



Our Ref.: NCP GB8-019 – MLS Working Group

11 March 2019

## NOTIFICATION

### Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group to Enhance the Functioning of the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-Sharing –

#### Update on informal consultations and invitation to send inputs

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Dear Madam/Sir,

The purpose of this notification is to provide an update on ongoing consultations in support of the process to enhance the functioning of the Multilateral System and to solicit input from Contracting Parties and stakeholder groups, as a contribution to the work of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group to Enhance the Functioning of the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-Sharing (Working Group).

By [Resolution 2/2017](#) the Governing Body extended the mandate of the Working Group for the 2018-2019 biennium. While recognizing that further work is needed to develop the package of measures agreed in [Resolution 2/2013](#), it requested the Working Group, *inter alia*, to take any further initiatives needed within the next intersessional period to conclude its work.

The Working Group, at its eighth meeting in October 2018, agreed with the Co-chairs' objective to conduct a transparent and inclusive participatory process in the preparations for the ninth meeting of the Working Group.

Accordingly, the Co-chairs agreed to organize a number of consultations and events to support the process to enhance the functioning of the Multilateral System. Building on the outcomes of the eighth meeting of the Working Group, an informal meeting was held from 14 to 15 January 2019 in San José, Costa Rica, and further informal meetings will be held from 25 to 27 March 2019 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and, tentatively, from 29 to 30 April 2019 in Madrid, Spain. Experts from all regions and stakeholder groups were invited to participate in these events.

Furthermore, the Co-chair of the Working Group, Ambassador Hans Hoogeveen, provided information on the key issues, expectations and the state of the negotiations for the enhancement of the functioning of the Multilateral System during a briefing of Permanent Representatives in Rome, jointly organized by the Secretariats of the International Treaty and of the Commission on PGRFA on 22 January 2019 in Rome, Italy. Invitations to this event were sent to all National Focal Points of the International Treaty.

The Co-chairs of the Working Group will provide a detailed report on the outcomes of all informal consultations and events at the ninth meeting of the Working Group, which will be held from 17 to 21 June 2019 in Rome, Italy.



In [Resolution 2/2017](#), the Governing Body requested the Working Group, with support from the Secretariat, to (a) develop a proposal for a Growth Plan to attain the enhanced Multilateral System, (b) revise the Standard Material Transfer Agreement, (c) elaborate criteria and options for possible adaptation of the coverage of the Multilateral System, and (d) make recommendations to the Governing Body on any other issues related to the process for the enhancement of the Multilateral System.

It also appealed to “*stakeholders who use plant genetic resources under the International Treaty to assist the Working Group in finalizing the process for the enhancement of the Multilateral System, including by continuing to develop concrete proposals regarding the finalisation of the revised Standard Material Transfer Agreement, the process for further expansion of the scope of Annex I of the International Treaty, and ways to attract additional voluntary funding for the Benefit-sharing Fund on a sustainable basis, for consideration of the Working Group.*”

I, therefore, have the honour to invite Contracting Parties, stakeholder groups and stakeholders who use plant genetic resources under the International Treaty to make available inputs and proposals on the above issues being discussed by the Working Group.

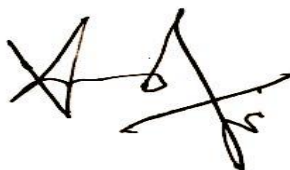
In case you provided written inputs and proposals to the Working Group during the previous two biennia and you consider them still to be valid, may I please request that you re-submit or reconfirm the relevant information as an input to the ninth meeting of the Working Group. Submissions previously submitted to the Working Group may be found, *inter alia*, in the documents, [IT/OWG-EFMLS-6/17/Inf.7](#), *Submissions from Contracting Parties and Stakeholders on matters to be discussed in the Sixth Meeting of the Working Group*, [IT/OWG-EFMLS-5/16/Inf.3](#), *Compilation of Submissions from Contracting Parties and Relevant Stakeholders*, and [IT/OWG-EFMLS-4/15/Inf.3](#), *Submissions received by the Working Group during the Biennium, in preparation for the Subscription System and the Draft Revised Standard Material Transfer Agreement*.

To facilitate the consolidation of such information in the documentation being prepared by the Secretariat for the ninth meeting of the Working Group, I would appreciate receiving such information by **26 April 2019** at [PGRFA-Treaty@fao.org](mailto:PGRFA-Treaty@fao.org) .

For any query or request for further information, please contact the Secretariat of the International Treaty at:

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Please accept, Madam/Sir, the assurance of my highest consideration.



**Kent Nnadozie**  
Secretary  
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