



COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Item 13 of the Provisional Agenda

Nineteenth Regular Session

Rome, 17–21 July 2023

THE FUTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMISSION'S INTERSESSIONAL WORK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Paragraphs
I. Introduction	1–6
II. Current organization of the Commission's intersessional work.....	7–12
III. Criteria for the assessment of options for the future organization of the Commission's intersessional work.....	13
IV. Options for the future organization of the Commission's intersessional work.....	14–17
V. Financial and human resource implications	18–19
VI. Director-General's report on the programme, administrative and financial implications of establishing additional subsidiary bodies under the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture	20–24
VII. Guidance sought.....	25
<i>Appendix I: Bureau report on the informal open-ended consultation on the future organization of the commission's intersessional work</i>	
<i>Appendix II: Draft statutes of the intergovernmental technical working group/expert team on microorganism and invertebrate genetic resources for food and agriculture/biodiversity for food and agriculture</i>	

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Commission), at its Eighteenth Regular Session, discussed the possible reorganization of its intersessional work. In this context, the Commission endorsed model terms of reference for the various National Focal Points/Coordinators¹ and encouraged countries to take them into consideration in the preparation or revision of terms of reference for their National Focal Points/Coordinators. The Commission also encouraged FAO country offices to support, upon request by countries, national activities related to the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources. The Commission welcomed the possibility of holding virtual and hybrid information webinars, consultations, or regional workshops, taking into account the need for inclusiveness and equal participation and noting the limitations of virtual meetings.²
2. The Commission also mandated its Bureau to conduct informal open-ended consultations to: (i) develop criteria for the assessment of different options for the reorganization of the Commission's intersessional work; (ii) review and revise, as appropriate, the options presented to the last session of the Commission and develop new options, if necessary; and (iii) assess the consolidated options against the criteria identified. The Commission requested recommendations for its consideration at the present session.³
3. At the request of the Bureau, the Secretary in May 2022 invited Members to provide, through their National Focal Points, inputs to and comments on existing or new options for the reorganization of the Commission's future intersessional work and criteria against which the different options should be assessed. Contributions were received from the Near East Regional Group, Argentina, Canada, Costa Rica, Germany, Kuwait, the Philippines, Poland and Slovakia.
4. On the basis of a Bureau Non-paper,⁴ taking into account comments and inputs received, the Bureau held open-ended online consultations on the future organization of the Commission's intersessional work on 16 November 2022.⁵ The *Bureau report on the informal open-ended consultation on the future organization of the Commission's intersessional work* (Bureau Report) is contained in *Appendix I* to this document.
5. This document briefly recapitulates the current organization of the Commission's intersessional work (Section II). Based on the Bureau Report, the document:
 - presents criteria the Commission may wish to use for the assessment of the different options (Section III); and
 - provides different options for the organization of the Commission's future intersessional work, as consolidated by the Bureau following the informal consultations (Section IV).
6. The document also costs the different options (Section V) and contains, in line with the Commission's Statutes, a report from the Director-General on the programme, administrative and financial implications of the decision to establish any sectoral working group or other subsidiary body (Section VI).

II. CURRENT ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMISSION'S INTERSESSIONAL WORK

7. Since 1995, the Commission's mandate "covers all components of biodiversity for food and agriculture."⁶ According to its Statutes, the Commission shall have a coordinating role and shall deal

¹ *Model terms of reference of the National Focal Points for plant, aquatic and forest genetic resources and for biodiversity for food and agriculture and the National Coordinators for animal genetic resources for food and agriculture*, CGRFA-18/21/Report, Appendix E.

² CGRFA-18/21/Report, paragraph 111.

³ CGRFA-18/21/Report, paragraphs 111–112.

⁴ <https://www.fao.org/3/nk135en/nk135en.pdf>

⁵ For agenda and relevant documentation:

<https://www.fao.org/cgrfa/meetings/informal-open-ended-consultation/en/>

⁶ FAO Conference Resolution 3/95.

with policy, sectoral and cross-sectoral matters related to the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources of relevance to food and agriculture.⁷

8. Since 1995, the work of the Commission has increasingly been shaped by its Intergovernmental Technical Working Groups (Working Groups) and other subsidiary bodies.

9. In 1997, the Commission established two Working Groups, one for animal genetic resources for food and agriculture (AnGR) and one for plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGR).⁸ In 2009, the Commission established a Working Group for forest genetic resources (FGR).⁹ In 2015, it established an ad hoc Working Group for aquatic genetic resources for food and agriculture (AqGR),¹⁰ which in 2019 became a regular Working Group.¹¹

10. In 2011, the Commission established an Ad Hoc Technical Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing for Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture,¹² which was replaced two years later by the Team of Technical and Legal Experts on Access and Benefit-sharing (ABS Expert Team), a smaller group consisting of two experts from each region.¹³

11. Occasionally, the Commission has also sought advice from less formal groups, such as the Group of National Focal Points for Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture, which was established on an ad hoc basis in 2017 to review the needs and actions identified in the course of the preparation of *The State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture* (SoW BFA), and the Expert Group on Micro-organism and Invertebrate Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, convened in 2018 to review the draft explanatory notes to the *Elements to Facilitate Domestic Implementation of Access and Benefit-Sharing for Different Subsectors of Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* (ABS Elements).¹⁴

12. The Commission's subsidiary bodies have played a key role in preparing and reviewing deliverables related to their respective mandates. Without their work, many of the Commission's achievements over the last two decades would not have been possible. Any reorganization of the Commission's intersessional work should therefore strengthen the involvement of the Working Groups. At the same time, it will be important to reorganize the Commission's intersessional work in a way that reflects the importance of cross-sectoral matters for the Commission and facilitates intersectoral dialogue on these matters.

III. CRITERIA FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMISSION'S INTERSESSIONAL WORK

13. Based on the comments received prior to and during the informal consultations held by the Bureau, the Bureau suggested consolidating the criteria against which the options for the future organization of the Commission's intersessional work may be assessed as follows:

- (i) the need to address Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture (BFA) and Micro-organism and Invertebrate Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (MIGR) through intersessional work;
- (ii) the need to facilitate cross-sectoral intersessional work;
- (iii) the need to strengthen synergies within FAO and with other global policy fora;
- (iv) clarity of roles and mandates of any new subsidiary body or bodies, which should not duplicate the work of other bodies;

⁷ Statutes of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, Paragraph 2.

⁸ CGRFA-7/97/REP, paragraph 10.

⁹ CGRFA-12/09/Report, paragraph 55.

¹⁰ CGRFA-15/15/Report, paragraph 63.

¹¹ CGRFA-17/19/Report, paragraph 51.

¹² CGRFA-13/11/Report, paragraph 60.

¹³ CGRFA-14/13/Report, paragraph 40.

¹⁴ CGRFA-16/17/Report Rev.1, paragraph 25.

- (v) principles of good governance, including effectiveness and efficiency, transparency and inclusiveness, including equal representation of all regions; and
- (vi) the need to take into account workload and financial implications of additional intersessional work, including additional intersessional meetings, in particular for Commission Members from among developing countries.¹⁵

IV. OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMISSION'S INTERSESSIONAL WORK

Composition of subsidiary bodies

14. The Commission “may establish intergovernmental technical sectoral working groups (“Sectoral Working Groups”), with appropriate geographical balance, to assist in the areas of plant, animal, forest and fisheries genetic resources”¹⁶ and “such other subsidiary bodies as it may deem necessary for the effective discharge of its functions.”¹⁷

15. Currently, the Commission’s Working Groups are each composed of 28 Member Nations (five from Africa, Europe, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, four from the Near East and two from North America and Southwest Pacific), who are elected at each regular session of the Commission and serve until the next regular session. The Commission’s Team of Technical and Legal Experts on Access and Benefit-sharing (ABS Expert Team) is composed of 14 experts (two from each region), who are nominated through the Bureau Members of their regions.

Composition of existing subsidiary bodies

Working Groups	ABS Expert Team
5 from Africa	2 from Africa
5 from Asia	2 from Asia
5 from Europe	2 from Europe
5 from Latin America and the Caribbean	2 from Latin America and the Caribbean
4 from the Near East	2 from Near East
2 from North America	2 from North America
2 from Southwest Pacific.	2 from Southwest Pacific.

16. For the purpose of this document, it is assumed that the composition and nomination procedure of any new “Working Groups” would follow those of the Commission’s existing Working Groups and that the composition and nomination procedure of any new “Expert Teams” would follow those of the ABS Expert Team. However, the Commission’s Statutes leave considerable flexibility to the Commission in this regard: the composition and terms of reference “shall be established by the Commission.”¹⁸

Additional subsidiary bodies

17. The Bureau Non-paper and the Bureau Report identify slightly different sets of options.¹⁹ Following the Bureau’s Report, the following options, as marked in yellow in Table 1, seem to have support at least from parts of the membership:

- Option 1: Establishment of an Expert Team on MIGR;
- Option 2: Establishment of a Working Group on MIGR;
- Option 3. Establishment of a Working Group on BFA;
- Option 4: Establishment of a Working Group on MIGR and a Working Group on BFA;
- Option 5: Establishment of Working Group on BFA and an Expert Team on MIGR;²⁰

¹⁵ Appendix I, paragraph 10.

¹⁶ Statutes of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, paragraph 3(i).

¹⁷ Statutes of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, paragraph 5.

¹⁸ Statutes of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, paragraph 3(iii).

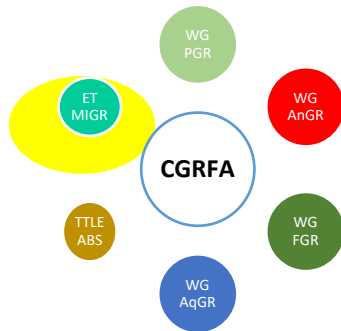
¹⁹ See Appendix I, Table 1 and Bureau Non-Paper (<https://www.fao.org/3/nk135en/nk135en.pdf>), p.6.

²⁰ Referred to in the Bureau Report as Option 4bis.

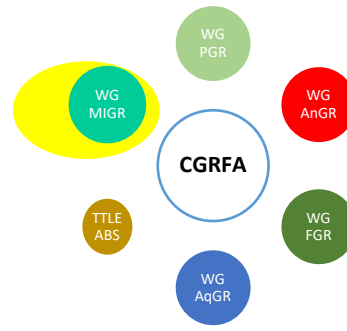
Option 6: Establishment of Working Group on MIGR and an Expert Team on BFA.

Table 1. Options for the organization of future intersessional work

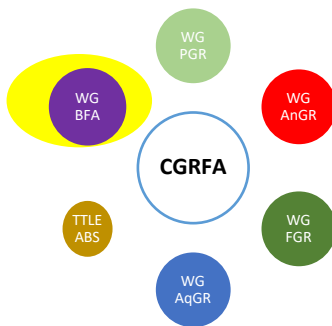
Option 1: ET MIGR



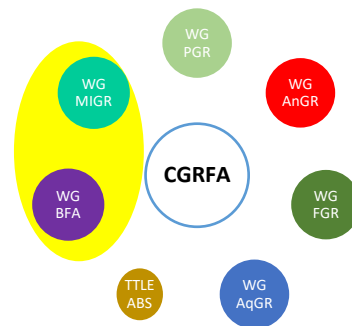
Option 2: WG MIGR



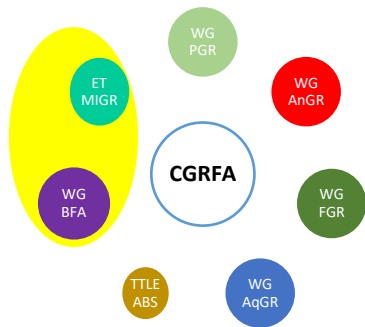
Option 3: WG BFA



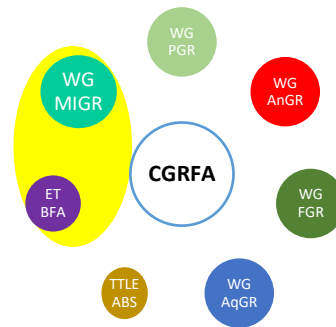
Option 4: WG BFA and WG MIGR



Option 5: WG BFA and ET MIGR



Option 6: WG MIGR and ET BFA



V. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

18. An overview of the financial and human resource implications of various options was provided to the last session of the Commission.²¹

19. Tables 2 and 3 show the financial and human resource implications of the above-listed six options. It is assumed that while pre-session documents for Expert Teams are not translated and sessions of Expert Teams are held in English only, pre-session documents for Working Groups are translated into all UN languages and interpretation in all UN languages is provided for Working Groups.

Table 2. Interpretation/Translation costs (USD)*

²¹ CGRFA-18/21/13, *Appendix II*.

	Option 1	Options 2/3	Option 4	Option 5/6
Groups	ET MIGR	One WG (MIGR or BFA)	Two WGs (BFA & MIGR)	One WG and one ET (BFA/MIGR)
Duration/session	3 days	3 days	3 days	3 days
Number of sessions with interpretation:	0	5	10	5
Cost:	0	42 000	84 000	42 000
Translation: <i>Pre-session</i> (20 000 words)		60 625	121 250	60 625
<i>Report</i> (5 000 words)	12 125	12 125	24 250	24 250
Total (USD):	12 125	114 750	229 500	128.875

*As of 1 June 2023.

Table 3. Human resources (USD)*

	Option 1	Options 2/3	Option 4	Option 5/6
Groups	ET MIGR	One WG (MIGR or BFA)	Two WGs (BFA & MIGR)	One WG and one ET (BFA/MIGR)
Secretariat (P-4/ biennium) 1 new post	390 888	390 888	390 888	390 888

*As of 1 June 2023.

VI. DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S REPORT ON THE PROGRAMME, ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF ESTABLISHING ADDITIONAL SUBSIDIARY BODIES UNDER THE COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

20. At its Twenty-eighth Session in October 1995, the FAO Conference broadened the mandate of the Commission to cover all aspects of genetic resources with relevance to food and agriculture. The Conference further agreed that the Commission should be assisted by geographically balanced sectoral working groups of an intergovernmental technical nature.²²

21. Paragraph 3 of the Statutes of the Commission provides:

- (i) The Commission may establish intergovernmental technical sectoral working groups ("Sectoral Working Groups"), with appropriate geographical balance, to assist it in areas of plant, animal, forestry and fisheries genetic resources.
- (ii) The purpose of the Sectoral Working Groups shall be to review the situation and issues related to agrobiodiversity in the areas under their respective competences, to advise and make recommendations to the Commission on these matters and to consider the progress made in implementing the Commission's programme of work, as well as any other matters referred to them by the Commission.
- (iii) The composition and terms of reference for each Sectoral Working Group shall be established by the Commission.

22. Under paragraph 6 of the Commission's Statutes, the establishment of any Sectoral Working Group or other subsidiary body shall be subject to the determination by the Director-General that the necessary funds are available in the relevant chapter of the budget of the Organization or from extrabudgetary sources. Before taking any decision involving expenditures in connection with the establishment of Subsidiary Bodies, the Commission shall have before it a report from the Director-General on the programme, administrative and financial implications thereof.

23. Individual three-day meetings of an additional Expert Team and/or of a Working Group would incur the estimated costs given above.

²² C 1995/ REP, paragraphs 65–68.

24. If it is decided to convene a first session of a newly established Working Group and/or of an Expert Team prior to the Twentieth Regular Session of the Commission, the Director-General would need to call for extra-budgetary support, as no provision has been made in the 2024/25 Programme of Work and Budget. Provision will need to be made to support subsequent sessions, either from the Regular Programme Budget or from extra-budgetary resources, or a combination of the two sources. It should be noted, however, that the draft Statutes, as provided in the Appendix to this document, do not require regular sessions of the Working Groups or any other subsidiary body. As is the case with the Commission's other subsidiary bodies, it would be the Commission, which, depending on the need, would decide on the timing and duration of the sessions of the subsidiary body.

VII. GUIDANCE SOUGHT

25. The Commission may wish to:
- (i) establish a Working Group or Working Groups and/or an Expert Team addressing micro-organism and invertebrate genetic resources for food and agriculture and/or biodiversity for food and agriculture;
 - (ii) review the draft statutes for the Working Group(s) and/or the Expert Team, as given in *Appendix II* to this document, with a view to adopting them;
 - (iii) decide on the timing and date of the first session(s) of the Working Group(s) and/or the Expert Team, subject to the availability of the necessary funds; and
 - (iv) call for adequate extra-budgetary support for sessions of the Working Group(s) and/or the Expert Team.

*APPENDIX I***BUREAU REPORT ON THE INFORMAL OPEN-ENDED CONSULTATION ON THE
FUTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMISSION'S INTERSESSIONAL WORK**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<i>Paragraphs</i>
I. Introduction	1–5
II. Criteria for the assessment of options for the future organization of the Commission's intersessional work	6–10
III. Options for the future organization of the Commission's intersessional work	11–13
IV. Other matters	14
<i>Annex</i>	

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its last Session, the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Commission) discussed the possible reorganization of its intersessional work. It mandated its Bureau to conduct an informal open-ended consultation with the aim of:

- i. developing, in a first step, criteria against which the different options for the reorganization of the Commission's intersessional work should be assessed;
- ii. reviewing and revising, as appropriate, the options contained in the document *Possible reorganization of the Commission's future intersessional work*²³ and developing new options, if necessary, with a view to establishing a set of options that reflects all views Members and the Working Groups hold with regard to the reorganization of the Commission's work; and
- iii. assessing the set of consolidated options against the criteria identified, with a view to agreeing on recommendations for the reorganization of the Commission's intersessional work, for consideration by the Commission at its Nineteenth Regular Session.

2. The open-ended consultation on the future organization of the Commission's intersessional work was held virtually on 16 November 2022.²⁴ The Chair of the Commission, Ms Deidré A. Januarie (Namibia), welcomed participants to the informal open-ended consultation and reminded participants that the Commission, at its last session, had mandated the Bureau to conduct the consultation.

3. Ms Januarie noted that the Bureau had prepared a non-paper on the *Future organization of the Commission's intersessional work*²⁵ that had been made available in August 2022. She noted that the non-paper took into account comments and inputs received from Members in response to the invitation of 26 April 2022 the Secretary had extended to all Members of the Commission at the request of the Bureau.

4. The informal open-ended consultation fell into three sessions, which discussed: (1) the criteria against which options for the reorganization of the Commission's work may be assessed; (2) the options for the reorganization of the Commission's intersessional work; and (3) the options in the light of the criteria identified. Mr Benoît Girard, Vice-Chair of the Commission (Canada) chaired session 1, Ms Kim van Seeters, Vice-Chair of the Commission (Netherlands) chaired session 2 and Ms Mariana Mashall Parra, Vice-Chair of the Commission (Brazil) chaired session 3.

5. This document summarizes comments Commission Members provided during the informal consultation on criteria against which options for the reorganization of the Commission's intersessional work may be assessed. The document further summarizes the discussions of the different options for the re-organization of the Commission's intersessional work and suggests a compromise option the Commission may wish to use as a basis for further discussions.

II. CRITERIA FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMISSION'S INTERSESSIONAL WORK

6. Key criteria for the assessment of the different options should address the challenges the Commission faces. Based on the analysis presented to the last session of the Commission, the Bureau non-paper listed four challenges:

- Lack of subsidiary bodies dedicated to biodiversity for food and agriculture (BFA) and microorganism and invertebrate genetic resources for food and agriculture (MIGR);
- Lack of interaction between Commission's subsidiary bodies;
- Lack of (cross-sectoral) interaction among National Focal Points/Coordinators; and
- Need to strengthen synergies with other global policy fora.

²³ CGRFA-18/21/13

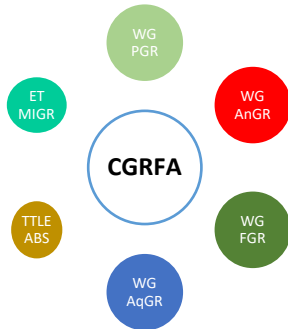
²⁴ For agenda and relevant documentation: <https://www.fao.org/cgrfa/meetings/informal-open-ended-consultation/en/>

²⁵ <https://www.fao.org/3/nk135en/nk135en.pdf>

7. Based on this analysis, the Bureau non-paper identified four criteria:
 - (i) the need to reflect the extended scope of the Commission's activities in its governance structure;
 - (ii) the need to improve interaction among the Commission's subsidiary bodies;
 - (iii) the need for cross-sectoral interaction among the Commission's National Focal Points/Coordinators; and
 - (iv) the need to strengthen synergies within FAO and with other global policy fora.
8. Based on written submissions received, the non-paper identified, in addition, the following criteria:
 - (v) participation of Commission Members in a transparent and inclusive way;
 - (vi) clarity of roles and mandates of the subsidiary bodies and no duplication of work of other bodies;
 - (vii) inclusiveness, including equal representation of all regions;
 - (viii) effectiveness and efficiency; and
 - (ix) transparency.
9. During the informal consultations, several delegations suggested to merge some of the criteria, such as (v), (vii) and (ix). It was suggested to include the need for intersessional work on BFA and MIGR as additional criteria. In addition, it was proposed that the re-organization of the Commission's intersessional work should take into consideration any related reporting burden for Commission Members, in particular developing countries. It was further stressed that financial implications should be taken into consideration when assessing the different options for the organization of the Commission's intersessional work. It was highlighted that the main task of the Commission's subsidiary bodies is to advise the Commission on matters within their mandate and that any new subsidiary body should be fit for that purpose. On the other hand, some Members considered it less important that the re-organization facilitates cross-sectoral interaction among the Commission's National Focal Points/Coordinators or improves the interaction among the Commission's subsidiary bodies. Finally, it was suggested that the organization of the Commission's intersessional work should follow the principles of good governance.
10. Based on the comments received, the Bureau suggests to consolidate the criteria against which the options for the future organization of the Commission's intersessional work may be assessed, as follows:
 - (i) the need to address BFA and MIGR through intersessional work;
 - (ii) the need to facilitate cross-sectoral intersessional work;
 - (iii) the need to strengthen synergies within FAO and with other global policy fora.
 - (iv) clarity of roles and mandates of any new subsidiary body or bodies, which should not duplicate the work of other bodies;
 - (v) principles of good governance, including effectiveness and efficiency, transparency and inclusiveness, including equal representation of all regions; and
 - (vi) the need to take into account workload and financial implications of additional intersessional work, including additional intersessional meetings, in particular for Commission Members from developing countries.

Table 1: Options for the organization of future intersessional work

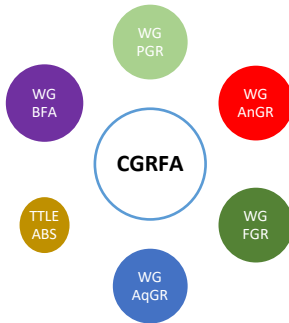
Option 1: Expert Team MIGR



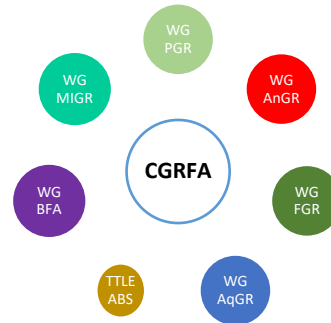
Option 2: WG MIGR



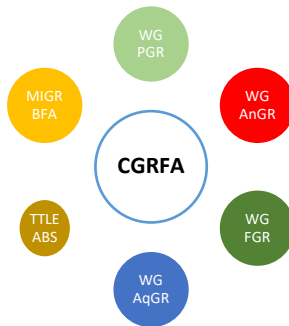
Option 3: WG BFA



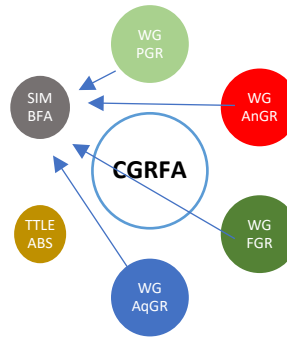
Option 4: WG BFA and WG MIGR



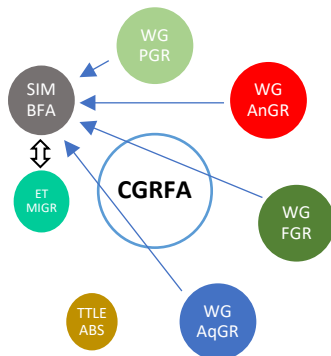
Option 5: Joint WG for MIGR and BFA



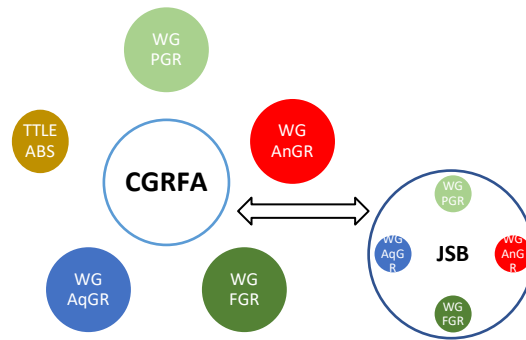
Option 6: SIM BFA



Option 7: SIM BFA and Expert Team MIGR



Option 8: JSB



III. OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMISSION'S INTERSESSIONAL WORK

11. Members discussed the options for the future organization of the Commission's intersessional work based on the options contained in the Bureau non-paper (see Table 1 and more detailed explanations for each option in the Appendix).

12. There was agreement that the option of creating a Joint Subsidiary Body for Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture (option 8) was logistically too complex and should therefore no longer be pursued. There was furthermore agreement that a new subsidiary body or bodies should advise the Commission on BFA and/or MIGR. Views diverged as to whether a Working Group (similar in size and working modalities to the Commission's existing intergovernmental technical working groups) or an Expert Team (similar in size and working modalities to the Commission's Team of Technical and Legal Experts on Access and Benefit-sharing (ABS Expert Team)²⁶) should be established for BFA or MIGR or both. Options 5 and 6 did not receive support from any of the Members participating in the consultation. An additional option (named Option 4*bis*) was proposed with a Working Group on BFA and an Expert Team on MIGR. While some Members expressed a clear preference for the creation of a Working Group on MIGR, others preferred a new Working Group to focus on BFA. There seemed to be some openness for the creation of an Expert Team for the topic for which no Working Group would be established. Several Members also indicated that while the immediate creation of two Working Groups would be premature, a second Working Group could, in fact, be established at a later stage. Several participants requested more detailed information on the financial implications of the different options.

13. Given the outcome of the informal open-ended consultation, Members may wish to further consult and reflect on the different options with a view to identify a possible compromise. In this regard, it might be useful to consider innovative solutions, including for the composition of the Working Group. Option 7, for example, aims to convene regionally balanced expertise from all the Working Groups of the Commission in a new subsidiary body and provides for an Expert Team for MIGR, taking into account that MIGR require inputs from an extremely diverse group of experts (e.g. soil experts, biological control experts, entomologists, microbiologists etc.) for the different functional groups of MIGR.

IV. OTHER MATTERS

14. Several Members stressed the importance of providing pre-session documents and interpretation of Commission meetings in all languages of the Organization.

²⁶ The Commission's Working Groups are composed of 28 Member Nations (5 from Africa; 5 from Europe; 5 from Asia; 5 from Latin America and the Caribbean; 4 from the Near East; 2 from North America; 2 from Southwest Pacific. The languages of the Working Groups are usually the languages of the Organization. The ABS Expert Team is composed of 14 experts (2 from each region) and its meetings are held in English.

ANNEX

OPTION 1: STATUS QUO & EXPERT TEAM MIGR

Given the cross-sectoral nature of BFA and the fact that MIGR play an important role in the management of all the GRFA already covered by existing Working Groups, the Commission could address BFA and MIGR during the intersessional period through its existing Working Groups. BFA and MIGR would thus be treated akin to the cross-sectoral matters on which the Commission often consults its Working Groups.

On MIGR-related matters the Commission could decide on a case-by-case basis to consult only relevant Working Groups or to establish an MIGR Expert Team following the model of the ABS Expert Team that consists of 14 experts, nominated by the regions through their Bureau Members. The ABS Expert Team works in English only.

OPTION 2: CREATION OF A WORKING GROUP ON MICRO-ORGANISM AND INVERTEBRATE GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

In order to address matters related to MIGR, the Commission could create a new Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Micro-organism and Invertebrate Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

The new Working Group could follow the model of the Commission's existing Working Groups, with the same number of Members and the same geographical balance.²⁷

The MIGR Working Group could be mandated to review the situation and issues related to MIGR, to advise and make recommendations to the Commission on these matters and to consider the progress made in implementing the Commission's programme of work, as well as any other matters referred to it by the Commission. There would be no subsidiary body dedicated to BFA but there may be the possibility of an expert team on BFA.

OPTION 3: CREATION OF AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON BIODIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

In order to address matters related to BFA, the Commission could create a new Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture.

The new Working Group could follow the composition of the Commission's existing Working Groups, with the same number of Members, the same geographical balance and the mandate to review the situation and issues related to BFA, to advise and make recommendations to the Commission on these matters and to consider the progress made in implementing the Commission's programme of work, as well as any other matters referred to it by the Commission. There would be no subsidiary body dedicated to MIGR, but there may be the possibility of an expert team on MIGR.

OPTION 4: CREATION OF TWO WORKING GROUPS, ONE FOR MICRO-ORGANISM AND INVERTEBRATE GENETIC RESOURCES, ONE FOR BIODIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

In order to address matters related to BFA and MIGR, the Commission could create two new Intergovernmental Technical Working Groups, one for MIGR and one for BFA.

²⁷ The Working Groups are composed of 28 Member Nations from the following regions: 5 from Africa; 5 from Europe; 5 from Asia; 5 from Latin America and the Caribbean; 4 from the Near East; 2 from North America; 2 from Southwest Pacific.

Under this option, the new Working Groups could follow the composition of the Commission's existing Working Groups, with the same number of Members, the same geographical balance and the mandate to review the situation and issues related to BFA and MIGR respectively, to advise and make recommendations to the Commission on these matters and to consider the progress made in implementing the Commission's programme of work, as well as any other matters referred to them by the Commission.

**OPTION 5:
CREATION OF A JOINT WORKING GROUP FOR MICRO-ORGANISM AND
INVERTEBRATE GENETIC RESOURCES AND BIODIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND
AGRICULTURE**

In order to address matters related to BFA and MIGR, the Commission could create one new Working Group dealing with both BFA and MIGR.

Under this option, the new Working Group could follow the composition of the Commission's existing Working Groups, with the same number of Members, the same geographical balance and the mandate to review the situation and issues related to BFA and MIGR, to advise and make recommendations to the Commission on these matters and to consider the progress made in implementing the Commission's programme of work, as well as any other matters referred to them by the Commission.

**OPTION 6:
SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF
BIODIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

The Commission could consider establishing a new Subsidiary Body for Integrated Management of BFA (SIM BFA), which could address the integration across all components of BFA, including AnGR, AqGR, FGR, MIGR and PGR, as well as consider the progress made in implementing the Commission's programme of work on BFA and MIGR. The SIM BFA would complement the existing subsidiary bodies, it would not replace them.

The SIM BFA could consist of seven Members from each of the Working Group (e.g. one Member per region), which would bring the total number of Members of the SIM BFA to 28. The SIM BFA would, thus, have the same number of Members as the existing Working Groups. However, its composition would be different, in that the SIM BFA would consist of seven Members from all regions nominated by each of the Commission's Working Groups, whereas the existing Working Groups are composed of 28 Member Nations nominated by the regions and elected by the Commission, based on a geographical distribution formula.

**OPTION 7:
SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF
BIODIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE & EXPERT TEAM MIGR**

15. The SIM BFA (Option 6) could receive support from a small expert group in the field of MIGR. The ABS Expert Team with its 14 experts (two per region) nominated by their regions through the Bureau Member could possibly serve as a model for this expert group.

**OPTION 8:
JOINT SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR BIODIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

The Commission could also opt for the establishment of a Joint Subsidiary Body for Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture (JSB) consisting of *all* the Members of its Working Groups. In addition to the Members of the Commission's Working Groups, the JSB could also include, for example, one additional Member per region with knowledge on integrated management of BFA.

Following the Working Groups' two-day sessions, the JSB could be convened on day 3, to consider cross-sectoral matters, including BFA and MIGR. On day four, each Working Group could consider and adopt its meeting report in the morning; the JSB BFA would consider its report in the afternoon.

APPENDIX II

**DRAFT STATUTES OF
THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP/EXPERT TEAM
ON
MICROORGANISM AND INVERTEBRATE GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND
AGRICULTURE/
BIODIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

Article 1 - Terms of Reference

1. The Intergovernmental Technical Working Group/Expert Team on Microorganism and Invertebrate Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture/Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture (the Working Group/Expert Team) shall:

- review the situation and issues related to microorganism and invertebrate genetic resources for food and agriculture/biodiversity for food and agriculture and advise and make recommendations to the Commission on these matters;
- consider the progress made in implementing the Commission's programme of work on microorganism and invertebrate genetic resources for food and agriculture/biodiversity for food and agriculture as well as any other matters referred to the Working Group/Expert Team by the Commission; and
- report to the Commission on its activities.

2. In order for the Working Group/Expert Team to carry out this mandate, the Commission will assign specific tasks to the Working Group/Expert Team.

Article II – Composition

The **Working Group** shall be composed of twenty-eight Member Nations from the following regions:

- 5 from Africa
- 5 from Asia
- 5 from Europe
- 5 from Latin America and the Caribbean
- 4 from Near East
- 2 from North America
- 2 from Southwest Pacific.

The **Expert Team** shall be composed of fourteen experts from the following regions:

- 2 from Africa
- 2 from Asia
- 2 from Europe
- 2 from Latin America and the Caribbean
- 2 from Near East
- 2 from North America
- 2 from Southwest Pacific.

Article III - Election and term of office of Members

The Members of the **Working Group** shall be elected at each regular session of the Commission and serve until the next regular session of the Commission. They shall be eligible for re-election.

Article III – Nomination of experts

The Members of the **Expert Team** shall be nominated through their Member of the Bureau of the Commission.

Article IV - Officers

1. The Working Group/Expert Team shall elect its Chairperson and one or more Vice-Chairpersons from among the representatives of Members of the Working Group/Expert Team at the beginning of each session. These officers shall remain in office until the next session of the Working Group/Expert Team and be eligible for re-election.
2. The Chairperson, or a Vice-Chairperson in the absence of a Chairperson, shall preside over the meetings of the Working Group/Expert Team and exercise such other functions as may be required to facilitate its work.

Article V - Sessions

The Commission shall decide on the timing and duration of the sessions of the Working Group/Expert Team, when required. In any case, the Working Group/Expert Team shall hold no more than one regular session annually.

Article VI - Observers

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Members of the Commission which are not Members of the Working Group may participate, upon request to the Commission Secretariat, in the work of the Working Group in an observer capacity. 2. The Working Group, or the bureau on behalf of the Working Group, may invite experts, as well as representatives of specialized international organizations, to attend its meetings. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Expert Team may invite other experts, as well as representatives of specialized international organizations, to attend its meetings. |
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Article VII - Application of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

The provisions of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to all matters not specifically dealt with under the present Statutes.