



The International Treaty

ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE



Item 3 of the Provisional Agenda

SECOND MEETING OF THE AD-HOC OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP TO ENHANCE THE FUNCTIONING OF THE MULTILATERAL SYSTEM

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SYNOPTIC STUDY 4: CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

AN ANALYSIS OF THE FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE WILLINGNESS OF STAKEHOLDER GROUPS TO MAKE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BENEFIT-SHARING FUND AND TO ACCESS PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE FROM THE MULTILATERAL SYSTEM

Note by the Secretary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As requested by the Governing Body, at its Fifth Session, the Secretariat has consulted stakeholders groups in order to analyse the factors that influence their willingness to contribute to the successful operation of the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing and the Benefit-sharing Fund of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (the Treaty). As requested by the Working Group, the consultation was carried out through a questionnaire and interviews. More than one hundred stakeholders participated in the consultation through the questionnaire and additional inputs were gathered through interviews with key experts from the Stakeholder Groups.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its Fifth Session, the Governing Body decided to establish, through Resolution 2/2013, this *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group to Enhance the Functioning of the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing (“the Working Group”). The Resolution specifies that task (c) of the Working Group is “to consult with relevant Stakeholder Groups” with a view to achieving enhanced access and increased fair and equitable sharing of benefits. The Working Group will develop a range of measures to enhance the functioning of the Multilateral System for consideration by the Governing Body and, for this purpose, the Governing Body requested the Secretariat to prepare a short, strategic preliminary “analysis of the factors that influence the willingness of stakeholder groups to make contributions to the Benefit-sharing Fund and to access plant genetic resources for food and agriculture from the Multilateral System” (Study 4).¹
2. At its first meeting the Working Group “noted that Study 4 would involve a questionnaire to be provided to the stakeholders and followed up with interviews where possible.” Accordingly, the Secretariat invited all stakeholders and Contracting Parties to provide their inputs through a questionnaire and interviews for Study 4², as described in section II below. Interviews with seed industry stakeholders were also held as part of Study 1, as part of a simulation exercise to better understand decision-making within the seed sector.³
3. In addition, the Working Group undertook its task of consulting relevant stakeholder groups through several requests, the responses to which have additionally been incorporated into the Information Document 4. These requests include that the Working Group: (i) requested the “Regional Groups to enable consultations amongst Contracting Parties and with stakeholders during the inter-sessional period”; (ii) requested the “stakeholders groups to consult their constituencies by contacting their members, holding discussions, and contributing inputs from their constituencies to the second meeting”; and (iii) requested the “Co-Chairs to continue the established practice of consulting inter-sessionally with stakeholder groups, in a formal, transparent and inclusive manner”. Additionally, pursuant to Resolution 2/2013, the Secretary had invited all Contracting Parties and stakeholders to provide “all relevant available information as contribution to the work of the *Ad Hoc* Open-Ended Working Group”.⁴ Information Document 4 incorporates responses and inputs received from all the above requests into an analysis of the factors that influence the willingness of stakeholder groups to make contributions to the Benefit-sharing Fund and to access PGRFA from the Multilateral System.
4. The Working Group already identified a number of factors to be taken into account in enhancing the functioning of the Multilateral System.⁵ In the consultations carried out through the preparation of this document, stakeholders concurred with the Working Group in many of the factors to be addressed to enhance the Multilateral System and have provided further insights on their willingness to support the process to enhance the System.

¹ Resolution 2/2013, para. 23.

² The questionnaire is available on <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/QX7VNP9> (English)

³ Results of interviews conducted for Study 1 are summarized in two stand-alone technical papers: *Investigation of the preferences and behaviour of users of the SMTA, when making decisions to use the alternative payment options of Articles 6.7 and 6.11 of the SMTA*, and *Summary of user opinions, following interviews with members of the seed industry* will be referred hereafter as *Study 1 Technical Papers* and are both available on line at: <http://www.planttreaty.org/content/background-study-paper-1>

⁴ Notification GB-6/010 and GB-6/026.

⁵ IT/OWG-EFMLS-1/14/Report, paras.7-9.

5. This document is based on an in-depth analysis⁶ prepared by the expert who compiled and analysed the questionnaires and conducted the interviews. It briefly describes the methodology used to consult stakeholders and then summarizes the results arising from such consultation. The document then identifies a number of general factors arising from the consultation that need to be addressed to improve generally the functioning of the Multilateral System. It then focuses on factors that influence the willingness of stakeholders to include plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA) in the Multilateral System, and to access PGRFA from the Multilateral System, and factors that influence the willingness to contribute to the Benefit-sharing Fund.

II. METHODOLOGY

6. Following the request by the Working Group, a questionnaire was designed as a main tool for information gathering for the study. The questionnaire has been designed in collaboration with the representatives of the Stakeholder Groups to the first meeting of the Working Group who had been nominated by their Stakeholder Groups to participate in the first meeting. After the design of the draft questionnaire based on the inputs of the stakeholder representatives, the Secretary discussed and reviewed the draft questionnaire with the Co-Chairs of the Working Group. The questions covered by the questionnaire related to a wide range of relevant areas, including the status of implementation of the Multilateral System and the Treaty, the operation so far of the SMTA and Benefit-sharing Fund, the non-monetary benefit-sharing mechanisms within the Multilateral System and policy and technical trends that may need to be taken into account to enhance the functioning of the Multilateral System.

7. The questionnaire was designed to cover all the four stakeholder groups identified in Resolution 2/2013 as observers to the Working Group: civil society organizations, the seed industry, farmers' organizations and the CGIAR Centres. The questionnaire was also addressed to representatives from government agencies and other public institutions, such as national genebanks or agricultural research institutions.⁷

8. The Secretariat published a notification inviting stakeholders to complete and circulate the questionnaire.⁸ Altogether 105 fully completed questionnaires were received, despite the short period of time given for answering the questionnaire to enable the completion of this analysis. Questionnaires were received from 40 different countries. Completed questionnaires were also received from 14 representatives from Contracting Party government agencies. There was a strong participation from the seed companies (48), especially from Europe and North America, followed by farmers' organizations (12), the CGIAR centres (11), national genebanks or research centres (11), civil society organizations (8), and international organizations (1). All respondents are collectively referred to as "stakeholders" throughout this document.

9. Questionnaires were followed up by in-depth interviews, conducted on an individual basis with a small number of questionnaire respondents (25) from civil society organizations, the seed industry, farmers' organizations and the CGIAR Centres, who were identified with support from the representatives of the stakeholder groups to the Working Group. Two rounds of interviews were conducted to help stakeholders share ideas and identify areas of common understanding among individuals who have special knowledge to share, but who were not in contact with each other, on a series of general recommendations that are included in the last section of this document.

⁶ The in-depth analysis will be published prior to the second meeting of the Working Group, at: <http://www.planttreaty.org/content/second-meeting-ad-hoc-open-ended-working-group-enhance-functioning-multilateral-system-access>

⁷ While the notification also invited those in government or national institutions in non-Contracting Parties to complete the questionnaire, no replies were received from this category of stakeholder.

⁸ Available at: http://www.planttreaty.org/sites/default/files/019_GB6_NCP_%20OWG_EFMLS_Study%204_survey_en.pdf

III. RESULTS

3.1 General considerations related to the implementation of the Multilateral System

10. The stakeholders were asked whether the implementation of the Treaty had so far had any positive impact for their organizations. The majority of respondents (60%) stated that the Treaty had had a distinct positive impact for them; 35% felt there was limited impact or no impact and 5% indicated that impact was so far negative. While all the latter ones were respondents from seed companies, which do not have their headquarters in Contracting Parties, it must be acknowledged that the majority of respondents from seed companies believed that the Treaty has had a positive impact for industry. 100% of interviewed seed companies with headquarters in Contracting Parties felt that the International Treaty had had a positive impact or no significant impact for them. Respondents from the CGIAR felt extremely positive about the Treaty, as it has provided the necessary legal framework for their genebanks to operate, through Article 15 and the agreements signed with the Governing Body. Respondents from Contracting Parties agencies felt that the main positive impact of the Treaty so far have been the improved flow of material provided through the Multilateral System. Researchers in national centres were also positive while they expressed concerns with regard to the management of SMTAs. Farmer organizations respondents thought that the Treaty had limited impact on farmers so far, as there is still too much disconnect between the farmers communities and the other Treaty actors, including breeders as well as genebanks.

11. At the same time, all stakeholder groups indicated, through the questionnaire and interviews, that there is still a significant lack of awareness and understanding of the Multilateral System at all levels and across the different stakeholder groups, and that such lack of awareness is preventing many stakeholders to meaningfully participate in, and benefit from the Multilateral System. The low level of awareness and understanding about the Multilateral System translates into lack of inclusion of materials in Annex I that are under the management and control of the Contracting Parties and in the public domain, as well as the inclusion of materials from natural and legal persons. It also affects the use of the Multilateral System that underpins benefit-sharing and the potential for provision of voluntary contributions into the Benefit-sharing Fund. Many stakeholders therefore emphasized the need for the Treaty to make additional and systematic awareness raising efforts.

3.2 Factors that influence the willingness of stakeholders to include PGRFA in the Multilateral System, and to access PGRFA from the Multilateral System

12. This section summarizes the factors identified by stakeholder groups regarding their willingness to access PGRFA from the Multilateral System. The stakeholders also indicated which factors may influence the willingness to include PGRFA of those managing germplasm collections under the management and control of the Contracting Parties and in the public domain, as well as those natural and legal persons within Contracting Party jurisdictions that hold PGRFA. They also made a number of remarks regarding a potential expansion of coverage of Annex 1.

Ease of Access

13. Many respondents emphasized that the Multilateral System with its Standard Material Transfer Agreement (SMTA) provides a clear, commercially viable contract that facilitates the access of PGRFA. SMTAs are widely used by the CGIAR, but also by many NARS and small seed companies. Other respondents indicated that they prefer using alternative PGRFA sources, that provide material available under the Multilateral System but without certain obligations on the users, such as those triggering monetary benefit-sharing.

Users' perspectives on PGRFA available within the Multilateral System

14. The availability of a wide portfolio of genetic material that can be accessed in a facilitated manner is the primary factor cited by stakeholders to explain the willingness of National Agricultural Research Systems and generally breeders to access PGRFA through the Multilateral System. Still, several experts specifically indicated that the PGRFA available through the System is still low compared to its current potential, as many Contracting Parties have still not included their national collections in the System.

15. Many respondents stressed the need to make the Multilateral System more attractive by including PGRFA that are characterized, evaluated and have gone through some degree of pre-breeding and other forms of value-addition. Breeders and breeding companies are much more interested in accessing routinely materials under development and commercial varieties that they can integrate easily within their breeding programmes, rather than accessing traditional gene banks materials (landraces, wild relatives) that require a "long term investment".

16. While there is material of interest for farmers in genebanks, farmers have traditionally not relied on genebanks to access PGRFA, but depend on local sources or networks. Many genebanks still do not grant access to PGRFA to farmers or their organizations. Support by NGOs, local research institutions or other experts, who can act as intermediaries between genebank staff and farmers is necessary to improve the willingness and capacity of farmers to access PGRFA from the Multilateral System.

Availability of information on the material within the Multilateral System

17. The availability of reliable information on germplasm for traits of agronomical and economic importance is necessary for breeders to search for material of interest for their program. Stakeholders indicated that if more information on the germplasm available in the Multilateral System were made available, it would make the System more attractive to users. Most respondents are of the view that the availability of information on passport data and the characteristics of the designated material are essential for access. Farmers' organizations indicated that information is crucial but they often cannot access it as it remains at government, research or university level. Many stakeholders indicated the need for the Treaty to rapidly develop the Global Information System of the Treaty as a way to enhance the functioning of the Multilateral System.

Provisions of the SMTA

18. The provisions of the SMTA which most stakeholders believe to be negatively influencing user willingness to access PGRFA from the Multilateral System, are:

- Article 6.7, for seed companies that commercialize products that incorporate PGRFA with a restriction to others for further research and breeding.
- Article 9.2, is referred to by some users as the "evergreen clause" as it provides for a perpetual liability linked to use of material under the Multilateral System.
- The provisions related to the reporting obligations under Article 5 referred to by seed companies as "tracking and tracing of the material", as users believe they are cumbersome and lead to administrative costs.

19. The amendments to the provisions of the SMTA which stakeholders, especially the users, believe will hold the biggest potential to enhance the use of the Multilateral System and increase user-based payments and contributions to the Benefit-sharing Fund in a sustainable and predictable long-term manner, include:

- The rates of Articles 6.7 and 6.11 are set too high and the parity between them is not favourable to 6.11. Some suggested for 6.7 to reduce rates from 0.77% to 0.5% or even less. Others suggested rates for 6.11 to be reduced from 0.5% to 0.01%.
- Some suggested formulating Article 6.7 and related provisions as a standard licensing agreement that includes a defined time frame for benefit-sharing if a minimal percentage of material from the Multilateral System has been incorporated in the final product.
- While many stakeholders supported making all payments mandatory and therefore deleting Article 6.8, seed companies who commercialize varieties under Plant Variety Protection disagree with such suggestions.
- Reduce as much as possible the reporting obligations in Article 6.5. and revise the 9.2 Termination clause to lower transaction costs for seed companies.

20. Stakeholders also suggested that a number of concepts included in the SMTA should be clarified, such as “material available without restriction” and “PGRFA under development”.

21. More detailed user opinions on the current provisions of the SMTA, as well as the revisions under discussion, can be found in the *Study 1 Technical Papers*.⁹

Inclusion of PGRFA in the Multilateral System

22. Factors believed by stakeholders to be influencing the willingness to include PGRFA in the Multilateral System of those managing germplasm collections under the management and control of the Contracting Parties and in the public domain, included the following:

- Low awareness and capacity of government and NARS staff with regard to the implementation of Treaty obligations;
- Lack or poor national legislation or other measures to support MLS implementation provide for regular funding of the germplasm banks;
- Continued lack of trust between some users and providers, especially with regard to perceived risks related to “patenting” of material provided and fears that materials will “leak out of the System”;
- The willingness to include PGRFA in the Multilateral System increases at national level, when breeders and other local users in the research and development chain show support for the Multilateral System.
- The implementation of the compliance procedures will facilitate further contributions of materials to the Multilateral System.

23. Factors believed by stakeholders to be influencing the willingness to include PGRFA in the Multilateral System of those natural and legal persons within Contracting Party jurisdictions that hold PGRFA, included the following:

- There is lack of clarity on the formal process of contributing PGRFA from natural and legal persons. There are also technical aspects that potential providers and curators of germplasm would like to clarify, such as how to manage hybrids or prioritize materials that are costly to conserve (i.e. in vitro conservation).
- There is no formal recognition from the Governing Body of those natural and legal persons that include PGRFA in the Multilateral System. There is also no communication effort to explain the importance and value for natural and legal persons to include material

⁹ See also footnote 3 above. Technical Papers are available at <http://www.planttreaty.org/content/background-study-paper-1>.

in the Multilateral System. Some seed companies already contribute material to their national genebanks and others may follow as part of philanthropy efforts.

- The contribution by private holders of intermediate or final research products may compromise their comparative advantage *vis a vis* other market competitors.
- Seed companies using plant variety protection do not see the need to contribute to the Multilateral System as the Breeder's Exemption of the UPOV system allows already free access to elite commercial germplasm. Patented material is unlikely to be shared until the patent expires, when it becomes freely available.
- Seed companies want to see more Contracting Parties including material in the public domain before including their own material.
- Farmers are reluctant to contribute material in the absence of implementation of Farmers' Rights.

Coverage of the Multilateral System: Annex I expansion

24. A majority of respondents to the questionnaire showed a strong interest to expand Annex I to all crops including their wild relatives and many of them indicated specifically that an increase use of the Multilateral System could be expected from the expansion of Annex I. While supporting such expansion, some stakeholders are of the view that the expansion of Annex I should be done simultaneously with attracting more Contracting Parties to join the Treaty and to contribute to the Multilateral System and to the Benefit-sharing Fund. Others felt that focusing on undertaking some changes of the SMTA is already a valuable exercise. Crops that attract the most interest by stakeholders include those with the biggest commercial value such as soybean, vegetables, especially tomato, and ornamental plants but also many minor or underutilized crops important for food security, as their inclusion may promote their use and prevent them from being neglected. In this context, the majority of the respondents referred to the entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol on 12 October 2014, which they fear could lead to a significant reduction in the use of non-Annex I material. Consequently, they highlighted the need for expanding Annex I to all PGRFA, while ensuring that the Nagoya Protocol is implemented in a mutually supportive manner with the Treaty.

Non-monetary benefit-sharing mechanisms to enhance use of the Multilateral System

25. As specified in Article 13.1, several stakeholders indicated that facilitated access within the Multilateral System is a major benefit for all, in particular developing countries. The positive impact achieved by ensuring facilitated access should not be undervalued and the facilitated access to PGRFA should be further enhanced and developed through the measures to be put in place by the Governing Body. Half of the seed industry respondents stressed that the facilitated access is a major benefit. Other respondents indicated that access to material is very important, but it needs to be accompanied by the capacity to use the material, the related information and the technology to use it, so developing countries need to have access to other benefit-sharing mechanisms to maximize their use of the Multilateral System.

26. The importance of information exchange is underlined in section 3.1. Stakeholders stressed also the importance of technology transfer as a non-monetary benefit-sharing mechanism. Government and Seed companies' respondents highlighted how delivery of technology transfer with capacity building is crucial to build up local breeding and the seed sector in developing countries. Farmer Organizations stressed the need to support participatory plant breeding as a technology transfer activity. Many stakeholders emphasized the importance of capacity building in genebanks, breeding of locally adapted varieties, farm-based seed multiplication and access of small holders to seed of improved varieties. They recognized that on-line tools are helpful but they are not sufficient as capacity building requires on-the-ground implementation. Benefit-

sharing Fund projects should have a strong component of awareness and capacity building for all actors (e.g. farming communities, Gene banks, Government institutions, breeders).

3.3 Factors that influence the willingness to contribute to the Benefit-sharing Fund

Factors leading to the current short-fall of user-based income

27. The stakeholders agreed with the Working Group in its review of the factors leading to the current short-fall of user-based income to the Benefit-sharing Fund. The following factors were also common in the responses to the questionnaires and interviews: the slow speed of plant breeding; the availability of material, and type of material; the alternative sources of materials; avoidance of SMTA material and the problem of voluntary payments; the imbalance of payment rates between options; and the transaction costs for users.

Benefit-sharing Fund: elements for a renewed strategy to mobilize funds

28. Resolution 2/2013 emphasized that the various innovative approaches are interlinked and interdependent, and need to be addressed together, as a range of different innovative approaches that could provide a part of an adequate and sustainable flow of income to the Benefit-sharing Fund. As described in document 3 of the first meeting of the Working Group,¹⁰ there are different components that could come together to provide an adequate income stream for the Benefit-sharing Fund, including user-based approaches that range from SMTA-approaches to non-SMTA approaches such as the so-called Norwegian approach or the potential to establish agreements with industry groups. Another component will be the contributions to be provided by Contracting Parties, foundations or other philanthropic institutions through further work on fund raising through the next iteration of the Strategic Plan for the implementation of the Benefit-sharing Fund. The Working Group will have to assess the potential of each innovative approach and estimate the value of the various components, and identify the supporting actions that are required to make them work, for example, the immediate and effective availability of all Contracting Parties' relevant materials. As described below, the stakeholders were very supportive of an approach which will create a packet of measures to increase income to the Benefit-sharing Fund through different components.

Contributors

29. The stakeholders reaffirmed the importance of the Treaty, which provides a global benefit to society, and helps enhance global food security, biodiversity conservation and adaptation to climate change. They view therefore a major responsibility of the Contracting Parties to support the Treaty to fulfil its crucial mission. Many stakeholders expected contributions to be mandatory for developed countries and voluntary for developing countries.

30. While all stakeholders anticipate that a major share of the funding should originate from Contracting Parties, most stakeholders also recognize that PGRFA users should also contribute to the Benefit-sharing Fund. The seed industry is the primary PGRFA user that commercializes varieties and other products. All respondents from seed companies indicated their willingness to contribute to the Benefit-sharing Fund, but they highlighted that Contracting Parties need to be realistic with regard to potential income to be generated through the SMTA. The seed industry would like to be recognized for the importance and value of monetary and non-monetary contributions to the International Treaty, including the availability of materials under Plant Variety Protection for further research and breeding.

31. Seed companies also indicated that future provision of non-SMTA contributions from industry will depend on how the monetary benefit-sharing is structured in the SMTA as part of the enhancement process. It cannot be expected that seed companies will support a package of

¹⁰ http://www.planttreaty.org/sites/default/files/OEWG-EFMLS_1-14-w3_en.pdf

measures where there is a major increase of both the provision of income through the SMTA and of non-SMTA contributions.

32. Several stakeholders stressed that a mechanism should be found, in line with Article 13.6 of the Treaty, to mobilize voluntary contributions from those actors in the food supply, such as food processing industry and retailers, which also benefit from the value generated from the use of PGRFA.

33. Some stakeholders also indicated that a wider array of sources for voluntary contributions should be explored. The case for support of the Benefit-sharing Fund has a great potential to attract funding for special projects or programmes from multilateral organizations, foundations and other philanthropic institutions, and this needs to be taken into account in future fund raising efforts through the next iteration of the *Strategic Plan*.

34. Civil Society Organizations indicated that they would not contribute funding directly, but they can be instrumental to promote funding contributions from certain donors, such as foundations.

Innovative approaches

35. **Revisiting Article 6.7/6.8 and 6.11:** The stakeholders' views about revisiting these Articles of the SMTA have already been introduced above, and are treated in more depth in the *Study 1 Technical Papers*.¹¹ A majority of stakeholders are of the view that making all payments mandatory would enhance funding, and help having a level playing field. Furthermore, only mandatory payments could provide a steady income, as voluntary payments tend to be cut when there are economic downturns. Seed companies that sell material under Plant Variety Protection disagree with mandatory payments as they feel that they already provide access through the breeders' exemption, or if payments are introduced for all protected products, the payment rate should be higher for products that restrict further use compared to products that do not restrict further use for research and breeding.

36. **Upfront payment on access,** to be discounted against payment due on commercialization of a product: several stakeholders supported the approach and felt that in addition to the early payment, such an approach could encourage seed companies to share material and technology with providers. Others, particularly from the seed industry, disagreed as they felt that it is difficult to contribute prior to knowing whether the material is of interest to the user.

37. **Promoting regular seed sales-based contributions by Contracting Parties:** This approach was supported by several respondents from governments, CGIAR, Farmers, civil society organizations and the small seed companies as it seems the simplest to implement and would allow a level playing field among all companies. It would be up to each country, based on a scale arising from discussions by the Governing Body, to decide how to collect and provide such contributions, while some countries may want to include such contributions in their national budget, others may decide to collect it from the seed industry or through its associations. Stakeholders reported that they were discussing, in a specific country, the possibility of a burden-sharing mechanism agreed by industry and government, where each one would provide a certain contribution on a regular basis.

38. **Expanding the coverage of the Multilateral System** was largely supported by all stakeholders, and especially all the seed industry.

Priorities in the use of funds

39. Several stakeholders believed that the Benefit-sharing Fund should invest in fewer but larger projects with the potential of a greater impact. Such projects could attract voluntary contributions by seed companies, multilateral donor institutions, as well as Contracting Parties. Such large projects should be designed in close cooperation with Treaty partners, such as the

¹¹ Available at <http://www.planttreaty.org/content/background-study-paper-1>.

CGIAR Centers and IFAD, in order to optimize the project impact and reinforce the attractiveness for potential funders. They could involve public-private partnerships especially in adding value to the material under the Multilateral System, hence making it more attractive for users and drawing further interest of other donors.

40. In terms of funding priorities, while stakeholders from farmer or civil society organizations support a clear focus of Benefit-sharing Fund for on-farm management of crop diversity, seed companies, CGIAR, and other stakeholders are of the view that the Fund should not only deal with on farm management but should also focus on the addition of value of material in the Multilateral System through better evaluation, pre-breeding, improvement of information systems and technology development and transfer.

41. Stakeholders from farmer or civil society organizations indicated that the projects focusing on on-farm management of crop diversity should strengthen farmers' organizations capacities to support seed management, with interventions centered on participatory breeding and collective conservation. Some are of the view that it should be possible to attract funding from some foundations to finance these types of projects. Other stakeholders indicated that this type of project should focus on PGRFA that are under threat under *in situ* and on-farm conditions and that appropriate links should be established with *ex situ* conservation facilities and institutions to make the material available under the Multilateral System. They also emphasize the need to focus on *in situ* conservation in centers of origin and diversity.

42. Several respondents (Contracting Parties, Seed Companies, CGIAR, and other) indicated that Benefit-sharing Fund should play a catalytic effect in increasing the value and the downstream use of the PGRFA in the Multilateral System, by supporting activities such as evaluation, pre-breeding or provision of PGRFA sample information to develop the Global Information System and the transfer of relevant technologies, as well as collecting and making available PGRFA. The strengthening of capacities to allow national institutions in developing countries to make better use of diversity available under the Multilateral System, in particular through plant breeding and local development of seed delivery, was emphasized. Private companies indicated that they could assist in some of these activities, such as pre-breeding.

43. Stakeholders have very concrete ideas on the priorities for use of funds in the Benefit-sharing Fund and would like to be involved and provide their expertise in defining priorities and selecting projects or programme to be funded. They emphasize the need for larger projects with higher impact that could enhance the value and use of the Multilateral System and the need for mechanisms for specific donors to contribute to specific programmes or priorities (i.e. foundations to support on-farm management and seed companies to support evaluation or pre-breeding).

IV. CONCLUSIONS

44. The stakeholders participating in this study reaffirmed that the International Treaty is crucial in the fight against food and nutrition insecurity and to adapt agriculture to climate change and future challenges. The majority of respondents stated that the Treaty had had a distinct positive impact for their organizations. There is a very strong goodwill among stakeholders towards contributing positively to the process of enhancing the functioning of the Multilateral System and the Benefit-sharing Fund. They expect the Multilateral System to become the main global system for accessing all PGRFA.

45. At the same time, the stakeholders note that there is still a significant lack of awareness and understanding of the Multilateral System at all levels and across the different stakeholder groups. They therefore emphasized the need for the Treaty to make additional and systematic awareness raising and capacity building efforts to improve the implementation of the Treaty and the functioning of the Multilateral System.

46. There is general agreement about measures to increase the attractiveness of the Multilateral System such as the inclusion of value-added material and the provision of better information on the PGRFA through the Global Information System. While farmer organizations want to see changes that will enable farmers to have better access to PGRFA in the System and to PGRFA information relevant to them, the seed companies expect that changes to enhance income through the use of the SMTA will be realistic and a simplification of the reporting obligations and the termination clause.

47. Stakeholders expect Contracting Parties to have a major responsibility to support the Treaty to fulfil its crucial mission, including in the provision of funding to the Benefit-sharing Fund, but also recognize that PGRFA users should also contribute to the Benefit-sharing Fund. All respondents from seed companies indicated their willingness to contribute to the Benefit-sharing Fund, but noted that Contracting Parties need to be realistic with regard to potential income to be generated through the SMTA. Stakeholders do not expect the Benefit-sharing Fund to rely only on income generated by the SMTA but agree that non-SMTA based approaches should attract voluntary contributions from Contracting Parties, seed companies, multilateral organizations and foundations.