



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



The International Treaty
ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES
FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

**Views, Experiences and Best Practices as an example of possible options for
the national implementation of Article 9 of the International Treaty**

Note by the Secretary

At its [second meeting](#) of the Ad hoc Technical Expert Group on Farmers' Rights (AHTEG), the Expert Group agreed on a revised version of the [template](#) for collecting information on examples of national measures, best practices and lessons learned from the realization of Farmers' Rights

This document presents the updated information on best practices and measures of implementing Article 9 of the International Treaty submitted by Japan on 1 August 2019.

The submission is presented in the form and language in which it was received.

2. The NARO* Genebank Project, Japan

Basic information

- Title of measure/practice : The NARO* Genebank Project, Japan
- Date of submission 31/07/2019
- Name(s) of country/countries in which the measure/practice is taking place : Japan
- Responsible institution/organization (name, address, website (if applicable), e-mail address, telephone number(s) and contact person) :The National Agriculture and Food Research Organization (NARO)

<http://www.naro.affrc.go.jp/english/index.html>

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- Type of institution/organization (categories) :National Research and Development Agency
- Collaborating/supporting institutions/organizations/actors, if applicable (name, address, website (if applicable), e-mail address, telephone number(s)) The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan

Description of the examples

Mandatory information:¹

- Short summary to be put in the inventory (max. 200 words) including:

The Genebank Project of Japan's National Agriculture and Food Research Organization (NARO), which started in 1985, builds on various previous initiatives. Its activities are directed toward conservation, exploration, collection, characterization, evaluation, distribution and documentation of PGRFA, including landraces. The project develops and applies advanced-technology to improve genebank operations, e.g. low/ultra- low temperature preservation and reproduction techniques. The Genetic Resources Center continuously develops new cryopreservation techniques for vegetatively propagated plant genetic resources which more systematic procedures are needed for. Genetic resources are distributed, together with relevant information, to users for breeding, scientific studies and educational purposes.

- Brief history (including starting year), as appropriate

1985 MAFF Genebank Project started as a national project for plants, microorganisms and animal genetic resources

2001 The project was renewed as the National Institute of Agrobiological Sciences (NIAS) Genebank Project when national agricultural research institutes were reorganized as independent administrative organizations

2016 The project was renewed as the NARO Genebank Project when NIAS was merged into NARO

¹ This mandatory information is required in order for the measure/practice to be included in the Inventory.

- Core components of the measure/practice (max 200 words)
Conservation, exploration, collection, characterization, evaluation, distribution and documentation of PGRFA, including farmer's varieties/ landraces.
- Description of the context and the history of the measure/practice is taking place (political, legal and economic framework conditions for the measure/practice) (max 200 words)

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan is funding the *NARO Genebank Project*, whose activities are directed toward conservation, exploration, collection, characterization, evaluation, distribution and documentation of PGRFA. Genetic resources are distributed, together with relevant information, to users for breeding, scientific studies and educational purposes. These genetic resources are contributing to improvements in various agricultural products.

- To which provision(s) of Article 9 of the International Treaty does this measure relate

Art. 9.1

Art. 9.2a

Art. 9.2b

Art. 9.2c

Art. 9.3

Other information, if applicable

- Please indicate which category of the Inventory is most relevant for the proposed measure, and which other categories are also relevant (if any):

| No. | Category | Most relevant ² | Also relevant ³ |
|-----|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | Recognition of local and indigenous communities', farmers' contributions to conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA, such as awards and recognition of custodian/guardian farmers | | |
| 2 | Financial contributions to support farmers conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA such as contributions to benefit-sharing funds | | |

² Please select only one category that is most relevant, under which the measure will be listed.

³ Please select one or several categories that may also be relevant (if applicable).

| | | | |
|----|--|---|--|
| 3 | Approaches to encourage income-generating activities to support farmers' conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA | | |
| 4 | Catalogues, registries and other forms of documentation of PGRFA and protection of traditional knowledge | | |
| 5 | In-situ/on-farm conservation and management of PGRFA, such as social and cultural measures, community biodiversity management and conservation sites | | |
| 6 | Facilitation of farmers' access to a diversity of PGRFA through community seed banks ⁴ , seed networks and other measures improving farmers' choices of a wider diversity of PGRFA. | | |
| 7 | Participatory approaches to research on PGRFA, including characterization and evaluation, participatory plant breeding and variety selection | | |
| 8 | Farmers' participation in decision-making at local, national and sub-regional, regional and international levels | | |
| 9 | Training, capacity development and public awareness creation | | |
| 10 | Legal measures for the implementation of Farmers' Rights, such as legislative measures related to PGRFA. | | |
| 11 | Other measures / practices | ✓ | |

- In case you selected 'other measures', would you like to suggest a description of this measure, e.g. as a possible new category?

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- Objective(s)
 - Target group(s) and numbers of involved and affected farmers⁵
 - Location(s) and geographical outreach
 - Resources used for implementation of the measure/practice
 - How has the measure/practice affected the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture?
 - Please describe the achievements of the measure/ practice so far (including quantification) (max 200 words)
 - Other national level instruments that are linked to the measure/practice
 - Are you aware of any other international agreements or programs that are relevant for this measure/practice?
 - Other issues you wish to address, that have not yet been covered, to describe the measure/practice

⁴ Including seed houses.

⁵ Any classification, e.g. of the types of farmer addressed, may be country-specific.

Lessons learned

- Describe lessons learned which may be relevant for others who wish to do the same or similar measures/practices (max 250 words).

Advanced-technology improves Genebank's operations. This project promotes systematic ex situ conservation of PGRFA through, for example, low/ultra-low temperature preservation and reproduction techniques. The Genetic Resources Center continuously develops new cryopreservation techniques for plants, to which the current techniques are difficult to apply. We can share these techniques with researchers of other countries through collaborative research and/or training.

- What challenges encountered along the way (if applicable) (max 200 words)
- What would you consider conditions for success, if others should seek to carry out such a measure or organize such an activity? (max 100 words)

Further information

- Link(s) to further information about the measure/practice
https://www.gene.affrc.go.jp/index_en.php