



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



The International Treaty
ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES
FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Item 17 of the Provisional Agenda

EIGHTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY

Rome, Italy, 11 - 16 November 2019

Draft Work Programme and Budget for the 2020-2021 Biennium: Donor-supported activities under the Special Fund for Agreed Purposes

Executive Summary

This document is presented to the Governing Body as an addendum to the draft Work Programme and Budget for the 2020-2021 biennium, which provides a summary list of possible supporting projects to be carried out during the next biennium with additional financial contributions outside the Core Administrative Budget. It may also be read in conjunction with the document IT/GB-8/19/17/Inf.1, *Report on donor-supported activities under the Special Fund for Agreed Purposes for the 2018-2019 biennium*. As in the past biennia, the proposed activities would increase the effectiveness of the overall implementation of the International Treaty and especially play critical supportive roles for the implementation of priority areas under the Core Work Programme. They also reflect the needs expressed by stakeholders during the current intersessional period.

Guidance Sought

The Governing Body is invited to endorse the proposed donor-supported activities and, should it so wish, suggest priority areas for the consideration of donors that intend to provide funds during the 2020-2021 biennium for proposed activities.

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2. As in the past biennia, the proposed activities would increase the effectiveness of the overall implementation of the International Treaty and especially play critical supportive roles for the implementation of priority areas under the Core Work Programme. They also reflect the needs expressed by stakeholders during the current intersessional period.

3. Those additional voluntary contributions will be received in Special Funds for Agreed Purposes and managed based on the individual agreements made between respective donors and the Secretary, including developing and implementing specific projects.

4. The Governing Body is invited to endorse the proposed donor-supported activities, as set out below and, should it so wish, suggest priority areas for the consideration of donors that intend to provide funds during the 2020-2021 biennium for proposed activities.

I. Conservation, Sustainable Use of PGRFA and Farmers' Rights under the Articles 5, 6 and 9 of the International Treaty

5. Supporting Contracting Parties in their efforts to promote the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA as well as the realization of Farmers' Rights as provided in the International Treaty requires the development and maintenance of a broad spectrum of policy, administrative, legal and technical measures. It would also depend on the engagement of a wide range of stakeholders, including farmers and farmers' organizations, civil society, public and private institutions.

6. The proposed Programme of Work on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and Supporting Initiatives 2020–2023 will provide a more comprehensive linkage between 'conservation' and 'sustainable use' of PGRFA, in recognition that sustainable use should not be considered as a stand-alone activity, but rather be closely linked to the conservation of PGRFA. Through a specific project, the possibilities of setting up a capacity development programme on conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA and Farmers' Rights will be explored. Specific activities for the proposed Programme of Work 2020–2023 would include:

- Promotion and dissemination of the educational modules on conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA, Farmers' Rights, as well as other available modules;
- The organization of regional training and capacity building activities to share, exchange knowledge, best practices, and lessons learned on conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA and Farmers' Rights;
- Provision of support for the development and implementation of national programmes and policies for the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA;
- Documentation, publication and dissemination of best practices and lessons learned on conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA and Farmers' Rights, and to populate and enhance the functioning and use of the Toolbox;
- Organization of awareness raising events at relevant national, regional and international conferences on conservation and access to and transfer of technology in the context of non-monetary benefit-sharing.

Estimated Cost: USD 500,000

II. Article 17 and the Global Information System on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture – Support to Contracting Parties and stakeholders for the adoption of DOIs

7. Since the adoption of the Programme of Work on the Global Information System (GLIS) for 2016-2022, the Governing Body has made financial provision for only a limited set of activities of the GLIS within the Core Administrative Budget. Consequently, the Secretary has repeatedly requested for funds for agreed activities and has had to raise external project funds to carry them out.

8. It is to be noted, as reported in the document, IT/GB-8/19/10, *Report on the Implementation of the Global Information System*, that some of the projects will end by 2019 and at the beginning of 2020. To bring forward the implementation of the Programme of Work, the Scientific Advisory Committee on GLIS, at its third meeting, discussed the development or review of selected crop descriptors globally. The Committee is expected to provide further guidance and priorities on the crop descriptors in the next biennium and the Secretariat could work on the review of two crop descriptors, in consultation with technical experts and through the review of literature and other relevant sources.

9. At the same meeting, the Committee also requested the Secretary to improve the GLIS Portal, particularly for the development of a graphic visualization tool allowing users to navigate through various types of relationships. Furthermore, the Committee requested the Secretary to continue promoting the adoption of Digital Object Identifiers. In this context, the Secretary has also identified, together with relevant regional Partners, several countries that would quickly register material in GLIS, and in the regional information system, if direct assistance is provided. While the Committee also consults and provides advice through electronic means, additional face-to-face meetings would be needed during the next biennium.

10. Specific proposed activities to be supported include:

- At least, one meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee
- Development and review of two crop descriptors globally
- Development of a graphic and visualization tool for germplasm in the GLIS Portal
- Direct technical assistance to developing countries for the adoption of DOIs

Estimated Cost: USD 650,000

III. Implementation of the updated Funding Strategy

11. The new Vision for the Funding Strategy adopted by the Governing Body is for the Funding Strategy to enable the Governing Body, Contracting Parties, funding agencies, farmers and other relevant actors to secure funding and other resources for the programmatic implementation of the International Treaty in a long-term, coordinated, synergistic and effective manner.

12. The updated Funding Strategy utilizes a programmatic approach to strengthen linkages between different funding sources and partners and its success will require the participation and contributions of all partners enabling the implementation of the International Treaty, at national and international levels.

13. A number of key measures have been proposed within the updated Funding Strategy to achieve its Vision and Targets. This Support Programme will accelerate efforts to implement such measures, particularly at the national level. Activities will include:

- Developing and disseminating strategic tools that National Focal Points (NFPs) and others can use to leverage funding at national level;

- Provision of targeted support to Contracting Parties to enhance integration of PGRFA in national development plans, national budgets and priorities for donor support and external funding.
- The establishment of a notification and helpdesk function to, inter alia, notify Treaty NFPs of upcoming finance opportunities in their countries, and provide links to expertise to develop proposals.
- Undertaking of analysis on a Cost of Inaction that could be used in communication and awareness related to the Treaty's Funding Strategy, building on previous research available.
- Establishing a network of Treaty enabling partners which have successfully integrated PGRFA in larger sustainable development and climate change programmes and share, at regional level, lessons learned to build the capacity of others to participate in similar programmes;
- Supporting National Focal Points and others to participate in strategic meetings such as the outreach events of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), to gain and share experiences from GEF projects and their integration within national policy frameworks.

Estimated Cost: USD 500,000

IV. Benefit-sharing Support Programme

14. The Benefit-sharing Fund (BSF) is an operational arm of the International Treaty at the field level, with the aim to increase crop diversity and enable a dynamic exchange of plant genetic material for food security and rural development. In ten years of operations, the BSF has supported in situ and on-farm management and created linkages with broader ex-situ conservation efforts. BSF projects have both facilitated farmer-to-farmer exchanges of seeds and enabled a dynamic flow of PGRFA material from farmers to ex-situ collections and back again to farmers.

15. The BSF mechanism has constantly evolved, and its grant making process and interventions will continue to be streamlined through the implementation of the new programmatic approach of the BSF and its Theory of Change. A community of practice should be established that could enable the sharing of knowledge, lessons learnt and best practices on the exchange, management and conservation of PGRFA within and between projects and programmes. This would further enhance the commitment to the BSF globally and give greater visibility to the BSF, communicating the results achieved and demonstrating its unique value.

16. The BSF is a critical element of the revised Funding Strategy and there are increasing opportunities to mobilize funds from innovative sources and mechanisms through the programmatic approach of the revised Funding Strategy. There is an ambition to maximize efforts to further diversify the sources of funding to the BSF by the end of 2025. Furthermore, the programmatic approach of the BSF aims to support the development of long-term partnerships with donors for the provision of predictable and long-term funding.

17. In order to keep the momentum in the recent policy developments, this component will include activities to support the implementation of the revised Funding Strategy and the enhancement of the programmatic approach of the BSF, as follows:

- Resource mobilization to reach the targets for both the Funding Strategy as a whole and for the Benefit-sharing Fund, as set out in the revised Funding Strategy;
- Exploration of innovative approaches to mobilize resources for the BSF, including by further engaging the private sector, especially the seed and the food processing industries, to make further contributions to the BSF on an multi-annual basis;
- Enhancement of the programmatic and partnership approach of the BSF, by organizing a mid-term global workshop to assess the main achievements of the Fourth project cycle and to further enhance synergies and complementarities between funded projects;

- Analysis of produced benefits, particularly in areas of interest to donors such as economic development, sustainable agriculture, food security, climate change, biodiversity conservation and resilient livelihoods as to validate the BSF Theory of Change and the Results Matrix of the Funding Strategy and develop a common storyline on how the BSF generates benefits from the local to the national and global levels;
- Generation, documentation and dissemination of information on results, impacts and success stories arising from BSF projects for future replication;
- Establishment of the BSF platform for communication and knowledge sharing as to enable partners to build linkages between different funding sources and explore collaborative planning and co-spending opportunities;
- Development of a communication toolkit to support BSF partners to effectively communicate the results and achievements arising from BSF projects within the framework of the broader communication strategy of the International Treaty;
- Strengthen linkages between different funding sources and partners, by pursuing co-spending opportunities through analysis of appropriate channels and activities to mobilize co-funding resources;
- Further promotion of non-monetary benefits sharing under the International Treaty (exchange of information; access to and transfer of technology; capacity building) and dissemination of the information and data arising from such schemes.

Estimated cost: USD 500,000

V. Multilateral System Support and Extension Programme (Article 15)

18. The International Treaty community benefits from a science-based system of *ex situ* conservation of international germplasm collections in order to make them available for research, breeding and training on a global scale. Agreements under Article 15 of the International Treaty are in place with international institutions and host governments holding the collections (Article 15 agreements), and the management of some of those collections, i.e. for the most part, those under the management of CGIAR Centers is supported by the Global Crop Diversity Trust.

19. Within this network, field collections play an essential role, both in terms of conservation of unique material and as a complement to *in situ* conservation in the context of local agricultural systems. *In situ* and field collections are particularly vulnerable as they are exposed to environmental and development threats. Hence, the need to secure resources that can be mobilized rapidly to respond to immediate threats to unique, international germplasm field collections that fall under framework the International Treaty, with a status in all respects equivalent to the *ex situ* collections under the management of CGIAR Centers.

20. In accordance with the responsibilities ensuing from the Article 15 agreements, the International Treaty has a mandate to respond to local situations where the orderly maintenance of collections is destabilized by unforeseen events. The agreements stipulate that the Secretary must provide assistance when collections are impeded or threatened by whatever event. However, no dedicated resources are currently available to the Secretary to facilitate the delivery of this vital support, which, as reported to the Governing Body at this Session, is currently needed in several cases.

21. Coupled with such support and on a mutually reinforcing basis, the network of Article 15 collections can be expanded through new agreements with interested international institutions and host governments. The Governing Body has regularly mandated the Secretary to explore prospects for new agreements and, in the execution of such mandate, new agreements have been signed or are under consideration. In cases where new agreements are in place, the Secretary, in close collaboration with technical partners, should also provide initial support to facilitate the availability of germplasm and related data in the Multilateral System, e.g. through Easy-SMTA, Digital Object Identifiers, and Genesys. The allocation of financial resources to the expansion of the network of Article 15

agreements would allow for upgrading these activities into a coherent programme, coordinated with an updated, rational system of international germplasm conservation and availability. Proposed activities will include:

- Facilitating the rapid mobilisation and deployment of technical and financial assistance in emergency situations for Article 15 field collections, in complementarity to existing mechanisms, e.g. the Benefit-Sharing Fund, and mandates e.g. the Crop Trust, CGIAR;
- Devising and implementing short-term measures to safeguard continuous accessibility of threatened unique germplasm;
- Planning and implementing a programme of expansion of Article 15 collections;
- For new signatory institutions, delivering backstop support for the operation of the Multilateral System.

Estimated cost: USD 250,000

VI. Capacity Development Programme for Mutual Supportiveness between the International Treaty, and the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Nagoya Protocol

22. The objectives of the International Treaty are attained by close linkages with the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the Governing Body has repeatedly stressed the need to enhance such linkages. The Convention's Conference of the Parties, in adopting the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing, formally recognized the International Treaty as one of the complementary instruments that constitute the International Regime on Access and Benefit-sharing. Following the entry-into-force and start up implementation of the Nagoya Protocol, the Secretariat and Bioversity International has implemented some capacity building activities in the context of the on-going Joint Capacity Building Programme. Such activities have contributed to maintaining the relevance of the International Treaty in the context of wider access and benefit-sharing initiatives, and to promoting the implementation of the Multilateral System within, or in parallel with, new or revised access and benefit-sharing frameworks.

23. However, continuing and enhancing such activities into an ad hoc, specific capacity development programme for mutual supportiveness with the Nagoya Protocol in the next biennium is necessary and justified. Membership in the Nagoya Protocol continues to increase and may soon reach the same level as the International Treaty's. With such expansion comes the need to strengthen, on a wider scale, policy dialogue and operative coordination between national authorities responsible for the International Treaty and environmental authorities in charge of the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol. In parallel with that, several processes under the Nagoya Protocol, e.g. on digital sequence information, on its Article 10 regarding global benefit-sharing mechanisms, on the consideration of its Article 4 on the relationship with other international instruments, call for direct coordination, at international, regional and national levels, with the International Treaty stakeholders.

This coordination will be promoted through:

- Preparing joint decision-support tools for relevant ministries in implementing the Nagoya Protocol and the Multilateral System, and the development of specialized awareness-raising and outreach material on the International Treaty and the Nagoya Protocol;
- Joint capacity-building workshops for the national focal points and competent authorities of both agreements, on selected themes of reciprocal, immediate relevance;
- Technical and expert advice to governments upon request for the harmonious and mutually supportive implementation of the access and benefit-sharing provisions of the Multilateral System and the Nagoya Protocol.

24. This Capacity Development Programme will be linked to the Strategic Framework for Capacity Building and Development for the Nagoya Protocol - and to the various implementing entities that contribute to implementing the Framework. A coherent and coordinated approach to capacity development will be pursued in order to integrate the programme into wider ABS experience sharing and lesson-learning, for the efficient utilization of available resources and expertise.

Estimated cost: USD 400,000