



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



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

**Views, Experiences and Best Practices as an example of possible options for  
the national implementation of Article 9 of the International Treaty**

*Note by the Secretary*

*At its [second meeting](#) of the Ad hoc Technical Expert Group on Farmers' Rights (AHTEG), the Expert Group agreed on a revised version of the [template](#) for collecting information on examples of national measures, best practices and lessons learned from the realization of Farmers' Rights*

*This document presents the updated information on best practices and measures of implementing Article 9 of the International Treaty submitted by Norway on 21 June 2019.*

*The submission is presented in the form and language in which it was received.*



## Template for submission of

### Measures, Best Practices and Lessons Learned from the Realization of Farmers' Rights as set out in Article 9 of the International Treaty

#### Basic information

- *Title of measure/practice:* **Farmers' Rights to Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture: Implementation of the Plant Treaty and the Nagoya Protocol in Bulgaria, RIGHTS**
- *Date of submission:* 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019
- *Name(s) of country/countries in which the measure/practice is taking place:* Norway, Bulgaria
- *Responsible institution/organization*  
The Norwegian Centre for Genetic Resources at the Norwegian Institute for Bioeconomy Research (NIBIO)

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- *Type of institution/organization (categories)* Government, research
- *Collaborating/supporting institutions/organizations/actors*  
Institute of Plant Genetic Resources „K. Malkov"  
<http://ipgrbg.com/en/>

#### Description of the examples

##### Mandatory information:<sup>1</sup>

- *Short summary to be put in the inventory*

The Norwegian Centre for Genetic Resources at the Norwegian Institute for Bioeconomy Research (NIBIO), together with the Institute of Plant Genetic Resources 'K. Malkov' in Bulgaria, participated in a project on the implementation of the Plant Treaty and the Nagoya Protocol (2015-2016). The project's main purpose was to propose elements for a national strategy supporting Farmers' Rights in access to PGRFA in the context of the International Treaty and the Nagoya Protocol, both signed and ratified by Bulgaria. The Norwegian partner actively engaged in several workshops and seminars and offered a study tour to Norway for a group of six Bulgarian representatives of target groups. They visited the Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, NIBIO, farmers as well as organizations that are part of value chains using plant genetic resources. Further activities included the development of a report on best practices for the realization of Farmers' Rights; capacity building workshops; development of a list of measures for implementation of Farmers' Rights; and of a draft strategy for PGRFA in Bulgaria. The project activities contributed to enhancing awareness and capacities

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<sup>1</sup> This mandatory information is required in order for the measure/practice to be included in the Inventory.



regarding key aspects of Farmers' Rights, including methods to study policies and processes and to reach consensus on important topics and issues of relevance for farmers' access to plant genetic resources

- *Brief history* Same as above
- *Core components of the measure/practice* Same as above
- *Description of the context and the history* Same as above
- *To which provision(s) of Article 9 of the International Treaty does this measure relate*  
 Art. 9.1    x  
 Art. 9.2a      
 Art. 9.2b      
 Art. 9.2c    x  
 Art. 9.3

**Other information, if applicable**

- *Please indicate which category of the Inventory is most relevant for the proposed measure, and which other categories are also relevant (if any):*

No.	Category	Most relevant <sup>2</sup>	Also relevant <sup>3</sup>
1	Recognition of local and indigenous communities', farmers' contributions to conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA, such as awards and recognition of custodian/guardian farmers		
2	Financial contributions to support farmers conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA such as contributions to benefit-sharing funds		
3	Approaches to encourage income-generating activities to support farmers' conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA		
4	Catalogues, registries and other forms of documentation of PGRFA and protection of traditional knowledge		
5	In-situ/on-farm conservation and management of PGRFA, such as social and cultural measures, community biodiversity management and conservation sites		
6	Facilitation of farmers' access to a diversity of PGRFA through community seed banks <sup>4</sup> , seed networks and other measures improving farmers' choices of a wider diversity of PGRFA.		
7	Participatory approaches to research on PGRFA, including characterization and evaluation, participatory plant breeding and variety selection		
8	Farmers' participation in decision-making at local, national and sub-regional, regional and international levels		
9	Training, capacity development and public awareness creation	x	

<sup>2</sup> Please select only one category that is most relevant, under which the measure will be listed.

<sup>3</sup> Please select one or several categories that may also be relevant (if applicable).

<sup>4</sup> Including seed houses.



10	Legal measures for the implementation of Farmers' Rights, such as legislative measures related to PGRFA.		
11	Other measures / practices		

- *In case you selected 'other measures', would you like to suggest a description of this measure, e.g. as a possible new category?* \_\_\_\_\_
- *Objective(s)* The main purpose of the project is ensuring farmers' rights in access to plant genetic resources for agricultural activities and food industry in the context of the signed and ratified, by Bulgaria, international treaties: International Treaty for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) and the Nagoya Protocol.

*Target group(s) and numbers of involved and affected farmers*<sup>5</sup> The National Gene bank, seed sector, growers organizations, Central government institutions, ministries and government agencies, research and scientific organizations, individual farmers and farmers' branch structures, civil society organizations.

- *Location(s) and geographical outreach* Bulgaria

### Lessons learned

- *Describe lessons learned which may be relevant for others who wish to do the same or similar measures/practices (max 250 words).*

The human resource capacity was developed during workshops (more than 100 people were involved, while 30 were planned). Measures were proposed for applying an integrated approach to ensure the rights of farmers. Awareness of the need to preserve traditional knowledge was built. Studies of existing policies and practices have been carried out. Methods to study policies and processes and to reach consensus on important topics were applied. The goal was to modernize the relationship between farmers, NGOs, gene banks and decision-makers. The project activities contributed to updating views at all levels of the problematic areas, in support of the farmers' access to plant genetic resources. Reflection in legislation was extensively covered.

During the project implementation was the establishment of working contacts and knowledge exchange with many Norwegian, Scandinavian and international organizations, e.g. Biodiversity International. Project developed ideas and models for implementation of practices for sustainable growth based on the diversity of traditional genetic resources. A very successful study visit to Norway for a group of 6 Bulgarian representatives of the target groups (decision makers from MAFF and MOEW, farmers, and IPGR Sadovo), which visits to the Norwegian Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, NIBIO, farmers working with PGR, and other organizations/institutions, part of the PGR value chain. Project results were verified during the meetings at Biodiversity International and the full compliance with the international norms was acknowledged.

- *What challenges encountered along the way (if applicable) (max 200 words)*
- *What would you consider conditions for success, if others should seek to carry out such a measure or organize such an activity? (max 100 words)*

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<sup>5</sup> Any classification, e.g. of the types of farmer addressed, may be country-specific.



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Building bridges between public, private and civil society sector within the field of PGR was extremely important for the implementation of all articles of the Plant Treaty, holding all stakeholders accountable for their participation and securing their contribution. Bringing together representatives from all relevant stakeholders were crucial for the success of the project.

Providing a path for understanding how Farmers' Rights may serve as a vehicle to fulfil the purposes of the Plant Treaty by showing examples of structures underpinning access to plant propagative material for all uses was important, hereunder seed saver organizations and community gene banks in an European context.

It was particularly helpful to meet the Biodiversity International product groups, due to the organization's experience in the field of our project worldwide.

Bringing different actors together – government, research and NGOs – all having different roles in the management of PGRFA, is a good learning exercise for all. Closer coordination between the environment and the agricultural sector is also strengthening the management of PGRFA.

**Further information**

*Link(s) to further information about the measure/practice*

Project description: <https://eeagrants.org/project-portal/project/BG03-0008>