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President of the Governance Board
Infrastructure and Ecology Network Europe

Infrastructure and Ecology Network Europe (IENE) members

Dear members of the Network,

We had the great pleasure of meeting many of you at the recent IENE General Assembly and throughout the IENE2018 International Conference “Crossing borders for a greener and sustainable transport infrastructure,” which took place in Eindhoven, Netherlands, on 11-14 September 2018.

We would like to thank you for our constructive discussion and your valuable comments at the IENE General Assembly and express our appreciation for your support and commitment to restructuring IENE towards more a dynamic and member-driven collaboration with an embedded scientific dimension.

Addressing the complexity of the challenge

The restructuring of IENE is paramount in view of the discontinuation of a long period of public financing by the Swedish Transport Administration which has, to a great share, unilaterally supported the activities of the Network, since 2008. The growing dynamics of the infrastructure sector as well as the rising importance of tackling biodiversity issues have added an insurmountable complexity for any institution or country to shoulder the burden almost single-handedly.

Breaking the silo thinking

The restructuring of IENE is equally a timely opportunity in view of recent international developments that aim to mainstream biodiversity in the field of infrastructure, elevate the consequences of biodiversity loss to the level of risk posed by the climate challenges and the misuse of natural resources, and develop a holistic approach to infrastructure development integrating social and ecological dimensions. National administrations and private companies often lead their own applied research and take unilateral decisions and actions. The IENE has the potential to become a multidimensional forum and a leading actor connecting infrastructure operators and ecologists at European and international levels.



Closing the circle

The restructuring of IENE will provide valuable tools to foster development by promoting the necessary knowledge to strengthen all three pillars of science-based decision making and thus close the circle from the need for new knowledge to support action; to fostering applied research to refine new knowledge; to practical tailor-made advice to improve the exchange of experience and good practice.

Adapting to the members' needs

Last, the restructuring of IENE is an opportunity to renew the Network's ambitions in terms of scope and activities, to perform proactive research coordination and to be able to face our common challenges.

Although the complete restructuring of the Network and its strategic vision will be officially unveiled and discussed with the members at the IENE2020 International Conference "Transportation Infrastructure Networks with Ecological Solutions," which will take place in Évora, Portugal, on 6-9 April 2020, there is an urgency of action to ensure the continuity of the Network and to take upon the opportunity of a fertile international conjuncture.

To this intent, several proposals were made and are scheduled to cover the interim period (2018-2020) of the IENE reorganisation. These will build on the decisions approved by the IENE General Assembly on 11 September 2018:

Decision 1: Agree on the intended organisational development - establishment of a Governance Board (GB), a Scientific and Expert Committee (SEC) and an Executive Secretariat (ES) - and approval of the suggested members for the interim Governance Board.

Decision 2: Agree to delegate to the new Governance Board the authority to draft a strategic plan for IENE and to update the existing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) accordingly, to be adopted at the next IENE conference in Évora in 2020.

Decision 3: Agree to delegate from now on to the new Governance Board the authority to engage the network in the proposed activities (Call for research, Web Handbook, etc.).

We would like to thank you for your confidence and we look forward to developing together a solid collaboration at European and international levels around the fields of infrastructure and



biodiversity for a better understanding and harmonisation of our interconnected society and nature.

We will provide regular updates on the development of the restructuring of the Network during the interim period. Please do not hesitate to contact us for any question or enquiry at info@iene.info.

With best regards,

Anders Sjölund

President of the Governance Board

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