



# The International Treaty

ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE



**E**

## Item 10 of the Provisional Agenda

### FIFTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY

Muscat, Oman, 24-28 September 2013

### REPORT OF THE THIRD HIGH-LEVEL ROUNDTABLE ON THE INTERNATIONAL TREATY – 2 JULY 2013 - BANDUNG (INDONESIA)

*Note by the Secretary*

1. At the request of the Government of Indonesia, this circulation document contains the report of the Third High-Level Roundtable on the International Treaty organized under the patronship of the Indonesian Government. The Roundtable was held on 2 July 2013, on the occasion of the International Conference on Biodiversity, Climate Change & Food Security, in Bandung, Indonesia.
2. The Third Roundtable welcomed the substantial progress that had been made in the short period of time since the adoption of the *Rio Six-point Action Plan* at the Second High-Level Roundtable in July 2012, in particular in relation to:
  - the Platform for the Co-Development and Transfer of Technologies;
  - the Public-Private Partnerships for Pre-Breeding; and
  - the Keystone-type Dialogue to complete the governance of all plant genetic resources for food and agriculture under the Treaty.
3. The Third Roundtable also discussed the need to raise awareness of the actual and potential value of underutilized species for food security and sustainable development.
4. The Third Roundtable decided to address all the above initiatives as a package, with the objective of obtaining the support of the Contracting Parties in the Treaty's Governing Body.
5. It appealed for vision and ambition, and stressed the urgency of making rapid progress, to support the International Treaty and implement the *Rio Six-Point Action Plan*.
6. The Third Roundtable also welcomed the efforts of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Funding Strategy in identifying innovative approaches to benefit-sharing, to be forwarded to the Treaty's Governing Body.

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## **REPORT OF THE THIRD HIGH-LEVEL ROUNDTABLE ON THE INTERNATIONAL TREATY ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON BIODIVERSITY, CLIMATE CHANGE AND  
FOOD SECURITY  
BANDUNG, INDONESIA, 2 JULY 2013**

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The Third High-level Roundtable on the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (the “Treaty”) was convened by the Government of Indonesia, on 2 July 2013, in Bandung, Indonesia, on the occasion of the International Conference on Biodiversity, Climate Change and Food Security, in order to prepare for the Fifth Session of the Governing Body, to be held in Muscat, Oman, from 24 to 28 September 2013, and to take stock of progress in the implementation of the *Rio Six-point Action Plan*.

The Roundtable was chaired by H.E. Suswono, Minister of Agriculture of Indonesia.

The High-level Roundtable was attended by: Ministers of Agriculture of a number of countries and Agricultural Research Organizations, including the CGIAR. The Minister of Agriculture of the Sultanate of Oman sent a video message, as did Mr. Francis Gurry, Director-General of the Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV) and Mr. Braulio F. de Sousa Dias, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Also in attendance were Mr. Javad Mozafari (Iran), Chair of the Fifth Session of the Governing Body, and Mr Modesto Fernandez Diaz (Cuba), Co-Chair of the Treaty’s *Ad Hoc* Advisory Technical Committee on the Funding Strategy.

Dr. Haryono, Director-General of the Indonesian Agency for Agricultural Research and Development, and Chair of the Organizing Conference on Biodiversity, Climate Change and Food Security, presented the Report of the Committee and welcomed participants.

## **Opening of the High Level Roundtable**

Mr. Javad Mozafari, Chairman of the Fifth Session of the Governing Body, described to the High-level Round Table the various important deliberations that Contracting Parties to the treaty would undertake during the session. These included the reviews and assessments under the Multilateral System, and of the implementation and operation of the Standard Material Transfer Agreement, which presented as opportunity for the Governing Body to take stock, and to fine tune the Treaty and its operational mechanisms.

He noted the important proposals for innovative approaches to benefit-sharing, to expand the scope of the Multilateral System, that had been prepared by the *Ad Hoc* Advisory Committee on the Funding Strategy.

He believed that the Governing Body should consider addressing these two elements as a package.

The Minister of Agriculture of Oman, H.E. Fuad Ibn Jaafar al-Sajwani, invited and welcomed all Contracting Parties to Muscat, where his Government would provide excellent facilities for these important discussions. The outcomes of the High Level Roundtable would, he said, would provide an important element in the discussions.

H.E. Suswono, Minister of Agriculture of Indonesia noted the many challenges that agriculture is facing throughout the world, particularly climate change and water scarcity. Plant genetic resources for food and agriculture are the main tools with which the world can face these challenges, and the Treaty is a manifestation of countries' commitment and needs, he said, which to be supported, for its full implementation. He appealed to countries to make all necessary efforts to create a package to enhance the efficiency of the Treaty, by addressing its three elements: improved benefit-sharing formulas through innovative approaches, the projected in-built reviews of the Treaty, and the possible expansion of facilitated multilateral access under the Treaty.

## **Progress in the implementation of the *Rio Six-Point Action Plan***

The Roundtable welcomed the substantial progress that had been made in the short period since the adoption of the *Rio Six-point Action Plan*.

H.E. Paulo Alberto Da Silveira Soares, Ambassador of Brazil to Indonesia, informed the Roundtable that a group of public and private organizations, from a number of regions with substantial technical expertise that they wished to put at the disposal of others, had established the *Platform for the Co-Development and Transfer of Technologies*, within the context of non-monetary benefit-sharing under the Treaty, that the *Rio Action Plan* had called for. This process had been initiated and was led by the Indonesian Agency for Agricultural Research and Development (IAARD) and the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa). The second meeting of the Action partners in the *Platform* has taken place in Bandung on 30 June and 1 July 2013, and the High-level Roundtable was informed of the outcomes and the Platform's future plans.

He announced that, within this *Platform*, Embrapa and IAARD were establishing an Internet Portal that would initially cover two crops, and bring together all available sources of technical information of value to plant breeders and relevant technologies, as well as what genetic materials were available, where and how they might be accessed, as well a facility for ordering them. The aim was to create a "one-stop shop" to directly support technology transfer to the final users, farmers.

Speaking as the Host Government of the Second High Level Roundtable, at which the *Rio Six-Point Action Plan* had been adopted, Brazil believed that, in order to ensure food security across the world, it was essential to expand the crops included in the Multilateral System. This would increase the bank of genetic resources available for common use, and would bring benefits to all Contracting Parties. Linked to such an expansion of coverage, Brazil also fully supported a re-launching of a fuller discussion of non-monetary and monetary benefit-sharing under the Treaty. These two elements are part of a single package, and deserve to be properly addressed by the Governing Body.

Dr. Swapan Datta, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, informed the Roundtable that he had been requested by the Technical Consultation on Public-Private Partnerships for Pre-Breeding that had been held in Rome, Italy, on 30 and 31 May 2013, in response to another

action point of the *Rio Action Plan*, to report on its outcomes and prospects. He stressed the importance of pre-breeding in underwriting food and nutrition security, by providing the widest possible range of useful genetic variations to plant breeders, in forms which can be used efficiently and rapidly in developing well-adapted crop varieties. This is crucial in ensuring the world's capacity to mitigate threats of climate change and genetic extinction and erosion. He noted that the Technical Consultation would report to the Governing Body, and that the *Public-Private Partnership for Pre-breeding*, which the *Rio Six-point Action Plan* had called for, was expected to take definite shape during 2014.

Dr. Emile Frison, Director-General, Bioversity International, referred to the further action point in the *Rio Six-point Action Plan* that has called for a new Keystone-type dialogue, to complete the governance of all plant genetic resources for food and agriculture under the Treaty. He reported on the informal meeting that had been organized in May 2013, with participants from governments, non-governmental organizations, and the seed industry, to investigate the possible value of convening such a dialogue. A proposed structure for the dialogue had been identified, and it would be reported to the Governing Body at its meeting in Oman, for its agreement, after which it might begin in earnest.

Mr. Modesto Fernandez Diaz, as Co-Chair of the Treaty's *Ad Hoc* Advisory Technical Committee on the Funding Strategy, described the work that the Committee had been undertaken by in the past biennium. At the request of the Governing Body, it has investigated a number of innovative approaches to the mobilization of income for the Treaty's Benefit-sharing Fund, which could be of value in putting the twin imperatives of improved access and benefit-sharing on a sound long-term basis.

### **Considerations of the Roundtable**

The Roundtable warmly welcomed these important initiatives by groups of stakeholder, which would greatly contribute to realizing the full value of the Treaty, for all its members, in support of its objectives of 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.

It welcomed the proactive, practical and innovative approaches to effective non-monetary benefit-sharing that were being put in place, in response to the *Rio Six-point Action Plan*. This would greatly expand the influence of the Treaty, and the benefits it provided to its Contracting Parties.

The Roundtable noted the importance of also addressing the action points that aimed at raising awareness of the actual and potential value of underutilized species of local and regional importance for food security and sustainable development; and at sensibilizing policy makers and other key stakeholders about the importance of fully implementing the Treaty, not only for food and agriculture, but also for food security, nutrition and the resilience of agriculture systems, particularly in the context of the climate change.

The Roundtable called for Contracting Parties to make a special effort to increase public awareness of the crucial importance of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, as a pillar of human life on the planet, and a crucial contributor to food security, social and economic development, and in particular of the central importance of the Treaty in this regard.

The Roundtable recalled that the scope of the Treaty was all plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. It recognized that the questions that the Governing Body would address in its forthcoming session in Oman would be of crucial importance in setting it on a sound long term-trajectory, and in deepening and widening its coverage and impact. It noted the proposal to address these matters as a package, with the aim for progressing rapidly, and obtaining the support of the Contracting Parties. It welcomed the intention of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Funding Strategy to forward all the innovative approaches that it had identified to the Governing Body, in order to provide a wide basis for discussions.

In welcoming the open space for dialogue that the High Level Roundtables provided, it was recalled that the Governing Body is the only forum empowered to take decisions regarding the Treaty. The Roundtable appealed for vision and ambition, and stressed the urgency of making rapid progress. For this reason, it appealed to all Contracting Parties to prepare for the very important and far-reaching discussions that would take place at the Governing Body, and

for them to send representatives of the skills and levels necessary, with the mandate to engage in productive debate and decision.

Mr. Javad Mozafari, Chairman of the Fifth Session of the Governing Body, recalled that the time has come to fully develop and extend both its access and benefit-sharing provisions, in a balanced package, around which the Parties the Treaty can reach an agreement. He underlined the urgency that Contracting Parties will be ambitious and to seize the moment, preferably during the forthcoming session of the Governing Body or, if not, in an inter-sessional process, to adopt the range of measures necessary to achieve the full implementation of the Treaty.

1. The package will need to include: enhancement of the benefit-sharing mechanisms through innovative approaches, in order to reach the funding targets, and
2. expansion of the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing to include substantially more crops through appropriate innovative mechanisms.

### *Closure of the High-level Round Table*

The countries, institutions and stakeholders present warmly thanked Indonesia for hosting the Third High-level Roundtable on the International Treaty. The Government of Indonesia undertook to make available and disseminate the Report of the High-level Roundtable as soon as possible. The Government of Indonesia would present the Report to the forthcoming session of the Governing Body, under Item 5, *Reports on High Level Initiatives of Contracting Parties*.

The Roundtable also warmly thanked the Government of the Sultanate of Oman, for its generosity and commitment in hosting the forthcoming session of the Treaty, in September 2013.

Dr. Haryono , as Chairman of the afternoon session, thanked participants for the rich discussions that had taken place. Indonesia stood ready to support any process that Governing Body might establish to seek consensus on a packet of measures to improve monetary and non-monetary benefit-sharing under Treaty, and expand the Multilateral System. He wished participants an enjoyable and productive stay in Indonesia, and a safe return home. The Fifth Session of the Governing Body, in Oman, was going, he said, to mark an important moment in the life of the Treaty, and he looked forward to constructive and engaged proceedings there.