



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**



The International Treaty
**ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES
FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

Item 11 of the Provisional Agenda

SEVENTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY

Kigali, Rwanda, 30 October – 3 November 2017

Report on the Availability of Material in the Multilateral System

Executive Summary

As requested by the Governing Body through Resolution 1/2015, this document provides information on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA) in Contracting Parties that form part of the Multilateral System, as well as PGRFA included in the Multilateral System by natural and legal persons from both Contracting Parties and countries that are not Contracting Parties. The document aims to further assist the Governing Body as it undertakes its review of material available in the Multilateral System. In particular, it contains an update on new material notified to the Secretary and the analysis of available data, at aggregated level, as well as a review of the sources of information and mechanisms available to collect such information.

*This document can be accessed using the Quick Response Code on this page;
an FAO initiative to minimize its environmental impact and promote greener communications.
Other documents can be consulted at [http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/meetings/meetings-
detail/en/c/888771/](http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/meetings/meetings-detail/en/c/888771/)*



bs796

I. Introduction

1. The Governing Body has repeatedly invited the Contracting Parties that have not done so to report on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture under their management and control and in the public domain that are in the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing (Multilateral System) in accordance with Article 11.2 of the International Treaty, and to take measures to make information on these resources available to potential users of the Multilateral System.¹
2. At its Sixth Session, the Governing Body adopted Resolution 1/2015 on measures to enhance the functioning of the Multilateral System, including increasing the availability of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture through the Multilateral System.
3. At its Sixth Session, the Governing Body urged Contracting Parties to notify the Secretary and to cooperate financially and technically to make related information available, and also encouraged natural and legal persons to make their materials available.
4. Furthermore, the Governing Body:
Decide[d] to include in the agenda of the Seventh Session a general review of the availability of material in the Multilateral System including the new accessions during the biennium, and request[d] the Secretariat to prepare a document providing information on materials included in the Multilateral System by Contracting Parties and from natural and legal persons, both in Contracting Parties and in countries that are not Contracting Parties.
5. This document provides such information. It presents and analyses all the notifications and information received, including the notifications received from Contracting Parties during the current biennium up to 10 August 2017.

II. Sources of Information

6. This section describes the sources of information used to estimate what material has been declared to be available or made available in the Multilateral System and the mechanisms that could further improve and facilitate future reviews. It necessarily omits material that is available but has not been declared to be available, and material that has been provided but not reported.

A. Notifications

7. During the biennium, the Secretariat continued to update the "Notification Facility" in the form of documents published on the International Treaty's website.² To date, 67 notifications have been received through this mechanism. During the current biennium, 124,088 additional accessions were notified by Burkina Faso, France, India, Japan, Nepal and Poland. This positively compares with 43,690 additional accessions notified by 19 Contracting Parties in the previous two biennia combined.
8. National reports on the implementation of the International Treaty submitted during the biennium under the Compliance Procedures contain information on available material and on measures taken by Contracting Parties to encourage natural and legal persons to make material available under the standards of the Multilateral System.³ Although still limited in number, these reports may constitute a complementary source of information in future assessments and analyses.

¹ Particularly Resolution 1/2013, Paragraph 12 and Resolution 1/2015 paragraph 10 onwards.

² At <http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/areas-of-work/the-multilateral-system/collections/en/>.

³ See the document, IT/GB-7/17/18, *Report of the Compliance Committee*.

9. Some Contracting Parties that joined the International Treaty during this biennium, which together hold more than 600,000 crop accessions, have indicated that they are in the process of identifying the material that is in the Multilateral System and will soon provide relevant information including on how the material may be accessed.

B. Online Catalogues, Databases and Information Systems

10. The FAO World Information and Early Warning System contains summary information on the number of accessions held *ex situ* and on the number declared to be in the Multilateral System. The most updated information reported through this Portal for the monitoring of the implementation of the *Second Global Plan of Action for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* and the preparation of the *Third Report on the State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* has been used in this review.

11. As reported in 2015,⁴ the second version of the FAO-Biodiversity multi-crop passport descriptors included a new descriptor for holders to document whether or not a particular germplasm sample is available under the conditions of the Multilateral System. Online PGRFA databases such as Genesys and online catalogues, like EURISCO, provide additional sources of information for this review. In particular, the Secretariat has used the EURISCO Portal as the source of information for material held by Contracting Parties in Europe, as previously requested by the Region.⁵

12. Similarly, the advancement in the implementation of the Global Information System (GLIS) with the establishment of the Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) offers the Governing Body the possibility of streamlining the process of notification and simultaneously obtaining more detailed information on the material available in the Multilateral System.⁶ DOIs were designed to become a standardised mechanism for all holders of PGRFA – including Contracting Parties, natural and legal persons, and institutions that have signed agreements under Article 15 of the Treaty – to inform about material available in the Multilateral System in an accurate and reliable way and following internationally agreed standards. The GLIS server became operational in October 2017 and, within the first two weeks of its operation, recorded the registration of approximately 175,000 accessions of PGRFA.⁷

13. Should the Governing Body wish to use the GLIS-DOI mechanism as the new notification method for material available in the Multilateral System, it could encourage Contracting Parties and other holders of PGRFA to declare the status of the material with respect to the Multilateral System when obtaining a DOI.⁸

14. To further facilitate the identification of the material available in the Multilateral System, the Secretariat has planned to update the Easy-SMTA in order to enable the assignment of DOI to the Material transferred with Click-Wrap SMTAs generated through Easy-SMTA. This will further facilitate the documentation in GLIS of material available in the Multilateral System.

⁴ IT/GB-6/15/8, *Report on the Implementation of the Multilateral System*, paragraph 16.

⁵ European Search Catalogue for Plant Genetic Resources (EURISCO), available at: <https://eurisco.ipk-gatersleben.de>.

⁶ IT/GB-7/17/14, "Implementation of the Global Information System"

⁷ <https://ssl.fao.org/glis/>

⁸ The registration of material in the Global Information System through the DOIs is a voluntary process. In this context, should the Governing Body wish to examine accession level information on the material available while keeping the DOI reporting process as voluntary, it could simply encourage Contracting Parties and other users to use the descriptor 'MLS Status' of the DOI.

15. Furthermore, Easy-SMTA will be updated to accept DOIs as one of the identification methods that providers can apply when reporting on the Material transferred. It would simplify reporting as the DOI already contains the minimum information that is needed to identify the material.⁹

16. However, currently there is no mechanism in place to know whether the material actually transferred had previously been notified as available for transfer, or to know how much material has been transferred with SMTA but not reported. Adoption of DOIs would provide such a mechanism.

C. Material Transferred under the SMTA and Reported

17. Reports in Easy-SMTA on SMTAs that have been concluded provide information on material that has in fact been made available, independently of whether the provider of the material had previously notified the Secretary of the availability of the material. It can be gathered from such reports that over 3.9 million PGRFA were provided by Institutions that have concluded Agreements with the Governing Body under Article 15 of the International Treaty. A further 145,016 PGRFA were transferred by 39 other providers. Of these, 10,480 PGRFA were transferred by 28 providers during the current biennium.

18. The report of Institutions that have concluded Agreements with the Governing Body under Article 15 also includes information on material received with the SMTA.¹⁰ During the period 2013-2016 it reports 17,426 PGRFA received with 190 SMTAs from 53 countries.

III. Material Available in the Multilateral System

19. According to the sources of information indicated in section II, plant genetic resources for food and agriculture found to be available in the Multilateral System are tabulated in the Appendix to this document. The table shows that there are 793,823 materials made available by Contracting Parties and 736,111 materials from Institutions that have concluded Agreements with the Governing Body under Article 15.

20. According to those figures, the Multilateral System makes available at least 1, 561,638 materials, which represents an increase of 230,000 accessions in relation to the material available at the end of 2015.

⁹ This information includes crop or genus and the local number given to the material in the local collection which could be, for example, the accession number or the breeding number.

¹⁰ IT/GB-7/17/24, "Reports from Institutions that have Concluded Agreements with the Governing Body under Article 15 of the International Treaty"

Appendix: Plant Genetic Resources Available in the Multilateral System

Country	Accessions reported conserved ¹¹	Material available in the MLS ¹²	% in the MLS
Afghanistan	953	953	100.0%
Albania	4,252	2,193	51.6%
Armenia	6,789	2,504	36.9%
Australia	221,780	282	0.1%
Austria	11,964	5,607	46.9%
Bangladesh	31,476	9,383	29.8%
Belgium	9,304	10,501	
Bhutan	1,151	60	5.2%
Brazil	54,868	2,377	4.3%
Burkina Faso		16,479	
Canada	110,363	110,363	100.0%
Costa Rica	11,588	128	1.1%
Croatia	3,423	434	12.7%
Cyprus	1,004	504	50.2%
Czech Republic	54,985	55,022	
Denmark	1,474	854	57.9%
Ecuador	27,778	13,054	47.0%
Egypt	11,654	40	0.3%
Estonia	2,948	2,635	89.4%
Ethiopia	72,510	52,657	72.6%
Finland	572	445	77.8%
France	5,078	3,795	74.7%
Germany	174,405	114,119	65.4%

¹¹ Figures from WIEWS.

¹² Figures combined from WIEWS, EURISCO, direct notifications to the Secretariat, and the report from institutions that have concluded agreements under Article 15 of the International Treaty.

Guyana	1,210	139	11.5%
Hungary	46,750	2,617	5.6%
India	395,001	26,530	6.7%
Ireland	1,421	1,418	99.8%
Italy	45,185	46,788	
Japan	93,569	40,000	42.7%
Jordan	3,985	1,938	48.6%
Kenya	50,323	25,742	51.2%
Latvia	2,494	1,711	68.6%
Lebanon	1,785	274	15.4%
Lithuania	1,681	613	36.5%
Madagascar	8,801	7,999	90.9%
Malawi	3,253	2,702	83.1%
Malaysia	12,501	9,898	79.2%
Mali	838	838	100.0%
Mongolia	13,992	935	6.7%
Morocco	60,028	351	0.6%
Namibia		1,441	
Nepal	4,671	1,441	30.8%
Netherlands	25,869	18,510	71.6%
Norway	26	20	76.9%
Pakistan	31,066	28,892	93.0%
Panama	824	391	47.5%
Poland	69,418	39,790	57.3%
Portugal	12,193	813	6.7%
Philippines		811	
Romania		6,363	
Senegal	1,890	898	47.5%
Slovakia	17,043	12,520	73.5%
Sudan		6,351	

Spain	77,000	17,316	22.5%
Sweden	312	58	18.6%
Switzerland	39,906	33,736	84.5%
Tanzania, United Rep of	5,825	277	4.8%
Togo	220	2	0.9%
Uganda	5,027	2,236	44.5%
Uruguay		13	
United Kingdom	801,759	42,722	5.3%
Zambia	7,252	4,340	59.8%
<u>Total from countries</u>	<u>2,663,437</u>	<u>793,823</u>	
SPC Genebank		358	
Nordic Genebank		31,346	
Article 15 Institutions		736,111	
<u>Total</u>		<u>1,561,638</u>	