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منظمة الأغذية
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Food
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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 Provisional Agenda

COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Seventh Session

Rome, 15-23 May 1997

PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA

1. Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair

During its Third Extraordinary Session in December 1996, the Commission agreed to expand its Bureau, in order to provide complete regional representation. It also agreed that the first expanded Bureau would be elected at the current Session. The statutes of the Commission do not specify the number of vice-chairpersons.

2. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable for the Session

The Third Extraordinary Session, in discussing the arrangements for the present session, considered, in particular, “the need to expedite and focus negotiations for the revision of the [International] Undertaking, and consider follow-up to the *Global Plan of Action*”. It recommended that, “after the opening session of the Commission to elect Bureau members and formalize other organizational matters, regional groups would meet on the remainder of the Thursday [15 May] and on the Friday [16 May] preceding the Commission to discuss and agree, as appropriate, on regional proposals. During the weekend, the Bureau of the Commission would compile, and the Secretariat would translate, the various texts proposed, with the Bureau consolidating them where possible”.

The current session is the first regular session since the decision to broaden the Commission’s mandate: the Third Extraordinary Session accordingly noted that adequate time would need to be allocated to animal genetic resources. It requested that “the time-table for this exercise should be set out in advance, so as to make it possible for the experts concerned to plan for travel to Rome.”¹

3. Revision of the terms of reference and procedures of the Working Group(s), and election of its officers

The Sixth Session of the Commission considered revised statutes for its Working Group, but decided to leave the matter pending, because of the possible broadening of its own mandate. The November 1995 Conference subsequently agreed (by Resolution 3/95) to broaden the mandate of the Commission to cover all aspects of genetic resources of relevance to food and agriculture, in a step-by-step process, starting with animal genetic resources. In November 1995, the Council then adopted (by Resolution CL 1/110) interim statutes of the broadened Commission, which are available as document CGRFA-7/97/Inf. 1: these provide that the Commission may establish “intergovernmental technical sectoral working groups..., with appropriate geographical balance, to assist [the Commission] in the areas of plant, animal, forestry and fisheries genetic resources”.

An *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources met in January 1997, at the request of the 1995 Conference, and recommended that the Commission establish an Inter-governmental Technical Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources (its report is document CGRFA-7/97/10). The Commission, at its Third Extraordinary Session, recommended that the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) consider this report in detail, to facilitate the work of its current session: the relevant extracts from the report of the Fourteenth Session of COAG are given in document CGRFA-7/97/Inf. 2. The Commission may also wish to consider transforming its existing general Working Group into an Inter-governmental Technical Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources. Draft Terms of Reference for both these proposed sectoral working groups, and a report from the Director-General on the programme, administrative and financial implications, are given in document CGRFA-7/97/2.

If the Commission decides to establish the sectoral working groups, it should decide on their Terms of Reference and elect their officers for the next biennium. If not, and the existing Working Group is maintained, the Commission will need to elect its officers for the biennium.

4. Report of the Fourth International Technical Conference

The Fourth International Technical Conference on Plant Genetic Resources - for which the Second Extraordinary Session of the Commission acted as a preparatory committee - was held in Leipzig, Germany, from 17 to 23 June 1996. The Conference welcomed the first *Report on the State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources* and adopted the first *Global Plan of Action* and the *Leipzig Declaration*. The *Leipzig Declaration*, the *Global Plan of Action*, and the *Report on the State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources*, as presented to the Technical Conference, are available to the Commission.

The present item is for information only: follow-up to the Technical Conference is covered under item 5.

5. Progress Report on the Global System for the Conservation and Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and Follow-up of the Fourth International Technical Conference

The Commission coordinates, oversees and monitors the development of the Global System, which includes the Commission itself, the International Undertaking, periodic *reports* on the *State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources* (5.1), the rolling *Global Plan of Action* (5.2), an International Fund for Plant Genetic Resources (5.3),² the World Information and Early Warning System (5.4), Codes of Conduct and Guidelines (5.5), the International Network of *Ex Situ* Collections under the Auspices of FAO (5.6), an international network of *in situ* conservation areas (5.7), and crop-related networks (5.8). The Global System involves the work of a number of FAO units, especially the Plant Production and Protection Division, the Forestry Department and the Legal Office.

Under this item, the Commission is expected to provide guidance in further developing the Global System and its components as well as its relationship to the Convention on Biological

Document CGRFA-7/97/3 gives an overview of the Global System and its components, focusing on progress since the last regular session, and on follow-up to the Fourth International Technical Conference. Other documents relevant to the consideration of some of the components are indicated below.

A progress report on follow-up to the Fourth International Technical Conference on Plant Genetic Resources was presented to the Third Extraordinary Session, which postponed its consideration until the current session, in document CGRFA-EX3/96/Inf. 1 (now CGRFA-7/97/4). It also postponed consideration of the revised cost estimates for the *Global Plan of Action*, which, as requested by the Technical Conference, were provided in document CGRFA-EX3/96/Inf. 1 Annex (now CGRFA-7/97/4 Annex).

The full *Report on the State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources* has undergone a technical peer review. The guidance of the Commission is requested concerning the financial implications of publishing the full Report in the language in which it was prepared, English, and translating it into other languages. The Commission's guidance regarding the frequency of future reports, as well as procedures for the preparation of the second *Report*, is also sought.

In adopting the first *Global Plan of Action*, the Fourth International Technical Conference reiterated that national governments and other Members of FAO should monitor and guide its implementation, through the Commission. To assist the Commission in this function, the Conference suggested that it develop a phased programme, with appropriate cost estimates, and a procedure for the review of the *Plan*. Secretariat proposals in this regard are contained in document CGRFA-7/97/5, for the consideration of the Commission.

The Third Extraordinary Session, and the Fourth International Technical Conference, stressed the need to assemble information on current levels of expenditure on plant genetic resources conservation and utilization. Document CGRFA-7/97/6 suggests procedures for assembling such information. Matters related to international funding for plant genetic resources conservation and utilization, including the possible establishment of the International Fund requested in FAO Resolution 3/91 (or of windows within existing funding mechanisms), will be discussed within the context of item 8, in relation to the realization of Farmers' Rights.

The Commission will consider progress made in the development of the International Network of *Ex Situ* Collections under the Auspices of FAO; the extension of the current agreements with the CGIAR Centres, due to expire in October 1998; and a proposed agreement with the International Coconut Genetic Resources Network (COGENT).

In line with the request by the Sixth Session, progress on the development of *Decision Guidelines on Regeneration* and *Guidelines for the management of field and in vitro genebanks* will be reported to the Commission.

6. Reports from international organizations on their programmes, policies and activities on genetic resources for food and agriculture

Previous sessions of the Commission have received reports from international governmental and non-governmental organizations on their programmes, policies and activities on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. Following the broadening of the Commission's mandate, the Secretariat has invited a wide range of relevant organizations to report, and to cover in their new reports all aspects of genetic resources for food and agriculture.

Reports received in time for printing are contained in document CGRFA-7/97/7. Verbal reports may be made during the session.

7. Consideration of FAO's programme and activities on genetic resources for food and agriculture

Following the Conference's decision to broaden the Commission's mandate in a step-by-step process, starting with animal genetic resources, FAO's usual Report regarding plant genetic resources (document CGRFA-7/97/8.1) is complemented by a further report regarding other fields of agricultural biological diversity, with special emphasis on animal genetic resources (document CGRFA-7/97/8.2).

8. Continuation of negotiations for the revision of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources

Conference Resolution 7/93 requested the Director-General to provide for negotiations among governments, in the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture,³ for the adaptation of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources, in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity.⁴

In the process of these negotiations, the Third Extraordinary Session agreed, last December, on various changes and texts to be introduced into the negotiating draft. These have been integrated into the Fourth Negotiating Draft (document CGRFA/IUND/4), which provides the basis for the continuation of the negotiations at this session. The last session of the Commission also invited members to make additional submissions for the revision of the Undertaking. FAO members were reminded of this through a Note Verbale in February 1997, and any submissions received will be available as document CGRFA/IUND/4 Add. 1.

At the request of the Third Extraordinary Session, IPGRI and the FAO Secretariat have carried out, with inputs from member countries, a study on the characterization of options on scope and access and a notional assessment of the "pros and cons" of each. A first draft document was circulated for comments in February 1997, and the final study will be presented as document CGRFA-7/97/9.

In addition, a number of documents dealing with technical, economic, legal and institutional matters of relevance in the revision of the International Undertaking, which have already been presented to the Commission, but not yet fully discussed, will also be available for information.⁵

³ Then the Commission on Plant Genetic Resources.

⁴ While the Convention on Biological Diversity covers all kinds of biological diversity, the scope of the Undertaking is limited to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

⁵ *Revision of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources. Issues for consideration in Stage II: access to plant genetic resources, and Farmers' Rights* (CPGR-6/95/8); the document provides information on areas where countries have already reached consensus regarding the issues of access and the realization of Farmers' Rights, and identifies areas where consensus is still needed.

Revision of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources. Analysis of some technical, economic and legal aspects for consideration in Stage II (CPGR-6/95/8 Supp). The document covers some key aspects of issues in discussion.

Revision of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources. Stage III - Legal and institutional matters (CPGR-6/95/9).

Access to plant genetic resources and the equitable sharing of benefits: a contribution to the debate on systems for the exchange of germplasm; the document, prepared by IPGRI at the request of the Fifth Regular Session, was made available to the Second Extraordinary Session.

CGRFA-EX3/96/Lim. 2: *Options for access to plant genetic resources and the optional sharing of benefits arising from their use*. This document prepared by IPGRI, was made available to the Third Extraordinary Session.

Document CPGR-EX1/94/3 provides information on the *Mandate, context, background and proposed process*.

Background Study Paper No. 1: *The appropriation of the benefits of plant genetic resources for agriculture: an economic analysis of the alternative mechanisms for biodiversity conservation* (only in English).

9. Future Work of the Commission

Under this item, the Commission is expected to discuss the process of its broadening to cover all aspects of genetic resources of relevance to food and agriculture (Conference Resolution 3/95), and the agenda for its next regular session.

The 1995 FAO Conference “agreed to implement the broadened mandate in a step-by-step process, starting with animal genetic resources, and that the broadening must not interfere with the ongoing negotiations for the revision of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources”.

The Conference “*requested* the Director-General to establish an *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts on Animal Genetic Resources to prepare the future work of the Animal Genetic Resources Intergovernmental Technical Working Group and report on progress to the Director-General, who would bring its recommendations, as appropriate, to the attention of the Fourteenth Session of COAG (Rome, 7-11 April 1997) and to the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, taking into consideration the progress in the revision of the Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources”. The report of the *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts on Animal Genetic Resources is available as document CGRFA-7/97/10. Relevant extracts from the report of the Fourteenth Session of COAG are in document CGRFA-7/97/Inf. 2.

The implications for forest genetic resources of the broadening of the Commission was discussed by the Thirteenth Session of COFO (10-13 March 1997). Its recommendations on the role of the Panel of Experts on Forest Gene Resources, the possible establishment of a sectoral inter-governmental technical working group on forest genetic resources, and the possible development of a Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Utilization of Forest Genetic Resources, are in document CGRFA-7/97/Inf. 3.

10. Other Business

11. Date and place of the next session.

12. Adoption of the Report