

April 2023



**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**

**FIFTH MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY
COMMITTEE ON THE GLOBAL INFORMATION SYSTEM**

Rome, Italy, 8 – 9 May 2023

ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND TIMETABLE

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

1. The fifth meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee (Committee) will be held on 8 and 9 May 2022, in Rome, Italy. The meeting will start on Monday 8 May at 10.00 CEST (Rome time). Further details concerning the practical arrangements for the meeting are contained in the document, IT/GB-10/SAC-GLIS-5/23/2/Inf.2, *Note for Participants*.
2. The meeting will be held in English. The documentation for this meeting is available at www.fao.org/plant-treaty/meetings/meetings-detail/en/c/1628020/

ITEM 2. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

2.1 Election of the Co-Chairpersons

3. According to its terms of reference, the Committee elects two Co-Chairpersons from among the experts nominated by the Regions, and it has been customary to elect one Co-Chairperson from a developing and one from a developed country. The experts of the Committee nominated by the FAO Regions are invited consult among themselves on the matter in preparation for the meeting.

2.2 Adoption of the Agenda

4. The Provisional Agenda, IT/GB-10/SAC-GLIS-5/23/2, containing the substantive items for discussion was derived from the decisions of the Governing Body or advice provided by the Committee at previous meetings. The list of documents is contained in document IT/GB-10/SAC-GLIS-5/23/2/Inf.1.

5. Under this item, the Co-Chairpersons will invite the Committee to adopt the Agenda and Timetable for its meeting based on the Provisional Agenda, as contained in *Annex 2*.

6. Under Item 4, Partnerships, Collaboration and Capacity Development, partner organizations, technical projects and initiatives will be invited to provide updates relevant to the Programme of Work on the Global Information System. Other relevant speakers will be invited to intervene under various items and deliver presentations.

7. Some observers from Contracting Parties and stakeholder groups that have requested in advance to participate will also be present at the meeting. The names and affiliations of the observers will be included in the list of participants.

2.3 Organization of Work

8. The Committee was established by the Governing Body at its Sixth Session by Resolution 3/2015, through which it also set out the mandate of the Committee. The Governing Body has since then reconvened the Committee and invited it to consider specific matters during the intersessional periods. The updated terms of reference of the Committee are attached as *Annex 1*.

9. By Resolution 5/2022, Implementation of the Global Information System,¹ the Governing Body:²

- a. Decided to reconvene the Committee with the same composition and terms of reference of the previous biennium, subject to the availability of financial resources, to hold at least one meeting in presence and, if necessary, additional virtual meetings and requested the Secretary to updating the Committee on progress with the implementation of the PoW-GLIS; (paragraph 10);
- b. Requested the Committee to continue considering scientific and technical issues of relevance to DSI/GSD, and considering national legislation, as appropriate (paragraph 11);
- c. Invited the Committee to advise the Secretary on exploring collaboration and linkages with the Clearing House Mechanism of the Convention on Biological Diversity as relevant to the GLIS;
- d. Invited the Committee to provide the Governing Body at its Tenth Session with advice on ways to increase the declaration of the country of origin/provenance.

10. By the same Resolution, the Governing Body, adopted a revised programme of work up to 2028. The revised programme is structured around five main objectives:

- i. **The GLIS Portal:** to manage and enhance the GLIS Portal;
- ii. **Interoperability:** to promote interoperability among existing systems by documenting and facilitating access to principles, technical standards and appropriate tools to support their operations;
- iii. **Access to and use of Information:** to promote transparency on the rights and obligations of users for accessing, sharing and using PGRFA-associated information;
- iv. **Information and knowledge sharing:** to create and enhance opportunities to increase knowledge about and add value to PGRFA;
- v. **Capacity development and technology transfer:** to inform about and support capacity development and technology transfer opportunities for the conservation, management and use of information and knowledge associated with PGRFA, paying special attention to the needs of developing countries.

ITEM 3. OPERATIONS OF THE GLOBAL INFORMATION SYSTEM AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK

11. The Secretariat has prepared three documents under this item and will, *inter alia*, illustrate the synergies and complementarities between the GLIS Portal and other global and regional databases.

3.1 Support to Contracting Parties and other users with PGRFA information exchange

12. For sub-item 3.1, the document, IT/GB-10/SAC-5/23/3, *Report on the Operations of the Global Information System and Implementation of the Programme of Work*, contains updates on the support provided to users to make the plant genetic resources they hold more visible through the Global Information System in relation to objectives 1, 2 and 4 of the Programme of Work. The document contains annotations to Resolution 5/2022 indicating progress in responding to the guidance provided by the Governing at its Ninth Session.

¹ Resolution 3/2015, www.fao.org/3/bl140e/bl140e.pdf

² Resolution 5/2022, www.fao.org/3/nk240en/nk240en.pdf

13. Under this sub-item, the Secretariat will provide specific information on the development of the structural elements of the GLIS Portal. In particular, it will illustrate the integration with Toolbox for Sustainable Use of PGRFA, requested by the Committee at its fourth meeting. The document also illustrates the support provided to Contracting Parties and researchers, mainly on the documentation of ex situ material.

14. The Secretariat will also provide information on the progress in the adoption and use of Digital Object Identifiers, and latest collaboration with partners. The Secretariat will also illustrate the progress in the interface with other scientific communities and datasets through the use of DOIs.

15. The Committee is invited to note the relevant information and updates, and provide its advice, as appropriate, particularly on the assistance to Contracting Parties and users.

3.2 PGRFA Documentation and Descriptors

16. The Ninth Session of the Governing Body took note of the of the publication of the *Descriptors for Crop Wild Relatives Conserved In Situ* and the six new lists of characterization and evaluation descriptors for tropical fruit trees. It also acknowledged all the institutions and individuals who contributed to their publication and invited the Secretary to facilitate the development of further descriptor lists, as appropriate, subject to the availability of financial resources. Under this sub-item, the Secretariat will provide an update on the development of the descriptors.

17. Through the document, IT/GB-10/SAC-5/23/3.2, *Support to the documentation of PGRFA and the development of crop descriptors lists*, the Secretariat will provide an update on the third phase of the project “Development of globally agreed list of descriptors for in situ crop wild relatives documentation” and inform about the regional experiences and testing that have been documented.

18. Accordingly, the Committee is invited to take note of the progress made and to provide additional advice, as appropriate.

3.3 Developments Regarding Digital Sequence Information/Genetic Sequence Data

19. At its Ninth Session, the Governing Body tasked the Committee again with considering scientific and technical issues of relevance to DSI/GSD, and considering national legislation, as appropriate.

20. Through the document, IT/GB-10/SAC-5/23/3.3, *Developments regarding Digital Sequence Information/Genetic Sequence Data*, the Secretariat will present a synthesis of the DSI/GSD-related outcomes arising from the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 15), as they relate to the PoW and the mandate of the Committee.

21. The Committee may wish to take note of the update provided in the synthesys report and provide the Secretary with guidance on how to facilitate the continued consideration of the issues of relevance, including by addressing the implications of COP 15 outcomes on the PoW.

ITEM 4. PARTNERSHIPS, COLLABORATION AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

22. Under this agenda item, the Committee is invited to consider the document, IT/GB-10/SAC-5/23/4, *Report on Partnerships, Collaboration and Capacity Development*, which provides a summary of key cooperation activities, as well as of recent developments in the increasingly close relationship between the Secretariat and the key partners identified in the context of GLIS.

23. Under this item, several partners, initiatives and projects have been invited to provide updates on their activities and other developments, occurring since the last Session of the Governing Body, that are relevant to the Global Information System.

24. The Committee is invited to take note of the information presented under this agenda item and provide any relevant advice.

ITEM 5. OTHER MATTERS

25. Under this agenda item, the Committee may consider any other matters of relevance for this meeting. The Committee may consider suggestions for future work of the Committee in the intersessional period.

26. At its meeting in February 2023, the Bureau of the Tenth Session of the Governing Body agreed that the theme of the Tenth Session of the Governing Body should focus on the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and the role of plant genetic resources and, in particular, on the interrelations of the International Treaty and the GBF. While noting their different status and scope, the Bureau agreed to invite the intersessional subsidiary bodies to consider the possible implications of the outcomes of the GBF for the work of the International Treaty in their respective areas of work, with the view to making relevant observations and recommendations for consideration by the Governing Body.

27. The Bureau also highlighted the possible contribution of the International Treaty in supporting Contracting Parties to monitor progress in the implementation of the GBF. In this context, the Committee may wish to note, as a starting point, the document presented to the Ninth Session of the Governing Body IT/GB-9/22/14/Inf.1, Indicators under the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.³

28. In response to the invitation of the Bureau, the Committee is invited to consider the possible implications of the outcomes of the GBF for the work of the International Treaty and make any relevant recommendations, if not done earlier in the meeting.

ITEM 6. RECORDS AND CLOSURE

29. The draft report will be prepared by the Secretariat under the guidance of the Co-Chairpersons and presented to the Committee for its approval.

³ IT/GB-9/22/14/Inf.1, www.fao.org/3/cc2073en/cc2073en.pdf

*Annex 1***Terms of Reference for the Scientific Advisory Committee on Article 17⁴**Objectives

The Governing Body provides guidance on the development and strengthening of the Global Information System, to facilitate the exchange of information, based on existing information systems, on scientific, technical and environmental matters related to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA).

The Scientific Advisory Committee (Committee) shall advise the Secretary on:

- general recommendations on the development and deployment of the Global Information System and its components as adopted by the Governing Body;
- the discovery of new areas of work with potential impact on the System;
- the selection of pilot activities for the Global Information System and, upon request of the Secretary, other initiatives and actions to sustain the operation of the Global Information System, and the further update of the Programme of Work.

In particular, the Committee shall provide scientific advice to the Secretary on the following items:

1. the effectiveness and efficiency of the Global Information System as a mechanism to promote advice regarding scientific, technical and environmental cooperation on PGRFA matters;
2. the exchange of PGRFA-related information and the transfer of publicly available expertise, technology and scientific cooperation;
3. scientific and technical components of the Global Information System and its Programme of Work as recommended by the Governing Body;
4. cooperation with other relevant international and regional scientific, technical and technology transfer initiatives, including the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing House Mechanism of the Nagoya Protocol;
5. means to facilitate the implementation of the Global Information System at the national level and the establishment of a Stakeholder Platform;
6. scientific, technical and environmental cooperation and benefits of all the Treaty activities, including the Multilateral System and Access and Benefit-sharing and the Programme of Work on Sustainable Use;
7. consider scientific and technical issues of relevance to DSI/GSD, and considering national legislation, as appropriate;

Composition

The Committee is composed of:

- up to 2 scientific experts from each Region, nominated by the Vice-chairpersons of the Governing Body of each respective Region;
- 10 additional scientific and technical experts appointed by the Secretary including experts suggested by the regions and relevant stakeholders, taking into account the required range of technical expertise and regional balance as appropriate.
- A variable number of observers;

The members shall be selected for their scientific expertise and understanding of the Global Information System and the International Treaty, taking into account the need for specialized and in-depth expertise including: bioinformatics and molecular genetics; the 'omics', in particular genomics, phenomics and proteomics; management of environmental and geo-spatial data about plant genetic resources; scientific information, taxonomy, crop wild relatives and genebank management and *ex situ*, *in situ* and on-farm conservation of PGRFA, technical cooperation; capacity development, system integration, information exchange and data sharing; fair and equitable benefit sharing and legal

⁴ Resolutions IT/GB-6/15/Res 3 and IT/GB-7/17/Res 5.

expertise in the relevant international law and regulations; partnerships with other organizations, institutions and initiatives.

The Committee shall elect its Co-Chairpersons from among the experts.

The Secretariat of the International Treaty will facilitate the work of the Committee and report to the Governing Body.

Annex 2**PROVISIONAL INDICATIVE TIMETABLE***

Time	Agenda Item	Title	Documents
Monday, 8 May 2023			
Morning			
10.00-13.00	1	Opening of the meeting	
	2	Organizational matters: 2.1. Election of the Co-Chairpersons 2.2. Adoption of the Agenda 2.3. Organization of Work	Resolution 5/2022 IT/GB-10/SAC-GLIS-5/23/1 IT/GB-10/SAC-GLIS-5/23/2 IT/GB-10/SAC-GLIS-5/23/2/Inf.1 IT/GB-10/SAC-GLIS-5/23/2/Inf.2 IT/GB-10/SAC-GLIS-5/23/2/Inf.3
	3	Operations of the Global Information System and Implementation of the Programme of Work	IT/GB-10/SAC-GLIS-5/23/3.1
	3.1	Support to Contracting Parties and other users with PGRFA information exchange	
Monday, 8 May 2023			
Afternoon			
14.00-17.00	3.2	PGRFA Documentation and Descriptors	IT/GB-10/SAC-GLIS-5/23/3.3
	3.3	Developments regarding Digital Sequence Information/Genetic Sequence Data	IT/GB-10/SAC-GLIS-5/23/3.3 IT/GB-9/22/14/Inf.1
Tuesday, 9 May 2023			
Morning			
10.00-13.00	4	Partnerships, Collaboration and Capacity Development	IT/GB-10/SAC-GLIS-5/23/4
	5	Other matters	
Tuesday, 9 May 2023			
Afternoon			
14.30-17.00	6	Records of the meeting and closure	

*Health breaks will be scheduled at 11:30 and 15:30 every day.