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Alimentación

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Item 15 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

MECHANISMS FOR COOPERATION WITH THE COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

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MECHANISMS FOR COOPERATION WITH THE COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its First Session in 2006, the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture stressed the need to develop close cooperation with the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, underlined the need to promote coherence and mutual supportiveness between the two bodies, including through the exchange of information, and emphasized the need for close cooperation between the two Secretariats. At its Eleventh Regular Session in June 2007, the Commission stressed the importance of the supporting the activities of the Governing Body, and welcomed the excellent cooperation between its Secretariat and the Secretariat of the International Treaty. It supported the development of a joint statement of intention regarding long-term cooperation between the two secretariats.

2. The present document – prepared jointly by the Secretaries of the Treaty and of the Commission – provides summary information on the relationship between the Governing Body and the Commission, as well as on the supporting components of the Treaty that are under the aegis of the Commission. The outcomes of the Commission’s discussions during its Eleventh Regular Session regarding mechanisms for cooperation with the Governing Body are presented. Guidance is sought from the Governing Body on how to develop such cooperation, and a draft joint statement of intent for cooperation between the two bodies is presented for the Governing Body’s consideration.

II. THE ROLE OF THE COMMISSION

3. The Commission is the only standing inter-governmental body that specifically addresses biodiversity for food and agriculture, and as such is an internationally acknowledged interlocutor with related cross-sectorial processes, including in the environment and trade forums. This was recognized by the FAO Conference in adopting *A Strategic Framework for FAO, 2000 – 2015*:

*“FAO is ideally placed to provide a global and neutral forum for the further development of the international policy and regulatory framework for food, agriculture, fisheries and forestry [...] Through the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, FAO has recognized competence in facilitating negotiations by governments of international instruments on aspects of biological diversity of relevance to food and agriculture”.*¹

4. The Commission facilitates and oversees cooperation between FAO and other international governmental and non-governmental bodies dealing with the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources, in particular with the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and seeks to develop appropriate mechanisms for cooperation and coordination in consultation with them.

5. The Commission also keeps under continuous review all FAO’s relevant policy, programmes and activities. The priorities for work on genetic resources that the Commission has expressed over the years have resulted in priority being accorded to the relevant programme

¹ Paragraph 57.

entities within the Organization's Programmes of Work and Budget. Moreover, the Commission has helped mobilize very substantial extra-budgetary resources: for the Leipzig International Technical Conference on Plant Genetic Resources and *The State the World's Plant Genetic Resources* and *Global Plan of Action*; for the negotiation of the Treaty itself; and for the Interlaken International Technical Conference on Animal Genetic Resources and *The State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources*.

6. The Commission may establish intergovernmental technical sectorial working groups to assist it in the areas of plant, animal, forestry and fisheries genetic resources: it has so far established two, on animal genetic resources, and on plant genetic resources

III. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TREATY AND THE COMMISSION

7. The relationship between the Governing Body of the Treaty and the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture is particularly close.

Scope of work

The Governing Body and the Commission overlap in their scope of work. While the Treaty relates to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, the Commission's mandate covers all components of biological diversity for food and agriculture, including – in addition to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture – animal, fisheries, forestry and microbial genetic resources, as well as cross-sectorial matters.

Supporting components of the Treaty under the guidance of the Commission

The Commission has since 1983 developed and overseen the FAO Global System for Plant Genetic Resources. A number of its elements are given roles in Part V of the Treaty, as “supporting components” of the Treaty, which are discussed in part IV of the current document.

Recognised need for cooperation

The Treaty not only provides for cooperation in relation to elements of the Global System, but also reflects the need for cooperation and coordination between its Governing Body and the Commission generally. This has been reiterated by the Governing Body. For example, Article 15.1d requires the International Agricultural Research Centres to manage and administer their *ex situ* collections in accordance with internationally accepted standards, in particular the Genebank Standards as endorsed by the Commission. Article 19.9 stipulates that sessions of the Governing Body should, as far as possible, be held back-to-back with the regular sessions of the Commission.

Membership

At the time of preparing this document,² all Contracting Parties to the Treaty were Members of the Commission: 170 countries and the European Community were members of the Commission, and 113 countries and the European Community were members of the Treaty.

8. Both the Governing Body and the Commission have expressed their willingness to cooperate and to coordinate their activities in relation to the Global System.

9. At its Tenth Regular Session in 2005, the Commission “suggested that work undertaken for the Commission and for the Governing Body of the International Treaty should be

² 24 July 2007.

complementary, and optimize the potential for synergy between them”.³ It also expressed its “willingness to develop its work on the Global System in ways that would complement the objectives of the International Treaty”.⁴

10. In response, the Governing Body, in June 2006, “welcomed the Commission’s offer to support the implementation of the Treaty, including through the further development of components of the FAO Global System on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, as part of the Commission’s Multi-Year Programme of Work”.⁵ It “stressed the need to develop close cooperation with the Commission, and underlined the need to promote coherence and mutual supportiveness between the two bodies, including through the exchange of information. The Governing Body emphasized the need for close cooperation between the two Secretariats in the future”.⁶ The Governing Body also adopted its Funding Strategy, which states that:

*“Cooperation between the Governing Body and the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture should, as appropriate, facilitate the implementation of the supporting components of the Treaty, in particular, The Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture”.*⁷

11. At its Eleventh Regular Session in June 2007, the Commission accordingly reviewed possible mechanisms for cooperation with the Governing Body.⁸ It “stressed the importance of supporting the activities of the Governing Body, especially in its early phases of work. It welcomed the excellent cooperation between its Secretariat and the Secretariat of the International Treaty”.⁹ At that meeting, the Commission also adopted a rolling ten-year Multi-year Programme of Work on Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture, which includes – as discussed below – the updating of two of the Treaty’s supporting components, *The State of the World’s Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* and the *Global Plan of Action*.¹⁰

IV. SUPPORTING COMPONENTS OF THE TREATY OVERSEEN BY THE COMMISSION

12. The supporting components of the Treaty include:
- The periodic *State of the World’s Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*,
 - *The Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*,
 - *Ex situ* collections held by International Agricultural Research Centres and other international institutions,
 - International plant genetic resources networks, and
 - The Global Information System on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

³ CGRFA-10/04/REP, *Report of the Tenth Regular Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*, available on the internet at: <ftp://ftp.fao.org/ag/cgrfa/cgrfa10/r10repe.pdf>, paragraph 18.

⁴ *Ibid.* paragraph 19.

⁵ IT/GB-1/06/Report, *First Session of the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*, available on the internet at: <ftp://ftp.fao.org/ag/cgrfa/gb1/gb1repe.pdf>, paragraph 42.

⁶ IT/GB-1/06/Report, paragraph 43.

⁷ *Ibid.* Appendix F, paragraph VIII.15.

⁸ CGRFA-11/07/16. The current document is substantially an updated version of that document that takes into account the deliberations of the Commission.

⁹ CGRFA-11/07/Report, paragraph 75.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* paragraph 39.

Supporting component	Reference in Treaty
<i>The State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture</i>	Article 17.3

13. *The State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*,¹¹ which was prepared under the guidance of the Commission, was welcomed by 150 countries at the Leipzig International Technical Conference on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in 1996 as the first comprehensive worldwide assessment of the status and use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

14. Although the Governing Body is not directly involved in the updating of *The State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*, Article 17.3 of the Treaty provides that "Contracting Parties shall cooperate with the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture of the FAO in its periodic reassessment of *The State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* in order to facilitate the updating of the rolling *Global Plan of Action* referred to in Article 14 [of the Treaty]". The Governing Body, at its First Session, emphasized the need to avoid duplication of efforts, especially in the light of the Commission's preparations for the second *State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*.

15. The Commission has decided that the updated *State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* will be presented to its Twelfth Regular Session, in 2009. "It noted that the preparation of a second *State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* should provide a concise and succinct assessment of the status and trends of these resources. The Commission noted that the second *State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* should be a high quality document, with regional and global analysis, to identify the most significant gaps and needs, in order to provide a sound basis for updating the rolling *Global Plan of Action*. The successful updating of the *Global Plan of Action* would contribute to the implementation of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture."¹²

Supporting component	References in Treaty
<i>The Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture</i>	Recital No. 5, Articles 13.2, 13.5, 14, 17.3, 18.3

16. The *Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* was formally adopted by representatives of 150 countries during the Leipzig International Technical Conference on Plant Genetic Resources in 1996. FAO periodically monitors and updates *The Global Plan of Action*, under the guidance of the Commission.

17. Article 14 of the Treaty states that "the rolling *Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* is important to this Treaty [and that] Contracting Parties should promote its effective implementation, including through national actions and, as appropriate, international cooperation to provide a coherent framework, *inter alia*, for capacity-building, technology transfer and exchange of information."

¹¹ Available on the Internet at <http://www.fao.org/ag/AGP/AGPS/Pgrfa/pdf/swrfull.pdf>.

¹² CGRFA-11/07/Report, paragraph 39.

18. The Treaty recognises a particular role for *The Global Plan of Action* in relation to benefit-sharing in the context of its Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing, and, more specifically, in relation to its Funding Strategy: the priority activity areas of the rolling *Global Plan of Action* will be taken into account for the exchange of information, access to and transfer of technology, capacity-building, and the sharing of the benefits arising from commercialization.¹³ The Funding Strategy states that “cooperation between the Governing Body and the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture should, as appropriate, facilitate the implementation of [...] in particular, *The Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*.”¹⁴ The Governing Body will take *The Global Plan of Action* into account when it periodically establishes a target for funding, in order to mobilize funding for priority activities, plans and programmes, in particular in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.¹⁵ At its First Session, the Governing Body requested the Commission to support the development of the Funding Strategy, in the context of its work in relation to the supporting components of the Treaty.¹⁶ The Governing Body also decided that the initial priorities of the Funding Strategy should be the priority activity areas of *The Global Plan of Action*, for further development by the Governing Body.¹⁷

19. The Commission was informed of progress in the development of the web portal of the Facilitating Mechanism for the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*.¹⁸ The portal provides easily accessible information on available funding sources related to plant genetic resources, and other relevant information for the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*, and is therefore of relevance to the Treaty’s Funding Strategy. The Governing Body may therefore wish to consider it in this context.¹⁹

20. At its Eleventh Regular Session, the Commission requested FAO to submit to its Twelfth Regular Session (2009) a proposed plan for the process of updating the *Global Plan of Action*. The updated *Global Plan of Action* would be considered at the Thirteenth Regular Session of the Commission (2011), on the basis of the updated *State of the World’s Plant Genetic Resources*.

21. At the same time, “The Commission requested that its process regarding the updating of *The State of the World’s Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*, and of the *Global Plan of Action*, be provided to the [current] Session of the Governing Body of the International Treaty, so that it might make comments and suggestions.”²⁰

Supporting component	Reference in Treaty
<i>Ex situ collections of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture held by the International Agricultural Research Centres of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research and other international institutions</i>	Article 15

22. Article 15 of the Treaty provides for the Governing Body to sign agreements with the International Agricultural Research Centres of the CGIAR, and other relevant international

¹³ Article 13.2.

¹⁴ IT/GB-1/06/Report, *Appendix F*, paragraph VIII.15.

¹⁵ Article 18.3.

¹⁶ IT/GB-1/06/Report, paragraph 17.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* *Appendix F*, paragraph III.4.

¹⁸ <http://www.globalplanofaction.org/>.

¹⁹ IT/GB-1/06/Report, paragraph 30.

²⁰ *Ibid.* paragraph 42.

institutions, regarding their *ex situ* collections of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. At its First Session, the Governing Body approved a model draft agreement,²¹ and all international institutions that had earlier joined the International Network of *Ex Situ* Collections under the Auspices of FAO, which was established by the Commission, have already signed such agreements, or are in the process of doing so. The agreements under Article 15 of the Treaty replace the earlier agreements.

23. Materials from the International Network of *Ex Situ* Collections under the Auspices of FAO were released under a material transfer agreement approved by the Commission. These contractual instruments remain valid for both the providers and recipients of such materials, and the Commission will continue to oversee their implementation.

Supporting component	Reference in Treaty
International Plant Genetic Resources Networks	Article 16

24. Within the context of the FAO Global System and priority activity area 16 of *The Global Plan of Action*, the Commission promotes the development of crop, regional, and thematic networks. A detailed study of existing international plant genetic resources for food and agriculture was undertaken as background information on this subject.²²

25. Article 16 of the Treaty states that “existing cooperation in international plant genetic resources for food and agriculture networks will be encouraged or developed on the basis of existing arrangements and consistent with the terms of this Treaty, so as to achieve as complete coverage as possible of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture”.

Supporting component	Reference in Treaty
The Global Information System on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture	Article 17

26. Article 17.1 of the Treaty states that “the Contracting Parties shall cooperate to develop and strengthen a 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, with the expectation that such exchange of information will contribute to the sharing of benefits, by making information on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture available to all Contracting Parties”.

27. The World Information and Early Warning System (WIEWS), which is part of the Global System, may be of value in this context. WIEWS is a dynamic worldwide mechanism to foster information exchange on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, and supports the periodic assessment of *The State of the World’s Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*.

28. WIEWS presently consists of:²³

- A number of relational databases, resulting from direct contributions from Members and from routine (*e.g.*, World Seed Review; data gathering from publications; national databases developed in the process of monitoring *The Global Plan of Action*; etc.) and event-related data collating activities (*e.g.*, country reports for the Leipzig International Technical Conference);

²¹ *Ibid.* Appendix K.

²² Background Study Paper No. 16, *A summary and analysis of existing international plant genetic resources networks*, by Electra Kalaugher and Bert Visser, available on the Internet at <ftp://ftp.fao.org/ag/cgrfa/BSP/bsp16e.pdf>.

²³ See http://apps3.fao.org/wiews/wiewspage.jsp?i_l=EN&show=Meetings/WSMeet.

- A Global Network of Country Correspondents on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, nominated by FAO Members;
- A repository directory of documents and proceedings related to:
 - The activities of the Global Network on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture Information Exchange;
 - The Early Warning System on Genetic Erosion; and
 - *The Global Plan of Action*.

29. At its Eleventh Regular Session, “The Commission stated that the [WIEWS] should be further developed in the context of developing the Global Information System on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in the International Treaty. It expressed its willingness to work with the Governing Body of the International Treaty for this purpose. The Commission further invited the Governing Body to consider utilizing national information-sharing mechanisms established through WIEWS, as contributions to the development of its Global Information System.”²⁴

30. The Secretariat of the Commission will report as relevant to meetings of the Governing Body in relation to the further development of the supporting components of the Treaty. In response to a request from the Commission, the relevance of the components of the Global System will be reviewed, including in the light of further cooperation with the Treaty.²⁵

V. RELEVANT OUTCOMES OF THE ELEVENTH REGULAR SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

31. At its Eleventh Regular Session, the Commission adopted a ten-year Multi-year Programme of Work on Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture that covers all components of biological diversity of interest to food and agriculture. As noted above, it includes work on several of the supporting components of the Treaty.

*“Emphasizing the importance of cooperation with the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the Commission requested its Secretary to transmit the Multi-year Programme of Work to the Secretary of the Governing Body, and invite him to inform the Governing Body, in order to facilitate the planning of the work of the two bodies”.*²⁶

The Multi-year Programme of Work is accordingly given in *Appendix 1* to this document. Because of the responsibilities of the Commission in relation to the supporting components of the Treaty, there are advantages for the Governing Body and the Commission to seek to coordinate their work programmes.

32. As noted above, there are two main milestones within the Multi-year Programme of Work on Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture of interest to the Governing Body: the adoption of the second *State of the World’s Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* (in 2009), and the subsequent updating of *The Global Plan of Action* (in 2011).

33. In addition to the Commission’s work on plant genetic resources, the Governing Body may wish to note the various cross-sectorial matters included in the Multi-year Programme of Work, in particular its work on access and benefit-sharing for genetic resources for food and agriculture generally. At its Tenth Regular Session in 2005, the Commission decided to “contribute to further work on access and benefit-sharing, in order to ensure that it move in a

²⁴ IT/GB-1/06/Report, paragraph 37.

²⁵ CGRFA-11/04/Report, paragraph 29.

²⁶ *Ibid.* paragraph 93.

direction supportive of the special needs of the agricultural sector, in regard to all components of biological diversity of interest to food and agriculture”.²⁷ At its Eleventh Regular Session in 2007, it “agreed on the importance of considering access and benefit-sharing, in relation to all components of biodiversity for food and agriculture. It decided that work in this field should be an early task within its Multi-year Programme of Work.”²⁸ This work will need to be in harmony with relevant legally binding international instruments, of which there are at present only two: the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Treaty. The Governing Body will be kept informed of the Commission’s work in this regard, through periodic reporting by the Secretary of the Commission on the supporting components of the Treaty.

34. As noted above, the Commission also discussed possible mechanisms for cooperation between the Commission and the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. These included: periodic reporting by the Commission on the supporting components of the Treaty; coordination of the Work Programmes of the Commission and of the Treaty; and the conclusion of a formal agreement between the Governing Body and the Commission. In the latter case, it noted that the Commission (established under Article VI of the FAO Constitution) and the Treaty (established under Article XIV of the FAO Constitution), are both bodies of the FAO. As such, they do not have independent legal personality, and must draw on the legal personality of FAO. As a consequence, no formal agreement may be concluded between these two bodies. However, alternative practical approaches, such as a joint statement of intention, adopted by both the Commission and the Governing Body, specifying the areas and modalities of cooperation, could serve the same purpose. The Commission accordingly supported the development of such a joint statement of intention regarding long-term cooperation between the two secretariats: a draft prepared by the Secretary of the Commission and the Secretary of the Treaty is attached as *Appendix 2* to this document.²⁹

VI. GUIDANCE SOUGHT FROM THE GOVERNING BODY

35. The Governing Body may wish to:

- Thank the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture for its support, and its willingness to develop the supporting components that are under its aegis in ways that are of use to the Governing Body and report regularly to its sessions;
- Take note of the planned outputs and milestones under the Commission’s Multi-year Programme of Work, as contained in *Appendix 1* to this document;
- Consider whether it wishes to make any comments and suggestions to the Commission, regarding the updating of *The State of the World’s Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*, in response to the invitation of the Commission, and other elements of the FAO Global System;
- Request its Secretary to work closely, on a regular basis, with the Secretary of the Commission, on matters of common interest;
- Consider and adopt the draft joint statement of intention contained in *Appendix 1* to this document, and invite the Commission to adopt the same at its next session; and
- Request its Secretariat to immediately cooperate with the Secretariat of the Commission in the terms provided for in the draft joint statement of intention, pending its adoption by the Commission.

²⁷ *Ibid*, paragraph 76.

²⁸ *Ibid*. paragraph 71.

²⁹ *Ibid*. paragraphs 26 and 76.

APPENDIX 1					
THE COMMISSION'S MULTI-YEAR PROGRAMME OF WORK: MAJOR OUTPUTS AND MILESTONES					
	12th Session	13th Session	14th Session	15th Session	16th Session
Plant Genetic Resources	Presentation of <i>The State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources</i>	Consideration of the updated <i>Global Plan of Action</i> for adoption, and review of cooperation with the International Treaty			Update of <i>The State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources</i>
Animal Genetic Resources	Follow-up to the Interlaken Conference		Review of implementation of Interlaken outcomes		Update of <i>The State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources</i>
Aquatic Genetic Resources		Review of information base for aquatic genetic resources, and key issues for <i>The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources</i>	Presentation of <i>The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources</i>	Development of elements related to the <i>Code of Conduct of Responsible Fisheries</i> aimed to maintain a broad genetic basis and to ensure sustainable use and conservation of aquatic genetic resources	
Forest Genetic Resources	Analysis of key issues in forest genetic resources, for <i>The State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources</i>		Presentation of <i>The State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources</i>		
Micro-organisms and invertebrates	Review of scoping study on Micro-organisms and invertebrates		Review of key issues on micro-organisms and invertebrates	Review of work on micro-organisms and invertebrates	
Cross-sectorial matters	Consideration of policies and arrangements for access and benefit-sharing for genetic resources for food and agriculture	Review ways and means [of promoting][considering] [for] the application and integration of biotechnologies in the conservation and utilization of genetic resources [as a basis for future work such as, the development of guidelines, consideration of Codes of Conduct or other work]	Review of all relevant international targets and indicators for biodiversity for food and food and agriculture	Consideration of the internalization of the ecosystem approach to biodiversity management in agriculture, forestry and fisheries Review of contribution of biodiversity for food and agriculture to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals	Presentation of <i>The State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture</i>
Management of the Multi-year Programme of Work		Progress Report/ Periodic assessment/ Review of the Multi-year Programme of Work		Progress Report/ Periodic assessment/ Review of the Multi-year Programme of Work	

APPENDIX 2

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

Whereas the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (“the Treaty”) has as its objectives the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their use,

Whereas the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (“the Commission”) is FAO’s inter-governmental statutory body addressing biodiversity for food and agriculture, with an internationally acknowledged competence in facilitating negotiations by governments of international instruments on aspects of biological diversity of relevance to food and agriculture,

Whereas the Commission facilitates and oversees cooperation between FAO and other international governmental and non-governmental bodies dealing with the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources, and seeks to develop appropriate mechanisms for cooperation and coordination in consultation with them,

Whereas the Governing Body establishes and maintains cooperation with relevant international organizations and treaty bodies, on matters covered by the Treaty, including their participation in the funding strategy,

Whereas the Commission keeps under continuous review all matters relating to the policy, programmes and activities of FAO in the area of genetic resources of relevance to food and agriculture, including their conservation and sustainable use and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from their utilization,

Whereas the Commission has developed and oversees a Global System on Plant Genetic Resources that includes a number of supporting components of the Treaty, in particular *The State of the World’s Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* and the *Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*,

Whereas the Treaty provides for a funding strategy for priority activities, plans and programmes, in particular in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, taking into account the *Global Plan of Action*,

Whereas the Treaty provides that Contracting Parties shall cooperate with the Commission in its periodic reassessment of the state of the world’s plant genetic resources for food and agriculture in order to facilitate the updating of the *Global Plan of Action*,

Whereas the Treaty provides that sessions of its Governing Body shall, as far as possible, be held back-to-back with regular sessions of the Commission,

The Governing Body of the Treaty [and the Commission]¹ intend[s] to cooperate as follows:

1. The Chairs of the one body will be invited to participate in sessions of the other body, when matters of common interest are being considered.
2. The Chairs of either body may request an item to be put on the agenda of the other body.
3. The Chairs and, as necessary, the Bureaux of the two bodies will maintain contact between sessions, in order to promote synergy in the implementation of the programmes of work of the two bodies. By mutual agreement, the Bureaux may meet jointly to address matters of common interest.
4. The Secretary of the Commission will report regularly to sessions of the Treaty on the implementation of relevant components of the Commission's Multi-year Programme of Work, in particular regarding the supporting components of the Treaty that are under its aegis, including *The State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* and the *Global Plan of Action*.
5. Recognizing the importance that the Treaty gives to the *Global Plan of Action*, in the development and implementation of the Treaty's funding strategy, the Commission will consider comments, suggestions or requests from the Governing Body in relation to the updating and to the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*.

The Secretariats of the Governing Body of the Treaty [and the Commission] will cooperate as follows:

1. The Secretariats will meet regularly, in order to keep each other informed of relevant developments, to seek synergy and efficiency, and to promote coherence in the development and implementation of their respective programmes of work.
2. They will cooperate, as appropriate, in the preparation and management of meetings of the Commission and the Treaty.
3. They will consult each other in the development of relevant documents for meetings of their respective bodies, and any subsidiary processes.
4. Where relevant, they will coordinate fund-raising activities, and may develop joint projects and jointly seek donor support, as appropriate, including in the context of the Treaty's funding strategy.
5. They will endeavour to harmonize their positions in meetings of relevant international processes and bodies, such as in the Convention on Biological Diversity, the World Intellectual Property Organization and the World Trade Organization.

¹ The brackets in this draft will be deleted, following consideration of this text by the Commission, at its Twelfth Regular Session.