

February 1999



منظمة الأغذية  
والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة

联合国  
粮食及  
农业组织

Food  
and  
Agriculture  
Organization  
of  
the  
United  
Nations

Organisation  
des  
Nations  
Unies  
pour  
l'alimentation  
et  
l'agriculture

Organización  
de las  
Naciones  
Unidas  
para la  
Agricultura  
y la  
Alimentación

## Item 2 of the Draft Provisional Agenda

### COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Eighth Regular Session

Rome, 19-23 April 1999

### PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA

#### 1. Election of the Chair and Vice-Chairs (*Item 1 of the Draft Provisional Agenda*)

The Commission elected an expanded bureau at its Seventh Session, in order to provide complete regional representation, especially in the context of the negotiating process for the revision of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources. The statutes of the Commission do not specify the number of vice-chairs.

#### 2. Adoption of the Agenda and timetable for the session (*Item 2 of the Draft Provisional Agenda*)

In order to facilitate the work of the Commission, the items proposed for the *Draft Provisional Agenda* of the Eighth Session at the Commission's Seventh Session (as given in document CGRFA-8/99/1) have been regrouped as below, in consultation with the Chairman. In particular, items relating to animal, and to plant genetic resources, have been brought together, *inter alia*, to facilitate Members' planning for experts' attendance.

In setting priorities for its work until the present session, the Commission, at its Seventh Regular Session, gave first priority to convening an extraordinary session of the Commission, devoted solely to the continuing negotiations for the revision of the International Undertaking; second priority to convening a session of its Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources; and third priority to convening a session of its Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources. The convening of these sessions was subject to the necessary funds being available in the Regular Budget of the Organization or from extra-budgetary sources. Due to financial constraints, and the heavy schedule of the negotiating process, no meeting of the Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources was held.

### **3. Revision of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources (*Item 4 of the Draft Provisional Agenda*)**

Negotiations on the revision of the International Undertaking, in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity, have continued, since the last regular session, at the Fourth and Fifth Extraordinary Sessions. The current *Consolidated Negotiating Text resulting from the deliberations during the Fifth Extraordinary Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* is contained in document CGRFA/IUND/CNT/Rev.1.

At its Fifth Extraordinary Session, “in order to facilitate progress, the Commission requested its Secretariat to carry out an analytical financial study on possible formulas for the sharing of benefits based on different benefit-indicators, establishing the respective total amounts and relative contributions corresponding to each country and region”: this study is in document CGRFA-8/99/8.

Document CGRFA-8/99/9, *Revision of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources: legal and institutional options*, updates document CPGR-6/95/9 (which has not yet been discussed by the Commission), and discusses, in particular, the legal status of the renegotiated Undertaking and related institutional questions.

The Council, at its Hundred and Fifteenth Session, mandated the Chairman to convene “an Informal Meeting of a Group of Experts, who, although attending in their personal capacity, would represent the various Regions and positions. This would help him identify areas of possible compromise, on which basis he would prepare Chairman’s draft elements for relevant articles, as appropriate”. The Meeting took place in Montreux, Switzerland, from 19 to 23 January 1999. In his Report to the Director-General (which will be available to the Commission as document CGRFA-8/99/13), the Chairman recommended that negotiations continue during the present Regular Session, while the ordinary business of the Commission is being conducted. Accordingly, the Commission may be asked to establish – as has been the case in previous sessions - a working group to continue the negotiations in parallel with the plenary meetings of the Commission, and arrangements have been made to allow for this.

### **4. Animal Genetic Resources**

#### **4.1 Report of the first session of the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (*Item 3 of the Draft Provisional Agenda*)**

The task given by the Commission to its Working Group in this biennium was to further the development of the Global Strategy for the Management of Farm Animal Genetic Resources, for consideration at this session. The Working Group met from 8 to 10 September 1998. Its report is in document CGRFA-8/99/2 (CGRFA/WG-AnGR-1/98/REP). This report was also considered by the Fifteenth Session of the Committee on Agriculture; the relevant extract from the report of that session is in document CGRFA-8/99/Inf. 4.

#### **4.2 Development of the Global Strategy for the Management of Farm Animal Genetic Resources (*Item 5 of the Draft Provisional Agenda*)**

In addition to the Report of the Working Group, the Commission has at its disposal the two main documents which the Working Group considered: CGRFA/WG-AnGR-1/98/2, *Identification of the Major Components of the Global Strategy for the Management of Farm Animal Genetic Resources and preparation of the Multi-year Workplan*, and

CGRFA/WG-AnGR-1/98/3, *The State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*.

#### **4.3 Future work of the Working Group, and election of its members (Item 10 of the Draft Provisional Agenda)**

The Working Group is composed of twenty-seven Members from the various regions, elected at each regular session of the Commission, and serving until the next regular session. They are eligible for re-election. Document CGRFA-8/99/Inf. 1 provides the list of Members of the Working Group, elected at the Seventh Session. In each biennium, the Commission needs to assign specific tasks to its Working Groups.

### **5. Plant Genetic Resources**

#### **5.1 Progress Report on the Global System for the Conservation and Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, and the implementation, monitoring and review of the Global Plan of Action (Item 6 of the Draft Provisional Agenda)**

The Commission coordinates, oversees and monitors the development of the Global System, which includes periodic *Reports on the State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources*; the rolling *Global Plan of Action*; an International Fund for Plant Genetic Resources;<sup>1</sup> the World Information and Early Warning System; the International Network of *Ex Situ* Collections under the Auspices of FAO, and other networks, including crop-related networks;<sup>2</sup> and Codes of Conduct and Guidelines, including the International Code of Conduct for Plant Germplasm Collecting and Transfer,<sup>3</sup> and a draft Code of Conduct for Biotechnology as it Relates to Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.<sup>4</sup>

The documents to be considered under this item deal with components of the Global System regarding which there have been important developments since the last session, with a particular focus on implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*. A number of components of the Global System – including the International Fund, and the *Global Plan of Action* - are also being discussed in the context of the revision of the International Undertaking.

With regard to the *Global Plan of Action*, the Seventh Session requested the preparation of “an overview report on the implementation of the Global Plan of Action for its next regular session”: document CGRFA-8/99/3, *Progress Report on the implementation of the Global Plan of Action on Plant Genetic Resources*, responds to this request, and provides information on relevant substantive issues. Document CGRFA-8/99/5 deals with process issues, and proposes plans for *Facilitating and monitoring the implementation of the Global Plan of Action on Plant Genetic Resources*, touching as well on the updating of the *Report on the State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources*. The Commission “stressed the need for a comprehensive study of existing and potential sources for funding of activities on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture”, and requested that the

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<sup>1</sup> Not yet established, and being discussed in the context of the negotiations for the revision of the International Undertaking.

<sup>2</sup> Information on crop-related networks is provided in document CGRFA-8/99/Inf. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Adopted by the FAO Conference, in 1993.

<sup>4</sup> Still under development.

“survey of expenditures on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture be updated in the framework of the priority areas of the Global Plan of Action”: document CGRFA-8/99/4, *Financing the implementation of the Global Plan of Action on Plant Genetic Resources*, responds to this request. On the basis of these documents, the Commission is invited to provide guidance on actions to be taken by the Secretariat, and, under item 4.2 below, on a possible work programme for the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources

The Seventh Session welcomed the arrangements that the Secretariat had made for an External review of the **World Information and Early Warning System on Plant Genetic Resources**, and requested that the review process be reported to the Commission: this review has taken place, and document CGRFA-8/99/6 reports on it.

With regard to the **International Network of *Ex Situ* Collections under the Auspices of FAO**, document CGRFA-8/99/7 provides a progress report, including on further agreements by which countries have brought material into the Network, as well as on questions that have arisen regarding intellectual property rights having been sought over material that the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research's Centres had designated to the Network, and the response of FAO and the Consultative Group.

## **5.2 Future work of the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, and election of its members (Item 10 of the Draft Provisional Agenda)**

The Working Group is composed of twenty-seven Members from the various regions, elected at each regular session of the Commission, and serving until the next regular session. They are eligible for re-election. Document CGRFA-8/99/Inf. 2 provides the list of Members of the Working Group, elected at the Seventh Session. In each biennium, the Commission needs to assign specific tasks to its Working Groups. The work given by the Commission to its Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources in the last biennium was to examine the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action* and related follow-up activities. In the event, no session of the Working Group was held since the last session of the Commission.

## **6. Consideration of FAO's policies, programmes and activities on genetic resources for food and agriculture (Item 7 of the Draft Provisional Agenda)**

FAO has reported on its programmes, policies and activities on genetic resources for food and agriculture to previous sessions of the Commission in order that the Commission may provide guidance. The Sixth Session requested that this be a specific item in the agenda of regular sessions. Document CGRFA-8/99/10 contains FAO's report.

## **7. International Cooperation in the field of genetic resources for food and agriculture, and cooperation with the Convention on Biological Diversity (Item 9 of the Draft Provisional Agenda)**

FAO has reported regularly to the Commission regarding its cooperation with the Convention on Biological Diversity, including through mutual reporting, *inter alia* on progress in the negotiations for the revision of the International Undertaking, in harmony with the Convention. Document CGRFA-8/99/12 reports on the period since the last session of the Commission. By Decision

III/11, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity requested the Executive Secretary “to invite the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, in close collaboration with other relevant United Nations bodies and regional and international organizations, to identify and assess relevant ongoing activities and existing instruments at the international level”, and report back on a phased basis to the Conference of the Parties through the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice: information is also provided on the results of this work.

**8. Reports from International Organizations on their policies, programmes and activities on agricultural biological diversity (*Item 8 of the Draft Provisional Agenda*)**

Previous sessions of the Commission have received reports from international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations on their programmes, policies and activities on genetic resources for food and agriculture. The Commission has regarded such reports “as an important contribution to its task in promoting coordination of activities in the field of agricultural biodiversity”, and “encouraged organizations to continue to submit reports to its regular sessions”. Reports received in time for printing are contained in document CGRFA-8/99/11. Verbal reports may also be made during the session.

**9. Future work of the Commission (*Item 10 of the Draft Provisional Agenda*)**

*Development of international agreements*

The Commission may wish to consider the further actions necessary for the finalization of the International Undertaking, for consideration by the Thirtieth Session of the FAO Conference, in November 1998.

At its Seventh Session, the Commission agreed that the possible updating of the International Code of Conduct for Plant Germplasm Collecting and Transfer, and any further work on the Code of Conduct for Biotechnology as it Relates to Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, should await the outcome of the revision of the International Undertaking. The Commission may wish to consider during this session how it could proceed with these codes of conduct, during the next biennium.

*Broadened mandate of the Commission: sectorial work*

At its Seventh Session, the Commission agreed that the broadening of its mandate would be implemented in a step-by-step process, starting with animal and plant genetic resources. It accordingly established subsidiary working groups for these two sectors. The Commission has been invited to assign tasks for these groups under items 4.3 and 5.2. It may also wish to consider whether and when to implement its broadened mandate to other sectors of genetic resources for food and agriculture, including forestry, fisheries, and possibly other resources, such as micro-organisms, and insects relevant to food and agriculture, should be implemented.

**10. Other business (*Item 11 of the Draft Provisional Agenda*)**

**11. Date and place of the next session (*Item 12 of the Draft Provisional Agenda*)**

**12. Adoption of the Report (*Item 13 of the Draft Provisional Agenda*)**