



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' access to gene bank material**
- *Date of submission* 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019
- *Name(s) of country/countries in which the measure/practice is taking place* Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Iceland
- *Responsible institution/organization*  
**Nordic Genetic Resource Centre (NordGen)**  
Box 41, SE-230 53 Alnarp,  
Sweden  
+46 40 53 66 40  
<https://www.nordgen.org/en/>  
[plants@nordgen.org](mailto:plants@nordgen.org)
- *Type of institution/organization (categories)* Intergovernmental organization (regional gene bank)
- *Collaborating/supporting institutions/organizations/actors, if applicable (name, address, website (if applicable), e-mail address, telephone number(s))*  
Ministries in Nordic countries.

#### Description of the examples

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

- *Short summary to be put in the inventory:*

Facilitating access to germplasm under the Multi-Lateral System (MLS) of the International Treaty could be considered as a contribution to benefit sharing. The Nordic Genetic Resource Centre (NordGen) is the genebank maintaining germplasm of Nordic origin as well as material relevant for the Nordic region. The seed material stored at NordGen is available upon request for plant breeders, plant researchers, museums and other bona fide users. Germplasm managed by Nordgen is available in small quantities for research, breeding, conservation or similar purposes. While NordGen mainly serves the scientific community, it also honors reasonable requests from individuals, such as farmers and gardeners, provided that the requester has a serious interest in seed saving and maintaining old or rare varieties. To facilitate access for these individuals, NordGen has developed a simplified material transfer agreement, called 'Hobby Material Transfer Agreement'; a small administrative fee was introduced to manage the rising number of requests.

*Brief history; Core components and description:* See summary above. The so-called Kalmar Declaration of 2003 clarifies the joint Nordic position on access and rights to genetic resources. The Declaration establishes that all plant genetic resources in the Nordic Gene Bank, not only those that are used for food and agriculture or are part of the Multilateral System, are freely available to all users.

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



- To which provision(s) of Article 9 of the International Treaty does this measure relate
  - Art. 9.1
  - Art. 9.2a
  - Art. 9.2b
  - Art. 9.2c
  - 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.	x	
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		
10	Legal measures for the implementation of Farmers' Rights, such as legislative measures related to PGRFA.		
11	Other measures / practices		x

- In case you selected 'other measures', would you like to suggest a description of this measure, e.g. as a possible new category? Farmers access to MLS material
- Objective(s) Potentially all farmers and other individuals interested in gene bank material

<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.



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- *Target group(s) and numbers of involved and affected farmers*<sup>5</sup> Nordic region (but also get requests from other countries)
- *Location(s) and geographical outreach* Nordic, international
- *Other national level instruments that are linked to the measure/practice*  
The Norwegian community seed bank is instrumental to gain actual access for farmers to PGR conserved at the gene bank. Far too small quantities of seeds as well as non-true to type seeds created obstacles for direct use of gene bank materials by farmers, and is in most cases prohibitive for use. Having a stakeholder securing the required multiplication and restoration of an accession prior to testing and use is of uttermost importance.

KVANN, the Norwegian seed saves are instrumental to disperse seeds of conserved accessions to private growers for hobby purposes while minimizing costs and workload for the gene bank. Furthermore, seed saver organizations also produce seeds of the most popular varieties for distribution amongst their members, and thus over years reduces costs and workload at the gene bank.

#### **Lessons learned**

- *What challenges encountered along the way (if applicable) (max 200 words)*  
The number of requests for seeds have been so high, that the gene bank has run out of seeds and cannot meet the full demand. It has been necessary to introduce a small administrative fee.

#### **Further information**

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

Submitted by Norway

<https://www.nordgen.org/en/>

<https://www.nordgen.org/en/plants/seed-potato-request/>

Hobby Material Transfer Agreement:

<https://shop.nordgen.org/index.php/terms-and-conditions/>

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