



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**



**International Treaty
on Plant Genetic Resources
for Food and Agriculture**

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

**THIRTEENTH MEETING OF THE AD HOC OPEN-ENDED WORKING
GROUP TO ENHANCE THE FUNCTIONING OF THE MULTILATERAL
SYSTEM**

Rome, Italy, 1 – 4 April 2025

Annotated Provisional Agenda and Timetable

INTRODUCTION

1. At its Ninth Session in New Delhi, India, the Governing Body decided to re-establish the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group to Enhance the Functioning of the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing (Working Group), to finalize the enhancement of the functioning of the Multilateral System by the Eleventh Session of the Governing Body,¹ scheduled for 24–29 November 2025.
2. The Governing Body noted that while a range of views exist among Contracting Parties on the matter, Contracting Parties commit to working together towards adopting a package of measures to enhance the functioning of the Multilateral System through the process established in the Resolution, with the following shared aims:
 - Increase the benefits that arise from the Multilateral System for all Contracting Parties and users, both monetary and non-monetary;
 - Increase user-based income to the Benefit-sharing Fund in a sustainable and predictable long-term manner;
 - Expand the crops and plant genetic diversity available through the Multilateral System;
 - Improve the availability of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture in the Multilateral System;
 - Make the Multilateral System more dynamic given that there are developments and emerging issues in science, innovation, plant breeding and global policy environment;
 - Create legal certainty, administrative simplicity and transparency for everyone participating in the Multilateral System.
3. The Governing Body decided that the process to enhance the functioning of the Multilateral System will have the following features:
 - Be inclusive, regionally and gender balanced and including all stakeholder groups;

¹ [Resolution 3/2022](#)

- Be open-ended, so that any Contracting Party may attend, provided that speaking rights are limited to a certain number of members;
- Be supported by robust regional or interregional consultations; and
- Be supported by virtual meetings and/or consultations (including hybrid meetings) as well as physical meetings which are held in a transparent manner, while decisions would be made at physical meetings.

4. The Governing Body appointed Mr. Sunil Archak (India) and Mr. Michael Ryan (Australia) as the two Co-Chairs of the Working Group.

5. At its Tenth Session, the Governing Body further elaborated the mandate of the Working Group. In particular, it endorsed the proposal of the Working Group to use the “June 2019 draft package” as a starting point for its further work; and it requested the Co-Chairs to give early attention to the three identified “hotspots”: digital sequence information/genetic sequence data, expansion of Annex I, and payment structure and rates.²

6. It noted that, with a view to make sufficient progress, four formal in-person meetings of the Working Group will be required in the biennium 2024-2025. This meeting is the third meeting during the biennium.

7. Also, the Governing Body took note of decision 15/9 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity on Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources and urged the Working Group to take this decision and related developments into account when addressing the issue of digital sequence information/genetic sequence data in the context of the process to enhance the functioning of the Multilateral system.³

8. The Working Group had originally been established by the Governing Body at its Fifth Session.⁴ It met nine times between 2014 and 2019, and three times so far between 2023 and 2024, following its re-establishment in 2022.

9. The reports of all its previous meetings are available on the website of the International Treaty at www.fao.org/plant-treaty/meetings/en/.

10. A general overview and summary of relevant background information, as well as an indicative timeline, are available at www.fao.org/plant-treaty/areas-of-work/the-multilateral-system/enhancement-process/en/.

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

11. The thirteenth meeting of the Working Group will be held at FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy, from 1 to 4 April 2025. Arrangements have been made to allow Regions and stakeholders to hold regional and interregional consultations, as well as other preparatory meetings, on Sunday, 30 March, and Monday, 31 March.

12. The opening session will begin at 10.00 on Tuesday, 1 April 2025.

13. The meeting will be held in Arabic, English, French and Spanish, in accordance with Resolution 3/2022.

ITEM 2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

14. The present document annotates the *Provisional Agenda* and contains a provisional indicative timetable, for the consideration of the Working Group, so that it could adopt its agenda and organize its work for this meeting.

15. The list of documents prepared for this meeting is contained in document IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/2/Inf.1, *List of documents*. The documents are available on the website of the International Treaty at <https://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/meetings/meetings-detail/en/c/1712761/>.

² [Resolution 3/2023](#)

³ [Resolution 3/2023](#)

⁴ [Resolution 2/2013](#), Part IV

ITEM 3. DEVELOPMENTS IN OTHER RELEVANT FORA

16. The document IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/3, *Developments in Other Relevant Fora*, provides a summary of major developments in relevant subsidiary bodies of the International Treaty, as well as under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

17. The Working Group may wish to consider the relevance and possible implications of these developments for its work.

ITEM 4. PACKAGE OF MEASURES TO ENHANCE THE FUNCTIONING OF THE MULTILATERAL SYSTEM

18. At its twelfth meeting,⁵ the Working Group undertook a first reading of the draft package of measures comprising of the draft Resolution, revised Standard Material Transfer Agreement (SMTA), and the draft text for an amendment of Annex I. It agreed to use the text of the draft package of measures, as the basis for further work at this meeting, as provided in document IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/4.3, *Package of measures to enhance the functioning of the Multilateral System: draft negotiating text contained in the Report of the twelfth meeting*.

19. The Working Group identified a few areas requiring intersessional preparatory work before the thirteenth meeting. In addition, the Working Group made requests for improvements in various provisions of the draft package of measures and such requests have been summarized in boxes in the negotiating text reproduced in the document, IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/4.3.

20. Additionally, the Working Group agreed on a way forward regarding the payment structure, including by considering certain criteria and factors, and provided a number of suggestions and improvements concerning the amendment of Annex I and digital sequence information/genetic sequence data, as well as on the implementation and review of the enhanced Multilateral System.

21. The Co-Chairs accordingly prepared, for the consideration of the Working Group, a proposal of how the suggestions and improvements requested by the Working Group could be addressed. The Co-Chairs' proposal is contained in the document, IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/4.1, *Package of measures to enhance the functioning of the Multilateral System: proposal by the Co-Chairs to address the improvements requested by the Working Group*.

22. The Co-Chairs suggest that the text in the document, IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/4.1 be the basis for the continuation of further negotiations by the Working Group, as it contains both the originally agreed negotiating text as well as the additional proposals by the Co-Chairs, which are clearly highlighted for quick identification. The Co-Chairs provide further information and explanations on the revisions in the document, IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/4.2, *Explanatory notes on the Co-Chairs' proposal*. The two documents are intended to be read together.

23. At its twelfth meeting, the Working Group agreed on the establishment of two sub-groups: A drafting group to redraft the subscription mechanism; and a small group to redraft text on direct use. The Co-Chairs considered the reports of these two sub-groups when preparing their proposals. The full reports of the two sub-groups are contained in the information documents, IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/4/Inf.1, *Report by the Drafting Group: payment structure*, and IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/4/Inf.2, *Report by the Small Group on Direct Use*.

24. In the document, IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/4.4, *Report by the Co-Chairs on Intersessional Work*, the Co-Chairs provide an account of the meetings, consultations and other activities they undertook since the twelfth meeting of the Working Group.

25. For the discussions and deliberations under this agenda item, the Working Group may also wish to consider the documents, IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/4/Inf.3, *Informal meeting on the Enhancement of the Functioning of the Multilateral System: Facilitators' summary*; as well as the previously prepared document IT/OWG-EFMLS-12/24/3/Inf.1, *Policy brief on digital sequence information/genetic sequence data*.

⁵ IT/OWG-EFMLS-12/24/Report, paras. 5 to 14.

26. The Working Group is invited to consider the documents prepared for this agenda item and to agree on a revised negotiating text to be finalized at its fourteenth meeting.

ITEM 5. NEXT STEPS TO FINALIZE THE PACKAGE OF MEASURES

27. The Co-Chairs updated the indicative timeline of the process, which continues to be available on the website of the International Treaty at <https://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/areas-of-work/the-multilateral-system/enhancement-process/en/>.

28. Under this agenda item, the Co-Chairs will present their suggestions for next steps, for discussion with the Working Group, based on the document IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/5.

29. The Working Group is invited to provide advice to the Co-Chairs on the support the Co-Chairs and the Secretary could provide to finalize the package of measures in time for the Eleventh Session of the Governing Body, scheduled for 24 – 29 November 2025. It may also want to provide guidance on any further documents it may wish to be prepared for its fourteenth meeting.

ITEM 6. OTHER MATTERS

30. Under this agenda item, the Working Group may wish to discuss any other relevant matters that may be raised by its members.

ITEM 7. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

31. Under this agenda item, the Working Group is invited to consider and approve the report of its meeting.

32. The draft report will be available in Arabic, English, French and Spanish.

33. The meeting is expected to end at 18.00 on 4 April 2025.

*Appendix***PROVISIONAL INDICATIVE TIMETABLE**

Time	Agenda Item	Title	Documents
Tuesday, 1 April 2025			
Morning			
10.00-13.00	1	Opening of the meeting	
	2	Adoption of the agenda and organization of work	Resolution 3/2023 Resolution 3/2022 IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/2.1 IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/2.2 IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/2/Inf.1
	3	Developments in other relevant fora	IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/3
Tuesday, 1 April 2025			
Afternoon			
15.00-18.00	4	Package of measures to enhance the functioning of the Multilateral System	IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/4.1 IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/4.2 IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/4.3 IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/4.4 IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/4/Inf.1 IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/4/Inf.2 IT/OWG-EFMLS-13/25/4/Inf.3
Wednesday, 2 April 2025			
Morning			
10.00-13.00	4	<i>Package of measures to enhance the functioning of the Multilateral System (continued)</i>	

Wednesday, 2 April 2025			
Afternoon			
14.30-17.30	4	<i>Package of measures to enhance the functioning of the Multilateral System (continued)</i>	
Wednesday, 2 April 2025			
Evening			
19.00-22.00	4	<i>Package of measures to enhance the functioning of the Multilateral System (continued)</i>	
Thursday, 3 April 2025			
Morning			
10.00-13.00	4	<i>Package of measures to enhance the functioning of the Multilateral System (continued)</i>	
Thursday, 3 April 2025			
Afternoon			
14.30-17.30	4	<i>Package of measures to enhance the functioning of the Multilateral System (continued)</i>	
Thursday, 3 April 2025			
Evening			
19.00-22.00	4	<i>Package of measures to enhance the functioning of the Multilateral System (continued)</i>	
	5	Next steps to finalize the package of measures	

	6	Other matters	
Friday, 4 April 2025			
Morning			
10.00-13.00			
Friday, 4 April 2025			
Afternoon			
15.00-18.00	7	Adoption of the Report	