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The International Treaty

ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE



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Item 10 of the Provisional Agenda
FIFTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY
Muscat, Oman, 24-28 September 2013
REPORT OF THE AD HOC TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE USE

Note by the Secretary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This document contains the Report of the first meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Technical Committee on Sustainable Use, held from 8 to 9 November 2012 in Rome, Italy.
2. The Report was published online on the Treaty website and circulated to the National Focal Points through a notification. The Report is accompanied by a cover note summarizing the major outcomes of the meeting.

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I. FIRST MEETING OF THE AD HOC TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE USE

1. The meeting was held from 8 to 9 November 2012 in Rome, Italy. The terms of reference are contained in the annex to Resolution 7/2011, among them, they include the following tasks:

- identification of needs and opportunities to facilitate the sustainable use of PGRFA;
- development of a toolbox on sustainable use of PGRFA in order to assist Contracting Parties in the implementation of Article 6 of the Treaty;
- elaboration of a draft work programme on sustainable use of PGRFA
- cooperation with the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the Global Crop Diversity Trust, the International Agricultural Research Centres of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, and other international processes and institutions in the field of sustainable use of PGRFA.

2. The Report is contained in the *Appendix* to this document. What follows summarizes some of the major outcomes of the meeting. The Committee:

- agreed on the format for an online questionnaire to gather information to devise and elaborate elements of a Programme of Work on Sustainable Use of PGRFA (PoW) that has been launched on 19 December 2012 and will close on 31 March 2013;
- agreed on a provisional draft of the vision, mission and goals of the PoW for the implementation of the sustainable use of PGRFA as per Article 6 of the Treaty;
- supported the development of a Toolbox on Sustainable Use of PGRFA as a one-stop shop from which institutions and individuals can draw selectively from a common and comprehensive set of instruments to tailor solutions to specific needs;
- reviewed the submissions received by the Secretariat on views, experiences and best practices on the implementation of Farmers' Rights and asked the Secretariat to communicate the extension of the deadline.

*Appendix***REPORT OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE AD HOC TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
ON SUSTAINABLE USE****FIRST MEETING OF THE AD HOC TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON
SUSTAINABLE USE OF PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND
AGRICULTURE****Rome, Italy, 8-9 November 2012****Report****Introduction**

3. The First Meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Technical Committee on Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture was held at FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy, from 8 to 9 November 2012. The list of participants is contained in *Appendix 4* to this Report.

Agenda Item 1. Opening of the meeting

4. Mr Clayton Campanhola, Director, Plant Production and Protection Division, FAO, briefed the participants about the new strategic planning process of FAO and the review of FAO's Strategic Objectives. He expressed his hope that it would be possible to even further connect the Treaty's work on sustainable use with this process. He announced the publication of the Second Global Plan of Action on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Second GPA), which is a recognized Supporting Component of the Treaty, and stressed that this would provide many further opportunities to connect the Division's work with the sustainable use activities of the Treaty. He highlighted the importance of increasing the list of crops and forages in *Annex I* of the Treaty for fostering local production and availability of quality seeds to smallholder farmers. He reiterated the importance of environmental sustainability privileging the ecosystem approach and the great value of the Treaty's *Ad Hoc* Technical Committee on Sustainable Use of PGRFA in this regard.

5. Mr Shakeel Bhatti, Secretary of the Treaty's Governing Body, welcomed the participants to the first session of this new Committee and recalled its mandate as established by the Governing Body and contained in the Annex to Resolution 7/2011. He recalled that until now the Secretariat had been working closely with the technical units of FAO on an *ad hoc* basis in order to advance the implementation of Article 6, henceforth the Committee may provide an intergovernmental subsidiary body to further enable and advance this cooperation for the implementation of Article 6. He thanked the FAO and the Plant Protection and Production Division (AGP) for the excellent support provided in the preparations of the present meeting.

Agenda Item 2. Election of the Co-Chairs

6. The Secretary drew attention to the need for the meeting to elect its officials. The meeting elected Messrs. Akanada Khaleqzzaman Chowdhury (Asia Region) and Brad Fraleigh (North America Region) as Co-Chairpersons to guide the proceedings of the meeting.

Agenda Item 3. Adoption of agenda and Time Table

7. The meeting adopted its agenda, as given in *Appendix 1* to this Report.

Agenda Item 4. The Stakeholders' Consultation

8. The Committee considered the document IT/ACSU-1/12/3, regarding the format and the method of the consultation, the options for the promotion of the participation of stakeholders, and the main research elements and questions covered in the draft questionnaire.

9. Regarding the format, the Committee agreed on the use of an online questionnaire and recommended the Secretariat to circulate it and suggested it be circulated through intermediaries as far as possible, including FAO Representatives and farmers' organizations. The Secretariat should also invite the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to circulate the questionnaire. The Committee also agreed that a number of organizations may conduct this work through other methods, based on the same questionnaire, with the view to provide inputs to the process.

10. The Committee recommended widening the categories of potential respondents including, *inter alia*, Ministries of Agriculture and Environment, members of the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) and national focal points of the CBD, gene bank managers, farmers and peasants' organizations¹, national agricultural research organizations, universities, agricultural schools, seed producers and private plant breeders. The Committee reviewed the questionnaire as contained in *Annex 2* of working document IT/ACSU-1/12/3 and provided guidance and comments for its improvement. It noted that questions to gather information on the status of implementation of the Second GPA should be avoided and that the focus should be on the collection of views on the future development of the Programme of Work.

11. The Committee recommended the questionnaire be made available, subject to availability of financial resources, in the official languages of FAO, and suggested to accept submissions during fourteen weeks and until 31 March 2013.

Agenda Item 5. Elements for the Definition of the Programme of Work on Sustainable Use of PGRFA (PoW-SU)

12. The Committee considered IT/ACSU-1/12/4, including the ongoing partnerships of the Treaty Secretariat with the CBD Secretariat and the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) related to sustainable use.

¹ The use of the terms "farmers and peasants' organizations" has to be decided by the Governing Body.

13. The Committee approved the steps to elaborate the Programme of Work presented in paragraph 21 of the document.
14. The Committee reviewed the vision, mission and goals presented in the working document and provided suggestions for its improvement and noted that the text, contained in *Appendix 2* should be considered as a provisional draft.
15. In considering the specific activities that may form part of the Treaty's Programme of Work on Sustainable Use of PGRFA, the Committee suggested amendments that have been reflected in *Appendix 3* to this Report.
16. The Secretary stated that it would be valuable to align the draft Programme of Work to the new Strategic Objectives of FAO as contained in the FAO Reviewed Strategic Framework in order to further enhance the linkages and cooperation between the work programme of the Treaty and relevant FAO departments. The Committee recommended that the Secretary should observe, participate in, and facilitate, the continued alignment between the FAO's Medium Term Plan and the new Strategic Objectives and the tentative elements of the Treaty's Programme of Work.
17. The Committee invited the Secretary, in elaborating the programme of work, to take into account submissions and consultations regarding Farmers' Rights relevant to Sustainable Use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.
18. In relation to Goal 5 of the draft Programme of Work on non-monetary benefit-sharing and pursuant to Resolution 4/2011, the Permanent Representative of Indonesia briefed the Committee on the initiative of Brazil and Indonesia to establish a Platform for the co-development and transfer of technology. The Committee considered the initiative appropriate and timely, and suggested that a link should be established between the Platform and the Programme of Work on sustainable use of PGRFA.

Agenda Item 6. Development of a Toolbox on Sustainable Use of PGRFA

19. The Committee considered documents IT/ACSU-1/12/5 and IT/ACSU-1/12/Inf.4 on the development of the Toolbox on sustainable use of PGRFA.
20. The Committee supported the development of the Toolbox on sustainable use and welcomed the concept of the Toolbox as a one-stop shop from which institutions and individuals can draw selectively for a common and comprehensive set of instruments to tailor solutions to specific needs.
21. The Committee noted that the implementation of the Toolbox will progress over time, bearing in mind the limited availability of resources.
22. It indicated that, when developing the Toolbox, the Secretariat and its partners should avoid duplication of efforts with other initiatives. The Committee was aware that the development of the Toolbox was a complex task and noted that the definition of the term "sustainable use" in the Toolbox should be broad, but the initial focus of the Toolbox should be narrower.

23. The Committee was sceptical about the establishment of an experts' system. It suggested that the participation of farmers' organizations and peasants' organizations, and relevant international organizations should be clarified. Furthermore, it noted that more emphasis should be given to neglected and underutilized crops.
24. The Secretary was invited to continue preparing the Toolbox.

Agenda Item 7. Farmers' Rights: compilation of submissions received and report of the Regional Workshops

25. The Committee considered documents IT/ACSU-1/12/6 and IT/ACSU-1/12/Inf .3 and its addendum and reviewed the submissions received by the Secretariat on views, experiences and best practices on the implementation of Farmers' Rights.
26. The Committee recalled that the implementation of Farmers' Rights is a national responsibility.
27. The Committee thanked those Contracting Parties and stakeholders who made submissions. It noted that, together with the earlier submissions made to the Fourth Session of the Governing Body, there were already elements available to be included in the draft Programme of Work on Sustainable Use.
28. It noted that the request of the Governing Body to Contracting Parties and relevant stakeholders to make further submissions is still in effect and requested the Secretariat to communicate this information, and to publish a reminder on the website.
29. Mr Mark Holderness, Executive Secretary of the GFAR, briefed the Committee on GFAR ongoing work on the preparation of a study on best practices regarding the interactions between Farmers' Rights and breeders' rights. He also mentioned the collaboration with the International Agricultural Research Centers (IARCs) to further incorporate the considerations on Farmers' Rights as outlined in Article 9 of the Treaty in their work. The Committee members expressed their interest in being kept aware of the progress in the study and of the possibility of contributing to it.

Agenda Item 8. Other business

30. The Committee was informed that an international workshop on neglected and underutilized crops for the XXI Century organized by the University of Cordoba in partnership with the Secretariat of the Treaty and other international institutions was scheduled to take place in Cordoba, Spain, on 12 and 13 December.

Agenda Item 9. Adoption of the Report

31. The Committee adopted this Report

32. The members of the Committee thanked the Secretary and the Secretariat for the excellent preparations made and the support provided to the meeting.

List of Appendixes

1. Agenda of the Meeting
2. Provisional draft of the Vision, Mission and Goals of the Programme of Work on Sustainable Use of PGRFA (PoW-SU)
3. Action for implementing the Sustainable Use of PGRFA as per Article 6 of the Treaty
4. List of Participants

Report *Appendix 1*

Agenda of the Meeting

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Election of Co-chairs
3. Adoption of the agenda and Time-Table
4. The Stakeholders' consultation
5. Elements for the definition of the Programme of Work on Sustainable Use of PGRFA (PoW-SU)
6. Development of a Toolbox on Sustainable Use of PGRFA
7. Farmers' Rights: compilation of submission received and report of the Regional Workshops
8. Other business
9. Adoption of the Report

Report Appendix 2

Provisional draft of the Vision, Mission and Goals of the Programme of Work on Sustainable Use of PGRFA (PoW-SU)**TENTATIVE VISION**

PGRFA are used sustainably in farming systems in accordance with Article 6 to enable more inclusive, sustainable and efficient agricultural and food systems at local, national and international levels.

TENTATIVE MISSION

To enhance the sustainable use of PGRFA through effective measures which translate Article 6 of the Treaty into country-level impact.

TENTATIVE GOALS**Monitoring, implementing and ensuring technical support**

Goal 1: to provide support for Contracting Parties and stakeholders to implement the provisions of Articles 5, 6 and 9 of the Treaty that are relevant to the sustainable use of PGRFA, based on national priorities and needs.

Goal 2: to provide policy direction and guidance by monitoring the implementation of the Treaty in relation to sustainable use of PGRFA.

Goal 3: to continue monitoring the technical support and expertise provided by FAO in the area of the sustainable use as foreseen in Article 6 of the Treaty.

Cooperating and improving partnerships

Goal 4: to strengthen collaboration and partnerships among stakeholders participating in projects and programmes relevant to the sustainable use of PGRFA, taking into account the CBD Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

Goal 5: to implement the objectives of non-monetary Benefit-sharing and the Priority Activities of the Second Global Plan of Action regarding the sustainable use of PGRFA.

Report Appendix 3

Draft Activities for Implementing the Sustainable Use of PGRFA, as per Article 6 of the Treaty

Treaty on PGRFA			
Paragraph of Art. 6	Provisions	Relevant Priority Activities of the Second GPA	Specific activities to support actions at national level that may form part of the Treaty's Programme of Work on Sustainable Use of PGRFA (PoW-SU)
6.1	The Contracting Parties shall develop and maintain appropriate policy and legal measures that promote the sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.	Priority Activity 3: Assisting farmers in disaster situations to restore crop systems	Inventorying existing mechanisms of PGRFA-related national and regional policies and legislations and adopt templates for national policies and legislations Development of templates for National PGRFA Strategy specifying action plans, governance, capacity strengthening, partnerships, etc.
		Priority Activity 11: Promoting development and commercialization of all varieties, primarily farmers' varieties/landraces and underutilized species	
		Priority Activity 12: Supporting seed production and distribution	
		Priority Activity 13: Building and strengthening national programmes	
		Priority Activity 14: Promoting and strengthening networks for plant genetic resources for food and agriculture	

6.2. Measures	(a) Pursuing fair agricultural policies that promote, as appropriate, the development and maintenance of diverse farming systems that enhance the sustainable use of agricultural biological diversity and other natural resources;	Priority Activity 2: Supporting on-farm management and improvement of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture	Benchmark existing agricultural development and/or biodiversity conservation policies and legislations relating to diversification of farming systems and develop templates for such policies
		Priority Activity 11: Promoting development and commercialization of all varieties, primarily farmers' varieties/landraces and underutilized species	Existing mechanisms for the recognition of farmer's innovations and traditional knowledge and develop of best practices for integrating them in PGRFA-related legislations and policies
	(b) Strengthening research which enhances and conserves biological diversity by maximizing intra- and inter-specific variation for the benefit of farmers, especially those who generate and use their own varieties and apply ecological principles in maintaining soil fertility and in combating diseases, weeds and pests;	Priority Activity 8: Expanding the characterization, evaluation and further development of specific collection subsets to facilitate use	Promoting the implementation of the genebank standards as they apply to the sustainable use of PGRFA; Establish or support research strategies to strength characterization and agronomic evaluation of plant genetic resources for the benefit of farmers; Support and strengthening of characterization in gene banks that are in the public domain;

	(c) Promoting, as appropriate, plant breeding efforts which, with the participation of farmers, particularly in developing countries, strengthen the capacity to develop varieties particularly adapted to social, economic and ecological conditions, including in marginal areas;	<p>Priority Activity 9: Supporting plant breeding, genetic enhancement and base-broadening efforts.</p>	<p>Develop the elements for the toolbox for crop improvement program as a component of the Toolbox on sustainable use;</p> <p>Implement, once finalized, the Planning and Assessment Tool for Crop Improvement Programs under Global Initiative Partnership on Plant Breeding (GIPB);</p> <p>Provide information and develop guidelines for farmers and breeders to develop and strengthen participatory evaluation and participatory plant breeding</p> <p>Encourage the development of public-private partnerships;</p>
		<p>Priority Activity 12: Supporting seed production and distribution</p>	<p>To make new varieties available to farmers and to make suitable germplasm ex situ available for multiplication and distribution to farmers to fulfil their needs for sustainable crop production ;</p> <p>To increase the availability of high-quality seed of a wider range of plant varieties, including improved and farmer' varieties/landraces;</p> <p>Support seed production of farmers' varieties/landraces generated in conservation-oriented plant programs;</p>
	(d) Broadening the genetic base of crops and increasing the range of genetic diversity	<p>Priority Activity 10: Promoting diversification of</p>	Organize regional training programs on pre-breeding;

	available to farmers;	crop production and broadening crop diversity for sustainable agriculture	Facilitate public – private partnerships in pre-breeding; Promote and develop best practices in multi-stakeholder pre-breeding activities; Implement national and regional pre-breeding programmes; Strengthening mechanisms for participatory evaluation of PGRFA among and between crops, including for adaptation to climate change;
	(e) Promoting, as appropriate, the expanded use of local and locally adapted crops, varieties and underutilized species;	Priority Activity 11: Promoting development and commercialization of all varieties, primarily farmers' varieties/landraces and underutilized species	Development of an inventory of existing mechanisms for promoting the increased cultivation and use of locally adapted crops varieties and underutilized species, including their farming systems, and development of templates for policies and measures; Strengthen mechanisms to enhance local varieties;
	(f) Supporting, as appropriate, the wider use of diversity of varieties and species in on-farm management, conservation and sustainable use of crops and creating strong links to plant breeding and agricultural development in order to reduce crop vulnerability and genetic erosion, and promote increased world food production	Priority Activity 2: Supporting on-farm management and improvement of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture	Develop and test a toolkit for on-farm management of PGRFA in farming systems, in partnership with farmers and peasant organizations ² and other relevant partners ; Promote the knowledge and sustainable use of plant genetic resources in plant breeding programmes on-farm and to explore new markets for these products;

² The use of the terms “*farmer and peasants’ organizations*” has to be decided by the Governing Body.

	compatible with sustainable development;		
	(g) Reviewing, and, as appropriate, adjusting breeding strategies and regulations concerning variety release and seed distribution.	Priority Activity 13: Building and strengthening national programmes	Develop tools for a crop improvement program for farmers' varieties/landraces as part of the sustainable use toolbox

Report Appendix 4

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
MEMBERS DESIGNATED BY THE REGIONS

- AFRICA**
- Mme Sonia HAMZA**
 Professor
 National Agronomic Institute of Tunisia
 Laboratoire de Biologie Moléculaire,
 INAT, 43 Av. Charles Nicolle, 1082
 Tunis Mahrajène, **Tunisia**
 Email: hamza.sonia@inat.agrinet.tn
- Mr Godfrey P. MWILA**
 Acting Chief Agricultural Research Officer
 Crop Improvement and Agronomy Division
 Zambia Agriculture Research Institute (ZARI)
 Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
 Mt. Makulu Research Centre
 P/B7, Chilanga, **Zambia**
 Phone/Fax: +260 211278130
 Mobile: +260 966745604
 Email: godfrey.mwila@gmail.com
- ASIA**
- Mr Ty CHANNA**
 Deputy Director
 Cambodian Agricultural Research and
 Development Institute, Ministry of Agriculture,
 Forestry and Fishery
 P.O. Box 01, Phnom Penh, **Cambodia**
 Phone: +855 12816581
 Email: tchanna@cardi.org.kh
- Mr MD. Khalequzzaman Akanada
 CHOWDHURY**
 Member Director
 Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council
 New Airport Road - Farmgate
 Dhaka, **Bangladesh**
 Phone: +880 2 8118275
 Email: md-crops@barc.gov.bd
- EUROPE**
- Mr François PYTHOUD**
 Responsable du Secteur Agriculture durable
 internationale
 Département fédéral de l'économie DFE
 Office fédéral de l'agriculture OFAG
 Mattenhofstr. 5
 CH-3003 Berne, **Switzerland**

Tél: +41 31 323 44 45
Fax: +41 31 322 26 34
Email: francois.pythoud@blw.admin.ch

Ms Isabelle CLEMENT-NISSOU
Sector Plant Reproductive Material
Unit E2 Plant Health
European Commission
Health and Consumers DG
Rue Froissart 101
B-1040 **Belgium**
Tel: +32-2-2987834
Fax: +32-2-2960951
Email: isabelle.clement-nissou@ec.europa.eu

**LATIN AMERICA
and the
CARIBBEAN**

Mr César TAPIA BASTIDAS
Líder del Departamento Nacional de Recursos
Fitogenéticos
Estación Experimental Santa Catalina, INIAP
Panamericana Sur, Km. 1
Casilla 17-01-340
Quito, **Ecuador**
Phone: +593 23006089
Fax: +593 23006089
Email: denareg@yahoo.com
cesar.tapia@iniap.gob.ec

Sr Ricardo SEVILLA PANIZO
Coordinador Ejecutivo
Secretaría Técnica de Coordinación con el
Grupo Consultivo de Investigación Agrícola
Internacional (STC-CGIAR)
Avenida La Molina 1981
La Molina, **Perú**
Phone: +51 1 3492600 (ext. 236)
Cell.: +51 996843911
Email: stc_cgiar@inia.gob.pe
rsevilla@minag.gob.pe

NEAR EAST

Mr Seyed Yaghoob SADEGHIAN
Prof of Plant Breeding
Agricultural, Research, Education and Extension
Organization
Karaj, Iran
Tel: +98-9125628876
Email: sadeghian_56@yahoo.com
areo@areo.org

Mme Lamis CHALAK
Chercheur
Institut de Recherches Agronomiques Libanaises
(IRAL)
Département de biotechnologie végétale
P.O. Box 287

Tal Amara, Rayak
Zahlé, **Lebanon**
Phone: +961 08900037 - 08900047
Fax: +961 08900077
Email: lchalak@lari.gov.lb
lamis.chalak@gmail.com

**NORTH
AMERICA**

Mr Brad FRALEIGH
Director, Multilateral Science Relations
International Science Cooperation Bureau
Agriculture and Agri-Food
1341 Baseline Road, Tower 5-5, Room
133 Ottawa, Ontario
Canada K1A 0C6
Phone: 613-773-1838
Fax 613-773-1833
Email: brad.fraleigh@agr.gc.ca

**SOUTH WEST
PACIFIC**

Mr Misa Konelio MISA
Assistant Chief Executive Officer (ACEO) –
Crops Division
Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
Samoa
Phone: + 685 32370
Mobile: + 685 7731521
Email Address: misa.konelio@maf.gov.ws
konelio.misa@mnre.gov.ws

INVITED TECHNICAL EXPERTS

**INTERNATIONAL
SEED
FEDERATION**

Ms Szonja CSÖRGO
Manager Intellectual Property
and Legal Affairs
Secretariat ESA
European Seed Association
Rue du Luxembourg 23/15, B 1000
Brussels, Belgium
Phone: +32 2 743 28 60
Email: secretariat@euroseeds.org

CBD

Mr David COATES
Environmental Affairs Officer
Secretariat of the Convention
on Biological Diversity
United Nations Environment Programme
Montreal, Canada
Phone: +1 514 288 2220
Email: secretariat@cbd.int

**BIOVERSITY
INTERNATIONAL**

Mr Michael HALEWOOD
Head
Policy Research and Support Unit
Bioversity International (CGIAR)
Maccarese, Rome
Italy
Phone: +39 06 6118 294
Email: m.halewood@cgiar.org

**FAO COMMISSION
ON GENETIC
RESOURCES FOR
FOOD AND
AGRICULTURE
(CGRFA)**

Mr Dan LESKIEN
Senior Officer
Commission on Genetic Resources
for Food and Agriculture
FAO of the UN
Rome, Italy
Phone: +39 0657052089
Email: dan.leskien@fao.org

CROCEVIA

Mr Antonio ONORATI
Presidente
Centro Internazionale Crocevia
Via Tuscolana
Roma, Italy
Phone: +39 06862 73211
Email: mc2535@mclink.it

**GLOBAL CROP
DIVERSITY
TRUST (GCDT)**

Ms Paula BRAMEL
Acting Executive Secretary
Global Crop Diversity Trust
c/o Food and Agriculture Organization
Rome, Italy
Phone: +39 06570 55142
Email: paula.bramel@croptrust.org

**GLOBAL FORUM
ON
AGRICULTURAL
RESEARCH
(GFAR)**

Mr Mark HOLDERNESS
Executive Secretary
Global Forum on Agricultural Research
c/o Food and Agriculture Organization
Rome, Italy
Phone: +39 06570 55047
Email: mark.holderness@fao.org

Mr Harry PALMIER
Senior Officer
Global Forum on Agricultural Research
Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome, Italy

Phone: +39 06570 53405
Email: harry.palmier@fao.org

**LA VIA
CAMPESINA**

Ms Miriam BOYER
La Via Campesina
Jl. Mampang Prapatan XIV No. 5
Selatan DKI Jakarta 12790
Indonesia
Phone: +62-21-7991890
Fax: +62-21-7993426
Email: viacampesina@viacampesina.org

OBSERVERS

**INTERNATIONAL
SEED
FEDERATION**

Mr Thomas NICKSON
International Policy Lead
Monsanto
800 North Lindbergh Blvd
St. Louis, Missouri 63167
USA
Phone: +1 314 694 2179
Fax: +1 314 694 1622
Email: tom.nickson@monsanto.com

BRAZIL

Mr Pedro BRANCANTE
Second Secretary
Alternate Permanent Representative
Permanent Representation of Brazil to FAO
Via Santa Maria dell'Anima, 32
00187 Roma - Italy
Phone: +39 06 6789353
Email: pedro.brancante@brafao.it

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION

Mr Clayton CAMPANHOLA
Director
Plant Production and Protection Division
Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome, Italy
Phone: +39 0657053016
Fax: +39 0657053057
Email: clayton.campanhola@fao.org

Mr Stefano DIULGHEROFF
Information Management Officer

Plant Production and Protection Division
Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome, Italy
Phone: +39 0657055544
Fax: +39 0657053057
Email: stefano.diulgheroff@fao.org

Mr Chike MBA
Agricultural Officer
Plant Production and Protection Division
Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department
Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome, Italy
Phone: +39 0657056265
Fax: +39 0657053057
Email: chikelu.mba@fao.org

Ms Kakoli GHOSH
Plant Production and Protection Division
Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome, Italy
Phone: +39 0657054533
Fax: +39 0657053057
Email: kakoli.ghosh@fao.org

**SECRETARIAT OF THE INTERNATIONAL TREATY ON PLANT
GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

Mr Shakeel BHATTI
Secretary
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome, Italy
Phone: +39 0657053441
Fax: +39 0657053057
Email: shakeel.bhatti@fao.org

Mr Mario MARINO
Treaty Support Officer
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome, Italy
Phone: +39 0657055084
Fax: +39 0657053057
Email: mario.marino@fao.org

Mr Francisco LÓPEZ MARTÍN
Treaty Support Officer
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla

00153 Rome, Italy
Phone: +39 0657056343
Fax: +39 0657053057
Email: francisco.lopez@fao.org

Mr Álvaro TOLEDO CHÁVARRI
Treaty Support Officer
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome, Italy
Phone: +39 0657054497
Fax: +39 0657053057
Email: alvaro.toledo@fao.org