

# Society for Tropical Ecology - *gtö*



## 46th Newsletter

### Letter from the President

Dear members of *gtö*, dear friends and colleagues,


Since I wrote you on 9th September this year, the whole planet continued to be tragically affected by COVID-19. My sincere hope is that science will rapidly find a cure, a vaccine, to avoid further losses of human lives before we reach herd immunity one day. This virus had affected all humankind and ecosystems we live in, across the entire planet, and had also impacted our professional and family lives in many ways. Though I wished that none of you, relatives, colleagues and friends, neighbors, had been affected, I know it's simply impossible, while we can witness cases around us every day. I can only wish you are doing well, stay positive, and trust in our communities and societies to help those in need.

Thanks to the renewal of many memberships, as well as several donations of the registration fee for the cancelled 2020 Conference, our Society had been able to keep the "head above the water" despite a huge financial loss in 2020. As we could not survive further losses without putting our Society in peril, and COVID-19 is not over, we decided to also cancel the Conference in 2021. In addition, we had to change our statutes in order to facilitate new routines that were imposed on us by the spread of COVID-19 which precluded meeting in person. But as from now, our Society is prepared and has adapted. We are now allowed to organize events, such as our general assembly including our elections of the executive and advisory boards virtually, which we will do in 2021.

Despite being unable to meet in person in 2020, we continued to virtually operate the Society. We virtually met in several instances, first on the 20th July when we also organized our first virtual General Assembly, then on the 7th September with the entire two boards, and recently

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on the 24th November with the Executive Board. Needless to mention that we are all impatient to return to the normal reunions we had in the past, and that our motivation to contribute has not eroded at all.

We've been therefore able to fulfill important tasks such as the election of a new Treasurer Simone Pfeiffer, member of the Executive Board, and of a Social Media Manager Annemarie Wurz, Member of the Scientific Advisory Board. Instead of organizing another virtual conference in 2021, we decided to have one virtual Society Talk by Katerina Sam on the 2nd February that will be followed by our general assembly and the election of the new boards. All will be organized on Zoom, and members will shortly before receive the links with password. We'll also broadcast the Society Talk on Youtube to open it to a larger audience.

While preparing that letter, I re-read the 44th and 45th Newsletters, allowing me to review what we achieved together during the three years of my Presidency. As a vice-President in 2017, I worked with President Manfred Niekisch, Heike Kuhlmann (KCS), and my colleagues at MNHN-Sorbonne University to host the Society in Paris in 2018. There, you elected new boards, and I have been honored to be elected President and to serve our community since then. Together, we've been working intensively to enrich and move our Society across Europe, at first, meeting with the British Ecological Society-Tropical Ecology Group (BESTEG) in Edinburgh, Scotland in April 2019. Second, the plan in mind was to meet in Leipzig in April 2020, and then with the Ecological Society of the Czech Republic in Prague in February 2021. In agreement with the organizers and hosts of the here-before cited cancelled conferences, we now postponed them to April 2022 and February 2023, respectively, approximately at the same dates. With help of the Scientific Board Members Eckhard Heymann and Marco Tschapka, we officially re-launched the Online Free Access Journal ECOTROPICA in 2019, and another volume was published in 2020. We still have lot more to do together regarding travel grants, research grants, communication, and developing further collaborations with other organizations, and non-European and other tropical countries and colleagues.

On the 8th May 2020, I had a strong feeling that COVID-19 was also killing all what I liked the most, the idea of the United Nations of Europe, at least among scientists. I wrote to the board "Paris is empty while Europe is celebrating 75th years of the 8th May 1945, the end of the WWII thanks to the allied forces that helped European nations to be free". I observed that COVID-19 forced our Nations to close the borders for the first time since WWII, and being aware that it will not end with the coming summer, I also added "I have feeling that 2021 is going to be another year with other strong constraints, eventually with many limitations for our travels abroad". It is now confirmed, reinforcing my early impression "that this pandemic robbed us the chance to work for more Europe within the society". In 2018-2021, I could only partly fulfill our objectives, and I need a few more years. Therefore, contrary to what I said in 2018, I'm now standing in front of you as a candidate for the next election as President of the Society for Tropical Ecology. Only fools don't change their minds. So, bookmark your agendas and calendars for the next General Assembly and Election, please send us your membership fees (if not yet done), and stay with us, as I want to stay with you and our European Society for Tropical Ecology during the next 3 years.

Friendly yours  
In Freundschaft  
Avec toute mon amitié  
Pierre-Michel Forget



Peaceful sunset after a heavy rain – Proboscis monkey (*Nasalis larvatus*) females on tree top before night fall, Lower Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary, Sabah, Borneo. Picture: Pablo Orozco Ter Wengel.

## Invitation to first virtual plenary talk organized by the society for tropical ecology

Due to the cancellation of the annual meeting in Prague 2021, the next general assembly of the gtö will take place on 02. February 2021 via Zoom (see below). We are happy to announce that we will have a virtual plenary talk by **Katerina Sam, Czech Academy of Sciences and University of South Bohemia**, prior to the general assembly. She will talk about her experimental research on plant-herbivore-predator food webs from tropical to temperate forest ecosystems, see an abstract of the talk below.



### Fifty shades of green alias where do the predators keep the plants flourish?

It is well recognized that predators can enhance plant growth by reducing herbivore abundance. Yet the strength of such trophic cascades has been found to be quite variable both within and between communities. Moreover, effects of various taxa were usually summed within the effect of “predators” thus it remains unclear which predators and where might control trophic cascades. Even less known is the indirect effect of presence of predators on the changes in feeding behaviour of herbivores and its impact on plants. We hypothesise that birds, bats and ants are important predators of arthropods, which further affect plant growth directly and indirectly. However, their relative importance may differ along large (latitudinal) gradients due to changes in their richness and abundance and productivity of the environment. For similar reasons, we also expect that the importance of predators differs in forest canopies and understories, as productivity and trophic levels are predicted to be higher in the canopies. To find out where top-down forces control food webs, we run predator exclusion experiments along latitudinal and vertical gradient(s). We exclude ants, birds, and/or bats separately and in combinations from saplings and from branches in forest canopies and run smaller experiments in laboratories to identify the direct and indirect effect of predators on lower trophic levels. We further investigate various plant defences, which are inevitably shaping the interactions via bottom up control and we fit our findings into a big picture of a global meta-analysis of similar studies during which predators were excluded. We discuss that stable arthropod populations are maintained by natural enemies of various importance along gradients and that disruption of communities of natural enemies often, but not always, result into significantly increased abundances of insect, increased herbivorous damage and into changes in leaf traits.

#### Program 2. February 2021

14:00-15:00 (MEZ, UTC +1) Talk by Katerina Sam, Czech Academy of Sciences and University of South Bohemia, Czech Republic

15:00-17:00 (MEZ, UTC + 1) Virtual general assembly

## Invitation to the 34th general assembly of gtö in 2021 via Zoom

The Executive Board of the gtö, represented by its President, invites its members to the 34th general assembly held on Tuesday, 2nd February 2021 from 15h00 to 17h00. The meeting will



be held virtually, i.e. in the internet on the platform Zoom. **We will circulate the specific link about one week before.**

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 33rd general assembly
4. Report of the executive board on the activities of the society in 2020
5. Report of the treasurer on the financial year 2020
6. Report of the cash accountants
7. Discharge of the executive board
8. Report of the advisory board
9. Election of the executive board members
10. Election of the scientific board members
11. Election of the cash accountants
12. Ecotropica
13. Preparation of future annual meetings
14. Miscellaneous

### **Einladung zur 34. Mitgliederversammlung der gtö in 2021 via Zoom**

Das Präsidium der gtö, vertreten durch den Präsidenten, lädt alle Mitglieder ein zur virtuellen 34. Mitgliederversammlung der gtö am Dienstag, 2. Februar 2021 von 15:00 bis 17:00 Uhr. Die Sitzung wird virtuell, d.h. im Internet auf Zoom, durchgeführt. **Der dazugehörige link wird circa eine Woche vorher verschickt.**

Tagesordnung:

1. Eröffnung der Mitgliederversammlung durch den Präsidenten und Annahme der Tagesordnung
2. Wahl des Schriftführenden
3. Genehmigung des Protokolls der 33. Mitgliederversammlung
4. Bericht des Präsidiums über die Aktivitäten der Gesellschaft in 2020
5. Bericht der Schatzmeisterin zum Geschäftsjahr 2020
6. Bericht der Kassenprüfenden
7. Entlastung des Präsidiums
8. Bericht des Wissenschaftlichen Beirats
9. Neuwahl des Präsidiums
10. Neuwahl des Wissenschaftlichen Beirats
11. Wahl der Kassenprüfenden

12. Ecotropica
13. Vorbereitung der zukünftigen Jahrestagungen
14. Verschiedenes

## Candidates for the election of the executive board

See below a list of candidates for the election of the executive board and the scientific advisory board of the society for tropical ecology. The election will take place at the upcoming general assembly.

### PIERRE-MICHEL FORGET, Candidate for President



**BIOSKETCH.** Tropical Forest Ecologist, Professor of the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Brunoy, Adjunct Director of the CNRS Research Unit MECADEV CNRS-MNHN. PhD University of Paris VI (1988). Fellow at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, BCI, Panama (1989-1990). Editorial Board of Journal of Tropical Ecology (1999-2019) and Tropical Conservation Science (2008+). President Society for Tropical Ecology-Gtö (2018-2021). Professional Societies: Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation (1988+), Society for Tropical Ecology-Gtö (2004+). ATBC Councillor (2003), Past-president (2008), Gtö Vice-president (2015-2017). Research Interests: Ecology and conservation of tropical forests, seed fate, fruit seasonality and consumption by frugivores and granivores, impact of anthropogenic disturbances on forest diversity and tree recruitment, harvesting of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP) and sustainable use of forest diversity. Current research sites of interest: Guyane.

**PERSONAL STATEMENT.** After been elected President of the Society, my goal has been to help developing the Society for Tropical Ecology, in close collaboration with the executive and the scientific advisory boards. I'm especially interested in networking with other European and International Societies and Associations. In 2019, the Society joined with the British Ecological Society to hold a Joint Meeting in Edinburgh, UK. Then, we had planned annual meetings and other European conferences in 2020-2024. Not only the COVID pandemic has stopped these initiatives, but also put our Society in peril. With the crucial help of the boards and the financial aid from members, the Society is again afloat, and we are now ready to navigate again across Europe once the storm is gone. I'm not going to abandon the boat and the passengers in the middle of the journey. Though it was not my initial wish, I however took the decision to candidate again for the next election to help reaching our future destinations, and to pass the bar to the next generation.

### NINA FARWIG, Candidate for Vice-President



**BIOSKETCH.** Chair of Conservation Ecology, University of Marburg, Karl-von-Frisch-Str. 8, D-35032 Marburg. PhD (2005) University of Mainz. Research Interests: Biodiversity management, functional biodiversity research, community ecology, conservation, invasion biology, landscape ecology. Since 2018 Vice President of the Society for Tropical Ecology (gtö); earlier Secretary General of gtö (2011-2018), speaker of the advisory board of gtö (2009-2011), member of the advisory board of gtö (2006-2011) and councilor (2010-2012) of Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation (ATBC).

**PERSONAL STATEMENT.** I am a conservation ecologist whose research focus is to understand the importance of different animal and plant species and their interactions for ecosystem functions and services that are essential for our well-being. Global change is leading to a dramatic decline in biodiversity which is also threatening our human livelihood. With my research I

aim to contribute to the development of strategies for sustainable management of ecosystems that allow a balance between the protection of biodiversity and the use of natural resources. I am currently one of the Vice Presidents of gtö and stand for re-election as Vice President. My goal is to increase the visibility and attractiveness of gtö as a society so that it becomes the “go-to-place” for tropical ecologists in Europe as well as to enhance the international exchange between ecological Societies.

### PABLO OROZCO-TER WENGEL, Candidate for Vice-President



I have been involved with the society for five years and overtime my interest in gaining an increased participation have increased. This path has led me from attending the conference to organizing almost on a yearly basis a “molecular ecology” session in our yearly conference, to having become a member of the scientific advisory board. I value the society for its efforts in bringing researchers working in ecology in the tropics together, and to have become an international and European society that is inclusive and diverse. I have always been passionate about tropical diversity and ecology as I was born in one of the most biodiverse countries in the world, and from an early age learned to appreciate and treasure the species, communities and ecosystems in this

important, yet fragile, environment. This interest led me to a career merging the fields of genetics, ecology and evolution with the goal of characterizing processes and mechanisms underpinning species relationships in the tropics and beyond, as well as contributing to the development of management practices for their conservation. While my own research has contributed to this goal, I feel that I have contributed more through efforts in supporting researchers locally through training and advising, or via specialist support through the IUCN SSC Conservation Genetics Specialists Group, which activities I coordinate in South America. I see the possibility of further contributing to our society through activities as its vice-president, which I see as a steppingstone in my contribution to a greater effort to support the development of our understanding of the tropics. Should I be elected to the vice-presidency I will do my best to support the president and the other members of the executive board, work together with the scientific advisory board, as well as continue participating in all society’s activities and contributing with the molecular genetics and genomics session in our conference.

### UTE RADESPIEL, Candidate for Secretary General



Position: Außerplanmäßige Professorin at the Institute of Zoology, University of Veterinary Medicine Hanover, Germany. Since I started working on Malagasy lemurs in 1995, I aim to understand the factors that drive the evolution of their social structure, demographic history, ecology, distribution, and the long-term survival of populations. My research activities are settled on different spatial scales ranging from the level of individuals up to entire species distributions. Many lemurs have very small geographic ranges. These species and their ecosystems are highly threatened by ongoing habitat fragmentation and other disturbances. The understanding of the species-specific habitat requirements, the influence of habitat fragmentation on the genetic diversity, genetic structure and parasite load of

populations, and therefore the evaluation of their viability are of major conservation concern and form another important component of my work.

I joined the gtöe Scientific Advisory Board in 2015 and was elected Secretary General in 2018. I hereby express my interest to continue my service to the Society. I feel that there is the continuous need for expertise regarding (a) the ecological and evolutionary peculiarities of the mini-continent Madagascar and (b) the primatological perspective in the discipline of tropical ecology. There are many important future research avenues in this field – most of them requiring interdisciplinary collaborations and scientific exchange, which I aim to promote further. The annual meetings of the gtö provide an ideal networking platform for this purpose, but we strive to facilitate

exchange, communication and support between members and the society even in difficult times such as under COVID-19.

### SIMONE PFEIFFER, Candidate for Treasurer



I joined the GTÖ in 2014 and have been in the scientific board since 2015. In the Centre of Biodiversity and Sustainable Land Use, University of Göttingen, I coordinate international and interdisciplinary research and teaching projects, alumni work and scientific events. Being part of the organisational team for the GTÖ conference 2016 I raised DAAD funds to invite 25 scientists and practitioners from developing countries to join the conference. Also planned for Leipzig 2020, the DAAD alumni seminar and GTÖ conference had to be cancelled due to the Covid pandemic with a huge refunding effort. This caused a significant reduction of the society asset. In this unpredictable time, I candidate as new treasurer of the GTÖ. It requires a strong commitment of the board and all members to revitalise the society. I want

to be an active part of this movement.

## Candidates for the election of the scientific advisory board

### MELANIE DAMMHAHN

As a long-standing active member of the gtö (since 2005) I have been serving the advisory board the last two years. My main emphasis is to strengthen the society's involvement in education and support of students from tropical countries (e.g. by student travel grants, research grants, and workshops). As a behavioural and animal ecologist with extended research and teaching experience in tropical ecology, I will help guarantee the quality of contributions to the society's meetings and to Ecotropica. Having studied one of the most endangered and enigmatic primates of the world – the Madame Berthe's mouse lemur (*Microcebus berthae*) – for 10 years in a vanishing and highly fragmented forest in Madagascar, I am highly motivated to further strengthen the society's conservation efforts (e.g. via support and guidance of in-situ projects and communication with the public).

### RAFFAEL ERNST



Herpetologist by passion and tropical ecologist by training (or vice versa) I have been heading the herpetology section at the Senckenberg Natural History Collections Dresden since 2010 and I have been engaged in tropical research, particularly in the Neo- and Afrotropics, for over two decades. I became a member of gtö in 1996, shortly after finishing high school and ever since then profited from the society's activities and international networks. In 2015 I joined the scientific board and had the unique chance to accompany and support the society's (r)evolutionary path towards a truly European platform for tropical biologists from

all continents. A lot has been achieved in the past years. But even more challenges lie ahead of us as a professional society that promotes research and conservation in tropical countries in times that are dominated by global pandemics, ongoing habitat destruction and poor leadership. It will take an active and engaged community to make the society's voice heard in political debates and I would be happy to continue supporting gtö and its members and friends in this process in the coming years.

### PAULINA GRIGUSOVA

Currently, I'm a scientific assistant and a PhD student at the University of Marburg, LCRS, AG Bendix. I have a bachelor degree in geography from University of Bonn and a master degree from University of Marburg in physical geography. In my studies, I specialized in Environment Informatics and Remote Sensing. I have experience in data science, especially in the application of machine learning techniques in biodiversity research and remote



sensing. Due to my migration for my studies from Slovakia to Germany, extracurricular engagement and participation in overseas research projects, I have a broad experience in being part of an international environment. In my PhD, I apply remote sensing methods at multiple scales (terrestrial cameras, UAV, high resolution satellite data), machine learning and numerical modeling to study the burrowing behavior of soil animals



and their influence on vegetation density and landscape processes. The results will contribute to a better understanding of effects the soil animals have on their habitat, show the potentials of remote sensing for the research of animal behavior and improve the performance of Earth-system models. After finishing my PhD, I want to continue my academic career at a university and specialize further in machine learning and remote sensing area. I would like to work in international projects, be an inspiration for future students and contribute with my work to the maintenance of world-wide biodiversity. I'm interested in becoming part of your Society, as I would value academic exchange in the fields of biodiversity and ecology and I would like to be part of a broad international network.

### ECKHARD W. HEYMANN



I have been serving as a board member since 1994. My emphasis, particularly in the last 15 years, was to make the society a European one, which I think we finally managed to become. Since 2017, I adopted the co-editorship of ECOTROPICA, together with Marco Tschapka. After much preparatory work, we succeeded in re-launching the society's journal in 2019. ECOTROPICA is now a pure online-journal with all articles published as open access under a Creative Commons license. It now has an e-ISSN number, its issues will be permanently stored at the Deutsche

Nationalbibliothek, and all articles have a doi number. The next steps include registration at the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and listing in the Science Citation Index.

### JÜRGEN HOMEIER



Tropical forest ecologist at the Department of Plant Ecology, University of Göttingen. I am especially interested in relationships between species richness, functional diversity and performance of Neotropical forest trees, and with long-term monitoring and experimental manipulation I try to understand the effects of global change on forest dynamics.

I am member of the gtö scientific advisory board since 2006 and was co-organizer of the conference in Göttingen 2016. The motivation for me to become again a member of the scientific advisory board is to strengthen the active role of the gtö as the European stakeholder in tropical ecology, in linking tropical ecologists globally, and promoting the

conservation of tropical biodiversity.

### SARAH LUKE



I am a postdoc based at the University of Cambridge, UK. My research focuses on developing strategies for striking a better balance between production and conservation in tropical agricultural landscapes. Projects that I am currently involved with include: (1) developing riparian buffer restoration strategies to boost biodiversity in oil palm plantations in Indonesia; (2) testing strategies for sustainable control of fall armyworm in maize in Nigeria; and (3) developing an evidence-based metric for farmers to assess the biodiversity value of different management options in tropical forest biome agriculture.

The Society for Tropical Ecology provides an important forum for tropical ecologists from multiple countries, topics, and career stages, to meet and discuss ideas. I have been a member of the society for several years, and have enjoyed the opportunities that it has

offered, including conferences, support for students, and the chance to meet other tropical ecologists. I have been a member of the Society's Advisory Board since 2018, and have very much enjoyed being more involved with the Society, and making a contribution to its work. As such, I would like to run for re-election as a Board member to continue to help support the work of the Society.

### EIKE LENA NEUSCHULZ



**BIOSKETCH.** Ecologist working on the interactions between plants and animals; Senior scientist at the Senckenberg Biodiversity and Climate Research Centre Frankfurt, Germany. PhD (2011) Philipps-Universität Marburg. Research interests: patterns of biodiversity and ecosystem functions across elevational gradients in temperate and tropical systems, experimental community ecology, understanding the mechanisms of ecosystem functioning. Member of the Society for Tropical Ecology (gtö) since 2009. Currently, co-speaker of the scientific advisory board. **MOTIVATION.** I joined the scientific advisory board of the gtö in 2012. I consider increasing the attractiveness of the gtö to young members, as well as an internationalization of the society as a very important to be addressed by the advisory board. I am involved in the communication between the advisory board and the members of gtö, for instance by being the editor of the gtö newsletter.

### VOJTECH NOVOTNY



**BIOSKETCH.** I have a PhD in Ecology from the Czech Academy of Sciences. In the Czech Republic, I am directing the Centre for Tropical Biology, a research consortium of three institutions (the Czech Academy of Sciences, the University of South Bohemia, and the Charles University), active throughout the tropics. In Papua New Guinea, I co-founded and have been directing the New Guinea Binatang Research Center, a research organization active also in rainforest conservation and training of postgraduate students. I am a member of the Advisory Board of gtö and served as a councilor of ATBC.

**PERSONAL STATEMENT.** I am a tropical biologist interested in the ecology of rainforests, particularly their food webs. My research, increasingly using field-based experiments, focuses on ecological mechanisms of species coexistence of rainforest plants and animals and on ecological drivers of biodiversity along succession, latitudinal and altitudinal gradients in forest ecosystems. I am also interested in the development of ecological research capacity, from paraecologists to postgraduate students, in tropical countries and in the conservation of tropical forests, particularly with indigenous communities. For the past 20 years I have been dividing my time equally between Europe and Papua New Guinea. As a Vice-President I would focus on publishing, conferences, and public outreach in order to establish gtö as a platform for wide ranging, and hopefully inspiring, discussion of scientific, conservation and science policy issues, particularly facilitating interaction and understanding between extra-tropical and equatorial scientists.

### PIA PAROLIN



**BIOSKETCH.** Tropical Ecologist at Dept. Biodiversity, Evolution and Ecology of Plants, University of Hamburg, Germany. Habilitation (2002) Max-Planck-Institute for Evolutionary Biology; PhD (1997) INPA-Max-Planck, Manaus, Brazil. Research Interests: Wetlands, floodplain ecology, plant ecophysiology, dispersal, regeneration, use of floodplain forests, conservation. Ex Vice-President and Secretary General of gtö, and ex Chair of Conservation Committee of Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation (ATBC). Photographer and book author since 2017.

**PERSONAL STATEMENT.** Since my first field studies as a student in Brazil in 1986, and many years spent in South America, my research expanded from a focus on understanding

the ecology of Amazonian floodplain forests to increasingly broader research projects and comparative studies of systems which suffered natural or anthropogenic impacts. Freshwater wetlands are so important, yet so underrepresented. In gtö, my goal is to increase the strength as a society that serves as networking basis for tropical ecology in Europe, and to increase information flow between ecologists in Europe and other societies of tropical ecology worldwide.

### KATERINA SAM



**BIOSKETCH.** I am an ecologist working on the multitrophic interactions between plants and animals. I work mostly with bats, birds, ant and spiders on various aspect of their functioning in trophic interactions. I am an associate professor at Biology Centre of Czech Academy of Sciences and at University of South Bohemia in Czech Republic. My research interests are patterns of diversity and trophic interactions in tropical and temperate system, and large manipulative experiments focusing on predation and predators. I am member of

the advisory board of Czech Society for Ecology from and member of the Society for Tropical Ecology (gtö) since 2010. **MOTIVATION:** I would like to help to increase the attractiveness of the society to your members and I hope to represent a female role model for your tropical ecologists. I hope my communications skills, skills in popularization of science and enthusiasm will be useful for the society. I would like to gain experience about the successful functioning of the gtö and develop further my transferrable skills gained during my work for the board.

### CHRISTINE B. SCHMITT



Senior Researcher, Center for Development Research (ZEF), University of Bonn, Germany. I am a Landscape Ecologist fascinated by the diversity and beauty of tropical forests. My main research interest is to study the biodiversity and ecosystem services of tropical forest landscapes as a basis for developing conservation and sustainable use strategies. Next to field surveys with a vegetation focus, I use inter- and transdisciplinary approaches to also consider policy frameworks and people's perspectives. I have conducted most of my field research in Ethiopia and Kenya but also have been involved in projects in other parts of the tropics. I am a gtoe member since 2012 and a regular participant in the gtoe annual meetings. During those meetings I have much enjoyed the interaction and discussion with the tropical ecology community and thus would like to take

my engagement with the gtoe to a next level. I would be thrilled to be elected as a member of the scientific advisory board and be able to make an active contribution towards developing the gtoe scientifically and as an organization. In particular, I am interested in promoting ecological research and the conservation and sustainable use of tropical ecosystems through enhanced international collaboration and awareness raising in- and outside academia.

### DOMINIK SCHÜSSLER



My scientific expertise certainly lies in combining multiple research areas to forward the study of evolutionary and ecological processes in light of the conservation of tropical biodiversity. These fields include landscape-scale analyses like land cover mapping, environmental and biogeographical modeling on the one hand, but also small-scale ecological investigations of impacts of changing habitat characteristics. In striving to further integrate the human dimension into wildlife conservation, I am interested in the attitudes towards the species of concern and the socio-economic perspective of conservation science.

My current focus is on the lemurs of northeastern Madagascar. While pursuing the goal to protect these species and their habitats, my PhD project tries to investigate the evolutionary history of some



lineages and their implications for conservation planning. Side projects further include the human dimensions concerning some characteristic species aiming to contribute to my overall goal.

While being a member of the Society for Tropical Ecology for two years, I would now like to become a Board member to contribute my experience and to further help in developing the society's visions.

## MARCO TSCHAPKA

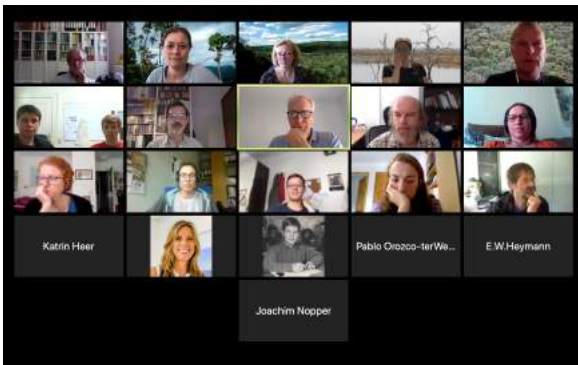
Associate professor at the Institute of Evolutionary Ecology and Conservation Genomics, University of Ulm, Germany. PhD 1998, University of Erlangen-Nuremberg. My research interests comprise ecology and behavior of bats and arachnids, animal-plant interactions, and the ecological background of emerging diseases. I came first to the tropics in 1991 when I started working on the pollination of bromeliads by nectar-feeding bats. Since that time I am fascinated by the multitude of interactions occurring in the Old and New World tropics. Currently I have projects in Panama, Mexico, Costa Rica, Tanzania and Ghana, mostly related to bat ecology. I prefer working in cooperation with colleagues from tropical countries and organized over the last sixteen years a mutual student exchange program between the Universidad de Costa Rica and the University of Ulm. I am a member of gtö since 1998 and co-editor of our journal *Ecotropica* since 2004.



## ANNEMARIE WURZ

I am a gtö society member since 2017. I am a tropical ecologist with research experience in Madagascar. I am Social Media Manager for the gtö since 2019, managing facebook and twitter. Science communication is one of my passions. I enjoy writing and especially illustrating scientific results. With the ongoing Covid19 pandemic, social media has gained in importance to connect people and to broadcast their work. I am happy to support the society to gain visibility and impact through social media, reaching out to a diversity of people and countries.

## First virtual, and 33rd general assembly of gtö in 2020 via Zoom



Due to the cancellation of the annual meeting in Prague, the first virtual general assembly was held on 20.07.2020 via Zoom.

***See Appendix I for the minutes of the general assembly 2020***

***See Appendix II for budgetary revenues and expenditures 2019 ("Kassenbericht")***

***See Appendix III for the new statutes of the society for tropical ecology***

## Awardees of the student research grants

Due to the special conditions in 2020 due to Covid 19, the gtö had extended the deadline for handing in applications for student research grants. At the time of the copy deadline, the selection process was not completed, which is why we cannot present awardees of the 2020 grants yet. 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> for upcoming deadlines.

We are happy to present a short report of one of the awardees from 2019 here:



**Contribution of millipedes to ecosystem functioning in tropical forest: an experimental study** - Mukhlis Jamal Musa Holle (Oxford University)

In general, I found that millipede plays a crucial role in decomposing organic matter in the forest floor, complementarily improving other litter invertebrate functionality, and maintain decomposition resilience towards climate change. Their ecosystem services could benefit agriculture and forest by creating refuge in the farmland (i.e. adding litter in the ground) and supporting litter invertebrate mobility by a green corridor. Moreover, completely clearing forest into open areas could disable the decomposition process.

## Upcoming conferences

We are very happy to announce the **future conference locations of the society for tropical ecology / gtö** for the upcoming years. We very much hope that we will be back on a regular meeting schedule soon.

**2022: Leipzig, Germany**

**2023: Prague, Czech Republic**

## Treasurer's Corner

Dear members,

thanks to everyone who paid membership fees for 2019 and 2020. We highly appreciate your support of our society! With these revenues and the surplus from previous years, we can just meet the commitments for the cancelled conference in Leipzig this year.

We need to continue raising funds to pay for fixed costs (communication, insurance, legal support). We would also like to continue our research and travel grant initiatives.

Everyone who still ought to pay membership fee in this year, please transfer it to our bank account **before 31 December 2020** to:

Account holder: Gesellschaft für Tropenökologie e.V.

Bank name: Sparkasse Köln-Bonn

IBAN code: DE10 3705 0198 0017 5354 10

SWIFT Code (BIC): COLSDE33

Reason for payment: first and last name - membership fee year



In 2021, we will offer different membership payment options on our webpage and I will contact members concerning direct debiting.

My name is Simone Pfeiffer, working at the University of Göttingen, and I am the new gtö treasurer. **You can either use the [online form for membership updates](#) or contact me directly via [treasurer@soctropecol.eu](mailto:treasurer@soctropecol.eu).**

## Ecotropica

After the completion of volume 21, ECOTROPICA is now publishing volume 22. So far, this volume includes two major papers, one short communication, and a Field Station Profile. Another major paper, another short communication and another Field Station Profile are in the production phase.

A major problem for moving ECOTROPICA ahead is the low number of manuscript submissions. Therefore, we would like to ask gtö members to consider submitting manuscripts to ECOTROPICA.

## Social media news

The usage of social media for communication is indispensable nowadays. Social media is easily accessible to a diversity of people without country borders. Social media offers possibilities to get easily informally in touch and thus can facilitate networking among researchers. For our society, facebook and twitter offer a great opportunity to make us visible to society members but also to the wider public and to share society updates but also communicate new tropical research, job offers and conference opportunities. With the cancellation of conferences globally (like our society meeting in Leipzig), social media has gained in importance for researchers to stay in touch and present their research. Our twitter account counts currently 2,432 followers and our facebook group has 1.9 K members. Highlights of this year were our participation in the #TropiCon20 conference (4./5. November 2020) organized by the BES.

If you have research or news which you would like to share on our twitter or facebook society account, feel free to get in touch with us directly! If you enjoy “tweeting” or “facebooking” and you would like to join the GtÖ social media team, please get in touch with Annemarie Wurz ([annemarie.wurz@uni-goettingen.de](mailto:annemarie.wurz@uni-goettingen.de)).

## Report from a field site – research in a special year...



The New Guinea Binatang Research Center in Papua New Guinea continues its full activity throughout the covid-19 pandemic, demonstrating the advantage of having fully trained local research staff that can work even when international movement of researchers is impeded.

Photo: Study of plant-insect interactions, led by Katerina Sam, using a canopy crane in Madang, Papua new Guinea.

## German Nagoya Protocol “HuB”

The German research foundation (DFG) kindly asked to distribute the below information:

Dear Sir or Madam,

I'd like to draw your attention to the project German Nagoya Protocol HuB (GNP HuB), where HuB stands for “Hilfe und Beratung“. The purpose of this project, which is funded through the Bundesamt für Naturschutz, is to help scientists across Germany with understanding their obligations arising from the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol.


The project is being led by the Leibniz Institute DSMZ. The partners are the German Natural History Museum Network (DNFS), German Life Science Association, (VBIO), and Leibniz Biodiversity Alliance (LVB).

The German Nagoya Protocol HuB could be of interest for scientists in the life sciences who are conducting international research. What are we doing?

1. We are setting up a website that specifically addresses the researchers' questions.
2. We are creating a network of practitioners across Germany who regularly exchange on Nagoya Protocol related issues
3. We are setting up a contact point for researchers
4. Outreach and awareness-raising for the research community in Germany.

In order to do outreach and awareness-raising, it was planned to attend various biology-related conferences and meetings. The COVID-19 pandemic has obviously made this impossible, with most of these conferences and meetings being cancelled.

Going digital –some of you are involved in planning information sessions for your institutions or online meetings/conferences for the wider research community. We would be happy to attend online events if speaking slots on compliance/policy-related topics are on the agenda. We have a short set of slides (5 or 10 minutes) and can let researchers know something about Nagoya Protocol compliance and the German Nagoya Protocol HuB. We can offer talks in German or English.



Please feel free to get in contact with Elizabeth Karger (info@nagoyaprotocol-hub.de) if you have a question or you are interested in having the German Nagoya Protocol HuB involved in one of your events. Please also feel free to forward this on to interested colleagues in your network or to people organizing online scientific workshops!

Yours faithfully,  
Elizabeth Karger

Projektkoordinatorin / Project Manager

Nagoya-Protokoll: Unterstützende Beratungsstelle für den Sektor “Akademische Forschung” (UBer) / German Nagoya Protocol HuB

## **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/>

## **Impressum**

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## gtö Executive Board



### **President**

Prof. Dr. Pierre-Michel Forget

Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, UMR 7179 CNER-MNHN, 1 avenue du petit château, 91800 Brunoy, France, Phone +33 160 479246, pierre-michel.forget@mnhn.fr

### **Vice-President**

Prof. Dr. Nina Farwig

Department of Conservation, Philipps-Universität Marburg, Karl-von-Frisch-Str. 8, 35043 Marburg, Germany, Phone: +49 6421 2823478, farwig@staff.uni-marburg.de

### **Vice-President**

Prof. Dr. Vojtech Novotny

Department of Zoology at the Faculty of Science, University of South Bohemia / Institute of Entomology, Branisovska 31, 370 05 Ceske Budejovice, Czech Republic  
Phone +420 38 7775362, novotny@entu.cas.cz

### **Secretary General**

Apl. Prof. Dr. Ute Radespiel

Institute of Zoology, University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover, Bünteweg 17, 30559 Hannover, Phone: +49 511 953-8430, ute.radespiel@tiho-hannover.de

### **Treasurer**

Dr. Simone Pfeiffer, Centre of Biodiversity and Sustainable Land Use, Georg-August Universität Göttingen, Büsgenweg 1, 37077 Göttingen, Phone: +49 551 39 23909, treasurer@soctropecol.eu

## **gtö scientific advisory board**

Dr. Melanie Dammhahn, Animal Ecology, University of Potsdam, Germany

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. Holger Kurz, Büro für biologische Bestandsaufnahmen, Hamburg, Germany

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

Dr. Pia Parolin, INRA, Univ. Nice Sophia Antipolis, CNRS, France

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

MSc. Annemarie Wurz, Department of Crop Sciences, Division Agroecology, University of Göttingen, Germany

## APPENDIX I: Minutes of the 33<sup>rd</sup> general assembly of the gtö in 2020 via Zoom

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> July 2020, Start: 14h00 (entry possible until 14h30), End: 15h50

Place: Paris - Online in Zoom

Minutes written by: Ute Radespiel (Secretary General)

Present: 22 members (certification of presence archived in chat protocol; two persons only part-time)

### Agenda:

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

The president Pierre-Michel Forget opens the general assembly and explains the practical rules and procedures for this virtual meeting. All decisions and presence will be documented by archiving the chat by the assembly's secretary.

The agenda is approved by the general assembly.

#### 2. Election of the assembly's secretary

The general assembly elects Ute Radespiel (secretary general) as the assembly's secretary.

#### 3. Approval of the minutes of the 32nd general assembly

The 33rd general assembly approves the minutes of the 32nd general assembly from Edinburgh in 2019.

#### 4. Report of the executive board on the activities of the society in 2019

The present presents the yearly tasks of the executive board that are the smooth administration of the society, the organization of the annual meetings (2019 in Edinburgh U.K.), the preparation of future annual meetings, and the administration of student grants (travel or research).

2019 – meeting took place from 8-12 April 2019 together with BES-TEG in Edinburgh, U.K. There were 270 delegates recorded from 29 countries (80% from Europe). The society awarded 6 Merian Awards (3x for best talks, 3x for best posters) at the Edinburgh meeting. Names and topics were published in the 45th Newsletter. We also provided travel grants to 11 participants to attend the meeting in Edinburgh. This grant scheme will continue for the next conference.

The society also awarded 8 Research Grants during the year 2019. Names and topics were published in the 45th Newsletter. This scheme will also be continued with extended deadlines for reporting and with extended deadlines for new applications to account for the CORONA-crisis.

#### 5. Report of the treasurer on the financial year 2019

The treasurer Holger Kurz presents the financial report for 2019 (see below). The costs include those that were needed to support the conferences in Paris (2018) and in Edinburgh (2019). Total costs exceeded total revenues in 2019 substantially and reduced our overall positive balance to 35,560.92 Euro as of 31st December 2019.

Some comments from the treasurer on the actual financial situation in 2020: Due to the unforeseen cancellation of our conference in Leipzig in 2020 (due to CORONA), the overall conference balance was negative (-38,278.34 Euro). This balance needs to be covered from our general society accounts which do not contain enough money at this moment. As a result, we still have some open financial obligations resulting from the conference. We will therefore ask for the fees for 2019 and 2020 soon from the members to fulfill our financial duties. There were no questions from the audience about this report.

#### 6. Report of the cash accountants

The members Annemarie Wurz and Dominic Martin served as cash accountants for the year 2019. They checked all documents and everything was in good order.

They declare that the accounting of the society was done correctly, i.e. that all revenues and costs were accounted for correctly.

One person left the session after this point.

7. Discharge of the executive board

The member Katrin Heer suggests to discharge the executive board.

Results of the vote: 19x yes, 2x abstentions

Decision: the executive board is discharged

8. Report of the advisory board

The speaker of scientific advisory board, Eike Lena Neuschulz, reported on activities of the scientific advisory board. There were 2 scientific board meetings together with the executive board in 2019 and one meeting for 2 days in March 2020. We had two Newsletters sent out, one in February 2020, one in May 2020, in preparation of the general assembly. The gtoe webpage is changed and rearranged on a regular basis, and the board welcomes any further comments on the layout of the webpage.

9. Advanced election of new treasurer

The former treasurer (Holger Kurz) has resigned his position for personal reasons, and the society has long searched for a suitable new candidate. Simone Pfeiffer is willing to take over this very important position with high responsibility. Dr. Simone Pfeiffer from University of Göttingen introduces herself. She has substantial experience with academic management tasks, is a member of the gtoe since 2014 and became member of scientific advisory board in 2015. She hopes to move the membership administration of the society smoothly into the new digital era to become fit in face of future challenges.

Candidate: Dr. Simone Pfeiffer, University of Göttingen

Voting results: Yes-votes: 20, No-votes: 0, Abstentions: 1

We warmly welcome Simone Pfeiffer as the new treasurer and member of the executive board. She accepts the election results. The president thanks Holger Kurz for his previous service during many years. The web-page will be updated soon.

10. Election of one additional member of the scientific board

In the 21st century we are facing new challenges in the digital world. We need to have somebody to help the society to increase visibility and awareness. Annemarie Wurz is willing to do so and supports us already as a co-opted member of the scientific advisory board since last year. She introduces herself.

Candidate: Anne-Marie Wurz, (PhD student) University of Göttingen

Voting results: Yes-votes: 20x, No-votes: 0, Abstentions: 1x

We warmly welcome Anne-Marie Wurz as a new scientific board member. She accepts the election results.

One person leaves the meeting at this point

11. Election of the cash accountants

President introduces the need for two new cash accountants for the coming year. There are two candidates, both members but not present, but each of them has declared their willingness to perform this service to the society.



Candidates: Dominic Martin (PhD student, University of Göttingen), PD Dr. Stephan Hohnwald (University of Göttingen)

Voting results: Yes-votes: 20x, No-votes: 0, Abstentions: 0

The two new cash accountants are elected.

#### 12. Discussion and vote on the planned changes of the statutes

The president explains that a revision of statutes became necessary mainly to allow us to conduct virtual general assembly meetings and also virtual elections of the executive board and advisory board. This virtual general assembly became possible in 2020 only due to an exceptional regulation of the German government in CORONA times. Such a permanent change will allow the society to fulfil its duties under all future circumstances and may also increase participation of members who cannot join a meeting in person. Besides, our new lawyer reviewed our statutes and suggested some further minor changes. All suggested changes of the statutes were sent out to all members in due time with the 46th Newsletter of the Society on the 6th June 2020. There were no questions from the plenum.

Voting results: Yes-votes: 20x, No-votes: 0, Abstentions: 0

Decision: All statute changes were en bloc accepted and approved by the general assembly. The new statutes with all changes are provided below.

#### 13. Ecotropica

A new issue of Ecotropica has been published in 2019 (Vol. 21). Eckhard Heymann (Member of scientific advisory board and editor of Ecotropica) reports on progress and problems with the new start of this online-journal. The journal has now received an ISSN number, a DOI code, and each article receives an Article DOI code. Overall, 30 manuscripts have been received over time, of which 10 had to be rejected without review, because they were out of scope. Thirteen manuscripts are currently in the pipeline in various stages. There is still room for improvement: Communication still needs to be optimized between the editorial office, section editors and reviewers, and reviewers are difficult to find. We also need to attract more manuscripts. We aim for registration at the Directory of Open Access Journals (not to be listed as predatory journal), but some technical issues still need to be solved beforehand. Marco Tschapka (Member of scientific advisory board and second editor of Ecotropica) reports that type-setting will probably go to a company in India in the future, since the local service is no longer available to us.

#### 14. Preparation of future annual meetings

2021: 31st January – 3rd February 2021 in Prague, Czech Republic, organizers: Robert TROPEK & Kateřina SAM, Vice-president Vojtech Novotny reports on the concept: the organizers hope for a conference in person, but streaming of all sessions will be possible in parallel (hybrid concept). This leaves open the possibility for a 100% virtual meeting if needed. The venue is already booked at University of Prague. Next step will be the submission of sessions. Deadline for sessions: 10th September 2020. New sessions are possible and welcome, but also moving sessions from Leipzig 2020 will be possible. Vojtech Novotny appeals to everybody to submit a session or to spread the information among colleagues.

2022: Leipzig, Germany – venue: University of Leipzig, Campus Augustusplatz. Plenary Speakers of 2020 will be retained for 2022

2023: Lisbon, Portugal. The president welcomes the local organizer and member Jorge Palmeirim. Jorge Palmeirim confirms the continuing interest of the Portuguese colleagues to host the meeting. No further details are available at this point, the event is still too far in the future.

2024: Berlin, Germany. Member Heribert Hofer has agreed to organize the meeting in Berlin at the IZW. No further news.

#### 15. Miscellaneous

Initiative by Pia Parolin (member of the scientific advisory board): "My message as a scientist". Pia Parolin presents the goal of her initiative – to reach out from scientists in tropical ecology (e.g. board members, grantees of gtoe) with their photo and individual key messages to the public or the scientific community. Pia Parolin prepares colorful and artistic posters for this, but this is still work in progress. Members are welcome to join the initiative. Pia Parolin has the plan for launching the initiative in Prague and for continuing in Leipzig in 2022. 1st step: present at the venue, 2nd step: present in city where we are having the conference. This requires close collaboration with the local organizers. Plans are acknowledged by general assembly.

Plans for social media activities (Annemarie Wurz, new member of scientific advisory board): Annemarie invites all members to use the gtoe platform (Twitter and Facebook) to inform about new publications, new projects or activities in the field of tropical ecology. She can be contacted directly for that purpose. We have currently 2,265 followers on Twitter as of today, and Annemarie Wurz maintains both accounts.

There is the plan for an online photo competition in the context of the next conference, and Annemarie Wurz, Melanie Dammhahn and Pia Parolin (all three members of scientific advisory board) will organize it. Such an activity will serve to increase visibility of gtoe.

The resident thanks everybody for joining this event and closes the general assembly at 15h50.

## **Protokoll der 33. Mitgliederversammlung der gtö in 2020 via Zoom**

Datum: 20. Juli 2020, Beginn: 14.00 Uhr (Einlass bis 14.30 Uhr), Ende: 15.50 Uhr  
Ort: Paris - Online in Zoom

Protokoll erstellt von: Ute Radespiel (Generalsekretärin)

Anwesend: 22 Mitglieder (2 nur zeitweilig, Dokumentation der Anwesenheit über gespeichertes Chat-Protokoll)

### **Tagesordnung:**

1. Eröffnung der Mitgliederversammlung durch den Präsidenten und Annahme der Tagesordnung  
Der Präsident Pierre-Michel Forget eröffnet die Mitgliederversammlung und erklärt die praktischen Regeln der Durchführung. Alle Abstimmungen und die Anwesenheit werden im Chat dokumentiert und anschließend durch die Schriftführerin archiviert.  
Die Tagesordnung wird durch die Versammlung angenommen.
2. Wahl des Schriftführenden  
Die Mitgliederversammlung wählt einstimmig Ute Radespiel (Generalsekretärin) zur Schriftführerin der Versammlung.
3. Genehmigung des Protokolls der 32. Mitgliederversammlung  
Die Anwesenden genehmigen das Protokoll der 32. Mitgliederversammlung, die in Edinburgh in 2019 stattfand.
4. Bericht des Vorstands über die Aktivitäten der Gesellschaft in 2019  
Der Präsident berichtet über die jährlichen Aktivitäten des Vorstands, die die reibungslosen Abläufe in der Gesellschaft gewährleisten sollen, die jährliche Tagungsorganisation betreffen (2019 in Edinburgh, U.K.), die zukünftigen Tagungen der Gesellschaft sicherstellen sollen, und die sich mit der Auswahl und Abwicklung der studentischen Förderung (travel grants und research grants) beschäftigen.

Die letzte Tagung fand vom 8.-12. April 2019 in Edinburgh, U.K. statt und wurde gemeinsam von uns und der British Ecological Society (BES-TEG) ausgerichtet. Dort haben 270 Delegierte aus 29 Ländern teilgenommen (80% aus Europa). Die gtoe verlieh 6 Merian Awards (3x für herausragende Vorträge, 3x für herausragende Poster) auf der Tagung. Die Namen und Themen der Preisträger wurden im 45. Newsletter im Februar 2020 veröffentlicht. Wir haben daneben in 2019 11 Teilnehmer der Tagung mit einem travel grant gefördert. Dieses Förderprogramm wird weiter fortgesetzt. Die gtoe hat schließlich 8 research grants vergeben. Auch diese Namen und Themen der Preisträger wurden im 45. Newsletter im Februar 2020 veröffentlicht. Dieses Förderprogramm wird ebenfalls fortgesetzt, wobei bereits Geförderte wegen der CORONA-Situation eine verlängerte Berichtsfrist erhalten haben und die neue Förderrunde ebenfalls mit erweiterter Antragsfrist noch läuft.

#### 5. Bericht des Schatzmeisters zum Geschäftsjahr 2019

Der Schatzmeister Holger Kurz stellt den finanziellen Bericht für das Geschäftsjahr 2019 vor (siehe unten). Die Kosten enthalten solche, die für die Durchführung der Jahrestagungen in Paris (2018) und in Edinburgh (2019) nötig waren. Die Gesamtkosten überschreiten die Gesamteinnahmen in 2019 deutlich und reduzierten unsere Kontostände auf insgesamt 35.560,92 Euro am 31.12.2019.

Der Schatzmeister kommentierte zudem die aktuelle Situation der Gesellschaft in 2020: Aufgrund der unvorhergesehenen Absage unserer Jahrestagung in Leipzig in 2020 (aufgrund von CORONA) ergab sich eine deutliche Unterdeckung der Tagungskonten (-38.278,34 Euro). Diese Unterdeckung muss durch die Gesellschaftskonten ausgeglichen werden, die hierfür zurzeit nicht genügend Geld beinhalten. Wir haben daher noch einige offene Forderungen. Wir werden deshalb in Kürze die Mitglieder um die Überweisung der Mitgliedsbeiträge für 2019 und 2020 bitten, um diese finanziellen Verpflichtungen erfüllen zu können. Es gab aus dem Plenum keine weiteren Fragen.

#### 6. Bericht der Kassenprüfenden

Die beiden Mitglieder Annemarie Wurz und Dominic Martin haben dieses Jahr die Kassenprüfung abgenommen. Sie haben alle Buchungsvorgänge auf den Bankkonten kontrolliert und keine Beanstandungen gefunden.

Sie erklären daher, dass die Buchführung der Gesellschaft ordentlich geführt wurde und alle Einnahmen und Ausgaben korrekt verbucht wurden.

Eine Person verließ die Sitzung an dieser Stelle

#### 7. Entlastung des Vorstands

Das Mitglied Katrin Heer beantragt die Entlastung des Vorstands.

Abstimmungsergebnis: 19 x Ja, 2 x Enthaltung

Ergebnis: die Entlastung des Vorstands wird erteilt.

#### 8. Bericht des Wissenschaftlichen Beirats

Die Sprecherin des wissenschaftlichen Beirats, Eike Lena Neuschulz, berichtet über die Aktivitäten des wissenschaftlichen Beirats. Es gab zwei Treffen des Beirats zusammen mit dem Vorstand in 2019 und ein 2-tägiges Treffen im März 2020. Es wurden zwei Newsletter versendet, einer im Februar 2020 und einer im Mai 2020, in Vorbereitung auf diese Versammlung. Die gtoe-webpage wird regelmäßig aktualisiert und verändert, wobei der Beirat Anregungen und Hinweise zum Layout oder Inhalt gerne aufgreift.

#### 9. Vorgezogene Neuwahl des Schatzmeisters

Der bisherige Schatzmeister (Holger Kurz) hat sich entschieden, aus persönlichen Gründen von diesem Amt zurückzutreten. Der Vorstand hat längere Zeit nach einer/m Kandidaten gesucht und konnte Frau Dr. Simone Pfeiffer schließlich dafür gewinnen, dieses wichtige und verantwortungsreiche Amt zu übernehmen. Frau Dr. Simone Pfeiffer von der Universität Göttingen stellt sich selbst vor. Sie hat viel Erfahrung in akademischen Management-Aufgaben, ist seit 2014 Mitglied der gtoe, und seit 2015 Mitglied des Wissenschaftlichen Beirats. Sie hofft, mit ihrer Tätigkeit einen Beitrag zu leisten, die Gesellschaft mit einer neuen modernen Mitgliederverwaltung in das digitale Zeitalter führen zu können, um sie fit zu machen für zukünftige Herausforderungen.

Bei der anschließenden Wahl entfielen auf die Kandidatin Dr. Simone Pfeiffer 20 Ja-Stimmen, keine Nein-Stimme, und eine Enthaltung.

Die Gesellschaft begrüßt Frau Simone Pfeiffer herzlich in ihrem neuen Amt als Schatzmeisterin und als Mitglied des Vorstands der Gesellschaft für Tropenökologie. Sie nimmt die Wahl an. Der Präsident dankt Holger Kurz für seine vorherigen langjährigen Dienste. Die web-page der Gesellschaft wird in Kürze aktualisiert.

10. Wahl eines zusätzlichen Mitglieds des Wissenschaftlichen Beirats

Die Gesellschaft steht im 21. Jahrhundert vor neuen Herausforderungen der digitalen Welt. Wir brauchen daher jemanden, der insbesondere durch eine Aktivierung der sozialen Medien die Sichtbarkeit der gtoe im Bewusstsein der Fachwelt zu erhöhen. Frau Annemarie Wurz, Doktorandin an der Universität Göttingen, ist hoch motiviert für diese Aufgabe und unterstützt die Gesellschaft und den wissenschaftlichen Beirat bereits seit letztem Jahr bei dieser Aufgabe. Sie stellt sich selber vor.

Bei der anschließenden Wahl entfallen auf die Kandidatin Frau Annemarie Wurz 20 Ja-Stimmen, keine Nein-Stimme und eine Enthaltung.

Die Gesellschaft begrüßt Frau Annemarie Wurz herzlich als neues Mitglied des wissenschaftlichen Beirats. Sie nimmt die Wahl an.

Eine Person verlässt die Versammlung an dieser Stelle.

11. Wahl der Kassenprüfenden

Der Präsident führt aus, dass wir satzungsgemäß für das kommende Jahr zwei neue Kassenprüfer wählen müssen. Es gibt zwei Mitglieder, die im Vorfeld die Bereitschaft zur Kandidatur signalisiert haben, aber beide nicht anwesend sind: Dominic Martin (PhD Student der Universität Göttingen) und PD Dr. Stephan Hohnwald (Universität Göttingen)

Abstimmungsergebnis: 20 Ja-Stimmen, keine Nein-Stimmen, keine Enthaltung

Beide Personen wurden als neue Kassenprüfer gewählt.

12. Diskussion und Abstimmung zu geplanten Satzungsänderungen

Der Präsident erklärt, dass eine Satzungsänderung nötig wurde, um wenn nötig die Mitgliederversammlung und auch Vorstandswahlen virtuell durchführen zu können. Dies war in diesem Jahr in CORONA-Zeiten nur durch eine Ausnahmeregel möglich. Durch diese Änderung der Satzung werden wir zukünftig durchgängig handlungsfähig sein und können zudem die Teilhabe nicht anwesender Mitglieder an diesen Prozessen erhöhen. Daneben hat der neue Anwalt der Gesellschaft die Satzung überarbeitet und einige kleinere Änderungen vorgeschlagen. Die Vorschläge zur Satzungsänderung wurden mit dem zweiten Newsletter diesen Jahres der Gesellschaft am 6.6.2020 fristgerecht an alle Mitglieder verschickt. Es gab keine Fragen aus dem Plenum zu diesem Punkt.

Abstimmungsergebnis: 20 Ja-Stimmen, keine Nein-Stimme, Keine Enthaltung

Damit wurden alle Satzungsänderungen en bloc angenommen und von der Versammlung durch Abstimmung bestätigt. Die neue Satzung samt Änderungen ist als Teil des Protokolls abgedruckt.

13. Ecotropica

Eine neue Ausgabe von Ecotropica wurde in 2019 publiziert (Vol. 21). Eckhard Heymann (Mitglied des wiss. Beirats und Editor von Ecotropica) berichtet über die Fortschritte und Probleme mit dem Neustart dieses Online-Journals. Die Zeitschrift hat jetzt eine ISSN Nummer, einen DOI Code, und jeder Artikel erhält einen eigenen Artikel-DOI-code. Insgesamt wurden bisher 30 Manuskripte eingereicht, von denen jedoch 10 vorab ohne Review abgewiesen wurden, da sie nicht unter die Zielsetzung der Zeitschrift fielen. Dreizehn Artikel sind zum jetzigen Zeitpunkt in verschiedenen Stadien der Bearbeitung. Es gibt noch an einigen Stellen Verbesserungsbedarf: Die Kommunikation zwischen den Herausgebern und Gutachtern muss noch verbessert werden, und es ist häufig schwierig, geeignete Gutachter zu finden. Die Anzahl eingereichter Manuskripte ist noch viel zu gering! Wir streben als nächstes eine Registrierung beim Directory of Open Access Journals an, um keine Verwechslung mit unseriösen Zeitschriften zuzulassen, aber es gibt leider immer noch ein paar technische Probleme, die vorher gelöst werden müssen. Marco Tschapka (Mitglied des wiss. Beirats und Editor von Ecotropica) berichtet darüber, dass wir wohl bald das Type-Setting an eine Firma in Indien übertragen werden, da unsere lokale Lösung für diesen Service nicht mehr zur Verfügung steht.

14. Vorbereitung der zukünftigen Jahrestagungen

2021: 31. Januar – 3. Februar 2021 in Prag, Tschechien, Ausrichter: Robert TROPEK & Kateřina SAM. Vize-Präsident Vojtěch Novotný berichtet vom Konzept: die Ausrichter hoffen auf eine Präsenzveranstaltung, aber das Live Streaming aller Symposien und Beiträge wird parallel angeboten (Hybrid-Konzept). Dieses Konzept wird es



auch ermöglichen, falls nötig auf eine 100% virtuelle Konferenz umzusteigen. Der Veranstaltungsort wird die Universität Prag sein. Der nächste Schritt umfasst die Anfrage zum Einreichen von Symposien, die bereits an alle Mitglieder verschickt wurde. Die Frist hierzu ist der 10. September 2020. Neue Symposien sind sehr willkommen, aber es können gerne auch Symposien von der verschobenen Leipzig-Tagung 2020 übernommen werden. Vojtech Novotny appelliert an alle Interessierten, ein Symposium vorzubereiten und diese Information an alle Kollegen weiterzureichen.

2022: Leipzig, Deutschland – Austragungsort: Universität Leipzig, Campus Augustusplatz. Die Plenar-Vorträge von 2020 werden für 2022 übernommen.

2023: Lissabon, Portugal – Der Präsident begrüßt den Ausrichter und Mitglied Jorge Palmeirim. Jorge Palmeirim bestätigt das fortgesetzte Interesse der portugiesischen Kollegen an der Ausrichtung dieser Konferenz. Weitere Details sind zu diesem Zeitpunkt noch nicht vorhanden, die Veranstaltung liegt noch zu weit in der Zukunft.

2024: Berlin, Deutschland – Mitglied Heribert Hofer hat seine Bereitschaft erklärt, diese Tagung in Berlin auszurichten. Details sind noch nicht bekannt.

#### 15. Verschiedenes

Initiative von Mitglied des wissenschaftlichen Beirats Pia Parolin „My message as a scientist“. Pia Parolin präsentiert ihre Initiative mit dem Ziel, eine Brücke zu schlagen von Wissenschaftler\*innen in der Tropenökologie zur Öffentlichkeit und der wissenschaftlichen Gemeinschaft. Pia Parolin bereitet hierfür Poster vor, die Bilder der Wissenschaftler\*innen (z.B. Mitglieder des Vorstands, des Beirats, geförderte Studierende) mit ihren eigenen Schlüsselerfahrungen künstlerisch verknüpfen. Dieses Projekt ist noch in der Ausarbeitungsphase. Alle Mitglieder sind eingeladen, sich an der Initiative zu beteiligen. Pia Parolin plant, die Initiative bei der Prager gtoe Konferenz öffentlich zu starten und sie dann in Leipzig 2022 fortzusetzen. Im ersten Schritt würden die Poster auf der Tagung ausgestellt, im zweiten Schritt auch an geeigneten Stellen parallel zur Tagung in der austragenden Stadt angebracht. Dies erfordert enge Abstimmung mit den lokalen Ausrichtern. Die Pläne werden von der Mitgliederversammlung begrüßt.

Pläne zu Aktivitäten in Sozialen Medien (Annemarie Wurz, neues Mitglied des Beirats): Annemarie lädt alle Mitglieder ein, die bestehenden gtoe Konten bei Twitter und Facebook zu nutzen, um über ihre neuesten Publikationen, Projekte oder Aktivitäten zu berichten. Annemarie Wurz kann zu diesem Zweck von jedem Mitglied kontaktiert werden. Die Gesellschaft hat zurzeit 2,265 Follower auf Twitter und beide Konten werden von Annemarie Wurz gepflegt.

Es gibt die Idee zu einem Online Fotowettbewerb im Kontext der nächsten Konferenz in Prag, und Annemarie Wurz, Melanie Dammhahn und Pia Parolin (alle drei Mitglieder des Beirats) werden dies organisieren. Diese Aktion soll ebenfalls dazu dienen, die Sichtbarkeit der gtoe zu erhöhen.

Der Präsident dankt allen Anwesenden für Ihre Teilnahme und schließt die Mitgliederversammlung um 15.50 Uhr.

## APPENDIX II: Budgetary revenues and expenditures 2019 / Kassenbericht 2019

<b>Statement fo revenues and expenditures</b>	<b>Revenues 2019</b>	<b>Expenses 2019</b>
	<b>Account balance</b>	<b>Account balance</b>
	<b>(Euro)</b>	<b>(Euro)</b>
Membership fees including new members from Paris	3,650.00	
Back-payment from Paris conference	10,826.95	
Annual interest	0.16	
<b>Sum:</b>	<b>14,477.11</b>	

<b>Expenditures:</b>		
Reimbursement of travelling costs (Executive Board)		1,111.53
Catering for Keynote speakers, Advisory and Executive Board		495.93
Office supplies & postal charges		0.00
Raffles		87.28
Travel grants for students		2,200.00
Research grants for students		7,000.00
Homepage costs		3,716.37
Merian Award for students		300.00
Ecotropica revision (style editor)		604.90
Ecotropica ISSN-number, MVB-payment		357.00
Grant for joint conference with British Ecological Society		4,331.26
Temporary grant for Paris conference		7,000.00
Account maintenance charges		167.30
Journals Treasurer and Executive Board for associations		323.70
<b>Sum:</b>		<b>27,695.27</b>
<b>Annual cash flow:</b>		<b>-13,218.16</b>
Account balance giro (beginning of the year)	01.01.2019:	23,741.60
Account balance day-to-day money (beginning of the year)	01.01.2019:	25,047.48
<b>Overall account balance (beginning of the year)</b>	01.01.2019:	<b>48,789.08</b>
Account balance giro (end of year)	31.12.2019:	10,523.28
Account balance day-to-day money (end of year)	31.12.2019:	25,047.64
<b>Overall account balance (end of year)</b>	31.12.2019:	<b>35,570.92</b>

<b>Einnahme-Überschuss-Rechnung 2019</b>	<b>Einnahmen 2019</b>	<b>Ausgaben 2019</b>
	<b>Kontensumme</b>	<b>Kontensumme</b>
<b>Einnahmen:</b>	<b>(Euro)</b>	<b>(Euro)</b>
Mitgliedsbeiträge (incl. Neumitglieder Paris)	3,650.00	
Gutschrift Tagung Paris (Kuhlmann)	10,826.95	
Tagegeld-Zinsen	0.16	
<b>Summe:</b>	<b>14,477.11</b>	
<b>Ausgaben:</b>		
Erstattung von Reisekosten (Vorstand und Beirat)		1,111.53
Verpflegung für Keynote Redner, Vorstand und Beirat		495.93
Bürobedarf, Versandkosten		0.00
Verlosungen		87.28
Reisezuschüsse für Studenten		2,200.00
Forschungszuschüsse für Studenten		7,000.00
Internetkosten (Pflege homepage, Gebühren)		3,716.37
Merian Preis für Studenten		300.00
Revision von Artikeln für Ecotropica (style editor)		604.90

Ecotropica ISSN-Number, MVB-Beitrag		357.00
Beitrag für Tagung an British Ecological Society		4,331.26
Zuschuss zu Raummiete Sorbonne		7,000.00
Kontogebühren, Überweisungsgebühren		167.30
Zeitschrift Schatzmeister und Zeitschrift Vorstand		323.70
<b>Summe:</b>		<b>27,695.27</b>
<b>Jährlicher Geldfluss:</b>		<b>-13,218.16</b>
Stand Girokonto Jahresanfang	01.01.2019:	23,741.60
Stand Geldmarktkonto Jahresanfang	01.01.2019:	25,047.48
<b>Gesamt-Kontostand (Jahresanfang)</b>	01.01.2019:	<b>48,789.08</b>
Stand Girokonto Jahresende	31.12.2019:	10,523.28
Stand Geldmarktkonto Jahresende	31.12.2019:	25,047.64
<b>Gesamt-Kontostand (Jahresende)</b>	<b>31.12.2019:</b>	<b>35,570.92</b>

## APPENDIX III: New statutes of the Society of Tropical Ecology (gtö)

Approved by general assembly on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2020:

### Statutes

- Version 20.07 2020 –

#### § 1

##### Name and legal office

The name of the society is “Gesellschaft für Tropenökologie e.V. (Society for Tropical Ecology)” and the society has its legal office in Frankfurt/Main, Germany.

#### § 2

##### Purpose

The purposes of the society are

1. To support scientific research in tropical ecology
2. To disseminate knowledge on tropical ecology
3. To contribute to the conservation of tropical organisms and habitats.

In particular, the purposes of the society are reached by organizing a conference (if possible to be held yearly), through workshops, by publishing the scientific journal “Ecotropica”, and by producing a newsletter and sending it to the members.

#### § 3

##### Tax concession

The society is a non-profit association and only pursues charitable objectives that are defined in the section “Steuerbegünstigte Zwecke” in the general tax code. The society is selfless and does not primarily pursue economic objectives.

The funds of the society can only be spent for the purposes defined in the statutes. Members are not entitled to any part of the asset of the society when leaving the society. No person may be favored by expenses that do not conform to the purposes of the society, or by disproportionate allowances.

#### § 4

##### Members

Each individual person and legal person can become a member of the society if supporting the goals of the society. Membership is obtained by completing the application form and when the first membership due has been received. The application is to be addressed to the executive board for the attention of the treasurer. The executive board decides on the application for admission by resolution. There is no entitlement to admission to the society. The executive board can decide to appoint full members but also other individuals who have contributed notably to the society, to honorary members of the society.

Members can withdraw from the society by means of a written declaration that needs to be addressed to the executive board for the attention of the treasurer, with a deadline of three months towards the end of a calendar year.

A member can be expelled from the society based on a decision of the executive board, if he/she counteracted the goals of the society, or did not comply with his/her membership obligations, e.g. if membership dues have not been paid for more than one year after payment date. The member can appeal to the general assembly against this decision within one month of receiving the notification of expulsion. The general assembly decides irrevocably. The member is to be invited to and heard on this general assembly.

All membership claims end with the end of membership. Membership dues and donations are not reimbursed.

Honorary members have the same rights as members, but are exempt from paying membership dues.

Full members and honorary members as well as legal members have a single vote at the general assembly. The general assembly passes the rules for membership dues that administer the amount of the yearly membership dues. Members are obliged to pay the membership dues that have been fixed by the general assembly, until the 31st March of each financial year (= calendar year).

## **§ 5**

### **Organs of the society**

The organs of the society are:

- a) general assembly
- b) executive board
- c) advisory board

## **§ 6**

### **General assembly**

The uppermost organ is the general assembly. As a general rule the general assembly is chaired by the president. The general assembly formulates the guidelines for the work of the society and decides on questions of fundamental importance. The duties of the general assembly include in particular

- a. Election and deselection of the executive board
- b. Election and deselection of the advisory board
- c. Election of auditors of annual accounts
- d. Debate on the status and planning of projects and the work of the society
- e. Resolution on the annual accounts
- f. Acceptance of the annual report of the executive board
- g. Resolution on the formal approval of the executive board
- h. Issuing of the rules for membership dues that are not part of the statutes
- i. Resolution on changes of the statutes and the dissolution of the society

The executive board, represented by the president, has to call the regular general assembly once per year. Members have to be invited in written form and by informing about the agenda items subject to a notice period of six weeks.

Requests for additions to the agenda must be submitted to the President at least two weeks before the general assembly. The president can complement the agenda. The agenda is to be complemented, if the request is submitted by 10 members or by the advisory board. An extraordinary general assembly takes place if at least 10% of the members request it and specify the purpose and the reasons in written form. This extraordinary general assembly has to be held at most six weeks after the receipt of the motion.

The general assembly always has a quorum independent of the number of participating members.

A secretary has to be elected at the beginning of the general assembly.

The members of the council and of the advisory board are elected during the general assembly by means of a simple majority of votes. If a member makes a motion, all elections of persons besides that of the auditor of the annual accounts have to be conducted with ballot paper. Otherwise, the elections can also occur by acclamation; voting en-bloc is also permitted, if the general assembly approves this procedure with a prior vote.

Changes of the statutes and the dissolution of the society can only be decided by the majority of 2/3 of the attending members.

The minutes have to be written down and have to contain the resolutions and, if necessary to understand their formation, also the course of the meeting. The minutes are signed by the chairman and the secretary.

## **§ 6a**

### **Virtual general assembly**

The executive committee can decide, with the consent of the advisory board, that a general assembly is to be held virtually in deviation from § 6. The virtual general assembly is also chaired by the president, who appoints a secretary.

In the virtual procedure neither the joint presence of the members at one place nor the simultaneous casting of votes is required. It proceeds as follows:

- (a) The meeting shall be convened by e-mail or letter from the President. The invitation shall be sent with a notice period of four weeks in principle by e-mail to the last e-mail address communicated by the member to the Executive Board or, at the request of the member who does not have his own Internet access, by a postal letter. For the proper invitation it is sufficient to send off the e-mail or letter.
- (b) The President shall announce the provisional agenda and shall give members the opportunity to request the inclusion of other items on the agenda within two weeks. The President shall decide on the inclusion of such requests at his own discretion. A motion is to be included in the agenda if it is requested by at least 10 members or by the advisory board.

Belated applications will not be considered. The President may make exceptions to this rule, if the delay is sufficiently excused or if other reasons, in particular procedural economy, justify the inclusion of the item. The President shall take a decision at his own discretion.

- (c) In the online procedure, the password that is only valid for the current meeting is announced in a separate e-mail shortly before the meeting, at most one week before. Sufficient for this is the proper sending of the e-mail to the last known e-mail address of the respective member. Members who do not have an e-mail address will receive the password by mail to the last address communicated to the board. Sufficient is sending off the letter one week before the general assembly. All members are obliged not to make their legitimation data and the password accessible to any third party and to keep them under strict lock and key. In the meeting the vote is then carried out by announcing the vote in the chat or by e-mail.
- (d) Minutes are to be taken of the online meeting, which are to be signed by the president and the secretary.

## **§ 6b**

### **Virtual procedure for the election of the executive board and advisory board**

Notwithstanding § 6 and § 6a, the executive board may decide, with the consent of the advisory board, that elections to the executive board and advisory board shall be conducted virtually by online voting.

The procedure is as follows:

- a) Following a corresponding resolution of the executive board and the advisory board, the President, who also acts as the election committee in this procedure, shall announce through the channel provided for in § 6a lit. a that an online election is to take place and which positions it concerns. At the same time as this notification, the President shall set a deadline of at least four weeks for the submission of election proposals.
- b) Nominations may be submitted by any member in writing or by e-mail to the President. A member may nominate himself/herself for election. Nominations received after the deadline will not be considered.
- c) After the nominations have been submitted, the election is carried out by an online procedure, which ensures that all members have access to this procedure. At the same time, the members shall be given the opportunity to cast their vote by e-mail to the President. The President shall lay down the details in his communication on the voting procedure. Members shall be given at least four weeks in which to cast their votes.
- d) The result of the vote shall be established by the President and announced to the members. The notification shall also indicate whether the elected persons have accepted the election.

## **§ 7**

### **Executive board and advisory board**

Members of the executive board in the sense of § 26 BGB are: the president, two vice presidents, the secretary general and the treasurer. The executive board is responsible for the administration of the funds of the society and the implementation of the resolutions of the society.

The society is represented judicially and outside court jointly by two members of the executive board, respectively. The procurator for legal acts – without external effects – is given to the president, both vice presidents, the secretary general and the treasurer.

The advisory board is composed of up to 15 members. The members of the advisory board elect one speaker and a deputy speaker among themselves. The advisory board is consulted by the executive board in all important matters of the society. The executive board and advisory board are elected by the general assembly for the duration of 3 years. They stay in office until a new executive board and advisory board is elected; re-election is possible. In case of the withdrawal of a member of the executive board or advisory board, the remaining members of the respective board are entitled to name a replacement until the next general assembly.

The members of the executive board and the advisory board are elected in the general assembly by simple majority (see § 6).



Nominations for the election of members of the executive board and advisory board have to be submitted to the speaker of the advisory board or to the secretary general not later than six weeks prior to the general assembly. Members of the executive board or the advisory board need to be members of the society. If the membership in the society ends, so does the membership in the executive board or advisory board.

The executive board can entrust certain members of the society with certain tasks and can call them in for the meetings of the advisory board.

The executive board and advisory board meet at least once per year and meetings are chaired by the president. The executive board takes decisions in executive board meetings that have been called by the president or, in absence of the president, by the secretary general. The executive board has a quorum if at least three members are present. In case of a lack of a quorum, the president or the secretary general calls a second meeting within 30 days with the same agenda. This meeting has a quorum independent of the number of executive board members present at the executive board meeting. The executive board takes decisions with simple majority. Executive board members can hand over their authority to vote to other members.

The treasurer administers the cash of the society and is responsible for the accounting of receipts and disbursements.

The executive board determines the editorial staff for the publications of the society.

## **§8**

### **Expenses and allowances**

The members of the executive board and the advisory board work gratuitously.

By resolution of the general assembly, individual or all members of the executive board or advisory board may be granted compensation for the performance of their executive board or advisory board duties within the framework of the respectively valid tax law regulation on the so-called "Ehrenamtszuschale" (§ 3 No. 26a EStG, § 31a BGB). Independently, reimbursement of moderate and real expenses that are incurred due to the obligations as executive board member or advisory board member is possible. For this, an application has to be submitted in an appropriate period of up to one calendar year after the date of expenditure. This includes particularly costs for mailing, telephone, office material, travel costs etc.

Members do not receive allowances in their function as members from the society.

If individual members, however, have expenses (travel costs etc.) for participating in certain events on behalf of the society, members can be reimbursed for these costs upon request and when the respective receipts are attached.

The executive board decides upon such reimbursements after dutiful assessment.

## **§ 9**

### **Dissolution**

The dissolution of the society results from the respective resolution of the general assembly, at which  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the delivered votes need to be in favor of the dissolution.

In case of the dissolution of the society, its termination, or the abolition of its tax concession, the funds of the society fall to the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft which will spend it immediately and entirely on charitable purposes.

## **§ 10**

### **Gender-neutral formulation**

In order to facilitate the readability of the text, the text of the statutes waives gender-neutral formulations. However, all genders are always addressed in terms of equal treatment.

## **APPENDIX III: Neue Satzung der Gesellschaft für Tropenökologie Angenommen am 20.7.2020:**

### **Satzung**

- Fassung 20.7.2020 -

## **§ 1**

### **Name und Sitz**

Die Gesellschaft führt den Namen „Gesellschaft für Tropenökologie e.V. (Society for Tropical Ecology)“ und hat ihren Sitz in Frankfurt am Main.

## § 2

### Zweck

Zwecke des Vereins sind:

1. Die wissenschaftliche Forschung in der Tropenökologie zu fördern,
2. tropenökologische Erkenntnisse zu verbreiten,
3. Beiträge zum Schutz tropischer Organismen und Lebensräume zu leisten.

Die Zwecke des Vereins werden insbesondere verwirklicht durch die Abhaltung einer Konferenz, die möglichst jährlich stattfinden soll, durch Workshops, durch die Herausgabe der Fachzeitschrift „Ecotropica“ und durch die Erstellung und den Versand eines Newsletter für die Mitglieder.

## § 3

### Steuerbegünstigung

Der Verein verfolgt ausschließlich und unmittelbar gemeinnützige Zwecke im Sinne des Abschnitts „Steuerbegünstigte Zwecke“ der Abgabenordnung. Der Verein ist selbstlos tätig; er verfolgt nicht in erster Linie eigenwirtschaftliche Zwecke.

Die Mittel des Vereins dürfen nur für die satzungsmäßigen Zwecke verwendet werden. Die Mitglieder haben bei ihrem Ausscheiden keinerlei Anspruch an das Vereinsvermögen. Keine Person darf durch Ausgaben, die den Zwecken des Vereins fremd sind, oder durch unverhältnismäßige hohe Vergütungen begünstigt werden.

## § 4

### Mitglieder

Mitglied der Gesellschaft kann jede natürliche oder juristische Person werden, die die Ziele des Vereins unterstützt. Die Mitgliedschaft wird erworben durch einen Aufnahmeantrag und nach Eingang des ersten Mitgliedsbeitrages. Der Antrag ist an den Vorstand z. Hd. des Schatzmeisters zu richten. Über den Aufnahmeantrag entscheidet der Vorstand durch Beschluss. Ein Anspruch auf Aufnahme in den Verein besteht nicht.

Neben den ordentlichen Mitgliedern des Vereins können Personen, die sich in besonderem Maße Verdienste für die Gesellschaft erworben haben, durch Beschluss des Vorstandes zu Ehrenmitgliedern ernannt werden.

Der Austritt eines Mitglieds erfolgt durch schriftliche Erklärung gegenüber dem Vorstand z. Hd. des Schatzmeisters und ist mit einer Frist von drei Monaten zum Schluss des Kalenderjahres möglich.

Ein Mitglied kann durch Beschluss des Vorstandes ausgeschlossen werden, wenn es den Vereinszielen zuwiderhandelt oder seinen Verpflichtungen gegenüber dem Verein nicht nachkommt, z. B. mit seiner Beitragszahlung länger als ein Jahr nach Fälligkeit im Rückstand ist. Gegen den Beschluss kann das Mitglied innerhalb einer Frist von einem Monat ab Zugang des Ausschließungsbeschlusses die Mitgliederversammlung anrufen. Diese entscheidet endgültig. Das Mitglied ist zu dieser Versammlung einzuladen und anzuhören.

Bei Beendigung der Mitgliedschaft erlöschen alle Ansprüche aus dem Mitgliedschaftsverhältnis. Eine Rückgewähr von Beiträgen oder Spenden ist ausgeschlossen.

Ehrenmitglieder haben die gleichen Rechte wie ordentliche Mitglieder, sind jedoch von der Beitragszahlung befreit.

Ordentliche Mitglieder und Ehrenmitglieder haben, wie auch juristische Personen, das einfache Stimmrecht in der Mitgliederversammlung. Die Mitgliederversammlung erlässt eine Beitragsordnung, die die Höhe der jährlich zu zahlenden Beiträge regelt. Die Mitglieder sind verpflichtet, den von der Mitgliederversammlung festgesetzten Vereinsbeitrag bis zum 31. März des Geschäftsjahres (=Kalenderjahres) zu entrichten.

## § 5

### Organe des Vereins

Die Organe des Vereins sind:

- a) Mitgliederversammlung
- b) Vorstand
- c) Beirat

### §

### Mitgliederversammlung

Oberstes Organ ist die Mitgliederversammlung. Sie wird in der Regel von dem Präsidenten geleitet.

Die Mitgliederversammlung stellt die Richtlinien für die Arbeit des Vereins auf und entscheidet Fragen von grundsätzlicher Bedeutung. Zu den Aufgaben der Mitgliederversammlung gehören insbesondere

- a. Wahl und Abwahl des Vorstands
- b. Wahl und Abwahl des Beirats
- c. Wahl des Abschlussprüfers
- d. Beratung über den Stand und die Planung von Projekten und der Arbeit des Vereins

- e. Beschlussfassung über den Jahresabschluss
- f. Entgegennahme des Geschäftsberichtes des Vorstandes
- g. Beschlussfassung über die Entlastung des Vorstandes
- h. Erlass der Beitragsordnung, die nicht Bestandteil der Satzung ist
- i. Beschlussfassung über Änderungen der Satzung und die Auflösung des Vereins

Die ordentliche Mitgliederversammlung ist einmal jährlich durch den Vorstand, vertreten durch den Präsidenten einzuberufen. Die Mitglieder sind unter Bekanntgabe der Tagesordnungspunkte und unter Einhaltung einer Frist von sechs Wochen schriftlich einzuladen.

Anträge auf Ergänzung der Tagesordnung sind mindestens zwei Wochen vor der Mitgliederversammlung gegenüber dem Präsidenten zu stellen. Dieser kann die Tagesordnung ergänzen. Die Tagesordnung ist zu ergänzen, wenn der Antrag von 10 Mitgliedern oder vom Beirat eingebracht worden ist.

Eine außerordentliche Mitgliederversammlung findet statt, wenn mindestens 10 % der Mitglieder sie unter Angaben des Zwecks und der Gründe schriftlich verlangen. Sie muss längstens sechs Wochen nach Eingang des Antrags tagen.

Die Mitgliederversammlung ist unabhängig von der Anzahl der teilnehmenden Mitglieder immer beschlussfähig.

Zu Beginn der Mitgliederversammlung ist ein Protokollführer zu wählen.

Die Mitglieder des Vorstandes und des Beirats werden in der Mitgliederversammlung einzeln mit einfacher Stimmenmehrheit gewählt. Bei allen Personenwahlen wird mit Ausnahme des Rechnungsprüfers auf Antrag eines Mitglieds mit Stimmzetteln abgestimmt. Ansonsten kann die Wahl durch Akklamation erfolgen; auch Blockwahlen sind zulässig, sofern die Mitgliederversammlung durch Abstimmung diese zuvor zulässt.

Satzungsänderungen und die Auflösung des Vereins können nur mit einer Mehrheit von 2/3 der anwesenden Mitglieder beschlossen werden.

Über die Beschlüsse und, soweit zum Verständnis über deren Zustandekommen erforderlich, auch über den wesentlichen Verlauf der Verhandlung, ist eine Niederschrift anzufertigen. Sie wird vom Versammlungsleiter und dem Protokollführer unterschrieben.

## **§ 6a**

### **Virtuelle Mitgliederversammlung**

Der Vorstand kann mit Zustimmung des Beirates entscheiden, dass eine Mitgliederversammlung abweichend von § 6 virtuell durchgeführt wird. Auch die virtuelle Mitgliederversammlung wird vom Präsidenten geleitet, der einen Protokollführer bestimmt.

Im virtuellen Verfahren ist weder die gemeinsame Anwesenheit der Mitglieder an einem Ort noch die zeitgleiche Abgabe der Stimmen erforderlich. Es verläuft wie folgt:

a) Die Einberufung erfolgt per E-Mail oder Brief durch den Präsidenten. Die Ladung erfolgt mit einer Frist von vier Wochen grundsätzlich per E-Mail an die letzte vom Mitglied dem Vorstand mitgeteilte E-Mail-Adresse bzw. auf ausdrücklichen Wunsch des Mitglieds, das über keinen eigenen Internetzugang verfügt, per einfachem Brief postalisch. Für die ordnungsgemäße Einladung genügt jeweils die Absendung der E-Mail bzw. des Briefes.

b) Der Präsident gibt die vorläufig durch ihn festgesetzte Tagesordnung bekannt und gibt den Mitgliedern Gelegenheit, die Aufnahme weiterer Punkte binnen zwei Wochen in die Tagesordnung zu beantragen. Über die Aufnahme der Anträge entscheidet der Präsident nach billigem Ermessen. Ein Antrag ist in die Tagesordnung aufzunehmen, wenn er von mindestens 10 Mitgliedern oder vom Beirat beantragt wird.

Verspätet eingegangene Anträge finden keine Berücksichtigung. Der Präsident kann hiervon Ausnahmen machen, wenn die Verspätung genügend entschuldigt wird oder andere Gründe, insbesondere die Verfahrensökonomie, die Aufnahme des Punkts rechtfertigen. Der Präsident entscheidet nach billigem Ermessen.

c) Im Onlineverfahren wird das jeweils nur für die aktuelle Versammlung gültige Zugangswort mit einer gesonderten E-Mail kurz vor der Versammlung, maximal eine Woche davor, bekannt gegeben. Ausreichend ist dabei die ordnungsgemäße Absendung der E-Mail an die letzte dem Vorstand bekannt gegebene E-Mail-Adresse des jeweiligen Mitglieds. Mitglieder, die über keine E-Mail-Adresse verfügen, erhalten das Zugangswort per Post an die letzte dem Vorstand bekannt gegebene Adresse. Ausreichend ist die ordnungsgemäße Absendung des Briefes eine Woche vor der Mitgliederversammlung. Sämtliche Mitglieder sind verpflichtet, ihre Legitimationsdaten und das Zugangswort keinem Dritten zugänglich zu machen und unter strengem Verschluss zu halten. In der Versammlung erfolgt die Abstimmung dann durch Bekanntgabe der Stimmabgabe im Chat oder per E-Mail.

d) Über die Online-Versammlung ist ein Protokoll zu fertigen, welches von dem Präsidenten und dem Protokollführer zu unterzeichnen ist.

## **§ 6b**

### **Virtuelles Verfahren bei Wahlen von Vorstand und Beirat**

Abweichend von § 6 und § 6a kann der Vorstand mit Zustimmung des Beirates beschließen, dass Wahlen zum Vorstand und Beirat virtuell durch Online-Voting durchgeführt werden.

Das Verfahren verläuft wie folgt:

- a) Nach entsprechendem Beschluss des Vorstands und Beirat teilt der Präsident, der in diesem Verfahren zugleich als Wahlvorstand agiert, auf dem nach § 6a lit. a vorgesehenen Weg mit, dass eine Online Wahl stattfinden soll und welche Positionen diese betrifft. Zugleich mit dieser Mitteilung setzt der Präsident eine Frist von mindestens vier Wochen zur Einreichung von Wahlvorschlägen.
- b) Wahlvorschläge können von jedem Mitglied schriftlich oder per E-Mail an den Präsidenten eingereicht werden. Ein Mitglied kann sich selbst zur Wahl vorschlagen. Nach Ablauf der Frist eingehende Wahlvorschläge werden nicht berücksichtigt.
- c) Nach Einreichung der Wahlvorschläge wird die Wahl durch ein Online-Verfahren durchgeführt, welches gewährleistet, dass der Zugang aller Mitglieder zu diesem Verfahren gegeben ist. Parallel ist den Mitgliedern die Möglichkeit zu eröffnen, ihre Stimme auch per E-Mail gegenüber dem Präsidenten abzugeben. Einzelheiten regelt der Präsident in seiner Mitteilung über das Abstimmungsverfahren. Für die Stimmabgabe ist den Mitgliedern eine Frist von mindestens vier Wochen zu setzen.
- d) Das Abstimmungsergebnis wird durch den Präsidenten festgestellt und den Mitgliedern bekannt gegeben. Mit der Mitteilung ist auch mitzuteilen, ob die Gewählten die Wahl angenommen haben.

## **§ 7**

### **Vorstand und Beirat**

Dem geschäftsführenden Vorstand im Sinne des § 26 BGB gehören an: der Präsident, zwei Vizepräsidenten, der Generalsekretär und der Schatzmeister. Dem geschäftsführenden Vorstand obliegen die Verwaltung des Gesellschaftsvermögens und die Ausführung der Gesellschaftsbeschlüsse.

Die Gesellschaft wird gerichtlich und außergerichtlich von je zwei Mitgliedern des geschäftsführenden Vorstands gemeinsam vertreten. Die rechtsgeschäftliche Handlungsvollmacht wird – ohne Außenwirkung – erteilt für den Präsidenten, die beiden Vizepräsidenten, den Generalsekretär und den Schatzmeister.

Dem Beirat gehören bis zu 15 Mitglieder an. Die Mitglieder des Beirates wählen aus ihrer Mitte einen Sprecher und einen Stellvertreter des Sprechers. Der Beirat ist vom geschäftsführenden Vorstand in allen wichtigen Vereinsangelegenheiten beratend zuzuziehen. Vorstand und Beirat werden von der Mitgliederversammlung auf die Dauer von 3 Jahren gewählt. Sie bleiben so lange im Amt, bis ein neuer Vorstand und Beirat gewählt ist; Wiederwahl ist möglich. Bei Ausscheiden eines Vorstands- oder Beiratsmitgliedes haben die jeweils übrigen Mitglieder des jeweiligen Gremiums das Recht, ein Ersatzmitglied bis zur nächsten Mitgliederversammlung zu bestimmen.

Die Mitglieder des geschäftsführenden Vorstands und des Beirates werden entsprechend § 6 in der Mitgliederversammlung mit einfacher Stimmenmehrheit gewählt.

Vorschläge für die Wahl der Mitglieder von Vorstand und Beirat müssen spätestens sechs Wochen vor der Mitgliederversammlung beim Sprecher des Beirats bzw. beim Generalsekretär eingegangen sein.

Vorstandsmitglieder und Mitglieder des Beirats können nur Vereinsmitglieder sein. Bei Beendigung der Mitgliedschaft im Verein endet auch das Amt im Vorstand und Beirat.

Der Vorstand kann einzelne Mitglieder des Vereins mit besonderen Aufgaben betrauen und sie zu den Sitzungen des Beirats entsenden.

Vorstand und Beirat tagen jährlich mindestens einmal unter dem Vorsitz des Präsidenten. Der Vorstand fasst seine Beschlüsse in Sitzungen, die vom Präsidenten und bei dessen Verhinderung vom Generalsekretär einberufen werden. Der Vorstand ist beschlussfähig, wenn mindestens 3 Mitglieder anwesend sind. Bei Beschlussunfähigkeit muss der Präsident bzw. der Generalsekretär innerhalb von 30 Tagen eine zweite Sitzung mit derselben Tagesordnung einberufen. Diese ist ohne Rücksicht auf die Zahl der erschienenen Vorstandsmitglieder beschlussfähig. Der Vorstand fasst die Beschlüsse mit einfacher Mehrheit der abgegebenen Stimmen. Die Erteilung von Stimmrechtvollmachten ist möglich.

Der Schatzmeister verwaltet die Vereinskasse und führt Buch über die Einnahmen und Ausgaben.

Der Vorstand bestimmt die Schriftleitung für die Publikationen der Gesellschaft.


## **§ 8**

### **Aufwandsentschädigung und Vergütung**

Die Mitglieder des Vorstands und des Beirats sind unentgeltlich tätig.

Durch Beschluss der Mitgliederversammlung können einzelnen oder allen Mitgliedern des Vorstandes oder Beirates für die Wahrnehmung ihrer Vorstands- bzw. Beiratspflichten eine Vergütung im Rahmen der jeweils gültigen steuerrechtlichen Regelung zur sog. Ehrenamtspauschale (§ 3 Nr. 26a EStG, § 31a BGB) zugebilligt werden.

Unberührt hiervon ist der Ersatz von Aufwendungen, die dem Vorstands- oder Beiratsmitglied tatsächlich angefallen sind, für die Amtsführung erforderlich sind und in einem angemessenen Rahmen bleiben. Diese können auf Antrag innerhalb einer angemessenen Frist bis längstens in dem Kalenderjahr nach seiner Entstehung



anmeldet und erstattet werden. Darunter fallen vor allem Post- und Telefonkosten, Schreibmaterial, Reisekosten usw.

Die Mitglieder erhalten in ihrer Eigenschaft als Mitglied keine Zuwendungen aus Mitteln des Vereins.

Soweit einzelnen Mitgliedern jedoch zur Teilnahme von Veranstaltungen, an denen sie im Auftrag des Vereins teilnehmen, Reisekosten oder weitere notwendige Auslagen entstehen, können diese auf Antrag und unter Beifügung entsprechender Belege erstattet werden.

Über die Erstattungsfähigkeit entscheidet der Vorstand nach pflichtgemäßer Prüfung.

## **§ 9**

### **Auflösung des Vereins**

Die Auflösung des Vereins erfolgt durch Beschluss der Mitgliederversammlung, wobei drei Viertel der abgegebenen Stimmen für die Auflösung stimmen muss.

Bei Auflösung des Vereins, bei seinem Erlöschen oder bei Wegfall seines steuerbegünstigten Zwecks fällt das Vereinsvermögen der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft zu, die es unmittelbar und ausschließlich für gemeinnützige Zwecke zu verwenden hat.

## **§ 10**

### **Geschlechtsneutrale Formulierung**

Im Satzungstext wurde aus Gründen der Lesbarkeit auf eine geschlechtsneutrale Formulierung verzichtet. Es sind jedoch immer alle Geschlechter im Sinne der Gleichbehandlung angesprochen.