THE OPTIMA (ORGANIZATION FOR THE PHYTO-TAXONOMIC INVESTIGATION OF THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA) COMMISSION ON FUNGI

G. Venturella[1], V. Antonin[2], A. Bawadekji[3], V. Chinan[4], M. Floriani[5], M. Karaman[6], L. Khabar[7], A. Morte[8], L.A. Parra[9], U. Peintner[10], P. Roux[11], E. Savino[12], A. Zambonelli[13], G.I. Zervakis[14]

Members of the OPTIMA (Organization for the Phyto-Taxonomic Investigation of the Mediterranean Area) Commission on Fungi

[1]Department of Agricultural and Forest Sciences, University of Palermo, Viale delle Scienze, Bld. 4, I-90128 Palermo (Italy), [2]Moravian Museum, Dept. of Botany, Zelny trh 6, CZ-659 37 Brno (Czech Republic), [3]Northern Border University, Deanship of Scientific Research, Arar, P.O. Box 1321 (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia), [4]Faculty of Biology, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Bd. Carol I, 11, Iasi, 700506 (Romania), [5]Gruppo Micologico G. Bresadola, Via dei Caldonazzi 44, Serso, I-38057, Pergine Valsugana (Trento, Italy), [6]Department of Biology and Ecology, Trg Dositeja Obradovica 2, Faculty of Sciences, University of Novi Sad (Serbia), [7]Université Mohammed V-Agdal, Faculté des Sciences, Departement de Biologie, Equipe Mycologie Forestière et Trufficulture “MycoTruf”, Avenue Ibn Battouta, B.P. 1014, Rabat (Maroc), [8]Dpt. Biologia Vegetal (Botánica), Facultad Biologia, Universidad de Murcia, Campus de Espinardo, 30100 Murcia (Spain), [9]Asociación Micológica Arandina, Centro Cívico Norte. 09400 Aranda de Duero, Burgos (España), [10]University of Innsbruck, Technikerstr. 25, 6020 Innsbruck (Austria), [11]Boite Postale n°9 - 43620 Saint-Pal-de-Mons (France), [12]Dipartimento di Scienze della Terra e degli Ambienti (DSTA), Laboratorio di Micologia, Via S. Epifanio 14, 27100 Pavia (Italy), [13]Dipartimento di Scienze Agrarie, University of Bologna, Viale Fanin 46, 40010 Bologna (Italy), [14]Laboratory of General and Agricultural Microbiology, Agricultural University of Athens, Iera Odos 75, 11855 Athens (Greece).

Fig. 1 – Logo of the Organization for the Phyto-Taxonomic Investigation of the Mediterranean Area.

The Organization for the Phyto-Taxonomic Investigation of the Mediterranean Area (OPTIMA) is an international association encompassing botany in its widest sense, and deals with all groups of plants, fungi, bryophytes, algae, etc., and all disciplines which have an impact on systematic studies (Fig. 1). Specific commissions and committees are created upon decisions of the International Board, on a temporary or more permanent basis, to fulfill the purposes of OPTIMA. In 2013, the OPTIMA Commission on Fungi was reformed, and its new members have agreed to a series of activities to be performed in the period 2013-2019 (Fig. 2).

The list of proposed activities/objectives is here reported: 1. ACTION A: Prepare a list of local names related to wild edible mushrooms that grow in each country (Austria, the Czech Republic, France, Greece, Italy, Morocco, Romania, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Serbia, and Spain); 2. ACTION B: Define a provisional catalogue of macrofungi that could be characterized as typical-representatives of the Mediterranean region; 3. ACTION C: Publish a Checklist of all macrofungi occurring in the Mediterranean region; 4. ACTION D: Setup of a literature database on fungi occurring in the Mediterranean region; 5. ACTION E: Promote studies on Mediterranean fungi to be used as food and medicine, and examine their potential in other biotechnological applications (e.g. mushroom cultivation, treatment and detoxification of wastes etc.), incl. large-scale (commercial) use;

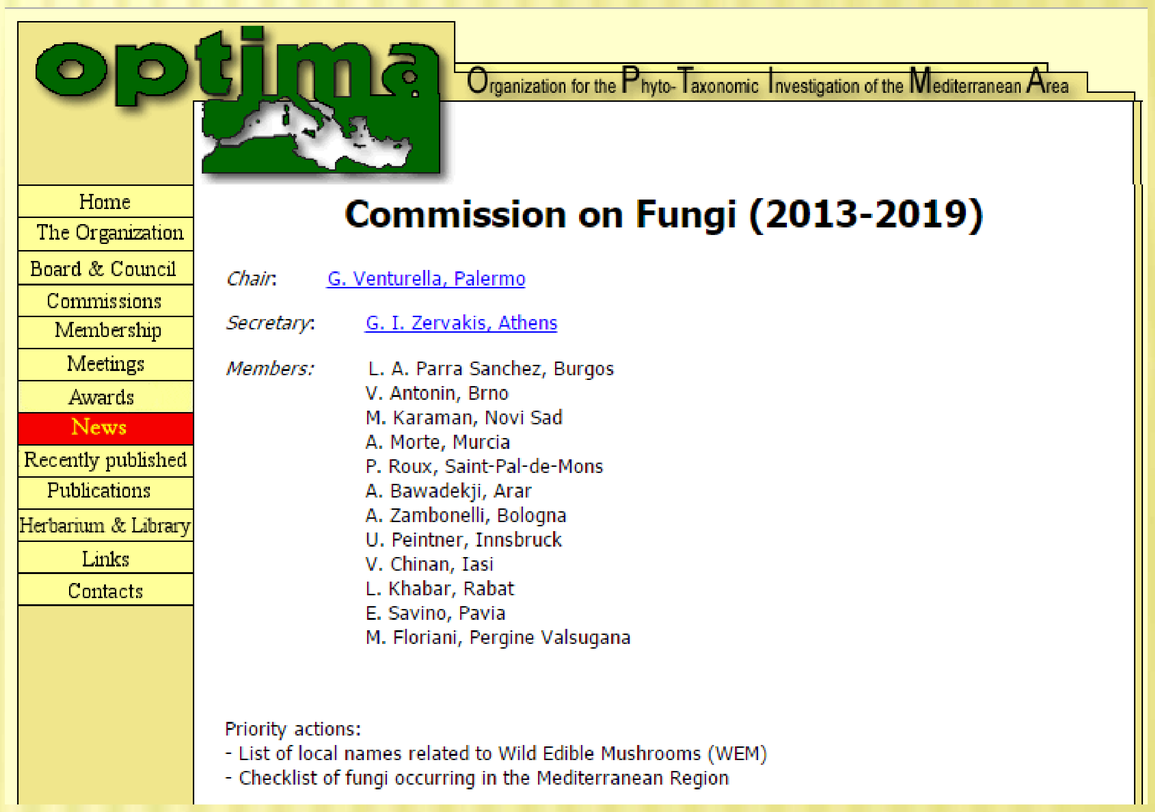

Fig. 2 – Members of the OPTIMA Commission on Fungi and priority actions.

6. ACTION F: Document ethnomycological knowledge in the Mediterranean area (incl. traditional use of mushrooms in local communities); 7. ACTION G: Prepare a list of threatened fungal species (with emphasis on those of economic importance) in the Mediterranean area and adopt suitable strategies for their conservation. Assess invasion and determine possible risks from alien species. Examine existing legislation and regulations on harvesting of wild edible mushrooms and on quality of fungal products; 8. ACTION H: Promote mycological education and disseminate fungal-related knowledge in a wider audience; 9. ACTION I: Examine existing protocols used for various experimental purposes in fungal taxonomy (e.g. molecular systematics, phylogeny, chemotaxonomy, characterization of secondary metabolites, proximate analyses, etc.) and possibly adopt common improved approaches/techniques to deal with pertinent issues; 10. ACTION J (horizontal): Examine the possibilities for networking the Institutions of participating members in order to seek and obtain funding from the E.U. or other national and international Organizations. Assess the potential of collaboration with other Societies, SME’s and/or NGO’s having pertinent interests and priorities.