



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**



The International Treaty
ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES
FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

E

SEVENTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY

Kigali, Rwanda, 30 October - 3 November 2017

Information Note for Participants

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an FAO initiative to minimize its environmental impact and promote greener communications.
Other documents can be consulted at [http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/meetings/meetings-
detail/en/c/888771/](http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/meetings/meetings-detail/en/c/888771/)*



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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Venue, date and place of the Session

1. The Seventh Session of the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (International Treaty) will be held in Kigali, Rwanda, from 28 October to 3 November 2017. The meeting will start on Monday 30 October 2017, at 10.00 a.m., and it will be preceded by two days of regional and interregional consultations and a special event, on Saturday 28 October and Sunday 29 October 2017.

2. The meeting place for the Regular Session is “Kigali Convention Centre (KCC)”, KG2, Kimihurura Roundabout, Kigali. The translucent dome modelled on a traditional King’s Palace, is located in the heart of the capital on a hilltop near the Parliament.

3. KCC has several cafeterias, bars, restaurants available during all the duration of the meeting. All these areas provide with free wi-fi service.



B. Communication with the Secretariat

4. All correspondence related to the meeting should be addressed to the Secretary of the International Treaty at the following address:

Dr Kent Nnadozie
Secretary a. i.
International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 1
00153 Rome, Italy
Tel: +39 06 5705 3441
Fax: +39 06 5705 3057
E-mail: PGRFA-Treaty@fao.org

5. Any queries or requests for information should also be addressed to the Secretariat of the International Treaty at the above address.

II. REGISTRATION AND CREDENTIALS

A. Invitation letter and registration

Registration of delegates

6. The invitation letter was dispatched in July through the official communication channels of FAO. The Director-General would appreciate receiving, by 15 August 2017, the name(s) of the delegate, alternate, expert(s) and adviser(s) of each Contracting Party or, in the case of Non-Parties, the name(s) of the observer(s) designated to participate in the Session. Online registration is accessible for FAO Members through the password-protected area of the FAO Members Gateway at: <http://www.fao.org/members-gateway/home/en/>. Instructions for online registration can be downloaded from the website. Please note that online registration requires the uploading of a recent passport-size digital photograph.

Registration of observers

7. Observers, including international organizations, designated to attend the meeting are requested to forward their names, official titles and addresses by email to PGRFA-Treaty@fao.org, together with a recent passport-size photograph. Online pre-registration is mandatory. The information will be used to prepare the badges providing access to the meeting places and for the first draft of the Provisional List of Participants. Participants have the obligation to provide accurate contact details.

Photo requirements

8. The photo must be in colour, featuring a frontal view of a head and shoulders, it must have a light or neutral background and show very little of the background above and on either side of the head (no hats, sunglasses, or accessories that obscure de face). The photo must be in digital JPEG format and should also have a width to height ratio of approximately 3:4. In other words, a photo that is 2 cm wide should be approximately 2.5 cm high.

9. If you need support for the registration, please contact Ms Ida MANCINI by phone at +390657053388 or by e-mail at Ida.Mancini@fao.org.

B. Credentials

10. Each Contracting Party is asked to kindly submit the credentials, as indicated below, of delegate(s), alternate(s) and expert(s) and adviser(s) designated to attend the Session to the Secretariat of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, insofar as possible, not later than 15 August 2017. The credentials for national delegations should indicate which member is the delegate, the alternate and adviser(s).

11. States that are not Contracting Parties, as well as the United Nations, its specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency, may be represented as observers at the Session. Observers should communicate to the Secretary by 15 August 2017 the name(s) and contact details (including address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address) of the person or persons designated to participate in the Session. Observers whose names are not communicated before the Session will be asked, upon registration, to show a letter, on official letter-headed paper, confirming their nomination to participate in this Session.

12. Any other international body or agency, whether governmental or non-governmental, qualified in fields relating to conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, may also be represented at the Session as observer. Admission of observers will be subject

to the receipt by the Secretary of an official letter from the body or agency before 15 August 2017, providing the name, official title and contact details (including address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address) of the person(s) representing the body or agency. Observers will be asked upon registration to show a letter, on official letter-headed paper, from their body or agency confirming their nomination to participate in this Session. For more information, please contact the Secretariat of the International Treaty.

C. Collection of badges

13. On-site collection of badges for the Seventh Session of the Governing Body will take place at the meeting venue. Registration will commence on 28 October 2017 at 9:00 and will continue the following days from 9:00 to 13:00 hrs, and from 15:00 to 18:00 hrs.

- In order to collect the badges, all participants must show proof of identity and, as applicable, a letter of credentials or any other valid document.
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- A Provisional List of Participants will be issued during the Session, and revised as necessary. Corrections or additions to the list should be done on paper and handed to the Secretariat at the Registration and Information Desk.
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III. DOCUMENTATION

14. Working and information documents for the Seventh Session of the Governing Body will be published on the website of the International Treaty as soon as they become available at the following address: <http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/meetings/meetings-detail/en/c/888771/>

15. With a view to minimizing the environmental impact of the meeting, the Secretariat will limit the use of paper as much as possible. Paper copies will be made available at the meeting venue only for a limited number of pre-session documents, such as the Provisional Annotated Agenda and the draft Programme of Work and Budget.

16. Participants are therefore advised to bring their own copies of documents, as they deem appropriate, and to refrain from requesting additional copies from the document distribution desk. Those participants who are not in a position to bring their own copies of the documents should inform the Secretariat to that effect, and arrangements will be made for a full set of working documents to be ready in the language, or languages requested. Such requests should be made as soon as possible but no later than 15 October 2017.

17. Documents issued during the Session will be made available at the document distribution desk. Delegations are requested to provide their oral interventions to the floor electronically to the Secretariat.

18. Request to circulate other documents must be cleared with the Secretariat.

IV. MEETINGS AND OFFICIAL LANGUAGES OF THE SESSION

Opening Ceremony

19. The Opening Ceremony will take place in the Plenary Room of the Extension Building, at 10:00 am on Monday 30 October 2017. The Session will be conducted in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Spanish and Russian.

Regional and Interregional Consultations

20. Regional and interregional consultations will be held on 28 and 29 October 2017. The list of meetings rooms will be made available on the website in mid-October. Meetings rooms for regional consultations will be allocated throughout the Session.

V. EVENTS AND EXHIBITION OF MATERIAL

Special Event

21. An special event on genomics information will be organized on Saturday, 28 October from 10:00 to 13:00. More information on the event can be obtained online at <http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/meetings/meetings-detail/en/c/1026007/>

Side Events

22. Side events are scheduled to take place at the meeting venue from 30 October to 2 November 2017, from 13.15 to 14.30 and from 18.15 to 19.30. Request for side events should be submitted through an online registration form available on the website of the International Treaty. The request form must be fully completed to be considered. The deadline for receipt is 1 September 2017. Requests received through other means and after the deadline may not be considered. The request will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis.

23. Organizers of side events whose request cannot be accommodated will be encouraged to consider combining their events with other relevant scheduled side events. Side events may be rescheduled to accommodate requests from the Plenary or by decision of the Secretariat.

24. List of side events would be available from 15 September 2017 on the Website. The Secretariat will circulate to the organizers, upon request, additional information on catering arrangements and options with the local providers.

Exhibition of Material and Stands

25. A number of tables will be set up at the meeting venue to display promotional materials. For more information, please contact the Treaty Secretariat at PGRFA-Treaty@fao.org

26. Delegations and observers can also request information on the modalities and costs of exhibition stands. There are two options, one with a basic shell scheme that can be set up in different sizes (3x3m or 3x6m) with standard prices and the option of ordering a stand with customized design.

VI. FORMALITIES FOR ENTRY INTO RWANDA: VISA REQUIREMENTS

27. Entry in Rwanda is subject to presentation of a passport or other travel document that certifies the identity of the traveller and is valid under the international agreements signed by Rwanda and not subject to specific prohibitions. An invitation letter is requested for the issuance of visa online and in most cases to initiate travel.

28. The obtaining of visa is a responsibility of the traveller. The Directorate General of Immigration has provided summary information of the country's Visa Granting Policy:

- East African Community Partner States citizens are eligible for a renewable 6 month visitors pass at entry points with no fee.
- In accordance with the CEPGL agreement, Democratic Republic of the Congo nationals will be granted a visitor's visa for a stay not exceeding 90 days with no fee.

- Nationals of all other African countries traveling to or transiting through Rwanda can obtain an entry visa upon arrival for the fee of 30 US Dollars.
- Nationals of Singapore, Hong Kong, Mauritius and Philippines are exempted from entry visas for a stay of up to 90 days.
- Nationals of Australia, Germany, Israel, New Zealand, Republic of South Africa, Sweden, United Kingdom, and the United States of America, are eligible for visas upon arrival without prior application, for the standard fee of 30 US Dollars for a period of up to 30 days.

29. Nationals of countries not mentioned above must submit a visa application before traveling at Rwandan Diplomatic Missions (except the UN Mission in New York) or online:
<https://irembo.gov.rw/rolportal/en/web/dgie/newhome>

VII. SUPPORT TO THE PARTICIPATION OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES CONTRACTING PARTIES

30. Limited extra-budgetary funds have been made available to the Secretariat for the purpose of supporting one representative per developing country that is Contracting Party to the International Treaty. Support will be provided upon request. Countries wishing to avail themselves of such support should inform the Secretariat before 25 August 2017.

31. For assistance with financial support to the participation of developing country Contracting Parties, please contact us by email at PGRFA-treaty@fao.org, or by phone at +3906 5705 53388.

VIII. KIGALI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

32. The main airport, Kigali International Airport (KIA), is located 10 km East of the city centre, and has been recently completed; the expanded airport can now handle 1.5 million passengers annually (from its previous capacity of 600,000 passengers).

33. The airport currently receives direct flights from Addis Ababa, Amsterdam, Brazzaville, Brussels, Bujumbura, Dar es Salaam, Doha, Douala, Dubai, Entebbe, Istanbul, Gatwick, Johannesburg, Juba, Kilimanjaro, Lagos, Libreville, Lusaka, Mombasa, Mwanza, Nairobi, Cotonou, and Abidjan (from 21st October 2016).

34. A dedicated information counter will be operating at the main terminal during the Governing Body meeting to facilitate information and support to delegates. At the terminal there is also a foreign exchange office (Forex Bureau), and places where to buy sim cards, if needed.

35. As part of an environmental protection policy, plastic bags are not allowed into Rwanda. Passengers entering Kigali International Airport or any other border posts with plastic bags are required to discard them, and are supplied with an environmentally friendly alternative at a cost ranging between \$2-\$6.

IX. TAXIS AND AIRPORT PICK UPS

36. Average travel times from the airport to Kigali Conference Centre range from 15-20 minutes (Taxicab), depending on traffic.

37. Most hotels provide a shuttle pick up and drop off at the airport. Please ensure you arrange your own transport from the airport to the hotels.

38. In addition to hotels shuttles, ATAK, a taxi company will be operating at Kigali International. ATAK taxicab will arrange on average \$10-\$20 per trip and \$60 for a full day rental. The company telephones are: 0788568860, 0782754574, 0782862540

39. In the eventuality that any delegate loses his luggage, a dedicated travel desk will be available at the KCC during the meeting to assist with the tracking.

X. HOTELS

40. There are several hotels situated near the KCC or well connected. The Secretariat has selected a short list of hotels for which the Host Government would provide transportation to and from the KCC during the Seventh Session of the Governing Body. The list is posted on the Website of the International Treaty: <http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/seventh-governing-body/hotels/en/>

41. Additionally, to facilitate the booking of hotels rooms by delegates, the Rwanda Convention Bureau recommended the online booking platform "Go Travel Ltd, managed locally. This portal facilitates the booking of hotel rooms at reduced rates for the Seventh Session of the ITPGRFA.

42. The Radisson Blu is the hotel connected with the KCC and has also offered special rates and a dedicated online page with the discount code "ITPGR". Additionally, the Lemigo Hotel at a short walking distance from the Conference Center and offers standard convenient prices.

XI. PRACTICAL INFORMATION ON RWANDA

Rwanda

43. Rwanda is a landlocked country situated in Central Africa. Also known as the 'Land of a Thousand Hills'. The country has five volcanoes, twenty-three lakes and numerous rivers, some forming the source of the River Nile. The country lies 75 miles south of the equator in the Tropic of Capricorn, 880 miles 'as the crow flies' west of the Indian Ocean and 1,250 miles east of the Atlantic Ocean – literally in the heart of Africa.

44. Rwanda is bordered by Uganda to the north, Tanzania to the east, Burundi to the south and the Democratic Republic of Congo to the west. Rwanda is politically stable with well-functioning institutions, rule of law and zero tolerance for corruption. The World Bank's 2013/14 Global Competitive Index Report ranked Rwanda as the most competitive place to do business in East Africa and 2nd in Africa.

45. Rwanda is an attractive market of over 11 million people with a rapidly growing middle class and its location as part of the East African Community (EAC) provides access to the burgeoning East African market of over 140 million people.

Climate

46. Rwanda can be visited and enjoyed any time of the year. The climate is temperate to subtropical, with two rainy seasons and two dry seasons each year. Temperatures average around 24°C (75°F), except for in the higher mountain areas where it ranges from 10°C to 15°C (50°F to 60°F) The dry season which lasts from mid-May to mid-October, is the best time to walk, hike and mountain climb, however, it is not as "green" as the wet season, which spans the other half of the year. The wet Season is from mid-October to mid-May. The Northeast has a lot more rain due to the volcanoes being covered in rainforest. Karisimbi (the highest peak in Rwanda at 2,507 meters) is usually covered with snow.

Language

47. The principal language is Kinyarwanda, spoken by most Rwandans, with English and French serving as official languages.

Customs

48. Rwanda has a rich culture that includes captivating music and dance, a growing contemporary art industry and wonderful crafts including pottery, basketry, painting, jewelry, woodcarving and metalwork. A window into Rwanda's history is provided by the many memorial sites and museums preserved around the country. A number of Community Based Tourism experiences offer travelers the opportunity to experience the destination's rich cultural life.

Yellow Fever Notice

49. Due to the recent outbreak of Yellow Fever in the region, the Rwandan Ministry of Health requires all travelers coming from countries endemic to Yellow Fever to produce proof of vaccination at border posts for passengers. Delegates that fail to produce proof of vaccination will be immunized on site, at the airport clinic for the cost of 40 US Dollars.

For more information, please visit:

http://moh.gov.rw/fileadmin/Yellow_Fever/Yellow-Fever-Prevention-Measures17-04-2016.pdf

<http://www.moh.gov.rw/index.php?id=222>

Currency

50. The unit of currency is the Rwandan Franc (RWF). Exchange rates are subject to fluctuation. Currently, 1 USD is approximately equivalent to 840 RWF. Foreign exchange facilities are available at the airport and in all parts of Kigali city.

51. It is best to arrive in Rwanda with US dollars or Euros in cash, which can be exchanged either at the airport or at any FOREX bureau or bank. The most useful bank branch would be the Banque de Kigali, which offers cash advances on credit cards and also accepts travelers' cheques, which is not possible outside of Kigali.

52. There are ATMs throughout Kigali that are accessible to visitors. Credit cards are accepted in some supermarkets, restaurants and hotels, but it is best to confirm prior to ordering.

Banking services

53. Banking hours are from 08:00 to 18:00 on weekdays and from 08:00 to 15:00 on Saturdays. Banking amenities are available at all commercial banks; local and regional banks hold agreements with a variety of credit card networks:

- VISA – Bank of Kigali, Ecobank, Equity bank, I & M bank, Kenya Commercial bank, ACCESS Bank, Banque populaire du Rwanda and Urwego Opportunity bank
- MasterCard – ACCESS Bank and Equity bank
- China Union Pay - ACCESS Bank, Equity bank and Bank of Kigali
- Japan Credit Bureau - Equity bank
- American Express - Equity bank and Bank of Kigali
- Diners Club - Equity bank and Bank of Kigali

54. Most internationally recognized currencies and travellers' cheques can be exchanged at commercial banks, hotels and the airport. Major credit cards are accepted in most hotels, restaurants and shops.

Tipping

55. It is customary to tip for service in restaurants and bars. A tip of 5% is very acceptable and a tip of 20% is very generous. It is also customary to tip your driver/guide at the end of a safari or hike, as well as the cook and/or porter that may accompany to you.

Time

56. The time in Rwanda is GMT+2.

Electricity Supply

57. The electricity supply in Rwanda is 220/240V AC. It is advisable to bring your own round, two-prong adapter and transformer for 110V AC.

Telephone Services

58. Telephone Country Code +250 (telecommunications among the best in Africa).

59. The following Rwandan mobile telecommunication service providers are available:

- MTN
- Tigo
- Airtel

60. Mobile telephone service providers also provide gateway to Internet using GPRS, 3G and 4G. Cell phone SIM cards are widely available. Every SIM card user/buyer in Rwanda is expected by law to be registered prior to activation.

Emergency Services

61. In case of emergency, please refer to telephone numbers listed below.

- Fire Brigade (Toll Free): 111 or +250 788 311 224
- Ambulance (Toll Free): 912 or + 250 788 300 116.
- General Assistance: 997

Internet Services

62. Wi-Fi will be provided for free at the Convention Center. Wi-fi is available in most hotels, free of charge. It is quite easy to find cafés in Kigali with wi-fi, but it is best to check beforehand if you are planning on using internet. The lodges in the countryside are also equipped with wi-fi, however, cafés and restaurants outside of Kigali may not have it on offer.

Health Services

63. First aid and emergency services will be available at the Kigali Convention Center. For more extensive medical services, delegates are advised to seek treatment at one of the following hospitals:

- King Faysal Hospital: +250 788307561
- Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Kigali/CHUK: +250 788868240
- Kanombe Military Hospital: +250 788305703

Business and shopping hours

64. Public Offices open from 07:00 to 17:00 while businesses open from 8:00 to 18:00, Monday to Friday. Weekend business hours range between 09:00 to 22:00. For more practical information on Rwanda, please visit: <http://www.rwandatourism.com/practical-info>