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COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

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REPORT FROM FAO ON ITS POLICIES, PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES ON AGRICULTURE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY: (3) PRIORITY AREAS FOR INTER-DISCIPLINARY ACTION (PAIAs)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		<i>Para.</i>
I.	Introduction	1-2
II.	Priority Areas for Inter-Disciplinary Action (PAIAs) of relevance to genetic resources for food and agriculture	3
	1. Biological Diversity for Food and Agriculture	5-12
	2. Biotechnology	13-22
	3. Organic Agriculture	23-28
	4. WTO Multi-lateral Trade Negotiations on Agriculture, Fisheries, and Forestry	29-32
	5. Biosecurity in Food and Agriculture	33-39
	6. Ethics in Food and Agriculture	40-45
III.	Guidance requested from the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture	46

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture regularly receives reports from relevant international organizations, including FAO, on their policies, programmes and activities of relevance to the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources for food and agriculture. These reports contribute to understanding in this area between FAO and its Commission, and other international organizations, and to the development of appropriate mechanisms for cooperation and coordination.
2. This report provides information on FAO's Priority Areas for Inter-Disciplinary Action (PAIAs) of relevance to genetic resources for food and agriculture. Sectorial activities are addressed in document CGRFA-10/04/10.1, and cross-sectorial activities are addressed in document CGRFA-10/04/10.2. Document CGRFA-9/02/10 Annex provides information on FAO's technical consultations, training courses and workshops, and publications, of relevance to genetic resources for food and agriculture. Reports submitted by other organizations are in documents CGRFA-9/02/11.1, CGRFA-9/02/11.2 and CGRFA-9/02/11.3.

II. PRIORITY AREAS FOR INTER-DISCIPLINARY ACTION (PAIAs) OF RELEVANCE TO GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

3. Priority Areas for Inter-disciplinary Action have been established within FAO as part of an overall effort to strengthen the capacity for inter-disciplinary planning (i.e. problem identification, goal formulation, priority setting, monitoring and evaluation), to develop fully the new programme model based on cross-sectorial planning; and to enhance mechanisms within and between units for the cross-sectorial aspects of programme implementation. Each PAIA develops cooperative mechanisms to facilitate planning, implementation monitoring and eventual evaluation.
4. This report provides an overview of the main activities being undertaken in six of the PAIAs that are most relevant to the work of the Commission: Biological Diversity; Biotechnology; Organic Agriculture; WTO Multi-lateral Trade Negotiations; Biosecurity; and Ethics in Food and Agriculture.

1. Integrated Management of Biological Diversity for Food and Agriculture

5. The Integrated Management of Biological Diversity for Food and Agriculture PAIA (PAIA/BIOD) is implemented by the Inter-Departmental Working Group on Biological Diversity for Food and Agriculture (IDWG/BIOD), which continues to be the main mechanism for coordination of all FAO activities on biological diversity. The programmatic approach and vision, as expressed in the Medium-Term Plan 2002-07 and activities of staff members have seen the Working Group evolve from a coordinating function to active promotion and inter-disciplinary analysis of problems related to biological diversity. These analyses apply ecosystem approaches to a wide and growing range of technical and policy issues that arise in the course of FAO's work for member countries, as well as in FAO's relations with partner organizations. The PAIA/BIOD increases synergies among and lessons learned by staff of technical units responsible for biological diversity in agriculture, fisheries, and forestry.
6. The PAIA/BIOD provides a coherent and substantial contribution to the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). This involves, among other things, a Joint programme of Work on Agricultural Biodiversity between the Secretariats and chairing the Liaison Group on Agrobiodiversity. In 2002-03, areas of cooperation with the CBD have

expanded, and now cover forest biological diversity, mountain biological diversity, coastal and marine biological diversity. Initial discussions have taken place on cross-cutting initiatives such as biodiversity for food and nutrition, and a global partnership on biodiversity. The PAIA/BIOD has become the main institutional interface with the CBD Secretariat and other interested partners, such as IPGRI.

7. The PAIA/BIOD also maintains technical linkages with the FAO-hosted Secretariats of: the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food Agriculture also acting as the interim Committee for the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture; the International Plant Protection Convention; the Cooperative Partnership on Forests; and relevant articles of the Code of Conduct on Responsible Fisheries.

8. The PAIA/BIOD provides the technical entry point for the FAO-International Planning Committee (IPC) Working Group on Agroecology. The IPC, representing some 2000 civil society organisations worldwide, organised the NGO/CSO Forum for Food Sovereignty (FFS) in parallel with the World Food Summit: five years later in June 2002. The consultative process for this collaboration includes common initiatives, including pilot field projects with NGO partners on family- and community-based agroecology. Requests from over ten Member Governments for these projects were received by the end of the 2003.

9. The PAIA/BIOD delivery is facilitated by extra-budgetary support from the FAO Netherlands Partnership Programme. The Agro-biodiversity Theme of this Programme (totalling over US \$3 million in non-staff resources for the 2002-03 biennium) allowed the implementation of a number of normative and field activities. Also, a series of information products were produced, including posters, an awareness folder, illustrated workbooks for children, multi-media monographs, and photographic publications, all featuring biodiversity and ecosystem services in agro-ecosystems.

10. A Satellite Event on Biodiversity and the Ecosystem Approach in Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries was organized on the occasion of the Ninth Regular Session of the Commission 12-13 October 2002. The 11 case studies presented produced guidance, including tools for assessing and improving the conservation outcomes of sustainable agriculture, fisheries, and forestry interventions. Discussions emphasised interdisciplinary activities, such as: animal-plant-soil; traditional/cultural versus market-driven; and/or cultivated versus wild and associated biodiversity. Field activities followed and case studies on pollination and on organic production of medicinal, aromatic, and dye plants led to successful efforts to obtain new multi-year extra-budgetary funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD). These efforts included governmental, non-governmental, and international research system partners from Asia, Latin America, and Sub-Saharan Africa.

11. Biological diversity, including also agricultural biodiversity, continues to grow as an increasingly important global environmental concern. Non agriculture-related institutions are gradually expanding their area of work to sustainable use and access and benefit sharing of biodiversity. The PAIA/BIOD is well placed and leveraged among inter-governmental and non-governmental networks to continue to provide technical expertise on how ecosystem approaches and a focus on community level indigenous knowledge can increase the range of benefits from agriculture biodiversity. With experience in nearly all developing countries and with engagement of professional networks, the PAIA/BIOD can continue to assist governmental policy makers and encourage them to seek enhanced inter-sectorial partnerships.

12. Guidance is being sought from the Commission on how the PAIA/BIOD could best serve the Commission to strengthen the integrated management of biological diversity for food and agriculture.

2. Biotechnology Applications in Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

13. A major role of the Biotechnology PAIA is to provide Members of FAO with updated, factual and comprehensive information on international developments relating to agricultural biotechnology applications. In 2001, the FAO Biotechnology website (<http://www.fao.org/biotech/index.asp>) was launched in Arabic, Chinese, English, French and Spanish. This site has become increasingly popular since then (in 2003 it was visited approximately 240 000 times and almost 800 000 webpages were viewed). Since January 2002, over 300 news and events items have been posted on the homepage of the website, more than half of these were about biotechnology-related activities/meetings/documents that were organized or co-organized by FAO. News and event updates are also regularly provided to 3 200 subscribers through the e-mail newsletter FAO-BiotechNews, available in English, French and Spanish.

14. The FAO Biotechnology Forum (<http://www.fao.org/biotech/forum.asp>) provides a neutral platform for the exchange of views and experiences on biotechnology in food and agriculture for developing countries. The Forum has 2 400 members, and since 2000 it has hosted 11 moderated e-mail conferences on topics such as the regulation of GMOs, and most recently, the use of biotechnology in food processing. These conferences have seen very active participation from developing countries. In early 2005, the Forum plans to host a conference on the role of biotechnology for the conservation and characterization of crop, forestry, livestock and fishery genetic resources in developing countries. The conference will be preceded by an international workshop to be held in March 2005 on the same theme, in Turin, Italy.

15. FAO-BioDeC was launched in 2003 (<http://www.fao.org/biotech/inventoryadmin/dep/default.asp>). This is a searchable database providing information on crop biotechnology products/techniques in use or in the pipeline in developing countries, backed-up by a network of national correspondents. It was recently expanded to include information regarding biotechnology-related policies, regulations and activities of individual developing countries, and will soon include information from the livestock and forestry sectors.

16. The Biotechnology PAIA collaborated with FAO's Media Relations Office in the preparation of "Agricultural biotechnology: will it help?" (<http://www.fao.org/english/newsroom/focus/2003/gmo1.htm>). Released in 2003 in Arabic, English, French and Spanish, this series of nine articles provides background information for non-specialists on current and potential applications of agricultural biotechnology (focusing on genetic modification) for animals, crops, fish and trees. It also presented the main arguments put forward for, and against, the use of GMOs in agriculture, and provided links to other information sources.

17. The Biotechnology PAIA co-ordinated FAO's response to the World Food Programme's request in 2003 for guidance on its "Draft Operational Guidelines on the Donation of Foods Derived from Biotechnology".

18. In 2004, FAO published the latest edition of the State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA 2003-04), which considered the theme "Agricultural biotechnology: meeting the needs of the poor?" (<http://www.fao.org/newsroom/en/news/2004/41714/index.html>). The subject was examined comprehensively in nine chapters grouped under three main headings: framing the debate; the evidence so far; and making biotechnology work for the poor. The Biotechnology PAIA contributed to this major FAO publication by providing background material, technical support, financial support, and undertaking reviews.

19. The Biotechnology PAIA is currently undertaking compilation of an "FAO Agriculture Biotechnology Policy Compendium: Options and Impacts". This will cover all policy options and related aspects that are relevant to biotechnology in food and agriculture, including *inter alia*; options for developing regulatory frameworks and legal instruments for fostering research and technology transfer and for assessing safety; and promoting capacity-building and societal dialogue. The main objective is to assist decision makers, in particular those engaged in the food

and agriculture sector, to enable them to better pursue their domestic policies and enhance their capacity to respond to the opportunities and challenges offered by biotechnology in a rational and consistent manner. Subject to availability of resources, the Compendium will be available in all official languages, and used as a basis for capacity-building through workshops, distance learning courses and other outreach activities.

20. The Biotechnology PAIA prepared a Concept Note on a Biotechnology Programme for Food and Agriculture. This proposal encompasses activities over a three-year period to address the needs of developing countries and countries in transition for assistance to strengthen their policy, institutional and technical capacities for using biotechnology within their food and agriculture sector. It is conceived as a flexible structure that will be refined in scope and content according to both the level of resources and the priorities of the stakeholders-including governments, potential donors and concerned regional bodies and institutions.

21. With support of the Biotechnology PAIA, a review was commissioned of "Biotechnology in Forestry, including Genetic Modification". This will be published in late 2004.

22. The Commission is requested to identify key questions of a policy, regulatory or technical nature regarding biotechnology and genetic resources for food and agriculture that they may wish the Biotechnology PAIA to address in future.

3. Organic Agriculture

23. During the Ninth Regular Session of the Commission, a Satellite Event on Biodiversity and the Ecosystem Approach in Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries was held. One of the case studies was prepared by the Organic Agriculture PAIA (PAIA/ORGa) to illustrate experiences in "Organic Agriculture and Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture". There were questions raised with regard to production, characterization, evaluation, breeding and exchange of genetic resources appropriate to low-input conditions that are typical of organic systems.

24. Organic seed related work, as implemented by the organic agriculture community, includes pertinent questions such as establishment of participatory propagation and breeding networks as well as simple and practical systems of equitable sharing of benefits derived from genetic resources developed for organic agriculture. As a result, FAO, with the International Federation for Organic Agriculture Movement and the International Seed Federation, decided to organize the First World Conference on Organic Seeds, Rome, 5-7 July 2004.

25. In order to further explore the potential role of organic agriculture in providing positive connections within the wider environment, the PAIA/ORGa prepared a case-based document entitled "The Scope of Organic Agriculture, Sustainable Forest Management and Ecoforestry in Protected Area Management", as a background document to the Ninth Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Montreal, Canada, 10-14 November 2003. The document identified that opportunities and constraints of ecological agricultural systems, such as organic agriculture, require enhanced investments in ecological research, but mostly depend on successfully creating partnerships and joint planning between the agriculture and environmental sectors. As a follow-up, the PAIA/ORGa is cooperating with IUCN and ICRAF in organizing the First International Ecoagriculture Conference, Nairobi, Kenya October 27, 2004.

26. In response to the request by the Commission during its Ninth Regular Session for FAO to analyze "the impact of organic agriculture on the economies of developing countries", the PAIA/ORGa has prepared a Conceptual Framework for the Assessment of the Impact of Organic Agriculture on the Economies of Developing Countries. This handbook contains the methodology to follow for this impact assessment, including economic, environmental and social indicators. The proposed methodology will be discussed through an E-conference scheduled for September, 2004. Field applications of the methodology will be conducted in selected countries, subject to the availability of extra-budgetary resources.

27. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of Turkey called on the PAIA/ORGA to support a Workshop on Biodiversity and Organic Agriculture, Ankara, 15-16 April 2003. The breadth of the issues put forward in this meeting created a new dialogue between the agriculture, forestry and environment sectors, including both public and private sector institutions. The workshop demonstrated that conservation and development needs can be reconciled through organic agriculture, provided that due policy support is given to its development. A direct follow-up to the workshop was the formulation of a large project for the Development of Organic Agriculture in Turkey, which is currently under consideration by the European Community for funding.

28. Guidance is being sought from the Commission on how the PAIA/ORGA could best serve the Commission to undertake its work on genetic resources for food and agriculture.

4. WTO Multi-lateral Trade Negotiations on Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

29. The objective of this WTO Multi-lateral Trade Negotiations PAIA (PAIA/WTO) is to support Member Countries, particularly developing countries and countries in transition, with a view to increasing their capacity to participate effectively in international trade negotiations and to better integrate into global trade in food, agricultural, fishery and forestry products. It is focused on capacity building for trade, and involves normative and operational field activities. The PAIA/WTO work is designed to cover components of:

- Information and analysis (analysis of country proposals, assessment of experience, etc.);
- Training and capacity-building; technical advice on investment in trade-related infrastructures and on legal frameworks; and
- Facilitation of developing country participation in the new WTO negotiations on agriculture.

30. The following activities were undertaken during the biennium 2002-03:

- a) Studies were prepared in the following areas:
 - Recent developments in commodity markets and trade, with a focus on global food security trends;
 - Medium-term projections to the year 2010, and commodity market review;
 - Analyses of 23 country case-studies on the implementation experience of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture;
 - Fifteen country case-studies were developed on the impact of trade reforms on food security; and
 - Several analytical papers and information were assembled regarding the implications of alternative proposals emerging from the agenda on trade negotiations.
- b) The FAO trade website (www.fao.org/trade) has been improved to provide up-to-date information and analysis on various issues relating to trade in agriculture. In addition, statistics and analysis have been provided on food import bills of LDCs and NFIDCs, agricultural trade situations in small developing economies and single commodity exporters, and world price variability.
- c) Trade-related capacity building activities in support of Members were organised at three levels:

- National capacity-building projects and activities were implemented in more than 15 developing countries providing support in analyzing trade-related issues, implementing trade agreements and preparing for trade negotiations.
 - Regional and sub-regional training activities and technical assistance were organised for more than nine regional economic groupings. The regional groupings included: Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), Union Economique et Monetaire oust Africaine (UEMOA), Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), African Union, NEPAD, Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD), South Pacific Island States, several South American countries, and Central American Countries that participated at a workshop under FAO's Umbrella Programme.
 - At the global level, the PAIA/WTO provided support to the agriculture-related WTO negotiations through, *inter alia*, informal briefings/roundtables held in Geneva in concert with the special sessions of the WTO Committee on Agriculture, and covering the main topics that were on the agenda for negotiations. During 2002-03, five roundtables and a symposium were organized for the benefit of WTO negotiators on issues related to development and food security.
- d) The PAIA/WTO organised FAO participation in the last two WTO Conferences – Doha and Cancun. In both Conferences, besides the FAO statement, a number of activities were undertaken and material distributed, including side events, symposia, fact-sheets, briefing materials, and media activities. For the Cancun Conference, a total of 13 fact-sheets were prepared including on issues related to SPS/TBT, TRIPS (plant varieties and biodiversity, traditional knowledge and benefit-sharing and geographical indication), fisheries and forestry.

31. Recent and on-going activities and events of particular relevance to agricultural biodiversity include the following:

- a) The TRIPS Agreement requires a review of Article 27.3(b), which deals with patentability or non-patentability of plant and animal inventions and the protection of plant varieties. The Doha Declaration has extended the TRIPS Council review process to also look at the relationship between the TRIPS Agreement and the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the protection of traditional knowledge and folklore. It adds that the TRIPS Council's work on these topics is to be guided by the TRIPS Agreement's objectives (Article 7) and principles (Article 8), and must take development issues fully into account. Since then, discussions in the TRIPS Council have gone into considerable detail with a number of ideas and proposals for dealing with these complex subjects. Topics raised include: how to apply the existing TRIPS provisions on patenting biotechnological inventions; the meaning of effective "sui generis" protection for new plant varieties including the question of allowing farmers to continue to save and exchange seeds that they have harvested; how to deal with traditional knowledge, folklore and genetic material, and the rights of the communities where these originate; and how to implement the TRIPS Agreement and the Convention on Biological Diversity together.
- b) In June 2003, the FAO published new [guidelines for assessing the potential risk to plants and plant products posed by living modified organisms](#) (LMOs). These guidelines were adopted in April 2003 by the Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures, the governing body of the International Plant Protection Convention

(IPPC). The IPPC is recognised by the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) as the international organisation responsible for standard-setting related to plant health. The guidelines were developed to protect the plant and crop ecosystems from potential risks arising from the introduction of LMOs, such as insects, fungi and bacteria. They stress that measures to manage pest risks caused by LMOs should be cost-effective, feasible, not more trade restrictive than necessary and non-discriminatory.

32. Guidance is being sought from the Commission on how the PAIA/WTO could best serve the Commission to undertake its work on genetic resources for food and agriculture.

5. Biosecurity in Food and Agriculture

33. Since its inception in 2002, the FAO Biosecurity PAIA continues to work to further the concept and the implementation of a *Biosecurity* approach to holistically analyse and manage risks in the fields of food safety, animal life and health, and plant life and health, including the associated environmental risks.

34. To further explore the relevance of a *Biosecurity* approach, Expert and Technical Consultations on Biological Risk Management in Food and Agriculture (including Fisheries and Forestry) were held in 2002 and 2003, respectively.

35. In order to facilitate the exchange of *Biosecurity*- related information, FAO, under the direction of the Biosecurity Inter-Department Working Group, is leading an interagency initiative to develop an Internet-based portal to provide an authoritative search for current standards, regulations and other relevant official materials relating to Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures. Version 1.0 of the portal was launched on May 25, 2004, and work will continue to further develop the content of the portal.

36. To increase coordination of integrated *Biosecurity*-related technical assistance at the national level, both within FAO and between other partner agencies, FAO is involved in a Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), first developed in 2002. The funding mechanism of the STDF will enable financial resources for selected capacity building projects in the areas of food safety, plant and animal health, with special preference given to integrated projects, which can be used as a model for implementation in other geographic and disciplinary areas.

37. A paper has recently been prepared to outline FAO's role in Biosafety in food and agriculture. Efforts are currently underway to establish a Biosafety sub-group of the *Biosecurity* and Biotechnology PAIAs, and to adopt a corporate FAO policy and vision on biosafety. Plans are also underway to hold an FAO expert consultation on Biosafety.

38. In order to assist countries to implement this *Biosecurity* approach, a series of tools are planned or under development. These tools include a *Biosecurity* Risk Analysis manual, a *Biosecurity* Capacity Evaluation tool, and proposed Guidelines for developing and implementing *Biosecurity* national frameworks. Once completed, all of these tools will be pilot tested in selected countries for further implementation by FAO member countries.

39. Guidance is being sought from the Commission on how the *Biosecurity* PAIA could best serve the Commission to undertake its work on genetic resources for food and agriculture.

6. Ethics in Food and Agriculture

40. The Ethics in Food and Agriculture PAIA (PAIA/ETHI) plays a number of important roles within FAO. The PAIA/ETHI prepares and supports meetings of the Panel of Eminent Experts in Food and Agriculture; implements and oversees a technical work programme to mainstream ethical considerations within FAO's work; and coordinates the preparation of studies within the *FAO Ethics Series*. A full description of the PAIA/ETHI was provided to the last

Regular Session of the Commission in document CGRFA-9/02/14.3. Activities since the last session are reported on here.

41. The Director-General established the Panel of Eminent Experts to advise him on pressing ethical issues in food and agriculture. The Panel held its second session in Rome from 18-20 March 2002, at which it discussed six main themes¹: 1) ethical aspects of the global emergency of hunger 2) ethical limits and challenges in the intensification of agriculture 3) ethics and the economic globalization in food and agriculture 4) sharing the benefits of biotechnologies as part of the advancement of science 5) TRIPS, UPOV and Farmers' Rights 6) GMOs and ethics in decision-making: participation, monitoring and accountability.

42. The Panel addressed a number of issues and ideas that relate directly to genetic resources for food and agriculture and related biotechnologies, and the work of the Commission. These are:

- The Panel noted that most research and resulting biotechnologies were produced in the North, while the genetic resources that were the building blocks to which they applied the technologies were found mainly in the South. The Panel welcomed the adoption of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources as a multilateral agreement with important ethical dimensions, which had the potential to counterbalance privatized patent or plant breeders' rights over genetic resources (along with resulting commercial products under the TRIPS Agreement) with collective farmers' rights over the same genetic resources. The International Treaty could serve to ensure that monetary benefits were equitably shared. The Panel also took note with interest of the recent legislation on this subject in India, which dealt in a single legal act with Farmers' Rights and patent or plant breeders' rights.
- In relation to biotechnologies, major concerns of the Panel were those of ensuring the participation of stakeholders in decision-making, the sharing of benefits of modern technologies, and research into technologies that could benefit poor farmers. The Panel emphasized the need for international instruments, such as the Code of Conduct on Biotechnology that includes specific reference to public participation in decision-making in biotechnology.
- The Panel underlined the importance of avoiding the singular term "biotechnology", which tended to lump together many different biotechnologies and considered that such language caused confusion in the debate over the relative usefulness or risks of the many different technologies.

43. The *FAO Ethics Series* was launched in 2000 and aims at publishing one paper per year. Its main purposes are, to promote ethical reflection and constructive dialogue, and to clarify the issues underlying current public debate in ways which help both policy-makers and the public at large to become more informed of issues. The first two issues, ("Ethical Issues in Food and Agriculture" and "Genetically Modified Organisms, Consumers, Food Safety and the Environment"), were reported on during the last Regular Session of the Commission. Two new publications are being finalized, "The Ethics of Sustainable Agricultural Intensification" and "Ethics and Globalization of Food and Agriculture". As described below, two further studies are in preparation on "Ethical Issues in Fisheries" and "Global Public Goods in Food and Agriculture".

¹ Its report is at <http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/005/Y8265E/Y8265E00.HTM>.

- “The Ethics of Sustainable Agricultural Intensification” (published in 2004) reviews ethical issues that arise from the history of agricultural intensification, and proposes a framework for analysing the ethical issues surrounding modern agricultural intensification, and in particular, how sustainability can be ensured. It focuses on informing decision-making, using a variety of approaches, including utilitarian, rights-based and virtue-based ethics.
- “Ethics and Globalization of Food and Agriculture” (under preparation) will seek to explore the term, “globalization” and to distinguish which major current changes are attributable to “globalization”. It will address ethical issues relating to the effects of globalization in terms of hunger, poverty, and equality.

44. An increasing number of interdisciplinary activities related to ethics are being undertaken by FAO. FAO Readings in Ethics is a new series that brings together the results of these activities as an integral part of the Organization's Regular Programme of Work. The series complements the FAO Ethics Series and the Reports of the Panel of Eminent Experts. The first publication under the FAO Readings in Ethics is called “FAO Expert Consultation on Food Safety: Science and Ethics”.

45. The Commission has on a number of occasions considered issues with an ethical dimension, including, for example, the conservation of genetic resources for food and agriculture in the interests of future generations, and questions of equity involving the use of genetic resources for food and agriculture, such as those in relation to Farmers' Rights and the need for and development of codes of conduct. The Commission is invited to provide advice on further work such as: subjects on which the Panel of Eminent Experts might be invited to address; possible themes for studies within the context of the FAO Ethics Series; and ethical considerations to be taken into account in further activities of the Commission.

III. GUIDANCE REQUESTED FROM THE COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

46. In the closing paragraphs of each of the individual PAIAs in the previous section, specific requests for guidance have been addressed to the Commission. The Commission may wish also to express its views and make suggestions on any other of the policies and activities covered in this document, which the PAIAs can take into consideration when carrying out their specific tasks, and when planning for the future.