

March 2001



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para la
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y la
Alimentación

Item 3.2 of the Draft Provisional Agenda

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

**WORKING GROUP ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD
AND AGRICULTURE**

First Session

Rome, 2 - 4 July 2001

**UPDATING THE REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S PLANT
GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

CONTENTS

	<i>Para.</i>
1. Introduction	1 - 3
2. Towards a second report on the <i>State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture</i>	4 - 9
3. Guidance requested from the Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture	10

UPDATING THE REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

1. INTRODUCTION

1. The Twenty-sixth Session of the FAO Conference in 1991, and Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992, called for the development of periodic reports on the *State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* (PGRFA), and the preparation of a rolling *Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of PGRFA*, as part of the FAO Global System for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of PGRFA.

2. From 1993 to 1996, FAO coordinated a multi-donor Trust Fund for convening the Fourth International Technical Conference and for the preparation of both the first report on the *State of the World's PGRFA* and the *Global Plan of Action*, under the guidance of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA), in the context of the participatory country-driven process for the Conference, which actively involved 157 countries, fifty non-governmental organizations, and private sector associations. Country Reports and the *World Information and Early Warning System on PGRFA* (WIEWS) were a primary source of the baseline information used in the preparation of the report.

3. Summary and extended versions of the *State of the World's PGRFA* were prepared for the International Technical Conference, which welcomed the Report as the first comprehensive world-wide assessment of the state of plant genetic resources. The outcome of the International Technical Conference was endorsed by FAO Conference and welcomed by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).¹ The extended version of the Report² was peer-reviewed, edited and published by FAO in 1998.

2. TOWARDS A SECOND REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S PGRFA

4. The Commission, at its Eighth Regular Session, agreed that FAO should periodically assess the *State of the World's PGRFA*, which could facilitate the analysis of changing needs and gaps and contribute to the preparation of the rolling *Global Plan of Action*. It was agreed that the preparation of a second report of the *State of the World's PGRFA* and the amendment of the *Global Plan of Action* would be considered by the Commission after the completion of the negotiations for the revision of the International Undertaking, and that, in the longer term, a report on the *State of the World's Agricultural Biodiversity* might be envisaged.³ The importance of the FAO's report on the *State of the World's PGRFA* is also recognized in the CBD's Programme of Work, as a contribution to a comprehensive assessment of agricultural biodiversity.⁴

¹ Decision III/11.

² Chapter 1 - The State of Diversity; Chapter 2 - The State of *In Situ* Management; Chapter 3 - The State of *Ex Situ* Conservation; Chapter 4 - The State of Utilization; Chapter 5 - The State of National Programmes, Training Needs and Legislation; Chapter 6 - The State of Regional and International Collaboration; Chapter 7 - Access to Plant Genetic Resources, the Sharing of Benefits Derived from their Use and the Realization of Farmers' Rights; Annex 1 - State of the Art: Genetic Diversity, Conservation, Utilization, Legal and Economic. Annex 2 - State of Diversity of Major and Minor Crops.

³ CGRFA-8/99/REP, para. 19.

⁴ Decision V/5.

5. Updating the report on the *State of the World's PGRFA*, and monitoring the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*, are complementary processes that need to be carried out in unison.⁵ Supplemental, in-depth studies, in the context of the preparation of an updated *State of the World's PGRFA*, would provide further information on the implementation of specific activities of the *Global Plan of Action*. This would feed back into the proposed continuing and comprehensive monitoring of the *Plan's* implementation, which would itself substantially contribute to the periodic updating of the *State of the World's PGRFA*.⁶

6. In addition, the Commission may wish to examine and establish priorities in addressing gaps and shortcomings which it has already identified in the first *State of the World's PGRFA*,⁷ and advise on the role of the *World Information and Early Warning System on PGRFA* in this integrated process.⁸

7. It is proposed that the second *State of the World's PGRFA* be of a size similar to the summary version of the first report,⁹ and be supplemented by thematic studies to fill gaps, in particular, those identified by the Commission. Possible topics for such supplements could include:

- the state of diversity, conservation and use of specific crops not adequately covered in the first report (*e.g.*, forage crops, under-utilized species), and of crop wild relatives and wild plants of importance to food and agriculture;
- indicators for measuring plant genetic vulnerability and genetic erosion;
- methodologies for the use of PGRFA in crop improvement, including new approaches to plant breeding and new biotechnologies;
- the impact of national, regional and global agricultural policies and agreements on conservation and use of PGRFA;
- the impact of bio-safety and bio-security related issues on the conservation and sustainable utilization of PGRFA;
- plant genetic resource management at farmer and community level, and crop-associated biodiversity and agro-ecosystem management;
- the contributions of PGRFA to ecosystem services.

8. At the Hundred and Nineteenth FAO Council, in November 2000, it was agreed that the negotiations for the revision of the International Undertaking should be concluded by the Thirty-first FAO Conference in November 2001. In view of this timetable, the Working Group may wish to recommend that the preparation of thematic studies for the updating of the *State of the World's PGRFA* be initiated in early 2002, and coordinated with the process of monitoring the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action* proposed for 2004-2006.¹⁰ The updated report on the *State of the World's PGRFA*, including its thematic supplements, could then be prepared by 2006, and submitted to the Commission's Twelfth Regular Session.

⁵ CGRFA-7/97/REP, para 22.

⁶ CGRFA/WG-PGR-1/01/3, *Monitoring the Implementation of the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*, para. 15-23.

⁷ CGRFA-Ex2/96/REP, para. 10.

⁸ CGRFA/WG-PGR-1/01/6, *Progress Report on the World Information and Early Warning System on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*, para. 18.

⁹ 75 pages.

¹⁰ CGRFA/WG-PGR-1/01/3, *Monitoring the Implementation of the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*, para. 26.

9. Baseline information for the preparation of the second report on the *State of the World's PGRFA* is expected to become available from the comprehensive monitoring process proposed in document CGRFA/WG-PGR-1/01/3.¹¹ The Medium Term Plan for the Seed and Plant Genetic Resources Service, for the period from 2002 to 2007, includes resources for the compilation of information, as well as for the preparation and publication of the report on the *State of the World's PGRFA*, including three to four thematic studies. Should the Working Group and the Commission require further thematic studies, extra-budgetary resources will be needed.

3. GUIDANCE REQUESTED FROM THE WORKING GROUP ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

10. The Working Group may wish to provide guidance on actions to be taken by the Secretariat, *inter alia*, in relation to:

- the preparation of the second report on the *State of the World's PGRFA* (para. 4 - 8);
- the number and nature of the thematic areas to be addressed among those proposed in para. 7 and others that the Commission may wish to see addressed;
- the integration of the monitoring process for the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action* and the process of updating the *State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* (para. 5);
- the role of the *World Information and Early Warning System on PGRFA* in the updating of the *State of the World's PGRFA* (para. 6); and
- the mobilization of the necessary extra-budgetary funds (para. 9).

¹¹ Mobilization of extra-budgetary resources will be required for the proposed comprehensive monitoring process of the *Plan's* implementation as discussed in CGRFA/WG-PGR-1/01/3, para. 28 and 29.