



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



The International Treaty
ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES
FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

**INTERNATIONAL TREATY ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES
FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

**EIGHTH MEETING OF THE *AD-HOC* ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE
FUNDING STRATEGY**

Rome, Italy, 20–21 March 2017

REPORT

ITEM I. OPENING OF THE MEETING

1. The eighth meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Advisory Committee on the Funding Strategy was opened by Mr. Kent Nnadozie, Secretary a.i. of the Treaty. He recalled that the Governing Body in Resolution 2/2015 decided to reconvene the *Ad Hoc* Advisory Committee on the Funding Strategy (the Committee), in order to prepare the review of the Funding Strategy by the Governing Body at its Seventh Session. He recalled that the Funding Strategy plays a critical role in ensuring that financial resources are made available for implementation of the International Treaty.

ITEM II. ELECTION OF THE CO-CHAIRS

2. The Committee elected Mr. Pierre du Plessis (Namibia) and Mr. Alwin Kopse (Switzerland) as the Co-Chairs of the Committee.

ITEM III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND TIMETABLE

3. The Committee adopted its Agenda, as provided in *Appendix 1*. The list of participants is provided in *Appendix 2*.

**ITEM IV. OVERVIEW AND STATUS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
FUNDING STRATEGY**

4. The Secretariat provided an overview of the Funding Strategy, including its four Annexes, as provided in the document, *Funding Strategy for the Implementation of the International Treaty*.¹

5. The Committee undertook a first review of the Funding Strategy and its Annexes with a view to develop concrete recommendations at its next meeting to be forwarded to the Seventh Session of the Governing Body. It noted the need to clarify terminology used in the Funding Strategy, as well as the structure of the Funding Strategy, to make it clearer which Annexes apply exclusively to the Benefit-sharing Fund and which ones apply to the overall Funding Strategy.

6. The Committee also noted that there is little or no information available on resources other than those provided by the Benefit-sharing Fund, including resources that are not under the

¹ IT/ACFS-8/17/Inf.2

direct control of the Governing Body, which Annex 4 of the Funding Strategy foresees to be provided by Contracting Parties, non-Contracting Parties, international organizations and relevant international mechanisms, funds and bodies. In this regard, there may be a need to review the reporting procedures to facilitate the provision of information by Contracting Parties, and other different bodies and entities.

7. The Committee noted that the Global Plan of Action on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture is a rolling instrument and has evolved since the Funding Strategy was adopted. Therefore, the Funding Strategy may need to be updated accordingly, in order to keep the link with the Global Plan of Action on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture as close as possible.

8. In this context, the Committee emphasized the need to avoid, as much as possible, duplication of reporting efforts by Contracting Parties under the reporting processes of the Governing Body including on the Funding Strategy and under the Compliance Procedures, as well as the reporting processes of the Commission of Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and, in particular, the monitoring of the Global Plan of Action on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

9. The Committee noted that Article 18.5 of the Treaty relates to priorities of the Funding Strategy as a whole. It also emphasized the important role of farmers, who are the primary beneficiaries of the Funding Strategy, in accordance with the Treaty.

10. The Funding Strategy should take into account global trends and realities of the donor environment. The Committee agreed to further review this issue at its ninth meeting, including by considering experiences gained in relation to the Special Fund for Agreed Purposes.

11. With regard to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Committee considered that the Sustainable Development Goals provided an opportunity to enhance the political profile of the Treaty and its areas of work that may increase funding opportunities. It stressed the need for the Governing Body to further reinforce interlinkages with Targets 2.5 and 15.6, increase communication and awareness-raising, explore possible linkages with development issues such as climate change, agricultural development, environment and biodiversity, public health and nutrition, and identify funding opportunities connections arising from these. The Committee pointed to the need to address such interlinkages especially at national level, as the responsibility to implement the Sustainable Development Goals rests with governments. There is potential to improve funding opportunities for Treaty implementation if national focal points and other Treaty stakeholders are able to make the case to national decision-makers and development agencies for the importance of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture as well as the interlinkages with these other development issues.

ITEM V. BENEFIT-SHARING FUND

5.1. Liaison with the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group to Enhance the Functioning of the Multilateral System

12. The Co-chairs of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group to Enhance the Functioning of the Multilateral System (Working Group), Mr. Bert Visser and Mr. Javad Mozafari, provided an update on the work carried out during the last two biennia. In their overview of the outcomes of the most recent meeting of the Working Group, the Co-chairs of the Working Group highlighted the progress that the Working Group had made in revising the Standard Material Transfer Agreement containing, in particular, a Subscription System and in setting priorities for the expansion of the coverage of the Multilateral System. They also emphasized that the Working Group had agreed that a full package of measures to enhance the Multilateral System and, in particular, to enhance sustainable and predictable long-term income to the Benefit-sharing Fund from user-based income payments will need to be prepared.

13. The Committee thanked the two Co-chairs of the Working Group for their detailed report on the process to enhance the Multilateral System, in particular as it relates to the Funding Strategy, and it requested its Co-chairs to liaise closely with the Co-chairs of the Working Group, in preparation for the Seventh Session of the Governing Body.

14. The Committee decided to explore, at its ninth meeting, the possibility of proposing funding targets for both the Funding Strategy as a whole and for the Benefit-sharing Fund. It decided to have a further discussion, at its next meeting, on the conceptual difference between these two targets. The Committee acknowledged that in order to meet the target for the Benefit-sharing Fund, both user-based income and contributions from Contracting Parties would be necessary. As directed by Resolution 2/2015, it decided to further consider at its next meeting, the link between user-based payments and exploration of a proposal to develop a mechanism of contributions by Contracting Parties in accordance with Article 18.4 of the Treaty.

5.2. Resource mobilization: assessment of the Strategic Plan for the Implementation of the Benefit-sharing Fund 2009-2014

15. The Secretariat provided an overview of the implementation of the Strategic Plan summarizing progress made, key challenges and lessons learnt since 2009.

16. It was noted that the majority of funds came from Contracting Parties over the period of the Strategic Plan and, although some contributions were received from the private sector, these were not at the level that had been forecasted originally. It was also noted that additional funding was received from other sources not anticipated in the Strategic Plan, including through a partnership with a multi-lateral institution and innovative approaches such the Norwegian seed sales model.

17. The Secretariat highlighted that whilst a number of donors only made single contributions to the Benefit-sharing Fund over the period of the Strategic Plan, there were also more consistent funding streams, as in the case of Italy and Norway, who have contributed regularly on an annual basis.

18. There were a number of lessons learnt in relation to the implementation of the Strategic Plan. These included changes in the funding landscape and the potential of the Benefit-sharing Fund to evolve and adapt to donor and recipient needs, thus increasing its potential to attract adequate, diverse and sustainable funding. Consequently the Funding Strategy review should respond to emerging funding trends, provide flexibility to adapt to a changing environment and ensure an efficient and coherent funding approach across Treaty mechanisms.

19. The Committee recognized the value of setting funding targets reflective of needs but acknowledged that most development sectors are unable to fulfil their financing requirements and acknowledged the importance of having a balanced approach which is both ambitious and realistic.

20. The Committee emphasized the need to develop and articulate the unique features and added-value of contributing to the Benefit-sharing Fund. In this context, it welcomed the possibility of contributions with a regional and crop priority focus, although it recognized the need for these to be embedded in the overall priorities.

5.3. Measures to strengthen the programmatic approach of the Benefit-sharing Fund

21. The Secretariat provided a presentation on past efforts to develop a programmatic approach. The delegate from Switzerland presented the main conclusions of the *Report of a multi-stakeholder workshop organized by Switzerland – The International Treaty on PGRFA; What*

*investment strategy for the Benefit-sharing Fund?*²

22. The Committee emphasized the importance of the programmatic approach to the Benefit-sharing Fund in order to use available resources more efficiently. The Committee considered that the programmatic approach of the Benefit-sharing Fund should:

- i. develop a theory of change for the Benefit-sharing Fund and the impact pathways to enable such change, so that Treaty stakeholders share a common storyline on how the Fund generates benefits from the local to the national and global levels;
- ii. elaborate a results framework for Funding Strategy including for the Benefit-sharing Fund;
- iii. test innovative interventions to leverage further resources and action for Treaty implementation, in particular, at the national level;
- iv. facilitate building complementarities with other elements of the Funding Strategy and avoid unnecessary duplication;
- v. enable the Benefit-sharing Fund to be more responsive to regional and local needs and circumstances;
- vi. have clear links to the priorities of the Global Plan of Action on PGRFA.

23. The Committee also noted that in order to be effective, the development of the programmatic approach will have to be complemented with improvements to the selection criteria as well as the administration of project agreements and, in particular, timely disbursement of funds.

24. The Committee considered that the programmatic approach for the Benefit-sharing Fund should bring together resource mobilization, allocation and disbursement in an integrated manner, and be integrated into the overall Funding Strategy.

25. The Committee stressed that the main beneficiaries of the programmatic approach will be farmers. All projects should therefore demonstrate the benefits arising for farmers, with a special emphasis on support to on-farm/in situ management and farmer to farmer exchanges of PGRFA. Strategic planning to be undertaken under thematic area one should have a focus on facilitating national planning and raising the profile of PGRFA in national development plans. In addition, funding should enable Contracting Parties to improve the effective implementation of the Multilateral System, through the inclusion of additional materials and other measures. Funding provided through the Benefit-sharing Fund should catalyse mobilization of additional resources not under the direct control of the Governing Body, for example by supporting project proposal development.

ITEM VI. MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ELEMENTS OF THE FUNDING STRATEGY, OTHER THAN THE BENEFIT-SHARING FUND

26. The Committee emphasized the importance for the Governing Body to improve implementation of the Funding Strategy by having a greater focus on resources other than those provided by the Benefit-sharing Fund. It therefore decided to develop a range of measures to address cooperation with other international mechanisms as well as improve reporting on national and bilateral and multilateral funding for activities relevant to Treaty implementation. The next phase of the implementation of the Funding Strategy should also aim at strengthening linkages between different funding sources and partners, by pursuing co-spending opportunities and identifying the appropriate channels to make such linkages. The Funding Strategy should also aim

to foster the implementation of other parts of the International Treaty. The role of non-monetary benefit-sharing in the overall Funding Strategy needs to be addressed.

27. The Governing Body had invited the Global Crop Diversity Trust to support the work of the Committee during the biennium. Hannes Dempewolf from the Trust provided an overview of recent activities and funds mobilized. He introduced the Trust's Strategic Results Framework and acknowledged the importance of diversification of funding sources including through innovative approaches. The Committee thanked him for the information provided and looked forward to the involvement of the Trust in the ninth meeting of the Committee.

28. The Bureau of the Seventh Session of the Governing Body recently concluded Elements of Advice for the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in relation to the International Treaty. The Committee recognized that GEF can be an important mechanism to support Treaty implementation. It noted that most GEF funding is allocated at a national level. Measures should be developed to enable better linkages between Treaty stakeholders, including national focal points, and GEF operational focal points at national level to leverage different funding streams related to GEF, including for developing sub-regional initiatives.

29. The Committee advised to strengthen networks of current and potential donors to the Benefit-sharing Fund and the Funding Strategy in order to support Treaty implementation, especially at national level. The idea of developing a contributors platform and potential joint awareness raising initiatives should be further explored in the context of the Funding Strategy review.

30. In order to improve reporting of achievements in the implementation of the Funding Strategy at national and bilateral levels, the Committee will consider existing reporting formats used by the Governing Body and the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, to enable a further consideration on how information gathering could be improved.

ITEM VII. DATE AND PLACE OF THE NINTH MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE

31. The Committee agreed to have its ninth meeting on 20-22 June 2017, in Rome (Italy).

32. In preparation for this meeting, the Committee requested its Members to provide written comments to the Secretariat, by 2 May 2017, on the following:

- Funding Strategy for the Implementation of the International Treaty (IT/ACFS-8/17/Inf.2);
- Strategic Plan for implementation of the Benefit-sharing Fund of the Funding Strategy 2009-2014 (IT/ACFS-8/17/Inf.3);
- Elements of the Mid-Term Plan of the Benefit-sharing Fund (IT/ACFS-8/17/Inf.6);
- How the programmatic approach for the Benefit-sharing Fund will be embedded in the overall Funding Strategy and relate to other funds available to the Governing Body; and,
- Any other relevant considerations.

33. In preparation for written comments, Members of the Committee were invited to participate in an informal teleconference to be held around 3 April or to address any questions to the Secretariat and the Co-Chairs by email.

34. The Co-Chairs, with support from the Secretariat, will prepare a document for the next meeting of the Committee that outlines a framework for the overall Funding Strategy, including the Benefit-sharing Fund, and that brings together the different elements and features discussed above. The paper will identify main beneficiaries of the Funding Strategy, propose a strategic results framework and address how to build synergies between different funding mechanisms. The paper will need to address how to overcome the challenges experienced during the previous strategic planning period.

35. The documentation for the ninth meeting should be provided by 1 June 2017.

36. The Committee agreed on the need for an ambitious revision of the Funding Strategy and the need to raise the political profile of the Treaty in this exercise. The report of the Committee to the Governing Body will need to address how the different elements of the Terms of Reference were addressed during the biennium. The Committee recognized that it may not be possible to complete the preparation of a new Funding Strategy for adoption by the Governing Body, at its Seventh Session, but at a minimum to provide a strong input that will enable the Governing Body to respond and provide guidance for finalization during the next biennium. The report to the Governing Body should map out the areas that would need further work and identify what is required for the finalization of a holistic Funding Strategy, incorporating the Benefit-sharing Fund.

ITEM VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

37. The Committee discussed no other business

ITEM IX. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

38. The Committee adopted the Report of its eighth meeting.

Appendix 1

INTERNATIONAL TREATY ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
EIGHTH MEETING OF THE <i>AD-HOC</i> ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE FUNDING STRATEGY
Rome, Italy, 20-21 March 2017
AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Election of Co-Chairs
3. Adoption of the agenda and time table
4. Overview and status of implementation of the Funding Strategy
5. Benefit-sharing Fund
 - 5.1 Liaison with the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group to Enhance the Functioning of the Multilateral System
 - 5.2 Resource mobilization: assessment of the *Strategic Plan for the implementation of the Benefit-sharing Fund 2009-2014*
 - 5.3 Measures to strengthen the programmatic approach of the Benefit-sharing Fund
6. Measures to strengthen the implementation of elements of the Funding Strategy, other than the Benefit-sharing Fund
7. Date and place of the ninth meeting of the Committee
8. Other business
9. Adoption of the report

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