



2nd High Level Round Table on the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA)
21 June 2012 - Rio de Janeiro

“A coherent and synergic implementation of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture toward a green economy”

Concept Note

An event organised under the patronship of the Government of the Kingdom of Norway and co-organised by Brazil and Italy.

Context

Over the last 100 years, more than three quarters of all crop diversity has disappeared. Crop diversity provides the raw material for plant breeding, the tools for adaptation. These unique attributes acquired over millennia, which include the ability to survive hot summers or cold winters, to thrive in dry conditions or in areas prone to flood, to withstand pests and disease – are being irrevocably lost, putting global food security and economies at risk.

The global exchange of genetic material ensures that nations adapt to environmental and socio-economic changes. Nations are already interdependent in terms of their crop diversity; all depend on the genetic diversity in crops from other countries and regions.

The loss of crop diversity endangers agricultural productivity, food security and our ability to adapt to the pace of environmental change. Conservation and use of crop diversity globally strengthens farmer’s capacity to adapt to a changing climate and to feed a growing population.

The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (IT-PGRFA)

The IT-PGRFA has been established as a direct international response to these global challenges. It directly contributes to the achievement of Millennium Development Goals 1 and 7 of Ending poverty and hunger and ensuring Environmental Sustainability through its:

- Governance structure which member nations have created to secure food crops - 64 of the most important crops for global food security, crops that together account for 80% of the food we derive from plants;
- Multilateral System of access and benefit sharing and the Benefit-sharing Fund;
- Projects on conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA to produce food and new variability and to preserve crop varieties addressing food security at a time when more than 75% of all crop diversity has been permanently lost and the world’s population is moving rapidly toward 9 billion.

The International Treaty sees 127 Governments working together as Contracting Parties to use crop diversity for food security in the context of climate change.

Outcomes of the First Meeting of the High-level Round Table (Rome, FAO, 7 December 2010)

On 7 December 2010 the former Italian Minister for Agriculture, his Excellency Giancarlo Galan, convened the 1st High Level Round Table on the "Importance of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in Meeting the Climate Change Challenges, Enhancing Food Security and addressing Agro-biodiversity Erosion ", which was a highly productive and successful event.

Many speakers stressed that the Treaty needs better communication, outreach and public relations. This is important both to give it recognition and public space, but also to support the mobilization of funds for the Benefit-sharing Fund, from a wide and innovative range of possible sources. It finalized several investment pledges for the Benefit-sharing Fund and initiated extensive discussions on innovative approaches to facilitate contributions to the Benefit-sharing Fund, as foreseen in the Strategic Plan and the Governing Body Resolutions.

The 2nd High-level Round Table (Rio de Janeiro, 21 June 2012)

On the basis of the good experience made in the 1st High-Level Round Table we need to further enhance and promote partnerships with donors and to profile the Fund among high-level political decision makers as referred in Resolution 3/2011 adopted by the Governing Body of the Treaty in its last Session, held in Indonesia in March 2011.

The event is organised under the patronship of the High Level Task Force of the Benefit-sharing Fund of the ITPGRFA and co-organised by Brazil and Italy.

As a concrete activity to be implemented in the course of the United Nations Decade for Biodiversity 2011 – 2020, the 2nd HLRT will represent a *momentum* which will allow to discuss with Contracting Parties, stakeholders and experts growing pressing issues regarding the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.

The main focus of the 2nd HLRT will be:

- To highlight the interaction between economy, biodiversity and food security;
- To showcase the Treaty as one of the foremost legal instruments leading the agricultural field internationally with innovative mechanisms such as the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing and its Benefit-sharing Fund;
- Facilitate the high-level discussion on the potential monetary and non-monetary benefits arising from the utilization of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture under the Multilateral System of the International Treaty.