

## Minutes of the 'Online learning needs assessment' MuEuCAP Zoom meeting Thursday 22 October 2020, 10.30 am (European time); 3.00 PM (15.00 hours, Myanmar time)



### Attendance (EUPs):

Dr Marcela Suarez-Rubio, Project Coordinator, University of Natural Resources and Natural Sciences, Austria  
Prof. Christoph Kleinn, University of Göttingen, Germany  
Dr Lutz Fehrmann, University of Göttingen, Germany  
Assoc Prof Dr Alfonso Marzal Reynolds, University of Extremadura, Spain  
Dr Paul Bates, Project Manager, University of Natural Resources and Natural Sciences, Austria

### (MUPs):

Dr Sai Sin Lin Oo, National Project Coordinator, University of Mandalay  
Daw Saw Myat Ohnmar, Project Outreach Officer, Myeik University  
Prof Dr Mie Mie Sein, Pro-Rector, Mawlamyine University  
Dr San San Aye, University of Mandalay  
Dr Aung Aung Aye, Myeik University  
Dr Zin Lin Khine, Myeik University  
Dr Aung Myo Hsan, Mawlamyine University  
Dr Aye Aye Myint, Myeik University

### Apologies for absence:

Prof Dr Thant Zin, Head of Zoology, University of Mandalay, Myanmar

**Item 1: Introduction/Opening Remarks:** At 10.33 hours, Dr Marcela Suarez-Rubio (BOKU), the Chairperson and project Co-ordinator welcomed everyone to the meeting. She informed all the participants that the meeting was being recorded and received their permissions. She outlined the aim of the meeting, noting that online teaching was not in the original MuEuCAP proposal, but recognising that it is important not only for now but also for the future. In the immediate term, it will prevent the project from falling further behind schedule by allowing those MUP staff trained in

Europe to fulfil their commitments to WP3 (Practical Testing of the Curriculum) and WP4 (Realisation of the curriculum).

**Item 2: Current status of online teaching in Myanmar's higher education:** Dr Sai led the conversation about the current situation of online teaching in Myanmar. He noted that Myanmar staff have been involved in many online training programmes, which have been initiated by Myanmar's Ministry of Education. He suggested that university staff were in a good position to take part in online teaching/learning since it was low cost, flexible, access to the internet was mainly good in the universities, and staff could teach from home. However, the situation for many of the students was more problematic, owing to practical difficulties with living in remote areas that had a shortage of electricity and access to the internet. There was also a shortage of laptops.

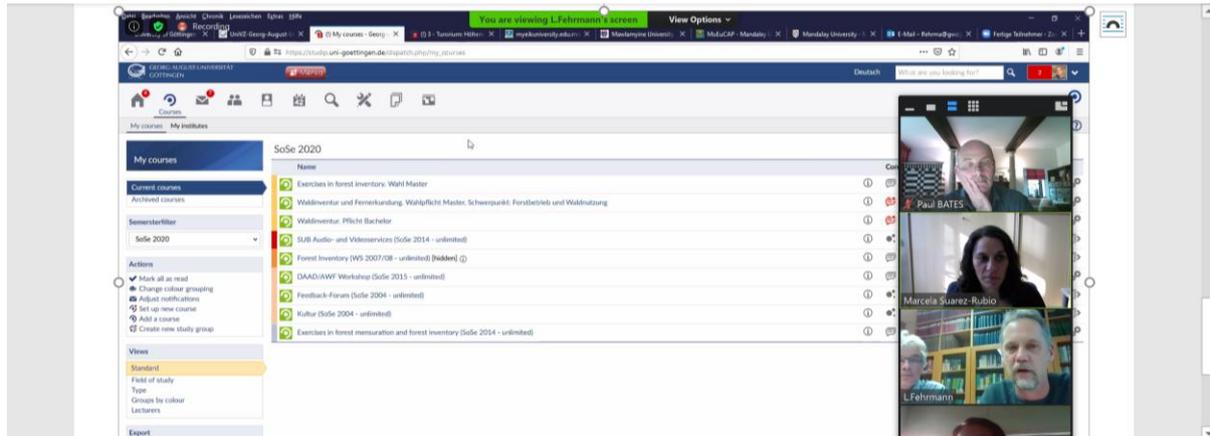
Daw Ohnmar talked about the importance of 'blended learning' and 'synchronous learning' and noted that most Masters' students have access to laptops and/or smart phones and there is good internet connection in Myeik University. Dr Lutz suggested that currently the Myanmar universities' webpages appear somewhat dated and seem to have no platforms for sharing online materials.

Daw Ohnmar stated that currently the universities have not chosen a particular learning platform and that there is a need for uniformity. Dr Sai noted that the Myanmar government, with financial support from the EU, is in negotiations with some private companies about choosing an e-learning platform. He further noted that most individuals used Zoom and/or Microsoft Teams and/or Google Meet. It was pointed out that to upload to Microsoft Teams, the user needs to have Microsoft Office 365. Dr Sai suggested that students and staff might need some financial help to cover the cost of using their own mobile data.

Dr Lutz noted that perhaps surprisingly Germany has very poor internet/mobile coverage in some regions and many students living in rural areas have to travel to internet hotspots to download online tutorials. He also explained that although each university has had some form of e-learning platform for some time, most have not been used extensively until now. Currently, in addition to online tutorials, a Big Blue Button (<https://bigbluebutton.org/>) meeting is hosted once a week for discussions but there are limitations on participation and the length of the meeting.

**Item 3: Structure of an online tutorial:** It was suggested by Dr Lutz that to prepare an online meeting requires the teacher to think hard about didactics since it is not possible to just replicate existing face-to-face teaching methods – with two hour lectures and 50 slides. Rather there is a need to break the lectures into smaller sections and produce 30 minute lectures. Dr Lutz also noted that in the past, his practical demonstrations in the field usually lasted 3 to 4 hours but now he has to condense this teaching, requiring him to think about filming, recording, editing sound and video, and preparing subtitles.

Dr Lutz underlined the importance of preparing a good 'story-board' (logical plan) before preparing/filming an online presentation and looking at examples of best practice online. He noted that the young generation are more familiar with the technology and that in addition to preparing online tutorials himself, he will instruct the 50% of students who are able to attend university practicals in person next term to prepare instruction videos for the 50% of foreign students who are currently still based abroad. He showed examples of how tutorials are stored on, and can be accessed from, the UGOE webpage.



Prof. Christoph noted that the communication of science is an increasingly important topic and this training is very timely. However, he also advised that examinations should not only test knowledge learned but also skills developed through practical application and that the rigour of examinations should be maintained irrespective of the teaching methods and content. He also commented on the potential dangers of recording verbatim existing lectures as content that is deemed acceptable to the classroom may excite adverse comment if published online.

Dr Alfonso suggested that online learning can never replace face to face learning, only complement it and that one hour lectures need to be split into short separate explanations of different concepts.

**Item 4: Platforms for hosting online tutorials:** Dr Marcela suggested that the BOKU online platform with an available space of 100 gb might be useful for the uploading of MuEuCAP output. However, it was suggested that for the longer term, there needs to be a system that is free and accessible to Myanmar universities and which is linked to their websites.

**Item 5: Conclusion and Action points:** In conclusion, the Myanmar staff who had attended training in Europe, were asked by Dr Marcela if they were happy to prepare a 10 minute online presentation on one topic of their work in respect of WP3 (Practical testing of the curriculum). This would act as a baseline for MUP/EUP staff to assess training needs. All agreed to do this. Daw Ohnmar, Dr Sai, and Dr Paul also agreed to complete other tasks.

### **Action Points**

- Four 10 minute videos to be presented on 29 October, namely:
  - Dr Aung Aung Aye on 'Ecological monitoring of coral' in Powerpoint/OBS Studio
  - Dr Zin Lin Khine on 'Introduction to statistics' in OBS Studio
  - Dr Aung Myo Hsan on 'Survey methodology of coral reef' in Powerpoint/OBS studio
  - Aye Aye Myint on 'Why scientific writing is important: the importance of a good introduction'.
- Daw Ohnmar to set up a training programme in Google Classroom
- Dr Sai to report back on what platforms the Ministry of Education are considering and when such platforms might be available
- Dr Lutz to provide a "making off" video on how we prepare video tutorials
- Dr Paul to provide a training video on aspects of editing video and audio in Powerpoint.

It was decided to meet again in one week at 10.30 am European time/ 16.00 hours Myanmar time on 29 October. The meeting would be expanded to include additional Myanmar staff who attended training in Europe.

**Action Point**

- Daw Ohnmar to invite additional Myanmar staff members.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12.03 hours.