



## Virtual Board Meeting

17 January 2018, 9:00hrs – 11:15hrs CEST

### Minutes

#### Participants

**Board members:** Co-Chair Patrick Herlant (EC), Conrad Rein (EC), Bernhard Worm (BMZ), Oriane Barthélemy (MEAE France), Sanna-Liisa Taivalmaa (Finland), Ueli Mauderli (SDC), Marco Platzer & Emanuela Benini & Paolo Sertoli (IADC), Julie Delforce (DFAT Australia), Simon Calvert (on behalf of Iris Krebber, DFID), Torben Nilsson (IFAD), & Monique Calon (MFA-The Netherlands)

**Platform Secretariat:** Reinhild Ernst, Marion Thompson, Laura Barrington, Romy Sato, Oliver Hanschke, Manuel Urrutia

**Apologies:** Ammad Bahalim (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation), David Hegwood (Co-Chair, USAID), Iris Krebber (DFID), Edson Mpyisi (AfDB)

#### Agenda

1. Welcome and agreement on agenda for the day
2. Review of action and decision points from the last Board meeting
3. Annual Progress Report 2018 – highlights (presentation by the Secretariat)
4. Draft Work Plan 2019
5. Budget and finance issues
6. Presentation of and decision on new communication strategy
7. Decision on definitions and criteria for the different forms of Platform’s activities and actors
8. Updates on the AGA preparation
9. AOB and closing remarks

Agenda Point	Overview, Discussions, Decisions, and Agreements
<b>1. Welcome and agreement on agenda for the day</b>	<p>The Co-Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and reviewed the agenda points for the day.</p> <p>The agenda was agreed upon without any changes.</p>
<b>2. Review of action and decision points from the last Board meeting, 15 June 2018</b>	<p>The Secretariat reviewed the previous Board meeting action and decision points:</p> <p><b>4.1 Strategic plan implementation and highlights: Regularly share a table with updates/upcoming Platform activities and relevant events with all members, so that they can get engaged in activities</b></p> <p>The Secretariat pointed out that this point will be addressed under this meeting’s agenda point 6 (see agenda point 6 below).</p> <p><b>4.2 Create definitions and criteria (markers) for the different forms of the Platform’s activities and actors, e.g., working groups and partners.</b></p> <p>The Secretariat stated that this point will be addressed under this meeting’s agenda point 7 (see agenda point 7 below).</p>

	<p><b>5. Strategic discussion on way forward for SDG2 roadmap and Rural Youth engagement at the Platform</b></p> <p>The Secretariat reviewed this agenda point and mentioned that a new Youth Thematic Working Group was established. A more detailed update will follow in agenda point 3 (see agenda point 3 below).</p> <p><b>6.i Finances: Following a request by the BMZ, Board members are asked to consider providing increased contributions in the future instead of the yearly minimum of Euro 50.000,00.</b></p> <p>The Secretariat reiterated that this was a request made by the BMZ to the Secretariat and will be discussed in further detail under agenda point 5 of this meeting (see agenda point 5 below).</p> <p><b>6.ii Provide Board members with adjusted 2018 indicative budget.</b></p> <p>The Secretariat stated this this point will be addressed under this meeting’s agenda point 5.i (see agenda point 5.i below)</p> <p><b>7.2 Membership and partnership requests: Secretariat to follow up with MasterCard foundation to gather more information about them and share this with the Board.</b></p> <p>The Secretariat stated that the first step in notifying the Board and acknowledging the Board’s interest in formally approaching the MasterCard Foundation has been accomplished. The second step of establishing contact with Lindsay Wallace of the MasterCard Foundation via Ammad Bahalin (BMGF) is in process.</p>
<p><b>3. Annual Progress Report 2018 – highlights</b></p>	<p>The Secretariat reviewed the five key points from the Annual Progress Report:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. New rural youth work stream established:</b> This was a result of discussions during AGA 2018 and in preparation of the later published Compendium on Donor Engagement with Rural Youth, which framed the AGA. IADC, AfDB, USAID and NORAD are the leads and are currently discussing a work plan for 2019. The working group agreed that 50% of participants in the group should be youth and will soon define further criteria for new participants.</li> <li><b>2. SDG2 Roadmap:</b> This initiative was implemented to catalyse the achievement of SDG2. The Secretariat is providing support to this group. One of its 7 action areas, the 50x2030 Data Initiative, was launched at a high-level side event of the UNGA. The working group met in Berlin 14-15 January and finalised its Theory of Change document. The key messages within this document will be used to mobilise support for SDG2 beyond the donor community.</li> <li><b>3. Paper on policy coherence between agriculture and Aid for Trade was finalized and disseminated:</b> The paper <a href="#"><i>“Strengthening Agriculture and Aid for Trade Development Impact: Opportunities for aligning policies and programmes”</i></a> was written by consultant Paul Engel. Many members contributed to the publication via comments, feedback, networking advice. A webinar was held in late December to disseminate the publication and had good member participation. The Secretariat is following up with</li> </ol>

	<p>interested members to continue this debate and establish a plan of activities in 2019.</p> <p><b>4. Global Donor Working Group on Land:</b> Continuously engaged in the SDGs and VGGTs. They are looking at responsible business conducts in regards to land governance, with at least two side events dedicated to this topic last year – one at the World Bank Land Conference and one at the <a href="#">Global Land Forum</a>. The former looked at <a href="#">the role of development finance institutions</a> (DFI) to see how these types of investors can influence the land tenure-related practices of the investees in their portfolios.</p> <p><b>5. Gender Work Stream:</b> There was a well-attended roundtable in New York on gender, which is a crosscutting issue in the Platform. For example, the 50x2030 Initiative also has a gender component. Land governance targets (e.g. 1.4 and 5.a) also have gender components.</p> <p>In summation, the workstreams influenced each other in 2018, which is a positive outcome.</p>
<p><b>4. Draft Work Plan 2019</b></p>	<p>The Secretariat informed that the work plan structure is adapted from last year but includes some different activities under the four specific outputs. For example, under Output 1, it now includes the Secretariat support provided to the SDG2 Roadmap Initiative. Similarly, under Output 2, the work plan lists Rural Youth as the newly established working group and where resources will be necessary. Under Output 4, (Sound governance of Platform and Secretariat), the Secretariat highlighted task F4) which refers to the necessary prolongation of the hosting arrangement by BMZ.</p> <p>DFID asked for clarification on the absence of a working group on finance for agricultural development. The Secretariat referred to the Board decision taken in June 2018 to discontinue the group, as reporting and outputs for this group are now subsumed into the Agenda 2030 activities; however, information on this topic will be periodically sent to members. GIZ's report on finance for agricultural development was delayed but will be disseminated once it is available. Developments by partners who focus on finance for agricultural development, such as the <a href="#">Smallholder and Agri-SME Finance and Investment Network (SAFIN)</a>, will also be shared. SAFIN is coordinated by IFAD and as many Platform members already engage in this network, it was decided to rather coordinate and disseminate the generated information. IFAD commented that partners who are interested in joining SAFIN are most welcome to contact IFAD for more information.</p> <p>BMZ asked what are the key physical meetings and side events that are planned this year for Output 2, Strategic Thematic Work. The Secretariat mentioned side events or sessions in large conferences, such as the World Bank Land Conference and the CFS. Physical meetings include those organised by workstreams, and roundtables on gender and inclusive agribusiness. Also, in a recent SDG2 Roadmap meeting in Berlin, Ria Ketting (EC) announced a high level event "Global Food Security Network: Food and Agriculture in times of crises" taking place 2-3 April in Brussels. Looking further into the future, Stefan Schmitz (BMZ) proposed that the group support a global conference on agriculture and food security after five years of the Agenda 2030 in Spring 2020.</p>

	<p>IADC commented that the thematic working groups are extremely important and has committed to increase members' information sharing as part of the communication strategy.</p> <p>The Board approved the work plan 2019.</p> <p>Regarding Work Plan item F4 ('Ensure continuity in Secretariat function beyond 12/2019), the Secretariat pointed out that the current BMZ hosting arrangement mandates the Secretariat function via GIZ until 31 December 2019. If the Secretariat is to continue its operations under BMZ mandate, administrative steps would need to be taken now to ensure continuity of the Secretariat function from 01/2020 onwards. It was noted that the BMZ has provided the Platform Secretariat function since its early beginnings in 2003.</p> <p>The BMZ informed that an extension of the mandate until 12/2020 is currently under consideration BMZ internally and that the BMZ will inform the Secretariat regarding its decision soonest possible.</p>
<p><b>5. Budget and finance issues</b></p>	<p>Note: Board members were provided with detailed supporting documents and a brief PowerPoint presentation regarding agenda item 5. The Secretariat presented agenda item 5 on behalf of the Platform Budget Group.</p> <p><b>(i) Report on finances 2018</b></p> <p>The 2018 budget ceiling as it was approved at the Berlin Board meeting was reflected against incurred costs and commitments per accounting status 30 November 2018. Overall budget spending in 2018 (€ 1.184.585, preliminary and subject to final accounting) remained well under the 2018 budget ceiling (€ 1.499.860).</p> <p>The 2018 Platform budget financed various activities reported on in the 2018 progress report. This includes the AGA held in June in Berlin on the topic of Youth, the compilation of a 'Compendium on Donor Programs on Rural Youth', the maintenance and development of the Platform website, webinars, the implementation of a communications review leading to the Platform's new 'Communication Strategy', an 'Analysis on Policy Coherence: ARD and Trade Policies', Secretariat staff travel to events representing the Platform, Secretariat staff costs, office facilities and the yearly external audit, amongst others.</p> <p><b>(ii) Status of financial contributions</b></p> <p>The corresponding overview provided with the Board documents reflects the status and outlook on member contributions regarding member years 2016 to 2019.</p> <p><b>Regarding 2018</b>, 11 members have a signed contribution agreement formalizing core-funding, these are: AfDB, Australia-DFAT, BMGF, DFID, EC, Finland-MFA, France-MEFA, BMZ, Netherlands-MFA, SDC and USAID while 2 agreements are in or close to signature: IADC, IFAD. All concerned core-funding and did not foresee new supplemental funding.</p>

Five members have signed a contribution agreement **for member year 2019** so far: DFAT-Australia, EC, Finland-MFA, BMZ and SDC while one agreement is in the pipeline with USAID for both core- and supplemental funding.

It was informed that Global Affairs Canada (GAC) is hopeful to be in a position to re-establish their financial contribution and become a Board member once again by summer 2019 – communication between GAC and the Secretariat is ongoing.

**In line with provisions made in Annex 3 of the Strategic Plan, members who have not yet indicated their core-funding contribution regarding 2019 are to inform the Secretariat about their core-funding prospects latest by 31 March 2019.**

Special mention was made again of the fact that the BMZ requested at the Berlin Board meeting in June 2018 that other Board members consider contributing higher amounts than the yearly minimum contribution of 50.000 Euro. This request was made particularly because, since the early days of the Platform, significantly larger than the minimum required contribution have been made only by the EC and the BMZ. Members are again requested to consider increasing their yearly contribution, for example to 100.000 Euro yearly. Multi-year agreements are particularly encouraged in the interest of longer term Platform financial planning.

Board members SDC and DFAT-Australia have signed agreements for core-funding until **2020** while the agreement in the pipeline with USAID stipulates core-and supplemental funding until **2022**.

It was pointed out that **contribution agreement periods from 2020 onwards will become valid only with a corresponding BMZ commission** (please see agenda item 4 of these minutes for details).

**(iii) Draft 2019 indicative budget, staffing**

The potential high-ceiling volume of the 2019 Platform Budget was presented based on the 2019 signed contributions and those in the pipeline (€ 1.429.007), the preliminary carry-over from 2018 (€ 315.492, selection for best suited contributions ongoing), the prognosis of additional 2019 contributions if all 'steady' Board members, incl. GAC, contribute in 2019 (€ 400.000). Thus arriving at roughly € 2.144.499, some € 434.000 need to be kept in reserve from the BMZ contribution for VAT/ISC (taxes, indirect support costs) not covered by members regarding the currently BMZ commissioned period 2016-2019. This leads to a potential high ceiling budget space in the area of € 1.700.000.

The corresponding 2019 draft budget presented is comprised of some € 548.858 for Activity-Related Budget Items, € 955.566 for Staff and Management Related Budget Items and roughly € 195.567 for indirect support costs (ISC).

Activity related budget items are rough estimates of budget distribution to the various individual budget positions including the continued maintenance of the Platform website, provisions for the 2019 AGA, staff travels, USAID supplemental funding (in the pipeline, subject to currency deviation and ISC), amongst others. While existing contracts for the website maintenance have been extended until 12/2019 and the AGA 2019 moderator contract is signed, the vast portion of the preliminary activity related budget is not yet charged with activities.

	<p>Staff and management related items are largely based on signed and expected staff contracts until year's end, fixed and running costs, such as office rent and communication infrastructure and the yearly external audit.</p> <p><u>It is important to note that the potential 2019 budget volume is subject to review/adjustments following outstanding indications of the 2019 financial contributions which, in line with Annex 3 of the Strategic Plan, are due by 31 March 2019. Until then, any cost-relevant items which go beyond those already contracted and supported by member contributions, will be evaluated on a case-by case basis to ensure sufficient financing.</u></p> <p>The Co-Chair opened the floor for any comments or questions regarding the budget.</p> <p>MFA Netherlands asked what would be the status of multi year agreements beyond 2019 given the current limitations of the BMZ commission. The Secretariat informed that special text passages are included in affected agreements ensuring its effectiveness beyond 2019 only with a corresponding BMZ commission.</p> <p>IFAD expressed its regret that the conclusion of its 2018 contribution agreement is delayed, which is due to unforeseen prolonged IFAD-internal procedures. IFAD informed of the intention to expand the current draft 2018 agreement to include IFAD's 2019 financial contribution.</p> <p>IADC requested clarification on the budget-scope variations between several budget positions, comparing the 2018 and 2019 budget. The Secretariat briefly explained the differences in allocating amounts of budget to the several budget positions. This is due mainly because of the varying (potential) scope of the 2018 and 2019 budget. And also due to a number of other factors, such as the varying concept of the respective AGA, keeping a buffer for Platform website items in 2019, and the varying staffing spectrum of the Secretariat team (while some functions were temporarily not staffed in 2018, 2019 anticipates full Secretariat staffing).</p> <p>To conclude agenda item 5, the Secretariat briefly elaborated the detailed overview provided to the Board members reflecting the name, function and area of responsibilities of the Secretariat staff. Highlights in developments since the Berlin Board meeting include the staffing of the Communications Officer position with Oliver Hanschke who joined the Secretariat in September 2018. While the Office Manager position was vacant since November 2018, Lucia Wienand has joined the Secretariat in January 2019 to take on that position. The Secretariat also warmly welcomed Manuel Urrutia, who joined the Secretariat as Intern in January with a contract until end of June 2019.</p> <p><b>The documents and presentation regarding agenda item 5 were all approved without dissent.</b></p>
<p><b>6. Presentation of and decision on new communication strategy</b></p>	<p>The Secretariat presented an overview of the new communications strategy, which is a result of a 2018 review by an external communications consultant company, Marchmont Communications, well versed in the development field. The review examined the communication tools used, assessed their performance via member</p>

	<p>interviews, a survey, and a website diagnostic, and came up with a list of recommendations based on member demands.</p> <p>The Secretariat wants to keep the communication tools that have worked and refine the tools that can be improved upon in order to have a package of tools that can provide better services to Members. Communication tools are ranked according to importance and effectiveness, with “A” being the highest priority, “B” being middle priority, and “C” being low priority. The focus will be on “A” tools as they can achieve the biggest impact. Tools with priority B/C are subject to availability of time and funds. Written outputs will have a revised journalistic tone, emphasizing condense reporting on key take away messages, greater visual impact with the use of infographics. The new communication strategy will be cross media and upcycle content, while working on standardization.</p> <p>Going forward, communication tools will be standardized according to their effectiveness and demand from Members. The Website is the major reference tool and there has been an increase in site visitors from 2017-2018, indicating the direction the Secretariat is taking in communications is on the right track. The eUpdate and activity briefs will remain top priority tools. The activity briefs will be used to collect information from members by the Secretariat in order to compile an easy to digest document that will be shared with the Members. There will be a Members only toolbox, which will be a virtual library containing useful files, an interactive calendar, and a who’s who list for members, amongst other documents. The toolbox provides a service that Members have requested. A network of communicators is another tool that is in the works, which increases the visibility of members’ content, can be shared, and leverages the nature of the Platform’s networking core.</p> <p>The Co-Chair opens the floor for comments, questions, or concerns.</p> <p>DFID thinks the comprehensive communications strategy is great. They think that there should be more regular eUpdates, as they are useful, as is expanding the database of contacts so that these eUpdates get to more people. They will promote the eUpdate within DFID. DFID asked what is the value of a members only section? Why build a fire wall and not open it up to everyone? The Secretariat says this question will be elaborated upon in detail in the next agenda point, but essentially, its purpose is to make members feel like there is a reason to be a member in that it provides incentive to be a member.</p> <p>IADC said they are fine with the creation of Members’ only tools but they would like a better understanding of the prioritization of the tools and how they are linked to each other. As they understand things, tools with a priority B/C are subject to availability of time and funds. Will decisions regarding actions taken on B/C prioritized tools be communicated to members? They also think that a network of communicators is a good idea, but how would this be implemented?</p> <p>The Secretariat said the rankings came from the Members’ survey and interviews, but B/C tools will be utilized to a lesser degree as Members find A tools more useful and less crucial to stimulate contact amongst Members and partners.</p>
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	<p>MFA Netherlands stated that it is good that there is an overall strategy given that communications is part of the Platform’s core activities. It is also good that it responds to the needs of the members. They had two questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Will different thematic working groups include a paragraph on communications in their work plans that link to the communications strategy in order to promote both the communications strategy and the groups’ respective thematic topics?</li> <li>2. If these tools are for members only, how do we engage with partners? What is the communication strategy with them and how will it take advantage of these partnerships?</li> </ol> <p>The Secretariat stated that the issue of work streams will be disseminated through the various tools, such as activity briefs. This will consolidate the thematic working groups work plans into the overall communications strategy. This strategy is about setting a plan and pattern of tools the Platform wants to use. Communication with Platform partners will be discussed under agenda item 7.</p> <p>The Co-Chair asked for a decision on adopting the new communications strategy. There was no dissent, and so the strategy was approved.</p>
<p><b>7. Decision on definitions and criteria for the different forms of Platform’s activities and actors</b></p>	<p>Further clarity on the definitions and criteria for the different forms of the Platform’s activities and actors was requested by the Board in June 2018. The decision sheet references the sections of the Strategic Plan, which provide background on the Platform’s activities and actors. After a review of the Strategic Plan, the Secretariat believes the Platform’s activities are sufficiently described, but on the topic of actors there are some areas in need of further definition, which the present agenda item will focus on.</p> <p><b>Decision 1</b> in the decision sheet proposes definitions to distinguish between <i>strategic</i> and <i>operational</i> partners, as these definitions are not established in the Strategic Plan. Please refer to the decision sheet for the specific definitions. The definitions between the two groups of partners are important because they related to Secretariat resource usage. Strategic partners require more Secretariat resources, so formally defining these partners will help in planning Secretariat activities.</p> <p><b>Decision 2</b> in the decision sheet relates to the decision-making process for <i>strategic</i> and <i>operational</i> partners. The Board shall review <i>strategic</i> partners at least once a year at the Board Meeting following the AGA, while <i>operational</i> partners shall be decided upon and managed by the Thematic Working Group Leads directly, as these partners change more frequently and greater flexibility is needed to facilitate the knowledge sharing with a broad range of partners.</p> <p><b>Decision 3</b> lists the benefits of partners versus the benefits of full and associate members. The table is based on the Strategic Plan but the Secretariat proposes two changes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Strategic</i> partners shall only be featured with their logo on the Platform’s website, without a particular focal point, because the organization itself is a partner and not the focal point.</li> <li>2. <i>Strategic</i> partners shall not be invited to Members’ Day Meetings unless they are in the process of becoming a member, as the Secretariat wants to differentiate the benefits between members and partners.</li> </ol>



	<p>The Co-Chair opens the floor for comments, questions, or concerns.</p> <p>IADC stated they are pleased about the definitions as it is important to make a difference between the different levels of members and partners and they request that the Secretariat clearly document these definitions and what they entail (i.e. the relevant benefits) of being an operational partner, strategic partner, a Board member (paying) and an associate member (non-paying), emphasizing the difference in benefits between (paying) members and (non-paying) associate members in order to stimulate the latter to join the Board, by contributing financially to the Platform, and to gain further benefits. In addition, having these definitions can be linked to a strategy for gaining more paying members or more or certain types of partners, e.g. from institutions or on the executing side. The decision is a good first step towards defining the different actors involved and how this can contribute to the implementation of the Strategic Plan.</p> <p>The Co-Chair asked for a decision on adopting these three decisions and the decision on the new communications strategy. With no objections, the four decisions were endorsed.</p>
<p><b>8. Updates on the AGA preparation</b></p>	<p>The present Co-Chair from the EC introduces the ideas regarding AGA 2019 from the USAID Co-Chair who could unfortunately not attend the meeting, who proposes a Members’ only AGA, one that reflects and expands upon the Members section of the last AGA. Facilitator Nancy White contributed to the proposal with some initial thoughts on how such a Members’ only AGA could be conceived.</p> <p>The central idea of AGA 2019 is that beyond the themes and topics that have already been identified, Members need to ask themselves essential higher-level questions regarding how they will operate in a changing environment, such as what is our role as donors and what is our added value? Solely moving towards the political priorities may not be enough as political themes constantly change. For example, migration, a current short-term political priority, did not exist two years ago, while a long-term priority is fostering sustainable agri-food systems. A Members’ only AGA can allow the Members to better survey the donor landscape with its shifting political and societal priorities and themes so that the Members can better reposition and prepare themselves relative to these priorities and themes that will arise.</p> <p>This AGA would be innovative and pragmatic. The next step would be to come up with some key questions that can anchor the discussion sections and process of the AGA that Nancy has described. The Co-Chair proposes the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do Members position themselves as a public sector in relation with the private sector?</li> <li>• What will be the position of the public sector in these changing political and societal environments?</li> <li>• How can we redefine ourselves and the network as an output of this event.</li> </ul> <p>The point of the AGA is to capture ideas and questions. SDC has graciously offered to host AGA 2019 and will part of the steering committee. The AGA will be 1.5 days, followed by a 0.5 day Board Meeting. There will be fewer attendees than previous AGAs due to the Members’ only nature of this AGA, and some key</p>

	<p>Platform Members will be invited to give talks at the outset of the AGA in order to frame the anchor questions.</p> <p>The Co-Chair opens the floor for comments, questions, or concerns.</p> <p>SDC states that the concept note is excellent and that it is good to connect as a group. They said they are ready and looking forward towards hosting the next AGA. They are currently looking for a venue as the first venue they had in mind was not available during the second half of May or the first half of June.</p> <p>MFA Netherlands thinks the Members' only AGA concept note is a great idea. The talk leaders can frame the meeting for future issues. The AGA can be a building bloc towards a new strategic plan, which can lead towards using AGA 2020 to consolidate a new strategic plan. AGA 2019 should feed into the strategic plan process.</p> <p>The Co-Chair reiterated that Members have big challenges coming up; both from funding and political support perspectives and so Members need to sell themselves to meet the coming demands.</p> <p>IADC thinks that the Members' only AGA is a great idea and believes that the AGA can also be used to examine what benefits members and partners should have in relation to next strategic plan. They would also like to be part of the steering committee.</p> <p>The Secretariat stated that the steering committee will be composed of the host, SDC, the Co-chairs and the Secretariat, but a round of collecting input from Members in regards to which issues and challenges that lie ahead and be brought up within the AGA is a good idea. Members are invited to write the steering committee with any ideas they may have.</p> <p>IADC mentioned that the Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028 could also be an idea for the AGA.</p> <p>Co-Chair stated that family farming is at the core of changing agricultural food systems and reclaiming the role/critical contribution of smallholder family farming to achieve sustainable and inclusive agrifood systems.</p> <p>IFAD supports the AGA concept note but notifies the Board that they will hosting an event that launches the Decade of Family Farming on 27-29 May in Rome, so the AGA should not conflict with these dates.</p> <p>Co-Chair said that the EC will also organize a large event on food crisis and agricultural food systems from 2-3 April. The outcomes from this event could feed into the AGA.</p> <p>The next steps are to refine the concept note by spelling out the process the Members would like to follow and identifying key challenges that will arise in the next 10-15 years. It is important to ask what will be the issues and political priorities in the near future.</p>
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	The Co-Chair asked for a decision on endorsing the AGA 2019 concept note and clarify the note as the next action. There was no dissent, and so the decision was taken to endorse the concept note.
<b>9. AOB and closing remarks</b>	<p>The Secretariat apologized for the problems they had with their email server. The problems will hopefully be fixed by end of the week. The minutes will be forwarded to the Board.</p> <p>MFA Netherlands gives a suggestion for a thematic topic at AGA 2019 by stating that “rural development” maybe not be the right way to define the scope of the Members’ work. They suggest that maybe including a specific focus through the thematic working groups on the act of urbanisation could come out as a topic in the AGA.</p> <p>The Co-Chair agrees that there is a need to stop thinking along rural/urban divides. The Secretariat states that this topic is quite developed in the Land Group.</p> <p>The Co-chair closed the meeting thanking the Board members for their participation.</p>

#### Action Points

Agenda Point	Task	Responsible	Timeline
<b>4.-</b> 2019 Work Plan – Section F ‘Platform Governance’	Ensure continuity of Secretariat function past 12/2019	Secretariat in close collaboration with BMZ	asap
<b>5.-</b> Budget and finance issues	Secretariat to distribute the 2018 external audit report to Board members	Secretariat	31 May 2019
<b>5.-</b> Budget and finance issues	Members to contact the Secretariat about their 2019 contributions	Board members	31 March 2019
<b>5.-</b> Budget and finance issues	Secretariat to review and if called for adjust the 2019 budget pending the result of contributions stated by Board members by 31 March	Secretariat	April 2019
<b>8.-</b> Updates on the AGA preparation	Refine AGA 2019 concept note	AGA Steering Committee (SDC, Co-chairs & Secretariat)	asap