

CETAF AISBL
c/o Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences
Rue Vautier, 29.
B-1000 – Brussels,
Belgium

Espoo, Finland, 26 November 2020

Dear CETAF colleagues,

I am writing with regret to inform you that I am obliged to stand down from my position as Chair of the Governing Board of CETAF, because I have been appointed by the Government of Finland to the post of Director General of the Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE; more information [here](#)). While a significant research and expert institution in the area of the environment and biodiversity, SYKE is not a collection-holding institution and, hence, not a member of CETAF. Therefore, I cannot continue as Chair of the Governing Board.

I am sorry I have to leave already now, before even half of my term has passed. However, I am thankful to the members of the Executive Committee, with whom I had a meeting yesterday, for their readiness to carry on their work for CETAF. Our bylaws state (Section V, article 11, paragraph 2): *“In the event of a vacancy during a mandate, for whatever reason, the Executive Committee may appoint a provisional member to complete the mandate vacant seat, except if the vacancy corresponds to the Chair, in which case his/her function will be borne by the Vice-Chair, or failing that, by the Secretary.”* I am happy to let you know that the Vice-Chair, Professor Michelle Price, has received the mandate from her institution and is willing to bear the function of the Chair. Hence, the work of the EC will continue uninterrupted, and **I resign with immediate effect, i.e., from the date of this letter**, even though my new position does not commence until 1 January 20201.

I take this opportunity to wish CETAF and all its members the best of success. The times are challenging, to say the least. However, at the same time, several exciting developments, such as the digital transformation and the renewed political focus on the sustainability crisis, open up great opportunities for collection-holding institutions. I strongly believe that, if working together as one coherent community, natural science collection institutes can assume a pivotal role in supporting the societal transition that is required for a good future of our children and grandchildren.

I thank you all for collaboration in various contexts and hope we will have the opportunity to work together again in the future.

Yours sincerely,



Leif Schulman
Director, Finnish Museum of Natural History
Chair of the Governing Board of CETAF