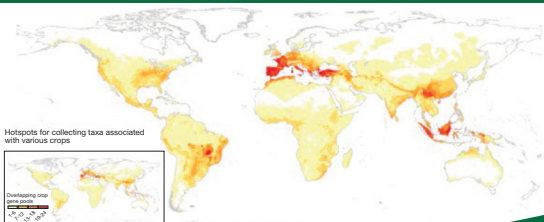


## WHY ARE CROP WILD RELATIVES SO IMPORTANT?

The use of Crop Wild Relatives (CWR) is an essential tool to fight world hunger. They are wild plant species genetically related to cultivated crops and can enhance the nutritional quality of domesticated crops. Genes from wild plants have also provided cultivars with resistance against biotic stresses and improved tolerance to abiotic stresses.

They are continuously evolving adaptive characteristics that enable them to cope with changing environmental conditions. Therefore, they are a rich reservoir of novel traits and genes that can be used to develop crop varieties that are adapted to climate change.



### Overlapping high-priority taxa for collecting

- 1-6
- 7-12
- 13-18
- 19-24
- 25-30
- 31-36
- 37-43

## PARTNERSHIPS, SUPPORT, AND TRAINING

The International Treaty Secretariat collaborates with various regional networks and provides on demand direct support to governments and stakeholders for developing inventories, surveys, and national databases of CWR, applying international standards, methodologies and tools.

It further provides these services in close collaboration with other units of FAO and a large group of experts and internationally recognized research and academic institutions with ample experience in this field.



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations



International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

## Fostering documentation and use of

## Crop Wild Relatives

Supporting CWR National Stakeholders and Networks

For more information, contact:

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**Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations**  
Rome, Italy  
2022



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## CROP WILD RELATIVES IN THE INTERNATIONAL TREATY

The objectives of the International Treaty are the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA), and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of their use, in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), to promote sustainable agriculture and food security and contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Governments agreed to promote *in situ* conservation of CWRs and wild plants for food production per Article 5 of the International Treaty.

Under this agreement, “*in situ* conservation” means the conservation of ecosystems and natural habitats and the maintenance and recovery of viable populations of species in their natural surroundings and, in the case of domesticated or cultivated plant species, in the surroundings where they have developed their distinctive properties.

The Governing Body has repeatedly called for support for developing national and regional PGRFA conservation plans, including activities supporting the documentation and use of CWR as a central element of the strategic approach.

## GAPS AND LIMITATIONS

Lack of information about CWRs, data fragmentation, and poor data quality are some of the main limitations identified. Data collection about *in situ* material and CWR is dispersed and stored in different sources and formats. Consequently, records about CWR are incomplete, and appropriate standards to document data are not always applied, thus hampering their use. Additionally, helpful related resources like pictures, scientific publications, and other online records are seldom connected to them.

In this context, various Treaty committees have called for the identification of CWR and the development of scientific and practical mechanisms to facilitate the publication and exchange of their datasets, as well as the connection between *ex situ* and *in situ* information.

## PASSPORT DESCRIPTORS FOR CWR *IN SITU*

The International Treaty, and a team of CWR experts from different institutions and countries, have worked to internationally agree and publish a list of key passport descriptors for CWR conserved *in situ*. This international standard aims to ensure consistency in the way CWR are documented and exchanged globally. In this context, the Treaty supports specific activities and projects on CWR. In addition, it is embarked on the promotion of their use and the development of tools, including a dedicated section in the Global Information System on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (GLIS).

We must adopt  
commonly accepted  
standards to facilitate  
global information  
exchange and data  
availability!