Invitation to the Seventh Session of the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

Rome, Italy, 24 - 26 October 2012

Reply requested by 24 August 2012

The Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has the honour to announce that the Seventh Session of the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture will be held at FAO headquarters in Rome from 24 to 26 October 2012. The opening meeting will begin at 9.30 hours on Wednesday 24 October 2012.

The Session is being convened under the Regular Programme of the Organization. It will be conducted in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

The Working Group was established by the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture at its Seventh Session in May 1997. The members of the Working Group, as elected by the Thirteenth Session of the Commission in July 2011, are as follows:

Africa: Congo, Kenya, Mauritania, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe
Asia: China, Malaysia, Mongolia, Republic of Korea, Thailand
Europe: Germany, Netherlands, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland
Latin America and the Caribbean: Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba, Suriname
Near East: Afghanistan, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of)
North America: Canada, United States of America
Southwest Pacific: Cook Islands, Fiji

Members of the Commission which are not members of the Working Group may participate, upon request to the Commission Secretariat, in the work of the Working Group in an observer capacity. The Working Group, or the Bureau on behalf of the Working Group, may invite experts, as well as representatives of specialized international organizations, to attend its meetings as observers.

This invitation is sent to addressees of invited FAO Members as prescribed in the official channels of communication of FAO, as follows:

For ACTION/INFORMATION, as appropriate:
-Main Addressees (Ministers for Foreign Affairs or Agriculture or other addressees selected by the Government);
-Permanent Representatives to FAO/Embassies.
The Thirteenth Regular Session of the Commission decided that the Working Group should meet prior to the next Regular Session of the Commission to review: progress in the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources* (http://www.fao.org/docrep/010/a1404e/a1404e00.htm); implementation and review of the Funding Strategy for the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*: preparation of *The Second Report on the State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*; and targets and indicators for animal genetic resources. The Commission also requested the Working Group to review the status and trends of microorganisms for ruminant digestion.

In line with the Organization's objective to minimize the environmental impact of FAO's processes and to contribute to climate neutrality, the Seventh Session of the ITWG on Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture will be a paper-smart meeting, i.e. the use of paper at all stages of the meeting will be greatly reduced. Participants are requested to bring their own documents to the meetings, as hard copies will not be available. All meeting and background documents, including in-session documents, will be available online at: http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/programmes/en/genetics/angrvent.html.

The Director-General would appreciate receiving the names, official titles and addresses of the representatives designated to attend the Session by 24 August 2012 at the latest. Online registration will be available through the password-protected Permanent Representatives Website (PRWS) at http://permreps.fao.org. Please note that online registration requires the uploading of a recent passport-size digital photograph. Representatives from international organizations designated to attend the meeting as observers are requested to forward their names, official titles and addresses by email to: ITWG-AnGR7@fao.org, together with a recent passport-size digital photograph.

Participants requiring visas must obtain these from the Italian Consulate or competent Diplomatic Mission in their country before leaving for Rome. Visa applications must be submitted well in advance of departure, as up to three weeks may be required for an Italian visa to be issued. Exclusively those participants traveling from a country where there is no Italian Consulate or other competent Diplomatic Mission may obtain a visa on arrival in Rome, provided that they advise the Secretariat of the meeting of their full name, date of birth, nationality, passport number, issue and expiry dates, flight number, date and hour of arrival and their full travel itinerary, which must not include any other Schengen country. This information must reach FAO at least three weeks before the arrival of participants to permit the Protocol Branch to request that a visa be issued at Rome airport. Participants failing to comply with the above will not be allowed to enter Italy by the Italian authorities.