



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



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

## Item 14 of the Provisional Agenda

### SEVENTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY

**Kigali, Rwanda, 30 October – 3 November 2017**

### **Report of the Third Meeting of the Ad Hoc Technical Committee on Sustainable Use**

#### **Note by the Secretary**

Through Resolution 5/2015, the Governing Body endorsed the Programme of Work 2016–2019 and reconvened the Ad Hoc Technical Committee on Sustainable Use (ACSU).

During the biennium, the Committee met once in Vienna, Austria, in October 2016. The documents and report of the meeting are available on the website of the International Treaty as well as the list of participants.

This document contains the previously published Report of the third meeting of the ACSU for the information of the Governing Body.



<b>THIRD MEETING OF THE <i>AD HOC</i> TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE USE OF PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE</b>
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<b>24–25 October 2016, Vienna, Austria</b>
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<b>REPORT</b>
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### **1. Opening of the Meeting**

1. The third meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Technical Committee on Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (the Committee) of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (the Treaty) took place in Vienna, at the Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety (AGES), on 24 and 25 October 2016.
2. Mr. Kent Nnadozie, the Secretary, *ad interim*, of the Treaty, welcomed the participants and recalled the mandate of the Committee as established by the Governing Body in Resolution 4/2015. He noted that the Committee's deliberations would be presented to the Governing Body at its Seventh Session for its consideration and in order to continue the progression of the Programme of Work on Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture 2016–2019 (Programme of Work). Mr Nnadozie thanked the members of the Committee as well as the individual experts, observers and representatives of Treaty-associated institutions who joined the Committee to contribute to the deliberations. He reassured participants of the Secretariat's commitment to actively follow up on the recommendations of the Committee and the guidance of the Governing Body, taking into account the additional financial and human resources support needed to finalize all the activities included in the Programme of Work. He thanked the Austrian Government and AGES in particular for hosting such an important event and for the excellent support to the Programme of Work, as well as the governments of Italy, Norway and Switzerland for their generous financial contributions, which made the meeting possible.
3. Mr. Paul Freudenthaler briefed the participants on the work of AGES, its vision and mission. He reiterated the pivotal role of the Programme of Work and acknowledged the importance of the work of the Committee. He noted the support of the Secretariat in the preparation of such an important meeting and that he looked forward to future collaboration on the relevant issues.

### **2. Election of Co-Chairpersons**

4. The meeting elected Mr. Riccardo Bocci (Europe Region) and Mr. William Wigmore (South West Pacific Region) as Co-Chairpersons to guide the proceedings of the meeting.

### **3. Adoption of the Agenda**

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

#### **4. Resolution 4/2015, *Implementation of the Programme of Work on Sustainable Use of PGRFA***

6. This agenda item was opened with an introductory presentation by Mr. Chikelu Mba, FAO Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department, who briefed the Committee on "The Second Global Plan of Action and relevant reporting formats" (Second GPA). He recalled some

of the activities undertaken to strengthen plant breeding and seed delivery, the FAO International Symposium on “The role of Agricultural Biotechnologies in Sustainable Food Systems and Nutrition”, as well as the Voluntary Guide for National Seed Policy Formulation. A reporting format to assess the implementation of the Second GPA and the model for higher-order composite Indices (HCIs) was also presented.

7. Ms. Shelagh Kell, Consultant of the Secretariat of the Treaty, presented “Progress in defining the functions and contents of the Toolbox on Sustainable Use for PGRFA”. The context and concept of the Toolbox and the results of the online stakeholder consultation conducted before the Sixth Session of the Governing Body were presented, as well as the outcomes of the Expert Meeting on the Toolbox for the Sustainable Use of PGRFA, which took place at the International School for Advanced Education (SIAF) in Volterra, Italy, 19–21 July 2016. Some steps on how to move forward were also suggested, including the preparation of a document providing a concrete vision of and action on the different elements of the Toolbox, including technical requirements to take the Toolbox from the concept phase to its design and implementation.

8. The Committee appreciated the efforts made by FAO and Treaty Secretariat to work on the implementation of the Second GPA and reconfirmed the necessity of developing the Toolbox as a practical instrument to assist Contracting Parties with the implementation of Article 6 of the Treaty. The Committee welcomed the progress in defining the functions and contents of the Toolbox, while acknowledging that there is a need to move as soon as possible into the implementation phase. It was suggested that in order to deliver something concrete as soon as possible, the Toolbox will initially focus on one to a few priority areas and be developed further over time to address all elements of the PGRFA use system. In this regard, the Committee identified the topics highlighted in Table 5 of document IT/GB-6/15/Inf.3 under the thematic areas ‘adding value to and sustaining the use of landraces/farmers’ varieties’ and ‘seed systems’, as well as the topic ‘participatory plant breeding’, as specific priorities. The importance of providing support to countries in establishing collaborations and partnerships in these areas was also emphasized.

9. The Committee suggested that the Secretariat prepares an information document for the Seventh Session of the Governing Body after collecting and compiling all the relevant material in those thematic areas.

10. The issue of the responsibility for ongoing management and maintenance of the Toolbox was raised, and it was suggested that a joint programme of work involving multiple multilateral organizations with an interest in the Toolbox would ensure its continued support and sustainability.

11. The meeting continued with four presentations on Supporting Initiatives, as recognized in the Programme of Work. Mr Muhamad Sabran, IAARD, delivered a progress report on activities of the Platform for Co-Development and Transfer of Technology (the Platform). The principles, the scope of technologies and the outcomes of the Fourth meeting of the Platform, held on 22 October in Vienna, were presented. Among the main results of the Fourth meeting, the development of an online portal Platform and the pilot technology packages for developing countries on selected crops were highlighted.

12. Ms Mary Jane dela Cruz, Officer of the Treaty Secretariat, provided an overview of the outcomes of the electronic survey on the implementation of Farmers’ Rights conducted by the Secretariat. The survey was designed to gather views, perceptions and possible strategies to advocate the implementation of Farmers’ Rights. 164 respondents from 58 countries cited and enumerated the major challenges and constraints in the realization of Farmers’ Rights, such as the limited or lack of awareness and understanding of the Farmers’ Rights concept, lack of financial support, and capacity building activities.

13. Ms Regine Andersen, on behalf of Oikos, Norway, presented the main outcomes from the discussions held in Bali during the Second Global Consultation on Farmers’ Rights (27 – 30

September 2016). The meeting was organized under the auspices of the governments of Indonesia and Norway with additional financial support provided by Italy and Switzerland. At the Global Consultation, the participants agreed that the two co-chairs would present a list of recommendations that reflects the discussion to Indonesia and Norway, to be forwarded to the next Session of the Governing Body.

14. Ms Juanita Chaves, on behalf of the Global Forum on Agricultural Research, presented “Joining efforts to develop capacity for the full implementation of Farmers’ Rights: the Joint Capacity Building Programme”. She highlighted the objectives of the Programme and presented some of the activities undertaken at national level in Latin America and Africa. Ms Chaves noted that additional projects to mainstream Farmers’ Rights might be developed in the future under the Small Grant Programme of the Global Environment Facility.

15. The Committee reaffirmed the relevance of the Supporting Initiatives of the Programme of Work for the implementation of Article 6 of the Treaty and the promotion of *ex situ*, *in situ* and on-farm conservation.

16. The Committee emphasized the importance of prioritizing regional activities on Sustainable use of PGRFA. These activities could include more opportunities for Contracting Parties and all relevant stakeholders to share experiences, exchange ideas and raise awareness on the implementation of the conservation, sustainable use and Farmers’ Rights provisions of the Treaty. The Committee recognized the opportunity and value of cooperation with other initiatives and processes. The importance of the upcoming Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) as an opportunity to promote the mainstreaming of biodiversity in agriculture and its impact on sustainable use of PGRFA in these initiatives and processes was underlined.

17. The Committee invited the Secretariat to explore possibilities of establishing a joint programme on biodiversity in agriculture for sustainable use of PGRFA which will involve other organizations such as the CBD Secretariat, FAO, the Global Forum on Agricultural Research, the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the Consultative Group of International Agricultural Research Centres and other stakeholders for consideration of the Governing Body at its Seventh Session.

18. The Committee also advised the Secretary to continue facilitating and monitoring the implementation of the Programme of Work.

## **5. Identification of Interrelations between the International Treaty, especially its Article 9, and Relevant Instruments of UPOV and WIPO**

19. The Committee took note that the Secretariat grouped the preliminary list of issues on interrelations under four elements of Article 9 of the Treaty, namely the rights mentioned in its subparagraphs 9.2a), 9.2b), 9.2c) and 9.3.<sup>1</sup> The draft Program of the Symposium on Possible Interrelations between the Treaty and the International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV), which will be held on 26 October 2016 in Geneva, was distributed.

20. The Committee welcomed the collaboration between the Treaty and UPOV. It noted that no farmers’ organizations were included in the draft program and that it would be useful to expand the dialogue to include patents in addition to plant variety protection. The Committee agreed that the Symposium is just a starting point for future collaboration with UPOV and WIPO, and invited the Secretariat to inform the Governing Body on the main outcomes at its Seventh Session.

## **6. Other Business**

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<sup>1</sup> See document IT/ACSU-3/16/Inf.6.

21. The Committee dealt with no other business.

### **7. Adoption of the Report**

22. The meeting adopted this Report and the Appendices thereto. The list of participants is in *Appendix 2* to this Report.

*Appendix 1*

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



**THIRD MEETING OF THE *AD HOC* TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON  
SUSTAINABLE USE OF PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND  
AGRICULTURE**

**24–25 October 2016 Vienna, Austria**

**Agenda**

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Election of Co-chairs
3. Adoption of the agenda and time table
4. Resolution 4/2015, “Implementation of Article 6, Sustainable Use of PGRFA”
  - 4.1 Activities, projects and programmes for the achievement of sustainable use of PGRFA
  - 4.2 Toolbox for Sustainable Use of PGRFA
  - 4.3 Platform for the Co-Development and Transfer of Technologies within the context of non-monetary benefit-sharing
  - 4.4 Implementation of relevant activities in Resolution 5/2015 on Farmers’ Rights
5. Interrelations between the International Treaty, especially its Art. 9, and relevant instruments of UPOV and WIPO
6. Any other business
7. Report of the meeting

*Appendix 2*

***LIST OF PARTICIPANTS***

*The list of participants is available at:*

<http://www.fao.org/3/a-bq804e.pdf>