



# The International Treaty

ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE



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## Item 19 of the Provisional Agenda

### FIFTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY

Muscat, Oman, 24–28 September 2013

#### REPORT ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GOVERNING BODY AND THE INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH CENTRES OF THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND OTHER RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS UNDER ARTICLE 15 OF THE TREATY

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. *The Governing Body has repeatedly affirmed that cooperation with other international organizations is of particular importance to the Treaty, in many aspects of its work.<sup>1</sup>*
2. *The Governing Body, at its Third and Fourth Sessions, also recognized the significant role of the International Agricultural Research Centres (IARCs) of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and of the other institutions signatories of agreements under Article 15 of the International Treaty, in supporting its objectives.<sup>2</sup>*
3. *This document contains a report on the relevant activities undertaken by the Secretary, and progress made since the last Session of the Governing Body to maintain, strengthen and extend partnerships, synergies and cooperation with the IARCs of the CGIAR and other institutions under Article 15 of the International Treaty. Possible elements of a Resolution are provided for the consideration of the Governing Body.*

<sup>1</sup> IT/GB-1/06/Report, paragraph 45; IT/GB-2/07/Report, paragraphs 84-87; IT/GB-3/09/Report, Resolution 8/2009; IT/GB-4/11/Report, Resolution 8/2011.

<sup>2</sup> Resolution 8/2009; Resolution 8/2011.

## **A. International Agricultural Research Centres of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research**

1. In the past intersessional period, the Secretariat has continued collaborating with the IARCs of the CGIAR on the implementation of the Treaty. In this context, two have been the major work tracks: a) coordinating technical assistance with implementation of the Multilateral System; b) collaborating with the newly established CGIAR Consortium Office.

### **The Joint Capacity Building Programme**

2. At its Fourth Session, the Governing Body reaffirmed the need to expand the duration of the Joint Capacity Building Programme to the full biennium 2012-2103 and invited additional funding and partners.<sup>3</sup> In the context of the second phase of the project “Genetic Resources Policy Assistance”, Bioversity International was able to secure funding from the government of The Netherlands for activities of technical assistance and capacity building aligned with the Joint Capacity Building Programme.

3. Under the project, Bioversity International is strengthening national capacities to participate in the Multilateral System. The Secretariat of the International Treaty published a notification to Contracting Parties calling for expressions of interest in the project.<sup>4</sup> Bioversity International was exclusively responsible for the selection of recipient countries based on pre-determined criteria, and is the implementing entity of the project.<sup>5</sup>

4. The project is benefiting from the institutional mechanism that were established through the Joint Capacity Building Programme under which the Secretariat of the International Treaty provides overall coordination, in particular in order to ensure positive synergies with other relevant capacity building initiatives, including those for the entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol. The project was presented and discussed at the Third Capacity Building Workshop that the Secretariats of the International Treaty and the Convention on Biological Diversity jointly organized.<sup>6</sup> The Secretariat of the International Treaty also promoted coordination between the project and the ABS Capacity Development Initiative, which resulted in the Expert Workshop on Mutual Supportiveness between the International Treaty and the Nagoya Protocol.<sup>7</sup>

5. Another result of the coordination that the Secretariat of the International Treaty promoted with Bioversity International under the Joint Capacity Building Programme is the planned participation of technology transfer experts, including national stakeholders of countries that are beneficiaries of the Genetic Resources Policy Assistance project, in the Second Meeting of the Technology Co-Development and Transfer Platform.<sup>8</sup> At the meeting, those experts and stakeholders are to present the methodology and early results of national assessments of technology co-development and transfer capabilities, which are conducted under the project.

### **Cooperation with the CGIAR Consortium Office**

6. In light of the new structure of the CGIAR, the Secretariat approached the newly established CGIAR Consortium Office in order to explore potential synergies on Treaty implementation. This initiative was welcomed by the Consortium Office and a mapping of the respective work tracks was conducted in order to determine areas for cooperation. Early results of

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<sup>3</sup> Resolution 8/2011, paragraph 17.

<sup>4</sup> The notification of Bioversity International’s project is available at the following url:  
[http://www.planttreaty.org/sites/default/files/NCP\\_GB5\\_CBBioversity\\_en.pdf](http://www.planttreaty.org/sites/default/files/NCP_GB5_CBBioversity_en.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> The eight selected countries are: Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Guatemala, Nepal, Rwanda and Uganda.

<sup>6</sup> The notification of the workshop is available at the following url:  
[http://www.planttreaty.org/sites/default/files/NCP\\_CB\\_ABS\\_wjun2012\\_en.pdf](http://www.planttreaty.org/sites/default/files/NCP_CB_ABS_wjun2012_en.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Coordination with capacity building on the Nagoya Protocol is discussed in the working document IT/GB-5/13/14, as well as in the document *Report on the Implementation of the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing*, IT/GB-5/13/5.

<sup>8</sup> See document IT/GB-5/13/22, Report on Partnerships, Synergies and Cooperation with Other Organizations.

such cooperation were: a) the participation by the Secretariat in the workshop “Toward a CGIAR Consortium Strategy on *In Situ* Agro-biodiversity Research” in July 2012, where the Secretariat presented some projects of the Benefit-Sharing Fund that may be relevant to the CGIAR strategy; and b) collaboration on preparing implementation guidelines to the CGIAR Principles of the Management of Intellectual Assets, which make reference to the provisions of the International Treaty on Farmers’ Rights and on the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-Sharing, and to the Agreements under Article 15 of the International Treaty between the Governing Body and the IARCs of the CGIAR.<sup>9</sup>

## **B. Other International Institutions Signatories of Agreements under Article 15 of the International Treaty**

7. The Secretariat continued providing the international institutions that signed agreements with the Governing Body under Article 15 of the International Treaty with assistance on various policy and operational issues that were related to the implementation of the agreements, with particular regard to application of the SMTA and the reporting to the Governing Body.

8. The Secretariat cooperated with the South Pacific Community Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees, on capacity building activities for accession to the International Treaty by countries in the region as well as, under the Joint Capacity Building Programme for Developing Countries, on joint workshops with the ABS Capacity Development.<sup>10</sup>

## **C. Management of *ex situ* collections: genebank and other standards**

9. A matter of relevance to the agreements between the Governing Body and the IARCs of the CGIAR and other International Institutions is the application of internationally accepted standards for the management and administration of *ex situ* collections. According to Article 15.1 (d) of the International Treaty and Article 2(d) of the agreements concluded by the Governing Body with IARCs of the CGIAR and other International Institutions, those institutions undertake to manage and administer the *ex situ* collections within the purview of the agreements, in accordance with internationally accepted standards, in particular the Genebank Standards as endorsed by the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (FAO Commission).

10. The Genebank Standards were originally endorsed by the Commission in 1993. The FAO Commission endorsed the revised *Genebank Standards for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* at its Fourteenth Regular Session in April 2013.<sup>11</sup> Consequently, the updated standards are to be brought to the attention of the IARCs of the CGIAR and the other relevant International Institutions, in the context of the agreements with the Governing Body.

## **D. Elements of a Resolution**

11. Based on the continuous cooperation with IARCs of the CGIAR in the past intersessional period, the Governing Body may wish to consider the following draft elements for the integration in the *Resolution on Partnerships, Synergies and Cooperation with Other Organizations*.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> The Secretariat informed the *Ad Hoc* Technical Committee on the Standard Material Transfer Agreement and the Multilateral System about the CGIAR Principles and was instructed to collaborate with the CGIAR Consortium Office on the preparation of implementation guidelines. See document IT/GB-5/13/Inf.3.

<sup>10</sup> See document IT/GB-5/13/22.

<sup>11</sup> CGRFA-14/13/Report, paras. 102-104. The revised genebanks standards are available for the information of the Governing Body in document IT/GB-5/13/Inf.9.

<sup>12</sup> See document IT/GB-5/13/22.

## **THE GOVERNING BODY,**

**Noting** the need to continue providing developing country Contracting Parties with assistance with implementation of the International Treaty and its Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing in particular, through coordinated multi-regional programmes of technical assistance with the involvement, as appropriate, of the relevant International Agricultural Research Centers (IARCs) of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), and other International Institutions which signed agreements with the Governing Body under Article 15 of the International Treaty;

**Recalling** the significant support to the objectives of the International Treaty by the IARCs of the CGIAR, and other International Institutions which signed agreements with the Governing Body under Article 15 of the International Treaty;

**Cognizant** of the need to promote coordination among the IARCs of the CGIAR on policy and operational activities of relevance to the objectives of the International Treaty and **welcoming**, in that regard, the establishment of the CGIAR Consortium Office;

**Recalling** that, pursuant to the agreements concluded under Article 15 of the International Treaty, the IARCs of the CGIAR and other International Institutions are to manage and administer the *ex situ* collections within the purview of those agreements, in accordance with internationally accepted standards, in particular the Genebank Standards as endorsed by the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture;

*Hereby,*

**Reaffirms** the need to continue the Joint Capacity Building Programme in the biennium 2014-2015 and invites, on a voluntary basis, additional funding and partners;

**Requests** the Secretary to continue pursuing initiatives for coordination and cooperation with the IARCs of the CGIAR, as well as with other international institutions signatories of Articles 15 agreements, on relevant policy and operational activities within the Programme of Work of the International Treaty, through the CGIAR Consortium Office as appropriate;

**Requests** the IARCs of the CGIAR and other International Institutions which signed agreements under Article 15 of the International Treaty, to manage and administer the *ex situ* collections within the purview of those agreements in accordance with internationally accepted standards, in particular the revised *Genebank Standards for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* as endorsed by the FAO Commission in 2013, as well as to report on a regular basis to the Governing Body on any matters relevant to the implementation of the agreements arising from the use of those and other standards in the management of the collections.