



# The International Treaty

## ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

### THIRD CALL FOR PROPOSALS

## Benefit-sharing Fund of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

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### Frequently Asked Questions

#### **1. What type of projects is funded through the Benefit-sharing Fund?**

During the third round of its project cycle, the Benefit-sharing Fund will provide financial support to two different types of projects: (a) Window 2-Immediate Action Projects; and (b) Window 3-projects for the Co-development and Transfer of Technology.

Immediate Action Projects will aim to strengthen the on-farm conservation and management of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA) through actions, primarily at farm and community levels. The interventions will include such activities as climate analysis; community action to conserve local varieties; the introduction and testing of new varieties; plant breeding and selection; and the development and promotion of appropriate seed production and dissemination systems. Immediate Action Projects operating within one country can receive up to US\$ 300,000 for duration of 3 years, whereas the maximum grant size for programmes operating across multiple countries is US\$ 800,000, over the period of up to 4 years.

Co-development and Transfer of Technology projects will co-develop and transfer key technologies, in particular those that are related to the use of species under the Multilateral System. Technologies to be developed and/or transferred must have the potential to make a significant impact on the conservation and/or use of PGRFA by resource-poor rural communities. Special attention should be paid to technologies that could enhance the ability of farmers to adapt to climate change, especially through increased resistance to drought, heat and associated biotic stresses.

The Co-development and Transfer of Technology Projects operating within one country can receive up to US\$ 150,000 and shall have a duration of maximum two years, whereas the maximum grant size for programmes operating across multiple countries is US\$ 500,000, over the period of up to 3 years.

For more information on the type of projects / programmes that may be funded through the third round of the Benefit-sharing Fund, please refer to section 3 of the Call for Proposals, available at:

<http://www.planttreaty.org/content/bsfcall3>

#### **2. Who can apply for funding under the Benefit-sharing Fund?**

Any governmental or non-governmental organization, including genebanks and research institutions, farmers and farmers' organizations, and regional and international organizations, based in developing countries that are Contracting Parties to the International Treaty, may apply for grants under the Benefit-sharing Fund.

For a complete list of Contracting Parties to the Treaty, please visit [http://www.planttreaty.org/list\\_of\\_countries](http://www.planttreaty.org/list_of_countries) . For a complete list of eligible countries to apply for funding under the Benefit-sharing Fund, refer to Annex 2 of the Third Call for proposals, available also at [ftp://ftp.fao.org/ag/agp/planttreaty/funding/call2014/cfp\\_3\\_2014\\_a2\\_en.pdf](ftp://ftp.fao.org/ag/agp/planttreaty/funding/call2014/cfp_3_2014_a2_en.pdf) This list was prepared based

on a complete list of developing countries derived from the most recent World Bank's classification of economies, as requested by the Governing Body at its Third Session.

### ***3. How to submit project proposals to the Treaty Secretariat?***

Pre-proposals should be submitted through the national authorities of an eligible Contracting Party to the International Treaty, i.e. through the National Focal Points or through the Permanent Representatives to FAO. For some Contracting Parties, other official channels of communication are considered and indicated, where relevant, in Appendix 3 to the Call for Proposals. Pre-proposals submitted directly by applicants to the Secretariat of the Treaty will not be considered by the Bureau.

The list of National Focal Points to the Treaty is included in Appendix 3 to the Call for Proposals and is also available at <http://www.planttreaty.org/nfp>. The list of National Focal Points is updated regularly and any change regarding the national authorities will be highlighted for an easy reference in the website.

For a complete list of Permanent Representatives to FAO, please visit <http://adintersys.fao.org/Bluebook/>. The list is also available as Appendix 3 to the Call for Proposals: [ftp://ftp.fao.org/ag/agp/planttreaty/funding/call2014/cfp\\_3\\_2014\\_a3\\_en.pdf](ftp://ftp.fao.org/ag/agp/planttreaty/funding/call2014/cfp_3_2014_a3_en.pdf)

It is recommended that applicants send the pre-proposals sufficiently in advance so that these reach the Treaty Secretariat through the national authorities before 5 May 2014, 24:00h Rome time.

### ***4. Can one country submit a pre-proposal under Window 2 and another one under Window 3? or are they mutually exclusive?***

Window 2 and 3 of the Call for Proposals 2014 are not mutually exclusive. Therefore, one country may submit different pre-proposals under Window 2 and Window 3, or more than one pre-proposals under the same window.

### ***5. Can one institution submit more than one pre-proposal benefitting the same Contracting Party?***

No institution may submit more than one pre-proposal benefitting a particular Contracting Party. This implies that an applicant may submit several pre-proposals, however each of the pre-proposals submitted by the same applicant must benefit a different Contracting Parties.

### ***6. What is the deadline for the submission of project proposals, how long will the selection process take, and when will the project implementation phase begin?***

The Fund follows a process of calling for pre-proposals and selecting from among them the applicants that will be invited to submit full project proposals. The deadline for submission of pre-proposals is 5 May 2010, at 24:00 hrs (Rome time).

Below are the main steps and indicative dates of the selection process:

1. Submission of pre-proposals: 7 March -5 May 2014;
2. Invitations to submit full project proposals sent out by the Secretariat. Deadline: 7 July 2014;
3. Submission of full project proposals: 7 July -8 September 2014;
4. Announcement of projects to be funded. Deadline: 17 November 2014.

Upon the announcement of projects to be funded, additional time (about one month) has to be allowed for the signature of project agreements and fund disbursement, before the project implementation can begin.

For more information on the steps for the submission and approval of pre-proposals and full project proposals, refer to Appendix 1 of the Call for Proposals:

[ftp://ftp.fao.org/ag/agp/planttreaty/funding/call2014/cfp\\_3\\_2014\\_0\\_en.pdf](ftp://ftp.fao.org/ag/agp/planttreaty/funding/call2014/cfp_3_2014_0_en.pdf)

### ***7. What format has to be used for the project proposals, and how should they be submitted?***

The Treaty Secretariat has prepared a pre-proposal submission form, containing guidelines for the submission of pre-proposals that is available in Appendix 4 of the Call for Proposals:

[ftp://ftp.fao.org/ag/agp/planttreaty/funding/call2014/cfp\\_3\\_2014\\_a4f\\_en.docx](ftp://ftp.fao.org/ag/agp/planttreaty/funding/call2014/cfp_3_2014_a4f_en.docx)

The submission form asks for basic information on the applicant organization and information about the proposed project, including partner institutions, definition of the problems to be addressed, targeted PGRFA, methodologies applied, objectives and expected results. Through the form, applicants are also to include an indicative budget, and to respond to a set of screening questions.

### ***8. According to what criteria will the projects be selected?***

In order to be eligible for funding, proposed projects must: contribute to the objectives of the Treaty; fall within the priorities established by the Governing Body (information exchange, technology transfer and capacity-building; managing and conserving PGRFA on farm; and the sustainable use of PGRFA); benefit Contracting Parties that are developing countries; be presented through the Contracting Party or Parties concerned; be submitted on or before the deadline set for submissions; adhere to the guidelines for submission; and not reproduce the same or a very similar wording as has already been used in another submitted pre-proposal.

Providing a pre-proposal meets all the above criteria, it will be assessed by independent experts against the following screening criteria: project relevance; beneficiaries; collaboration and project team; methodology; feasibility; potential impact; and budget.

In addition to the screening criteria listed above, further criteria will be applied at the full proposal stage. These will include a more detailed assessment of the likelihood of project success, and an assessment of the proposed measures for monitoring and evaluating progress and impact.

For more information on eligibility and screening criteria of pre-proposals, refer to section 4 of the Call for Proposals: [ftp://ftp.fao.org/ag/agp/planttreaty/funding/call2014/cfp\\_3\\_2014\\_0\\_en.pdf](ftp://ftp.fao.org/ag/agp/planttreaty/funding/call2014/cfp_3_2014_0_en.pdf)

### ***9. What other criteria will be used in the screening of pre-proposals?***

In addition to the eligibility criteria mentioned in Section 4 of the Call for proposals, the following pre-proposals will be excluded from the competitive process of the Benefit-sharing Fund:

- Applications that do not adhere to the guidelines and the instructions contained in the submission form will not be considered;
- No institution may submit more than one pre-proposal benefitting a particular Contracting Party;
- Pre-proposals that reproduce the same (or a very similar) wording already used in another submitted pre-proposal will not be considered.<sup>1</sup>

### ***10. Will proposals submitted under the previous Call for Proposals of the Treaty be considered for this round?***

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<sup>1</sup> Please refer to <http://www.planttreaty.org/sites/default/files/gb2repe.pdf> for the list of the eligibility criteria.

Pre-proposals submitted within the first and the second project cycles will not automatically form part of this third round of the project cycle. However, those applicants are welcome to submit a pre-proposal according to the adopted priorities, submissions forms and the thematic focus of the Call for Proposals 2014.

### ***11. Should proposals have complementary sources of funding?***

Although co-funding is not mandatory, projects must identify actual and potential additional funds from other funding sources that will support the implementation of the project. An applicant can submit a pre-proposal related to an on-going project, specifying how the proposal will complement activities already carried out or underway.

### ***12. Can applicants receive support in developing their project proposals?***

Yes, a Helpdesk function is available to support applicants to the Third Call for Proposals. Specifically, the Helpdesk will:

- provide technical assistance by email and over the phone, regarding the preparation of pre-proposals and full proposals, in Arabic, English, French and Spanish; and
- conduct support workshops focussing on the preparation of full project proposals, for applicants invited to prepare full proposals from regions and Contracting Parties that have so far been under-represented among the recipients of support from the Benefit-sharing Fund.

More information on the Helpdesk function is available in Appendix 1 of the Call for Proposals: [ftp://ftp.fao.org/ag/agg/planttreaty/funding/call2014/cfp\\_3\\_2014\\_0\\_en.pdf](ftp://ftp.fao.org/ag/agg/planttreaty/funding/call2014/cfp_3_2014_0_en.pdf)

The Helpdesk can be contacted either by E-mail ([Treaty-Fund@fao.org](mailto:Treaty-Fund@fao.org)) or over the phone: +390657053233

### ***13. Who will screen the pre-proposals? What will happen if a pre-proposal is selected?***

The Ad Hoc Committee on the Funding Strategy will review the preparatory screening work done by the Secretariat and advise the Bureau of the Sixth Session of the Governing Body accordingly. The Bureau will finalize the screening of pre-proposals and will invite those approved to develop full project proposals.

### ***14. When and how will the funds for project implementation be disbursed?***

It may take up to about nine months from the opening of the call for proposals until full project proposals will be approved for funding, and from that moment another month until project agreements are signed and the first disbursements can be made.

It is important to note that the grants will not be disbursed as a whole at the beginning of the project implementation phase. Instead, they will be disbursed in tranche payments. The first payment (30%) will be made upon receipt by the Secretary of the signed project agreement. Subsequent disbursements are conditional on receipt and approval by the Secretary of the progress reports: after the approval of the first implementation report (25%); after the approval of the second implementation report (25%); and after the approval of the terminal report (20%). The last payment will also be conditional on the inclusion of PGRFA in the Multilateral System and Approval of the Financial Report.

### ***15. What kind of provisions are contained in the project agreement?***

The project agreement follows the structure and content of the FAO template for Letters of Agreements. It consists of an introductory part where general terms and conditions are established and an annex that integrates the project proposal. In addition to the general provisions of the FAO template, however, the

project agreements contain some additional provisions that are specifically tailored to the needs of the Benefit-sharing Fund.

These specific provisions include the agreement (a) to make all PGRFA listed in *Annex I* of the Treaty that are within the scope of the project available according to the terms and conditions of the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing; and (b) to make all information generated by the project publicly available within one year from the date of completion of the project.

More information on project agreements is contained in Appendix 5 of the Call for Proposals:

[ftp://ftp.fao.org/ag/agp/planttreaty/funding/call2014/cfp\\_3\\_2014\\_0\\_en.pdf](ftp://ftp.fao.org/ag/agp/planttreaty/funding/call2014/cfp_3_2014_0_en.pdf)

#### ***16. How will the monitoring and evaluation process work?***

The monitoring and evaluation process follows the Interim Procedures for Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation, which were adopted by the Governing Body at its Fourth Session. Full project proposals are to include a concrete monitoring and reporting plan, and project agreements will provide a detailed reporting schedule to which the payment schedule is linked. Executing entities develop the monitoring products during the project implementation phase, in line with the reporting schedule. In addition, the Secretary of the Treaty may arrange backstopping missions in cooperation with multilateral agencies, including to capture the views of stakeholders and identify solutions to obstacles in project implementation.

Furthermore, a terminal independent evaluation of the project portfolio is conducted at the end of the project cycle. Executing entities are to collaborate with the evaluation team during the evaluation mission, which shall be based on visits to the locations of a sample of projects and other mechanisms, such as interviews, questionnaires, and focus group discussions.

For more information on the monitoring and evaluation process, please refer to the Interim Procedures for Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation, contained in Annex 1 of Resolution 3/2011:

[http://www.planttreaty.org/sites/default/files/R3\\_2011\\_en.pdf](http://www.planttreaty.org/sites/default/files/R3_2011_en.pdf)

***If you have further questions regarding the application process under the Third Call for Proposals, you can address them directly to the Helpdesk:***

E-mail: [Treaty-Fund@fao.org](mailto:Treaty-Fund@fao.org)

Tel: +390657053233

***For additional information, please consult the training manual on the International Treaty's Funding Strategy and the Benefit-sharing Fund [http://www.planttreaty.org/educational\\_modules](http://www.planttreaty.org/educational_modules)***