



MINUTES INTERBULL BUSINESS MEETING 2022

VENUE: HOTEL BONAVENTURE, MONTREAL, QUEBEC, CANADA

DATE: TUESDAY 31 MAY 2022, 08:30-11:00

Agenda

1. Opening and welcome
2. Adoption of agenda
3. Interbull Governance
 - a. Governance Review
 - b. Steering Committee Updates
 - c. Steering Committee Membership
4. Interbull Technical Committee
5. Interbeef Working Group
6. Interbull Centre
 - a. Management
 - b. Continuously improving core services
 - c. Defining a new traits pipeline
 - d. Providing international evaluations in the genomic era
 - e. Meeting future data service needs
7. Future Events
8. Other Matters
9. Close



1. Opening and welcome - Matthew Shaffer

Matthew Shaffer, Chairman of the Interbull Steering Committee, opened the meeting by welcoming and inviting everyone to an interactive meeting with two-way communication between the presenters and the delegates.

2. Adoption of agenda - Matthew Shaffer

The agenda for the meeting was presented and adopted without comments.

3. Interbull Governance - Matthew Shaffer

The Interbull Chairs Report, Interbull Centre Directors Report and Interbull Centre Service Manager Report have been available as pre-recorded video presentations on the Interbull website (https://interbull.org/ib/2022_bm_montreal) in advance of the Business Meeting. The Chair provided some highlights from the Annual Activity and Financial Reports during the meeting. There were no comments from the Business Meeting participants on the Annual Activity Report or the Interbull Financial Report.

a. Governance Review – Matthew Shaffer and Chris Murphy

In 2021, a Governance Review had been performed by an external resource, Chris Murphy. He presented his findings based on a review of the system and extensive interviews, with Matthew Shaffer providing the responses and follow ups by the SC. The most important findings were:

- 1) international representation: securing that all members can be represented in the committees and working groups.
- 2) The role and need of the various committees and working groups: The role of all the groups and committees in relation to each other is not clear, especially between the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) and the Interbull Technical Committee (ITC).
- 3) Rotation of working group members: The same members tend to be represented in several groups, and for a lengthy amount of time. How to attract new and younger members needs to be discussed.
- 4) Enhancement of communication between ICAR board and Interbull: and clarification to the users on the different governance roles.

During the following discussion, Michelle Axford, Brian Van Doormaal and Andrew Cromie all expressed comments and concerns on how to attract new members and representatives to contribute to working groups and committees. Joao Dürr asked about the Governance reviews recommendations for working groups, to which Chris Murphy replied that the recommendations are to disband a working group when its initial task is solved.

Reinhard Reents commented on the difference in budgeting between Interbull and Interbeef, where the first is solely handled by Interbull Centre while the latter is a mixture of ICAR and Interbull Centre. The Chairman replied that although the situation will continue like that for a while, it is a matter that should be further discussed, as there is a lot of the same interactions for beef and dairy. Laurent Journaux commented that for the purpose of the field International Genetic Evaluations regardless of beef and dairy, ICAR and Interbull should integrate and have a clear strategy to the consumers on how to move on.



b. Steering Committee Updates – Matthew Shaffer
Scientific Advisory Committee – Matthew Shaffer

As a consequence of the recommendations of the Governance Review, the SC has decided to disband the Scientific Advisory Committee. Matthew Shaffer gave a special thanks to the committee members for their contributions through many years.

Business Model Task Force – Brian Van Doormaal

Brian Van Doormaal gave a presentation from the Business Model Task Force. The value of the services has changed over time for many of the customers while new Interbull services are continuously being developed. Also, there are several smaller services provided that also have costs attached to them which need to be covered. The costs and expenses in general go up every year, and this is true also at Interbull Centre, and such increase should be reflected in the annual Interbull service fees. Traditionally the fees have been based on the number of milk-recorded cows, but this number has seen a decreasing trend in most countries and such situation would need to be addressed.

During the following discussion, Joao Durr acknowledged the work of the Task Force, agreeing that decreasing populations is a fact that needs to be carefully considered. Interesting discussion about the value of the data will be needed in the future. Laurent Journaux commented that a margin of the fees needs to go to development of new services for the future. Brian Van Doormaal agreed and commented that although grants have been a reliable source of income, other sources of finance also need to be considered to cover internal (Interbull Centre staff) or external (contract-based engagement) research and development. Reinhard Reents commented that the value of MACE may be decreasing while the quality assurance aspect is increasing and should be valued in the fee structure.

c. Steering Committee Membership – Matthew Shaffer

Toine Roozen noted the new nomination for Steering Committee membership from France and Wallonia was Laurent Journaux, who will replace Sophie Mattalia who did not renew her candidacy for another term. Matthew Shaffer was nominated as the representatives from Oceania for a new term. The Interbull SC will ask the ICAR Board to approve the SC membership of both candidates for a 4-year term.

Both Enrico Santus (who left the Interbull SC in 2021 after serving 25 years) and Sophie Mattalia (who served 16 years on the SC) were thanked for their Interbull SC membership and their contributions to the Interbull community.

In the following discussion, Sophie Mattalia commented on the gender balance in the Steering Committee and encouraged the nomination of female members in the future.

4. Interbull Technical Committee – Gerben de Jong

Gerben de Jong, Chair of Interbull Technical Committee (ITC), gave a presentation of the Technical-Strategic meeting held in Montreal on 26 and 27 May 2022, where the ITC identified six topics relevant for future discussion.

- 1) Validation
- 2) Genomic preselection
- 3) Update Service Calendar
- 4) Near time data and results exchange
- 5) Better connection between NGECS and Interbull
- 6) Data mining for Interbull story telling



On 28 May 2022, ITC held its regular ITC meeting. A brief update on three working groups were given. GREL WG: Proposed recommendations for approximation of genomic reliabilities is still valid. Expansion to be used on multi-trait models are being tested.

Validation test WG: Current validation methods still give useful results, but test III is losing power due to fewer bulls available for the validation. The working group is focusing on improvement of the GEBV-test.

Genomic pre-selection and future MACE: Method of correction of the MS-term is tested; it works well on simulated data, and shows expected results on real data. The method still needs some fine-tuning and further results need to be checked.

The ITC and Interbull Centre have given recommendations for harmonisation of calving traits and are now working on recommendations for harmonisations of female fertility traits.

In the discussion that followed, Laurent Journaux asked of the ITC considerations on the possible consequences that such recommendations could have at national level. Gerben de Jong clarified that recommendations are made to provide information, so that member countries can have a clearer understanding of what is the best way to work with their traits.

Brian Van Doormaal commented that it is worth talking about a change in the service calendar, but a balance must be considered to not sacrifice the value of MACE in order to increase the value of GMACE.

5. Interbeef Working Group – Andrew Cromie

Andrew Cromie, Chair of Interbeef Working group, gave an update of the most important work of the group. The research and working groups have been:

- Single step genomic evaluations (Renzo Bonifazi & WUR)
- Validation procedures (Ross Evans)
- Carcass Traits (Thierry Pabiou)
- Age at slaughter/GenTORE (Simone Savoia)
- Female fertility (Wolfgang Ruten)
- Interbeef Information Exchange (Laurent Griffon)
- Interbeef guidelines in wiki format (Andrew Cromie & Beef Improvement Federation)
- Global Hereford (with ABRI Breedplan)

Genetic groups have been implemented in the Interbeef Service to improve the quality of the results and the possibilities for comparison at national level.

The Ph.D.-project of Renzo Bonifazi on Single Step genomic evaluation is finished, and the focus now is on implementation and development of Interbeef Genomic Evaluation. A Genomic Task Force is working on the business model before possible development of the service.

6. Interbull Centre – Toine Roozen

a. Management - Toine Roozen

The Interbull Centre Director, Toine Roozen, gave a presentation on Interbull management, focusing mainly on the Interbull Centre's role as a European Union Reference Centre and the benefits this gives to the organisation. The development of PREP database was used as an example. Validation as a stand-alone service was also highlighted as a quality assurance of national evaluations - in addition to the mandatory routine validation for MACE participation.



b. Continuously improving core services – Valentina Palucci

Interbull Centre is continuously assessing service satisfaction, and development and improvement of the services. Interbull Quality Manager Valentina Palucci highlighted two services Interbull Centre that can add additional benefits to its Service Users.

Truncated MACE (“TMACE”):

The **Truncated MACE** service was rolled into production in 2019. The service is relevant for countries with their own genomic evaluation, as TMACE provides appropriate validation inputs for countries using foreign bulls in their reference populations. The value of this service increases when more populations within a breed participate. Interbull Centre is asking for feedback from the countries on their experience, to gain useful information for getting new participants to the service, and encouraging potential participants to get in touch with the Interbull Centre.

InterGenomics:

When **InterGenomics-BSW** was developed ten years ago it was based on pooling (rather than sharing) of genotypes, with only Interbull Centre having access to all genotypes, and providing the international genomic evaluation. Now the genotypes are shared amongst the InterGenomics participants, and most of the participants have also developed their national genomic evaluation, which led to the development of GenoEx-GDE at the Interbull Centre for sharing of genotypes. International GEBVs are still provided as part of the international genomic evaluation of the service, but Interbull Centre and InterGenomics are now looking more in the direction of providing quality assurance feedback to the IG-BSW participating countries.

InterGenomics-Holstein serves the smaller Holstein populations with pooling of genotypes where Interbull Centre provides the international genomic service. In this service, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Germany and France contributed genotypes to increase the reference population. Germany continues to provide genotypes for young bulls and gets the possibility to advertise their young bulls in the market of the InterGenomics countries.

c. Defining a new traits pipeline - Valentina Palucci

The New Traits Pipeline Working group defined a pipeline for the introduction of new traits to the Interbull Service Portfolio. The suggested pipeline has been accepted by the Steering Committee. The pipeline builds on the newly launched PREP database. Several countries have already added information to the PREP database. All organisations are invited to continue contributing information to the PREP database on “new traits” – that is, traits that are not yet included in MACE evaluations, but may be of interest for an international genetic or genomic evaluations.

d. Providing international evaluations in the genomic era - Simone Savoia

After finishing discussions on the SNPmace business model it was decided to proceed with the research phase and pilot run in two pre-defined closed groups. While EuroGenomics (Holstein) has expressed its continued interest in developing SNPmace, it will (at this stage) concentrate on its own SNPmace project. Interbull will continue the SNPmace Pilot Run with InterGenomics (Brown Swiss).

e. Meeting future data service needs - Toine Roozen

To meet the future data service needs a good infrastructure with databases and pipelines needs to be in place. Several databases, based on user need, have already been developed at Interbull Centre, such as IDEA, PREP database, GenoEx-GDE and GenoEx-PSE, and exchange of recessive traits information. Several of these have currently limited breeds and users, and Interbull Centre informs the audience that these services are open to additional users (organisations, countries, breeds and populations).



7. Future Events – Laurent Journaux

The next Interbull Meeting will be held 26-28 August 2023 in Lyon, France, together with EAAP.

8. Other Matters – Matthew Shaffer

No other matters were raised.

9. Close – Matthew Shaffer

Matthew Shaffer thanked all participants for their attention and comments and officially closed the meeting.