Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

The International Treaty ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

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Item 11 of the Provisional Agenda
SIXTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY
Rome, Italy, 5 – 9 October 2015
Report of the Third Meeting of the Platform for the Co-Development and Transfer of Technologies

1. BACKGROUND

1.   The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture calls for technology transfer as a form of non-monetary benefit-sharing in the context of the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-Sharing. The Treaty provides that transfer of technology shall be carried out through all types of partnership in research and development (Article 13.2.b.iii). At its Fourth Session in 2011, the Governing Body of the Treaty called for facilitating the necessary measures to realize technology transfer. In 2012, the *Rio Six-point Action Plan for the International Treaty* recommended, as a priority action to be undertaken by stakeholders in the Treaty, "to establish a *Platform for the Co-Development and Transfer of Technologies*, within the context of non-monetary benefit-sharing under the Treaty".

2.   Following the recommendation of the Governing Body and the Rio Action Plan, a number of potential action partners convened a meeting in Brasilia, Brazil, in August 2012, under the co-chairing of the Brazilian Agriculture Research Corporation (EMBRAPA) and the Indonesian Agency for Agricultural Research and Development (IAARD). The stakeholders at the meeting considered establishing a Platform, where institutions active in technology co-development and transfer, including advisory partners and donor institutions, could constitute a coordination and initiation mechanism to mobilize resources, including those of the initial proponents themselves, for technology co-development and transfer.

3.   At the Platform second meeting in Bandung, Indonesia, in July 2013, institutions convened under the leadership of EMBRAPA and IAARD, and with the additional support of the African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF), further developed the initiative through a review of models of technology transfers that would be useful for smallholder farmers.

4.   At its Fifth Session in September 2013, the Governing Body welcomed those developments and grouped activities under the Platform under "supporting activities" to the Programme of Work on Sustainable Use. IAARD on behalf of the Platform reported to the meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Sustainable Use held in March 2015.

5.   Following implementing activities by Platform institutions in the biennium 2014-2015 and in preparation for the Sixth Session of the Governing Body in October 2015, IAARD, which took up the presidency of the Platform from EMBRAPA, convened this third meeting of the Platform to take stock of progress made, define the strategic focus of the initiative in the light of developments with other Treaty processes, expand the network of active institutions, and then report on progress at the Sixth Session of the Governing Body.

6.   The list of participants in the meeting is in Annex 1. The agenda of the meeting is in Annex 2. Background documentation for the meeting was circulated to participants in advance, and is available on-line on Treaty's website, together with all presentations made at the meeting.[1]

2. THE MEETING

2.1 Presentations by Platform institutions

7.   The meeting reviewed a number of presentations intended to allow Platform institutions to progress towards a sharpened definition of the Platform activities within the operation of the Treaty. Institutions already active on the Platform presented progress with their relevant projects in the light of the mission statement that the Platform had developed in its previous two meetings, and how their activities could further be integrated in support of the Treaty.

8.   IAARD presented two recently financed projects of the Benefit-Sharing Fund (BSF). Both projects are multi-country projects dealing with rice. The first project facilitates the establishment of automated meaning links among rice information systems through the adoption of permanent unique identifiers, to add value to and facilitate the use of rice germplasm. The project also contributes to the creation of a rice information management portal, which was an action point earlier agreed on between IAARD and EMBRAPA in the context of the Platform. The second BSF project creates a germplasm pool through the exchange of local varieties among participating countries, a data pool through the identification of phenotypic and genotypic characteristics, and a technology pool to improve the productivity of local varieties, e.g. through the use of molecular markers. IAARD informed that Platform leading institutions, namely EMBRAPA and AATF, had already started contributing expertise to the projects in two workshops, held in the week preceding this Platform meeting, and would further support implementation in line with the Platform mission statement.

9.   EMBRAPA updated the participants on three categories of activities that implement the mission statement of the Platform: i) the creation and deployment of social technologies meeting farmers' demands, ii) plant germplasm exchange and germplasm information systems (namely, the "Alelo" portal); and iii) partnerships for cooperative research projects on plant innovation (i.e. the Agricultural Innovation Marketplace).

10.   AATF illustrated its relevant core functions and activities, such as technology identification, brokering, adaptation and delivery, and presented the commercial licensing scheme under the Water Efficient Maize for Africa project, as an example of delivery of technology to seed companies and agri-businesses.

11.   Bioversity International presented an overview of CGIAR technology co-development and transfer recent activities. The presentation highlighted efforts, within the individual CGIAR research programmes and across the programmes, to enhance the innovative capacity of its clients, to enable them to better identify their technological needs and implement the necessary intervention to facilitate the transfer of technologies, including germplasm, which meet the specific needs of the community, taking social, cultural and economic factors into consideration.

12.   New institutions that joined the Platform at this meeting, presented their direct experience with various aspects of technology co-development and transfer, with the aim of identifying additional value propositions that could be expressed through the Platform mission statement. Representatives of Italian research institutions explained the content of a coordination initiative at the country level that, in cooperation with selected developing countries, would integrate

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[1] http://www.planttreaty.org/content/third-meeting-platform-co-development-and-transfer-technologies-0

technology co- development and transfer into the utilization of plant genomics data for the sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. To further illustrate the possible synergies with plant genomics research, a project ("Bean_Adapt") on the advanced characterization of germplasm that combines sequencing and phenotyping services and data management, with the availability of germplasm under development to farmers, was also presented.

13.   A representative of the Austrian Agency for Food Safety and Health provided an overview of the activities food security division of the Agency, with particular emphasis on the programme of seed variety registration and release, as a tool to deploy innovation on the field, in the form of improved germplasm.

14.   A representative of the German Federal Office for Agriculture and Food illustrated the German National Evaluation Programme for Plant Genetic Resources (EVA II), as a practical example of a cooperative information system serving breeders, with the potential to scale up at the regional level and to incentivize public private partnerships along the germplasm value addition chain.

15.   On behalf of civil society and farmers' organizations, IPC for Food Sovereignty presented its views on technology co-development and transfer suited to the needs of small farmers and their communities in developing countries. IPC highlighted how food production through local seed systems and networks are vital to food security and expressed the need for technology that generates socially, agro-ecologically and economically adequate solutions.

16.   A representative of the Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture presented projects for delivery of public-bred germplasm by private sector, as an illustration of the partnership approach that the Foundation promotes for the scaling of public sector technology. The Foundation highlighted how the projects applied the Standard Material Transfer Agreement of the International Treaty to transfers of improved germplasm for final development into a product, and how additional conditions to trigger voluntary benefit-sharing payments by private sector licensees and selected National Agricultural Research Centers as intermediate licensing agents, were under consideration in the context of the projects.

<div align="center">2.2 Updating the mission statement</div>

17.   In reviewing the content of the presentations and taking stock of developments with Treaty systems and processes, as outlined in the background documents for the meeting, the Platform selected new elements to reflect in its mission statement, as follows:

- including a vision of technology co-development and transfer;
- making reference to technologies applicable to the germplasm information domain, for instance for genomics data generation, storage and use, in support of the Global Information System of Article 17 of the International Treaty;
- adopting the value chain approach, according to which the Platform would support technology co-development and transfer along the entire value chain, from the distribution of germplasm for research and breeding to the release of new plant varieties to farmers.

18.   The resulting updated mission statement is in Annex 3.

19.   The Platform agreed on the necessity to develop a strategy paper that would further specify the mission statement of the Platform, with an elaboration of the methodology and good practices that the Platform would document and advocate for. The strategy paper could deal with aspects of technology co-development and transfer that Platform institutions flagged at this meeting as priorities, such as:

- the identification of existing constraints as the basis for undertaking a technology co-development and transfer within the Treaty in a programmatic manner;
- the pursuing of multiple technology pathways through partnerships and coalitions;

- the facilitation of technology deployment, e.g. through licensing schemes and legislative intervention on seed variety release;
- the monitoring and measurement of technology impacts.

2.3 Support to the Benefit-Sharing Fund

20.   The Secretariat informed the Platform that an expanded funding window focused on technology co-development and transfer, information sharing and capacity building was in the third project cycle of the BSF (window 3). The Secretariat informed that the 2014 call for proposals provided funding for the co- development and transfer of key technologies for the exchange of value added information about germplasm. As a result of the call, a project portfolio of twelve projects was approved under window 3, to mainstream technology co-development and transfer into Treaty implementation.

21.   The Platform had the opportunity to review aggregate information on: i) the geographic scope of the projects, and the activities and partnerships within the projects; ii) the types of technologies, capacities and information to be generated and transferred; iii) the actors involved in the co-development and transfer of technologies, capacities and information; and iv) projects where technology transfer, capacity building and information exchange are pursued or promoted together as part of a package and other projects where they are pursued or promoted independently of each other.

22.   The Secretariat also informed the Platform that an initiative for strengthening the programmatic approach of the BSF would be considered by the Governing Body at its Sixth Session. Such a programmatic approach would provide greater predictability to prospective donors regarding the planned activities and targeted outputs and impacts of proposed projects, and improve thematic coherence between individual projects and project cycles.

23.   In the light of such information, the Platform proposed to provide advice on and support to the existing relevant project portfolio, through mid-term and end-of-project workshops among implementing entities, with a view to collecting views and experiences from the implementing entities and developing lessons learned of general application to future project cycles. The Platform found that it could benefit from this exercise to develop the methodology and good practices that would be reflected in its strategy paper.

24.   The Platform expressed its availability to provide strategic advice on the programmatic approach of window 3 of the BSF, by convening electronic consultations and an in-person expert meeting. The Platform would make the results of this work available for the consideration of any inter-sessional Treaty committee that the Governing Body at its Sixth Session would establish to oversee the operation of the BSF and the Funding Strategy.

3. THE BIENNIAL PROGRAMME OF WORK

25.   In regard of the practical organization of the Platform and its activities, the meeting recalled that the Platform had previously considered flexible and modular arrangements for its substantive activities, where a number of facilities could be created. The Platform agreed to postpone the establishment of facilities and, instead, to concentrate on support to the current project portfolio of window 3 of the BSF.

26.   The Platform decided to continue operating as a functioning network of institutions, and agreed on a light and strategic biennial programme of work, to enhance coherence and focus of the Platform. Support to the window 3 project portfolio and advice on the future programmatic approach of the BSF, the development of a strategic paper containing a methodology for, and good practices of technology co-development and transfer within the Treaty, are the main components of the biennial programme of work, which is in Annex 4.

27.   The meeting requested the Secretariat of the International Treaty, with the support of Platform leading institutions, to mobilize financial and in-kind resources for the implementation of the programme of work.

4. CONCLUSION

28.   The meeting requested IAARD to report on progress made by the Platform at the forthcoming Sixth Session of the Governing Body.

29.   The meeting agreed that the Platform should remain open to other interested partners who wish to work within it, and technical advisors whose experience and expertise are relevant to the mission statement. The meeting requested the Secretariat to circulate a notification to Treaty National Focal Points to draw attention on future Platform activities in the biennium 2016-2017.

30.   The meeting thanked IAARD for its continuous leadership and strategic vision in developing the Platform. It also thanked the participants, many of whom had travelled far, for their interest and support, and their valuable technical contributions.

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THIRD MEETING OF THE PLATFORM FOR THE CO-DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGIES
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Rome, Italy, 7 September 2015
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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
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Annex 2

The International Treaty
ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

THIRD MEETING OF THE PLATFORM FOR THE CO-DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGIES
Rome, Italy, 7 September 2015
AGENDA

(9.00–9.15)

➤ *Opening and welcome; introduction of participants*
IAARD, Presidency of the Platform

➤ *The role of technology transfer in fulfilling the objectives of the Treaty*
Shakeel Bhatti, Secretary of the International Treaty

(9.15–13.00)

FIRST SESSION: ACTIVITIES AND TREATY DEVELOPMENTS

➤ *Summary of Platform meetings and activities; objectives of the meeting; (15 min.)*
Daniele Manzella, Secretariat of the International Treaty

➤ *Report by partner institutions on relevant activities (60 min.)*
IAARD, EMBRAPA, AATF, Bioversity International

(10.30 – 11.00)
Coffee break

➤ *Presentations of relevant projects and activities by new participants (75 min.)*
Institutions of Contracting Parties (Austria, Germany, Italy); civil society (IPC for Food Sovereignty); Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture

➤ *Discussion with participants: the Platform mission statement and the establishment of Platform facilities (45 min.)*

(13.00 – 14.00)
Lunch

(14.00–17.00)

SECOND SESSION: THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLATFORM

➤ *Window 3 of the third call for proposals of the Benefit-Sharing Fund (30 min.)*
Alvaro Toledo, Secretariat of the International Treaty
Report by IAARD on project workshops

➤ *Discussion with participants: a possible role for the Platform in the context of future project cycles (45 min.)*

➢ *Other practical actions for the further development of the Platform (30 min.)*
Elaboration of a strategy paper

(15.45 – 16.00)
Coffee break

➢ *Other practical actions for the further development of the Platform cont. (60 min.)*
Programme of work; report to the Governing Body; arrangements for internal governance

(17.00 – 17.15)
➢ *Wrap up and conclusions*
IAARD, Secretary of the International Treaty

Annex 3

PLATFORM FOR THE CO-DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY
MISSION STATEMENT

Vision

Stakeholders in the International Treaty are empowered to utilize technologies for the conservation, characterization, evaluation and use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

Objectives of the Platform

The Platform seeks:

1. To respond to needs identified and problems perceived by target beneficiaries, namely small farmers and their communities;

2. To create a functioning network of institutions with the skills and experience to support and undertake initiatives and projects that aim to co-develop and transfer technologies to beneficiaries in developing countries;[2]

3. To contribute to food security, and the social and economic development of the target beneficiaries, through the establishment of a "one-stop shop" for coherent "technology packets", based on the understanding of technology co-development and transfer pathways and the mapping of actors involved;

4. To promote the co-development and transfer of technologies, recognizing that technology transfer requires a range of supporting activities, in particular information sharing and capacity- and institution- building;

5. To mobilize in-kind contributions from both the public and the private sectors for this purpose;

6. To mobilize financial and in-kind support to deliver relevant technologies, including through the Treaty's Benefit-sharing Fund;

7. To support the implementation of the Benefit-sharing Fund project cycle through the provision of relevant expert advice and capacity.

Principles of the Platform

The Platform adheres to the following principles.

1. The Platform considers that technology transfer is a means to deliver benefits to target beneficiaries, rather than an end in itself.

2. The Platform follows a problem solving-based approach (i.e. the identification of existing constraints as the basis for undertaking technology co-development and transfer).

3. The Platform recognizes that there is a wide range of approaches to technology transfer, and a broad range of potential solutions, in responding to needs. Hence, the Platform does not adopt a single model

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[2] Technology is the making, modification, usage, and knowledge of tools, machines, techniques, crafts, systems, methods of organization, in order to solve a problem, improve a pre-existing solution to a problem, achieve a goal or perform a specific function.

of technology co-development and transfer; it evaluates the usefulness of different models based on parameters such as the capacity to lead to integrated technology packets and to technologies adapted to the needs of small farmers and their communities.

4. The Platform pursues technology co-development and transfer along the entire value chain, from the distribution of germplasm for research and breeding to the release of improved varieties to farmers, including through technologies in support of the Global Information System of Article 17 of the International Treaty.

5. The establishment of and progress with the Platform will be reported to sessions of the Governing Body.

6. The Platform will consult with a wide range of stakeholders in the International Treaty, in developing and implementing its activities.

7. In keeping with the Treaty's multilateral objectives, genetic material developed in the context of initiatives and projects supported by the Platform will be available through the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing.

PROGRAMME OF WORK (2016-2017)

OBJECTIVES	OUTCOMES	ACTIVITIES
1. Supporting the project cycle of the Benefit-Sharing Fund	*Outcome 1.1* Support to projects under window 3 is provided	*Activity 1.1.1* Backstopping missions to selected projects *Activity 1.1.2* Mid-term and end-of-project workshops for window 3 implementing entities
	Outcome 1.2 A programmatic approach for window 3 of the Fund that will strengthen its catalytic role in technology co-development and transfer, is in place	*Activity 1.2.1* Running an electronic expert consultation and developing a synthesis document *Activity 1.2.2* Convening an expert meeting to develop the programmatic approach based on the synthesis document *Activity 1.2.3* Developing a paper outlining the scope and content of the programmatic approach *Activity 1.2.4* Making inputs into the text for window 3 of the 4th call for proposals
2. Developing a strategy paper on technology co-development and transfer	*Outcome 2* A methodology for and good practices of technology co-development and transfer are elaborated	*Activity 2.1* Based on findings from supporting activities to the BSF projects and the scope and contents of the BSF programmatic approach, identifying methodologies and good practices *Activity 2.2* Developing a draft of the strategy paper *Activity 2.3* The Platform institutions review the draft through electronic consultations for subsequent finalization
3. Communication and community building	*Outcome 3.1* Progress with activities of the Platform are communicated effectively to potential donors	*Activity 3.1.1* Preparing communication materials *Activity 3.1.2* Developing a case for support
	Outcome 3.2 The Platform increases its range of available expertise	*Activity 3.2.1* Issuing a call for expressions of interest *Activity 3.2.2* A Platform institution host the fourth meeting of the Platform
	Outcome 3.3 The *Ad Hoc* Committee on Sustainable Use (ACSU) and the Governing Body appraise progress with the Platform	*Activity 3.3* Preparing and presenting reports to the ACSU and the 7th Session of the Governing Body