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**COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD
AND AGRICULTURE**

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**JOINT WORK PLAN WITH THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL
DIVERSITY**

**DRAFT JOINT WORK PLAN OF THE SECRETARIATS OF THE CONVENTION ON
BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND OF THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND ITS COMMISSION ON GENETIC
RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

**Enhancing synergies in the implementation of the Programmes of Work of the Convention
and the**

Multi-Year Programme of Work of the FAO Commission

Phase 1: (2009-2011) Preparation for Post 2010 Cooperation

1. Introduction

In 1997, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, hereinafter referred to as FAO, and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, hereinafter referred to as the CBD Secretariat, entered into a Memorandum of Cooperation, which provided a framework in which the two Secretariats advance biodiversity initiatives of mutual interest. In May 2005, a revised Memorandum of Cooperation was signed, to ensure continued effective working arrangements. The revised Memorandum recognizes that the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, hereinafter referred as the FAO Commission, is the international forum where governments specifically address all components of biological diversity of relevance to food and agriculture. The revised Memorandum also contains, in article V, provision for development of joint programmes¹ of work aimed at specific objects of cooperation of mutual relevance.

FAO has supported the development and implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, since its entry into force. This has been done through *inter alia* the provision of technical and policy advice and analysis, documentation, the secondment of staff as well as technical assistance to countries. In addition, FAO's International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, negotiated through the FAO Commission, is in harmony with the CBD. FAO is currently involved in the implementation of many thematic and cross cutting programmes of work of the CBD including the coordination of the pollinators, soil biodiversity and biodiversity for food and nutrition initiatives.

The Conference of the Parties to the CBD and the FAO Commission have regularly recognized the importance of cooperation between FAO and the CBD and have called for development of mutually supportive activities. The FAO Commission, at its Eleventh Session, recommended “a joint work plan on biodiversity for food and agriculture between FAO and its Commission and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity”², and requested this recommendation be forwarded to the Conference of the Parties to the CBD. At the same Session, the Commission adopted major milestones and outputs to be addressed in its Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW), over its next five sessions, and considered that it provided an excellent basis to prepare the joint work plan.

At its ninth meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the CBD, in response to the request from the FAO Commission, requested the Executive Secretary to work with FAO and the Secretariat of the Commission “to prepare a joint work plan on biodiversity for food and agriculture that would assist Parties in, *inter alia*, streamlining reporting requirements, and facilitating the

¹ Although the Memorandum of Cooperation refers to joint programmes of work, this document will use the term joint work plan. Moreover the guidance provided by the FAO Commission and the Conference of the Parties to the CBD use this terminology

² CGRFA-11/07/REP, para. 80.

dialogue at international, regional and national level between bodies dealing with environment and agriculture, while respecting each other's mandates and intergovernmental authority"³.

This joint work plan between the Secretariats of the CBD and of FAO and the FAO Commission will be annexed to the revised Memorandum of Cooperation.

2. Goal and rationale

This joint work plan is aimed at enhancing synergies in the implementation of the FAO Commission's MYPOW and the CBD programmes of work including work on cross cutting issues. In the current phase, the Secretariats have focused the joint work plan on areas where cooperation can be consolidated in the short term, for the mutual benefit of both institutions. It should therefore be noted that the scope of cooperation between FAO and the CBD is much broader than the scope of this joint work plan. New areas of work could be included in the next phases of this joint work plan or through other joint plans.

At its tenth meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the CBD will consider the post 2010 Strategic Plan for the implementation of the CBD. The joint work plan provides an opportunity to enhance long term collaboration between CBD, FAO and the FAO Commission.

3 Mechanisms of collaboration between the FAO and the CBD

Both the FAO Commission and the Conference of the Parties to the CBD have repeatedly stressed the need for enhanced cooperation. This section presents enhanced mechanisms of cooperation at different levels.

Between Secretariats: The Secretariats will:

- Hold consultations on preparations of relevant papers, for mutual benefit;
- Regularly assess progress with and update the joint work plan, at least annually, through joint Secretariat meetings (both in person and by e-mail and teleconference);
- Extend mutual invitations to relevant meetings and consult regarding dates of intergovernmental and other meetings, as appropriate; and
- Submit joint notifications in areas of mutual interest, to streamline reporting.

Between intergovernmental bodies: The Conference of the Parties to the CBD (and/or its subsidiary bodies) and the FAO Commission may consider decisions or recommendations of mutual interest amongst them. They can also exchange views and develop further guidance on cooperation. In addition to any formal decisions or recommendations of these officially convened forums, communication can be expedited and enhanced through, for example, the exchange of experts to discuss a specific issue, organizing meetings⁴ between representatives, of their various bodies inter-sessionally (e.g., the Bureaux or the Chairs thereof) or otherwise liaise regarding recommendations for the next phase of the joint work plan. Where appropriate, other relevant intergovernmental forums may be provided with information of relevance to them, including any relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD, recommendations of its subsidiary bodies or decisions or recommendations of the FAO Commission. Bone-fide representatives of such other forums, on a case-by-case basis and subject to identified needs, may also be invited to contribute to relevant processes under this joint work plan.

³ COPIX/1, para.37

⁴ Membership and terms of reference to be developed.

In preparing meeting documents, the Secretariats of the CBD and the FAO Commission will suggest ways and means to enhance collaboration between the Conference of the Parties to the CBD and the FAO Commission, such as:

- Inform one another of relevant decisions and provide updates on activities adopted by the intergovernmental bodies which are relevant to the joint work plan;
- Invite Bureau members of the intergovernmental bodies to participate in relevant joint Secretariat meetings to facilitate cooperation; and
- Organize joint meetings, if necessary, to discuss specific matters of mutual interest.

Within national governments: Fostering collaboration between agencies responsible for agriculture and environment working on biodiversity presents an essential mechanism for promotion of synergies and avoidance of unnecessary duplication at the national level. The FAO Commission and the Conference of the Parties to the CBD have both noted the importance of this collaboration. To facilitate such collaboration, FAO and the CBD Secretariats will encourage the respective relevant national focal points to interact with their respective counterparts at the national level.

- FAO and CBD Secretariats will provide information in order to enhance cooperation between their respective focal points and their counterparts in other agencies as appropriate. Such consultation may include communication regarding documents for intergovernmental meetings, and input into development of guidance under the respective intergovernmental bodies.

4. Areas of focus

The Secretariats have agreed to address five major areas of focus: assessments of biodiversity of relevance to food and agriculture; targets and indicators; best practices for the management of agricultural biodiversity; micro-organisms and invertebrates, including the International initiatives on soil biodiversity and pollinators; and climate change and genetic resources for food and agriculture.

4.1 Assessments: cooperation toward the preparation of global assessments for the State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture

The Multi-Year Programme of Work of the FAO Commission foresees the preparation of a number of global assessments leading towards *The State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture*, including in particular the current updating of *The State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources*, and work towards the future updating of *The State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources* as well as the preparation of *The State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources* and of *The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources*. The Conference of the Parties to the CBD, at its Ninth Meeting, welcomed the progress and plans made by FAO in preparing these assessments and encouraged countries to provide information that would enable FAO to complete, as planned, the preparation or updating of these reports.

(1) The updating of *The State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* and related processes

- CBD Secretariat will participate in the final review of the update of *The State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*; and
- FAO and CBD Secretariat will identify issues based on decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD which are of relevance to the update of the Global Plan of Action

for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, taking into account the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the work of its Governing Body and FAO will bring these issues to the attention of the Commission and the Governing Body of the International Treaty.

(2) The future updating of *The State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources* and related processes

- In relevant forums and processes, the CBD Secretariat will incorporate consideration of the FAO monitoring mechanism on the status and trends of Animal Genetic Resources, including the Domestic Animal Diversity Information System (DAD-IS), and information from FAO on progress and experience with the implementation of the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources

(3) Preparation of *The State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources*

- CBD Secretariat will participate in the conceptualization and preparation of *The State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources*, including participating in relevant meetings;
- FAO and the CBD Secretariat will promote the exchange of information received from national sources in both forums and encourage mechanisms to streamline national reporting in the future; and,
- Encourage the participation of the relevant national officers supporting the preparation of *The State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources* and the CBD focal points in regional workshops and meetings of mutual interest, including the FAO regional forestry commissions, to facilitate the implementation of the CBD programme of work on forest biological diversity and the preparation of *The State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources*.

(4) Preparation of *The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources*

- The CBD Secretariat will participate in the conceptualization and preparation of *The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources* and the review undertaken of the information base for aquatic genetic resources, including participation in relevant meetings;
- CBD Secretariat will provide advice on expertise related to aquatic genetic resources and linkages between the preparation of *The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources* and relevant processes being undertaken through the CBD programmes of work on inland water biological diversity and marine and coastal biological diversity; and
- The FAO will provide to the CBD Secretariat available information on this subject that might be a useful contribution to the latter two programmes of work, in particular their in-depth review.

4.2 Targets and Indicators

The CBD is currently revising the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation and the Strategic Plan of the CBD for the period beyond 2010. Both include targets and sub-targets for biodiversity and indicators to assess performance towards them. FAO is a major partner of the CBD and genetic resources for food and agriculture is an important area in this context. There is a need to streamline reporting and reduce its burden on their respective Members by facilitating synergy and co-ordination between the FAO Commission and the Conference of the Parties to the CBD regarding these matters.

- Both Secretariats will facilitate cooperation to enhance synergy and harmony between the FAO Commission and the Conference of the Parties to the CBD on relevant aspects of the revised CBD Strategic Plan, in particular the further development or refinement of biodiversity targets and indicators of relevance to both the CBD and the CGRFA in the post-2010 period; and
- Both Secretariats will promote and support the development and eventual use by countries of standardised indicators for global and regional monitoring and foster streamlined reporting.

4.3 Best practices for the on-farm and *in situ* management of agricultural biodiversity

At its Ninth Session, the Conference of the Parties to the CBD invited countries and relevant organizations to submit to the CBD Secretariat best practices concerning the issue of on-farm and *in situ* conservation of agricultural biodiversity and requested the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the FAO, to collate and disseminate this information and make it available to its Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the FAO Commission.

- FAO and the CBD Secretariat will jointly review contributions made by countries and explore the next steps for further work of the FAO Commission and Conference of the Parties to the CBD, if appropriate.

4.4 Micro-organisms and invertebrates including the international initiatives on soil biodiversity and pollinators

Both the Conference of the Parties to the CBD and the FAO Commission recognize the work carried out by FAO on soil biodiversity and pollinators and welcome the technical assistance provided to further the understanding of their role and importance as providers of ecosystem services. During this period FAO will be developing a number of tools and protocols and will regularly inform the Conference of the Parties of the CBD Secretariat and the FAO Commission on progress made. The workplan will aim to:

- Streamline information in both forums, in particular in relation to pollinators and soil biodiversity; and
- Raise awareness of the importance and value of pollinators and soil biodiversity in both forums

The Commission, the Conference of the Parties to the CBD and both Secretariats have recognised that micro-organisms and invertebrates beyond the domains of soil and pollinators are also important components of genetic resources for food and agriculture which are currently given insufficient attention. The workplan will aim to:

- Explore ways and means to improve the information availability for micro-organisms and invertebrates, other than soil biodiversity and pollinators, and share available information between them, with a view to the eventual provision of improved information to, the FAO Commission and the Conference of the Parties to the CBD (including, if appropriate, its Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice) and to their respective Members.

4.5 Climate Change and genetic resources for food and agriculture.

The interface between Climate Change and biodiversity is an emerging issue at both the FAO Commission and Conference of the Parties to the CBD. Both Secretariats will collaborate to explore the links between Climate Change and genetic resources for food and agriculture in particular in the following areas:

- Impact of Climate Change on genetic resources for food and agriculture;
- Lessons learned about ways and means to conserve and use genetic diversity to build resilience and adaptation to Climate Change in food and agriculture systems;
- Integration of genetic diversity considerations into climate change adaptation and mitigation planning; and
- Integration of Climate Change consideration in sectorial and cross sectorial planning for genetic resources;

with a view to eventually providing improved information on these subjects to the Commission and the Conference of the Parties to the CBD (including, if appropriate, its Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice) and to their respective Members.

5. Resource Mobilization

This joint work plan is subject to the availability of resources for its implementation.

Nothing in this joint work plan shall be binding on financial resources of either Secretariats unless mutually agreed in writing.

The CBD Secretariat and the FAO will regularly consult each other to determine the availability of resources required to implement the activities under this joint work plan and the most equitable way of meeting such expenditure, and, if resources are not available, the most appropriate ways to obtain them.

The FAO and CBD Secretariats may, preferably jointly or independently where necessary, seek in kind and financial resources from other organizations and agencies, including funding agencies, for implementation of activities under this joint work plan.

6. Duration and Timeline

Phase 1 of this joint work plan concludes on 31 December 2011. Important milestones for this period are:

- CGRFA-12 (October 2009): Joint progress report presented. (FAO Secretariat will lead on this, draft available July 31 2009);
- SBSTTA – 14 (May 2010): Joint report presented as requested by COP-9 together with recommendations by CGRFA-12. (FAO Secretariat to provide draft input by 31 October 2009, Secretariat of the CBD to incorporate the information into documents prepared for SBSTTA 14);
- COP-10 (October 2010): Guidance on progress made and future work; and
- CGRFA-13 (2011): Guidance on progress made, the outcomes of COP-10 and future work.

Consideration will be given to organizing, between COP-10 and CGRFA-13, a joint meeting with representatives of environment and agriculture to discuss phase II of this joint work plan, including mechanisms to improve streamlining of reporting and facilitation of sectoral dialogue.

7. Focal Points for this joint work plan

Since this joint work plan is between the FAO and the Secretariat of the CBD it is agreed that the focal points for this joint work plan shall be designated from within respective Secretariat staff. This does not preclude the designation of additional focal points in, for example, the various bureaus of the relevant subsidiary bodies.

The focal points shall be:

For the CBD:

The Principle Officer, Scientific, Technical and Technological Matters; and

the Programme Officer in-charge of the Programme of Work on Agricultural Biodiversity at the Secretariat.

For the FAO:

The Sr. Officer, Crop Biodiversity, co-chair of the Interdepartmental working group on Biodiversity for food and agriculture; and

the Sr. Liaison Officer of the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

8. Signature