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منظمة الأغذية
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para la
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y la
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Item 8 of the Draft Provisional Agenda

COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

**Second meeting of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
acting as the Interim Committee for the International Treaty
on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture**

Rome, 15 - 19 November 2004

REPORT ON THE STATUS OF THE GLOBAL CROP DIVERSITY TRUST

Table of Contents

	<i>Para.</i>
I. Introduction	1 - 7
II. Interim Panel of Eminent Experts	8 - 12
III. Constitutional Matters	13 - 22
IV. Status of the Fund	23 - 24
V. Matters for Consideration by the Interim Committee for the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture	25 - 26

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I. INTRODUCTION

Overview

1. The Global Crop Diversity Trust is being established within the framework of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, as an element within the Treaty's funding strategy. It will operate under the policy guidance of the Governing Body of the Treaty as an independent international fund whose goal is to support the efficient and effective *ex situ* conservation of crop diversity for the long term. At its centre is an endowment that will provide a permanent source of funding for important crop diversity collections around the world. The intention is to raise a minimum of \$260 million from governments, corporations, foundations, non-governmental organizations and individuals. Its success will greatly enhance agricultural research and assure the viability of crop collections for the future. The Trust will promote and assist the development of an effective global arrangement for crop diversity conservation and will provide technical and capacity building assistance to eligible collections, particularly those in developing countries, seeking to meet the Trust's criteria for long-term funding.

Origin of the Trust

2. The idea of establishing an endowment to match long-term funding to the long-term nature of conservation has been discussed within the genetic resources community for a number of years. Following extensive consultations with FAO, constituencies in developed and developing countries, the Global Forum for Agricultural Research and the NGO community, the CGIAR's¹ International Centres Week 2000 agreed to proceed with a formal study of the feasibility of a major campaign to raise endowment funds to support national, regional and international *ex situ* genetic resources collections.

3. The study concluded that it would be possible to raise very significant funds to support the conservation of the genetic resources of key agricultural crops and that \$260 million was a feasible first target.

4. The campaign to establish the Trust was launched in August 2002 at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, as a joint initiative of FAO and IPGRI acting on behalf of the Future Harvest Centres of the CGIAR.

Reports to Ninth Regular Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and to the Second Session of the Commission's Inter-governmental Technical Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

5. The Global Crop Diversity Trust² was presented to the Ninth Regular Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in October 2002. The Commission endorsed the initiative.³ In particular it noted that the Trust was being established to "*provide, in perpetuity, a flow of funds for ex situ conservation by national and international institutions, and for relevant capacity-building*" and that it "*would operate in the framework of the International Treaty, and be an essential element of its Funding Strategy.*" The Commission hoped that the Trust would "*attract new and additional funds from a wide-range of donors*" and "*stressed the need for the Governance of the Trust to work in a transparent and efficient manner*".

¹ The Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research.

² Then called the Global Conservation Trust.

³ See paragraphs 49 and 50 of the report of the 9th Regular Session of the Commission, which can be found at <http://www.fao.org/ag/cgrfa/docs9.htm>.

6. In addition the Commission requested that progress regarding the Trust be reported at sessions of its Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

7. Accordingly, a report was presented to the second meeting of the Working Group in November 2003. The Working Group welcomed the progress that had been made on the Trust since the last regular meeting of the FAO Commission and called on donors to provide funds for the work of the Trust. It noted that the Constitution of the Trust required that it operate under the policy guidance of the Governing Body of the International Treaty.

II. INTERIM PANEL OF EMINENT EXPERTS

Mandate and membership

8. Following extensive discussions, the Directors-General of FAO and IPGRI appointed eleven individuals (see *Annex I*) to serve on the Interim Panel of Eminent Experts, the body responsible for overseeing the establishment of the Global Crop Diversity Trust. Their mandate includes ensuring the effective establishment of the institutional and financial mechanisms of the Trust and the smooth transition of governance from the Interim Panel of Eminent Experts to the Executive Board, which will be the governing body of the Trust once it is fully established. The Interim Panel of Eminent Experts also bears a responsibility for overseeing and carrying out fund-raising activities on behalf of the Trust and in the interim may receive and consider requests for support of activities relevant to Trust objectives.

Work undertaken by the Interim Panel of Eminent Experts

9. The Interim Panel of Eminent Experts has accomplished much in the four meetings held to date. It has:

- developed and adopted a Constitution and the Establishment Agreement by which governments will formally establish the Trust;
- developed a draft Relationship Agreement between the Trust and the Governing Body of the International Treaty for the consideration of the Governing Body and the Executive Board;
- developed Rules of Procedure for the consideration of the Executive Board;
- initiated development of a financial model and business plan;
- established an Interim Committee on Finance and Investment;
- established an interim financial mechanism;
- approved Financial Regulations on an interim basis;
- established interim principles and criteria for determining whether a collection holder is eligible for funding by the Trust; and
- established a committee to lead the international search for the Executive Secretary of the Trust.

Interim Measures

10. The Executive Board of the Trust is scheduled to hold its first meeting in 2005. In the meantime, the Interim Panel of Eminent Experts will exercise the powers of the Executive Board as appropriate and necessary for the establishment of the Trust. A Donor Council is also being established on an interim basis to exercise the functions defined in the Constitution. The role and responsibilities of the Executive Secretary are exercised by the Interim Executive Secretary, Geoffrey Hawtin, who has been appointed by FAO on the recommendation of the Interim Panel of Eminent Experts. All interim structures will exercise their powers and perform their functions in a manner that is consistent with the Establishment Agreement and Constitution approved by the Interim Panel of Eminent Experts, subject to conformity with FAO and IPGRI procedures.

11. The Trust will award grants for upgrading, capacity building and for the long-term maintenance of collections in accordance with regional and crop-based strategies. The development of these strategies has already been initiated with the participation of all key stakeholders including genebank managers, the regional agricultural research forums, and experts from developing and developed countries.

12. In making grants to crop diversity collections during this interim period, the Interim Panel of Eminent Experts will apply the interim eligibility principles and criteria it has developed.

III. CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

Objective of the Trust

13. According to its Constitution, the Trust has the following objective:

1. *The objective of the Trust is to ensure the long-term conservation and availability of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture with a view to achieving global food security and sustainable agriculture.*
2. *The Trust shall in particular, without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing,*
 - a) *endeavour to safeguard collections of unique and valuable plant genetic resources for food and agriculture held ex situ, with priority being given to those that are plant genetic resources included in Annex I to the International Treaty or referred to in Article 15.1(b) of the International Treaty;*
 - b) *promote an efficient goal-oriented, economically efficient and sustainable global system of ex situ conservation in accordance with the International Treaty and the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (hereinafter referred to as “the Global Plan of Action”);*
 - c) *promote the regeneration, characterization, documentation and evaluation of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture and the exchange of related information;*
 - d) *promote the availability of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture; and*
 - e) *promote national and regional capacity building, including the training of key personnel, with respect to the above.*

Adoption of the Establishment Agreement and Constitution

14. The Establishment Agreement and annexed Constitution of the Global Crop Diversity Trust were adopted by the Interim Panel of Eminent Experts at its second meeting in October 2003.⁴ On 13 February 2004, the documents were conveyed to all Governments by the Director-General of FAO with the request that they consider signing the Establishment Agreement. Follow-up letters were also sent by the Director-General of IPGRI and the Chair of the Interim Panel of Eminent Experts inviting countries to sign the Establishment Agreement.

Status of signature of the Establishment Agreement and entry into force of the Trust

15. The Establishment Agreement was opened for signature at FAO on 1 April 2004. The Agreement will come into force when it has been signed by at least seven countries from at least five of the FAO regions. At the time of writing this paper (24 August 2004), the Agreement had been signed by ten countries from four of the FAO regions: Egypt (1 April), Cape Verde (1 April), Jordan (15 April), the Republic of Togo (4 May), the Kingdom of Morocco (21 June), the

⁴ These are available on the internet at <http://www.startwithaseed.org/items/governance.php>.

Syrian Arab Republic (25 June), Samoa (29 June), Ethiopia (9 July), Peru (23 August) and Tonga (23 August).

Governance of the Trust

16. The organs of the Trust will be:
 - the Executive Board;
 - the Donor Council;
 - the Executive Secretary; and
 - such technical panel of experts or panels of experts or other arrangements as the Executive Board may establish.
17. The main body responsible for governing the Trust will be the Executive Board, operating under the policy guidance of the Governing Body of the International Treaty. It will be responsible for setting policies, overseeing financial and investment management and awarding grants.
18. In accordance with the Constitution, the Executive Board shall consist of the following members:
 - Four members, at least two of whom shall be from developing countries, appointed by the Governing Body of the International Treaty or, prior to the entry into force of the International Treaty, the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture acting as Interim Committee for the International Treaty;
 - Four members, at least one of whom shall be from a developing country, appointed by the Donors' Council;
 - One member appointed by the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations who shall operate in a technical capacity only and shall not have the right to vote;
 - One member appointed by the Chair of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research who shall operate in a technical capacity only and shall not have the right to vote;
 - The Executive Secretary of the Trust as a member *ex officio*;
 - The Executive Board may appoint two additional members to ensure overall balance amongst its membership, in particular with regard to diversity in disciplinary backgrounds, geographical representation, gender, and competence in fundraising and financial management.
19. Before making their appointments, the parties appointing members of the Executive Board shall consult with each other with a view to ensuring that the Executive Board has the balance and the range of skills necessary for it to perform its functions effectively.

Relationship of the Trust to the International Treaty

20. The Trust is being established as an independent international fund which is an element of the funding strategy of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. It will therefore operate under the policy guidance of the Governing Body of the Treaty and will report to the Governing Body on a regular basis.
21. It is envisaged that the Executive Board of the Global Crop Diversity Trust will enter into an agreement with the Governing Body of the International Treaty, defining the relationship between the Trust and the International Treaty. This Relationship Agreement would include the following:
 - recognition of the Trust as an essential element of the funding strategy of the International Treaty;
 - recognition of the authority of the Governing Body of the International Treaty to provide overall policy guidance to the Trust on all matters within the purview of the International Treaty; and

- reporting obligations of the Trust to the Governing Body of the International Treaty.

22. It is anticipated that the agreement would be signed by the Chair of the Executive Board and the Director-General of FAO, acting on behalf of the Governing Body of the International Treaty.

IV. STATUS OF THE FUND

Moneys available and promised

23. To date (24 August 2004), the Trust has raised about US\$45 million in endowment and project funds, with another US\$60 million under discussion. Funds have been provided, or pledged, by developed and developing country governments, private corporations, foundations and a farmers' organization.

Award of grants

24. The first proposals for grants will be presented to the Interim Panel of Eminent Experts at its meeting on 13-14 October 2004. The proposals will be for upgrading and capacity building activities. It is anticipated that the Trust will be in a position to award a small number of grants by the end of 2004.

V. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE INTERIM COMMITTEE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL TREATY ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

25. The Interim Committee for the Treaty is invited to consider asking its Bureau, or possibly setting up a working group, to work with the Trust on matters of mutual concern until the first meeting of the Governing Body. It is proposed that the group would, in particular:

- appoint, in consultation with other appointing bodies and on an interim basis, four members to the Executive Board of the Trust pending a final decision on membership by the Governing Body; and
- prepare any other items of mutual concern for the consideration of the Governing Body.

26. The group would also be consulted by the Executive Board on the appointment of the Executive Secretary of the Trust.

ANNEX I

MEMBERS OF THE INTERIM PANEL OF EMINENT EXPERTS

Ambassador Fernando Gerbasi (Venezuela)

- Chairman, Interim Panel of Eminent Experts, the Global Crop Diversity Trust
- Former Chairman of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
- Former Chairman of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture Acting as Interim Committee for the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

Andrew Bennett (UK)

Executive Director, the Syngenta Foundation

Lukas Brader (the Netherlands)

Former Director-General, International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Nigeria

Lewis Coleman (United States)

President, Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation

Tewolde Gebre Egziabher (Ethiopia)

General Manager, Environmental Protection Authority, Ethiopia

Walter Fust (Switzerland)

Director-General, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

Geoffrey C. Hawtin (UK/Canada)

Interim Executive Secretary, the Global Crop Diversity Trust

Chebet Maikut (Uganda)

- President, Uganda National Farmers Federation (UNFFE)
- Chair, International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP) Committee on Science and Technology

Mohammad H. Roozitalab (Iran)

Deputy Director-General, Agricultural Research and Education Organization, Iran

Setijati Sastrapradja (Indonesia)

Senior Scientist, Indonesian Institute of Sciences

Ismail Serageldin (Egypt)

Director, New Library of Alexandria, Egypt