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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

The International Treaty ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Item 8 of the Provisional Agenda
INTERNATIONAL TREATY ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
FIRST MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE GLOBAL INFORMATION SYSTEM OF ARTICLE 17 OF THE TREATY
Rome, Italy, 24 – 25 November 2016
DRAFT MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT MECHANISM

I.   INTRODUCTION

1.   At its Sixth Session, the Governing Body adopted Resolution 3/2015, on the Vision and the Programme of Work on the Global Information System, and:

> **Request[ed]** *the Secretary, to design a monitoring and assessment mechanism on the usefulness and effectiveness of the Global Information System according to Article 17.1, subject to availability of resources, based on the recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Committee and present a draft to the next Session of the Governing Body.*

2.   Consequently, Objective 7 of the Programme of Work aims at creating a mechanism to assess progress and monitor the effectiveness of the Global Information System and lists two activities:

> *i)   To implement a feedback system for the portal in order to allow assessments of the usefulness and effectiveness of the Global Information System;*
>
> *ii)   To promote periodic consultations among Contracting Parties, and stakeholders, users, and providers, about the usefulness and effectiveness of the Global Information System.*

3.   This document has been prepared pursuant to this request and provides information and options to establish such a monitoring mechanism. It does also put forward some questions for the consideration of the members of the Scientific Advisory Committee regarding its design and implementation.

II. THE MONITORING MECHANISM IN RELATION TO ARTICLE 17.1

4.   In adopting the Programme of Work for the Global Information System (GLIS), the Governing Body did not make any budgetary provision in the Core Budget for its implemenation. The monitoring of the progress in the implementation will have to be dependent on the availability of extra-budgetary financial and other resources. In this context, the monitoring and assessment mechanism should somehow take into account the level of resources needed.

5.   The first Programme of Work for GLIS was approved for a period of seven years, from 2016 until 2022. While the Scientific Advisory Committee will receive progress reports on a

regular basis, three sessions of the Governing Body will take place at regular intervals during this period: in 2017, 2019 and 2021.

6.   The monitoring reports to be prepared for the Governing Body on the effectiveness and usefulness of the GLIS Portal should also take into account the information available on activities implemented not only by the Secretariat but also by the Contracting Parties. In fact, Article 17.1 of the International Treaty refers to the cooperation that Contracting Parties shall put in place to develop and strengthen a Global Information System.

7.   Three main elements emerge from the reading of Article 17.1 that could be taken into account for the development of a monitoring mechanism:

     i)   The volume and types of information made available;

     ii)   The volume and types of information exchanged;

     iii)   The relationship with the Clearing House Mechanism of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

8.   Article 18.3 of the CBD established a Clearing House Mechanism to gather information and facilitate collaboration for the implementation of the Convention. The mechanism itself is a network of national focal points and 101 national information websites.[1] That Article was further developed by Article 14 of the Nagoya Protocol, with the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House (ABS Clearing-House), which is a platform for exchanging information on access and benefit-sharing. The ABS Clearing-House Portal is monitored through web-generated statistics. Moreover, the CBD Secretariat receives feedback from users through email, chat, phone and online forums.[2] The CBD Secretariat also receives feedback from its Informal Advisory Committee (IAC).

9.   Following from the above, there are at least three possible options to gather information to monitor the GLIS Portal: feedback from the users, information generated by the System with analytical tools, and other methods like inputs collected from consultations with national focal points and partners as well as suggestions and comments contained in external reports and communications. A summary of the options is displayed in Figure 1 below.
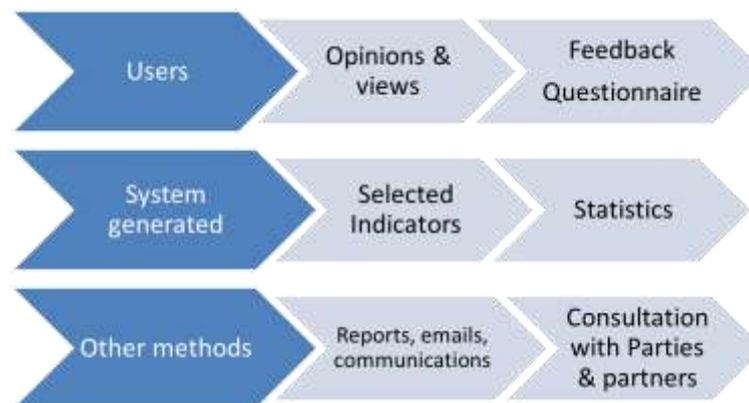
Figure 1. Monitoring Methods for the GLIS Portal

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[1] https://www.chm-cbd.net/ accessed on 19 July 2016.

[2] Communication from the Secretariat.

III. FEEDBACK SYSTEM FOR THE PORTAL

10.   The first activity requested is to develop and set up a feedback system for the web-based portal which is contemplated in Objective 1 of the Programme of Work. The Portal "*should be able to receive feedback from the users on the SMTA material*".

11.   For this purpose, the Secretariat could use a questionnaire with a set of basic questions to evaluate the satisfaction and experience of users with the first prototype. A sample questionnaire is attached in the *Appendix*.[3] The questions could be administered by email and also distributed during the workshops on capacity development or on the occasion of presentations of the Portal.

12.   The questionnaire could also be distributed on the occasion of other inter-sessional meetings of the International Treaty to their participants, particularly the *Ad hoc* Technical Committee on Sustainable Use.

13.   Additionally, the CBD Secretariat has integrated with its portal a customer service application that offers a help-desk with an online chat through which users can directly interact with the Secretariat in real time, if the staff is available, or through the same application send an email if the staff is offline. Users have evaluated this tool very positively during the first months of operations.

IV. SYSTEM-GENERATED STATISTICS

14.   The main activity that a user of material available in the Multilateral System may wish to perform through the Portal is to search for PGRFA across distributed websites, so the amount of information in the Portal on material available in the Multilateral System could be one of the best indicators to measure progress over the initial years. Passport information will be only one of the types of datasets available. As the Portal expands its services, a qualitative assessment should also take into account the diversity of datasets and the number of analytical services and tools provided.

15.   Likewise, as with any other online systems, the Secretariat will be able to generate with state-of-the-art web statistical tools a single and accurate view of users which can be a factor to further customize and adapt the services available. The analytical tool should be able to measure how users interact with the content. It should be cross-device and able to segment and filter the statistics with several types of automatic reports. It should offer flow visualization reports to analyze the path a visitor takes to the Portal and insights about how users interact with each page.[4]

V. OTHER OPTIONS FOR MONITORING

16.   The Secretariat could also use other sources of information like reports from partner initiatives and projects, and direct communications received from users via email. Both methods have proven to be quite useful in the past. Moreover, notification to national focal points requesting for comments could also be used at any given time as both a promotional mechanism and as an evaluation method.The Secretariat, with the support of the SAC, could also set up a dedicated 'feedback group'.

17.   Additionally, discussion forums could be provided for the users to interact among themselves and/or solicit topics to be discussed with experts. By monitoring and analyzing the discussions, it would be possible to identify areas of interest for future GLIS development.

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[3] Based on the model developed by J. R. Lewis, Computer Usability Satisfaction Questionnaire: Psychometric Evaluation and Instructions for Use. 1995.

[4] The analitical tool should be able to provide at least these reports: geographical data, navigation summary, bounces and visitors loyalty, main search keywords, browse capabilities, languagues, connection speeds data, top content, search engine traffic.

VI.   ADVICE SOUGHT

18.   The Scientific Advisory Committee is invited to take into consideration the information presented in this document and advise on:

i)   The monitoring and evaluation methods proposed, including the questionnaire contained in the *Appendix* and the additional ways in which feedback could be obtained from users;

ii)   The periodicity and formats of the reports;

iii)   Any other relevant element for the monitoring and assessment of the Portal and its usefulness and relevance.

Draft - Users' Feedback Questionnaire on the Web-based Portal

Please rate the usability of the Portal of the Global Information System.

- Try to respond to all the items.

- For items that are not applicable, use: **N/A**

- Make sure these fields are filled in: **Portal: Email to:**

- Add a comment about an item by clicking on its ▣ icon, or add comment fields for all items by clicking on **Comment All**.

- To mail in your results, click on: **Mail Data**

Name of the System: Global Information System (GLIS) Portal

Return this form to pgrfa-treaty@fao.org

		1	2	3	4	5		N/A
1. Overall, I am satisfied with how easy it is to use this portal ▣	DISAGREE	○	○	○	○	○	AGREE	○
2. It was simple to use this portal ▣	DISAGREE	○	○	○	○	○	AGREE	○
3. I can effectively complete my work using this portal ▣	DISAGREE	○	○	○	○	○	AGREE	○
4. I am able to complete my work quickly using this portal ▣	DISAGREE	○	○	○	○	○	AGREE	○
5. I am able to efficiently complete my work using this portal ▣	DISAGREE	○	○	○	○	○	AGREE	○
6. I feel comfortable using this portal ▣	DISAGREE	○	○	○	○	○	AGREE	○
7. It was easy to learn to use this portal ▣	DISAGREE	○	○	○	○	○	AGREE	○
8. I believe I became productive quickly using this portal ▣	DISAGREE	○	○	○	○	○	AGREE	○
9. The portal gives error messages that clearly tell me how to fix problems ▣	DISAGREE	○	○	○	○	○	AGREE	○
10. Whenever I make a mistake using the portal, I recover easily and quickly ▣	DISAGREE	○	○	○	○	○	AGREE	○
11. The information (such as online help, on-screen messages, and other documentation) provided with this portal is clear ▣	DISAGREE	○	○	○	○	○	AGREE	○
12. It is easy to find the information I	DISAGREE	○	○	○	○	○	AGREE	○

need

13. The information provided for the portal   DISAGREE ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   AGREE ○
    is easy to understand

14. The information is effective in helping   DISAGREE ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   AGREE ○
    me complete the tasks and scenarios

15. The organization of information on the   DISAGREE ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   AGREE ○
    portal screens is clear

16. The interface of this portal is pleasant   DISAGREE ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   AGREE ○

17. I like using the interface of this portal DISAGREE ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   AGREE ○

18. This portal has all the functions and   DISAGREE ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   AGREE ○
    capabilities I expect it to have

19. Overall, I am satisfied with this portal   DISAGREE ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   AGREE ○

		1	2	3	4	5		N/A

List the most **negative** aspect(s):

1. [   ]

2. [   ]

3. [   ]

List the most **positive** aspect(s):

1. [   ]

2. [   ]

3. [   ]

4. [   ]

5. [   ]

List other features that would you like to have available in this system or other general comments:

[   ]