



منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food
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Agriculture
Organization
of
the
United
Nations

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

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

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Item 9 of the Provisional Agenda

INTERNATIONAL TREATY ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

SECOND SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY

Rome, 29 October – 2 November 2007

REPORT FROM THE GLOBAL CROP DIVERSITY TRUST

1. Article 18 of the Treaty provides that “*Contracting Parties undertake to implement a funding strategy for the implementation of this Treaty*” with the objective “*to enhance the availability, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of the provision of financial resources to implement activities under this Treaty*”¹.
2. At its first session, the Governing Body adopted the *Funding Strategy of the International Treaty* by Resolution 1/2006.² In Resolution 1/2006, the Governing Body noted “*that the Global Crop Diversity Trust is an essential element of the Funding Strategy in relation to the ex situ conservation and availability of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture*”³.
3. At its first session, the Governing Body also concluded a *Relationship Agreement with the Global Crop Diversity Trust*. That Agreement, *inter alia*, recognizes the Trust as “*an essential element of the Funding Strategy of the International Treaty in relation to the ex situ conservation and availability of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.*”
4. Article 3 of the *Relationship Agreement* states that the Governing Body “*shall provide overall policy guidance to the Trust on all matters within the purview of the International Treaty,*” that the Governing Body “*shall appoint four members to serve on the Executive Board of the Trust,*” and that the Executive Board of the Trust “*shall submit an annual report on the activities of the Trust to the Governing Body of the International Treaty*”. Pursuant to Article 3, the Secretary of the Governing Body received a *Report from the Executive Board of the Trust to the Governing Body* on August 13, 2007. The Report is reproduced in the Annex of this document in the form and language in which it was received.

¹ Article 18.1 and Article 18.2

² IT/GB-1/06/Report, p.2 and Appendix F

³ Resolution 1/2006, Preamble, para. (ix), IT/GB-1/06/Report, p.3

5. Article 4 of the *Relationship Agreement* states that “*Subject to the provisions of Article 3, the Trust and its Executive Board shall have full executive independence in managing the operations and activities of the Trust and in taking decisions relating to the raising and investment of funds and the operation of the Trust including decisions relating to the allocation of grants from the Trust*”.

6. A report on the appointment by the Governing Body of four individuals to serve as Members of the Executive Board of the Global Crop Diversity Trust as well as biographical details of the individuals selected are contained in document IT/GB-2/07/04⁴. A brief biographical sketch of the individuals selected follows:

a. Prof Sir Peter Crane is John & Marion Sullivan University Professor at the University of Chicago. He is former Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (United Kingdom), and former director of the Field Museum (Chicago, United States). He is a Member of the Royal Society and a Foreign Associate of the United States National Academy of Sciences and the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences.

b. Prof Adel El-Beltagy is Chair of the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) and Professor at the Faculty of Agriculture, Ain Shams University. His was formerly Director-General of the International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA) and Under Secretary of State for Land Reclamation (Egypt). His is a Fellow of the Third World Academy of Sciences.

c. Prof Wangari Maathai is the Nobel Peace Prize laureate of 2004. She is a Member of Parliament (Kenya) and is President, Economic, Social and Cultural Council of the African Union (ECOSOCC). She was the Founder of the Green Belt Movement, and was formerly Assistant Minister of Environment and Natural Resources. She is the recipient of the Right Livelihood Award, Global 500 Roll of Honor, Goldman Prize, Edinburgh Medal, Africa Prize, Sophie Prize, and the Legion d’Honneur.

d. Mr Karl Erik Olsson is currently a farmer in Sweden. Formerly he was Minister of Agriculture (Sweden). He has served as a Member of the Swedish Parliament as well as a Member of the European Parliament.

7. The Governing Body is invited to take note of the contents of the Report contained in the *Annex* to this document and provide relevant guidance within the purview of the International Treaty and the *Relationship Agreement*.

⁴ IT/GB-2/07/4, *Report of the Chair*.

Annex I

REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE GLOBAL CROP DIVERSITY TRUST TO THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE INTERNATIONAL TREATY ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**I. INTRODUCTION**

1. The Executive Board of the Global Crop Diversity Trust is pleased to submit its first annual report on the Trust's activities to the Governing Body as provided for by Article 3.3 of the *Relationship Agreement* between the two entities.

2. As the *Relationship Agreement* notes, the Trust was established in the form of an endowment with the objective of “*providing a permanent source of funds to support the long-term conservation of the ex situ germplasm on which the world depends for food security*”. Furthermore, the *Agreement* notes the FAO Global Plan of Action's call for the “*development and support of a rational, efficient and sustainable system of genetic resources collections around the world*”. The activities the Trust is reporting were conceived and are being implemented through a science-based approach in furtherance of these goals.

II. TRUST ACTIVITIES

3. The Trust has recently launched a major initiative to secure the biological basis of agriculture and promote new and fuller use of crop genetic resources. This initiative comes in addition to, but is also a prerequisite for complementary efforts to provide for the long-term conservation of crop diversity. The International Treaty, as the text of the *Relationship Agreement* with the Trust notes, provides that “*due attention be given to the need for adequate documentation, characterization, regeneration and evaluation, and for promoting the development and transfer of appropriate technologies for this purpose [...] and further provides for the encouragement and development of international plant genetic resources networks and the development and strengthening of a global information system*”.

4. Below, is a brief description of the Trust's contribution to each of the areas specified above by the Treaty, as noted by the *Relationship Agreement* with the Trust.

III. REGENERATION OF THREATENED, GLOBALLY-IMPORTANT CROP DIVERSITY

5. The Trust anticipates providing financial support to regenerate distinct and threatened samples now held in some 120 collections in developing countries. In identifying specific collections for support, the Trust has benefited from “*Global Crop Strategies*” formulated by crop experts. More than 500 experts from 120 countries were involved in this process and, among other things, identified which collections collectively would comprise the gene pool of each crop. Regeneration of threatened accessions was identified as a high priority and a matter of urgency in the *Crop Strategies*, as well as in numerous informal discussions that took place with delegates to the *First Session of the Governing Body of the International Treaty*. The Trust is responding to

this perceived emergency, which was also highlighted in the *First Report on the State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* and the *Global Plan of Action*.

6. The Trust is focusing its initial regeneration efforts on 22 crops listed in *Annex I of the International Treaty*.⁵ The Trust is now contacting holders of the identified priority collections in more than 40 developing countries to propose a partnership for the regeneration of relevant accessions.

7. Because not all diversity will be covered and thus secured by dealing with the identified priority collections alone, the Trust is approaching each of the 15 regional Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA) networks to propose projects to identify and regenerate the remaining diversity held in other collections. Partnerships with the regional networks will effectively encompass all developing countries.

8. The Trust expects to invest more than US\$ 3.75 million in this process in developing countries. The initiative should result in the regeneration of more than 165 000 threatened accessions over the course of four years.

IV. SAFETY DUPLICATION

9. The Trust has entered into a tripartite agreement with the Government of Norway and the Nordic Gene Bank concerning the management, operation and funding of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault. During the last year, the Trust has provided technical and organizational support to the Seed Vault. The tripartite agreement calls for the Trust to provide funding for its ongoing operation.

10. The Trust is supporting the packaging and shipment to Svalbard of the collections held in trust by the Centers of the CGIAR under agreements with the Governing Body of the International Treaty, and will provide similar support to the priority collections referred to above that are held in developing countries, as well as to the material regenerated through regional networks.

V. INFORMATION SYSTEMS

11. The Trust will support the development of two information systems, one to be applied at the institute level to improve management of collections, and the other globally to facilitate and improve the flow of genetic resources and associated information in line with the International Treaty.

12. The Trust is currently contracting for the development of a new *gene bank management software system*. The Trust anticipates the system will be based on an existing and very comprehensive software programme. The new version, however, will be capable of operating

⁵ Banana, barley, bean, breadfruit, cassava, chickpea, coconut, cowpea (*Vigna* sp.), fababean, finger millet, grass pea (*Lathyrus*), maize, major aroids (e.g., taro, cocoyam), lentil, pearl millet, pigeon pea, potato, rice, sorghum, sweet potato, wheat, yam.

on a personal computer platform, without license fees. The system will be offered free of charge, and in different major languages. Training will be provided individually or through networks, as feasible, to developing countries wishing to install the system.

13. The Trust will also support the development of a global *Accession Level Information System*. National and other gene banks would link to this system voluntarily, providing plant breeders and researchers with the capacity of searching globally for accessions and traits of interest. This system should serve to promote the Treaty's access and benefit-sharing provisions by making accessions more visible and easy to identify.

14. Information systems are only as good as the information that goes into them. In July 2007, the Trust announced a *Competitive Awards Scheme for Enhancing the Value of Crop Diversity* to enable researchers and other users to screen collections for important characteristics and to make the information generated publicly available. Priority will be given to screening for characters of greatest importance to the poor, and especially those relevant in the context of climate change. The Trust anticipates providing funding to screen at least 50 collections during the next three years.

VI. RESEARCH

15. The Trust will not typically be a funding source for research. However, the long-term *ex situ* conservation of certain crops is difficult due to technical reasons, whereas *in situ* conservation exposes such collections to risks and makes distribution of germplasm difficult due to phytosanitary restrictions. Examples of such crops include sweet potato, yam, coconut, breadfruit, and major aroids, all *Annex I crops*. The Trust intends to finance basic research on one or more of these crops with the aim of developing robust techniques for its/their cryopreservation.

VII. LONG-TERM CONSERVATION AND AVAILABILITY OF CROP DIVERSITY

16. The chief mission of the Trust is to ensure the long-term conservation and availability of crop diversity.

17. The first grant agreement providing for recurring support to a collection was concluded in late 2006 with the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI). IRRI maintains in trust, under an agreement with the Governing Body, the largest, most diverse, and most accessed rice collection in the world. Both IRRI and the Trust have set aside funds, the income from which ensures the IRRI gene bank of being able to maintain its current level of funding and operations forever. This is an historic agreement that brings stability and security to the most important collection of arguably the most important crop in the world to food security.

VIII. INSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

18. The Executive Board of the Global Crop Diversity Trust held its first meeting in Rome in April 2007. Ambassador Fernando Gerbasi, Chairperson of the Interim Panel of Eminent Experts (IPEE), opened the meeting, handing over the governance of the Trust to the newly-

chosen members of the Executive Board who elected Margaret Catley-Carlson as Chairperson and Wangari Maathai as Vice-Chairperson.

19. The Executive Board wishes to pay tribute to the members of the IPEE for their extraordinary leadership and service in establishing the Trust and to thank them for the smooth transition to the current governance structure. It wishes to note the cooperation, assistance, and many contributions of FAO and Bioversity International to the founding and operation of the Trust. It also wishes to thank the 25 countries that have formally adopted or ratified the Trust's *Establishment Agreement*.⁶

20. Approximately US\$ 94 million has now been pledged (and US\$ 39.7 million received and invested) towards the Trust's endowment, and a total of US\$ 134 million raised (including the amount pledged to the endowment). According to the Trust's business plan, 4.5 percent can be drawn from the endowment annually. Investment returns have been good, exceeding withdrawals by a comfortable margin. Nevertheless, significant new contributions will be required if the Trust is to achieve its goal of ensuring the conservation of the biological foundation of agriculture and future food security.

21. Sixteen countries (including developed and developing) as well as a number of foundations, associations and companies have contributed funds and joined the Trust's Donors' Council. The Council meets annually and provides financial oversight and advice on such matters to the Executive Board. In addition a number of individuals have contributed to the Trust.

22. More information about the Trust's strategy, programmes and finances can be found at: <http://www.croptrust.org>

23. In closing, the Executive Board would like to use the occasion of its *First Report to the Governing Body of the International Treaty* to reaffirm its commitment to the mission of the Trust as specified in the Constitution, and to the *Relationship Agreement* concluded with the Governing Body of the International Treaty in Madrid. The Executive Board, four members of which were chosen directly by the Governing Body, looks forward to continuing and strengthening the constructive and cooperative relationship that already exists between the Trust and the Governing Body.

24. Submitted by the Executive Board of the Global Crop Diversity Trust, 13 August 2007.

Members:

-Dr Margaret Catley-Carlson (Chairperson)

Chairperson of the Global Water Partnership⁷

⁶ In order of ratification: Egypt, Cape Verde, Jordan, Togo, Morocco, Syria, Samoa, Ethiopia, Tonga, Peru, Mali, Ecuador, Colombia, Sweden, Mauritius, Serbia and Montenegro, Cameroon, Cambodia, Pakistan, Romania, Uganda, Kenya, Australia, Ghana, India.

⁷ Organizational affiliations are provided for identification purposes only.

-Prof Wangari Maathai (Vice-Chairperson)

Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

Member of Parliament (Kenya)

-Mr Lewis Coleman (Chair, Finance and Investment Committee)

President and Chief Financial Officer of DreamWorks Animation

Director, Northrop Grumman Corporation

-Prof Sir Peter Crane

John & Marion Sullivan University Professor at the University of Chicago

-Ambassador Jorio Dauster

Board Chairman, Brasil Ecodiesel

-Prof Adel El-Beltagy

Chair of the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR)

Professor at the Faculty of Agriculture/Ain Shams University

-Prof Cary Fowler

Executive Secretary, Global Crop Diversity Trust

-Prof John Lovett

Chairperson of the Cooperative Research Centre for National Plant Biosecurity, Australia

-Dr José María Sumpsi Viñas

Assistant Director-General, Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department of FAO

-Mr Karl Erik Olsson

Farmer

-Dr Mangala Rai

Secretary of the Government of India's Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE)

Director-General of the Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR)