



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



The International Treaty
ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES
FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

RESOLUTION 13/2017

MULTI-YEAR PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE INTERNATIONAL TREATY

THE GOVERNING BODY,

Recalling Resolution 13/2015;

Noting that one of the primary objectives of the Multi-Year Programme of Work is to better structure the International Treaty's work programme, particularly the work to be done during the inter-sessional periods;

Noting that other FAO bodies have adopted multi-year programmes of work to schedule in-depth reviews of relevant programmes and mechanisms;

Recognizing that "digital sequence information"¹ has been raised repeatedly in the context of various aspects of its work;

Noting decision XIII/16 adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in December 2016,² and decision 2/14 adopted by the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing in December 2016;³

Noting that the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) at its sixteenth Regular Session in February 2017 established a new work stream on "digital sequence information on GRFA";⁴

Noting with appreciation the Special Event on Genomics Information held in Kigali prior to the start of the Seventh Session;

Noting that there is a need to further clarify the terminology around "digital sequence information";

1. *Requests* the Bureau to develop, with the support of the Secretary and inputs from Contracting Parties, the Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPoW) for the Governing Body for its consideration at the Eighth Session;

¹ The term is taken from decision CBD COP XIII/16 and is subject to further discussion. There is a recognition that there are a multiplicity of terms that have been used in this area (including, inter alia, "genetic sequence data", "genetic sequence information", "genetic information", "dematerialized genetic resources", "in silico utilization", etc.) and that further consideration is needed regarding the appropriate term or terms to be used.

² CBD/COP/DEC/XIII/16, available at: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-13/cop-13-dec-16-en.pdf>

³ CBD/NP/MOP/DEC/2/14, available at: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/np-mop-02/np-mop-02-dec-14-en.doc>

⁴ Para. 86 of CGRFA-16/17/Report, available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-ms565e.pdf>

2. **Decides** to consider at its Eighth Session the potential implications of the use of “digital sequence information” on genetic resources for the objectives of the International Treaty, and to consider it for inclusion in the MYPoW at that meeting;

3. **Requests** the Secretary to notify the outputs of the work foreseen under paragraph 9 of Resolution 5/2017, on the Implementation of the Global Information System, to Contracting Parties and all relevant stakeholders;

4. **Invites** Contracting Parties, other governments, relevant stakeholders and individuals with relevant expertise on the matter to provide information to the Governing Body on, *inter alia*, terminology used in this area, actors involved with “digital sequence information” on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA), the types and extent of uses of “digital sequence information” on PGRFA, such as:

- i) characterization
- ii) breeding and genetic improvement
- iii) conservation
- iv) identification of PGRFA

as well as on relevance of “digital sequence information” on PGRFA for food security and nutrition, in order to facilitate consideration by the Governing Body, at its Eighth Session, of the potential implications of the use of “digital sequence information” on PGRFA for the objectives of the International Treaty, including exchange, access and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their use;

5. **Requests** the Secretary to compile the views received and make them available to Contracting Parties to inform discussions on this topic at the Eight Session of the Governing Body;

6. **Requests** the Secretary to continue following the discussions on genetic sequence information in other fora, and to coordinate with the Secretariats of the CBD and the CGRFA in any related activities in order to ensure coherence and avoid duplication of efforts;

7. **Requests** the Secretary to inform the Governing Body at its Eighth Session of the outcomes of the related processes in the CBD and in the CGRFA as they relate to the potential implications of the use of "digital sequence information" on genetic resources for the objectives of the International Treaty;

8. **Requests** the Bureau to guide the Secretary in the preparation of the discussions on “digital sequence information” at its Eighth Session, benefiting from technical expertise.