

***Meeting of the European Carbon Association
March 04th 2026 (online)***

Minutes

Participants

UK. The British Carbon Group: Alex THEODOSIOU, Gareth NEIGHBOUR.

France. Société Francophone d'Étude des Carbones. Alain CELZARD (ECA Chair), Conchi ANIA.

Spain. Grupo Español del Carbón. Covadonga PEVIDA, Agustín Francisco PEREZ CADENAS.

Portugal. Grupo do Carbono. Fernando PEREIRA, Ana Paula CARVALHO.

Germany. ArbeitskreisKohlenstoff (AKK). --

Poland. Polish Carbon Group. Aneta FRACZEK-SZCZYPTA, Mirosława PAWLYTA.

Ukraine. Association "CARBON" in Ukraine. --

Start time: 10 h (CET, GMT+1)

End time: 12:05 h (CET, GMT+1)

1. Opening Remarks.

The ECA chair (CELZARD) opens the meeting at 10 am and starts reminding the participants that all attendees are members of the association and share a commitment to its mission and objectives. He emphasizes that the purpose of current mandate is to revitalize the association, which has been perceived as relatively inactive in the past years. As such, it will be conducted by a spirit of service, with the objective of contribute constructively to the benefit of ECA and implement decisions collectively adopted by members.

Members agreed with the assessment that the association had shown limited activity over the past three years, and that a revival would be beneficial.

The president explains that current meeting, framed as a "Revival Meeting", intended to share with the members some ideas for revitalizing the association. These ideas require the collective engagement and active involvement of the respective national associations.

The President proposed that the ECA should again function as a coordination platform creating added value beyond the aggregation of national activities. Members agreed, and were encouraged to share expectations and suggest priorities for the coming years.

2. Actions implemented in previous months.

The President summarized several actions already implemented:

- ECA website update, including publication of photos from the Saint-Malo conference. Appreciation was expressed for the efficient work of the webmaster, Aneta FRACZEK-SZCZYPTA.
- Revision and clarification of the association's statutes, including a review of the rules governing the ECA Prize.

3. Actions proposed for consideration.

The president shared a power point presentation with several actions, that will be shared with the members by email).

- **Logo.** A proposal for a modification of the logo was presented. The layout and colors remain unchanged, with various outlines. Outcome: a revised logo with circular outline was retained.

- **Secretary position.** The President proposed creating a Secretary position to the Governance of the ECA (currently formed by a president, a vice-president, and a webmaster) to assist with note-taking, drafting minutes and act as communication actor with members and other institutions. A suggestion was made that this role rotate with the national group holding the presidency. Outcome: Members emphasized that the creation would require a statutory amendment and specific definition of the role. It was also noted that the webmaster does not take part in the Governance and that this should be corrected in the website. It was concluded that the position was not necessary, and the idea was abandoned.
- **Liaison Officer for early-career researchers.** The President recalled a previous proposal to establish a Liaison Officer for early-career researchers to integrate the perspectives of PhD candidates, postdoctoral researchers, etc. in the ECA. Discussion highlighted that such roles do not currently exist within national groups. Outcome: The proposal was abandoned.
- **ECA Newsletters.** The President proposed creating ECA Newsletters to share news and developments within the community. The newsletter would be disseminated via the national societies, which would also contribute to the content (announcements of national conferences, awards and distinctions, important publications, community news). Discussion highlighted that it would be a great effort that needs the input and commitment of all the national groups to make it possible. Outcome: The proposal was approved.
- **Joint Online Seminars.** The president presented a proposal to organize series of online seminars (2–4 sessions per year), in the format of short/long presentations (45-75 min), with each national society nominating at least one speaker per year and a selection considering scientific excellence, geographical balance, career-stage diversity and gender balance (among others). The seminars would be recorded and archived on the association website. Outcome: Approved.
- **Early-Career Researcher Mobility Grant.** The president proposed to launch micro-grants (€300–500) to support travel, conferences, or research visits to early career researchers, with funding coming from contributions by national societies. The members considered the administrative effort too high relative to the limited impact, particularly since similar funding already exists at national level in various groups. Outcome: The proposal was not adopted.
- **“Carbon Rising Star” Award.** The president proposed to establish a European early-career researcher award, with eligibility based on career stage (e.g., up to 8 years after PhD). The members approved the concept with reservations. It was suggested that the award would be presented once every three years at the European Carbon conference rather than annually. The rules should draw on the existing ECA Award statutes. The rules and the financial contribution must be approved by each national society before final adoption of this action.
- **European / International Summer School.** An International Summer School in Carbon Science was proposed as a long-term strategic initiative of the ECA. The action was initially proposed as a 4-5 days school, targeting 20-40 participants, with lectures, tutorials, and poster sessions. The estimated budget was above €50,000. The discussion among the members emphasizes high logistical complexity and costs (based on the experience of the Spanish group that organizes a similar initiative every two years). It was suggested to consider shorter formats (e.g., two days) and hybrid or online options combined with in-person format only when the world conference takes place in Europe (to minimize costs). It was informed that the American Carbon Society (ACS) is currently considering a similar action: potential collaboration with them was suggested. Outcome: the members suggested to postpone further actions on this topic until knowing the outcome of the COST action submitted some months ago, which could provide an appropriate framework.
- **European Carbon Days.** The president presented a proposal to organize thematic online “European Carbon Days” strengthening the ECA’s identity and visibility. The discussion

among the members reflected that it is preferable to first evaluate the Joint Seminar Series before launching additional initiatives. The format proposed (full day event) seemed not adequate as it is unlikely to attract the attention of an online event with presentations from morning to night. Outcome: The proposal was abandoned for the moment.

- ***Annual ECA Scientific Report.*** The president presented a proposal for an annual report on European advances in Carbon science, aimed at strengthening visibility and influence. After a brief discussion, the idea was not pursued at this stage, with priority given to launching the newsletter.
- ***Predatory Conferences.*** The President raised concerns about predatory conferences on carbon materials (examples are: Carbon Connect 2026 in Frankfurt, Carbon Horizon 2026 in Paris, and Carbon Chemistry and Materials 2026 in Valencia), noting cases where researchers were listed as speakers without awareness or consent. The members were encouraged to inform their national societies about the reputational risks associated with such events. It was emphasized that ECA should continue promoting trusted conferences through its website, that each member has a responsibility to communicate this to their national society members. It is acknowledged, however, that the ECA has no authority to enforce compliance. Outcome: the members approved this approach.
- ***12th Carbon Symposium by the Polish Group.*** The president presents the concerns raised within the national group regarding the announcement of the 12th Carbon Symposium by the Polish Group, scheduled for June 23–26, 2026, in Gliwice, Poland. The announcement of the event was forwarded to the French group, as per request of the Polish Group. This prompted concerns from some members of the SFEC warranting further clarifications about the national/international character of this conference hosted under the umbrella of the Polish carbon Group. The president explained that in 2000 the World Conference on Carbon became the principal international conference for all carbon communities. At this time, to protect the continuity, growth, and quality of the World Conference on Carbon, it was agreed that national groups would focus only on topical conferences and, that members would be encouraged not to attend general international conferences organized by other communities. The president notes that the World Conference has faced competition from highly specialized events (e.g., graphene, nanotubes, biochar) and from other general conferences. A precedent in the 2010s was cited: the Indian Carbon Society organized a general international conference after being denied a World Carbon Conference. If the conference of the Polish carbon Group wishes to broaden the scope of its national conference, this change would require discussion within the ECA. It is suggested that national groups and their members commit to refraining from organizing international general conferences that could compete with the World Carbon Conference, particularly when scheduled at or near the same time. The president concludes that the change of name from Torun Carbon Symposium to 12th Carbon Symposium has been perceived as an intention to become fully international, which constitutes the core concern and could reasonably cause offense to the organisers of the World Carbon Conference.

The Polish group clarifies that the name was simply changed because the event no longer takes place in Torun. They stated that this is the national event of the Polish Group, even if some foreign experts usually attend the conference. They indicated that the event is usually attended by around 70 people, for which it can in no way compete with the World Carbon Conference, and manifested their surprise to the concerns raised (particularly since there is no overlapping in the dates). Moreover, members of the Polish Group have indeed submitted abstracts and are considering attendance to the World Carbon Conference in Charleston.

It was suggested that to avoid ambiguities in the future and potential conflict with the organizers with the World Carbon Conference, the title of the national conferences should include the national character, such as “Polish carbon conference,” “Portuguese carbon conference,” etc. No comments from the rest of the members were made to this suggestion.

- **World Carbon Council.** The president suggested that these issues reinforce the need to reactivate the World Carbon Council, originally established by Marc Monthieux to coordinate continental groups and facilitate strategic discussions between the Asian Association of Carbon Groups (AACG), the American Carbon Society, and the Latin American group. It was indicated that this issue will be further explored during the upcoming World Carbon Conference in Charleston. The discussion emphasized that some of the ECA members are not familiar with the missions of this World Carbon Council, and that this should be clarified. The president of ECA indicated that he will share the 2012 roadmap document issued in one of the last World Carbon Council meetings to further discuss this matter in the future.
- **Establishing Links with the European Advanced Carbon & Graphite Materials Association (ECGA).** The president enquires about the possibility of establishing collaborative links between ECA and ECGA to broaden the ECA's profile beyond academia. It was highlighted that the ECGA sponsored the World Carbon Conference in 2025, and participated in a Round Table of discussion organized around Industry – Academia collaborations. It was also noted that most of the ECA members are not familiar with ECGA, and that more information about the potential benefits for ECA and partners will be needed. It was proposed to further discuss about this matter in upcoming meetings, once more information is presented.
- **Establishing Links with isolated researchers in Europe.** The president presents a proposal to strengthen connections with European carbon researchers who are not currently represented by a national society. Such “isolated” researchers would have been identified in Hungary and Italy, and could exist potentially in other countries in Europe. It was proposed to approach them to join the ECA to be able to profit from the resources and opportunities provided by this organization. But in accordance with ECA statutes, ECA membership is based on affiliation with a national society, thus this would require formal registration and contribution of isolated researchers to a national group. The president invites members to report any knowledge of such cases. A cited example is the French-speaking group, which includes Belgian and Swiss researchers, as well as individuals from North Africa and the French West Indies. Members are asked whether similar arrangements exist in other countries lacking national groups, and, if not, to identify and reach out to such researchers. The discussion points out that these are few researchers that limit themselves to participating in the world Carbon conference, and might not necessarily seek to be affiliated with a national group. Since they have always operated this way, it seems difficult to change anything in this regard.

4. Closing Remarks.

The president moves to conclude and close the meeting. It is noted that updates will be provided as progress is made on different actions. Smaller preparatory meetings may be organized with volunteers, focused on the specific topics previously proposed. All members' support will be required to advance the initiatives discussed. The date of the next meeting will be fixed in the upcoming weeks. The next opportunity for in-person interaction will be at the World Carbon Conference 2026 in Charleston for those able to attend.

The president expresses the hope that, collectively, the community will prove contrary to the saying attributed to Confucius: *“When you undertake something, you will face opposition from those who wished to do it themselves, those who wished the contrary, and the great majority who preferred that nothing be done at all.”*

The President thanked participants for their contributions. The meeting concluded at 12:05 p.m.

Annex – list of activities of the national Carbon Groups for 2025

British C.G.:

1. The Core Challenge: Carbon Treatment and Recycling Event & AGM – held in May at Henry Royce Building, University of Manchester. Approximately 50 attended
2. Ubbelohde Memorial Lecture given by Prof Abbie Jones “From Diamond to Graphite: Shaping a Career in Carbon”
3. New Chair: Dr Alex Theodosiou was voted in at the AGM as the new Chair of the British Carbon Group
4. October 7th - Invited colloquium – talk by Prof. Ke Shen entitled “New Insights into the Growth and Coalescence of Carbonaceous Mesophase”.

Francophone C.G.:

1. Organization of the World Conference on Carbon 2025, Saint-Malo (France), June 29 – July 4. The conference welcomed 561 participants from 42 countries. It consisted in 5 plenary lectures, 30 keynote lectures, 239 regular oral presentations, 233 poster presentations. During the Conference, an Industrial workshop, regrouping ~120 participants, was also organized in collaboration with the ECGA.
2. Young researcher award – presented to Dr David Tilve-Martinez at the World Conference on Carbon in Saint-Malo.

German C.G.:

1. Spring Meeting Round Robin Tests, April 4th.
2. Autumn Meeting, Sep. 22nd - 23rd, Mainz Erbacher Hof, including poster session and AKK research award session. More than 30 participants.

Polish C.G.:

1. Organization of the **16th Scientific-Technical Conference of the Polish Carbon Society**, titled “*Carbon Materials and Polymer Composites – Science & Industry 2025*”. The conference took place in **Ustroń-Jaszowiec** from **April 8 to 11, 2025**, and gathered participants from both academia and industry, continuing our commitment to strengthening collaboration between the scientific community and industrial partners working with advanced carbon materials and composites.
2. Organization of the **6th Scientific Workshop of the Polish Carbon Society**, which took place in **Warsaw on September 29, 2025**, bringing together 32 registered participants and 6 invited speakers, and providing a valuable forum for scientific exchange and discussion within the carbon materials community.

Portuguese C.G.:

1. In 2025, the Group’s activities were mainly focused on consolidating the momentum generated by the III RGC and preparing the next strategic milestones. In particular, the IV Meeting of the Carbon Group is planned for 2026 in Lisbon.

2. At the same time, the Group continued preparations related to the organization of Carbon 2028 in Portugal, a major international milestone for the Portuguese carbon community

Spanish C.G.:

1. XVII Reunión del GEC (XVII Meeting of the Spanish Carbon Group):
<https://www.gecarbon.org/gecarbon2025/index.htm>
2. 12th GEC Young Researchers Award:
<https://www.gecarbon.org/gecarbon2025/Premio-J%C3%B3venes-Investigadores-XVII-Reuni%C3%B3n-del-Grupo-Espa%C3%B1ol-del-Carb%C3%B3n/index.htm>
3. GEC partnered the 11th International Symposium on Sensor Science (I3S 2025).
<https://sciforum.net/event/I3S2025?section=#sponsors>

Ukrainian C.G.:

1. Organisation of the annual Ukrainian conference «CHEMISTRY, PHYSICS AND TECHNOLOGY OF SURFACE» with international participation. The conference was dedicated to the 95th birthday of Oleksii Chuiko, Academician of NAS of Ukraine, founder of the Institute of Surface Chemistry of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. Due to the war, international participation was mostly limited to online presentations. 28-29 May 2025.

Prof MT Kartel, Chairman of the Ukrainian Carbon Group, was member of the Scientific Committee.

Number of participants (off- and online): 150+

Format: Oral presentations: 23

Poster presentations: 172

Countries: Ukraine, Czech Republic, Denmark, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, USA, Uzbekistan

The Ukrainian Carbon Group was the main conference organiser; approximately 30% of presentations were related to carbon materials.

Book of Abstracts of the conference was published, 246 pp. Institute of Surface Chemistry, Kyiv, Ukraine, 2025. ISBN 978-617-95367-2-4.

2. “Surface”, N17(32), 2025. Annual collection of publications. Prof MT Kartel, Editor-in-Chief. DOI: [10.15407/Surface](https://doi.org/10.15407/Surface) ISSN 2617-5983 (Online), ISSN 2617-5975 (Print). **19 book chapters, 6 chapters about carbon materials. 478 pp. The collection is published in English and Ukrainian with an abstract in English.**
3. Periodical: Scientific Journal “Chemistry, Physics and Technology of Surface”. Prof MT Kartel, Editor-in-Chief. Volume 17, issues 1-4. ISSN 2518-1238 (Online) ISSN 2079-1704 (Print). DOI: [10.15407/hftp](https://doi.org/10.15407/hftp). Publisher: Chuiko Institute of Surface Chemistry, Kyiv, Ukraine. Periodicity: Quarterly. Indexed in Scopus database. Open access journal, official

languages: English and Ukrainian (with an abstract in English). About 30% publications are related to carbon materials.