



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**



The International Treaty
**ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES
FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

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Item 14.2 of the Provisional Agenda
SIXTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY
Rome, Italy, 5 – 9 October 2015
Report from the Global Crop Diversity Trust*

Executive Summary

Pursuant to Article 3 of the Relationship Agreement with the Global Crop Diversity Trust, this document contains a report from the Executive Board of the Global Crop Diversity Trust to the Governing Body, which is contained in the *Appendix 1* to this document. *Appendix 2* contains a draft Resolution to provide policy guidance to the Trust, as foreseen in the Relationship Agreement of the Governing Body with, and the Constitution of, the Trust.

Guidance Sought

The Governing Body is invited to take note of the *Report from the Global Crop Diversity Trust* and to consider and adopt the draft Resolution, Policy Guidance to the Global Crop Diversity Trust, as contained in the *Appendix 2* to this document.

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*The present version replaces an earlier draft which was erroneously uploaded during document processing.

1. Article 18 of the Treaty provides that Contracting Parties undertake to implement a funding strategy for the implementation of this Treaty “to enhance the availability, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of the provision of financial resources to implement activities under this Treaty.”¹ At its first Session, the Governing Body entered into a Relationship Agreement with the Global Crop Diversity Trust (the Crop Trust) and recognized it as an essential element of the Funding Strategy of the Treaty in relation to *ex situ* conservation and availability of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. The Constitution of the Crop Trust² and its Relationship Agreement with the Governing Body³ provide that the Executive Board of the Crop Trust shall provide regular reports on activities of the Crop Trust to the Governing Body and recognize the authority of the Governing Body to provide overall policy guidance to the Crop Trust on all matters within the purview of the Treaty. Accordingly, this document contains both the Report of the Crop Trust and the basis for discussion on policy guidance of the Governing Body to the Crop Trust.

I. BACKGROUND

2. The Crop Trust was established in 2004 under international law as an independent international organization. Building, and funding, an efficient and sustainable global system for the *ex situ* conservation of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture is at the core of the Crop Trust’s work. The Relationship Agreement between the Crop Trust and the Governing Body of the Treaty recognizes the Crop Trust “as an essential element of the Funding Strategy of the International Treaty in relation to *ex situ* conservation and availability of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture”. It also provides for the Governing Body to give overall policy guidance to the Crop Trust on all matters within the purview of the Treaty. This reflects parallel language in the Constitution of the Crop Trust.

3. The Relationship Agreement notes that the Crop Trust has established an endowment fund with the objective of “providing a permanent source of funds to support the long-term conservation of the *ex situ* germplasm collections on which the world depends for food security”. The Crop Trust Endowment Fund provides long-term stable funding to crop collections of global importance, currently the international collections managed by the CGIAR Centres and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) under Article 15 of the Treaty. The Crop Trust also funds project work to further the development of the global system, a role recognised in the Second Global Plan of Action.

4. Members of the Crop Trust Executive Board are nominated by the Governing Body of the Treaty and the Crop Trust’s Donors’ Council. In addition, there are non-voting members appointed by FAO and CGIAR. The Board generally meets twice a year and reports of its decisions are publically available on the Crop Trust website. In addition, the Treaty Secretary is an observer on the Crop Trust Executive Board, with full access to Board documents. In order to enhance cooperation further, the Crop Trust decided in 2014 that both the Secretary and the Chair of the Governing Body of the Treaty will be invited to its Board meetings; both participated in the Executive Board meeting in March 2015. The Chair of the Crop Trust Executive Board and its Executive Director were likewise invited to attend meetings of the Bureau of the Sixth Session of the Governing Body. The Crop Trust is invited to Governing Body meetings of the Treaty as an observer, where it presents a report on its activities.

5. Four members of the Crop Trust Executive Board come to the end of their tenure in 2016 and the Crop Trust would welcome sight of the timeline to be followed by the Bureau of the

¹ Article 18.1 and Article 18.2.

² Articles 6(3).q, 7(2)(b) and (c)

³ Articles 2, 3

Seventh Session of the Governing Body to nominate new members, or a decision in principle to keep the same members for a new term.

6. During the current biennium the Bureau of the Sixth Session, made efforts to continue to evolve this relationship and to identify areas where the Governing Body could provide useful policy guidance. Accordingly, programmatic and policy aspects of the areas identified by the Bureau for policy guidance are reflected in Section II below. The Report of the Trust is contained in *Appendix 1* to this document in the form received. *Appendix 2* contains a draft Resolution by which the Governing Body may provide policy guidance to the Trust. Arrangements for collaboration and liaison with the Trust in the current biennium are described together with similar arrangements in document IT/GB-6/15/21.

II. PROGRAMMATIC AND POLICY ASPECTS

7. The Bureau agreed to facilitate discussions of the Governing Body through this document to provide informed policy guidance in areas such as the Global Information System, including Divseek, scientific and technical matters, resource mobilization and communication and outreach. Accordingly, programmatic and policy aspects of these areas are described below.

Scientific and technical matters

8. From 2012 to 2016, inclusive, the funding for the CGIAR-managed international collections under Article 15 of the Treaty is ensured at a stable, agreed level under the Genebanks CGIAR Research Programme (CRP), complementing the long-term grants of the Crop Trust. Ambitious targets for the availability, safety duplication and data availability of the CGIAR-managed collections have been agreed, and Centers are investing in facilities, staff and operations to meet these targets by 2021. A similar arrangement for the next 5 years is being developed. The Treaty Secretariat has been involved in the annual meetings of the managers of the international genebanks organized under the Genebanks CRP, and has also provided guidance and advice on such issues as use of the SMTA on an *ad hoc* basis.

9. In 2011, the Crop Trust launched a 10-year project to collect, conserve and use high-priority diversity of the wild species related to 29 Annex I crops. The project is funded by the Government of Norway and guided by an expert Advisory Group. The Crop Trust is grateful to the Treaty Secretariat for its participation on the Advisory Group, as well as the provision of technical and policy advice on a more *ad hoc* basis. This collaboration is expected to continue into the new biennium, during which the focus will be on support to collecting crop wild relatives by national programmes. The project also includes a component on pre-breeding, and the Crop Trust is grateful for its involvement in the consultation on Public Private Partnership (PPP) for Pre-breeding organized by the Treaty Secretariat.

The Global Information System (GLIS), including DivSeek

10. In furtherance of Article 17.1 of the Treaty, which provides that 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 plant genetic resources for food and agriculture” and Priority Activity 15 of the Global Plan of Action, the Crop Trust is supporting the development of GRIN-Global, Genesys and DivSeek as fundamental components of the information infrastructure for an effective global conservation system. How these systems relate to each other and to the GLIS are, based on discussion of the Bureau of the Sixth Session, an area where the Governing Body may consider providing policy guidance and directions as to continuous monitoring and reporting on progress, for a consistent and effective implementation of the GLIS. The Treaty Secretariat is represented on the Genesys Oversight Committee. During 2015 a series of meetings took place to strengthen

collaboration on the further development of the system. Similarly, the DivSeek Joint Facilitation Unit was launched (in addition to the Treaty Secretariat and the Crop Trust, the Global Plant Council and CGIAR Consortium Office are also partners), a Steering Committee (SC) elected, together with a Chair, and its first meeting held, hosted by the Treaty Secretariat. The SC reviewed a “landscape study” of projects developing data standards for sharing information about PGRFA, and considered elements to strengthen the current governance of the initiative. It also began discussing components of a multi-year strategy and an initial work plan. The current task is to identify, within the DivSeek strategy and work plan, a clear set of activities, which are harmonious with the forthcoming Vision and Programme of Work on the GLIS and recognize the role of the Governing Body on GLIS components, as well as a robust mechanism for funding and managing them.

Resource mobilization and communication and outreach

11. The Treaty Secretariat and the Crop Trust have cooperated on resource mobilization outreach and communications in a variety of ways. A joint Information Document has been prepared to explain the complementarity of the funding needs and strategies of the Benefit-sharing Fund of the Treaty and the Crop Trust Endowment Fund. This has also been the basis for a joint Information Note on this topic that is being used in communications with donor partners. Another joint communications product is an Institutional Chart that explains the place of the Treaty, its Benefit-sharing Fund, the Crop Trust, and its Endowment Fund in the international agricultural policy and organizational environment.

12. The Crop Trust Fundraising Strategy was adopted in October 2013 and calls for raising the Crop Trust Endowment Fund to USD 500 million by end-2016 in order to finance sustainably the core operations of international genebanks listed under Article 15 of the Treaty. Most of the required funding is expected to be sourced from donor governments. In a second phase, the Crop Trust Endowment Fund is targeted to rise to USD 850 million, by end-2018, in order to support selected national crop collections of significance for global food security and to finance the long-term operation of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault and the GCDT Secretariat. The bulk of the related funding is expected to come from private donors, including the seed and agro-food industry, foundations and wealthy individuals.

13. On all the above areas, ongoing communication among the organizations has been further expanded in the current biennium, including meetings of the Chairpersons of the Executive Board and Governing Body to discuss ongoing activities and areas for policy guidance, participation in inter-sessional processes, and continuous communication among all officers working on the above-mentioned areas and related workprogrammes. These arrangements of collaboration will further continue in the next biennium at both executive and technical levels.

III. CONCLUSIONS

14. There has been increased collaboration between the Crop Trust and the Treaty in the current biennium. At the same time, the Bureau of the Sixth Session of the Governing Body raised the issue of policy guidance from the Governing Body to the Trust. The Trust and its donors strongly value its independence as an organization. However, it also values the overall policy guidance it has received and will continue to receive.

GUIDANCE SOUGHT

15. The Governing Body is invited to:

Take note of the *Report from the Global Crop Diversity Trust*;

Consider and adopt the draft Resolution, Policy Guidance to the Global Crop Diversity Trust, as contained in the Appendix 2 to this document.

Appendix I
**REPORT FROM THE GLOBAL CROP DIVERSITY TRUST TO THE GOVERNING
BODY OF THE INTERNATIONAL TREATY**
I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Global Crop Diversity Trust (the Crop Trust) was established in 2004 under international law as an independent international organization. Its objective, as stated in its Constitution, 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.*” The Constitution further states that “*the Trust shall in particular, without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing,*

- *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;*
- *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”);*
- *promote the regeneration, characterization, documentation and evaluation of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture and the exchange of related information;*
- *promote the availability of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture; and*
- *promote national and regional capacity building, including the training of key personnel, with respect to the above.”*

2. The Relationship Agreement between the Crop Trust and the Governing Body of the International Treaty recognizes the Crop Trust “*as an essential element of the Funding Strategy of the International Treaty in relation to ex situ conservation and availability of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture*”. It notes that the Crop Trust established an endowment fund with the objective of “*providing a permanent source of funds to support the long-term conservation of the ex situ germplasm collections on which the world depends for food security*”. The Agreement highlights the call in the first Global Plan of Action for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (GPA) for the “*development and support of a rational, efficient and sustainable system of genetic resources collections around the world*”, re-emphasized in the International Treaty’s call for contracting parties to “*cooperate to promote the development of an efficient and sustainable system of ex situ conservation*”.

3. The Crop Trust, in accordance with its Constitution and the Relationship Agreement with the Governing Body, focuses on *ex situ* (genebank) conservation and availability of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. It addresses major portions of the International Treaty, including Articles 5 and 6, and much of Articles 7, 8, 9, 14, 16, 17.

4. Following a decision at the Fifth Meeting of the Governing Body, the Crop Trust and the Secretariat of the International Treaty co-fund a Joint Liaison staff position to strengthen coordination and collaboration between the two organizations.

5. Building – and funding – an efficient and sustainable global conservation system is at the core of the Crop Trust’s work. The endowment fund provides long-term stable funding to crop collections of global importance, initially the international collections managed by the CGIAR Centres and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community under Article 15 of the International Treaty. The Crop Trust also funds project work to further the development of the global system and address challenges for PGRFA conservation and use, such as climate change. The Crop Trust’s role in this regard is recognised in the Second Global Plan Action.

6. The Crop Trust is pleased to submit this report on its activities to the Sixth Governing Body meeting of the International Treaty. This report provides an update on both institutional and programme developments.

I. INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

7. The Crop Trust was established by FAO and Bioversity International, on behalf of the CGIAR Centres, and jointly hosted by the two organisations in Rome, Italy pending a permanent host country agreement. The decision to accept the headquarter agreement offered by the Government of Germany was taken by the Crop Trust's Executive Board after a thorough study of proposals submitted by a number of different countries. Accordingly, in January 2013 the Crop Trust started operating from its new offices in Bonn, Germany. The Crop Trust takes this opportunity of thanking the Government of Germany once again for its continued support.

8. The Crop Trust has recruited a full complement of 25 staff⁴ at its new location in Bonn over the past two years, including a new team of specialists on fund-raising, partnerships and communications.

9. All members of its Board are listed on the Crop Trust website⁵. Members are nominated by the Governing Body of the International Treaty and the Crop Trust's Donors' Council. In addition, there are non-voting members appointed by FAO and CGIAR. The Chair of the Governing Body of the International Treaty is invited to Board meetings as an observer. The Board generally meets twice a year and reports of its decisions are available on the Crop Trust website.

10. As of January 2015, private donors who contribute USD 250,000 or more are invited to join the Crop Trust's Donors' Council. For governments the limit continues to be USD25,000. The Council meets annually and provides financial oversight and advice to the Board. The Council's reports and the complete list of donors can be found on the Crop Trust website⁶.

11. The Crop Trust has a broad and important mandate consistent with the requirements of the International Treaty and the Second Global Plan of Action, but financial resources are limited. The Crop Trust therefore focuses funding on activities that provide maximum global benefits, are cost-effective, efficient and sustainable. The Crop Trust operates on the basis of a Fund Disbursement Strategy, which was adopted by its Board in 2009 after consultation with the Governing Body of the International Treaty and donors. The Fund Disbursement Strategy can be viewed on the Crop Trust website⁷. Two further documents detailing the Crop Trust's direction, a Strategic Workplan and Fund-raising Strategy, were published in 2013.

12. To date, the Crop Trust has raised in the region of USD 263 million, of which approximately USD 160 million is invested in the endowment fund⁸. However, the Crop Trust is still some distance from reaching its endowment target and the programmatic goals recognized in its Relationship Agreement with the Governing Body and set out for itself in its Constitution and Fund Disbursement Raising Strategy.

13. In 2012, the CGIAR Fund Council approved the Crop Trust-CGIAR Consortium 5-year programme for the management and sustainable funding of the collections of plant genetic resources managed by 11 CGIAR Centers (CGIAR Research Program for Genebanks, or CRP Genebanks). This funding commitment from the CGIAR Fund for the international collections includes management oversight by the Crop Trust together with the Consortium Office and aims to increase efficiencies, ensure accountability, nurture collaboration between genebanks, and most

⁴ <http://www.croptrust.org/content/staff>

⁵ <https://www.croptrust.org/governance-policy/executive-board/members/>

⁶ <http://www.croptrust.org/content/funds-raised>

⁷ <https://www.croptrust.org/downloads/>

⁸ <http://www.croptrust.org/content/funds-raised>

importantly, improve long-term stability of funding. The programme agreement calls for the commitment to “phase-out” annual funding while simultaneously building the Crop Trust’s endowment, thus ensuring true sustainability.

14. The Crop Trust contributes significantly to implementation of the International Treaty and the Second Global Plan of Action. The Crop Trust thus appeals to governments and private donors to summon the political will at the highest level to make the investment needed to secure crop diversity through its endowment fund. The Crop Trust Pledging Conference planned for April 2016 in Washington, DC, at the margins of the IMF/World Bank Spring Meeting, will provide a perfect opportunity to the international community for doing so.

II. PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENTS

Long-term conservation and availability of crop diversity

15. Article 5.1e of the International Treaty requires that Contracting Parties “*cooperate to promote the development of an efficient and sustainable system of ex situ conservation ...*” and Priority Activity 6 of the Second Global Plan of Action has as an objective “*to develop a rational, efficient, goal-oriented, economically efficient and sustainable system of ex situ conservation and use for both seed and vegetatively propagated species*”. At the core of the Crop Trust is the endowment fund, created to provide financial security to globally important collections of crop diversity in perpetuity.

16. As the endowment fund grows, the income it generates is used to provide in-perpetuity funding to collections of crop diversity of global importance that are conserved at international standards and available in accordance with the terms and conditions of Part IV of the International Treaty.

17. To date, the Crop Trust has approved long-term grants to 9 CGIAR genebanks and the genebank of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community. The funding is supporting the conservation and availability of 20 international collections of 17 major crops⁹. The supported collections serve an exclusively international role as the backbone of the rational, efficient and effective global system. In addition, the Crop Trust contributes to the annual operating costs of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, providing the ultimate back-up for the global system.

18. Long-term grants now total USD 2.5m million annually and since their initiation in 2006, USD 16.6 million has been disbursed for long term grants from the Crop Trust endowment.

19. From 2012 to 2016, inclusive, the funding for the CGIAR-managed international collections is ensured at a stable, agreed level under the Genebanks CRP, complementing the long-term grants.

20. Targets for the availability, safety duplication and data availability of the CGIAR-managed collections have been agreed, and Centers are investing in facilities, staff and operations to meet these targets by 2021.

21. Since 2012, seven of eleven CGIAR genebanks have received external reviews by crop diversity conservation and use experts from a wide range of institutes (Millennium Seed Bank, UK, Leibniz Institute of Plant Genetics and Crop Plant Research, Germany, National Plant Germplasm System, USA, Centre for Genetic Resources, Netherlands, National Agricultural Research Institute, Uruguay, Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária, Brazil, International Potato Centre, Peru and Bioversity International, Malaysia). The reviewed genebanks are now

⁹ Crops supported by the Trust through long-term grants are: banana and plantain, barley, bean, cassava, chickpea, edible aroids, faba bean, forages, grass pea, lentil, maize, pearl millet, rice, sorghum, sweet potatoes, wheat, and yam

implementing workplans to address recommendations. All genebanks supported under the Genebanks CRP will be reviewed by the end on 2016.

22. As part of the Genebanks CRP, a minimum Quality Management System for genebanks is being devised, based on the Genebank Standards, and will be implemented in all genebanks receiving long-term support from the Crop Trust.

23. Since 2012, the Crop Trust has organized three Annual Genebank Meetings in Italy, the USA and Tanzania. The next one is planned to take place in Turkey. The meetings convene all of the genebank managers of institutes receiving long-term grants, together with expert reviewers, thematic specialists and national genebank managers from the region.

24. In addition, the Crop Trust continues to collaborate with partners to update the global crop conservation strategies, develop new ones (on citrus and apple), and coordinate rescue activities (e.g. the international coconut genebank in Papua New Guinea). A methodology, based on the crop conservation strategies, has been developed to help identify national collections of global significance that could be eligible for support by the endowment. The process to identify these collections will be initiated in the near future.

Safety duplication

25. The International Treaty cites the need “*to take appropriate steps to minimize or, if possible, eliminate threats to PGRFA*” (Article 5.2) and the Second Global Plan of Action has as an objective “*to provide for the planned replication and safe storage of materials not currently safety duplicated*”. Safety duplication is recognized as an essential element of good genebank management practice aimed at minimizing risk to *ex situ* collections.

26. The Svalbard Global Seed Vault, welcomed unanimously by the then 172 Members plus EU of the Commission, was officially launched in February 2008 and provides virtually fail-safe security for duplicate samples of PGRFA. The Seed Bank was established and funded by the Government of Norway, with the responsibility for operations assigned to The Ministry of Agriculture and Food. The Ministry coordinates daily operation with the Nordic Gene Resource Centre and the Crop Trust, and receives guidance from a dedicated international council established to advise the Vault. The Crop Trust is contributing funding on an ongoing basis for the management and operation of the facility.

27. Since it opened its doors in 2008, the Vault has accepted deposits from 63 genebanks around the world, and now holds a total of 863,969 accessions.

28. The Crop Trust takes this opportunity of once again thanking the Government of Norway for its leadership in establishing the Svalbard Global Seed Vault.

Information and information systems

29. 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. Priority Activity 15 of the Second Global Plan of Action calls for “*Constructing and strengthening comprehensive information system for plant genetic resources for food and agriculture*”. The Crop Trust is continuing to support the implementation of three initiatives to enhance the management and availability of data on PGRFA:

- The Crop Trust partnered with the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Bioversity International to develop and deploy a state-of-the-art genebank data management

software package, GRIN-Global.¹⁰ Version 1.0 was released at the end of 2011 and a much-improved Version 2.0 is about to be released. The system has been introduced to ca. 40 genebanks for evaluation and possible eventual adoption. CIMMYT was the first genebank to formally adopt the system, followed by Portugal.

- The Crop Trust and the Secretariat of the International Treaty supported the Centres of the CGIAR, under Bioversity's leadership, to develop a global on-line portal to accession-level germplasm information. The portal, Genesys¹¹, builds on existing collaborative information sharing systems, namely SINGER, EURISCO and GRIN. It allows searching across multiple genebank databases online and currently contains data on 2.8 million accessions held in almost 450 institutions, including evaluation data from USDA and some CGIAR Centres. A second version of the portal was released by the Crop Trust in 2014 and continues to be enhanced and expanded.
- The recently launched Diversity Seek¹² (DivSeek) initiative will facilitate the networking of a rapidly growing number of projects that use game-changing DNA-sequencing and phenotypic platforms to harness PGRFA for food security and climate change adaptation. The first DivSeek Partner Assembly, held in January 2015, elected Susan McCouch as the Chairperson and identified interoperable data standards and repositories as the top priority for DivSeek's initial program of work. Four organizations with global reach, each providing access to a different group of stakeholders, contribute to operating a Joint Facilitation Unit (JFU) for DivSeek: the Crop Trust, the Secretariat of the International Treaty, the CGIAR Consortium Office and the Global Plant Council. A Crop Trust staff member is now working full-time on DivSeek.

30. In furtherance of Article 17.1 of the International Treaty and Priority Activity 15 of the Global Plan of Action, the Crop Trust will continue to support the development of GRIN-Global, Genesys and DivSeek as fundamental components of an effective global conservation system. It will also continue to assist interested genebanks with the adoption of GRIN-Global, the implementation of other improvements to their documentation systems, and sharing selected information on their collections through Genesys, thereby contributing to a truly global system of *ex situ* conservation. As part of this effort, the Crop Trust is supporting assessments of documentation systems in ca. 25 national genebanks around the world.

Adapting agriculture to climate change: collecting, protecting and preparing crop wild relatives

31. In 2011, the Crop Trust launched a 10-year project to collect high-priority diversity of the wild species related to 29 Annex 1 crops, to secure diversity for the long-term, and to use it to prepare materials useful to breeding programmes around the world in adapting these crops to climate change. The project is funded by the Government of Norway and guided by an Advisory Group comprising experts and representatives of the Secretariat of the International Treaty and CGIAR Centres. It is being implemented in partnership with the Millennium Seed Bank (MSB) of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, UK and with specialist institutes and national and international conservation and pre-breeding programmes around the world.

32. The crop wild relatives in a total of 92 genera, including the project's target 29 focal crops, have been catalogued and the database is searchable at the portal Crop Wild Relatives & Climate Change.¹³ A dataset containing about 4 million records has been assembled, representing

¹⁰ <http://www.grin-global.org>

¹¹ <http://www.genesys-pgr.org/>

¹² <http://www.divseek.org/>

¹³ <http://croptrust.org>

the largest and most comprehensive resource on the geographic distribution of the wild relatives of the world's major crops.

33. The dataset has been analysed to identify high priority species and regions for collecting. The collecting, which will be carried out by national programme, is funded through grant agreements with the Crop Trust. These recognize all relevant national laws and international agreements. Technical backstopping will be provided, as necessary, by staff of the Millennium Seed Bank and CGIAR Centres. Country-specific field identification guides are being developed by MSB to support approximately 25 national partners in their collecting activities, and will represent a long-term resource and important contribution to capacity building.

34. In preparation for the pre-breeding phase of the project, crop-specific consultations have been held with a wide range of breeders and other researchers who have experience in the use of crop wild relatives. Two case studies on pre-breeding are underway, on rice and sunflower. These crops were chosen because considerable crop wild relative diversity already exists in genebanks (though some gaps do also remain) and because the crops provide an interesting contrast in terms of level of past investment in breeding. Full-scale pre-breeding projects have now also started on carrot, chickpea, durum wheat, eggplant, lentil, potato, sorghum and sweet potato. All are collaborative arrangements including a significant component of capacity building for pre-breeding programmes in developing countries.

Communications

35. The Crop Trust has taken an active part in the deliberations on the draft United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Presentations have been made and documents submitted in cooperation with the ITPFRFA, the CGIAR Consortium Office and Bioversity. The existing draft SDGs reflect well the importance of crop diversity for food security.

36. The Crop Trust remains active in drawing media and public attention to the importance and urgency of crop diversity conservation and its relationship with future food security and nutrition, and the adaptation of agriculture to a changing climate.

37. Through press releases and related media efforts, the Crop Trust has been successful in raising awareness of the issue, with coverage in major media outlets worldwide. From 2011-2015, Trust media coverage included over 100 articles in international, newspapers, newsletters and journals, including New York Times, SciDev, International Herald Tribune, the Guardian, BBC and CNN.

38. In 2015, the Crop Trust released a completely redesigned website¹⁴. It represents a state-of-the-art visual display of the work of the organization and serves as a platform for online fundraising, including planned crowd-sourcing efforts, to mobilize support for the Crop Trust endowment from individual households. On a regular basis, the Trust raises awareness of plant genetic resources and their importance through its website, and through social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter and Flickr.

39. The Trust, usually in cooperation with national partners, issued several press releases to highlight successful activities and ongoing challenges. The press releases can be downloaded from the Crop Trust website¹⁵. The Svalbard Global Seed Vault continues to attract media attention from around the world. The Crop Trust has issued several press releases in connection with anniversaries and shipments to the Seed Vault, aiming to underscore the importance of crop diversity to global agriculture and food security.

40. The Crop Trust Pledging Conference in April 2016 will bring together world governments and selected private partners to mobilize firm financing pledges for the Crop Trust

¹⁴ www.croptrust.org

¹⁵ https://www.croptrust.org/news-center/?filter_category=press-release

Endowment, bringing the endowment to its USD 500 million target so as to support the most important international crop collections. To engage with partners on the scientific work of the Crop Trust, a first global Stakeholder Discussion has been held in January 2015 in Berlin, Germany at the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture. A second Stakeholder Discussion is scheduled for May 2015 at the FAO in Rome. The Crop Trust also intends to hold side events at various international conferences during the remainder of 2015 and in early 2016.

ITPGRFA - Crop Trust Cooperation

41. Cooperation between the ITPGRFA and the Crop Trust has always been close and has increased further during the last biennium. The ITPGRFA is represented as an observer on the Crop Trust Executive Board, with full access to Board documents; the ITPGRFA Secretary has been invited to all Board meetings. In order to enhance cooperation further, the Crop Trust has decided that in the future both the Secretary and the Chair of the Governing Body of the ITPGRFA will be invited to its Board meetings; both participated in the Executive Board meeting in March 2015. The Chair of the Crop Trust Executive Board and its Executive Director were invited to attend parts of the ITPGRFA's Bureau meeting in March 2015. The Crop Trust is invited to the biannual Governing Body meetings of the ITPGRFA as an observer.

42. The ITPGRFA Secretariat is involved in all major technical structures and project activities of the Crop Trust, as follows:

1. Crop Wild Relatives project: Advisory Group
2. Genesys global accession-level database: Oversight Committee
3. CRP Genebanks: in 2014 the ITPGRFA Secretariat attended the entire Annual Genebanks Meeting
4. DivSeek: Facilitation Unit implemented with the ITPGRFA Secretariat.

The Crop Trust has participated in the following ITPGRFA activities:

1. Consultation on the Global Information System (COGIS-PGRFA)
2. Public Private Partnership (PPP) for Pre-breeding

43. Following a decision at the Fifth meeting of the Governing Body, a position of Joint Liaison Officer (JLO) was established. It was filled from April 2014 until December 2014. The Crop Trust found this position very useful to ensure close coordination with the ITPGRFA Secretariat and was satisfied with the incumbent, until he was withdrawn by the ITPGRFA Secretariat in December 2014.

Since the Fifth meeting of the Governing body, cooperation between the ITPGRFA and the Crop Trust have increased and there is a well functioning day to day dialogue on matters of common interest. The two parties agree there is no longer need for a Joint Liaison Officer. The formal structure between the two organisations will be based on the following in the next bi-annium:

Executive level:

1. Reciprocal participation as observers in the Bureau of the Plant Treaty and the Crop Trust Executive Board
2. Monthly telephone conferences between the Secretary of the Treaty and the Executive Director of the Crop Trust

Technical level:

3. Annual Science Meeting to review cooperation
4. Continued Plant Treaty participation in governance structures related to major Crop Trust projects such as the Crop Wild Relatives and Genesys
5. Joint facilitation of DivSeek – also in cooperation with the CGIAR Consortium and Global Plant Council

Level of FAO:

6. Establishment of the Synergies and Collaboration Group between the Commission on Genetic Resources, the Plant Treaty and the Crop Trust. Annual meetings are foreseen

44. With regard to recent events and other communications activities, the ITPGRFA has been invited to Crop Trust Donors' Council meetings, periodic Stakeholder Discussions on technical aspects of the Crop Trust's work, a public Information Session in Dubai and to the 10th Anniversary Event of the Crop Trust at the South African Embassy in Rome. The Crop Trust was invited to two events celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the ITPGRFA. Joint communications materials have been developed, such as the DivSeek website and the ITPGRFA-Crop Trust one-page information note. The ITPGRFA is regularly referenced in Crop Trust presentations, speeches and other communications outreach, as appropriate.

Appendix 2

DRAFT RESOLUTION **/2015

Policy Guidance to the Global Crop Diversity Trust

The Governing Body,

Recalling that the Global Crop Diversity Trust (Trust) is an essential element of the Funding Strategy of the Treaty in relation to the ex situ conservation and availability of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture;

Recalling that pursuant to Article 1(5) of the Trust Constitution the Trust shall operate in accordance with the overall policy guidance to be provided by the Governing Body of the Treaty;

Recalling that pursuant to the *Relationship Agreement*, the Executive Board of the Trust shall submit an annual report on the activities of the Trust to the Governing Body;

Noting the adoption of the Multi-Year Programme of Work which might enable, *inter alia*, to improve the cooperation with the Trust by focusing the policy guidance in a more coherent manner;

Takes note with appreciation of the *Report* from the Trust which highlights the important contributions of the Trust to the implementation of the Treaty;

Welcomes the increased exchange between the Bureau of the Governing Body and the Executive Board of the Trust;

Provides policy guidance to the following key areas:

I. Resource Mobilization

Welcomes the organization of a Pledging Conference for the Crop Trust endowment fund, which has been scheduled for April 2016 in Washington D.C. (U.S.A.), recognizing that it will be a major milestone to support the realization of the Trust Fundraising Strategy and the Funding Strategy of Treaty;

Welcomes the continuing support of the CGIAR Fund Council to the development of the global system for ex-situ conservation through the transition to funding of the Article 15 collections managed by the CGIAR fully from the Crop Trust endowment fund;

Takes note of the new Trust's Fundraising Strategy 2014-2018 to reach an endowment target of USD 850 million by 2018 in two phases: the first phase will bring the total endowment to the first target of USD 500 million, with most of the funding sought from Contracting Parties, to finance core operations of international collections under Article 15 of the International Treaty and the second phase intends to raise the endowment further, to a total size of USD 850 million, to fund

selected national crop collections and other long-term costs, with most of the further funding sought from private donors;

Urges Contracting Parties and other governments and donors to provide financial support to enable a successful Pledging Conference, in order to mobilize sufficient funds to secure in perpetuity the core operations of international collections under Article 15 of the International Treaty, and in providing such support, to recognize contributions as being supportive to the realization of the Funding Strategy of the Treaty;

Invites the Trust to report back on the outcomes of the conference to the Seventh Session of the Governing Body, including on progress made to secure long-term funding for Article 15 collections;

Invites the Trust to support the work of the *Ad Hoc* Advisory Committee on the Funding Strategy during the next biennium to develop measures to enhance the functioning of the Funding Strategy, including to improve the complementarity between the different elements of the Funding Strategy and the definition of funding targets for the Funding Strategy;

II: Scientific and Technical Matters

Welcomes the Trust support to the further implementation of the Treaty in the further development of an efficient and sustainable system of *ex situ* conservation defined in Article 5(e) of the Treaty, including the plans to fund selected national crop collections, and *invites* it to do so in a manner which is complimentary and mutually supportive to the support to such system being made through other elements of the Funding Strategy of the Treaty, and following regular guidance from the Governing Body;

Invites the Trust to identify measures through which gaps in the existing system of *ex situ* conservation can be addressed, namely the inclusion of collections beyond the CGIAR genebanks, better advisory mechanisms, and a management and coordination structure following the expiration of the Genebank CRP, and to include such measures in its report to the Seventh Session of the Governing Body and relevant intersessional processes;

III: Global Information System

Invites the Trust to ensure, in its activities, synergies and complementarities with the Programme of Work on the Global Information System in recognition of the mandate and standard setting capacity of the Governing Body and to continue close collaboration with the Treaty Secretariat on the joint facilitation of the DivSeek Initiative;

Further invites the Trust to appoint one expert to participate in the Scientific Advisory Committee of the Global Information System and to facilitate the implementation of its advice and recommendations in the relevant activities of the Trust;

IV. Communication and Outreach

Invites the Trust to coordinate and jointly organize with the Treaty its outreach and communication activities, including in the context of highlighting the complementarity in the work of the Treaty and the Trust;

Invites the Chair and the Bureau of the Seventh Session of the Governing Body to continue facilitating the cooperation with the Chair and the Executive Board of the Trust following the practices established during the present biennium;

Invites the Trust to include in its report to the Seventh Session of the Governing Body:

- progress made towards reaching the endowment target and plans for resource mobilization beyond 2018, as this information will be useful in defining the funding target for the Benefit-sharing Fund for the period 2018-2023 at the Seventh Session of Governing Body;
- the contribution of the Trust to fill current gaps and needs in the development of an efficient and sustainable system of *ex situ* conservation defined in Article 5(e) of the Treaty, including in particular to fund selected national crop collections.