

Unlocking the Power of Diversity: The Role of Sorghum and Millets Genetic Resources in Sustainable Agriculture

An expert panel discussion on the conservation and use of sorghum and millet diversity

14 June 2023, from 12:00 to 2:30 pm CET – [Register here](#)

In 2023, the international community celebrates [the International Year of Millets](#). The Secretariat of the International Treaty, in collaboration with the Crop Trust and ICRISAT, are jointly organizing an international panel of high-level experts to highlight the importance of the genetic diversity of sorghum and millets for food security and nutrition. The panel will also reflect on recent advances in the conservation and use of the diversity of these important but often unjustly overlooked crops.

The webinar will be conducted in English, with interpretation into Arabic, French and Spanish

Scope of the Panel

The panel will comprise high-level experts from **FAO, the Crop Trust, ICRISAT** and other government, private sector, and civil society organizations with an interest in sorghum and millets.

The experts will provide a global overview of the status of production of sorghum and millets, and of the conservation and use of their diversity, including the latest trends and statistics. They will present experiences and challenges in the conservation, sharing and use of the genetic resources of these small grains.

The experts will discuss, in particular, how sorghum and millets are currently conserved, shared and used by international genebanks, national programs, researchers and breeders, the seed sector and non-governmental organizations.

Examples from Asia and Africa, as well as from other selected regions around the world, will be showcased. Finally, the panel will help to identify current barriers to the effective and efficient use of the diversity of these crops and opportunities that may benefit from joint efforts.

#IYM2023

#YearofMillets

www.fao.org/millets-2023/en

Agenda

12:00 - Opening Session

Opening by Ms Tara Satyavathi, Director, ICAR-Indian Institute of Millets Research, India

Mr Kent Nnadozie, Secretary, ITPGRFA

Ms Jackie Hughes, Director General, ICRISAT

Mr Stefan Schmitz, Executive Director, The Crop Trust

12:15 - Keynote Presentation

1. What are the challenges to sorghum and millet production and consumption and how can we overcome them?

Mr Prabhu Pingali, Professor and Director, Tata-Cornell Institute, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences, Cornell University

12:40 - Presentations

2. Conservation of plant genetic resources - perspectives:

Ms Paula Bramel, Consultant, Crop Trust: *Global Strategy for the Conservation and Use of Sorghum and Millet Genetic Resources*

Mr Colin Khoury, Senior Director, Science and Conservation, San Diego Botanic Garden: *The Crops That Feed the World*

Mr Kuldeep Singh, Head Genebank, ICRISAT: *Conservation of Sorghum and Millets Genetic Resources at ICRISAT*

Mr Rajeev Varshney, Director, Centre for Crop & Food Innovation, Food Futures Institute, Murdoch University (Australia), *Recent Developments in Sorghum and Millets Genomics*

13:30 - Panel Discussion

Introduction to the panel by moderators – The Use of Diversity, Mr Luigi Guarino, The Crop Trust, and Mr Álvaro Toledo, ITPGRFA

Mr Andrew Mushita, Executive Director, Community Technology Development Organization (CTDO), Zimbabwe

Mr Alexander Bombom, Principal Research Scientist, National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO)-National Livestock Resources Research Institute (NaLIRRI), Uganda

Mr Stephen Kresovich, Program Director, Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Crop Improvement, Department of Global Development, Cornell University, USA

Ms Tara Satyavathi, Director, ICAR-Indian Institute of Millets Research, India

Ms Damaris A. Odeny, Plant Molecular Breeder, ICRISAT

Ms Maria Marta Pastina, Research Director, Embrapa Maize and Sorghum, Brazil

14:30 - Closure