



The International Treaty
ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE



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Item 11 of the Provisional Agenda
INTERNATIONAL TREATY ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
THIRD SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY
Tunis, Tunisia, 1 – 5 June 2009
REPORT FROM THE GLOBAL CROP DIVERSITY TRUST

Table of Contents

	Paragraphs
I. Introduction	1-6

Annex 1: Report of the Executive Board of the Global Crop Diversity Trust to the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

Appendix 1: Relationship Between Articles and Provisions of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and Activities of the Global Crop Diversity Trust

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Article 18 of the Treaty provides that “*Contracting Parties undertake to implement a funding strategy for the implementation of this Treaty*” with the objective “*to enhance the availability, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of the provision of financial resources to implement activities under this Treaty*”¹.
2. At its First Session, the Governing Body adopted the *Funding Strategy of the International Treaty* by Resolution 1/2006.² In Resolution 1/2006, the Governing Body noted “*that the Global Crop Diversity Trust is an essential element of the Funding Strategy in relation to the ex situ conservation and availability of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture*”³.
3. At its First Session, the Governing Body also concluded a *Relationship Agreement with the Global Crop Diversity Trust*. That Agreement, *inter alia*, recognizes the Trust as “*an essential element of the Funding Strategy of the International Treaty in relation to the ex situ conservation and availability of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.*” Pursuant to Article 3, the Secretary of the Governing Body received a *Report from the Executive Board of the Trust to the Governing Body* on August 13, 2007. The Report was reproduced and presented to all Contracting Parties at the Second Session of the Governing Body as document IT/GB-2/07/10⁴.
4. At its Second Session the Governing Body “*recognized the executive independence of the Trust, and stressed the need for closer and effective cooperation. It emphasized that guidance for the Trust was provided under Article 5, 6 and 17 of the Global Plan of Action and Article 5 and 17 of the Treaty*”.
5. As part of the preparatory process for the Third Session of the Governing Body, the Secretary of the Treaty requested the Executive Secretary of the Trust to provide the annual report referred to in Article 3 of the *Relationship Agreement*. The Report on the activities of the Trust was received in December and constitutes the Annex to this document in the language and form in which it was received. The Report has also an Appendix, which associates the activities of the Trust with relevant sections of the International Treaty to show which of the Treaty’s elements are supported by the Trust and how.
6. The Governing Body is invited to take note of the contents of the Report contained in the *Annex* to this document and in its Appendix, and to provide relevant guidance within the purview of the International Treaty and the *Relationship Agreement*.

¹ Article 18.1 and Article 18.2

² IT/GB-1/06/Report, p.2 and *Appendix F*

³ *Resolution 1/2006*, Preamble, para. (ix), IT/GB-1/06/Report, p.3

⁴ <http://ftp.fao.org/ag/agp/planttreaty/gb2/gb2w10e.pdf>

ANNEX I: REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE GLOBAL CROP DIVERSITY TRUST TO THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE INTERNATIONAL TREATY ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

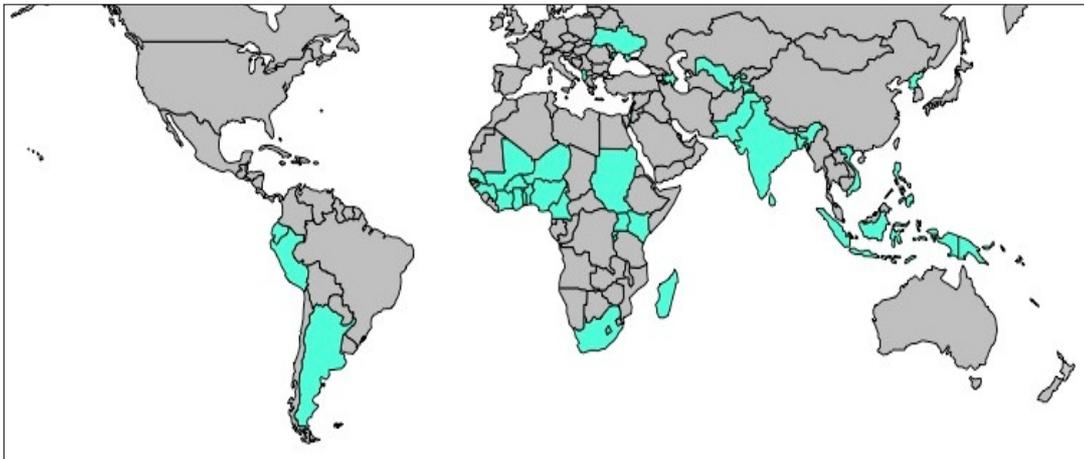
I. Introduction

1. The Executive Board of the Global Crop Diversity Trust is pleased to submit its second report on the Trust's activities to the Governing Body, as provided for by Article 3.3 of the *Relationship Agreement* between the two entities.
2. As the *Relationship Agreement* notes, the Trust was established in the form of an endowment with the objective of "*providing a permanent source of funds to support the long-term conservation of ex situ germplasm on which the world depends for food security*". In this regard, the *Agreement* notes the FAO Global Plan of Action's call for the "*development and support of a rational, efficient and sustainable system of genetic resources collections around the world*".
3. The Constitution of the Trust states that its objective 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.*" It states that "*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*".
4. Because the Trust carries out its mandate in partnership with and through other institutions, it relies on the willingness of others to work in cooperation with the Trust and each other to implement the International Treaty and Global Plan of Action in concrete ways. The requirement to cooperate is underscored and elaborated in Article 5.1 (e) of the International Treaty, which states that Contracting Parties shall "*cooperate to promote the development of an efficient and sustainable system of ex situ conservation...*" This same provision specifies explicitly that this cooperation in creating an efficient and sustainable system shall encompass activities such as documentation, characterization, regeneration, evaluation and technology transfer.

II. Trust Activities

5. During the last year, the Trust substantially increased its efforts to ensure the permanent conservation of collections of PGRFA of global importance through the provision of long-term (in perpetuity) grants. To date these grants specifically cover collections of: banana and plantain, barley, bean, cassava, faba bean, forages, grasspea (*Lathyrus*), lentil, pearl millet, rice, sorghum,

Figure 1: Countries where the Trust currently has regeneration and evaluation activities



wheat (and *Triticale*), and yam. In addition, the Trust embarked on a number of activities aimed at strengthening the global system of *ex situ* conservation for 22 Annex I crops, providing support to developing countries and countries with economies in transition for the regeneration of unique and endangered accessions, their characterization, entry of related information into databases, and safety duplication. Work was initiated to develop a comprehensive, user-friendly gene bank data management system, and a global accession-level on-line information system. Also, a competitive grants program provided funds for screening of collections for traits of value to the poor and for crop adaptation to climate change. Finally, through the Global Partnership Initiative for Plant Breeding Capacity Building led by FAO, the Trust supported efforts to enhance the use of genetic resources in developing countries, including through pre-breeding.

6. This Report provides a brief description of the Trust's activities. An appendix associates these activities with relevant sections of the International Treaty to show which of the Treaty's elements are supported by the Trust and how, as well as which are not. This Report, together with its appendix, is intended to provide an overview of how the Trust contributes to the implementation of the International Treaty.

IIa. Regeneration of Threatened, Globally-Important Crop Diversity

7. With developing country partners, and in furtherance of the International Treaty (Articles 5.1(e)(f), 5.2, 7.2(a)(b)), the Trust has embarked on funding the regeneration of threatened priority collections of 22 Annex I crops. The initiative involves more than 30 institutes as well as crop and regional networks in regenerating approximately 100,000 accessions. The projects include the characterisation and documentation of the regenerated accessions and their duplication at a gene

bank meeting international standards of management. Where necessary, equipment for regeneration and storage is also provided. In addition, the initiative includes the development of multilingual guidelines (Arabic, English, French, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish) for the regeneration of the target crops. To date, grants have been made to 25 institutes in 24 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America as well as one crop network and four regional networks. Additional grants are anticipated.

8. The Grant Agreements concluded for these activities will run for a period of three years. A total of USD 6.5 million has been set aside for regeneration activities in developing countries.

Iib. Safety Duplication

9. The International Treaty cites the need “*to take appropriate steps to minimize or, if possible, eliminate threats to PGRFA*” (Article 5.2). Safety duplication is a recognized element of good management practices aimed at minimizing risk and threats to *ex situ* collections.

10. In addition to ensuring the safety duplication of unique diversity in managed gene banks as mentioned in paragraph 7, the Trust is also supporting the duplication under black-box conditions of unique accessions of the world’s most important crops at the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, in Norway, as an ultimate safety net.

11. During its Eleventh Regular Session, the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture commended Norway for the establishment of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault as a valuable contribution to the conservation of the world’s plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. Additionally, the creation of the Seed Vault, was noted as “*one of the most innovative and impressive acts in the service of humanity,*” by the FAO Director-General Jacques Diouf during the opening ceremony in February 2008. Discovery Channel heralded it as one of world’s nine largest science projects (including even those “on the drawing board”). *Time Magazine* awarded it 6th place in the 50 best inventions of the year.

12. The Trust facilitated the safety duplication of seed samples at the Svalbard Global Seed Vault by providing support for seed packaging and shipment of more than 200,000 seed samples, both from international agricultural research centres and developing country gene banks. Additional funds will be provided for packaging and shipping to achieve the goal of having a sample of all relevant unique diversity protected there.

13. The Seed Vault, officially launched in February 2008, now houses over 300,000 duplicate samples of PGRFA. The Executive Secretary of the Trust currently serves as the Chair of the Seed Vault’s International Advisory Council, whose membership also includes the Chair of the Governing Body of the International Treaty.

14. Currently, and in addition to a number of significant in-kind services, the Trust provides USD 150,000 annually in direct support for the operations of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault. The Trust has allocated USD 1 million to support the black-box safety-duplication of unique accessions over the period 2008 to 2010, as mentioned in paragraph 12.

Iic. Information and Information Systems

15. Article 17.1 of the International Treaty requires that Contracting Parties “*cooperate to develop and strengthen a global information system to facilitate the exchange of information, based on existing information systems, on scientific, technical and environmental matters related to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, with the expectation that such exchange of information will contribute to the sharing of benefits by making information on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture available to all Contracting Parties.*” Articles 13.2(a) and 12.3(c) address requirements to make information available.

16. To promote implementation of the International Treaty in this area, and to enable plant breeders and others to make greater use of genetic resources and thus contribute to the sharing of benefits as noted in Article 17.1, the Trust has embarked on a number of significant activities to enhance information about PGRFA and information systems:

a. The Trust has provided support for the development and deployment of a state of the art genebank data management system, GRIN-Global. Work in the development of the software is in progress by the US Department of Agriculture, and Bioversity International will assist in the deployment of the system, free of charge to countries.

b. Work is underway on the development of characterization and evaluation standards to facilitate the sharing of information on PGRFA globally.

c. The Trust has thus far awarded grants to the value of USD 300,000 to support eleven projects for the evaluation of collections of 12 different Annex I crops for important traits relevant to poor farmers and climate change adaptation, such as major biotic and abiotic stresses.

d. The Trust is collaborating with the Secretariat of the International Treaty and Bioversity International to develop a global on-line portal to accession-level germplasm information. This will build on such existing collaborative information systems as SINGER and EURISCO. An International Steering Committee is being formed to provide technical input. The system will allow searching and ordering across multiple genetic resources databases.

17. The Grant Agreements concluded for these activities will run through to 2011. A

total of approximately USD 4.9 million has committed for this work (including about USD 1 million for additional grants to those mentioned in paragraph 16c to be issued in 2008 and 2009 to support the evaluation of collections for important traits).

IId. Research to Develop Conservation Protocols for Vegetatively Propagated Crops

18. Under Article 13.2 (b)(ii) Contracting Parties agree that “*access to and transfer of technology to countries, especially to developing countries and countries with economies in transition, shall be carried out through a set of measures, such as the establishment and maintenance of, and participation in, crop-based thematic groups on utilization of PGRFA, all types of partnership in research and development and in commercial joint ventures relating to the material received, human resource development, and effective access to research facilities*”.

19. To promote the implementation of the International Treaty in this area, the Trust has embarked on a number of research activities. These include making improvements to existing embryo culture protocols in partnership with the coconut network (COGENT), and developing

robust cryopreservation methodologies, for cassava, sweet potato, taro and yam. The research is aimed at providing more safe and cost-effective methods to conserve and make available germplasm of these crops.

20. The Trust is supporting the application of cryopreservation to the international banana collection managed by Bioversity International, to help secure its long-term conservation.

21. A total amount of approximately USD 2 million has been set aside for this work, which will run for a period of 3 years.

Iie. Long-Term Conservation and Availability of Crop Diversity

22. The core of the Trust is the endowment fund, created to provide financial security to globally important collections of crop diversity in perpetuity.

23. The original estimated endowment fund size required to endow the priority crops was USD 260 million. However, it should be noted that inflation and a decline in the dollar render this figure conservative today. As of October 2008, pledges to the endowment fund stood at USD 99 million.

24. The Executive Board of the Trust has approved an initial package of long-term grants to ensure the conservation and availability of international collections of 13 major crops (banana and plantain, barley, bean, cassava, faba bean, forages, grass pea, lentil, pearl millet, rice, sorghum, wheat, yam). In addition, the Executive Board approved an ongoing grant for the operations of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault. The supported collections serve an exclusively international purpose as the backbone of the rational, efficient and effective global system, and were therefore a high priority for the first Trust investments of this type.

25. These long-term grant agreements have ensured that funds are committed to conserving and distributing priority collections where funding was previously unsecure. The Agreements not only specify commitment of funds from the Trust, but also commitment of matching funds from the institute. In 2008, the annual long-term grant agreements provided commitments (from a combination of the Trust and partners) of USD 4.89 million. This was comprised of funds from the Trust of USD 1.65 million and contractually-ensured contributions by the institutes holding the collections of USD 3.23 million.

Iif. Public Awareness

26. The Trust has raised the public profile of plant genetic resources, most notably through a media campaign surrounding the launch of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault on 26 February 2008 – arguably the largest ever public relations effort on behalf of plant genetic resources conservation. The opening ceremony marked an unprecedented effort to protect global agriculture. The widespread international press coverage during the event and subsequent months has repositioned the importance of crop diversity and conservation in order to support global agriculture and food security.

27. The opening of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault generated huge global news coverage in TV, print, radio, and online formats. The extent of the coverage far exceeded the ability to track individual articles in each country; the best data the Trust has relates to North American media, where more than four hundred stories were published or aired on TV networks on the day of the opening ceremony alone. Broadcasts on the most influential US news and current affairs programmes such as CBS 60 Minutes, ABC World News, ABC's Good Morning America, NBC's The Today Show, and CBS Evening News reached many millions of people in the United States. In addition, again just in North America, at least 600 national, regional, and local TV and radio outlets worldwide aired stories during the week of the opening. In total, more than twenty-two international media outlets traveled to Svalbard to attend the opening ceremony on February 26th, including reporters and camera crews from ABC News, Associated Press, Agence France-Presse, BBC News, CNN International, *Financial Times*, *Nature*, NBC News, *Le Figaro*, and Reuters. Many of the world's top newspapers published stories on the opening of the seed vault, most notably thirteen front-page stories by influential publications such as *Berliner Zeitung* (Germany), *Globe and Mail* (Canada), *International Herald Tribune*, *New York Times*, and long feature pieces by *Financial Times*, *La Nación* (Argentina), *La Tercera* (Chile), to provide a few examples. The tone of the media coverage was overwhelmingly positive. A *Japan Times*' editorial dubbed the seed vault one of the "smartest measures we can take to safeguard future generations and one that all governments should be prepared to support". In addition to mainstream media, evidence of the spread and impact of the media campaign manifested itself in the fact that the Seed Vault featured in cartoons and comedy shows – demonstrating the penetration of the media outreach into the general public consciousness.

III. Institutional Matters

28. The Executive Board of the Global Crop Diversity Trust held its second meeting in Svalbard, in October 2007, its third meeting in Rome in April 2008 and its fourth meeting in Rome in November 2008. Margaret Catley-Carlson is Chair of the Board and Wangari Maathai is the Vice-Chair.

29. During its four meetings, the Board approved and established a number of regulations, processes and committees to facilitate the management of the Trust.

30. The Trust moved to its permanent location at FAO Headquarters in the last quarter of 2007. This relocation brought all staff together and streamlined operations and programmatic activities. The Trust expresses its appreciation to FAO for the generous support in hosting the Trust.

31. The number of countries (developed and developing), associations, foundations, and companies that have contributed funds and are eligible to attend the Trust's Donors' Council meetings is 30. The Council meets annually and provides financial oversight and advice on such matters to the Executive Board. In addition a number of individuals have contributed to the Trust. The list of donors can be found at: www.croptrust.org/main/funds.php. In addition to financial donations, Norway and Sweden have provided associate professional officers to the Trust, and Australia and the Netherlands have seconded senior staff, full-time and part-time respectively.

32. More information about the Trust's strategy, programmes and finances can be found at: www.croptrust.org

33. In closing, the Executive Board would like to use this occasion to reaffirm its commitment to the mission of the Trust as specified in the Constitution, and to the *Relationship Agreement* concluded with the Governing Body of the International Treaty. The Executive Board looks

forward to continuing and strengthening the constructive and cooperative relationship that already exists between the Trust and the Governing Body.

APPENDIX 1: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ARTICLES AND PROVISIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL TREATY ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE AND ACTIVITIES OF THE GLOBAL CROP DIVERSITY TRUST

ITPGRFA		Trust Activities
Art. #	Article Text	
PART I – INTRODUCTION		
Art. 1 – Objectives		
1.1	The conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of their use, in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity, for sustainable agriculture and food security.	<p>The Trust’s overall objective, which 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, is closely aligned with the objectives of the Treaty.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the 1st meeting of the Governing Body of the Treaty in Madrid, 12-16 June 2006, the Relationship Agreement between the Governing Body of the International Treaty and the Trust was formally approved. The Agreement recognizes the Trust as an essential element of the funding strategy of the Treaty in relation to the <i>ex situ</i> conservation and availability of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.
Art. 3 – Scope	This Treaty relates to PGRFA	The Trust focuses on the <i>ex situ</i> conservation, availability and use of PGRFA included under Annex I of the Treaty and collections held under Article 15.
PART II - GENERAL PROVISIONS		
Art. 5 – Conservation, Exploration, Collection, Characterization, Evaluation and Documentation of PGRFA		
5.1	Each Contracting Party shall, subject to national legislation, and in cooperation with other Contracting Parties where appropriate, promote an integrated approach to the exploration, conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA and shall in particular, as appropriate:	<p>The Trust has activities in the areas stated under this Article, for example the regeneration of unique and threatened collections, characterisation and evaluation, safety duplication, information systems development and support for the long-term conservation and availability of globally important collections. The Trust’s organizing principle is that of a rational global <i>ex situ</i> conservation system, concretely promoting cooperation among Contracting Parties to the Treaty in the overall management of crop diversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trust’s draft Fund Disbursement Strategy, as well as its policy document on “The Role of the Global Crop Diversity Trust in Helping Ensure

ITPGRFA		Trust Activities
Art. #	Article Text	
		the Long-Term Conservation and Availability of PGRFA” (www.croptrust.org/documents/web/RoleofTrustSept08.pdf), demonstrate a highly integrated approach, embodied for example, by the Trust’s strategy for regenerating unique and threatened diversity, as well as by its work with information technologies, such as the development of genebank data management software and a global accession-level information system.
5.1 a	Survey and inventory PGRFA, taking into account the status and degree of variation in existing populations, including those that are of potential use and, as feasible, assess any threats to them;	<p>Crop and regional conservation strategies developed with support from the Trust provide valuable information to Contracting Parties and others for the purpose of conducting PGRFA inventories as required by the Treaty.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than 500 experts from more than 125 countries participated to develop 19 global crop strategies (Aroids, Banana, Barley, Breadfruit, Cassava, Chickpea, Coconut, Faba bean, Grasspea, Lentil, Maize, Oat, Pigeon pea, Potato, Rice, Sorghum, Strawberry, Sweet potato and Wheat) and 8 regional strategies (Americas, Central Asia & the Caucasus, Eastern Africa, Pacific, Southern Africa, South, South East & East Asia, West Asia & North Africa, West & Central Africa). The Strategies are available at: www.croptrust.org/main/strategy.php
5.1 b	Promote the collection of PGRFA and relevant associated information on those PGR that are under threat or are of potential use;	<p>The Trust did not undertake collection activities during the reporting period but did foster efforts, including the development of crop and regional conservation strategies as noted above, that are relevant to this provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trust is now working with partners to identify (a) gaps in <i>ex situ</i> collections (including specific traits) and (b) diversity threatened <i>in situ</i>, and will soon support field exploration to collect targeted material for long-term conservation, safety duplication and availability. The focus will be on Annex I crops and their wild relatives. And the approach will be targeted collecting to support efforts to adapt to climate change and significant abiotic and biotic stresses of relevance to the poor.
5.1 e	Cooperate to promote the development of an efficient and sustainable system of <i>ex situ</i> conservation, giving due attention to the need for adequate documentation, characterization, regeneration and evaluation, and promote the development and transfer of appropriate technologies for this purpose with a view to improving the sustainable use of	The Trust has invited institutions in developing countries and countries in transition, identified through the strategy processes and other expert consultations as holding important crop diversity collections, into partnerships to regenerate, characterize and safety duplicate threatened, unique material. It also invited the regional PGR networks to identify additional threatened collections for such support. Trust projects require grantees to observe Article

ITPGRFA		Trust Activities
Art. #	Article Text	
	PGRFA;	<p>5.1e, and work in cooperation and partnership with others to develop an effective and efficient global system. Without such cooperation, there can be no rational global system, and the work of the Trust to promote the objectives of the Treaty would be severely impeded.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trust supports (and in turn relies upon) cooperation and an efficient division of labour amongst institutions in the regeneration, storage, documentation and provision of PGRFA. Grants for regeneration, for instance, require safety duplication of covered accessions. This reduces risk (Article 5.2), improves management and conservation services (Article 5.1e-f, Article 7.2a-b) and promotes/necessitates cooperation (Article 5.1e). The Trust currently has agreements with 36 institutions in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and with four regional PGRFA networks and one crop network to support activities listed in 5.1e, and agreements under negotiation with additional institutes and networks. The supported activities are aimed not just at accomplishing specific tasks, but at helping develop a global system that is efficient and sustainable in line with this provision of the Treaty and with the Global Plan of Action (in particular, its Activity 5).
5.1 f	Monitor the maintenance of the viability, degree of variation, and the genetic integrity of collections of PGRFA	<p>Trust activities on regeneration, characterization and the development of information systems contribute to the implementation of this Treaty provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over a period of three years, the Trust estimates that its regeneration activities will restore viability to as many as 100,000 threatened accessions in collections held in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The new genebank data management software under development with Trust support will help monitor accession viability and stocks and alert staff when germplasm is in need of regeneration. The Trust has ensured that monitoring the maintenance and genetic integrity of in-trust collections is a key component of performance reporting; a requirement of long-term funding by the Trust.
5.2	5.2 The Contracting Parties shall, as appropriate, take steps to minimize or, if possible, eliminate threats to PGRFA.	<p>Much of the Trust's program, as affirmed by its overall objective, contributes to this Treaty Article. For example, during the reporting period,:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trust initiated projects to rescue threatened global and regional priority crop collections through regeneration and safety duplication. It

ITPGRFA		Trust Activities
Art. #	Article Text	
		<p>provided support for the regeneration of at-risk coconut germplasm at the International Coconut Genebank for Africa and the Indian Ocean of the International Coconut Genetic Resources Network (COGENT) located in Côte d'Ivoire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trust provided an emergency grant to assist the Philippines national genebank to recover following a devastating typhoon in 2006. • Previously, the Trust helped to secure threatened field collections of apple in Kazakhstan & Turkmenistan originally established in 1937 and 1935 respectively. These countries are in the centre of origin/diversity of apples. • In addition, the establishment and maintenance of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, with which the Trust has been intimately involved with the Government of Norway and NordGen, should substantially reduce threats to <i>ex situ</i> collections in the future. The Vault currently (October 2008) holds some 300,000 duplicate back-up seed samples, with many more planned for deposit in the coming months and years. • The Trust coordinated and provided funding for the shipment of 217,838 samples from the international in-trust collections managed by the IARCs and from collections in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Additional funding is available for the shipment of unique materials not already safety duplicated in Svalbard.
Art. 6 – Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources		
6.2	6.2 The sustainable use of PGRFA may include such measures as:	
6.2 b	(b) strengthening research which enhances and conserves biological diversity by maximizing intra- and inter-specific variation for the benefit of farmers, especially those who generate and use their own varieties and apply ecological principles in maintaining soil fertility and in combating diseases, weeds and pests;	<p>The characterization and evaluation activities supported by the Trust contribute to the implementation of this provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trust is supporting research to develop more effective protocols to facilitate international exchange and long-term conservation of root and tuber crops, and banana and coconut.
6.2 c	(c) promoting, as appropriate, plant breeding efforts which,	The Trust activities on characterization and evaluation of germplasm, the

ITPGRFA		Trust Activities
Art. #	Article Text	
	with the participation of farmers, particularly in developing countries, strengthen the capacity to develop varieties particularly adapted to social, economic and ecological conditions, including in marginal areas;	<p>development and deployment of robust genebank data management software, and the creation of a global accession-level information system will contribute to the achievement of this provision through the generation and improved access to information on germplasm traits of relevance to breeders and farmers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trust is working with climatologists and plant breeders to identify the traits that will be necessary to adapt crops to climate change, particularly in marginal areas. Based on this work, the Trust has a competitive grants scheme to screen collections for these traits and put the information into databases. In 2008, grants were finalized for work on 12 different Annex I crop collections in 13 countries. • The Trust financially supports the FAO-led Global Partnership Initiative for Plant Breeding Capacity Building (GIPB) (http://km.fao.org/gipb/), which provides a clearinghouse of information for breeders, and awards grants for pre-breeding.
6.2 d	(d) broadening the genetic base of crops and increasing the range of genetic diversity available to farmers;	The Trust activities on the regeneration of threatened collections and ensuring their availability and long-term conservation contribute to the implementation of this Article. The Trust is also embarking on supporting the collection of new diversity, particularly crop wild relatives, which will also contribute to this provision.
6.2 e	(e) promoting, as appropriate, the expanded use of local and locally adapted crops, varieties and underutilized species;	<p>Support to ensure long-term conservation and availability of important crop diversity and the collection of wild crop relatives will contribute to the implementation of this provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trust is working with partner scientific institutions (e.g., Stanford University) to model future growing conditions in an effort to define more specifically what "locally adapted" will mean in an era of rapid climate change. This work will in turn help guide collecting, evaluation and documentation work. • See: http://iis-db.stanford.edu/pubs/22065/Bellagio_final1.pdf for an initial report on this work.
6.2 f	(f) supporting, as appropriate, the wider use of diversity of varieties and species in on-farm management, conservation and sustainable use of crops and creating strong links to plant breeding and agricultural development in order to	Trust activities that promote information generation and accessibility of germplasm and associated information to breeders and other users contribute to the implementation of this Treaty provision.

ITPGRFA		Trust Activities
Art. #	Article Text	
	reduce crop vulnerability and genetic erosion, and promote increased world food production compatible with sustainable development; and	
Art. 7 – National Commitments and International Cooperation		
7.1	7.1 Each Contracting Party shall, as appropriate, integrate into its agriculture and rural development policies and programmes, activities referred to in Art. 5 and 6, and cooperate with other Contracting Parties, directly or through FAO and other relevant international organizations, in the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA.	All Trust activities contribute to promoting international cooperation among Contracting Parties and other institutions at national, regional and international levels and assisting them to meet national commitments related to the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA.
7.2	7.2 International cooperation shall, in particular, be directed to:	
7.2 a	(a) establishing or strengthening the capabilities of developing countries and countries with economies in transition with respect to conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA;	Trust activities on the regeneration, characterisation and safety duplication of threatened, unique accessions in collections in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, including the provision of necessary conservation equipment and supplies; the evaluation of priority collections; the development and deployment of a genebank data management system and the building of a global accession-level information system to facilitate and improve the flow of genetic resources and associated information, are all relevant to the implementation of this Treaty Article. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As mentioned under Article 5.1.e, the Trust is supporting regeneration projects in developing countries and countries in transition. To date grants have been made to 25 institutes in 24 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America as well as to one crop network and four regional networks involving a further 28 institutes in 15 countries. • Additionally, the Trust has 11 contracts involving 16 institutes in 13 countries for the evaluation of collections. • The Trust has provided seed drying equipment and supported training on the use and maintenance of seed dryers to the SADC PGR network.
7.2 b	(b) enhancing international activities to promote conservation, evaluation, documentation, genetic enhancement, plant breeding, seed multiplication; and	The thrust of all Trust activities is to achieve a rational and effective global system for the management of <i>ex situ</i> collections of important crop diversity. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities the Trust has initiated which are more directly linked to this

ITPGRFA		Trust Activities
Art. #	Article Text	
	sharing, providing access to, and exchanging, in conformity with Part IV, PGRFA and appropriate information and technology;	<p>include provision of permanent financial support to ensure the long-term conservation and availability of crop diversity. The first such grant was concluded in 2006 with the IRRI, which holds the world's most important rice collection. Additional examples of this type of grant are the international in-trust collections of sorghum and pearl millet at ICRISAT, wheat at CIMMYT, and lentil, grasspea, faba bean, forages and barley at ICARDA, beans and cassava at CIAT, cassava and yam at IITA and forages at ILRI. In addition the Trust is supporting the cryopreservation of the international banana collection held by Bioversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other Trust activities linked to this provision are support to facilitate safety duplication at the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, the development of the genebank data management software and its deployment, characterization and evaluation of priority crop collections, support for research to develop cryopreservation methodologies for vegetatively propagated crops and embryo culture for coconut, creation of a global accession-level information system, and support to the FAO Global Partnership Initiative for Plant Breeding Capacity Building.
7.2 c	(c) maintaining and strengthening the institutional arrangements provided for in Part V; and	All activities of the Trust are linked to one or the other of the supporting components provided for under Part V of the Treaty, in particular Art 14 (the Global Plan of Action), Art. 15 (the <i>ex situ</i> collections held by CGIAR Centres), Art. 16 (international networks), and Art. 17 (the global information system).
7.2 d	(d) implement the funding strategy of Art.18.	The Trust is acknowledged as an essential element of the Funding Strategy under the Treaty, in particular in contributing to <i>ex situ</i> conservation and availability.
Art. 8 – Technical Assistance		
	The Contracting Parties agree to promote the provision of technical assistance to Contracting Parties, especially those that are developing countries or countries with economies in transition, either bilaterally or through the appropriate international organizations, with the objective of facilitating the implementation of this Treaty.	<p>The Trust is an international organization through which Contracting Parties can provide technical assistance with the objective of facilitating implementation of the Treaty. A number of Contracting Parties have provided funds to the Trust, which the Trust in turn is using to make technical assistance and other forms of support available to developing countries and countries with economies in transition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trust is currently providing technical assistance to 53 institutions in

ITPGRFA		Trust Activities
Art. #	Article Text	
		<p>developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in regards to regeneration and characterization of their unique and threatened genebank collections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trust offered technical assistance to genebanks wishing to avail themselves of the free black-box, safety duplication service of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault. The Trust is preparing to offer assistance to genebanks that wish to install and use the new genebank data management software currently under development. The system itself will be provided free-of-charge to any genebank wishing to deploy it.
PART IV - THE MULTILATERAL SYSTEM OF ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING		
Art. 10 – Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing		
10.2	10.2 In the exercise of their sovereign rights, the Contracting Parties agree to establish a multilateral system, which is efficient, effective, and transparent, both to facilitate access to PGRFA, and to share, in a fair and equitable way, the benefits arising from the utilization of these resources, on a complementary and mutually reinforcing basis.	Trust activities support the MLS of facilitated access and benefit sharing and contribute to the development of an efficient and cost effective global system of <i>ex situ</i> collections. All accessions regenerated, evaluated and conserved long-term with Trust funds are available under the terms of the MLS (see under Article 12.1 below).
Art. 11 – Coverage of the Multilateral System		
11.1	11.1 In furtherance of the objectives of conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of their use, as stated in Art.1, the MS shall cover the PGRFA listed in Annex I, established according to criteria of food security and interdependence.	The Trust prioritizes PGRFA identified by Article 11.1 and Article 15.1a and 15.5. No direct support was provided during this reporting period for crops not listed on Annex I or included consistent with provisions of Article 15.1a or 15.5.
11.5	11.5 The MS shall also include the PGRFA listed in Annex I and held in the <i>ex situ</i> collections of the IARCs of the CGIAR, as provided in Art. 15.1a, and in other international institutions, in accordance with Art. 15.5.	<p>See above (Article 11.1).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During this reporting period, the Trust provided long-term support for in-trust collections of 13 crops held by 8 CGIAR Centres. In addition, discussions with several national and regional facilities were initiated regarding long-term support consistent with the needs of a globally rational and efficient system. Agreements had not been finalized at

ITPGRFA		Trust Activities
Art. #	Article Text	
		the time of the drafting of this report (October 2008).
Art. 12 – Facilitated access to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture within the Multilateral System		
12.1	12.1 The Contracting Parties agree that facilitated access to PGRFA under the Multilateral System, as defined in Art. 11, shall be in accordance with the provisions of this Treaty.	The terms and conditions for all Trust grant agreements include the requirement that collections covered by the agreement must be made available in accordance with the terms of access and benefit-sharing provided for the MLS as set out in the International Treaty. Collection holders unwilling to agree to such terms are not eligible for Trust support.
12.3 a	(a) Access shall be provided solely for the purpose of utilization and conservation for research, breeding and training for food and agriculture, provided that such purpose does not include chemical, pharmaceutical and/or other non-food/feed industrial uses. In the case of multiple-use crops (food and non-food), their importance for food security should be the determinant for their inclusion in the MS and availability for facilitated access.	As noted above (Article 12.1), Trust contracts with partners support this provision of the Treaty. This support is discharged through the terms and conditions of Trust grant agreements, which are consistent with 12.3a
12.3 c	(c) All available passport data and, subject to applicable law, any other associated available non-confidential descriptive information, shall be made available with the PGRFA provided;	The Trust activities on information generation through characterization and evaluation and on information system development facilitate the provision and availability of such data. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trust is supporting the development of genebank data management software that will be made available to any genebank wishing to use it. The software will be free of charge, and in many cases training will be available. This software will assist genebanks in managing their collections, and in making available the information referred to in this Article. A global accession-level information system being developed with Trust support will dramatically increase the visibility and availability of information associated with collections under the Treaty.
12.3 g	(g) PGRFA accessed under the MS and conserved shall continue to be made available to the MS by the recipients of those PGRFA, under the terms of this Treaty; and	The Trust's contracts with partners make financial support contingent on observance of this and other terms and conditions of Article 12.
12.4	12.4 To this effect, facilitated access, in accordance with Art 12.2 and 12.3 above, shall be provided pursuant to a	The Trust promotes access to PGRFA under the internationally agreed terms of access and benefit sharing provided for in the multilateral system as set out in

ITPGRFA		Trust Activities
Art. #	Article Text	
	standard MTA, which shall be adopted by the GB and contain the provisions of Art 12.3a, d and g, as well as the benefit-sharing provisions set forth in Art 13.2d(ii) and other relevant provisions of this Treaty, and the provision that the recipient of the PGRFA shall require that the conditions of the MTA shall apply to the transfer of PGRFA to another person or entity, as well as to any subsequent transfers of those PGRFA.	the International Treaty. This represents one of the four basic principles that must be met in order for a collection to be eligible for long-term Trust support.
12.6	12.6 In emergency disaster situations, the Contracting Parties agree to provide facilitated access to appropriate PGRFA in the MS for the purpose of contributing to the re-establishment of agricultural systems, in cooperation with disaster relief co-ordinators.	<p>This provision relates to Activity 3 of the Global Plan of Action, which the Trust regards as very important.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The characterisation and evaluation activities and the information systems being developed with Trust support will facilitate identification of appropriate PGRFA and thus aid implementation of this provision. • The Trust's support to regeneration will ensure that material is available for re-establishment. • The Trust's long-term support for the maintenance and distribution of the in-trust collections will ensure that material is available for re-establishment.
Art. 13 - Benefit-sharing in the Multilateral System		
13.1	13.1 The Contracting Parties recognize that facilitated access to PGRFA which are included in the MS constitutes itself a major benefit of the MS and agree that benefits accruing therefrom shall be shared fairly and equitably in accordance with the provisions of this Article.	<p>Trust activities promote access to PGRFA consistent with the terms of the Treaty's MS. They do so in part by generating more information about PGRFA and making that information more widely available to users.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By binding grant recipients through contracts to the access/benefit-sharing terms of the Treaty's MS, with the possibility of withdrawal of funds for non-compliance, the Trust provides an additional level and means of support for implementation of the Treaty.
13.2	13.2 The Contracting Parties agree that benefits arising from the use, including commercial, of PGRFA under the MS shall be shared fairly and equitably through the following mechanisms: the exchange of information, access to and transfer of technology, capacity-building, and the sharing of the benefits arising from commercialization, taking into account the priority activity areas in the rolling GPA, under	<p>The Trust serves as one vehicle for the implementation of this Article, as it actively promotes exchange of information, access to and transfer of technology, and capacity building.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trust is substantively involved in the exchange of information (through development of a global accession-level information system), technology transfer (through projects on regeneration, evaluation, documentation and research with numerous partners in developing countries and countries

ITPGRFA		Trust Activities
Art. #	Article Text	
	the guidance of the GB:	<p>with economies in transition), and capacity building (in conjunction with the aforementioned projects as well as pre-breeding activities). See Figure 1 for countries where the Trust currently has regeneration and evaluation activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trust operates under the overall policy guidance of the Governing Body, and works within the scientific context of the Global Plan of Action.
13.2 a	<p>(a)Exchange of information: The Contracting Parties agree to make available information which shall, inter alia, encompass catalogues and inventories, information on technologies, results of technical, scientific and socio-economic research, including characterization, evaluation and utilization, regarding those PGRFA under the MS. Such information shall be made available, where non-confidential, subject to applicable law and in accordance with national capabilities. Such information shall be made available to all Contracting Parties to this Treaty through the information system, provided for in Article 17.</p>	<p>Trust activities on information systems development and deployment, and the generation of information through characterisation and evaluation will help Contracting Parties exchange information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trust is supporting the building of a global accession-level information system, an on-line catalogue and inventory of accessions held worldwide. The Trust is the largest single supporter of a clearinghouse of plant breeding information at FAO (see http://km.fao.org/gipb/).
13.2 b	<p>Access to and transfer of technology: (i) The Contracting Party undertake to provide and/or facilitate access to technologies for the conservation, characterization, evaluation and use of PGRFA which are under the MS. Recognizing that some technologies can only be transferred through genetic material, the Contracting Parties shall provide and/or facilitate access to such technologies and genetic material which is under the MS and to improved varieties and genetic material developed through the use of PGRFA under the MS, in conformity with the provisions of Art. 12. Access to these technologies, improved varieties and genetic material shall be provided and/or facilitated, while respecting applicable property rights and access laws, and in accordance with national capabilities. (ii) Access to and transfer of technology to countries, especially to developing countries and countries with economies in transition, shall be carried out through a set of measures, such as the establishment and maintenance of, and participation in, crop-</p>	<p>The Trust contributes to 13.2b through support to research and through the promotion of research partnerships between institutions in developed and developing countries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust supported research is developing improved methods for conserving certain difficult and costly to conserve vegetatively-propagated crops. The results of this research will be made publicly available. Where the results are contained in genetic material, this PGRFA will be made available under the terms and conditions of the Treaty's SMTA. Activities have been initiated on the development of cryopreservation methods for yam, sweet potato, cassava and edible aroids, and on the transfer of embryo technology for coconuts. Likewise, results from the screening of collections funded by the Trust will be made available in accessible databases. In 2008, through 11 projects screening was initiated on 12 Annex 1 crops, involving 16 national, regional or international institutes in 13 developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

ITPGRFA		Trust Activities
Art. #	Article Text	
	<p>based thematic groups on utilization of PGRFA, all types of partnership in research and development and in commercial joint ventures relating to the material received, human resource development, and effective access to research facilities. (iii) Access to and transfer of technology as referred to in (i) and (ii) above, including that protected by intellectual property rights, to developing countries that are Contracting Parties, in particular least developed countries, and countries with economies in transition, shall be provided and/or facilitated under fair and most favourable terms, in particular in the case of technologies for use in conservation as well as technologies for the benefit of farmers in developing countries, especially in least developed countries, and countries with economies in transition, including on concessional and preferential terms where mutually agreed, inter alia, through partnerships in research and development under the Multilateral System. Such access and transfer shall be provided on terms which recognize and are consistent with the adequate and effective protection of intellectual property rights.</p>	
13.2 c	<p>Capacity-building: Taking into account the needs of developing countries and countries with economies in transition, as expressed through the priority they accord to building capacity in PGRFA in their plans and programmes, when in place, in respect of those PGRFA covered by the Multilateral System, the Contracting Parties agree to give priority to (i) establishing and/or strengthening programmes for scientific and technical education and training in conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA, (ii) developing and strengthening facilities for conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA, in particular in developing countries, and countries with economies in transition, and (iii) carrying out scientific research preferably, and where possible, in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in cooperation with institutions of such countries,</p>	<p>The Trust support for upgrading key genebanks and the provision of essential germplasm processing and storage equipment contributes to the implementation of this Article.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trust has provided essential equipment and supplies to developing country genebanks in association with the regeneration and evaluation projects initiated during this reporting period. This contributes to subsections i, ii, and iii of the Article. • The Trust is supporting 30 regeneration projects, and 11 evaluation projects (see map of Trust partners/projects and Article 7.2 (a)). • The Trust is providing scientific materials, specifically regeneration guidelines for 21 Annex 1 crops, and genebank management software. • The Trust is building the capacity of researchers in tissue culture and cryopreservation in Benin and Ghana and potentially other countries in the Pacific and Latin America. Major coconut genebanks in Brazil, Cote d'Ivoire, Indonesia, India, Papua New Guinea, Philippines and Sri Lanka are also

ITPGRFA		Trust Activities
Art. #	Article Text	
	and developing capacity for such research in fields where they are needed.	benefiting from the sharing of technology and experiences in coconut embryo culture.
PART V - SUPPORTING COMPONENTS		
Art. 14 – Global Plan of Action		
	Recognizing that the rolling GPA for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of PGRFA is important to this Treaty, Contracting Parties should promote its effective implementation, including through national actions and, as appropriate, international cooperation to provide a coherent framework, <i>inter alia</i> , for capacity-building, technology transfer and exchange of information, taking into account the provisions of Art. 13.	<p>The Trust supports the Global Plan of Action, and takes very seriously the GPA's call for the establishment of a rational, efficient and sustainable global system for PGRFA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trust has substantive involvement in at least 15 of 20 of the priority activities of the GPA.
Art. 15 - Ex Situ Collections of PGRFA held by the IARCs of the CGIAR and other International Institutions		
15.1	15.1 The Contracting Parties recognize the importance to this Treaty of the <i>ex situ</i> collections of PGRFA held in trust by the IARCs of the CGIAR. The Contracting Parties call upon the IARCs to sign agreements with the GB with regard to such <i>ex situ</i> collections, in accordance with the following terms and conditions:	<p>The Trust is providing substantial support to the international collections held in trust by the IARCs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In several cases, the Trust has leveraged support from the Center, resulting in it setting aside funds under long-term contracts that will generate income to support the genebank collections reliably. Such commitments from Centers have come as part of larger agreements in which the Trust also provides guarantees of long-term funding.
15.1 a	(a) PGRFA listed in Annex I of this Treaty and held by the IARCs shall be made available in accordance with the provisions set out in Part IV of this Treaty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trust's agreements with IARCs require that the PGRFA is made available in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Treaty.
15.1 b i	(b)(i) The IARCs shall periodically inform the GB about the MTAs entered into, according to a schedule to be established by the GB;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A global accession-level information system is being constructed in a three-way partnership with Bioversity International and the Treaty Secretariat. It will encompass and build on the CGIAR's SINGER database and will have a mechanism for ordering accessions, and thus will facilitate reporting on MTAs entered into by IARCs and other genebanks.
15.1 d	(d) The scientific and technical facilities in which such <i>ex situ</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trust's contractual agreements with IARCs specifically require that

ITPGRFA		Trust Activities
Art. #	Article Text	
	collections are conserved shall remain under the authority of the IARCs, which undertake to manage and administer these <i>ex situ</i> collections in accordance with internationally accepted standards, in particular the Genebank Standards as endorsed by the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.	<p>their genebanks maintain the high, internationally-agreed standards achieved through recent upgrading initiatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial support provided by the Trust assists IARCs in meeting this requirement. • The Trust requires annual reports from the IARCs managing in-trust collections it supports. In these, IARCs report on specific physical and management indicators that enable the Trust to ascertain whether international standards are being maintained.
15.1 e	(e) Upon request by an IARC, the Secretary shall endeavour to provide appropriate technical support.	<p>The Trust is ready to provide technical support to any IARC in consultation with the Treaty Secretariat.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust-supported research on cryopreservation techniques for root and tuber crops will provide important technical support to relevant IARCs.
15.1 f	(f) The Secretary shall have, at any time, right of access to the facilities, as well as right to inspect all activities performed therein directly related to the conservation and exchange of the material covered by this Article.	<p>Through agreements with the IARCs it supports, the Trust has acquired the right to inspect relevant facilities and activities. This provision will assist the Secretary in the discharge of 15.1(f).</p>
15.1 g	(g) If the orderly maintenance of these <i>ex situ</i> collections held by IARCs is impeded or threatened by whatever event, including <i>force majeure</i> , the Secretary, with the approval of the host country, shall assist in its evacuation or transfer, to the extent possible.	<p>The Trust provides support to rescue threatened important collections, including those held by IARCs, though this capacity has, to date, only been used to assist threatened national collections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trust provided financial support to IARCs (and developing countries) for the shipment of replicates of unique samples to the Svalbard Global Seed Vault. • Support provided to IARCs for maintenance of the international in-trust collections should make evacuation/transfer less likely due to increased security of funding. However, the Trust will assist if such a situation arises.
15.5	15.5 The Governing Body will also seek to establish agreements for the purposes stated in this Article with other relevant international institutions.	<p>The Trust encourages institutions to associate themselves with the Treaty.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In dealings with international/regional institutions not covered by Article 15 (as well as with non-Parties), Trust staff has actively encouraged formal affiliation with the Treaty. Trust and Treaty Secretariats confer regularly on these matters.
Art. 16 – International Plant Genetic Resources Networks		

ITPGRFA		Trust Activities
Art. #	Article Text	
16.1	16.1 Existing cooperation in international PGRFA networks will be encouraged or developed on the basis of existing arrangements and consistent with the terms of this Treaty, so as to achieve as complete coverage as possible of PGRFA.	<p>Trust support to the development of crop and regional <i>ex situ</i> conservation strategies and for information systems development and deployment contribute to the implementation of this Treaty provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trust has worked through networks to help regenerate and characterize accessions held by network members, thus helping to strengthen the networks and to catalyse their participation in the development of the global system. The Trust invited all PGRFA networks to partner with it. During the reporting period, four regional networks and one crop network finalized agreements with the Trust. The Trust has required that agreements with the networks be consistent with the terms of the Treaty.
16.2	16.2 The Contracting Parties will encourage, as appropriate, all relevant institutions, including governmental, private, non-governmental, research, breeding and other institutions, to participate in the international networks.	<p>The Trust works with crop and regional networks and their member institutes, as well as all the categories of actors listed in Article 16.2.</p>
Art. 17 – The Global Information System on PGRFA		
17.1	17.1 The Contracting Parties shall cooperate to develop and strengthen a global information system to facilitate the exchange of information, based on existing information systems, on scientific, technical and environmental matters related to PGRFA, with the expectation that such exchange of information will contribute to the sharing of benefits by making information on PGRFA available to all Contracting Parties. In developing the Global Information System, cooperation will be sought with the Clearing House Mechanism of the CBD.	<p>The Trust is very committed to improving PGRFA information systems as a means to enhance value and benefits. The Trust supports a wide range of activities that are information related.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trust is collaborating with the Secretariat of the Treaty and Bioversity International to develop a global portal to accession-level germplasm information. This will build on and link existing collaborative information systems such as SINGER and EURISCO. The system will allow searching and ordering across multiple genetic resources databases. It will incorporate functionalities for the tracking of SMTAs and the ordering of germplasm. An International Steering Committee, including a Treaty representative, is being formed to guide the development and outreach of the information system.
17.3	17.3 The Contracting Parties shall cooperate with the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture of the FAO in its periodic reassessment of the state of the	<p>Relations between the Commission and Trust Secretariats are concrete and harmonious. Communication is frequent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The crop and regional <i>ex situ</i> conservation strategies developed with

ITPGRFA		Trust Activities
Art. #	Article Text	
	world's PGRFA in order to facilitate the updating of the rolling GPA referred to in Art.14.	<p>support from the Trust will help Contracting Parties and the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in the preparation of the second report on the state of the world's PGRFA, as part of the requirement for a periodic reassessment of the state of PGRFA in order to facilitate the updating of the GPA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust staff has served on a steering committee to assist in the current reassessment of the state of the world's PGRFA. • The Executive Board of the Trust has invited the Secretary of the ITPGRFA to sit as an observer on the Board. • Trust staff maintain a strong, positive working relationship with the Secretariat and met frequently to share information and some resources.