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para la
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y la
Alimentación

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COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Eleventh Regular Session

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FOLLOW UP TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE REGARDING PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

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**FOLLOW UP TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION ON GENETIC
RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE REGARDING PLANT
GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its Tenth Session, the Commission on made recommendations on certain elements of the FAO Global System and on other aspects related to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. It also requested the Inter-governmental Technical Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture to provide guidance and advise, in particular, on activities undertaken by FAO, including through its Commission, to support the work of the Governing Body of the International Treaty, in relation to the supporting components, to review and provide guidance on monitoring the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and sustainable use of Plant genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*, and provide guidance on the Organization's activities for capacity-building to support the utilization of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, through seed systems and plant breeding and genetic enhancement.¹ The Inter-governmental Technical Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture met from 26 to 28 October 2005.²
2. This document provides a summary of follow-up activities, and requests the Commission to further guide work on certain elements.

**II. FOLLOW UP TO RECOMMENDATIONS ON CERTAIN ELEMENTS OF THE
GLOBAL SYSTEM FOR THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE
USE OF PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD
AND AGRICULTURE**

3. The Commission recommended the continuation of work related to the Global System, and requested that a paper be prepared on actions taken by the Commission and on its future work in relation to the Global System.³ This section summarizes follow-up work on particular elements of the Global System, and proposes a way of action for consideration of the Commission.

**2.1 The Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant
Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture**

4. The *Global Plan of Action* is a supporting component of the International Treaty and a reference for the establishment of priorities of its Funding Strategy and is overseen by the Commission.⁴ It provides an operational framework for the development of national programmes on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, and for regional and international cooperation.
5. At its last meeting, the Inter-governmental Technical Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture suggested that the Commission should encourage countries to establish or strengthen national committees to support such implementation.

¹ CGRFA-10/04/REP, paragraph 38.

² Its report is document CGRFA-11/07/10 (CGRFA/WG-PGR-3/05/REPORT).

³ This information is provided in CGRFA-11/07/16, *Mechanisms for Cooperation between the Commission and the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*.

⁴ CGRFA-11/07/16, paragraphs 10-12.

6. Follow-up work is presented on two mechanisms by which FAO is supporting the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*: the Facilitating Mechanism for the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*, and the new approach for monitoring the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*.

2.1.1 Facilitating Mechanism for the implementation of the Global Plan of Action

7. At its Tenth Regular Session in 2004, the Commission supported the objective, the operational principles, the activities and the operational structure of the Facilitating Mechanism as given in *Appendix 1* to this document. The objective of the Facilitating Mechanism is “to facilitate the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action* and to encourage the mobilization of technical and financial resources to do so.” The operational structure specifies that the Commission and the Working Group will provide overall guidance to the Facilitating Mechanism. It provides for the Facilitating Mechanism to be hosted by FAO and to operate in partnership with IPGRI (now Bioversity International) in a way that attracts and accommodates other international organizations to become partners, as agreed by the Commission. The current partners are FAO, Bioversity International and the Global Forum for Agricultural Research (GFAR).

8. The proposal for the Facilitating Mechanism foresaw Regular Programme budget allocations and extrabudgetary resources needed to carry out the proposed activities. It has not yet proven possible for FAO to raise the extra-budgetary resources required, but with the limited resources available, FAO has started in cooperation with its partners, the implementation of selected activities. In particular, extra-budgetary resources from Germany together with Regular Programme budget allocations from FAO and Bioversity International have allowed the development of a web-based information portal prototype. Following the identification of the technical requirements and, with the recommendations of FAO information technology specialists, the use of a suitable content management system was decided. This portal will provide information on sources and availability of financial, technical and information resources, related subjects. This responds to the fast activity of the Facilitating Mechanism (see *Appendix 1*). Approximately US\$475,000 additional extra-budgetary resources will be required to carry out all the proposed activities during the next biennium 2008-2009. FAO will contact donors to attempt to raise this money.

9. In Resolution 1/2006, the Governing Body of the International Treaty requested the Commission to support the development of the Funding Strategy, in the context of its work in relation to the supporting components of the Treaty, including the *Global Plan of Action* and its Facilitating Mechanism.⁵ It further decided that information on the mandates, policies, eligibility criteria and procedures of funding bodies will be collected and maintained by the Secretariat of the International Treaty and made available to Contracting Parties through the website of the Treaty, and that the Facilitating Mechanism could complement this activity by collecting and providing information on relevant available funds from the Parties.⁶

10. The portal, which will be online from 1st of June 2007, the following URL www.globalplanofaction.org, will respond to this request. A database of potential funding sources for projects and programmes contributing to the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action* will compile more than 200 searchable donor profiles, containing a summary about the donor institution, the scope of funding of the respective donor (target subjects, target countries, target groups) and the type of funding provided.

11. Furthermore the portal will serve as an access point to information related to the *Global Plan of Action*, and the *Report on the State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*. The portal is also a source of other information relevant to the implementation of the

⁵ IT/GB-1/06/Report, paragraph 17.

⁶ IT/GB-1/06/Report. *Appendix F*, paragraph 13.

Global Plan of Action, including codes of conduct and guidelines, networks, germplasm-databases and key documents in the field of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

12. The Working Group recommended to the Commission that the Facilitating Mechanism reports periodically on its activities to the Commission and the Inter-governmental Technical Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture on Plant Genetic Resources. The reports should include information about priorities for action that have been identified by stakeholders, and project proposals developed with the assistance and coordination of the Facilitating Mechanism upon request from stakeholders. In order to be able to provide these services in support of the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*, the funds required for the implementation of the full proposed set of activities of the Facilitating Mechanism will need to be secured. This would make it possible for the Commission to propose priorities to the Governing Body of the International Treaty for consideration as appropriate under the Treaty's funding Strategy, and for the Facilitating Mechanism to take into account priorities established and activities carried out by the Governing Body under the Funding Strategy.⁷

13. The Commission may accordingly wish to:

- a. Encourage countries to provide the extra-budgetary resources needed to carry out the full set of activities proposed for the Facilitating Mechanism;
- b. Request its Working Group to review the work of the Facilitating Mechanism at its next meeting, in the light of the real financial resources available.

2.1.2 Monitoring the Implementation of the Global Plan of Action

14. The Commission at its Tenth Session recognized the importance of an efficient system for monitoring implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*, in terms of planning, priority-setting and achieving the mobilization of financial resources to support national plant genetic resource programmes. It reviewed progress in developing its new approach for monitoring implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*, which promotes a country-driven, participatory and capacity-building process, culminating in the establishment of national information-sharing mechanisms. It supported the application of the new monitoring approach to all countries, in view of the integration of these monitoring activities with the preparation of the second *State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*. The Commission invited the Future Harvest Centres to collaborate with FAO in both processes.⁸

15. The Working Group recommended that the Commission invite the Governing Body of the International Treaty to utilize the new approach for monitoring the implementation of the Global Plan of Action, with its main outputs (the establishment of National Information Sharing Mechanisms and capacity-building, as well as the information provided) as an essential element contributing to the Global Information System.⁹ FAO has written countries to name or confirm National Focal Points.¹⁰ Since then, 73 countries have responded to FAO's call for nomination or confirmation of 80 National Focal Points for the implementation of the Global Plan of Action.

16. Approximately 40 countries have finalized or are in the final steps of the establishment of their national information sharing mechanisms, 35 of which have prepared a country report on the state of plant genetic resources. Table 1 provides a summary of some key data available through the databases developed. As reported to the Commission at its Tenth Regular Session, extra-budgetary needs to apply the new monitoring approach to all countries were estimated at US\$ 20,000 per country. The current unmet extra-budgetary needs for 80 further countries are US\$

⁷ CGRFA/WG-PGR/3/05/REPORT, paragraph 12.

⁸ CGRFA-10/04/REP, paragraph 26.

⁹ CGRFA/WG-PGR-3/05/REPORT, paragraph 17.

¹⁰ CGRFA/WG-PGR-3/05/REPORT, paragraph 23.

1,600,000.¹¹ The Working Group recommended that the Commission appeal to donor countries as well as international bodies, such as other UN agencies, the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility, to assist by providing this financial support.

17. The Commission may therefore wish to appeal to donors to provide the necessary funds.

Table 1. Indicative list of projects, cultivars and publications for which detailed information can be accessed from WIEWS and the National Mechanisms databases.

Country	Projects	Cultivars	Publications
Azerbaijan	259	1304	712
Bolivia	156	138	192
Cuba	1065	985	1120
Czech Republic	264	2772	520
Ecuador*	160	35	35
Egypt*	-	942	16
Fiji	32	-	85
Ghana*	334	83	317
India	1171	5240	4736
Kazakhstan	228	747	741
Kenya*	214	381	86
Laos*	28	166	23
Lebanon	229	1082	224
Jordan*	30	67	76
Oman*	8	35	37
Mali*	88	1890	92
Malaysia	734	1925	805
Pakistan*	33	448	-
Peru	246	309	581
Philippines	95	918	592
Papua New Guinea	39	-	21
Togo*	51	409	24
Thailand	115	954	1123
Uzbekistan	132	733	358
Vietnam	83	8634	83
Total	5794	30197	12599

(WIEWS, March 2007)

* Preliminary data

2.2 The World Information and Early Warning System on PGRFA

18. The World Information and Early Warning System (WIEWS) on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture was established by FAO as part of the FAO Global System to foster exchange of information among member countries, to support the periodic assessment of the *State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* and to alert the international community about erosion threats.

19. WIEWS has been further developed under the guidance of the Commission. Since 1998, WIEWS is accessible through the Internet and in 2000, an improved web version including

¹¹ CGRFA-10/04/5, Follow-up to the recommendations of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and its Working Group, regarding plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, paragraph 32.

remote updating features, was released to allow countries to directly manage their own information via the Internet. Automatic capture of accession-level information on *ex situ* collections from international, regional and national web databases (e.g. the Nordic Genebank, SINGER, USDA-GRIN, etc.) was developed in 2002.

20. The information in WIEWS mainly derives from direct contributions from member countries channelled through 79 officially appointed National Focal Points for reporting on the implementation of the Global Plan of Action and 103 WIEWS correspondents nominated by them. They update the WIEWS database either on-line or through the databases under their National Information Sharing Mechanisms on the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*.

The role of WIEWS in monitoring the Global Plan of Action

21. In line with its mandate, WIEWS and its network of focal points and correspondents have played a mutual supporting role in the application of the new approach for monitoring the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action* and in strengthening information management capacity in member countries. Today WIEWS provides hosting and/or mirroring support to the websites and databases of more than 35 National Information Sharing Mechanisms, developed as a result of these processes.

22. Both the volume and quality of the information on conservation and utilization of plant genetic resources accessible through WIEWS has increased, due to the considerable effort concerted by the officially nominated National Focal Points with support of national stakeholders (see *Table 1*). Information on national efforts to push forward each of the 20 priority activity areas of the *Global Plan of Action*, which was previously scattered and hard to reach, is now organized, accessible and downloadable through Internet as well as through widely used and inexpensive digital supports such as CDs.

23. Access to updated information available in databases established under National Mechanisms is facilitated through a prototype portal developed under WIEWS, whose interface is presently available in 18 languages.¹² The portal allows distributed text searches in all or selected country databases.

24. WIEWS includes also other information relevant to PGR. Recent examples include a Seed Relief Agro-Ecological Information Tool for identifying the optimum period for delivery of seed of the most important food crops in the different agro-ecological zones of the member countries, published by FAO. The tool is to be used in planning and management of activities related to seeds and crops, in particular in the timely provision of seeds and planting materials to vulnerable farmers after disasters.

25. The Commission may wish to support the further updating and improvement of WIEWS, also in the light of the recommendations of the Working Group as stated in paragraph 15 above.

2.3 Other elements of the Global System

2.3.1 An international network of *in situ* areas under the auspices of FAO.

26. The Commission has on a number of occasions discussed the development of a network of *in situ* areas, as part of its global system, but no practical applications have yet been developed. In the context of the development of the Second State of the World of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, it requested the priority preparation of a thematic background study on the conservation of crop wild relatives.¹³ A Background Study Paper¹⁴ on

¹² Arabic, Azeri, Chinese, Czech, English, French, Georgian, German, Italian, Lao, Malay, Norwegian, Portuguese, Russian, Slovak, Spanish, Thai, Vietnamese

¹³ CGRFA-10/04/REPORT, paragraph 31.

the *in situ* conservation of crop wild relatives is available for the information of the Commission. The document analyses the feasibility of developing a network of *in situ* conservation areas, on the basis of existing protected areas. The Commission is invited to make any observation it wishes on the further development of its work on *in situ* conservation of crop wild relatives.

2.3.2 The International Code of Conduct for Plant Germplasm Collection and Transfer

27. The Tenth Regular Session of the Commission decided that the Code of Conduct needs not at present be updated, but consideration of the *Code* should remain on its agenda.¹⁵ The Commission may wish to consider if and when to begin such updating.

2.3.3 Genebank Standards

28. The Commission adopted genebank standards in 1993, and have since provided the international benchmark. The Working Group, at its Third Session, recommended that the Commission should continue to monitor and update such standards as required, in particular, for the collections of the CGIAR and other international institutions. The Commission may wish to request, the FAO technical services, and Bioversity International to prepare a report on the possible need for updating the feedback standards with the aim of adopting updated standards, if necessary, at its Thirteenth Session.

III. OTHER RELATED WORK BY FAO ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

3.1 Strengthening seed systems

29. The relevance of strengthening seed systems is fully acknowledged in the *Global Plan of Action*, mainly in its priority activity areas 3 and 13. The Commission recommended FAO a gap analysis, to explore how the Commission might contribute toward strengthening seed systems in a way that complements efforts by other organizations. Some countries members of the Commission voiced also the need for capacity building to strengthen seed systems in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in partnership with other initiatives. FAO responds to country members' requests for assistance in three main areas: development or strengthening seed production and supply, participatory development of seed regulatory frameworks, including recently biosafety, and seed systems rehabilitation after disasters, including seed emergency and relief.

30. In pursuing implementation of priority area 13 of the Global Plan of Action, FAO is engaged in promoting participatory processes for the development of seed regulatory frameworks that will create effective national seed councils, strengthen the linkage of research, extension, seed services and the farmers, and in the compatibility of seed regulatory aspects to facilitate the movement of seeds among countries. At the countries request five projects were approved and implemented in the period 2004-2006 for the national and regional seed policy development in the Republic of Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Gambia, West and central Africa and SADN countries, and the ECO region, with emphasis on Central Asia. The Working Group at its Third Session stressed the importance of FAO's efforts to increase the market share of farmers and seed producers in developing countries, particularly in fragile agro-ecosystems, encouraging the development, as appropriate, of mechanisms and legislation to this end, and recommended that the Commission request FAO to develop a draft plan to formulate appropriate seed policy and regulatory regimes.¹⁶

¹⁴ Background Study Paper No.39: *In situ* conservation of crop wild relatives: Status and Needs.

¹⁵ CGRFA-10/04/REPORT, *Appendix E*, Study B.

¹⁶ CGRFA/WG-PGR-3/05/REPORT, paragraph 26.

31. Following increasing requests for support, FAO has included in its Regular Programme of work and budget for 2006-2007 technical assistance to provide policy advice and support to enhance national capacity in plant biosafety, including development of biosafety regulatory frameworks, and training for detection of GMO in seed lots.
32. Seed systems development projects were implemented in the Union of Myanmar, Honduras, Sierra Leone, Republic of Cameroon, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Syrian Arab Republic and Uzbekistan, with a total budget of US\$5, 8 million. In addition, and upon request, further sub-regional technical training courses on advanced methodologies for GMO seed detection were organized in collaboration with ISTA for the Greater Mekong Subregion, Central Asian region and the Caribbean Subregion. At the request of the African Union, FAO is helping to develop an *Africa-wide seed and biotechnology programme* for the development of efficient and integrated seed systems by strengthening continental, regional and national policies and capacity for germplasm conservation, variety improvement, seed production and extension, improving seed quality assurance procedures, strengthening linkages between formal and informal sectors and promoting national seed industries.
33. In the area of seed emergency and relief, FAO has implemented a total of 83 projects in 31 countries approved in the biennium 2005-2006 for a total of US\$65, 5 million, and 74 projects approved in 2004 in 37 countries for a total of US\$41, 5 million. Examples of such projects include *Emergency provision of quality seeds and rehabilitation of certified seed production to assist vulnerable farmers in conflict-affected areas* of Sri Lanka, *Emergency assistance to vulnerable households in Darfur, Kassala, Red Sea, South Sudan and the Transitional zones of Sudan*, and *Support to the reestablishment of food security and strengthening of capacities of local community organizations* in Burundi. Considering the increasing relevance of FAO interventions in this area, the Working Group recommended at its Third Session, that the Commission prepare guidelines, taking into account lessons learned and best practices on seed relief and rehabilitation during and after disaster situations.
34. FAO has also started initiatives for the development of seed information systems, particularly for disaster prone areas, on availability, adaptability and other characteristics of commercial crop varieties and landraces, as a vital element in the planning of actions related to the restoration of seed systems after disaster situations, including the identification of appropriate seed material for reintroduction.
35. The Commission may wish to:
- a. Take note of the main FAO activities in seed systems development in the period 2004-2006.
 - b. Request FAO to further identify gaps and needs of countries at national regional and global levels that may help developing countries and countries in transition to build strong and effective seed systems, for example through the development of seed information systems.
 - c. Request FAO to develop a draft plan to formulate appropriate seed policy and regulatory regimes.
 - d. Request FAO to draft guidelines on seed relief and rehabilitation, during and after disasters, and request its Working Group to review these, and forward them with any recommendations necessary, to its Thirteenth Session.

3.2 Toward the sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture: strengthening plant breeding

36. At its Tenth Session, the Commission considered the recommendations of the Working Group in relation to the assessment of national capacities and priorities in plant breeding. In the last four years information has been gathered from sixty-nine member countries and these

assessments are providing a foundation for strategic advice and actions on how national governments and the research and development community can strengthen national plant breeding strategies and programs. In considering progress, the Working Group at its Third Session further expressed concern about the decreasing trends of plant breeding activities shown by the surveys carried out by FAO, and stated that new opportunities for effective partnerships could be identified between the public and the private sector and with the involvement of the Future Harvest Centres.¹⁷

37. In light of the results of the global survey still ongoing, and echoing countries requests at the last Session of the Commission,¹⁸ FAO and partners launched the Global Initiative for Plant Breeding Capacity Building (GIPB) during the First Session of the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture held in Madrid, in 2006. The goal of the Initiative is to strengthen capacities of the developing countries and those with economies in transition to improve their productivity through sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture using better breeding and seed delivery systems. The GIPB initiative has recently obtained a grant of US\$ 1.5 millions from the Gates Foundation, which will be used to advance this work in the next biennium.

38. The Working Group also recognized the need for a balanced approach between the use of traditional and modern technologies, including biotechnology in plant breeding, and recommended that the Commission request FAO to prepare an options paper, taking into account the views of the Working Group, and aimed at strengthening plant breeding, including, *inter alia*, all issues related to capacity-building.

39. In light of the follow-up activities and the need for additional resources for continuation of work, the Commission may wish to:

- a. Request FAO to prepare a draft optional paper, on how to strengthen plant breeding, and relevant capacity-building in developing countries, and request its Working Group to review this and forward it with any recommendation necessary to its next session.
- b. Recommend that more countries participate in the survey;
- c. Appeal to donors to make more resources available in support of capacity-building for plant breeding in developing countries.

3.3 Cultivar specific Nutrient Composition data

40. The Commission request the Working Group, at its Third Session, to provide guidance to FAO on how it might best support countries on request, to generate compile and disseminate cultivar-specific nutrient composition data. The Working Group recommended that FAO prepare a draft action plan for this purpose, and provided substantial guidance on what the focus should be. The Commission may wish to request FAO to prepare a draft action plan, taken into account the recommendations from the Working Group. It may also wish to request its Working Group to review, if necessary, the draft action plan, and forward it with many recommendations to its Thirteenth Session.

IV. GUIDANCE SOUGHT FROM THE COMMISSION

41. Requests for guidance are addressed to the Commission at the end of text dealing with each section, in particular in paragraphs 13, 17, 25, 26, 27, 28, 35, 39, and 40.

¹⁷ CGRFA/WG-PGR-3/05/REP, paragraph 26.

¹⁸ CGRFA-10/04/REP, paragraph 33.

*Appendix***OBJECTIVE, OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES, ACTIVITIES AND OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE FACILITATING MECHANISM*****Objective***

To facilitate the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*, and to encourage the mobilization of technical and financial resources to do so.

Operational principles

The Facilitating Mechanism:

- a) must add value to existing activities by identifying new opportunities and avoiding duplication of efforts;
- b) should promote innovative partnerships and creative solutions to obstacles to *Global Plan of Action* implementation;
- c) should facilitate the engagement of more diverse interests in the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action* in order to catalyze the involvement and resources of new partners;
- d) should promote and assist collaboration and coordination of related activities among those engaged in the implementation of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and other relevant international agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- e) shall operate in accordance with national sovereignty, through National Focal Points where desired by governments, and encouraging national level ownership of implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*. It shall respond to requests from countries;
- f) should operate in such a manner that external resources are focused on a country's priority needs and complement a country's own investments in the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action* in accordance with national capacities;
- g) should utilize the results of monitoring the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action* to assist in identifying gaps and priorities in that implementation;
- h) must operate in a transparent manner;
- i) should assist in promoting linkages between plant genetic resources conservation and utilization and sustainable development; and
- j) should promote the involvement of stakeholders, including farmers, the plant breeding sector and the seed sector, in the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*.

Activities of the Facilitating Mechanism

The Facilitating Mechanism should:

- a) provide information on:
 - i. sources and availability of financial, technical, material and information resources;
 - ii. linkages among stakeholders;
 - iii. donor and recipient priorities, roles and conditions;
 - iv. best practices and standards and procedures;
 - v. success stories;
 - vi. networking;
 - vii. plans, commitments, targets and indicators; and

- viii. any other information regarding resources necessary to implement the *Global Plan of Action*.
- b) facilitate and catalyze new partnerships to implement the *Global Plan of Action* by promoting meetings and dialogue to create opportunities among a wide-range of interests involving donors and recipients; international organizations; civil society organizations including farmers' organizations and foundations; plant breeders and the seed sector; and other private sector interests.
- c) facilitate awareness at all levels, of the roles and values of plant genetic resources in order to mainstream plant genetic resources. Target audiences should be carefully identified
- d) assist stakeholders, upon request, to develop, in a manner that avoids conflict of interest, project proposals and package proposals to enhance their quality, including to facilitate action planning at the wider level (by crops, thematic areas, and/or regions) to:
 - i. assess the status and implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*
 - ii. identify need and gaps;
 - iii. assist in setting milestones and targets; and
 - iv. engage a wide-range of stakeholders.

Operational Structure

- a) The Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and its Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources will provide overall guidance to the Facilitating Mechanism;
- b) The Facilitating Mechanism should be hosted by FAO and operated in partnership with IPGRI in a way that attracts and accommodates other international organizations to become partners, as agreed by the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture;
- c) The operational procedures should enable and encourage the direction of financial and other resources to support the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*;
- d) The operational structure should be designed to enable the Facilitating Mechanism to take greatest advantage of the available technical capacity within FAO and IPGRI, as well as agreed partners.

The operational structure should encourage the participation of a wide range of stakeholders.