



COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

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STATUS OF PREPARATION OF *THE SECOND REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES*

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its Seventeenth Regular Session in February 2019, the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Commission) adopted the outline¹ and timeline² for the preparation of *The Second Report on the State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources* (Second Report), as well as the guidelines³ for preparing country reports. It encouraged countries to initiate the collection of information and data for the preparation of their country reports and called upon them to submit their reports for the preparation of the Second Report by 30 June 2020. According to the timeline, the Commission will consider the status of the preparation of the Second Report at its current session, and the draft Second Report at its Nineteenth Session.
2. The Commission requested FAO to invite regional networks on forest genetic resources and relevant international organizations to contribute to the preparation of the Second Report. It also took note of the extra-budgetary resources required for the preparation of the Second Report⁴ and invited donors to support its preparation.
3. The Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Forest Genetic Resources (Working Group) reviewed the status of the preparation of the Second Report at its Sixth Session in April 2021. It took note of the activities reported in relation to the preparation of the Second Report and thanked FAO for organizing regional training workshops to assist National Focal Points for forest genetic resources in the preparation of their country reports. It requested FAO to ensure an inclusive process for the four expert meetings that will gather additional information on forest genetic resources from the scientific community for the preparation of the Second Report.⁵
4. This document presents a summary of activities undertaken for the preparation of the Second Report, the current status of the preparatory process and next steps, for consideration by the Commission.

II. ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN FOR THE PREPARATION OF *THE SECOND REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES*

5. Through Circular State Letter C/CBD-10⁶ of 18 June 2019, FAO invited Members to update the nominations of National Focal Points, as appropriate, by 31 August 2019, and submit the country reports for the preparation of the Second Report by 30 June 2020. Through the same letter, FAO invited the regional networks on forest genetic resources and relevant international organizations to submit reports on their contributions to the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action on the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Forest Genetic Resources* (Global Plan of Action)⁷ by the same date.
6. In 2019 and 2020, FAO briefed its Regional Forestry Commissions in Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Near East and North America on the preparatory process of the Second Report. FAO also provided a similar briefing to the Twenty-fifth Session of the FAO Committee on Forestry in October 2020. The Committee invited Members to finalize their country reports for the Second Report and submit them to FAO, as soon as possible.⁸
7. In March 2019, FAO, through a webinar, briefed the Steering Committee of the European Forest Genetic Resources Programme (EUFORGEN) on the preparatory process for the Second Report. In April 2019, Bioversity International, FAO and the Forestry Research Institute of Ghana organized a regional workshop in Kumasi, Ghana for the National Coordinators of the Sub-Saharan

¹ CGRFA-17/19/10.3, *Appendix I*.

² CGRFA-17/19/10/3, *Appendix II*.

³ CGRFA-17/19/10.3/Inf.1.

⁴ CGRFA-17/19/10.3, *Appendix III*.

⁵ CGRFA-18/21/9.1, paragraph 14.

⁶ <http://www.fao.org/3/ca5229en/ca5229en.pdf>

⁷ FAO. 2014. *Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Forest Genetic Resources*. Rome. (also available at <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3849e.pdf>).

⁸ COFO/2020/REP, paragraph 16.

Africa Forest Genetic Resources Programme (SAFORGEN). The workshop was attended by national experts from 20 countries,⁹ as well as representatives of Botanic Gardens Conservation International, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and the World Agroforestry Center. While the workshop focused on the implementation of the Global Plan of Action, the participants were also briefed on the preparatory process of the Second Report.

8. In October 2019, FAO organized, in collaboration with the Asia Pacific Forest Genetic Resources Programme (APFORGEN), Bioversity International and the Chinese Academy of Forestry, a regional training workshop on the preparation of country reports for the Second Report. The training event was held in Beijing, China, back-to-back with an APFORGEN meeting, and was attended by National Focal Points, their alternates or other national experts from ten countries.¹⁰ In the same month, FAO also presented an update to the preparation of the Second Report to the Annual Meeting of the OECD Forest Seed and Plant Scheme, held in Vienna, Austria.

9. As a follow-up to the Seventeenth Regular Session of the Commission, the Secretariat approached several potential donors for their interest to support the preparation of the Second Report. In October 2019, FAO hired a United Nations Volunteer for two years with resources from the multilateral trust fund project supporting the implementation of the Commission's Multi-Year Programme of Work¹¹ which has so far received contributions from the Governments of Canada, Norway and Switzerland. Furthermore, a forestry expert seconded to FAO by France contributed to this work among other forest management-related activities between January 2020 and July 2021.

10. In July 2020, the Government of Germany and FAO signed an agreement for a three-year global project¹² supporting the preparation of the Second Report. The project activities include the organization of regional training workshops to support the finalization of the country reports.

11. Due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic and related travel restrictions, the planned regional training workshops were converted to virtual meetings. The virtual mode allowed other national experts to attend the meetings, in addition to the National Focal Points. The meetings focused on clarifying the reporting guidelines, demonstrating the use of the online reporting system, sharing experiences on the preparation of the country reports and briefing the National Focal Points and experts on the overall preparatory process of the Second Report. In 2020, virtual meetings were organized in Asia (26–27 October), and in the Southwest Pacific (12–13 November). In 2021, virtual meetings were organized for sub-Saharan Africa (11–12 March), Latin America and the Caribbean (11–12 March), Near East and North Africa (19–20 April) and Central Asia (22–23 April). The virtual meetings were attended by a total of 96 National Focal Points and experts from 48 countries.

III. CURRENT STATUS AND NEXT STEPS IN PREPARING THE SECOND REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES

12. FAO continues to provide, on request, technical support to the National Focal Points for the finalization of the country reports through video calls and electronic mail. A country report consists of two sections: (i) an online questionnaire gathering data on the management of forest genetic resources; and (ii) a written report providing complementary information.¹³ The questionnaire is based on the targets, indicators and verifiers for forest genetic resources adopted by the Commission at its Sixteenth Regular Session for monitoring the implementation of the Global Plan of Action.¹⁴

⁹ Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Togo and Uganda.

¹⁰ Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

¹¹ GCP/GLO/841/MUL.

¹² GCP/GLO/041/GER.

¹³ CGRFA-17/19/10.3/Inf.1.

¹⁴ CGRFA-16/17/Report, paragraph 74; CGRFA-16/17/20, *Appendix C*.

13. As of July 2021, 101 countries¹⁵ have nominated their National Focal Points and 15 countries¹⁶ have submitted their full country report to FAO. An additional 21 countries have completed the online questionnaire but have not yet submitted their written reports. National Focal Points in many other countries have informed the Secretariat that the gathering of data and information is still under way, and that they expect to submit their country reports later in 2021. In addition to challenges related to the availability of financial and human resources for the preparation of country reports, several National Focal Points have reported that the pandemic and related restrictions in place in their countries have made it difficult to gather inputs from different stakeholders. No reports have so far been received from the regional networks on forest genetic resources and relevant international organizations.

14. In 2021, FAO will continue screening the received country reports for possible data-entry errors and inconsistencies in consultation with the National Focal Points, as needed. Analyses and summaries of the data and information from the country reports will then be prepared for the Second Report. Four expert meetings are planned for 2021 to gather additional information on forest genetic resources from the scientific community for the preparation of the Second Report. Furthermore, consultants will be hired to support the preparation of the Second Report.

15. According to the timeline adopted by the Commission for the preparation of the Second Report,¹⁷ FAO is expected to prepare a first draft of the Second Report for consideration by the Working Group at its Seventh Session in 2022. The Commission will then consider the draft Second Report at its Nineteenth Regular Session in 2023. As the country reports are the primary source of data and information for the preparation of the Second Report, it is necessary for FAO to receive more country reports as soon as possible to follow the agreed timeline.

16. At its Sixth Session, the Working Group stressed the urgency of finalizing the Second Report and recommended that the Commission invite countries that have not yet done so to nominate a National Focal Point and alternates, as needed. It also invited countries, regional networks and relevant international organizations that have not yet done so to submit their final reports to FAO by 31 October 2021, or as soon as possible thereafter, in order not to delay the finalization of the draft Second Report foreseen for review by the Working Group at its next Session and consideration by the Commission at its Nineteenth Regular Session. It noted that regional networking and the sharing of experiences could assist National Focal Points in preparing their country reports. It further noted that several countries had indicated their intention to submit their country reports by the deadline. The Working Group also highlighted the human and financial difficulties that many countries had experienced in finalizing their reports.¹⁸

17. The Working Group also recommended that the Commission invite donors to support the country reporting, in particular that of developing countries, as well as the finalization and publication of the Second Report, and FAO to explore cost-effective and new ways of publishing and distributing the Second Report and its key findings. It further encouraged FAO to make the country reports available on its website.¹⁹

IV. GUIDANCE SOUGHT

18. The Commission may wish to:

- i. invite countries that have not yet done so to nominate a National Focal Point and alternates, as needed;
- ii. invite countries, regional networks and relevant international organizations that have not yet done so to submit their reports to FAO by 31 October 2021, or as soon as possible thereafter;

¹⁵ <http://www.fao.org/forest-genetic-resources/background/national-focal-points/en/>

¹⁶ Canada, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Iceland, Lithuania, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland and Ukraine.

¹⁷ CGRFA-17/19/Report, *Appendix F*.

¹⁸ CGRFA-18/21/9.1, paragraph 15.

¹⁹ CGRFA-18/21/9.1, paragraph 16.

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- iii. request FAO to present the draft Second Report for consideration by the Commission at its Nineteenth Regular Session;
 - iv. request FAO to ensure an inclusive process for the four expert meetings that will gather additional information on forest genetic resources from the scientific community for the preparation of the Second Report;
 - v. request FAO to explore cost-effective and new ways of publishing and distributing the Second Report and its key findings;
 - vi. encourage FAO to make the country reports available on its website; and
 - vii. invite donors to support the country reporting, in particular that of developing countries, as well as the finalization and publication of the Second Report.