

Report of the Internet ECROA General Assembly March 30th 2026

Marcel Smits

Present: Olivier Philipponneau, Mathilda Adams, Marcel Smits, Beke Marquard, Pierre Guy Marnet, Ben Kamel, Judith Mueller, Zlatko Cvetkorski, Rebecca Fosset and Paloma Badia. Steve Lauber announced that he could not be there in time due to a traffic problem.

Olivier welcomes everyone and gives the floor to Marcel, who will lead the meeting.

1. **Financial Audit Committee.** The attendees agree to the proposal that Steve Lauber and Pierre Guy will control the finances of 2025. They will let the next General Assembly know whether they are in line with the financial report that will be presented later.
2. **Moral and Financial report:** In 2025, the foundations were laid for a thriving ECROA: ECROA is now registered with the Dutch Chamber of Commerce and has a bank account. As a result of new legislation, especially to prevent money laundering, this has taken a lot of energy.
In addition, the ECROA website has been adapted to the requirements of our time. Because optimal communication is crucial for the growth of ECROA, the board has investigated how multilingual translation can best be applied within ECROA.
In 2025, 4 international camel events were organized and there was intensive cooperation with the French camel racing association.
3. **Debts and Repayment plan.** Mathilda and Marcel advanced the costs of setting up the Website and the Foundation costs (Notary and Chamber of Commerce). The attendants agree, ECROA will repay the debt if ECROA's income allows it.
4. **Budget Forecast.** The board apologized for the fact that the budget forecast for 2026 was not available during the meeting. It will be presented at the next General Assembly
5. **Strategy.** The main axes of the strategic directions in 2026 will be directed to animal welfare and camel mediation. The intention is that ECROA-member European camel keepers, together with scientists and other experts, will draw up guidelines aimed at monitoring and improving camel welfare. This prevents government agencies from unilaterally drafting legislation on camel welfare.
Camel mediation refers to the use of camels for the better functioning of people (camel therapy). A very promising development in the field of camels!
6. **Projects.** In 2026, a number of projects will be started with the aim of bringing ECROA members into better contact with each other and exchanging knowledge about camels and camel-related matters. The projects must be self-supporting. ECROA is happy to help with the organization, the search for sponsors etc.
Proposals:
 - a. Webinars: every 2-3 months Every 2-3 months a 1-hour webinar about a subject that a topic of interest to ECROA members. Admission for members is free. Non-members pay 30 Euros
 - *First webinar in April or May 2026: Health and welfare of milked camels (Pierre Guy?). This webinar is an theoretical introduction to the practice at the technical day on June 7 at the camel dairy farm in the Netherlands.*
 - *Second webinar : in July or August 2026: European camel gene bank: why and how to contribute.*
 - o *Proposed other webinars:*
 - o *Practice of milking Camels*
 - o *Keeping camels as a hobby: What are the challenges?*

- *protocol welfare of adult camels*
- *Therapy Camels*
- *European legislation as to keeping camels.*

b. Technical days:

A combination of practice and theory

- On a European camel farm or camel-related company or - research institution.

- first technical day: Sunday June 7th at Camel Dairy Smits in the Netherlands.
Entrance, Coffee and Lunch: ECROA members: 40 Euro, non-members: 70 Euro.

This technical day will be a follow-up to the webinar that will be held in April or May. The intention is that Pierre Guy will go into more detail about the milking of camels during this technical day.

c. Emirats Day (Summer 2026)

On July 26, 2026, races with Arabian thoroughbred horses are planned to be held in the Netherlands (Presidents Cup), sponsored by the United Arab Emirates. The intention is to combine these races with a demonstration of camel races (led by Beke Marquard).

However, it is doubtful whether this will continue, given the war in the Middle East.

d. Participation in the Zurich Camel Festival (September 4,5 and 6, 2026).

Ben cordially invites everyone to this special annual camel event.

7. Multilingual Communication. Prior to the meeting the board recommended to use Microsoft Translate (on the telephone) + Teams (on the computer). This turned out not to work very well. Marcel called for the board to know if there are better solutions for Multilingual communication. All the more so since that is also very useful when following the webinars. Fortunately, Pierre-Guy summarized the French excellently in English.

8. Various questions.

- Paloma Badia told that camels currently cannot be exported from Fuertaventura. Camels are kept there for conservation, education and tourist activities.

- Zlatko Cvetkorski told that he is starting a new Camel farm in Macedonia. Therefore, he wants to buy (pregnant) camels. The Board is very glad with this new camel farm and encourage ECROA members to help Zlatko as much as possible.

- Rebecca proposes to make the ECROA website commercial and suitable for the supply and demand of camels. There is no website anywhere in the world for buying and selling camels and camel services.

9. Next General Assembly: June 7th at Camel dairy Smits; Hybrid (physically and by Internet)

10. Close of the meeting. Olivier closed the meeting at 19:35 h.