Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

The International Treaty ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Item 1 of the Provisional Agenda
INTERNATIONAL TREATY ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
THIRD MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE GLOBAL INFORMATION SYSTEM
Rome, Italy, 21 – 22 June 2018
Annotated Provisional Agenda and Timetable

I.   INTRODUCTION

1.   The Scientific Advisory Committee on the Global Information System (GLIS) was established by the Governing Body at its Sixth Session by Resolution 3/2015, whereby it also adopted the Vision and Programme of Work on the Global Information System (Programme of Work). At its Seventh Session, the Governing Body considered the work done by the Committee and decided:[1]

   a. to reconvene the Scientific Advisory Committee on the Global Information System of Article 17 and requested the Secretary to continue updating the Committee on progress with the Vision and Programme of Work on GLIS;

   b. to include in the terms of reference of the Committee, for the 2018-2019 biennium, the review of the Master Plan and the activities for collaboration with partners to be prepared by the Secretary, and the consideration of scientific and technical issues of relevance to genetic sequence information, as far as it is generated from the use of PGRFA and related to the implementation of GLIS;

2.   The updated terms of reference for the current biennium are attached as *Appendix 1*.

3.   The dates, the agenda and the documentation for the meeting have been prepared in consultation with the Co-chairs. In the setting the dates of the meeting, the Secretariat coordinated with the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture to organise it back-to-back with the meeting of the focal points on plant biodiversity, held the same week in Rome.

4.   In adopting its Report, the Seventh Session of the Governing Body did not make financial provisions for the organization of this meeting. The organization of the meeting has been possible thanks to the generous support of the Government of Canada.

II.   Agenda Item 1: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND TIMETABLE

5.   Under this first agenda item, the Committee is invited to consider the Provisional Annotated Agenda and the Provisional Indicative Timetable contained in *Appendix 2*.

---

[1] Resolution 3/2015 http://www.fao.org/3/a-bl140e.pdf and Resolution 5/2017 http://www.fao.org/3/a-mv103e.pdf

III.   Agenda Item 2 – ELECTION OF CO-CHAIRPERSONS

6.   In establishing the Committee, by Resolution 3/2015, the Governing Body indicated that "*The Committee shall elect its Co-chairpersons from among the experts*". As a standard practice under the Treaty, one each of the Co-Chairs should be from a developed and developing countries, respectively.

7.   At its first meeting, in 2016, the Committee elected Mr Axel Diederichsen (Canada) and Mr Kuldeep Singh (India) as Co-chairs. Both Co-chairs have indicated their availability to continue serving in this role.

8.   The Committee is invited to re-confirm the Co-chairs elected in the previous biennium or provide any other guidance it wishes on the matter.

IV.   Agenda Item 3 – REPORT ON THE OPERATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK

9.   The document, IT/SAC-GLIS-3/18/6, *Report on the Operations and Implementation of the Programme of Work*, contains an update on the support provided to users to make their plant genetic resources more visible through the Global Information System in relation to objectives 1, 2 and 3 of the Programme of Work. In particular, it contains information on the development of documentation and on the launch of the Module for the Registration of Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs). Furthermore, it presents information on the first type of registrants and a methodology for the collection of feedback and the documentation of users' experiences.

10.   The document also contains a proposal for the definition of entry points in GLIS. It explains how the entry points can be articulated through a set of keywords and used in the GLIS Catalogue of Sources of Information and to add value to the links and targets that are associated with the DOIs.

11.   Under this Agenda Item, the Committee is invited to:

   i.   take note of the progress made with the implementation of the DOI Module and the assistance to users during the first months of operations;

   ii.   review the list of keywords to be used for the classification of systems and sources for information in the GLIS Catalogue and;

   iii.   provide any relevant advice for the further promotion of Digital Object Identifiers.

Agenda Item 3.1 Experiences and Refining Guidelines in the Application and Use of Digital Object Identifiers

12.   The document, IT/SAC-GLIS-3/18/6, also summarizes the major elements of advice related to the documentation of experiences with the adoption of DOIs for Item 3.1 of the Provisional Agenda. In particular, the Committee is invited to advise:

   i.   on the selection of systems and stakeholders to interact with for the documentation of experiences and feedback on the DOI adoption, on the basis of the list identified in the document;

   ii.   on the list of questions for user's interviews and the focus of the research, based on the proposal contained in the document.

Agenda Item 3.2 Development and Promotion of Standards as Outlined in Objective 3 of the Programme of Work on the Global Information System

13.   Objective 3 of the Programme of Work focuses on the development, implementation and promotion of standards for documentation of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA) to facilitate interoperability among existing systems in the context of Article 17. Crop documentation standards, which are one of the recurrent needs highlighted by users, are essential

for improving the quality of the documentation and a key tool to prevent limitations to data exchange in this domain.

14.   The use of standards to describe biodiversity contributes to the achievement of a number of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly SDG 15 – by helping halt the loss of crop biodiversity around the globe; SDG 2 – by promoting sustainable agriculture and working to end hunger; and combating climate change (SDG 13).

15.   The document, IT/SAC-GLIS-3/18/4, *Development and Promotion of Standards as Outlined in Objective 3 of the Programme of Work on the Global Information System*, provides an overview of the status of the crop descriptors, analyses the current demand from PGRFA users and stakeholders in the context of the International Treaty, and presents a pathway for the development and promotion of crop documentation standards.

16.   The Committee is invited to consider the proposal contained in the document and advise on the prioritization for the development and review of crops standards and the expected targets for this activity in the context of Objective 3 of the Programme of Work on GLIS.

Agenda Item 3.3 Masterplan for the GLIS Portal

17.   By Resolution 5/2017, the Seventh Session of the Governing Body requested the Secretariat to prepare a Masterplan for the GLIS Portal, describing prioritized desired functionalities of the GLIS, for the review of the Scientific Advisory Committee.

18.   The document, IT/SAC-GLIS-3/18/5, makes an initial proposal for the Masterplan and presents a conceptual framework aimed at better defining some of the core functions of the Masterplan for the GLIS Portal. The proposed Masterplan with the user-oriented functions will be translated later on into a collection of architectural and design principles for its implementation.

19.   The document presents an analysis of the types of users and their needs and preferences in accessing and using PGRFA-related information. It also presents those functions in the form of five Use Modules. Furthermore, it invites for a discussion on how to maintain the relevance of GLIS through the conduct of in-depth interviews.

20.   The proposal takes into account inputs collected during the rounds of consultations for the design of the Programme for Work and on the early adoption phase. It also takes into account users' needs previously identified by the Secretariat in the context of the implementation of the Programme of Work on Sustainable Use and contained in the "Toolkit for sustainable use" developed in 2016. In doing so, it presents a practical proposal for the implementation of the first version of the GLIS Portal in the period 2018-2021, for the review of the Committee.

V.   Agenda Item 4 – ACCESS AND USE OF PGRFA INFORMATION THROUGH THE GLOBAL INFORMATION SYSTEM (GLIS)

21.   The document, IT/SAC-GLIS-3/18/6, *Access and Use of Plant Genetic Resources Information through the Global Information System*, relates to the component of the vision of GLIS dealing with transparency of rights and obligations in relation to accessing, sharing and using information associated with germplasm, and with the establishment of ways to exercise those rights and obligations within the GLIS. The GLIS Programme of Work foresees the analysis of the institutional, organizational, policy and legal factors for access to, sharing and use of PGRFA information.

22.   In response to the guidance of the Seventh Session of the Governing Body on digital sequence information, the document also provides updates on developments in relevant fora, which could be taken into account for the work that the Governing Body tasked the Committee with. The analysis in the working document may also be reviewed by the Committee to enable the

conduct of further practical work on the policy and legal components of the GLIS vision and programme of work.

23.   The Committee it is invited to consider the information provided in the document and advise, among other issues, on the preparatory work for the Eighth Session of the Governing Body, and in particular for:

- the definition of cases where digital sequence information/genetic sequence data are generated from the use of PGRFA, and are related to the implementation of the GLIS;
- the determination of what scientific and technical issues, which may include those that emerge from the international processes reviewed in the document, are of relevance to digital sequence information in the ambit of the International Treaty and the GLIS in particular;
- the development by the Committee of its analysis and considerations, which the Secretariat will circulate to Contracting Parties, as requested by the Governing Body, in preparation for its Eighth Session.

24.   Following the initial indications provided by the Co-chairs of the Committee, the discussion will be structured in two parts, one related to general issues under this agenda item, and the other related to "Genetic Sequence Data with Respect to Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture", as indicated in the Provisional Agenda, subitem 4.1.

VI.   Agenda Item 5 – DEVELOPMENT OF PARTNERSHIPS, COLLABORATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

25.   Under this agenda item, the Committee is invited to consider the document, IT//SAC-GLIS-3/7, *Strengthening Partnerships, Collaboration and Capacity Building*, which provides a summary of key cooperation activities, as well as of recent developments in the continuing close relationship between the Secretariat and the preferential partners identified in the context of GLIS.

VII.   OTHER MATTERS

26.   Under this item, the Committee may consider any other matters of relevance for this meeting.

VIII. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

27.   This final agenda item provides for the approval of the Report of the meeting.

Terms of Reference for the Scientific Advisory Committee on Article 17[2]

<u>Objectives</u>

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.

For the 2018-2019 biennium, it shall also review the Master Plan and the activities for collaboration with partners to be prepared by the Secretary, and consider scientific and technical issues of relevance to genetic sequence information, as far as it is generated from the use of PGRFA and related to the implementation of GLIS.

Subject to the availability of financial resources, the Committee will hold two meetings per biennium.

---

[2] Resolutions IT/GB-6/15/Res 3 and IT/GB-7/17/Res 5.

<u>Composition</u>

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.

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-building; system integration, information exchange and data sharing; fair and equitable benefit sharing and legal 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.

Appendix 2

Third Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee on the Global Information System

21-22 June 2018

Provisional Indicative Timetable

GERMAN ROOM		
Time	**Item**	**Title**
Thursday, 21 June 2018		
10:00-10:45		Opening of the meeting
	1	**Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable**
	2	**Election of Co-Chairpersons**
10:45-11:30	3	**Report on the Operations and Implementation of the Programme of Work**
Coffee Break		
11:30-12:30	3.2	**Guidelines and Experiences in the Application and Use of Digital Object Identifiers**
12:30-13:00	3.2	**Development and Promotion of Standards as Outlined in Objective 3 of the Programme of Work on the Global Information System**
Lunch Break		
14:30-15:30	3.3	**Masterplan for the GLIS Portal**
15:30-16:10	4	**Access and Use of PGRFA Information through the Global Information System (GLIS)**
Coffee Break		
16:30-17:00	4.1	**Genetic Sequence Data with Respect to PGRFA**

Friday, 22 June 2018		
9:00-10:30	5	**Development of Partnerships, Collaboration and Capacity Building**
Coffee Break		
10:45-11:30	5	**Development of Partnerships, Collaboration and Capacity Building** (Cont'd)
11:30-12:00	6	**Other Matters**
		Lunch and report preparation period
16:00-18:00	7	**Adoption of the Report**
Closing.		