



منظمة الأغذية  
والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة

联合国  
粮食及  
农业组织

Food  
and  
Agriculture  
Organization  
of  
the  
United  
Nations

Organisation  
des  
Nations  
Unies  
pour  
l'alimentation  
et  
l'agriculture

Продовольственная и  
сельскохозяйственная  
организация  
Объединенных  
Наций

Organización  
de las  
Naciones  
Unidas  
para la  
Agricultura  
y la  
Alimentación

## Item 10 of the Provisional Agenda

### COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

#### Twelfth Regular Session

Rome, 19 -23 October 2009

### COOPERATION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL TREATY ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE, THE GLOBAL CROP DIVERSITY TRUST AND THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its Eleventh Regular Session, the Commission considered mechanisms for cooperation between the Commission and the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (International Treaty). The Commission supported the development of a joint statement of intention regarding long term cooperation between the two secretariats, which is presented in the document, *Draft Joint Statement of Intent for Cooperation between the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*.<sup>1</sup>
2. In considering cooperation with the International Treaty, the Commission recommended that its Secretariat prepare an analysis of possible areas of collaboration with the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), the Global Crop Diversity Trust (Trust) and the International Treaty to be presented to the Commission's Twelfth Regular Session.<sup>2</sup>
3. The Commission has a well-established cooperation with the International Treaty, the Trust and the CGIAR. This document briefly analyzes such cooperation and seeks guidance from the Commission.

## II. COOPERATION WITH THE CGIAR, THE TRUST AND THE INTERNATIONAL TREATY

### Cooperation with the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)

4. The International Agricultural Research Centres of the CGIAR regularly report to the Commission, through the System-wide Programme on Genetic Resources (SGRP), on their policies, programmes and activities on biological diversity for food and agriculture. The Commission has welcomed these reports, which show the invaluable work and significant contributions of the CGIAR Centres to the Commission's work.<sup>3</sup> Reports from the Centres of the CGIAR on their programmes and activities on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture have also been regularly considered by the Commission's Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Working Group).
5. The contribution of the Centres of the CGIAR to the work of the Commission is not restricted to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. They undertake a broad spectrum of programmes and activities in all genetic resources for food and agriculture, and have the expertise and capacity to deal with cross-sectorial matters in an interdisciplinary and integrated manner.
6. At its Eleventh Regular Session, the Commission adopted its Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW).<sup>4</sup> The Commission underscored the importance of the MYPOW as an excellent vehicle to strengthen cooperation in relation to biodiversity for food and agriculture, and to ensure synergy and complementarity.<sup>5</sup> With the MYPOW, the Commission has enhanced the opportunity to advance and consolidate long-term cooperation between FAO and its Commission and the CGIAR in support of the implementation of a broad spectrum of initiatives aimed at enhancing the use, development and conservation of genetic resources for food and agriculture. The CGIAR inter-centre working group which oversees the SGRP is currently identifying a comprehensive set of priority research and capacity building activities to be undertaken by the CGIAR Centres, often

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<sup>1</sup> CGRFA-12/09/18

<sup>2</sup> CGRFA-11/07/Report, paragraph 76

<sup>3</sup> CGRFA-10/04/Report, paragraph 67, and CGRFA-11/07/Report, paragraph 76.

<sup>4</sup> CGRFA-12/09/4, *Draft Strategic Plan 2010-2017 for the Implementation of the Multi-Year Programme of Work*, provides more information about the MYPOW.

<sup>5</sup> CGRFA-11/07/Report, paragraph 92.

in partnership with other organizations, concerning the use and conservation of genetic resources for food and agriculture that are in line with, and complement, the MYPOW.<sup>6</sup>

### **Cooperation with the Global Crop Diversity Trust**

7. The Global Crop Diversity Trust (the Trust) was co-founded by FAO and Bioversity International (acting for the CGIAR Centres). Established in 2004 under international law as an independent international organization, the Trust operates within the framework of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (the Treaty) as an essential element of its Funding Strategy and in accordance with the overall policy guidance provided by its Governing Body. The Trust's objective as stated in its Constitution is "*to ensure the long-term conservation and availability of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture with a view to achieving global food security and sustainable agriculture.*"

8. The Commission has been regularly informed of initiatives and the progress made by the Trust, since its inception in 2004. The Trust has an extensive expertise in all aspects related to the long-term conservation and availability of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. The Commission at its Eleventh Session noted the Trust's success in mobilizing funding for *ex situ* conservation.

9. The Trust has also reported to the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources, at its Third and Fourth Sessions. At its Third Session, the Working Group stressed the important role of the Trust in supporting the long-term conservation of the world's most strategic germplasm collections.<sup>7</sup> At its Fourth Session, the Working Group expressed its appreciation for the important work that is being done by the Trust and other international organizations, to advance the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources. The document, *Report from the Global Crop Diversity Trust*<sup>8</sup> is available to the Commission.

### **Cooperation with the International Treaty**

10. The Governing Body of the International Treaty and the Commission have repeatedly emphasized the necessity for close cooperation and coordination. At this Session, the Commission will review a *Draft Joint Statement* for cooperation between the Governing Body of the International Treaty and the Commission, with a view to adopt it.<sup>9</sup> The Governing Body has already reviewed and adopted the Draft Joint Statement.

#### *Review of cooperation by the Governing Body of the International Treaty*

11. The Governing Body of the International Treaty, at its Third Session, considered the document, *Cooperation between the Governing Body and the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, and coordination of their fields of intergovernmental work*,<sup>10</sup> which is available to the Commission. The document was jointly prepared by the secretariats of the International Treaty and the Commission. It reviewed the main areas of intergovernmental work on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture of the Governing Body of the International Treaty and of the Commission, with a view to identify areas of intergovernmental work that require coordination and ways to facilitate future cooperation.

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<sup>6</sup> "*An Integrated Approach to Genetic Resources in Support of the CGIAR's Mission: a position paper developed by the Inter-Centre Working Group on Genetic Resources*". For more information see document CGRFA12/09/Inf. 6

<sup>7</sup> CGRFA/WG-PGR-3/05/REPORT, paragraph 40.

<sup>8</sup> CGRFA/WG-PGR-4/09/Inf.5

<sup>9</sup> CGRFA-12/09/18, more information on the request by the Commission to prepare the Draft Joint Statement and on steps taken since then can be found in this document.

<sup>10</sup> IT/GB-3/09/17

12. The Governing Body emphasized the need for collaboration between the two bodies and their Secretariats, and adopted Resolution 7/2009.<sup>11</sup> The Governing Body of the International Treaty encouraged close cooperation between the Commission and the Governing Body that may gradually lead to an agreed functional division of tasks and activities between the Commission and the Governing Body within the terms of the International Treaty.

13. Resolution 7/2009 of the Governing Body made reference to the following areas of intergovernmental work on plant genetic resources: *The State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*; the *Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*; International Plant Genetic Resources Networks; Genebank Standards; the Global Information System on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture; other policy issues related to the specificity of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture; the Funding Strategy of the International Treaty; and the FAO Reform.

14. Through Resolution 7/2009, the Governing Body specifically invited the Commission to:

- include in future revisions or updates of *The State of the World's on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* information on the implementation of the provisions of the Treaty, in particular, Articles 5, 6 and 9 of the Treaty, and coordinate, as appropriate with the Governing Body;
- take into account, in the revision of the Global Plan of Action, specific issues of relevance to the Treaty and to adequately reflect the provisions of the Treaty in the Global Plan of Action;
- commence and coordinate the process for the revision of the Genebank Standards, in collaboration with competent institutes, including the International Agricultural Research Centres of the CGIAR, the Global Crop Diversity Trust and other relevant organizations, taking into account relevant ongoing work and initiatives;
- collaborate, in the context of its Multi-year Programme of Work, with the Governing Body so that issues related to the access and benefit-sharing in plant genetic resources for food and agriculture may be dealt with in an integrated and harmonious manner, in order to ensure policy coherence, promote synergies and avoid duplication of efforts; and,
- continue monitoring progress made to develop the Facilitating Mechanism as necessary.

15. The Governing Body also invited coordination with the Commission to ensure that adequate attention is given to genetic resources issues, and that genetic resources issues are appropriately integrated into the FAO Regular Programme, Mid-Term Plan and Strategic Framework. Resolution 7/2009 also made a number of requests for further cooperation between the Secretariats and Bureaus of the Commission and the Treaty's Governing Body.

#### *Recommendations on future cooperation by the Working Group*

16. At its Fourth Session, the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources welcomed the *Draft Strategic Plan for the implementation of the Multi-Year Programme of Work*,<sup>12</sup> and provided inputs in its field of expertise, mainly with regard to the indicative timetable and processes and the international cooperation needed to achieve the MYPOW milestones and outputs on plant genetic resources. The Working Group recommended

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<sup>11</sup> Resolution 7/2009 is available in document CGRFA-12/09/18, *Appendix II*. The Report of the Third Session of the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture is available at [http://www.planttreaty.org/meetings/gb3\\_en.htm](http://www.planttreaty.org/meetings/gb3_en.htm)

<sup>12</sup> CGRFA-12/09/4

that the Commission request its Secretariat to continue close cooperation with the Secretariat of the International Treaty, including in the MYPOW implementation.

17. The Working Group also recommended close cooperation between the Commission and the Governing Body that may gradually lead to an agreed functional division of tasks and activities on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. In this context, the Working Group recommended that the Commission request its Secretariat, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the International Treaty, to prepare a vision paper with the aim of facilitating policy coherence and complementarity of the work of the two bodies, for consideration by the Commission at its Thirteenth Session. The Working Group recommended that the Commission request the bureaus of the Commission and the Governing Body to consider the draft vision paper prior to the Thirteenth Regular Session of the Commission.

18. The *Draft Strategic Plan for the implementation of the Multi-Year Programme of Work*<sup>13</sup> foresees a process to develop and discuss the vision paper before it is considered by the Commission. The Secretariats of the Commission and of the International Treaty will prepare the vision paper with options for facilitating policy coherence and complementarity of the work of the Commission and of the Governing Body, identify areas of collaboration and review the Global System on Plant Genetic Resources. A joint meeting of the Bureau of the Commission and the Bureau of the Treaty's Governing Body will review the vision paper.

### III. GUIDANCE SOUGHT

19. The Commission may wish:
- i. emphasize the need to continue close cooperation with the International Treaty, the Trust and the CGIAR, including in the MYPOW implementation;
  - ii. request its Secretariat to explore options to consolidate long-term cooperation between FAO and its Commission and the CGIAR Centres to support the implementation of the MYPOW with an integrated approach, including through the elaboration of cooperative arrangements;
  - iii. request its Secretariat, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the International Treaty, to prepare a vision paper with the aim of facilitating policy coherence and complementarity of the work of the two bodies, and the Commission may wish to indicate the main elements of the vision paper;
  - iv. request its Secretariat, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the International Treaty, to submit the vision paper for review by the joint meeting of the Bureau of the Commission and the Bureau of the Treaty's Governing Body, prior to its consideration by the next sessions of the Commission and the Governing Body of the Treaty.
  - v. respond to the various invitations made by the Governing Body of the International Treaty to the Commission and contained in Resolution 7/2009, and provide additional guidance it considers necessary in that regard.

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<sup>13</sup> CGRFA-12/09/4