

XVI<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Agricultural Museums (CIMA XVI)  
held at Slobozia (Romania) from 4<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> of September 2011

## Minutes of the General Assembly of AIMA

September 6<sup>th</sup> 2011

held at the Cultural Centre of UNESCO “Ionel Perlea” at Slobozia.

### I – General Progress

The meeting which started at 3:00 pm was chaired by Mr. Jan Maćkowiak. He was accompanied by Mr. Viteslav Koukal (VP), Mrs. Zdravka Michailova (VP), Mr. Gheorghe Petre (MNA), Mr. Radoslav Vlk (General Secretary).

The meeting's President Maćkowiak pronounced an opening speech to present the programme of the General Assembly and its preparation by the Presidium meetings. (To refer to his [Opening Speech](#) of the Congress and to the [reports of Presidium meetings](#) see below).

Thanks to the efforts of MNA and Polish delegation, declaration forms of members were distributed, filled in by attendees who were willing and collected immediately by Angelica Buzoianu who handed them over to René Bourrigaud for registration (see paragraph II below).

Due to the absence of the current president Razvan Ciuca, the retiring General Secretary, Radoslav Vlk, read a working report for the period 2008-2011. (See [his report](#) below).

Then, the new Presidium was elected ([list below](#)).

Finally, the new President, François Sigaut, pronounced a speech ([see below](#)) and the new general secretary, René Bourrigaud, presented the General Secretariat and defined briefly the objectives of the new management to implement the Strategic Plan 2011-2013 (see [Strategic Plan](#) and [Proposals for renewing](#) the organization of the AIMA).

### II – List of the represented Institutions and of the persons who where present or represented, and who declared in written form:

- 1) to be interested in participating in AIMA activities,
- 2) to promise paying annual dues of € 10 for individuals and € 30 for institutions, according to the decision of the Presidium the evening before.

#### 1 – List of the Institutions members and their representatives

##### Canada

Canada Agriculture Museum (Canada) (by K.-L. BURCHILL)

##### Estonia

Estonian Dairy Museum (by Mai KUKK)

Estonian Agricultural Museum (by Merli SILD)

C. R. Jakobson's Farm Museum (by Inna RAUD)

France

AFMA (Fédération des musées d'agriculture et du patrimoine rural) (by P. DEL PORTO)

Poland

National Museum of Agriculture and Food Industry in Szreniawa (by J. MAĆKOWIAK)

Romania

National Museum of Agriculture - Muzeul Național al Agriculturii (by G. PETRE)

National Museum of the Romanian Peasant – Muzeul Național al Țăranului Român  
(by V. S. NIȚULESCU)

Muzeul Județean Ialomița (by F. VLAD)

Serbia

Agricultural Museum of Kulpin – AMAH (Serbia) (by J. KISGECI)

USA

ALHFAM (Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums – USA)  
(by P. WATSON)

**2 – List of individual members (by countries)**

Canada

BURCHILL, Kerry-Leigh

DONDO-TARDIFF Michelle (represented by J. Sheridan)

Estonia

SILD Merli

VIIRALT Mare

France

BARBOFF Mouette

BOUILLON Didier

BOURRIGAUD René

CHARLIER Huguette

COQUET Jacques

GRIFFIN-KREMER Cozette (represented by R. Bourrigaud)

DEL PORTO Pierre

SIGAUT François

Germania

BAATZ Henning

Japan

HISASHI Horio

Poland

MAĆKOWIAK Jan

IGNATOWICZ Hanna

NOWAKOWSKA Urszula

WAWRUCH Hanka

Republic of Moldavia

BUZILĂ Varvara

Romania

BUZOIANU Angelica

CHERCIU Ion

CROITORU-CAPBUN Viorica

ILIE Marina

GHERGHE Fănica

LUPU Valentin

MIHAI Daniela  
PETRE Gheorghe  
PETRE-FILIP Magdalena  
RUBINESCU-OSTRICEANU Fideliu  
STROE Adrian  
VLAD Florin

#### Serbia

KISGECI Jan

#### USA

REID Debra A. (represented by J. Sheridan)  
SHERIDAN Judith  
SHERIDAN Terrence E.  
WATSON Peter

According to the statutes (art V – Members)<sup>1</sup>, the institutions and persons above are registered as members of AIMA and have the right to vote at the General Assembly.

### **3 – List of the other attendees at the Congress**

Officials:

Silvian CIUPERCĂ, President of the Ialomița County Council,  
Ioan MARTIN, Vice-president of the Ialomița County Council,  
Constantin STOENESCU, General Secretary of the Ialomița County Council,  
Gabriel IONAȘCU, Mayor of Slobozia Town Hall,  
Constantin PĂTRAȘCU, Bishop of Slobozia and Călărași.

Were also present at the Congress:

Vítěslav KOUKAL and Radoslav VLK (Czech Republic), Ivan ŠESTAN (Croatia), Liina KALJULA (Estonia), Lydia MARAIS (France), Birgit BAATZ (Germany), Emilia CORBU, Ion BĂRBUCEANU, Radu ȘTEFĂNESCU, Mihaela GHERGHEL, Eugen Marius GHERGHEL, Marian NEAGU, Elena RENȚA, Cătălin VOINEA, Dragoș NEAMU, Elena SLUJITORU, Dan EMILIANOF, Mihaela RACOVIȚEANU, Adriana MATAACHE, Elena PACALĂ, Doina ROȘCA and Viorica RISTEA (Romania), Mary Watson (USA).

### **III – Election of the new Presidium**

Are elected members of the new Presidium by all the voting members:

President:	François Sigaut (France) <a href="mailto:sigaut@cnam.fr">sigaut@cnam.fr</a>
First vice-president:	Debra A. Reid (USA) <a href="mailto:dareid@eiu.edu">dareid@eiu.edu</a>
Second vice-president:	Jan Maćkowiak (Poland) <a href="mailto:muzeum@muzeum-szreniawa.pl">muzeum@muzeum-szreniawa.pl</a>
Third vice-president:	Merli Sild (Estonia) <a href="mailto:merli.sild@epm.ee">merli.sild@epm.ee</a>

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<sup>1</sup> Statutes – art. V – Members:

“Active individual members are persons who have participated in the previous congress, and whom before the next congress declare their intentions to continue membership. If the Praesidium sets a membership fee structure, to be an active member during the three year period before the congress, the person must have made the appropriate contribution.

Active institutional members are institutions that have sent a representative to the previous congress and declare their intention to continue membership before the next one. If the Praesidium sets a membership fee structure, to be an active institutional member during the three year period before the congress, the institution must have made the appropriate contribution [...]”

Other members:

Kerry-Leigh Burchill (Canada) [kburchill@technomuses.ca](mailto:kburchill@technomuses.ca)

Alternate<sup>2</sup>: Michelle Dondo-Tardiff [dondotardiff@xplornet.ca](mailto:dondotardiff@xplornet.ca)

Cozette Griffin-Kremer (France) [griffin.kremer@wanadoo.fr](mailto:griffin.kremer@wanadoo.fr)

Alternate: Pierre Del Porto [pierre.delporto@gmail.com](mailto:pierre.delporto@gmail.com)

Hans Henning Baatz (Germany) [hanshenningbaatz@aol.de](mailto:hanshenningbaatz@aol.de)

Horio Hisashi (Japan) [horio@ae.auone-net.jp](mailto:horio@ae.auone-net.jp)

Gheorghe Petre (Romania) [mna\\_slobozia@yahoo.com](mailto:mna_slobozia@yahoo.com)

Jan Kisgeci (Serbia) [jan.kisgeci@gmail.com](mailto:jan.kisgeci@gmail.com)

Judith Sheridan (USA) [sheridan@orwell.net](mailto:sheridan@orwell.net)

Is elected as General Secretary: René Bourrigaud [rene.bourrigaud@sfr.fr](mailto:rene.bourrigaud@sfr.fr)

## **IV – Administrative organization**

### **1 – Account management**

The presidency and the general secretariat directed by French people, the management of AIMA will be assured in France until the next congress. The general secretary is in charge, under the supervision of the President and the Presidium, of the bookkeeping, maintaining the list of members and contacts, encashment of annual dues and management of the AIMA bank account. He has the mandate from the General Assembly to open a bank account in the AIMA name in a French bank. François Sigaut, president, and René Bourrigaud, general secretary who is responsible for treasury, have the mandate from the General Assembly and the Presidium to make all the necessary in order to open and manage the bank account.

To facilitate these administrative procedures, AFMA (France) will support if needs be. In particular, the AFMA head-office (Mucem, 6 avenue du Mahatma Gandhi, 75116 PARIS) becomes the legal address of AIMA for bank transactions until the next Congress. This address can be changed by ordinary decision of the Presidium.

### **2 – Permanent Secretariat**

The General Secretary presented the team for the Permanent Secretariat of AIMA, according to the Statutes (art. VI-3)<sup>3</sup>. It will be composed of Debra Reid – Judith Sheridan – Michelle Dondo-Tardiff – Cozette Griffin-Kremer – Hanna Ignatowicz – Urszula Nowakowska – Angelica Buzoianu.

### **3 – Projects**

The new team which is going to manage AIMA has for aims to develop a regular activity according to the article 3 (new line 2):

“AIMA comprises agricultural museums (including museum of agricultural technology, the food industry, forestry, horticulture, viticulture, fishing, hunting and other agricultural. servicing and

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<sup>2</sup> Statutes art. VI-2 : “Alternate Presidium Members: To encourage continuity in the governing of the organization, the Presidium (or the president acting between presidium meetings) may designate alternate members who will attend meetings and vote in place of regular presidium member...”. According to this text, we can then complete the actual list. Members of countries without designated alternate can propose an alternate and the president will can approve him.

<sup>3</sup> “Art VI-3: The Permanent Secretariat is the organ of the Presidium and is directed by the General Secretary of AIMA. The general secretariate is approved by the General Assembly every three years.”

processing industries), as well as open air museums and museums which have large agricultural departments or collections and research workers engaged in this field.

AIMA promotes cooperation between these categories of museums by aiding the exchange of exhibitions and exhibits, making detailed recommendations for collecting and documentation, and by providing a vehicle for the exchange of information relating especially to exhibition techniques and didactics. AIMA endeavors to stimulate research and exhibition activity to encompass not only the development of agricultural production but also changes in the work and way of life of the rural population (the social background) over successive historical periods. In this sense, AIMA intends to extend the work of agricultural museums to cover research, collection and the representation of agricultural development up to the present day, and through so doing to make an educational contribution - especially in the so for less developed countries.

By these means, AIMA is anxious to support the objectives of ICOM in emphasizing the "important part played by the museums and the museal profession in every community as well as in becoming better acquainted with and mutually understanding the nations" (ICOM -Statute 1974, section III, Art. 7)."

In view of reaching these aims defined into the [Strategic Plan](#) 2011-2013, the new Presidium, assisted by the Permanent Secretariat, propose:

- a) To inform regularly members of AIMA.
- b) To diffuse a **regular newsletter** in order to facilitate the exchanges of news and to extend AIMA influence.
- c) To create a **new website** in order to promote the activities of our members, to diffuse all useful news and more generally to increase awareness of agricultural museums in the world.
- d) To bring its help to prepare the publication and to diffuse **CIMA XVI proceedings**, of which responsibility rests with the country organizing the congress (Romania).
- e) To prepare actively the **next three-year congress**.
- f) To engage in a **reform of the statutes**.

After thanks from Mr. Maćkowiak to the retiring Presidium members and to the CIMA XVI organizers, the General Assembly was closed with a **speech of the new President**, François Sigaut ([see below](#)).

(Prepared by René Bourrigaud, with participation of Judith Sheridan, Hanna Ignatowicz, Urszula Nowakowska, Cozette Griffin-Kremer, Pierre Del Porto and Angelica Buzoianu)

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#### Attached documents (below)

- [Opening speech](#) of the Congress by Jan Maćkowiak, acting President.
- [Reports](#) of Presidium meetings.
- [Report of the General Secretary](#), Radoslav Vlk, for 2008-2011 period.
- [AIMA Strategic Plan](#) 2011-2013, written by Debra A. Reid.
- ["Proposals](#) for renewing the organization of the AIMA" written by René Bourrigaud.
- [Speech of the new President](#) François Sigaut.

**DR. JAN MAĆKOWIAK**

**NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD INDUSTRY IN  
SZRENIAWA, POLAND**

## **CIMA XVI OPENING SPEECH**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Colleagues,

As a Vice-president of the International Association of Museums of Agriculture (AIMA) I am honoured to cordially welcome you at the 16<sup>th</sup> Congress of this association. I thank all participants for coming.

Organization of today's congress would not have been possible without open and benevolent attitude and cooperation on the part of our hosts – National Museum of Agriculture in Slobozia, as well as its authorities, that is the Council of Ialomita County.

As you know, the retirement of Mr. Razvan Ciuca, President of AIMA, from the post of director of MNA, disturbed preparations of the congress and resulted in an extraordinary meeting of AIMA Presidium on May 7 and 8 in Chartres, France. In view of many questions and doubts about the state of preparations, Presidium decided to send to Slobozia a delegation in order to find out whether it was still possible to hold the meeting in Romania. The delegation members were: Mr. René Bourrigaud, Mr. Radoslav Vlk and Jan Maćkowiak.

From 23 to 25 May we were twice very kindly received by President of Ialomita County Council, Mr. Vasile Silviu Ciuperca. During our stay in Slobozia we were also assisted by MNA present director Dr. Gheorghe Petre who declared to actively participate in the organization of CIMA XVI.

Thus, I thank Mr. Vasile Silviu Ciuperca, President of Ialomita County Council, and his collaborators, as well as Dr. Gheorghe Petre, MNA director, for taking up the organization of CIMA XVI.

For coming and honoring the occasion with their presence I thank the Prefect of Ialomita County Mr. Mandalin Teculescu, as well as Mr. Virgil Stefan Nitulescu, director of Museum of the Romanian Peasant and President of Romanian National Committee of ICOM, and Mr. Gabriel Ionascu, Mayor of Slobozia.

We are glad to have succeeded in holding today's meeting in Romania, a country of rich traditions of agriculture and rural life, and famous for its hospitality.

What brings us here is the venerable tradition of our predecessors, to which continuing we feel obliged. The idea of an organization associating museums of agriculture from various countries originated from museum professionals focused in pre-war Czechoslovak Museum of Agriculture in Prague. Unfortunately, their efforts and hopes were thwarted by the outbreak of WW2.

Only the more favorable political climate of the 1960<sup>s</sup> allowed the Czechoslovak Museum of Agriculture to make preliminary agreements with the Museum of Hungarian Agriculture. Both museums suggested organizing the 1<sup>st</sup> International Congress of Museums of Agriculture on the occasion of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the Prague museum. It took place as CIMA I, between 11 and 14 October 1966 in the Castle of Libice near Prague.

Shortly after CIMA I was held, a committee was appointed to create the Statutes of the organization, and in 1966 the 1<sup>st</sup> issue of „Acta Museorum Agriculturae” appeared. By the end of the 1990<sup>s</sup> 21 issues of the bulletin had appeared. On the 25<sup>th</sup> session of Executive Committee of ICOM on July 28, 1968 in Cologne, AIMA was granted a status of an ICOM affiliated organization.

Over the last 45 years 15 conferences of AIMA have been held. After CIMA I in the then Czechoslovakia, the 2<sup>nd</sup> conference was held in the Agricultural Museum at Agricultural University of Hohenheim (Stuttgart) in 1969. The 3<sup>rd</sup> one, very successful, was held in 1971, at the Museum of Hungarian Agriculture in Budapest, on the occasion of its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Next congresses took place respectively: CIMA IV – at the Museum of English Rural Life in Reading, the UK (1976), CIMA V – Neubrandenburg in the former GDR, CIMA VI – in Stockholm in 1981, CIMA 1984 – in Paris (Saint Riquier). In 1987 the Museum of Hungarian Agriculture in Budapest hosted CIMA (VIII) for the second time. In 1989 CIMA IX was held in Denmark at the oldest museum of agriculture in the world – Danish Museum of Agriculture in Randers, which this way commemorated centenary of its existence (1888-1988). CIMA X was held in Trento, Italy in 1992. The organization of CIMA XI was taken up in 1995 by Slovak Museum of Agriculture in Nitra.

The consecutive conference, CIMA XII, was prepared by our institution, the National Museum of Agriculture and Food Industry in Szreniawa in 1998.

In 2001 CIMA congress was held at the Open-Air Museum in Lindlar, in which I already had the opportunity to take part. During the next congress, CIMA XIV in 2004, we gathered at the Open-Air Museum in Rožnov pod Radhoštěm in the Czech Rep., and our host was its director Mr. Vítězslav Koukal, present here. Also present today is the host of previous congress, CIMA XV, Prof. Jan Kišgeci. CIMA XV was held in Novi Sad, Serbia, in 2008.

During all these congresses various topics and subjects were addressed. Another important issues in last years were: „Water in agriculture“ (Trento, Italy), „Biological progress in the history of agriculture“ (Szreniawa, 1998), „Cultural landscape“ (CIMA XIII, Lindlar), „Development of agriculture in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, its documentation and presentation by museums“ (Rožnov, CIMA XIV), „Rich past, living future“ (Novi Sad, CIMA XV). By recalling these topics I wish to emphasise how important role the congresses played in the development of our institutions and how current issues they addressed. The congresses make us aware of regarding museums of agriculture in some new contexts, both cultural and of civilization development. The onset of the 21<sup>th</sup> century brought new challenges for the museums of agriculture and asked new and new questions and posed problems to be solved.

Agricultural museums of the world, majority of which federated in AIMA, have much in common, they have a common mission to fulfill and implement similar methods of activity. This ascertainment urges us to work together and keep AIMA active.

And that is how we reached the day of today, when, according to tradition, the time has come to hold the next congress. Unfortunately, not able to attend are two ladies, Dr. Debra Reid and Mrs. Michelle Dondo-Tardiff, so meritorious for AIMA. I express my thanks to Dr. Debra Reid, for developing AIMA Strategic Plan 2011-2013. I am glad though that both absentees are today represented by Mrs. Judith Sheridan, who fulfills the function of the Secretary and Treasurer of the American Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums ALHFAM. Also absent is, due to other international meetings, Mrs. Cozette Griffin-Kremer, in charge of international relations of the French Association of Museums of Agriculture and Rural Heritage AFMA, with whom our fruitful cooperation dates back to 2009. I am honoured though to welcome for the first time at AIMA congress the President of the French Association of Museums of Agriculture and Rural Heritage AFMA,

Mr. Pierre Del Porto. I express my gratitude to AFMA members for preparing the white paper for AIMA Presidium and General Assembly of AIMA, in particular to Mr. René Bourrigaud, for developing proposals for new administrative organization of AIMA.

I do hope that as the group gathered today we will succeed in continuing the traditions of AIMA. For efforts of our predecessors oblige us to do so. Furthermore, we are witnessing a rapidly changing world, where the newest achievements of technology make the society change their values and lifestyle. Our societies go further and further away from their rural past but it does not change the fact that our existence still is, and always will be, dependant on agriculture. So it is our common vocation and mission to make wide audiences aware of these dependances. I fully agree with the thesis of AFMA representatives that they recall in preparatory documents they developed, that an international organization of agricultural museums is today more needed than ever. I also thank the management and representatives for taking steps in order to renew contacts of AIMA with the International Council of Museums, as well as the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. This way AIMA's mission appears as a bridge, linking history of agricultural museums with challenges for the future that they face. From the report of AFMA from the meeting with ICOM's Director General Mr. Julien Anfruns we know that ICOM can offer to its affiliates its official support and encouragement, as well as their projects, in particular those which favour ICOM's priority themes of sustainability and environment. ICOM wishes especially to emphasize the role of museums in intangible heritage issues. ICOM declares also that it can provide free management of a website for AIMA, on condition that it be regularly and effectively updated. Cooperation with these two organizations opens new prospects for AIMA's future. May I thank again both present and absent representatives of AFMA for this precious initiative. I thank again our hosts for such a generous reception and all attendees for coming. I wish all of us a fruitful and successful meeting.

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## **Short reports of the three Presidium meetings**

**(Before the General Assembly)**

### **First Presidium Meeting, September 4<sup>th</sup> at 09:00 pm**

Present: Jan Maćkowiak (who chaired the meeting) – Gheorghe Petre (who organized the CIMA XVI) – Judith Sheridan (USA) – Kerry-Leigh Burchill (Canada) – Merli Sild (Estonia) – Viteslav Koukal (Czech Republic) – René Bourrigaud (France) – Hans Henning Baatz (Germany) – Radoslav Vlk (general secretary)

Assistants: Urszula Nowakowska (Poland) and Marina Ilie (Romania)

Other attendees: Mr. F. Sigaut and Mr. P. Del Porto (France)

Opening speech of Mr. Maćkowiak who presented the AIMA context (See his [opening speech](#) of the Congress).

Speech of Mr. Petre who presented the organization of the congress and had distributed the list of attendees, with the titles of their expected contributions. This list presented the presenters by alphabetic order of the countries, it was decided to nominate a little working group of three presidium members (J. Sheridan, R. Vlk and R. Bourrigaud) in order to propose an organization of working sessions around the principal thematic: bread, wine, bread and wine, and others.

### **Second Open Presidium Meeting, September 5<sup>th</sup> at 08:30 pm**

Present: J. Maćkowiak, J. Kisgeci, H. Baatz, M. Sild, V. Koukal, R. Vlk, Z. Michailova, R. Bourrigaud, K.-L. Burchill, J. Sheridan. Other attendees: F. Sigaut, P. Del Porto.

Translators Urszula Nowakowska and Hanna Ignatowicz.

Mr. Maćkowiak chaired the meeting starting at 20:30. We discussed dividing the position of the president of AIMA from the person who would host the site of the next Congress. Michailova said she was willing to be the next president and to host the next Congress in Bulgaria. Funding problems at her museum have been solved. R. Bourrigaud, alternate for C. Griffin-Kremer, indicated that F. Sigaut, under the proposed reorganization plan created in May at Chartres, France, was also willing to run for president but was not offering to host the next Congress in France. After much discussion, Michailova withdrew her candidacy and her offer to host the next Congress. Sigaut will be the candidate for President.

Discussion then turned to who are AIMA members. R. Vlk presented a list from the Lindlar Congress and said that the names of those that attended were the members. No dues have ever been collected so it is very difficult to determine the current membership. It was suggested that everyone that paid to attend this Romanian Congress be considered a member and allowed to vote since they have exhibited an interest in AIMA. Further refinement led to the proposal that a form be given to everyone at the General Assembly tomorrow that would ask them to commit to individual or institutional membership and to pay dues in the near future. These will be collected and those that commit to future membership will have voting privileges. A proposed dues schedule for members was presented by Bourrigaud. More discussion followed and it was decided to implement the dues schedule passed at a previous General Assembly that was 10 euro per year for an individual and 30 euro for an institution.

Rene Bourrigaud will replace Radoslav Vlk as the secretary. A bank account will be opened in France and then memberships will be solicited as soon as it is open. A representative from

each country will collect the dues and send them on to a bank account managed by Bourrigaud. Several names of potential members were mentioned. Some were active in the past and some are new in their jobs at large institutions. A new website needs to be created and kept current. Publishing will be done mainly electronically.

Candidates for the vice presidents to be voted on at tomorrow's General Assembly would be J. Maćkowiak, D. Reid, and M. Sild. Communications between Presidium and Secretariat members will be done by e-mail. The meeting concluded at 24:00.

### **Third Presidium Meeting, September 6<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 am**

Present: J. Maćkowiak, J. Kisgeci, H. Baatz, M. Sild, V. Koukal, R. Vlk, Z. Michailova, R. Bourrigaud, K.-L. Burchill, J. Sheridan.

Translators Urszula Nowakowska and Hanna Ignatowicz.

Short meeting to decide the detailed rules for membership. Each member of AIMA will have to fill up a following form:

#### **1) For institutional membership:**

- Name, surname, country, email address, phone number
- *“According to the Statutes of AIMA, I am an attendee of the CIMA XVI in Slobozia, Romania, I represent \_\_\_\_\_ (name of institution) and I declare the intention of my institution to become an institutional member of AIMA, as well as that my institution will pay an annual membership fee of minimum 30 EUR”* (Locality, date and signature).

#### **2) For individual membership:**

- Name, surname, country, email address, phone number
- *“According to the Statutes of AIMA, I am an attendee of the CIMA XVI in Slobozia, Romania, and I declare my intention of individual membership of AIMA, as well as that I will pay an annual membership fee of minimum 10 EUR”* (Locality, date and signature).

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# **AIMA Secretariat Report for the 2008 – 2011 Period**

By Radoslav Vlk  
Retiring General Secretary of AIMA

**Dear Deputy President of AIMA,  
Dear members of the AIMA Presidium  
Members of AIMA,  
Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Guests**

As it is usual at every CIMA congress, the acting president of AIMA submits a report on activities of the AIMA Presidium for the term of office, including his/her own activities regarding work in AIMA.

Unfortunately, this year it is going to be completely different. For reasons that all of you are certainly familiar with, the current president, Emeritus Director of the National Agricultural Museum in Slobozia (Romania) cannot attend and present his report. For this reason, I, the secretary of AIMA, was requested to write the report.

My report is not going to be brief but it will characterize significant organisational problems of AIMA that have not been handled and solved yet.

## **1. CIMA 15 – who is the President and who is the Presidium?**

CIMA 15 – Serbia. The AIMA Secretariat still does not have the final report from the CIMA 15 congress, including a very important report from the CIMA 15 General Assembly. I remind you again that this activity is governed by the AIMA Charter; it is not connected with the activities of the AIMA Secretariat. The whole agenda is part of the **CIMA Secretariat**. The CIMA Secretariat is a body of the President and it is responsible for the preparation and course of CIMA and for issuance of CIMA reports. The CIMA Secretariat has been operating for three years. I have reminded the previous AIMA President, Prof. Jan KIŠGECI, and the current President, Razvan CIUCA, of this fact several times. For this reason, there are no complete congress proceedings including a new, current charter and especially a list of Presidium members. We do not know how the CIMA Secretariat worked, but it is also included as a term in the AIMA Charter.

I needn't comment on the result, although some voices can be heard that the Secretariat is to be blamed. I will oppose these members and I remind you of the valid charter of the AIMA association, which accurately defines activities of the Secretariat and mainly activities and functions of the President.

## **2. Activities of the President**

The whole term of office of the AIMA President, Mr. Razvan CIUCA, was a period of preparation and effort to prepare the AIMA – CIMA 16 congress. I need to say that the submitted programme, which even the President himself changed several times, was well-founded, especially thanks to the chosen topic – Bread and Wine. Members of the Presidium could convince themselves of this effort at a meeting at the premises of the National Agricultural Museum in Slobozia in Romania in 2008. Unfortunately, certain coincidences and organisational changes in the hosting institution did not allow realisation of the programme according to the author and his ideas.

After he retired, AIMA found itself in a stalemate position. Based on a few pieces of information from the National Agricultural Museum in Slobozia and on the current director, Mr. Virilescu PETER, the AIMA Presidium was forced to act immediately and especially to search for information as to whether and under what conditions it would be possible to realize the AIMA – CIMA 16 congress in the regular year and in Romania if possible.

Meetings of the Presidium have taken place three times:

- 2009 – Romania

- 2010 – Poland
- 2011 – France and Romania. In Romania in 2011 there was a special focus on the meeting of narrow representation of the AIMA Presidium with representatives of the new management of the National Museum in Slobozia.

Besides preparations for CIMA 16, the AIMA President put a lot of effort into expanding the membership base of AIMA with new members from Europe and other countries around the world, but also into expanding and re-integrating former AIMA members. As far as I know, he was successful in these areas. He gave me this information during our meeting at the ICOM General Conference in Shanghai in China in November 2010. I will be happy if these new members are introduced at the AIMA General Assembly, if they are present.

### **3. Assignments of the Secretariat**

Some members of AIMA and members of the Presidium think that the Secretariat does not work as it should. I remind you of the Charter and the list of activities of the AIMA Secretariat again, and I add that it is not an ordinary full-time job. What the AIMA Secretariat is reproached for is involved in the main activities of the President of the whole association.

The main activities of the AIMA Secretariat are:

- Maintaining constant records of the AIMA members and updating them regularly.
- Maintaining financial records and looking after necessary accounts.
- Cooperating with the Body of Editors in the area of publishing reports and articles of congress dealings.
- Cooperating with the Body of Editors in the area of production and publishing of other materials for AIMA.
- Providing assistance while preparing the next congress including correspondence, collection of reports and other materials.
- Maintaining correspondence with members of national and regional AIMA committees.
- It is connected to ICOM and UNESCO including announcing meetings, etc.
- It is connected to the above-mentioned agricultural museums worldwide.
- Supporting international museum exchanges including exhibitions, literature, people, etc.
- Looking after the AIMA archive, including AMA and other publications.

Moreover I have to say that the Secretariat is a function elected by every assembly. For this reason I place my function at your disposal.

### **4. Work Schedule of the Presidium versus Minutes of Meetings**

One of the things the Secretariat is usually criticized for is not making minutes of the Presidium meetings. It was even called a scandal in the past. It happened only once. I apologize to all present members of AIMA and to members of the AIMA Presidium that I didn't deliver the minutes of the AIMA Presidium meeting that took place in Poland in 2010 on time and at the correct addresses. Actually nothing happened in my opinion because a major part of the minutes is not observed.

As the secretary of AIMA, I have highlighted this fact several times already. The AIMA President is always responsible for minutes. I also remember some minutes – for instance.

\* The General Assembly of AIMA at the CIMA 14 congress in Roznov pod Radhoštěm, when the Wallachian Open-Air Museum offered to sponsor a publishing and editorial activity of the AMA magazine – *Acta Musaeorum Agriculturae* – it mentioned rules, too. Unfortunately, only contributions by members from Bulgaria, Poland and Canada have been received so far. I remind you that AMA is a publisher-recorded periodical with an international ISSN number. Unfortunately, there has been only one issue of the magazine so far – it was issued only in 2005. It is always a nice surprise to me when I receive magazines published by organisations similar to AIMA at my museum postal address and when I find entries by members of AIMA published in these magazines. And these entries were written by those very members who keep reminding us of the drawbacks of the AIMA activities in relation to the publishing activity. I ask. Why don't they publish their pieces in AMA?!

Even in this case it is true that: **Those who want search for ways; those who don't want search for reasons.** I remind you that **the way** was the willingness of the Wallachian Open-Air Museum to finance everything; and concerning the reasons:

- Who will provide distribution?
- How much will it cost?
- etc.

Perhaps a small interjection. Let's not consider AMA a reviewed magazine or an impacted periodical according to current trends. AMA should serve especially for presentation of itself, for our internal self-learning – who is actually a member and what he or she does, how organisations develop, news in the professional-scientific area, etc. in spite of this, the Wallachian Museum applied for incorporation in scientific-research organisations. If the application is approved, we will immediately have an impacted and reviewed periodical with a high level of seriousness and expertise, but also responsibility. What are we going to do? Apparently publish in other periodicals.

\* Or minutes from the Presidium that took part in Canada. Through registration and agreement of all members, a calendar including venues of presidiums and CIMA congresses was made. This one is not observed either. It can even be heard that the next congress is going to be in Spain. Since 2004, since I started my work in AIMA I haven't noticed a single member from Spain at congresses. Current statutes speak clearly about the method of establishment of regular membership in an organisation (I mean both active and institutional membership).

\* The Presidium in Poland. The proposal of the Secretariat that it will make an application within the CULTURE programme and elaborate a project focused on promotion of AIMA and further on realization of touring exhibitions. The method was presented, nevertheless there was no action.

Even in this case it is true that: **Those who want search for ways; those who don't want search for reasons.** I remind you that **the way** was the willingness of the Secretariat to prepare everything, to prepare ways of financing; and concerning the reasons:

- We have no money for co-financing
- that is the answer of the membership
- Who is going to be the guarantor?
- What kind of an exhibition and for how much?
- etc.

AIMA strives for stimulation of an exhibition activity not only through presentation of agricultural production development, but also through presentation of changes in work activities and development of village population life, and social structure in individual historical time periods. Thus AIMA objectively supports work of agricultural museums in the area of research, documentation and representation of agricultural development with regard to the present. Through this activity, it also supports and contributes to education, especially regarding developing countries. This is a quotation from the AIMA Charter.

According to these activities mentioned, AIMA cooperates with ICOM and puts emphasis on the serious role that museums play, and on the museum activity in every society so that nations can better get to know one another based on mutual understanding.

Instead of professional, social-scientific and presentation activities we are just looking for the **reasons** why it's not possible to perform activities, and we prefer discussions on changing the charter again, on the repetitive issue of membership fees, etc.

\* Now that I've remembered the membership fees. It is a never-ending story, too.

AIMA can have its own account. A condition for opening the account, which is based on the AIMA Charter, is presence of the AIMA President for the reason of signature specimens and granting the full power of attorney to a second person in order to handle financial means in the

account. As the President changes once every three years, it would be very complicated to manage such an account.

As the seat of the permanent AIMA Secretariat, the Wallachian Open-Air Museum makes available the account of their organisation where it is possible to send the fees approved by the Charter. Unfortunately, some members don't consider the Wallachian Museum to be AIMA, which means that it's a problem when fees are sent to a different organisation than AIMA, as has been said in the past.

I must ask. Who holds this AIMA congress called CIMA 16.? Is it AIMA; or the National Agricultural Museum in Slobozia in Romania?; or a Travel Agency? What account did you send the congress fee to? To the account of AIMA?; of the museum?; or of the Travel Agency? Everything depends on trust, responsibility, abilities, but especially on not searching for reasons why it isn't possible.

This is a suitable time and place for a question. How to manage the financial means received? What purpose will they be used for?

There are many organisations similar to AIMA that do not collect membership fees at all, and the life of their organisations is spared from this issue.

And I am able to add more examples.

## 5. Membership

Membership base and membership. What is a membership base? What is membership? The Charter speaks clearly again.

Individual **active** members are people who attended the previous congress and who declared their interest in continuing the membership before the forthcoming congress.

I have neither been present at any such declaration, nor has any such declaration been submitted to me by any President of AIMA.

I can say similar things about the **institutional membership** when **active institutional members** are institutions that attended the previous congress and that declared their interest in continuing the membership before the forthcoming congress.

I have neither been present at any such declaration, nor has any such declaration been submitted to me by any President of AIMA.

For this reason I recommend to the General Assembly that they deal with the issue of the membership base more deeply and that they make use of methods of registering new members used in other organisations integrated in ICOM (such as AEOM, ICOMOS, ICOEM, and others). **In these organisations, you become a new member only after you attend two successive congresses and submit an official application supported by at least two regular members while one of them must not be of the same nationality as the applicant.** The Presidium deals with these proposals before every General Assembly takes place. Be careful! If you don't attend two successive congresses, **your acquired membership is cancelled.** I can confirm that at the above-mentioned organisations the membership base is numerous and the number of members corresponds with the professional focus of the organisation. It is a number characterising 60 -120 members. Unfortunately, AIMA does not belong to this range. It is common place that the above-mentioned organisations focus their activities more in a professional direction (exhibitions, workshops, publication activity) than it is usual elsewhere – I mean constant changes of the charter, etc.

It is nice to count participants of every congress when most of them will not attend the next one. For this reason, I speak about participants, definitely not about **members**.

Wanting to engage in the AIMA organisational structure was reflected in the personal structure of the Presidium itself in this term of office; the primary impression was soon replaced with disappointment. Many members have never participated in some meetings of the Presidium, or only rarely. And it is the AIMA Presidium which should stimulate the activity of AIMA and, with help of the head of

AIMA – the AIMA president, fulfil the mission of the whole organisation and ensure our presentation by making us visible in the public, museum and professional areas. If representatives of those institutions that will not be able to support this activity and that will not allow their participation in the meetings of the Presidium become members of AIMA, they cannot be valid members of the AIMA Presidium. A similar situation happened in this term of office, too.

There is nothing else we can do other than be jealous and also offer congratulations on activities of similar agricultural organisations at some institutional members of ours from Canada, the USA and France.

But I think that it has nothing in common with the activity of the Secretariat. Therefore I propose a change of the Charter regarding a decrease of the number of the AIMA Presidium members from 10-14 to half, maximum 7 members including the President and his/her personal secretary. Yes, this is a great time and place for: "Two heads are better than one". Or perhaps another saying: "Too much of anything is harmful"?

## **6. Congress Tourism**

At Presidiums I have raised the issue of methods of selecting a new venue for an AIMA – CIMA congress many times. I stressed it was necessary for the Presidium to receive official applications, the so-called candidate applications of institutional or active members for the possibility to hold forthcoming congresses. My own experience tells me that preparation of a congress or a big conference takes much more than only half a year beforehand.

If we don't have a schedule of congresses in advance, I mean congresses with an approved venue, and if these venues (I mean organisations – institutions, museums, universities) don't guarantee holding and success of the event, AIMA may be in the same situation as it was half a year ago when nobody knew if the congress would take place or not.

It also regards clearly set rules that must be observed. For example:

- a fixed term of holding congresses, for instance at the end of September or in the first week of October
- duration of a congress including arrival and departure of each participant must not exceed 5 calendar days
- maximum amount of the congress fee.

The candidates must submit in advance and present at the General Assembly the following:

- the congress programme including a day schedule
- term of taking place
- an approved topic of the congress.

At least 2 years before the next CIMA congress takes place, the elected AIMA Presidium must realize a Presidium meeting in the organisation/institution that is preparing the congress and discuss readiness of the congress.

If this procedure works, the situation from the close but also distant past cannot happen again.

## **7. Cooperation**

During the term of office of the AIMA Presidium in the period of 2008-2011, the AIMA Secretariat has several times attended common professional events in the partner museum in Szreniawie in Poland where the contract on cooperation between the Wallachian Museum and the National Agricultural Museum in Szreniawie in Poland was signed. I would like to take this opportunity and thank the director of the museum and the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-president of AIMA, Mr. Jan Maćkowiak, for the cooperation in the professional field, and also while preparing this congress. I respect the director of this museum very much and I dare to say that he is one of the significant driving forces of this organisation.

Within other activities of the Secretariat and of the AIMA President, one of the founding institutional members of AIMA – the National Agricultural Museum in Prague in the Czech Republic was asked for cooperation within the AIMA organisation.

Unfortunately, the economic crisis and political instability has also affected our AIMA organisation recently.

An institutional member – the National Agricultural Museum of Slovakia in Nitra is facing a deep economic crisis and a threat of decrease of both their professional and everyday activities. Their staff has been reduced by 60 % to 12 people including the director during the last 5 years. I have informed the Presidium members of this situation and asked them to deal with it at their next meeting in France in May this year and to form a written judgement, which should be presented at appropriate places in the Slovak Republic.

The same situation happened in the National Agricultural Museum of Bulgaria in Sofia, too. Fortunately, the museum is still operating and the director, Ms Zdravka Mihaylova, is starting to process a huge project of reconstruction and revitalisation of the whole museum. The first stage of the project should be financially supported by the European Funds in the amount of 1 million Euros; unfortunately it is a mere 10 per cent of the total costs. According to the information of the director, who I met in August, this museum is searching for a foreign partner among European structures in order to submit a common project focused on publishing and exhibition activities, respectively on workshop realisation.

## **8. Conclusion**

To summarise this report, I remind you that paper always bears everything it contains. Let's not search for reasons why something is not possible, but let's search for ways to work better and to make our activities and the AIMA organisation visible.

If you feel the need to make a change, go for it. I hereby place my function of the AIMA Secretary at the disposal of the Presidium and especially of the Deputy President of AIMA, Mr. Jan Mačkowiak, the first Vice-president of AIMA.

As I am mainly a Russian and Hispanic studies scholar, I will be happy to answer your potential questions in these languages, which are besides others specified as official languages of AIMA and CIMA in the Charter.

Finally, let me thank the whole team organising the CIMA 16 congress for their hospitality, care and organisation of such a demanding meeting.

Thank you and I wish you a lot of success in your professional activities.

Thank you for your attention.

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# **AIMA Strategic Plan 2011- 2013**

By Debra A. Reid  
PhD, Professor, Eastern Illinois University  
Vice-president of AIMA

## **INTRODUCTION**

The International Council of Museums (ICOM) expects each affiliated organization to develop a strategic plan that supports the direction charted in the ICOM Strategic Plan, modified every three years. The General Assembly of the International Association of Agricultural Museums (AIMA) approved the 2008-2011 AIMA Strategic Plan at the organization's 15<sup>th</sup> Congress in 2008 in Serbia. This plan reflected the ICOM effort to collect, preserve and interpret intangible as well as tangible artifacts. Members of the AIMA presidium discussed the strategic plan at the 2006 conference of the Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and created a working draft at the 2006 Fall meeting of the AIMA Presidium in Ottawa, Canada. The membership approved this plan at the 2008 AIMA Congress in Serbia.

The 2011-2013 AIMA Strategic Plan reflects the ICOM initiative to “face the challenges and seize the opportunities of a fast-changing museum landscape.” To that end, ICOM adopted the following strategic objectives to guide activities during 2011-2013:

- Increase membership value and transparency for ICOM members
- Develop museum and heritage expertise
- Strengthen ICOM's global leadership in the heritage sector
- Develop and manage resources to implement the Strategic Plan effectively

Several objectives AIMA identified in its 2008-2010 Strategic Plan remain relevant given these ICOM goals, and given the need to remain vital as agricultural museums respond to the “fast-changing museum landscape” and to a fast changing world population that remains dependent on agriculture generally (food, specifically) and as food remains at the center of international political debate. AIMA must become more proactive in supporting museums dedicated to public education of agricultural history as public funding for such museums seems uncertain and as the relevancy of agricultural museums' research and interpretation has increased.

[Note: the following incorporates components of the AIMA Strategic Plan, 2008-2011 as well as relevant ICOM 2011-2013 Strategic Plan objectives.]

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

AIMA, an affiliate of the International Council of Museums (ICOM), exists to serve agricultural museums (including museum of agricultural technology, the food industry, forestry, horticulture, viticulture, fishing, hunting and other agricultural servicing and processing industries), as well as open air museums and museums that have large agricultural departments or collections and research workers engaged in this field.

AIMA promotes cooperation between this array of museums by aiding the exchange of exhibitions and exhibits, encouraging governing bodies to sustain support, making detailed recommendations for collecting and documentation, and providing a vehicle for the exchange of information on exhibition techniques and didactics. AIMA seeks to stimulate research and

exhibition activity so museums interpret not only the development of agricultural production but also changes in the work and way of life of the rural population (the social background) over time. In this sense, AIMA intends to extend the work of agricultural museums to cover research, collection and the representation of agricultural development up to the present day, and through so doing to make an educational contribution - especially in the so far less developed countries.

AIMA intends to extend cooperation with FAO and other international organizations in agriculture. By these means, AIMA is anxious to support the objectives of ICOM in emphasizing the "important part played by the museums and the museum profession in every community as well as in becoming better acquainted with and mutually understanding the nations." (ICOM -Statute 1974, section 111, Art. 7).

## **AIMA'S CORE VALUES**

AIMA acts upon ICOM's core values:

- commitment to the conservation, continuation, and communication to society of the world's natural and cultural heritage, tangible and intangible
- recognition of human creativity in all its manifestations, and its value to all parts of society in interpreting the past, shaping the present, and mapping the future
- recognition of intellectual, cultural and social diversity, and respect for difference, as forces for cross-cultural understanding and social cohesion
- professional development, training, mentoring, exchange of expertise and mutual assistance among networks of museum personnel
- professional conduct, observance and promotion of ICOM's Code of Professional Ethics
- encouragement and particular support for museum work and heritage initiatives that are multi-lingual, inter-disciplinary, multi-faceted, or cross-cultural; or linking disparate people, countries and regions
- community education and skills-diffusion as an integral part of capacity-building, contributing to sustainable development according to varying socio-cultural needs
- publication and dissemination of information in support of ICOM's objectives
- democratic values, communication, and service orientation promoted throughout ICOM as an organization
- engagement with public issues of social change, and active participation in debates on arts, culture and heritage impacting on the work of museums and museum professionals
- joint action with partner organizations, and projection of ICOM's work and values internationally

## **AIMA'S MISSION**

AIMA is the international organization of agricultural museums and museum professionals, committed to the conservation, transmission and communication of the agricultural heritage, present and future, tangible and intangible.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN FOR STRATEGIC PLAN 2011-2013**

### **External environment**

External circumstances conditioning the creation and development of agricultural museums:

1. The world-wide demographic shift from rural to urban and from agricultural to more industrial environments have decreased first-hand experience with rural and agricultural history and could, thus, reduce public interest in agricultural museums. This, in turn, reduces the numbers of staff with first-hand experience in agriculture and rural life. The ICOM objective “develop museum and heritage expertise” seems critical to design and implementation of agricultural museum collecting and programming, and to all other AIMA “external circumstances.”
2. Funding crises affect stability of public institutions.
3. Changing attitudes toward chemicals and bioengineering in agriculture affect public perceptions of agriculture in general, and can affect interest in agricultural history.
4. Growing suburban and urban audiences (disassociated from rural life, but keen on direct experiences with natural and agricultural environments) offer potential for agricultural museums to regain relevancy
5. Evolution of the museum profession as it relates to agricultural museum operations [exploration of new technology for social networking, etc.; evolving standards (ethics; strategic plans; public good); research techniques (generating information), and interpretation and public programming (sharing information)]
6. Influence of the need to expand agricultural museum collections and interpretation to include cultural and natural heritage documentation
7. Promotion of best practices in museum profession including adherence to Code of Ethics and international exchange of information collection and dissemination

#### **Internal environment:**

1. AIMA has no dues-paying membership, but the number attending the triennial congress has remained fairly stable over the years.
2. AIMA has succeeded in offering a triennial congress since its inception.
3. Communication with AIMA members has been sporadic, and nonexistent outside of the presidium members since the 2008 Congress in Serbia.
4. The creation of a Secretariat strengthened the association; but between a meeting of the presidium at a September 2009 meeting, held in conjunction with the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary meeting of the National Polish Agricultural Museum in Szreniawa, Poland, and a May meeting with the new interim director of the National Agricultural Museum of Romania in Slobozia, the secretariat has been non-communicative.
5. There has been a web presence for AIMA between 2002 and 2008, but the information on the website has not been updated since 2008.
6. AIMA needs to take steps to expand its membership base and increase communication to its members.
7. AIMA needs to review the roles and responsibilities of the Secretariat in relation to the Presidium and to the larger agricultural museum community.
8. AIMA needs to review the roles and responsibilities of Presidium members and the Presidium organization to better respond to the agricultural museum community.
9. AIMA needs to develop a formal relationship with other related organizations, such as the European Open Air Museums Association, the Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums, the Federation of Agricultural and Rural Heritage Museums, The Folklore Society, and the Rural Life Network, etc.

#### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES FOR AIMA**

Objective 1: AIMA facilitates the exchange of information internationally. (ICOM objectives: Develop museum and heritage expertise; AND Strengthen ICOM's global leadership in the heritage sector)

Objective 2: AIMA is pro-active in enlarging its membership. (ICOM objective: Increase membership value and transparency for ICOM members)

Objective 3: AIMA promotes the role and importance of agricultural museums in global context. (ICOM objectives: Develop museum and heritage expertise; AND Strengthen ICOM's global leadership in the heritage sector)

Objective 4: AIMA identifies and manages resources to implement the Strategic Plan effectively (ICOM objective: Develop and manage resources to implement the Strategic Plan effectively).

### **Strategic Objective 1: AIMA facilitates the exchange of information internationally**

Anticipated results during 2011 (and between 2011-2012) (in priority order)

- a. Host a triennial international congress
- b. Publish proceedings of the congress.
- c. Maintain a permanent electronic presence.

#### **Action Plan for Strategic Objective 1**

1. Select the location and date of the next congress well in advance so it can be announced during the congress. (2011 – Slobozia, Romania and environs; 2014 – discussion with Scotland/England or Portugal, ongoing)
2. Select a conference theme for 2014 and future Congresses to respond to external environment challenges.
3. Prepare a synopsis of the theme to generate discussion and ideas.
4. Solicit written proposals from Museums wanting to host the congress and encourage AIMA meetings around the globe.
5. Develop a template for proposals.
6. Select a group of editors tasked with editing the papers and preparing the proceedings.
7. Prepare proceedings in both paper and digital format. Distribute via AIMA webpage.
8. Establish a team to discuss information that should/could be published electronically.
9. Develop objectives and guidelines for the AIMA international newsletter that will continue the infrequent *ACTA Agricultura*.
10. Assign members to write articles
11. Publish newsletter and distribute to members. [As of 2011 June, North Americans have developed "AIMA Calendario" an electronic newsletter that distributes information on the triennial congress and other news (continuing a tradition established by long-time United States presidium member, Ed Hawes, who used snail mail to share information about AIMA).

### **Strategic Objective 2: AIMA is pro-active in enlarging its membership**

Anticipated results 2011-2013 (in priority order)

- a. A list of membership categories, benefits and fees.
- b. An international account to handle dues.
- c. A membership office which maintains the membership list and sends renewals.
- d. An electronic newsletter published no less than once per year to maintain communication.

- e. A list-serve to ensure communication on timely topics across geo-political borders (i.e. as AIMA-L, perhaps hosted by H-Net (Humanities and Social Science On-Line): <http://www.h-net.org/lists/>)

### **Action Plan for Strategic Objective 2**

1. Review AIMA Statutes.
2. Review AIMA membership database; survey attendees at the 2011 Congress (16<sup>th</sup> Congress) to build database.
3. Involve Presidium members in identifying museums and individuals that should be targeted for membership
4. Define membership categories, benefits and fees by September 2012.
5. Determine the best way to manage memberships - e.g. through the Secretariat or through the use of a volunteer.
6. Develop a discussion list, either via H-Net or relevant organizations such as ALHFAM or the European Open-Air Museum Association.

### **Objective 3: AIMA promotes the role and importance of agricultural museums in global context.**

Anticipated results 2011-2013 (in priority order)

1. Create a dialog with the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations to facilitate cooperation with the FAO and other international organizations dedicated to agriculture, food and rural life.
2. Communicate with officials in countries with agricultural museums threatened by budget shortfalls the value of agricultural museums to public education.
3. Reach out to nations not currently included in the presidium (Euro- and North American-centric) to increase global coverage.
4. Seek venues for triennial congresses that further international exchange beyond Europe and North America.

### **Objective 4: AIMA identifies and manages resources to implement the Strategic Plan effectively**

1. Designate a Secretariat committed to fulfilling AIMA (and ICOM) goals and objectives.
2. Review the role of Presidium members.
3. Identify tasks that could be assigned to Presidium members.
4. Designate a committee of the Presidium (and include members not on the presidium as needed) to manage plan implementation.

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# Proposals for renewing the organization of the AIMA

By Rene Bourrigaud for the working group<sup>4</sup> of Chartres (France)

The AIMA has a long history and traditions. It also has statutes that are fairly clear about the objectives of the association, but which are relatively vague about its administrative organization. Here are the decisive points that the Chartres working group wishes to submit to discussion during the Presidium meeting in Romania that is to prepare for the General Assembly on September 6th.

These proposals fit in with the **Strategic Plan** ([see above](#)) and, for example, suppose that the Statutes will be modified. **However, before adding any new rules to the Statutes, we propose to try them out now, then add them to the Statutes if they prove to function effectively.**

## 1 – Rules about membership in the AIMA

### 1.1 – Active members

The first criterion of any democratic working of an association is this: who are the members? This leads to the question: who has the right to vote in the General Assembly?

We can leave the inactive members out of the discussion for the moment, as this is discussed in the statutes: they are ‘correspondents’ or ‘contacts’ who receive invitations to the congress. However, if they participate in a congress, they become ‘active members’.

According to the statutes, active members are:

- Individuals ‘who attended the latest congress and who indicate, before the following congress is held, that they intend to renew their membership (Art. V-1).
- Institutions ‘who sent representatives to the latest congress and indicate, before the following congress is held, that they intend to renew their membership (Art. V-2).

It thus suffices to consult the list of attendees at the Serbia 2008 CIMA to know the potential number of active members of the AIMA before the next congress (although it is necessary to subtract those who have shown a marked disinterest or have not kept up contact for some other reason). The number of members revealed by this is low, since there were only 28 of us at the General Assembly in Serbia and some of those certainly did not have the right to vote.

This makes it clear that the attendees in the Romanian CIMA will automatically and immediately become active members and will have the right to vote in the General Assembly during the afternoon of September 6th.

### 1.2 – Urgent need for a proxy system

The above definition of active member is obviously not satisfactory. First, it does not take into account the active members who simply cannot attend a congress, since no vote by proxy is foreseen. This is an omission which cannot be accepted in the present conditions of organization of the CIMA (lateness of convening announcement, conflict of dates with other international meetings).

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<sup>4</sup> The last meeting of Presidium was held at Chartres on May 7-8th 2011 and took the initiative to create a working group for renewing the AIMA organization.

Furthermore, it is obvious that the present statutes place great importance on the country organizing the congress, since the greatest number of attendees generally come from the host country (if only for practical reasons).

The Chartres working group should thus propose a 'proxy' formula for AIMA members who cannot attend this year. That way, we will know who is interested in continuing to work for the future of the AIMA. The Presidium will validate (or not) this proposal for a proxy system, which is not foreseen in the Statutes.

### **1.3 – Membership fees**

These have been the object of interminable discussions in previous Presidium meetings, to no effect. We must draw this conclusion: the importance of arriving in Romania with a written and well thought-out proposal.

The delegation sent to Romania in May for the Chartres Presidium working group also discussed this. For Ian Maćkowiak, for example, envisioning a membership fee of several hundred Euros for larger museums does not appear out of the question in any way.

But this proposition could be a new obstacle for the AIMA if it is not modulated. Hence, we propose to define a progressive scale of membership fees for museums, for example, in relation with the numbers of visitors per year.

Since we need concrete examples in order to make progress, this annual membership scale could be as follows:

For museums:

- less than 1000 visitors per year : 30 euro
- from 1000 to 10,000: 60 euro
- from 10000 to 100,000: 120 euro
- More than 100,000: 240 euro

For national associations:

- one euro per member?

For individual memberships:

- 10 or 20 euro? (waiving possible in certain cases?)

These are only suggestions to help us move forward in the discussion, and it is the responsibility of the Presidium to discuss this. However, this question is decisive for the AIMA's future. A decision must be made and the first steps carried out before the end of CIMA XVI (when attending members will be invited to pay their first annual fee, before departing).

## **2 – A new administrative organization**

Without paying members, an independent budget, or a Secretariat to manage the files of members and contacts, the administrative organization of the AIMA .... doesn't exist!

During the Serbia 2008 CIMA, Michelle Dondo-Tardiff suggested setting up an executive committee. Her proposal was not pursued, out of pure inertia.

If we do not want to encounter the same problem in Romania, we must propose a new organization AND a (or several) candidates to take on these responsibilities.

## **2.1 – ‘National committees’ as a basis**

The AIMA is an ‘international’ organization and, in this word, we also have ‘nation.’ We need to be able to count on ‘national committees’ – foreseen in the AIMA statutes (Art. VI-5) – in order to facilitate the administrative management of the AIMA. There seem to be three possible configurations here :

- 1- Countries which have a National Museum of Agriculture that brings together all the institutions and persons in the country interested in agricultural and rural heritage. It automatically takes on the role of ‘national committee’, at least as long as no one sees any objection to this.
- 2- Countries like France, that have a national association whose statutes and objectives correspond to those of the AIMA. In this case, such an association – the AFMA in France – would become the ‘national committee’ for the AIMA.
- 3- Countries with neither of the former : in this case, institutions and individuals interested in the AIMA would be put in contact with one another and the AIMA Presidium would appoint a temporary correspondent.

### **The role of national committees is essential for the AIMA to function correctly:**

From the standpoint of financial organization,

- They collect individual and institutional membership fees in their country
- Once a year, they transfer these fees to an AIMA bank account (run by the Secretary-Treasurer or by an ‘Executive Director’, cf. below). In this way, managing international transfers would be greatly facilitated

From the standpoint of how the AIMA operates,

- They propose a representative for their country (and Alternate) for the Presidium and, possibly, the other instances of the AIMA (AMA editorial committee, editorial committee for the future newsletter, etc.).
- They transmit information from the AIMA (if need be, in the language of their country).
- They transmit to the AIMA all proposals and suggestions coming from their members.

## **2.2 – A new ‘executive’ for the AIMA**

The present ‘General Secretariat’ needs to be rethought and its tasks better spread among those to be responsible. We remember the historical role played by the Czech Republic in the origins and history of the AIMA. Furthermore, the headquarters of the AIMA (legal address) is in the Wallachian Open Air Museum in Rožnov pod Radhoštěm (Art. II of the Statutes). There is no reason to change that and the Wallachian Open Air Museum could remain the official site for the AIMA archives.

However, the new media of communication enable us to envision delocalizing the new executive functions and appointing someone to coordinate the members of this branch. The Presidium must think over who would be the most effective and motivated candidate to assume this task and propose a team for a renewed secretariat, which will be subject to the approval of the General Assembly.

It would be wise for this person to have a different nationality than the President, so that the direction of the AIMA not be monopolized by a single country.



The tasks that would be incumbent upon this new executive would be about the same as those defined in the Statutes for the Permanent Secretariat (Art. VI-3), that is:

- Keeping the pertinent files:
  - Of active members of the AIMA and of the membership dues paid.
    - Of a list of ‘contacts’ who wish to be informed or whom AIMA members wish to keep informed.
- Management of a bank account, of the accounting and of preparing a provisional budget,
- Creation and distribution of a regular newsletter,
- Creation and regular updating of a website, which can be hosted by ICOM, as the General Director of ICOM has proposed to the French delegation.
- Continuous cooperation with the President and his/her team for official actions, development of publications, initiatives, etc.

The importance and diversity of these tasks, absolutely essential for an active organization, suppose sharing these tasks under the direction of a motivated coordinator who has the time to invest in this function.

### **2.3 – A new concept of the Presidency**

In AIMA traditions, the President appointed every three years by the General Assembly is the representative of the country that is to host the next congress.

This tradition had its advantages, but it favoured the countries having a large national museum of agriculture and it did not pursue other leads towards organizing congresses in new countries.

Furthermore, when the President is also the director of a large museum, he/she has the competent staff and means to carry out decision and initiatives. If the Presidency were to be taken up by a person with recognized scientific work, but without these material means, the Presidency would have to be envisioned in a new way: the President would need to have a team (a ‘cabinet’) to whom particular tasks could be given.

The AFMA Administrative Council, which met on 27th June 2011, dedicated a long discussion to the situation of the AIMA. The AFMA believes that an international association of museums of agriculture is more necessary than ever, in view of the enormous stakes represented by agriculture in the world today. The AFMA also believes it is time to modernize the way the AIMA operates and to open it up to new member countries. Thus, it may be desirable to choose a host country that will not be attending the Romanian congress.

In view of these considerations, the AFMA proposes the candidacy of François Sigaut, specialist in the history of agricultural techniques, Member of the Academy of Agriculture of France, as the President of the AIMA.

(Preliminary text written by René Bourrigaud, 29 June 2011  
Modified, after exchanges into the working group, 22 August 2011)

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**Closing Speech**  
**to the CIMA XVI General Assembly**  
**By the new President of the AIMA,**  
**François Sigaut**

[< François Sigaut at Slobozia](#)

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

You have just elected me President of the AIMA. This is a great honour for me and I would like to say that I feel an intense gratitude to all of you who believe I am worthy of this task. However, I must also add that it is a true responsibility. The AIMA has been in existence for forty-five years, since the Lednice congress in 1966. I have been a member since the 1976 Reading conference, and I have taken part in enough congresses since then to be convinced of the interest and vitality of the AIMA. The AIMA is a useful institution, the necessity of which has only grown with the more and more radical changes affecting agriculture throughout the world. In order to respond to what must be expected of us, the AIMA has to be strengthened and further developed. This is the task I shall commit myself to in the next three years.

Time is short. I will soon be 71 years old, which does not leave me too much time. I should add to that another handicap – that I am not a museum professional, but a university professor and researcher. It is true that my specialty – the history of agricultural technologies – has long since led me to be very aware of the irreplaceable role of museums in understanding the diversity of earlier agricultures. However, managing a museum requires many and particular competences that I do not possess. I am more a museum user, a regular and faithful one perhaps, but who has never had a direct responsibility for one. Furthermore, if I do have some ideas on the subject, I am very aware of what is missing: practical experience. This will obligate me to be even more careful.

The AIMA now stands at a turning point in its history. We must obviously pursue all that has been undertaken and has worked well since 1966, to the satisfaction of everyone: a congress held every three years in a different country. However, the issue of the next congress has not yet been resolved. I must say that, contrary to our traditions, I do not wish to see the CIMA XVII held in France (where the CIMA VII was held in 1984). This is an option, only if no other solution arises. First of all, I urge you to explore all other possibilities. Of course, I am thinking of Bulgaria, where I would like to see a Presidium mission go as soon as possible to appraise the situation, if our colleague Zdravka Michailova would accept this proposal. However, I am also thinking of non-European countries. The activities of the AIMA must not remain limited to Europe and we have North American and Japanese members. There are also agricultural museums in Egypt, India, Indonesia, China, etc., and we are awaiting the creation of others in Algeria, Senegal and elsewhere. I believe there is no better way to help these countries than to go and visit them. Time is short and it is not certain we can succeed here

immediately. This is a reason to begin working as soon as possible. The idea that the next CIMA could be in one of these countries must be concretely investigated now.

This means that some of our working rules must be amended. Preparing a congress is a very difficult task, which does not leave the President much time for anything else. But there are other things, more and more, in fact. These tasks are set out in the 2011-2013 Strategic Plan written up by Debra Reid this last July. I will not comment on this plan here, but only go into a few points that I believe to be especially important.

First of all, there is the issue of the regular functioning of the AIMA as an institution. Who is a member? How and by whom shall decisions be taken and confirmed? How shall we circulate information? These issues, and others, bring up many questions of details that may appear secondary, but which must be resolved, if we wish to be taken seriously by the national and international institutions (ICOM, FAO...) with whom we wish to cooperate. More generally, this vitally concerns the image we wish to present to others.

Secondly, I believe we must enlarge the framework of our congresses. Having the main theme chosen by the host country is a basic principle that we should in no case change. However, all scientific conferences offer their participants the opportunity to discuss other themes – either because of their topicality or for other reasons – in addition to the main congress subject. We should do the same thing. For each congress, we should propose time to take part in *free-choice workshops*, organized by *theme groups* on the subjects they choose – naturally, on the condition that these topics fit into the general framework of the AIMA.

Thirdly, and finally, we must be ready to discuss not only questions of history as such, but also everything that concerns the pragmatic operation of our museums: museological issues as such (collection, conservation, documentation of objects, educational aspects of exhibits...); the relations between museums and public institutions, with teaching and research, with farmers and their professional organizations, etc.; how various tasks can be shared out among museums, archives, libraries, collectors, databases... We could go on with this list, but I prefer to look at only a few examples, among many.

Allow me to come back to a point I believe is essential – *comparison*. For far too long, it was thought sufficient to appeal to a rather hasty evolutionism in order to understand the infinite diversity of the world's agricultures. I do not in any way wish to minimize the importance of progress, quite to the contrary. But we must not forget that every agriculture possesses its own rationale, in the sense that these are functioning responses to the circumstances existing at a certain time and in a certain place. It is this rationality that we must endeavour to understand, and it is not enough to simply describe this or that form of agriculture well, we must be able to compare it to others. Being interested in the agricultures foreign to us is simply a necessity, in order to understand the heart of those we call our own.

Now, I shall come to my last point, which concerns the image of agriculture, both in the eyes of non-farmers and among farmers themselves. A century ago, everyone or nearly everyone was still either a farmer or a farmer's neighbor. In our so-called developed countries today, agriculture has become an activity of such a minority that it is almost invisible, and especially young people know practically nothing about it. This has left the field open to one caricature after another, running from the backward country folk to the unscrupulous businessman who pollutes without a second's hesitation. Fighting this kind of image in the public mind is more necessary than ever. But there is also the issue of the image farmers have of themselves. By refuting these caricatures, agricultural museums can help farmers retake the place in society that the reduction in their numbers has tended to take away from them.

In the forty-five years of its existence, the AIMA has acquired experience that we must not lose: this is the objective of continuity. But the world is changing and the AIMA must broaden the framework of its activities. It is this task that the members of the Presidium, the Secretariat and I shall commit ourselves to.

Once again, I wish to thank everyone who has helped us to move the AIMA forward,

F. Sigaut

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