

April 2014



The International Treaty

ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE



INTERNATIONAL TREATY ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

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

Geneva, Switzerland, 14-16 May 2014

INFORMATION NOTE FOR PARTICIPANTS

1. Opening

The first meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open-Ended Working Group to enhance the functioning of the Multilateral System will be held in Geneva, Switzerland from Wednesday 14 to Friday 16 May 2014 at the “Palais des Nations” starting at 10:00 a.m. Arrangements are being made to allow delegates and stakeholders to hold regional and inter-regional consultations on 13 May 2014.

2. Venue and registration

Both the consultations and the meeting of the Working Group will take place at the Centre International de Conférence de Genève (CICG): <http://www.cicg.ch>. The Centre is located just next to the Place des Nations (UN) and within easy reach of the main hotels, international organizations, and diplomatic representations in Geneva.

All participants to the first meeting must register in advance through the Secretariat of the International Treaty. Identification badges will be delivered only if participants have registered in advance.

Each Region has nominated the Contracting Parties which shall be Members of the Working Group. The Members have then nominated their representatives. Identification badges will be available for the representatives of Members at the Registration Office of the venue meeting.

For the Working Group’s first meeting, the Bureau is inviting up to two representatives from the following stakeholder groups, as observers: civil society organizations; the seed industry; farmers’ organizations; and the CGIAR Centres. Identification badges will be available for the representatives of stakeholder groups at the Registration Office of the venue meeting.

Contracting Parties which have no representatives on the Working Group may participate, upon request to the Secretariat, in the work of the Working Group in an observer capacity. Due to capacity constraints, the Secretariat will need to receive the respective requests of those Contracting Parties wishing to participate in the meeting in an observer capacity before the meeting, in order to ensure that the appropriate arrangements can be made and identification badges can be prepared in advance.

Such requests should be addressed to PGRFA-Treaty@fao.org with copy to the National Focal Point or the permanent representation of the country to FAO. Should further issues arise or further potential clarifications become necessary regarding the participation of Contracting Parties as Observers, the Secretary will take the liberty to approach the permanent representations directly.

Funding to support the participation of Observers to the Working Group is not envisaged.

Others interested in attending this meeting, which pursuant to the respective decision of the Governing Body shall be open-ended, should make a request to the Secretariat as soon as possible at PGRFA-Treaty@fao.org.

Only written registrations will be taken into account for the issuance of an entry badge. Participants can collect their security identification badge from 09h00 on the day of the consultations at the following address:

Centre International de Conférence de Genève (CICG)
17 rue de Varembé
CH - 1211 Genève 20
T +41 22 791 91 11

Local contact, if needed:

Ms Margaret Omumbwa
for the FAO Liaison Office in Geneva (FAO-LOG)
Palais des Nations - Office A.585
Tel: +41 (0)22 9171152
Fax: +41 (0)22 9170065
E-mail: momumbwa@unog.ch

3. Transport from Geneva Airport

You can pick up a free ticket for public transport from a machine in the baggage collection area at Arrivals (it is situated next to the customs clearance section). This bus ticket allows you to use public transport in Geneva free for a period of 80 minutes. Bus No. 28 (destination “Jardin Botanique”) can be found at the check-in level of the airport. It is direct to the Palais des Nations and the journey is approximately 15 minutes. Alight at “Appia”, which is nearest to the Pregny Gate.

Alternatively, there is a taxi rank outside the arrivals section. Fares between airport and city are in the range of CHF 30/35. The cost will depend on traffic conditions, time of day and number of passengers. The driver will request a small extra charge for luggage. At the time of writing, the fare within Geneva is the amount shown on the taximeter.

4. Transport to the venue

The CICG Centre profits from a privileged situation in the immediate proximity of the Place des Nations, of main International Organisations and permanent missions based in Geneva.

Access to the venue is facilitated by good public transport services. The CIGC is situated only 5 kilometres away from the international airport and from the Cornavin main railway station, in downtown.

Public transport from Cornavain main railway station :

Bus n°5 : Bus stop "Vermont"

Bus n°8 : Bus stop "UIT"

Tramway n°15 : Stop "Nations"

Public transport from the international airport :

Bus n°5 : Bus stop "Vermont"

Bus n°28 : Bus stop "Nations "

For a printable access map to reach the venue, check:

<http://www.cicg.ch/en/access-map/>

Most hotels in Geneva issue guests with a complimentary bus pass for the duration of the stay. If this is not the case, please note you need to buy your ticket before entering the bus from the dispensers located at the bus stops. For timetables and more details, visit: www.tpg.ch.

5. Hotel information

Participants are responsible for arranging their accommodation in Geneva. A list of hotels is provided here:

ftp://ftp.fao.org/ag/agp/planttreaty/publi/2014/hotels_Geneva_2010.pdf

6. Entry visas for Switzerland

Participants who require an entry visa for Switzerland should submit a request well in advance to the Swiss embassy or consulate in their country of residence.

Please note that Switzerland now applies the European Schengen regulations concerning the issuance of visas. Persons already holding valid Schengen visas issued by other Schengen States will be permitted to enter Switzerland.

7. Payment of the Daily Subsistence Allowances (DSA)

Supported participants will be receiving their DSA through the FAO Representation office **in their country** or region along with their flight tickets.

8. Currency

The currency in Switzerland is the Swiss Franc (CHF). The UN's latest operational rates of exchange can be consulted at the following link:

<http://treasury.un.org/operationalrates/OperationalRates.aspx#S>