)		842.52

Merian-Preis		600.00
Ecotropica Druckkosten		0.00
Ecotropica Revision (Muttersprachler)		0.00
Ecotropica Werbungs- und Versandkosten		0.00
Rechtsanwaltskosten (Satzungsänderungen)		570.84
Beitrag für Tagung		0.00
Kosten für Werbung		0.00
Rücklastschrift- und Kontoführungsgebühren		109.65
Spende für BioFrankfurt - Network Biodiversity		0.00
Unterstützung für Plenary Speaker		0.00
<b>Summe:</b>		<b>3,088.64</b>
<b>Einnahme-Überschuss-Rechnung:</b>		<b>-2,658.48</b>
Kontostand Girokonto Jahresanfang	01.01.2018:	26,400.24
Kontostand Tagesgeld Jahresanfang	01.01.2018:	25,047.32
<b>Gesamtkontostand Jahresanfang</b>	01.01.2018:	<b>51,447.56</b>
Kontostand Girokonto Jahresende	31.12.2018:	23,741.60
Kontostand Tagesgeld Jahresende	31.12.2018:	25,047.48
<b>Gesamtkontostand Jahresende</b>	<b>31.12.2018:</b>	<b>48,789.08</b>

## Membership changes

This form is for current Society members who would like to change their address in the Society database. If you are interested in joining the Society, please see the membership application form below.

Full name:

OLD ADDRESS – please give us your old address information (Address – City – Zip Code – Country):

Old E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

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NEW ADDRESS – please give us your new address information (Address – City – Zip Code – Country):

Current E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Please select your membership level:

\_\_\_ Student (with verification of student status)

\_\_\_ Regular Member

### Please send this form to:

Dr. Holger Kurz  
Büro für biologische Bestandsaufnahmen  
Moorkamp 10, D-20357 Hamburg

or via Email to [gtoe@bfbb.de](mailto:gtoe@bfbb.de)

## Membership application form

The subscription covers reduced registration fees for the annual conferences of the society. **Payments via SEPA are most welcome.** Payments by check or international money order must be drawn on a bank. Please make sure to add the appropriate transfer charges.



Yes, I want to become a member of the Society for Tropical Ecology – Gesellschaft für Tropenökologie e.V.

Family name, given name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
Institutional address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Postal code & city: \_\_\_\_\_  
Private address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Country: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (private): \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (work): \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership status:

☐ regular ☐ student ☐ library

Students please enclose a verification of student status.

I will pay membership dues via:

☐ **Standing order** ☐ Master Card ☐ Visa ☐

Standing Order / Bankeinzugsermächtigung

Herewith I authorize the Society of Tropical Ecology (Gesellschaft für Tropenökologie e.V.) to retract the yearly memberships fee until cancelled.

Card holder: \_\_\_\_\_

IBAN: \_\_\_\_\_

BIC: \_\_\_\_\_

Master Card & Visa (available **only for members outside the Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA)**)

Credit-card number: \_\_\_\_\_

Card holder's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_

3-digit code on reverse side of card: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this form to: +49 40 8326151 (fax)

or Dr. Holger Kurz, Treasurer – Schatzmeister  
Büro für biologische Bestandsaufnahmen  
Moorkamp 10, D-20357 Hamburg

or via Email to [gtoe@bfbb.de](mailto:gtoe@bfbb.de)