Item 12 of the Provisional Agenda

TENTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY

Rome, Italy, 20–24 November 2023

Background Study on Bottlenecks and Challenges to the Implementation of Articles 5 and 6 of the International Treaty

Note by the Secretary

In response to the advice of the Ad hoc Technical Advisory Committee on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, and the need to address the limited implementation of Articles 5 and 6 of the International Treaty, the Secretariat prepared and presented the Background Study on the Bottlenecks and Challenges to the Implementation of Articles 5 and 6 of the International Treaty (Background Study) to the Governing Body at its Ninth Session.

The primary sources of information used to prepare the Background Study to identify the bottlenecks and challenges to the implementation of Articles 5 and 6 were the 79 National Reports that had been submitted by Contracting Parties on the implementation of the International Treaty, in accordance with the Compliance Procedures of the International Treaty as at July 2022. Since the Ninth Session of the Governing Body, in September 2022, 12 additional national reports have been submitted by Contracting Parties from Africa, Europe, Latin America and Caribbean, and Near East.

This document provides an update of the Background Study based on the information provided by the 12 additional national reports, in particular in relation to the Figures on the gaps in the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA for each of the four regions concerned.
I. INTRODUCTION

1. In response to the need to address the limited implementation of Articles 5 and 6 of the International Treaty, the Secretariat prepared a Background Study on the Bottlenecks and Challenges to the Implementation of Articles 5 and 6 (Background Study) that was presented to the Governing Body at its Ninth Session. The primary sources of information used in the Background study to identify the bottlenecks and challenges to the implementation of Articles 5 and 6 were the 79 National Reports on the implementation of the International Treaty that had been submitted by Contracting Parties in accordance with the Compliance Procedures of the International Treaty as at July 2022.

2. It may be recalled that, although there is great diversity among and within the regions, the study identified four main types of bottlenecks to the conservation and use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA) that are of greater or lesser significance, depending on the regions and countries concerned: (1) Legal, policy and institutional challenges; (2) Technical and scientific issues; (3) Seed distribution and marketing of landraces and farmers’ crop varieties; and (4) Resource constraints.

II. UPDATING THE BACKGROUND STUDY

3. Since the Ninth Session of the Governing Body in September 2022, 12 additional national reports have been submitted by Contracting Parties, adding up to a total of 91 national reports so far, including:

   - two additional reports from the Africa region, adding up to 21 national reports out of a total of 43 Contracting Parties from this region (about 49 percent of Contracting Parties for this region);
   - five additional reports from the Europe region, adding up to 26 national reports out of a total of 38 Contracting Parties, excluding the European Union, from this region (about 68 percent of Contracting Parties for this region);
   - one additional report from the Latin America and Caribbean Region, adding up to 15 national reports out of a total of 22 Contracting Parties from this region (about 68 percent of Contracting Parties for this region);
   - four additional reports from the Near East Region, adding up to 12 national reports out of a total of 17 Contracting Parties from this region (about 71 percent of Contracting Parties for this region).

4. The information provided by the 12 additional national reports does not affect the analysis provided in the Background Study and confirms the importance of the four types of bottlenecks and challenges. However, for the four regions for which additional national reports have been submitted since the publication of the Background Study, i.e. Africa, Europe, Latin America and Caribbean, and Near East, the new information impacts on the Figures under “Gaps in the conservation of PGRFA” and “Gaps in the sustainable use of PGRFA”.

5. For each of the four regions concerned, the two updated Figures are provided in Annex 1. To avoid misunderstanding, the titles and numbering of the Figures are the same as in the Background Study.

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1 FAO, International Treaty on PGRFA, 2022. Background Study on the Bottlenecks and Challenges to the Implementation of Articles 5 and 6 of the International Treaty (IT/GB-9/22/12/Inf.2). For more detailed information on the bottlenecks and challenges, reference is made to the Background study itself.

Background Study on the Bottlenecks and Challenges to the Implementation of Articles 5 and 6: Updated Figures on the gaps in the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA in Africa, Europe, Latin America and Caribbean, and Near East Africa

Figure 1.1
Gaps in the conservation of PGRFA in Africa (% of reporting countries - n = 21)

- No promotion of in situ conservation of CWR and wild plants for food production: 43%
- No efficient and sustainable system of ex situ conservation of PGRFA: 38%
- No monitoring of the maintenance of the viability, degree of variation, and the genetic integrity of ex situ collections of PGRFA: 33%
- No support to, or promotion of, farmers and local communities’ efforts to manage and conserve PGRFA on-farm: 33%
- No promotion of the collection of PGRFA that are under threat or are of potential use: 14%
- No comprehensive survey/inventory of PGRFA: 5%

Figure 1.3
Gaps in the sustainable use of PGRFA in Africa with regard to policy/legal measures for (% of reporting countries - n = 21)

- Supporting the wider use of diversity of varieties and species: 48%
- Strengthening research that enhances and conserves biological diversity by maximizing intra- and inter-specific variation: 43%
- Reviewing and adjusting breeding strategies and regulations concerning variety release and seed distribution: 38%
- Promoting the expanded use of local and locally adapted crops, varieties and underutilized species: 38%
- Broadening the genetic base of crops: 38%
- Promoting plant breeding efforts with farmers’ participation: 38%
- Pursuing fair agricultural policies: 38%
Europe

**Figure 3.1**
Gaps in the conservation of PGRFA in Europe (% of reporting countries - n = 26)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gap in Conservation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No promotion of in situ conservation of CWR and wild plants for food production</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No support to, or promotion of, farmers and local communities' efforts to manage and conserve PGRFA on-farm</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No efficient and sustainable system of ex situ conservation of PGRFA</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No comprehensive survey/inventory of PGRFA</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No monitoring of the maintenance of the viability, degree of variation, and the genetic integrity of ex situ collections of PGRFA</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No promotion of the collection of PGRFA that are under threat or are of potential use</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3.3**
Gaps in the sustainable use of PGRFA in Europe with regard to policy/legal measures for (% of reporting countries - n = 26)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainable Use</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reviewing and adjusting breeding strategies and regulations concerning variety release and seed distribution</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting the wider use of diversity of varieties and species and creating strong links to plant breeding and agricultural development</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting plant breeding efforts with farmers' participation</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadening the genetic base of crops</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pursuing fair agricultural policies</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening research that enhances and conserves biological diversity by maximizing intra- and inter-specific variation</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting the expanded use of local and locally adapted crops, varieties and underutilized species</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Latin America and Caribbean

Figure 4.1
Gaps in the conservation of PGRFA in Latin America and the Caribbean (% of reporting countries - n = 15)

- No promotion of in situ conservation of CWR and wild plants for food production: 20%
- No monitoring of the maintenance of the viability, degree of variation, and the genetic integrity of ex situ collections of PGRFA: 13%
- No efficient and sustainable system of ex situ conservation of PGRFA: 13%
- No comprehensive survey/inventory of PGRFA: 13%
- No promotion of the collection of PGRFA that are under threat or are of potential use: 7%
- No support to, or promotion of, farmers and local communities’ efforts to manage and conserve PGRFA on-farm: 0%

Figure 4.3
Gaps in the sustainable use of PGRFA in Latin America and the Caribbean with regard to policy/legal measures for (% of reporting countries - n = 15)

- Promoting the expanded use of local and locally adapted crops, varieties and underutilized species: 33%
- Supporting the wider use of diversity of varieties and species and creating strong links to plant breeding and agricultural development: 33%
- Reviewing and adjusting breeding strategies and regulations concerning variety release and seed distribution: 27%
- Broadening the genetic base of crops: 27%
- Promoting plant breeding efforts with farmers’ participation: 20%
- Pursuing fair agricultural policies: 20%
- Strengthening research that enhances and conserves biological diversity by maximizing intra- and inter-specific variation: 20%
Near East

**Figure 5.1**
Gaps in the conservation of PGRFA in Near East (% of reporting countries - n = 12)

- No support to, or promotion of, farmers and local communities’ efforts to manage and conserve PGRFA on-farm: 58%
- No promotion of in situ conservation of CWR and wild plants for food production: 50%
- No monitoring of the maintenance of the viability, degree of variation, and the genetic integrity of ex situ collections of PGRFA: 25%
- No efficient and sustainable system of ex situ conservation of PGRFA: 8%
- No identification of potential threats to PGRFA: 8%
- No comprehensive survey/inventory of PGRFA: 8%

**Figure 5.3**
Gaps in the sustainable use of PGRFA in the Near East with regard to policy/legal measures for (% of reporting countries - n = 12)

- Broadening the genetic base of crops: 58%
- Supporting the wider use of diversity of varieties and species and creating strong links to plant breeding and agricultural development: 50%
- Pursuing fair agricultural policies: 42%
- Reviewing and adjusting breeding strategies and regulations concerning variety release and seed distribution: 33%
- Promoting plant breeding efforts with farmers’ participation: 33%
- Promoting the expanded use of local and locally adapted crops, varieties and underutilized species: 25%
- Strengthening research that enhances and conserves biological diversity by maximizing intra- and inter-specific variation: 17%