

July 2011

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Объединенных  
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Organización  
de las  
Naciones  
Unidas  
para la  
Agricultura  
y la  
Alimentación

### Item 7 of the Provisional Agenda

**COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

**Thirteenth Regular Session**

Rome, 18 – 22 July 2011

**JOINT WORK PLAN WITH THE  
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

This document contains the *Joint Work Plan of the Secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and its Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, Phase 2 (2011-2020)*.

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**JOINT WORK PLAN OF  
THE SECRETARIATS OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY  
AND OF THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
AND ITS COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

**Phase 2: (2011-2020)**

**Enhancing synergies in the implementation of  
the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets  
and the Multi-Year Programme of Work of the FAO Commission**

**Preamble:**

*The framework for action under this, second, Joint Work Plan is the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (2011-2020)<sup>1</sup> and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets adopted at the Tenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (Decision X/2), the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing adopted at the same meeting (Decision X/1) and the Strategic Plan and the Multi-Year Programme of Work of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Commission)<sup>2</sup>.*

*The main principle of this Joint Work Plan is to continue the effective working relationship between the Secretariats in addressing the work required of them by their respective governing bodies<sup>3</sup>. The focus is on key areas of work and mechanisms to achieve this. It is designed to be flexible and to minimize the burden on both governing bodies by minimizing the need for regular updating and approval. In this context, specific instructions to the two Secretariats by their respective governing bodies are implemented and reported on by each Secretariat, and thus it will not be necessary to revise the Joint Work Plan to incorporate specific requests after each Conference of the Parties to the CBD or sessions of the Commission. Therefore, each and every existing or subsequent request by either governing body, relevant to the Joint Work Plan, will be considered by both secretariats in the execution of this Joint Work Plan.*

**1. Introduction**

In 1997, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, hereinafter referred to as FAO, and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, hereinafter referred to as the CBD Secretariat, entered into a Memorandum of Cooperation, which provided a framework in which the two Secretariats advance biodiversity initiatives of mutual interest. In May 2005, a revised Memorandum of Cooperation was signed in order to ensure continued effective working arrangements. The revised Memorandum recognizes that the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, hereinafter referred as the FAO Commission, is the international forum where governments specifically address all components of biological diversity of relevance to food and agriculture. The revised Memorandum also contains, in Article V, provision for development of joint

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<sup>1</sup> The Strategic Plan is the guiding framework for action by the CBD Secretariat but is also designed as a framework for action for all relevant stakeholders, such as the FAO Commission, for relevant areas within their mandate.

<sup>2</sup> CGRFA-11/09/Report.

<sup>3</sup> This phase of the Joint Work Plan builds on its Phase 1 and to that effect, Sections 1,2 and 3 have been updated to make reference to the decisions of the 13<sup>th</sup> Regular Session of the Commission and of COP X. Section 4 contains the updated areas of collaboration and Section 6 a revised updated timeline.

programmes of work<sup>4</sup> aimed at specific objects of cooperation of mutual relevance.

FAO has supported the development and implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), since its entry into force. This has been done through, *inter alia*, the provision of technical and policy advice and analysis, documentation and secondment of staff, as well as technical assistance to countries. In addition, FAO's International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, negotiated through the FAO Commission, is in harmony with the CBD including the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing. FAO is also currently involved in the implementation of many thematic and cross-cutting programmes of work of the CBD, including the programmes of work on agricultural biodiversity (and coordination within this of the pollinators, soil biodiversity and biodiversity for food and nutrition initiatives as well as the globally significant biodiversity harboured in agricultural heritage systems), forest biodiversity, marine and coastal biodiversity (particularly for fisheries and aquaculture) and the ecosystem approach, as well as in many other areas.

The Conference of the Parties to the CBD and the FAO Commission have regularly recognized the importance of cooperation between FAO and the CBD and have called for development of mutually supportive activities. The FAO Commission, at its Eleventh Regular Session, recommended "a joint work plan on biodiversity for food and agriculture between FAO and its Commission and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity"<sup>5</sup>, and requested that this recommendation be forwarded to the Conference of the Parties to the CBD. At the same Session, the FAO Commission adopted major milestones and outputs to be addressed in its Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW), over its next five sessions, and considered that it provided an excellent basis for preparing the Joint Work Plan.

At its Ninth Meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the CBD, in response to the request from the FAO Commission, requested the Executive Secretary to work with FAO and the Secretariat of the FAO Commission "to prepare a joint work plan on biodiversity for food and agriculture that would assist Parties in, *inter alia*, streamlining reporting requirements, and facilitating the dialogue at international, regional and national levels between bodies dealing with environment and agriculture, while respecting each other's mandates and intergovernmental authority"<sup>6</sup>.

The FAO Commission, at its Twelfth Regular Session in 2009, considered further collaboration with the CBD, took note of the 2009-2011 Joint Work Plan and requested its Secretariat to include in this phase access and benefit-sharing as a focus area. It stressed the need not to overburden the CBD and FAO and its Commission, indicating the need selectively to identify and to synchronize areas of collaboration.<sup>7</sup>

At its Tenth Meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the CBD welcomed and noted the importance of the Joint Work Plan between the Secretariats of the CBD and FAO and its Commission, its important contribution to the achievement of Millennium Development Goals 1 and 7, and the opportunities to further enhance the Joint Work Plan in accordance with relevant matters arising from the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, including consideration of matters relating to targets and indicators of relevance to the programme of work, and relevant matters arising from the Strategic Plan 2010-2017 for the implementation of MYPOW of the FAO Commission. It also requested the Executive Secretary, and invited FAO and its Commission, to work together in their design of the second phase of their Joint Work Plan covering at least until 2017, focusing on refinements required as a result of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, but also

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<sup>4</sup> Although the Memorandum of Cooperation refers to joint programmes of work, this document will use the term Joint Work Plan. Moreover, the guidance provided by the FAO Commission and the Conference of the Parties to the CBD uses this terminology.

<sup>5</sup> CGRFA-11/07/Report, paragraph 80.

<sup>6</sup> COP IX/1, paragraph 37.

<sup>7</sup> CGRFA-12/09/Report, paragraph 99.

considering, as necessary, other elements listed in its Decision X/34 on agricultural biodiversity.<sup>8</sup>

The current Joint Work Plan between the Secretariats of the CBD and of FAO and the FAO Commission will be annexed to the revised Memorandum of Cooperation to replace its previous version.

## **2. Goal and rationale**

This Phase 2 of the Joint Work Plan is aimed at enhancing synergies in the implementation of the FAO Commission's MYPOW and the CBD's objectives and decisions, in particular in the context of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (2011-2020), including the contributions of its various programmes of work and work on cross-cutting issues to this Strategic Plan and within the context of the Commission's Strategic Plan and MYPOW. In the current phase, the Secretariats will focus the Joint Work Plan on areas where cooperation can be consolidated for the mutual benefit of both institutions and Member countries.

It is noted that the Joint Work Plan is focused on cooperation between the two Secretariats, whereas the scope of cooperation between FAO and the CBD is much broader – in line with their diverse mandates and expansive areas of work. For instance, a Memorandum of Cooperation has been signed between the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the CBD Secretariat.

## **3. Mechanisms of collaboration between FAO and the CBD**

Both the FAO Commission and the Conference of the Parties to the CBD have repeatedly stressed the need for enhanced cooperation. This section presents enhanced mechanisms of cooperation at different levels.

**Between the Secretariats:** The Secretariats will:

- Hold consultations on the preparation of relevant technical and policy papers, for mutual benefit;
- Regularly (at least annually) assess progress with the Joint Work Plan through joint Secretariat meetings (both in person and by e-mail and teleconference);
- Report on progress with the Joint Work Plan to the FAO Commission and Conference of the Parties to the CBD, as required by those bodies;
- Extend mutual invitations to relevant meetings and consult regarding dates of intergovernmental and other meetings, as appropriate; and
- Submit joint notifications in areas of mutual interest and facilitate streamlined reporting.

**Between intergovernmental bodies:** The Conference of the Parties to the CBD (and/or its subsidiary bodies) and the FAO Commission may consider decisions or recommendations of mutual interest among them. They may also exchange views and develop further guidance on cooperation. In addition to supporting information flow related to relevant formal decisions or recommendations of officially convened forums, the Secretariats will expedite and enhance communication through, for example, the exchange of experts to discuss a specific issue, organizing meetings<sup>9</sup> between representatives of their various bodies intersessionally (e.g. the Bureaus or the Chairs thereof). Where appropriate, other

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<sup>8</sup> COP X/34 decision.

<sup>9</sup> Membership and terms of reference to be developed.

relevant intergovernmental forums may be provided with information of relevance to them, including any relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD, recommendations of its subsidiary bodies or decisions or recommendations of the FAO Commission. Bona fide representatives of such other forums, on a case-by-case basis and subject to identified needs, may also be invited to contribute to relevant processes under the Joint Work Plan.

In preparing meeting documents, the Secretariats of the CBD and the FAO Commission will consider, and if necessary suggest ways and means to enhance, collaboration between the Conference of the Parties to the CBD and the FAO Commission, including through the above-mentioned mechanisms.

**Within national governments:** Fostering collaboration between agencies responsible for agriculture and environment working on biodiversity is an essential mechanism for promoting synergies and avoiding unnecessary duplication at national level. The FAO Commission and the Conference of the Parties to the CBD have both noted the importance of such collaboration at national level. To facilitate such collaboration, the FAO and CBD Secretariats will encourage their respective national focal points to interact with their respective counterparts at national level.

A key mechanism for mainstreaming relevant needs is through the revision, but more so the implementation, of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), as recognized in the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity.

- The FAO and CBD Secretariats will exchange and make available information relevant to enhancing cooperation between their respective focal points and their counterparts in other agencies, as appropriate. Such consultation may include communication regarding documents for intergovernmental meetings and input into the development of guidance under the respective intergovernmental bodies.
- The FAO and CBD Secretariats will coordinate their relevant efforts so as to enhance delivery of action at national level including through supporting the updating and implementation of NBSAPs, particularly with respect to implementation at the national level of agriculture and other natural resources-related instruments such as the Global Plans of Action for plant and animal genetic resources.

#### 4. Areas of focus

The Secretariats have agreed to address the following key areas of work: (i) assessments of biodiversity of relevance to food and agriculture; (ii) targets and indicators; (iii) best practices for the management of agricultural biodiversity; (iv) micro-organisms and invertebrates including the international initiatives on soil biodiversity and pollinators; (v) access and benefit sharing; (vi) enhancing implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity at the national level; and (vi) climate change and genetic resources for food and agriculture.

##### 4.1 Assessments: cooperation leading towards the preparation of global assessments for *The State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture*

The MYPOW of the FAO Commission foresees the preparation of a number of global assessments leading towards *The State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture*, including in particular the current updating of *The State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources*, and work towards the future updating of *The State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources*, as well as the preparation of *The State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources* and *The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources*. The Conference of the Parties to the CBD, at its Tenth Meeting, welcomed the Strategic Plan 2010-2017 for the implementation of the MYPOW approved at the Twelfth Regular Session of the FAO Commission in 2009, and, in this context, welcomed the planned periodic publication of *The State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture*, and reports on the various genetic resources components, which will provide a solid technical base for the development of action plans.

- The CBD Secretariat will participate in the global assessments leading towards the preparation of *The State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture*.
- In relevant forums and processes, particularly the revision of the NBSAPs, the CBD Secretariat will incorporate consideration of the implementation of FAO instruments such as the Global Plans of Action on genetic resources.
- FAO will provide the CBD Secretariat with information on the above matters, such as might contribute to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, programmes of work and the revision of NBSAPs.

#### **4.2 Targets and indicators**

The Conference of the Parties to the CBD, at its Tenth Meeting, invited FAO and its Commission, for areas within its mandate, to contribute to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 by refining targets for agricultural biodiversity, including at the ecosystem and genetic resources levels, and monitoring progress towards these targets using indicators. There is a need to streamline reporting and reduce its burden on their respective Members by facilitating synergy and coordination between the FAO Commission and the Conference of the Parties to the CBD regarding these matters.

- Both Secretariats will facilitate cooperation to enhance synergy and harmony between the FAO Commission and the Conference of the Parties to the CBD in identifying and promoting ways and means to strengthen monitoring and reporting on progress towards achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, using relevant sources of information and indicators.
- Both Secretariats will, where appropriate, promote and support the development and eventual use by countries of standardized indicators for global and regional monitoring, and foster streamlined reporting.
- Where appropriate, both Secretariats will cooperate towards the identification of relevant targets for agricultural biodiversity that are, or could be, used by other relevant processes and assist, where feasible, national governments to set relevant targets as a contribution to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and to the work of the FAO Commission.

#### **4.3 Best practices for the management of agricultural biodiversity**

Both Secretariats will continue to compile best practices concerning the management of agricultural biodiversity including genetic resources and ecosystem services that underpin sustainable agriculture, and disseminate these to their respective bodies and partners and to national authorities as means to facilitate progress towards the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and the work of the Commission.

- The CBD Secretariat will participate jointly with FAO in recognition of Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems and where appropriate, both Secretariats will promote and support dynamic conservation of agricultural heritage systems and similar initiatives that emphasize balance between conservation, adaptation and socio-economic development, to revitalize local territories and economies and sustainable conservation of agricultural biodiversity.

#### **4.4 Micro-organisms and invertebrates including the international initiatives on soil biodiversity and pollinators**

Both the Conference of the Parties to the CBD and the FAO Commission recognize the work carried out by FAO on soil biodiversity and pollinators and welcome the technical assistance provided to

further the understanding of their role and importance as providers of ecosystem services. During this period FAO will be developing a number of tools and protocols and will regularly inform the Conference of the Parties of the CBD Secretariat and the FAO Commission on progress made. The Joint Work Plan will aim to:

- Streamline information in both forums, in particular in relation to pollinators and soil biodiversity; and
- Raise awareness of the importance and value of pollinators and soil biodiversity in both forums.

The Commission, the Conference of the Parties to the CBD and both Secretariats have recognised that micro-organisms and invertebrates beyond the domains of soil and pollinators are also important components of genetic resources for food and agriculture which are currently given insufficient attention. The Joint Work Plan will aim to:

- Explore ways and means to improve the information availability for micro-organisms and invertebrates relevant to food and agriculture, other than soil biodiversity and pollinators, and share available information between them, with a view to promote the eventual provision of improved information to, the FAO Commission and the Conference of the Parties to the CBD (including, if appropriate, its Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice) and to their respective Members.

Both Secretariats will share and streamline information on the sustainable management of the delivery of ecosystem services provided by micro-organisms and invertebrates relevant to food and agriculture in their respective forums and will cooperate in the identification of key issues on micro-organisms and invertebrates for food and agriculture to be included in The State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture.

#### **4.5 Access and benefit sharing**

The Nagoya Protocol allows for the development and implementation of other relevant international agreements, including other specialized access and benefit-sharing agreements, provided that they are supportive of and do not run counter to the objectives of the Convention and of the Protocol.

- Both Secretariats will promote and support the entry into force, development and implementation of the Nagoya Protocol and eventually, if desirable, the development of specialized instruments related to the food and agricultural sector.

#### **4.6 Enhancing implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity at the national level**

Both Secretariats will facilitate the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the work of the FAO Commission (MYPOW) at national level by supporting, as required, revision of NBSAPs with respect to the implementation at the national level of international instruments such as Global Plans of Action for genetic resources.

#### **4.7 Climate change and genetic resources for food and agriculture**

The interface between climate change and biodiversity is an important issue at both the FAO Commission and the Conference of the Parties to the CBD. Both Secretariats will collaborate to explore the links between climate change and genetic resources for food and agriculture in particular in the following areas:

- Impact of climate change on genetic resources for food and agriculture;



- Lessons learned about ways and means to conserve and use genetic diversity to build resilience and adaptation to climate change in food and agriculture systems;
- Integration of genetic diversity considerations into climate change adaptation and mitigation planning; and
- Integration of climate change considerations in sectoral and cross-sectoral planning for genetic resources.

The intent is eventually to provide improved information on these subjects to the FAO Commission and the Conference of the Parties to the CBD (including, if appropriate, its Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice) and to their respective Members.

#### **5. Resource mobilization**

This Joint Work Plan is subject to the availability of resources for its implementation.

Nothing in this Joint Work Plan shall be binding on financial resources of either Secretariats unless mutually agreed in writing.

The CBD Secretariat and FAO will regularly consult each other to determine the availability of resources required to implement the activities under this Joint Work Plan and the most equitable way of meeting such expenditure, and, if resources are not available, the most appropriate ways to obtain them.

The FAO and CBD Secretariats may, preferably jointly or independently where necessary, seek in-kind and financial resources from other organizations and agencies, including funding agencies, for implementation of activities under this Joint Work Plan.

#### **6. Duration and timeline**


This phase of the Joint Work Plan concludes on 31 December 2020.

#### **7. Focal points for this Joint Work Plan**

As this Joint Work Plan is between FAO and the Secretariat of the CBD, it is agreed that the focal points for this Joint Work Plan shall be designated from within respective Secretariat staff. This does not preclude the designation of additional focal points in, for example, the various bureaus of the relevant subsidiary bodies or for specific technical matters in the relevant departments of FAO.

#### **8. Signature**

On behalf of the Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the United Nations



Alexander Müller  
Assistant Director-General  
Natural Resources Management  
and Environment Department

Date: 11 July 2011

On behalf of the Secretariat of the  
Convention on Biological Diversity



Ahmed Djoghlaoui  
Executive Secretary

Date: 11 July 2011