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GENETIC RESOURCES
FOR FOOD AND
AGRICULTURE

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Fourth Session of the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Forest Genetic Resources

Rome, Italy, 10 – 12 May 2016

COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

REPORT OF THE FOURTH SESSION

OF THE

INTERGOVERNMENTAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON

FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES

Rome, Italy, 10 – 12 May 2016

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
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The documents prepared for the Fourth Session of the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Forest Genetic Resources of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture are available on the Internet at the following address:

<http://www.fao.org/forestry/86904/en/>

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Fourth Session of the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Forest Genetic Resources (Working Group) was held in Rome, Italy, from 10 to 12 May 2016. The members and alternates of the Working Group are given in *Appendix B*, the list of delegates and observers is available on the FAO Web site.¹

II. OPENING OF THE SESSION AND ELECTION OF THE CHAIR, VICE-CHAIRS AND *RAPPORTEUR*

2. Mr Pierre Bouillon (France), Chair of the Third Session of the Working Group, welcomed delegates and observers.

3. Mr René Castro Salazar, Assistant Director-General, Forestry Department, welcomed delegates and observers. He stressed that the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Forest Genetic Resources* (Global Plan of Action) remains timely and highly relevant as it contributes to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, national adaptation and mitigation actions under the Paris Agreement, and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. He called upon members and observers to further increase awareness of the importance of forest genetic resources and step up efforts in the implementation of the Global Plan of Action.

4. Ms Irene Hoffmann, Secretary, Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Commission), welcomed delegates and observers. She stressed that the Commission's work contributes to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and outlined the on-going work of the Commission Secretariat on the first report on *The State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture*, which covers forest topics as cross-sectoral issues. She thanked the Government of Germany for the financial assistance provided in support of the attendance of delegates from developing countries in the session.

5. Prior to the election of the new Bureau, Mr Bouillon noted that, in line with Article III of the Statutes of the Working Group, France would replace the United Kingdom as a member of the Working Group.

6. The Working Group elected Mr Sibidou Sina (Burkina Faso) as Chair. The Working Group then elected Ms Azulita Binti Salim (Malaysia), Ms Kjersti Bakkebø Fjellstad (Norway), Ms Larissa Maria Lima Costa (Brazil), Mr Mohamed Ali Elhadi Ali (Sudan), Mr Randy Johnson (United States of America) and Mr Hannington Tate (Vanuatu) as Vice-Chairs. Ms Fjellstad was elected *Rapporteur*.

7. The Working Group adopted the Agenda, as given in *Appendix A*.

III. FOLLOW-UP TO THE *GLOBAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE CONSERVATION, SUSTAINABLE USE AND DEVELOPMENT OF FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES*

Implementation of the *Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Forest Genetic Resources*

8. The Working Group considered the document *Implementation of the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Forest Genetic Resources*.²

9. The Working Group took note of the activities reported and acknowledged the progress made. It recommended that the Commission call upon countries to continue implementing the Global Plan of

¹ <http://www.fao.org/forestry/86904/en/>

² CGRFA/WG-FGR-4/16/2.

Action to contribute to sustainable forest management; the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and other relevant international commitments on forests, as appropriate.

10. The Working Group recommended that the Commission encourage countries to support, as appropriate, the regional networks on forest genetic resources and forest invasive species, and contribute to the activities of these networks to strengthen regional collaboration in these areas. It further recommended that the Commission request FAO to continue coordinating and supporting the implementation of the Global Plan of Action, in collaboration with regional networks and relevant international organizations. The Working Group also highlighted the importance of maintaining links between its work and the work of the FAO Committee on Forestry and Regional Forestry Commissions.

11. The Working Group recommended that the Commission request FAO to continue pursuing extra-budgetary funds and developing the funding strategy to support the implementation of the Global Plan of Action, and to encourage donors to provide support to its implementation.

Targets and indicators for forest genetic resources

12. The Working Group considered the document *Draft targets and indicators for forest genetic resources*.³

13. The Working Group reviewed and revised the targets and indicators for forest genetic resources, as given in *Appendix C* and *Appendix D*. It recommended that the Commission adopt these targets and indicators, as assessment tools to monitor the implementation of the Global Plan of Action, taking into account its voluntary nature.

14. The Working Group also reviewed some of the verifiers. It requested the Secretariat to:

- Invite the National Focal Points to comment on the draft verifiers, as revised by the Working Group, by 30 June 2016;
- Circulate all comments received from National Focal Points to the members of the Working Group, by email, by 30 July 2016 for their consideration and guidance;
- Prepare, based on the comments received from the National Focal Points and the members of the Working Group, a revised list of verifiers, for consideration and adoption by the Commission at its next session.

15. The Working Group noted that the Report of the Fourth Session of the Working Group will be available online on the dedicated Web site of the Working Group⁴ and requested the Secretariat to make it available as soon as possible.

16. The Working Group recommended that the Commission request FAO to prepare draft Guidelines for the Preparation of Country Progress Reports, as well as Reporting Guidelines for Regional Networks and International Organizations. It further recommended that the Commission request FAO to consult the Working Group and National Focal Points, by electronic means, on the draft Guidelines for the Preparation of Country Progress Reports, prior to their finalization by 31 March 2017. It recommended that the Guidelines for the Preparation of Country Progress Reports clarify in detail the reporting requirements and include a glossary explaining terms, such as “*in situ* and *ex situ* conservation”, “domestication of forest trees”, and “tree seed and breeding programmes”.

Monitoring the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Forest Genetic Resources*

17. The Working Group considered the document *Draft schedule for monitoring the implementation of the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development*

³ CGRFA-WG-FGR-4/16/3.

⁴ <http://www.fao.org/forestry/86904/en/>

of *Forest Genetic Resources*.⁵ It recommended that the Commission adopt the schedule for monitoring the implementation of the Global Plan of Action, as revised by the Working Group (*Appendix E*).

18. The Working Group recommended that the Commission encourage countries to prepare themselves for the collection of information and data, as appropriate, to facilitate the timely submission of the First Country Progress Report. It recommended that the Commission request FAO to pursue extra-budgetary funds to support developing countries, in particular least developed countries, in the preparation of Country Progress Reports, including through capacity development. It further recommended that the Commission request FAO to invite relevant regional networks and international organizations to report on their contributions to the implementation of the Global Plan of Action.

19. The Working Group stressed that the information to be collected for *The Second Report on the State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources* should cover the state of the forest genetic resources themselves, in addition to efforts related to the conservation, sustainable use and development of these resources.

Development of national strategies and action plans for the conservation, sustainable use and development of forest genetic resources

20. The Working Group considered the document *Development of national strategies and actions plans for the conservation, sustainable use and development of forest genetic resources*.⁶

21. The Working Group recommended that the Commission request FAO to prepare *Voluntary guidelines for preparing a national strategy for forest genetic resources* (Voluntary Guidelines) in line with the proposed outline⁷ and taking into account existing guidelines for the preparation of national forest programmes and for the formulation of forest policy. The Voluntary Guidelines should encourage the full involvement of stakeholders and relevant organizations in the preparation and implementation of national strategies. They should also emphasize the need to take existing national policies and strategies as well as national circumstances into account.

IV. ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING FOR FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES

22. The Working Group considered the document *Elaboration of subsector-specific elements for access and benefit-sharing for genetic resources for food and agriculture*.⁸

23. The Working Group requested that input sought from this group with regard to access and benefit-sharing should be limited to technical expertise on forest genetic resources, for instance with regard to the elaboration of typical uses or distinctive properties of forest genetic resources.

24. The Working Group recalled its work during previous sessions on access and benefit-sharing, in particular on the distinctive features of forest genetic resources⁹ and on aspects of forest genetic resources that should be considered by countries when dealing with access and benefit-sharing¹⁰, at the national level. It invited the Team of Technical and Legal Experts on Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS Expert Team) to take this work into consideration.

⁵ CGRFA-WG-FGR-4/16/4.

⁶ CGRFA-WG-FGR-4/16/5.

⁷ CGRFA-WG-FGR-4/16/5, *Appendix*.

⁸ CGRFA-WG-FGR-4/16/6.

⁹ CGRFA/WG-FGR-2/13/Report, paragraph 21.

¹⁰ CGRFA/WG-FGR-3/14/Report, *Appendix D*.

V. REVIEW OF THE COMMISSION'S MULTI-YEAR PROGRAMME OF WORK

25. The Working Group considered the document *Review of implementation of the Multi-Year Programme of Work and Draft Strategic Plan for the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (2018-2027)*.¹¹

26. The Working Group welcomed progress made over the last decade in the implementation of the Multi-Year Programme of Work. It recommended the proposed major outputs and milestones for 2018-2027 as well as the session planning for the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Regular Session of the Commission, as they relate to forest genetic resources¹², for adoption by the Commission.

27. The Working Group welcomed the alignment of the Commission's work with the Sustainable Development Goals, as appropriate. It recommended that the target for Goal 2 on Conservation read: *By 2020, conserve in either medium or long term conservation programmes or facilities the genetic diversity of at-risk cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their wild relatives, and forest trees.*

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

28. FAO presented a summary of its recent evaluation of FAO's contribution to the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources for food and agriculture¹³. The Working Group took note of the evaluation findings and welcomed its conclusions confirming FAO's important role in the policy landscape of biodiversity and genetic resources. The full evaluation report is available on FAO's Web site.¹⁴

VII. CLOSING STATEMENTS

29. Ms Eva Müller, Director, Forestry Policy and Resources Division, congratulated the Working Group on its accomplishments and noted that the guidance and recommendations of the Working Group are instrumental for monitoring the implementation of the Global Plan of Action. She reiterated the willingness of the FAO Forestry Department to support the Working Group and collaborate with countries, regional networks and relevant international organizations in providing technical support to the implementation of the Global Plan of Action.

30. Ms Hoffmann thanked delegates and observers for their contributions and active participation. She expressed satisfaction about the results of the session and emphasized their importance to the work of the Commission.

31. The Chair thanked members and observers for their work and recommendations. He pointed out that the results of the session were essential for the continued implementation of the Global Plan of Action and for monitoring progress made in this regard. The Chair also thanked the *Rapporteur* and the Secretariat as well as other FAO staff for their contributions to the success of the session.

¹¹ CGRFA-WG-FGR-4/16/7.

¹² CGRFA-WG-FGR-4/16/7, *Appendix I, Annex 1 & 2.*

¹³ PC 119/5.

¹⁴ <http://www.fao.org/evaluation/evaluation-digest/evaluations-detail/en/c/416092/>

APPENDIX A

**AGENDA OF THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL
TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES**

Rome, 10 - 12 May 2016

1. Election of the Chair, the Vice-Chair(s) and the *Rapporteur*
2. Adoption of the agenda and timetable
3. Follow-up to the *Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Forest Genetic Resources*
 - 3.1 Implementation of the *Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Forest Genetic Resources*
 - 3.2 Targets and indicators for forest genetic resources
 - 3.3 Monitoring the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Forest Genetic Resources*
 - 3.4 Development of national strategies and action plans for the conservation, sustainable use and development of forest genetic resources
4. Access and benefit-sharing for forest genetic resources
5. Review of the Commission's Multi-Year Programme of Work
6. Any other business
7. Adoption of the Report

APPENDIX B

**MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL TECHNICAL
WORKING GROUP ON FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES, ELECTED BY THE
COMMISSION AT ITS FIFTEENTH REGULAR SESSION**

<i>Composition (no. of countries per region)</i>	<i>Country</i>
Africa (5)	Algeria Burkina Faso Cameroon Ethiopia Zimbabwe <i>First Alternate:</i> Morocco <i>Second Alternate:</i> Burundi
Asia (5)	Bangladesh Lao People's Democratic Republic Malaysia Pakistan Republic of Korea <i>First Alternate:</i> China <i>Second Alternate:</i> Indonesia
Europe (5)	Finland Norway Poland Russian Federation United Kingdom <i>First Alternate:</i> France <i>Second Alternate:</i> Sweden
Latin America and the Caribbean (5)	Argentina Brazil Chile Cuba Uruguay <i>First Alternate:</i> Panama <i>Second Alternate:</i> Guyana
Near East (4)	Afghanistan Iraq Lebanon Sudan <i>First Alternate:</i> Iran (Islamic Republic of) <i>Second Alternate:</i> Yemen
North America (2)	Canada United States of America
Southwest Pacific (2)	Papua New Guinea Vanuatu <i>First Alternate:</i> Fiji <i>Second Alternate:</i> Solomon Islands

APPENDIX C

**TARGETS, INDICATORS AND VERIFIERS FOR MONITORING THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GLOBAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE CONSERVATION,
SUSTAINABLE USE AND DEVELOPMENT OF FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES**

Priority area	Target*	Indicator (response)	Verifier(s)**
Improving the availability of, and access to, information on forest genetic resources (FGR)	Availability of data and information on FGR is increased	Extent of national*** FGR inventories or similar arrangements	Number and list of countries with operational national FGR inventories or similar arrangements
		Extent of up-to-date national FGR information systems	Number and list of countries with up-to-date national FGR information system(s) or other similar arrangements
<i>In situ</i> and <i>ex situ</i> conservation of FGR	National <i>in situ</i> and <i>ex situ</i> systems for FGR conservation are strengthened	Extent of national <i>in situ</i> conservation systems	Number and list of countries with operational national <i>in situ</i> conservation systems
		Extent of national <i>ex situ</i> conservation systems	Number and list of countries with operational national <i>ex situ</i> conservation systems
Sustainable use, development and management of FGR	Tree seed and breeding programmes, as well as extension efforts on FGR use, are reinforced, including for conservation collections	Extent of national tree seed programmes	Number and list of countries with operational national tree seed programmes or similar arrangements
		Extent of tree breeding programmes	Number and list of countries with operational tree breeding programmes
		Extent of extension efforts promoting appropriate use of FGR	Number and list of countries with ongoing extension programmes or activities on FGR use
Policies, institutions and capacity-building	National coordination mechanisms on FGR are created, and national strategies for FGR conservation and use are developed and implemented	Extent of national coordination mechanisms on FGR	Number and list of countries with national coordination mechanisms on FGR
		Extent of national strategies for FGR conservation and use	Number and list of countries implementing national strategies for FGR conservation and use
		Extent to which national strategies contribute to the implementation of regional or sub-regional FGR conservation strategies	Number and list of countries whose national strategy contribute to the implementation of regional or sub-regional FGR conservation strategy

* Targets are understood as the means to assess the implementation of the Global Plan of Action and are a result of the compilation of the strategic priorities identified by the Plan.

** Countries can report progress by indicating the degree to which targets are achieved on a Likert-type scale.

*** In the context of monitoring the implementation of the Global Plan of Action, national reporting can be based on data collected at national and/or sub-national level, recognizing that some countries may not have national level systems in place; they may be at a sub-national level.

APPENDIX D

**TARGETS, INDICATORS AND VERIFIERS FOR ASSESSING THE STATE OF
CONSERVATION, USE AND DEVELOPMENT OF FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES**

Priority area	Target*	Indicator (state)	Verifier(s)**
Improving the availability of, and access to, information on forest genetic resources (FGR)	FGR are regularly assessed and characterized	Assessment of FGR	Number and list of species for which an up to date national distribution range is available
		Characterization of FGR	Number and list of species which have been characterized based on non-molecular information (e.g. provenance trials, ecological or climatic zonation) Number and list of species which have been characterized based on molecular information (e.g. range-wide sampling of populations for molecular marker studies)
<i>In situ</i> and <i>ex situ</i> conservation of FGR	FGR are conserved <i>in situ</i> , and complementary <i>ex situ</i> measures have been implemented	Amount FGR conserved <i>in situ</i>	Number and list of species included in <i>in situ</i> conservation programmes Area (ha) designated and managed for <i>in situ</i> conservation per species Number of <i>in situ</i> conservation populations by species
		Amount of FGR conserved <i>ex situ</i>	Number and list of species included in <i>ex situ</i> conservation programmes Area (ha) designated and managed for <i>ex situ</i> conservation per species Number of <i>ex situ</i> conservation populations per species Number of <i>ex situ</i> accessions (seed and clone banks) per species END OF REVIEWED VERIFIERS

Priority area	Target*	Indicator (state)	Verifier(s)**
Sustainable use, development and management of FGR	Use and development of FGR are enhanced	Species included in tree seed and breeding programmes (including international breeding cooperation and efforts carried out by the private sector)	Number and list of species included in national tree seed programmes Number and list of species included in tree breeding programmes
		Production of forest reproductive material	Area (ha) and number of seed stands per species Area (ha) and number of seed orchards per species Amount (average number per year) of planting stock produced through macro and micropropagation per species
		State of tree breeding programmes	Testing and selection cycle (1 st , 2 nd etc. generation) by species
Policies, institutions and capacity-building	Policies and capacities supporting FGR conservation and sustainable use are strengthened	Integration of FGR conservation and use into relevant national* policies	Number of countries which have integrated FGR conservation and use into their national forest programme and/or national forest policy Number of countries which have integrated FGR conservation and use into their national biodiversity action plans and/or related policies Number of countries which have integrated FGR conservation and use into their national adaptation strategies for climate change
		Participation in regional/sub-regional collaboration on FGR	Number of countries participating in regional/sub-regional networks on FGR
		Participation in international research and development cooperation on FGR	Number of countries and national organizations participating in international R&D cooperation on FGR

* Targets are understood as the means to assess the implementation of the Global Plan of Action and are a result of the compilation of the strategic priorities identified by the Plan.

** In the context of monitoring the state of conservation, use and development of forest genetic resources, national reporting can be based on data collected at national and/or sub-national level, recognizing that some countries may not have national level systems in place; they may be at a sub-national level.

APPENDIX E

SCHEDULE FOR MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GLOBAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE CONSERVATION, SUSTAINABLE USE AND DEVELOPMENT OF FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES, INCLUDING KEY STEPS FOR PREPARING THE SECOND REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES

Timeline	Steps / Activities
Preparatory steps	
2017	CGRFA-16 considers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO progress report; • Targets and indicators for forest genetic resources; • Schedule for monitoring the implementation of the Global Plan of Action.
March 2017	Finalization of <i>Guidelines for the Preparation of Country Progress Reports</i> in consultation with Members of the Working Group and National Focal Points. Circulation of <i>Guidelines for the Preparation of Country Progress Reports / guidelines for progress reports by regional networks and international organizations.</i>
First Implementation Report	
December 2017	Deadline for the submission of First Country Progress Reports/ progress reports by regional networks and international organizations.
2018	ITWG-FGR-5 considers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO progress report; • Draft First Implementation Report, prepared on the basis of First Country Progress Reports and progress reports by regional networks and international organizations; • Preparation of <i>The Second Report on the State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources (SoW-FGR-2)</i>; • <i>Draft Guidelines for the Preparation of Country Reports</i> (combined reporting for Second Implementation Report and for SoW-FGR-2).
2019	CGRFA-17 considers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO progress report; • First Implementation Report, as reviewed by ITWG-FGR-5; • Preparation of the SoW-FGR-2; • <i>Draft Guidelines for the Preparation of Country Reports</i> (combined reporting for Second Implementation Report and for SoW-FGR-2).

Timeline	Steps / Activities
Second Implementation Report / Preparation of SoW-FGR-2	
June 2019	Circulation of Guidelines for the Preparation of Country Reports/ guidelines for progress reports by regional networks and international organizations.
2020	ITWG-FGR-6 considers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO progress report; • Status of preparation of the SoW-FGR-2; • Status of submission of progress reports by regional networks and international organizations.
June 2020	Deadline for the submission of Country Reports to the Second Implementation Report and the SoW-FGR-2. Deadline for the submission of progress reports by regional networks and international organizations.
2021	CGRFA-18 considers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO progress report; • Status of preparation of the Second Implementation Report and the SoW-FGR-2.
2022	ITWG-FGR-7 considers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO progress report; • Draft Second Implementation Report; • Draft SoW-FGR-2.
2023	CGRFA-19 considers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO progress report; • Second Implementation Report, as reviewed by ITWG-FGR-7; • Draft SoW-FGR-2, as reviewed by ITWG-FGR-7.
2024	ITWG-FGR-8 considers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO progress report; • Draft updated Global Plan of Action.
2025	CGRFA-20 considers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO progress report; • Draft updated Global Plan of Action, as reviewed by ITWG-FGR-8.

APPENDIX F

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Working documents

CGRFA/WG-FGR-4/16/1	Provisional agenda and timetable
CGRFA/WG-FGR-4/16/1 Add.1 Rev.2	Provisional annotated agenda and timetable
CGRFA/WG-FGR-4/16/2	Implementation of the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Forest Genetic Resources
CGRFA/WG-FGR-4/16/3	Draft targets and indicators for forest genetic resources
CGRFA/WG-FGR-4/16/4	Draft schedule for monitoring and implementation of the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Forest Genetic Resources
CGRFA/WG-FGR-4/16/5	Development of national strategies and action plans for the conservation, sustainable use and development of forest genetic resources
CGRFA/WG-FGR-4/16/6	Elaboration of subsector-specific elements for access and benefit-sharing for genetic resources for food and agriculture
CGRFA/WG-FGR-4/16/7	Review of implementation of the Multi-Year Programme of Work and Draft Strategic Plan for the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (2018-2027)

Information documents

CGRFA/WG-FGR-4/16/Inf.1 Rev. 2	Statutes of the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Forest Genetic Resources, and Members and Alternates elected by the Commission at its Fifteenth Regular Session
CGRFA/WG-FGR-4/16/Inf.2	List of documents
CGRFA/WG-FGR-4/16/Inf.3 Rev. 2	Information note
CGRFA/WG-FGR-4/16/Inf.4	List of delegates and observers