



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 Norway on 21 June 2019.*

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



## Template for submission of

### Measures, Best Practices and Lessons Learned from the Realization of Farmers' Rights as set out in Article 9 of the International Treaty

#### Basic information

- *Title of measure/practice* **The Plant Heritage Award**
- *Date of submission* 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019
- *Name(s) of country/countries in which the measure/practice is taking place:* Norway
- *Responsible institution/organization*

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- *Type of institution/organization (categories)* Government/research

#### Description of the examples

##### Mandatory information:<sup>1</sup>

- *Short summary to be put in the inventory*

The Plant Heritage Award was created in order to support awareness, engagement and action to preserve and use plant genetic resources. It was awarded for the first time in 2006. The candidates are proposed to the Norwegian Centre for Genetic Resources at the Norwegian Institute for Bioeconomy Research (NIBIO) and approved by its advisory board. The award is meant as an appreciation for special efforts that promote the goal of conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic diversity. It can be awarded to individuals as well as institutions and is not exclusively directed towards farmers. However, since it was established, several farmers have been awarded the prize, which consists of a unique lithography by a Norwegian artist as well as a diploma. Thus, the prize also recognizes the important efforts of farmers in addition to those of researchers and formal institutions in conserving PGRFA and ensuring sustainable use of those resources. It creates an annual event that gives an opportunity to strengthen awareness on the importance of conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA, thus addressing the general public, other farmers as well as the political leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, amongst other public institutions.

- *Brief history; Core components and description of the context and the history:*

In order to create awareness, engagement and action to preserve and use genetic resources, the Plant Heritage Prize has been created. The award is an appreciation for special efforts that promote the goal of

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



conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic diversity. The prize consists of a unique lithography by the Norwegian artist Otto Østenstad as well as a diploma.

The prize was awarded for the first time in 2006. The candidates are proposed to the Norwegian Genetic Resources Centre and the recipients are approved by their advisory board on Plant Genetic Resource. The prize can be awarded to individuals as well as institutions.

The prize is not exclusively directed towards farmers, but since it was established, several farmers have been awarded the prize. Thus, the prize also recognizes the important efforts of farmers in addition to those of researchers and formal institutions in conserving PGRFA and ensuring sustainable use of those resources.

Examples of famers who have received the prize:

- (i) Erling Olsen, a farmer and formerly a breeder at a Norwegian research facility, was awarded in 2006 for his conservation of more than 170 older varieties of potato;
- (ii) Johan Swärd received the price in 2011 due to his comprehensive work of documenting the different properties of old cereal varieties, and to ensure that they are cultivated. At his farm, Johan Swärd has a rich collection of varieties stored.
- (iii) In 2012, Stephen Barstow was awarded due to his unique knowledge of plant diversity, having around 2000 different plants in his own garden, and having a comprehensive information activity, including presentations and on-line publications regarding PGRFA, e.g. <https://www.adlibris.com/no/bok/around-the-world-in-80-plants-an-edible-perennial-vegetable-adventure-for-temperate-climates-9781856231411>

- *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 <sup>2</sup>	Also relevant <sup>3</sup>
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	x	
2	Financial contributions to support farmers conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA such as contributions to benefit-sharing funds		

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

<sup>3</sup> 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 <sup>4</sup> , 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?* \_\_\_\_\_
- *Objective(s)* To create awareness, engagement and action to conserve and use plant genetic resources
- *Target group(s) and numbers of involved and affected farmers*<sup>5</sup> Direct target group: individuals or institutions that have made special contributions to the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic diversity in agriculture in Norway. Indirect target group: general public and Norwegian press
- *Location(s) and geographical outreach* national
- *Resources used for implementation of the measure/practice* The measure require limited financial resources to be implemented, and can be exploited for public attention depending in input in publicity work.
- *How has the measure/practice affected the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture?* Difficult to quantify impact, but the prize contributes to awareness raising both among the general public as well as among the political leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and amongst other public institutions. Such awareness is necessary in order to have political support to continued public funding of related activities.

<sup>4</sup> Including seed houses.

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



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### **Lessons learned**

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

The level of contribution to awareness raising with such an award is linked to several aspects, including:

- ✓ Creates an annual event that gives an opportunity to address PGRFA issues
- ✓ The process of finding candidates and announcing nominees gives potential to give information e.g. through news articles on web or trying to get media attention
- ✓ Announcing the prize winner at a public seminar gives more attention to the prize winner and the topic
- ✓ Having Deputy Minister to hand over the prize gives more prestige to the prize – as well as gives an opportunity to raise awareness in the political leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.
- ✓ Necessary to "translate" technical reasons for the award to a language that is understandable by the general public.

The Award serves as a way to provide farmers and the public in general with information on genetic resources and biodiversity, and it can also supply farmers with valuable in-put on how to utilize such resources. It has also heightened the focus on conservation and sustainable use of older varieties of plants, and increased the demand for propagating material of such varieties. This ensures that the varieties are actually used, which is the best guarantee against genetic erosion.

### **Further information**

*Link(s) to further information about the measure/practice*

About the prize in 2018 (in Norwegian):

[https://nibio.no/nyheter/helge-skinnes-fekk-plantearvenprisen-for-unikt-arbeid;](https://nibio.no/nyheter/helge-skinnes-fekk-plantearvenprisen-for-unikt-arbeid)

<https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/forsker-helge-skinnes-mottok-plantearveprisen-for-2018/id2612396/>