Country Report on the implementation of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA)

Syria
FIRST COUNTRY REPORT ON COMPLIANCE – ITPGRFA

Name and contact details of the reporting officer: Yousef Wjhani, Treaty Focal Point.
Email: yowj2015@hotmail.com
        yowj2017@gmail.com
Institution: (General Commition for Scientific Agriculture Research)
        Head of Genetic Resources Department.
Country: Syria

Date of preparation: April 2019
Receipt by the Secretariat on 17 May 2019

The Secretariat has made available a courtesy translation into English of this report, available at:
ANNEX 2

STANDARD REPORTING FORMAT PURSUANT TO SECTION V.1 OF THE PROCEDURES AND OPERATIONAL MECHANISMS TO PROMOTE COMPLIANCE AND ADDRESS ISSUES OF NON-COMPLIANCE

International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

Draft

Standard Voluntary Reporting Format

Introduction

1. Pursuant to Article 21 of the Treaty, the Governing Body has adopted a resolution that includes, amongst others, provisions on monitoring and reporting (Resolution 2/2011). Pursuant to this Resolution, each Contracting Party is to submit to the Compliance Committee, through the Secretary, a report on the measures it has taken to implement its obligations under the Treaty in one of the six languages of the United Nations (Section V.1).
2. The first report is to be submitted within three years from the approval of this standard format. The Governing Body approved this standard format at its Fifth Session.
3. This standard format has been developed to facilitate reporting and monitoring of the implementation of the Treaty. The use of this standard format is voluntary. A Contracting Party may use another reporting format if it so wishes.

Article 4: General Obligations

1. Are there any laws, regulations procedures or policies in place in your country that implement the Treaty?

   Yes ✔
   No ☐

If your answer is 'yes', please provide details of such laws, regulations, procedures or policies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article 20 لعام 2009: استناداً لأحكام المعاهدة الدولية للموارد الوراثية النباتية للأغذية والزراعة وضعت الهيئة العامة للبحوث العلمية الزراعية في سوريا هذا القانون بالتعاون مع FAO وهدف إلى:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. حماية وتنمية الموارد الوراثية النباتية والاستفادة منها.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. تنظيم الحصول على الموارد الوراثية النباتية من خارج الحدود السورية.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. ضمان اقتاسم عادل للمنافع حسب اتفاقيات نقل المواد الموحد (MTA).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. مشاركة الجهات العامة والخاصة والفلاحين في تنفيذ القانون.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. تضمن الدولة حقوق الفلاحين والمزارعين المتعلقة بالموارد الوراثية النباتية.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. منح الفلاحين والمزارعين في اختيار القرارات المتعلقة بصيانة الموارد الوراثية النباتية ويتقنون بجزء من المنافع لدعم جهودهم في صيانتها.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Are there any other laws, regulations, procedures or policies in place in your country that apply to plant genetic resources?

   Yes ✔
If your answer is ‘yes’, please provide details of such laws, regulations, procedures or policies:

- **Law 1:** Law 237 of 1960: To prevent the spread of pests and diseases in any vegetable shipment during import or export to protect plant resources.
- **Law 2:** Law 41 of 2006: Law on Sanitary and Quarantine Measures.
- **Law 3:** Law 25 of 2007: Law on the Protection of State Assets and Management.
- **Law 4:** Law on Environmental Protection 12 of 2012: This law aims to establish the basic guidelines for environmental safety and protection from pollution, and achieving environmental development.
- **Law 5:** Decree No. 158/2012.

3- Is there any law, regulation, procedure or policy in place in your country that needs to be adjusted/harmonized to ensure conformity with the obligations as provided in the Treaty? 

Yes ☐ No ✓

If your answer is 'yes', please provide details of such adjustments and any plans to make those adjustments:

---

**Article 5: Conservation, Exploration, Collection, Characterisation, Evaluation and Documentation of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture**

4- Has an integrated approach to the exploration, conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA) been promoted in your country?

☑ Yes

No ☐

5- Have PGRFA been surveyed and inventoried in your country?

☑ Yes

No ☐

---

1 For the purpose of this report, a Contracting Party may choose whichever term (adjusted or harmonized) is appropriate in relation to their legal systems.
If your answer is 'yes', please provide details of your findings, specifying species, sub-species and/or varieties, including those that are of potential use:

If your answer is 'no', please indicate:

- Any difficulties encountered in surveying or inventorying PGRFA;
- Any action plans to survey and inventory PGRFA;
- The most important PGRFA that should be surveyed and inventoried:

6- Has any threat to PGRFA in your country been identified?

  Yes ✅
  No ☐

If your answer is 'yes', please indicate:

- The species, subspecies and/or varieties subject to such threats;
- The sources (causes) of these threats;
- Any steps taken to minimise or eliminate these threats;
- Any difficulties encountered in implementing such steps:
10. The transition from natural ecosystems to agriculture has accelerated.

Before the crisis, we concentrated and collected many species, especially those under threat, and prepared a copy of these entries with 7,500 entries in Aleppo for safety. During the crisis, we lost some entries, and some of them were for threatened species. We divided the entries we saved into three parts: we saved a portion in Eikard (Black Box) for safety, a portion in Damascus headquarters, and a portion in the countryside in a research station. 

Challenges: The crisis facing Syria prevented the bank staff from collecting and concentrating for 6 years.

Has the collection of PGRFA and relevant associated information on those plant genetic resources that are under threat or are of potential use been promoted in your country?

Yes ✔
No

If your answer is 'yes', please provide details of the measures taken:

Some of the few threatened species are being safeguarded with their information, and we saved a portion of the entries saved during the crisis with the computer that contains its information today, and we are trying to revive these species and multiply them to reintroduce them in evaluation and exchange.

8- Have farmers and local communities’ efforts to manage and conserve PGRFA on-farm been promoted or supported in your country?

Yes
No ✔

If your answer is 'yes', please provide details of the measures taken:

9- Has in situ conservation of wild crop relatives and wild plants for food production been promoted in your country?

Yes ✔
No

If your answer is 'yes', please indicate whether any measures have been taken to:

✔ Promote in situ conservation in protected areas;

Support the efforts of indigenous and local communities.

If such measures have been taken, please provide details of the measures taken:
10- Are there any *ex situ* collections of PGRFA in your country?

Yes ✔
No

If your answer is 'yes', please provide information on the holder and content of such collections:

- Yes.
- No.

11- Has the development of an efficient and sustainable system of *ex situ* conservation of PGRFA been promoted in your country?

Yes ✔
No

If your answer is 'yes', please indicate the measures taken to promote *ex situ* conservation, in particular any measures to promote the development and transfer of technologies for this purpose:

- Yes.
- No.

12- Has the maintenance of the viability, degree of variation, and the genetic integrity of *ex situ* collections of PGRFA been monitored in your country?
If your answer is 'yes', please provide details of the main conclusions of these monitoring activities:

Before the crisis, it was conducted through surveys and studies between the previous and current visits for the maintenance of the entries and study of the variations, but this has not been done during the crisis and at present. However, from the previous comparisons and studies, we notice that the diversity, especially in the local cultivated species, has decreased and many varieties, whether cultivated or wild, are exposed to degradation.

13- Has your country cooperated with other Contracting Parties, through bilateral or regional channels, in the conservation, exploration, collection, characterization, evaluation or documentation of PGRFA?

Yes  ☑
No  ☐

If your answer is 'yes', please indicate the other Contracting Parties with whom the cooperation was undertaken (where additional to cooperation through the Governing Body or other Treaty mechanisms) and, where possible, details of any relevant projects:

Before the crisis, there was close cooperation with Ekarada (Affiliated to the Scientific Consultative Group for Research) where joint surveys and training for the bank staff and exchange of genetic resources.

Currently, about 5300 entries are preserved in Ekarada in the black box due to the crisis.

Article 6: Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

14- Are there any policy and legal measures² in place in your country that promote the sustainable use of PGRFA?

Yes  ☑
No  ☐

If your answer is 'yes', please indicate whether such policy and legal measures include:

² For the purpose of this report, legal measures may include regulations.
Pursuing fair agricultural policies that promote the development and maintenance of diverse farming systems that enhance the sustainable use of agricultural biological diversity and other natural resources;

- Strengthening research that enhances and conserves biological diversity by maximizing intra- and inter-specific variation for the benefit of farmers;

- Promoting plant breeding efforts, with the participation of farmers, that strengthen the capacity to develop varieties particularly adapted to social, economic and ecological conditions, including in marginal areas;

- Broadening the genetic base of crops and increasing the range of genetic diversity available to farmers;

- Promoting the expanded use of local and locally adapted crops, varieties and underutilised species;

- Supporting 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;

- Reviewing and adjusting breeding strategies and regulations concerning variety release and seed distribution.

If such policy and legal measures are in place, please provide details of the measures taken and any difficulties encountered in implementing them:

Article 7: National Commitments and International Cooperation

15- Has the conservation, exploration, collection, characterization, evaluation, documentation and sustainable use of PGRFA been integrated into your country’s agriculture and rural development programmes and policies?

Yes  ✓

No

If your answer is ‘yes’, please provide details of the integration of such activities into the agriculture and rural development programmes and policies:

الأنشطة المذكورة تنفذ ضمن استراتيجية وسياسة الهيئة العامة للبحوث العلمية الزراعية.

16- Has your country cooperated with other Contracting Parties, through bilateral or regional channels, in the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA?
Yes ☐

No ✓

If your answer is 'yes', please indicate whether the aim of such cooperation is to:

☐ Strengthen the capability of developing countries and countries with economies in transition with respect to conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA;

☐ Enhance international activities to promote conservation, evaluation, documentation, genetic enhancement, plant breeding, seed multiplication, and sharing, providing access to and exchanging PGRFA and appropriate information and technology, in conformity with the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-Sharing under the Treaty.

If, in addition to cooperation through the Governing Body or other Treaty mechanisms, your country has cooperated with other Contracting Parties directly or through FAO and other relevant international organizations, please indicate such other Contracting Parties and, where possible, details of any relevant projects:

Article 8: Technical Assistance

17- Has your country promoted the provision of technical assistance to developing countries and countries with economies in transition, with the objective of facilitating the implementation of the Treaty?

Yes ☐

No ✓

If your answer is 'yes', please provide details of the measures taken:

18- Has your country received technical assistance with the objective of facilitating the implementation of the Treaty?
Yes  ☐
No    ☑

If your answer is 'yes', please provide details of such technical assistance:


Article 9: Farmers’ Rights

19. Subject to national law, as appropriate, have any measures been taken to protect and promote farmers rights in your country?

Yes    ☑
No    ☐

If your answer is 'yes', please indicate whether such measures were related to:

- Recognition of the enormous contribution that local and indigenous communities and farmers of all regions of the world have made and will continue to make for the conservation and development of plant genetic resources;
- The protection of traditional knowledge relevant to PGRFA;
- The right to equitably participate in sharing benefits arising from the utilisation of PGRFA;
- The right to participate in making decisions, at the national level, on matters related to the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA;
- Any rights that farmers have to save, use, exchange, and sell farm-saved seed / propagating material.

If such measures were taken, please provide details of the measures taken and any difficulties encountered in implementing them:

القانون 20 من أهدافه حماية حقوق المزارعين والفلاحين وحماية ملكيتهم ومواردهم الوراثية واعطاءهم الحق في اتخاذ القرارات في هذا المجال. 

الإجراءات المتخذة في مجال حفظ حقوق الزراعيين: يتم عن طريق وزارة الزراعة والإصلاح الزراعي ودعم المشاريع الصغيرة المنزليه التي تساعد في رفع مستوى معيشة الفلاحين. تم تقديم تقرير حول حقوق الفلاحين وسرد فيه عدد من نماذج دعم الفلاحين.
Article 11: Coverage of the Multilateral System

20- Has your country included in the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-Sharing (MLS) all PGRFA listed in Annex I to the Treaty that are under the management and control of your Government and in the public domain?

- All  
- Partially  
- None

If your answer is 'all', please provide details of any difficulties encountered in including Annex I PGRFA in the MLS:

لا يوجد صعوبات وجميع البذور المتبادلة كانت تتم وفق الاتفاق الموحد لتبادل البذور (الصعوبات فقط مصوت عن الأزمة في سوريا)

If your answer is 'partially', please provide details of:
- The extent to which Annex I PGRFA have been included in the MLS;
- The crops that have been included in the MLS; and
- The difficulties encountered in including Annex I PGRFA in the MLS:

If your answer is 'none', please provide details of the difficulties encountered in including Annex I PGRFA in the MLS:

21- Has your country taken measures to encourage natural and legal persons within your jurisdiction who hold Annex I PGRFA to include those resources in the MLS?

- Yes  
- No

If your answer is ‘yes’, please provide details of:
- The natural or legal persons within your jurisdiction that included Annex I PGRFA in the MLS;
- The crops that have been included in the MLS by these persons; and
Any difficulties these persons encountered in including Annex I PGRFA in the MLS:

لا يوجد تفاصيل.

If your answer is ‘no’ please provide details, in particular details of any difficulties encountered in encouraging these persons to include Annex I PGRFA in the MLS:

Article 12: Facilitated access to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture within the Multilateral System

22- Has your country taken measures to provide facilitated access to Annex I PGRFA, in accordance with the conditions set out in Article 12.4 of the Treaty?

Yes ✔
No □

If your answer is ‘yes’, please provide details of such measures:

تم إصدار القانون (20) لعام 2009 (مذكور سابقا) وتم وضع صيغ مختلفة للحصول على المادة الوراثية سواء كانت لأغراض تجارية أو بحثية وتضمن هذه الصيغ حقوق أصحاب المادة الوراثية.

If your answer is ‘no’, please provide details of any difficulties encountered in providing facilitated access to Annex I PGRFA:

23- Has facilitated access been provided in your country to Annex I PGRFA pursuant to the standard material transfer agreement (SMTA)?

Yes ✔
No □

If your answer is ‘yes’, please provide the number of SMTAs entered into:

الحقيقة يوجد عدد لا بأس به من SMTA ولكن للأسف فقدت بالأزمة، ويجب حالياً عدد قليل.

If your answer is ‘no’, please provide details of any difficulties encountered in providing facilitated access to Annex I PGRFA pursuant to the SMTA:
24- Has the SMTA been used voluntarily in your country to provide access to non-Annex I PGRFA?

Yes ☐

No ✓

If your answer is 'yes', please indicate the number of such SMTAs entered into:


25- Does the legal system of your country provide an opportunity for parties to material transfer agreements (MTAs) to seek recourse in case of contractual disputes arising under such agreements?

Yes ✓

No ☐

If your answer is 'yes', please provide details of the relevant laws, regulations or procedures:

لا أعلم

26- Does the legal system of your country provide for the enforcement of arbitral decisions related to disputes arising under the SMTA?

Yes ✓

No ☐

If your answer is 'yes', please provide details of the relevant laws, regulations or procedures:

لا أعلم
27- Have there been any emergency disaster situations in respect of which your country has provided facilitated access to Annex I PGRFA for the purpose of contributing to the re-establishment of agricultural systems?

Yes ☑
No ☐

If your answer is 'yes', please provide details of such emergency disaster situations and the Annex I PGRFA to which access was provided:

Article 13: Benefit-sharing in the Multilateral System

28- Has your country made any information available regarding Annex I PGRFA?

Yes ☐
No ☑

If your answer is 'yes', please provide details of any information made available regarding Annex I PGRFA (e.g. catalogues and inventories, information on technologies, results of scientific and socio-economic research, including characterisation, evaluation and utilisation):

29- Has your country provided or facilitated access to technologies for the conservation, characterisation, evaluation and use of Annex I PGRFA?

Yes ☐
No ☑

If your answer is 'yes', please indicate whether your country:

☐ Has established or participated in crop-based thematic groups on utilisation of PGRFA;
☐ Is aware of any partnerships in your country in research and development and in commercial joint ventures relating to the material received through the MLS, human resource development and effective access to research facilities.
If access to technologies was provided, please provide details of the access provided:

30- Has your country provided for and/or benefitted from capacity building measures in respect of Annex I PGRFA?³

Yes ☐

No ✓

If your answer is 'yes', please indicate whether such measures were related to:

☐ Establishing and/or strengthening programmes for scientific and technical education and training in conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA;

☐ Developing and strengthening facilities for conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA;

☐ Carrying out scientific research and developing capacity for such research.

If your country provided for and/or benefitted from such measures, please provide details:

Article 14: Global Plan of Action

31- Has your country promoted the implementation of the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture?

Yes ☐

No ✓

³ Please note that this question differs from question 15 as it only concerns Annex I PGRFA and is more specific.
If your answer is ‘yes’, please indicate whether the implementation of the plan was promoted through:

☐ National actions;
☐ International cooperation;

If the implementation of the plan was promoted, please provide details:

Article 15: Ex Situ Collections of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture held by the International Agricultural Research Centres of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research and other International Institutions

32- Has facilitated access to Annex I PGRFA been provided in your country to the International Agricultural Research Centres of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (IARCs) or other international institutions that have signed agreements with the Governing Body of the Treaty?

Yes  ✓
No

If your answer is ‘yes’, please indicate:
• To which IARCs or other international institutions facilitated access was provided;
• The number of SMTAs entered into with each IARC or other international institution:

SMTA

If your answer is ‘no’, please provide details of any difficulties encountered in providing facilitated access to Annex I PGRFA to IARCs and other international institutions that have signed agreements with the Governing Body of the Treaty:

If your answer is ‘no’, please provide details of any difficulties encountered in providing facilitated access to Annex I PGRFA to IARCs and other international institutions that have signed agreements with the Governing Body of the Treaty:

33- Has access to non-Annex I PGRFA been provided in your country to IARCs or other international institutions that have signed agreements with the Governing Body of the Treaty?
Country Name

Yes  ☐

No  ☑

If your answer is ‘yes’, please indicate:
- To which IARCs or other international institutions access was provided;
- The number of MTAs entered into with each IARC or other international institution:

[Blank space for input]

If your answer is ‘no’, please provide details of any difficulties encountered in providing access to non-Annex I PGRFA to IARCs and other international institutions that have signed agreements with the Governing Body of the Treaty:

[Blank space for input]

Article 16: International Plant Genetic Resources Networks
34- Has your country undertaken any activities to encourage government, private, non-governmental, research, breeding and other institutions to participate in the international plant genetic resources networks?

Yes  ☑

No  ☐

If your answer is ‘yes’, please provide details of such activities:

نعم هناك ورشات عمل وندوات مع شبكة الموارد الوراثية النباتية في:

Article 18: Financial Resources
35- Has your country provided and/or received financial resources for the implementation of the Treaty through bilateral, regional or multilateral channels?

Yes  ☐

No  ☑
If your answer is 'yes', where possible, please provide details of such channels and the amount of the financial resources involved:

36- Has your country provided financial resources for national activities for the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA?

Yes ✓
No

If your answer is 'yes', please provide details of such national activities and the amount of the financial resources involved:


About this reporting format

37- Have you encountered any difficulties in completing this reporting format?

Yes ✓
No

If your answer is 'yes', please provide details on such difficulties:

بالنسبة لموضوع التقرير لا يوجد أي صعوبة ولكن وجدت صعوبة في التعامل مع التقرير (اون لاين) لذا كتبته على شكل وورد.

If you have suggestions for improvement of this reporting format, please share them:

General remarks on the implementation of the ITPGRFA
38- You may use this box to share any advice you may have arising from your country’s experience with implementation of the Treaty:

1- يجب أن يكون للمعاهدة القوة والつつوية اللازمان والضروريان لإجبار الأطراف المعنية على الوفاء بالالتزاماتها سواء المادية أو الفنية.

2- إيجاد وسيلة ثانية (غير دعم الأبحاث) لتقديم المساعدة للأطراف المعنية لتأمين حقوق المزارعين بشكل أفضل.

(مثلًا دعم مشاريع صغيرة لزيادة دخل الأسرة الريفية) على غرار بعض المنظمات الأخرى ويكون الدعم لمشاريع يمكن أن تدار رؤية من خلال استخدام المواد الوراثية النباتية.

39- You may use this box to share any additional information that may be useful to provide a broader perspective of difficulties in implementation of the Treaty:

40- You may use this box to share any additional information that may be useful to provide a broader perspective of measures that could help to promote compliance:

العمل من خلال المعاهدة بشكل تعاوني واسري وخاصة من قبل الدول المتقدمة (إن لا تظهر علنا أو لا تكتم سرا) بأنها تريد استخدام المواد الوراثية النباتية لصالحها الشخصية فقط وإن تبدي رغبة ونية في تقديم المنافع غير النقدية بشكل أكبر وتوفر فرص تدريب ورفع قدرات دول الأقل تقدمًا أو تمر اقتصاداتها بمراحل انتقالية وإن تقدم لها التكنولوجيا المفيدة والنافعة بشكل ملموس ومستوى جيد وعال على النحو الذي تعترف به الدول المستفيدة.