



**Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations**



**The International Treaty**  
**ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES**  
**FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

## **Item 15.2 of the Provisional Agenda**

### **EIGHTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY**

**Rome, 11 – 16 November 2019**

### **Cooperation with the Global Crop Diversity Trust**

#### **Executive Summary**

This document provides a summary of collaboration undertaken with the Global Crop Diversity Trust (the Crop Trust) since the Seventh Session of the Governing Body, particularly with regard to the Policy Guidance provided by the Governing Body to the Global Crop Diversity Trust through Resolution 10/2017. This document should be considered in conjunction with the document, IT/GB-8/19/15.2.2, *Report from the Global Crop Diversity Trust*.

#### **Guidance Sought**

The Governing Body is invited to review the activities and cooperation reported in this document and the *Report from the Global Crop Diversity Trust*, and adopt a Resolution to provide further guidance, taking into account the elements contained in the *Appendix* to this document.

*This document can be accessed using the Quick Response Code on this page; an FAO initiative to minimize its environmental impact and promote greener communications. Other documents can be consulted at <http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/meetings/meetings-detail/en/c/1111365/>*



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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its First Session, the Governing Body entered into a Relationship Agreement with the Global Crop Diversity Trust (the Crop Trust) and recognized it as an essential element of the Funding Strategy of the International Treaty in relation to *ex situ* conservation and availability of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.
2. The Constitution of the Crop Trust<sup>1</sup> and its Relationship Agreement with the Governing Body<sup>2</sup> provide that the Executive Board of the Crop Trust shall recognize the authority of the Governing Body to provide overall policy guidance to the Crop Trust on all matters within the purview of the International Treaty and submit regular reports on the activities of the Crop Trust to the Governing Body.

## II. INSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

3. The interactions between the Bureau of the Eighth Session of the Governing Body and the Executive Board of the Crop Trust have been very positive and productive during the current biennium, as has been between the two Secretariats. Such cooperation follows the practices already established in the 2014 – 2015 biennium and are in line with Resolution 8/2015.
4. The Secretary has continued to participate in meetings of the Executive Board and the Donors' Council of the Crop Trust. Also, the Executive Director of the Crop Trust has attended the meetings of the Bureau and informed the Bureau of the latest developments in the Crop Trust's activities.
5. The staff of the Secretariats of both the International Treaty and the Crop Trust held two annual meetings to exchange information about their on-going programmes and upcoming events for the year and to plan joint activities at global or regional levels. These meetings were very constructive and productive and the intention is to continue this practice during the next biennium.

### *Selection and Appointment of Members of the Executive Board of the Global Crop Diversity Trust*

6. According to the Constitution of the Crop Trust, four members of the Crop Trust Executive Board are appointed by the Governing Body of the International Treaty.<sup>3</sup> *Procedures for the Selection and Appointment of Members of the Executive Board of the Global Crop Diversity Trust*, adopted at the Fifth Session of the Governing Body by Resolution 3/2013, provides that “[t]he Governing Body, unless it otherwise decides in future, authorizes its Bureau to carry out the selection of candidates for appointment as members to the Executive Board under Article 5 of the Constitution of the Global Crop Diversity Trust”.<sup>4</sup>
7. The Governing Body, through Resolution 10/2017, requested “the Bureau of the Eighth Session to carry out the selection and appointment of members to the Executive Board during 2019 in accordance with the *Procedures for the Selection and Appointment of Members of the Executive Board of the Global Crop Diversity Trust*, so as to ensure the continued smooth and efficient functioning of the Executive Board.”
8. At its second meeting (March 2019), the Bureau agreed to undertake the process for the selection and appointment of four members of the Executive Board and also agreed on the steps to be undertaken including in relation to the call for, and the review of nominations as well as the final selection and appointment of the new members of the Crop Trust.
9. At the time of the preparation of this document, the process for the selection and appointment of Members of the Executive Board of the Crop Trust was yet to be finalized. The report of the outcomes

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<sup>1</sup> Articles 6(3).q, 7(2)(b) and (c)

<sup>2</sup> Articles 2 and 3

<sup>3</sup> Article 5(1)(a)

<sup>4</sup> B. 3.

of the process will be provided in an addendum to this document prior to the commencement of the Eighth Session of the Governing Body.

### ***Annual Reports by the Executive Board to the Governing Body***

10. Article 3.(3) of the Relationship Agreement signed between the Governing Body and the Crop Trust provides that the Executive Board of the Crop Trust shall submit an annual report on the activities of the Trust to the Governing Body.

11. Given that the Governing Body meets every two years, through Resolution 10/2017, it called upon the Executive Board of the Crop Trust to submit the report to the Governing Body for its regular sessions, and for the intervening years, to the Bureau of the Governing Body. Consequently, the Crop Trust submitted its annual report for 2018 to the Bureau, while the report to the Governing Body for 2019 is contained in the document, IT/GB-8/19/15.2.2, *Report from the Global Crop Diversity Trust*.

## **III. PROGRAMMATIC MATTERS**

### **A. Resource Mobilization**

12. The Governing Body recommended that the Crop Trust expands cooperation with the International Treaty on resource mobilization, in particular joint fundraising activities with the Secretariat.<sup>5</sup> Collaboration on resource mobilization has mainly occurred as part of the enhancement in collaboration and complementarity on scientific and technical matters that was called for in Resolution 10/2017, for instance, in improving linkages in the updating and implementation of the Global Crop Conservation Strategies, as reported below in subsection B on scientific and technical matters. The efforts on joint resource mobilization will continue during the next biennium, building on the work already started.

13. The Crop Trust actively supported the work of the Ad Hoc Advisory Committee on the Funding Strategy and Resource Mobilization (the Committee) during the biennium, and in particular in relation to the update of the Funding Strategy. This support included participation in the meetings of the Committee, provision of information about the Crop Trust contributions to the Funding Strategy, as well as expertise in the target-setting process.

14. At its Tenth meeting, the Committee requested the Secretary explore the possibility of undertaking a study and analysis of the Cost of Inaction that could be used in future communication and awareness-raising related to the Treaty's Funding Strategy. Following the request, the Secretariat partnered with the Crop Trust and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) to organize a scientific meeting to explore which methodologies could be used, building on previous research, to describe and quantify the global consequences of inaction if the conservation and access to crop genetic diversity across the world are not guaranteed through a multilateral approach. The three institutions intend to continue working together and undertake joint resource mobilization as a follow up to the scientific meeting and be able to use the results of the analysis of the Cost of Inaction during the next biennium. The Committee will receive further information on this collaboration at its next meeting.

### **B. Scientific and Technical Matters**

15. The Secretariat and the Crop Trust have continued collaboration in mobilizing technical support for the orderly maintenance of the collections of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture held under Article 15 of the International Treaty. Both institutions regularly exchange information about technical, policy and funding developments related to Article 15 collections. The Secretariat has been involved in the annual meetings of the managers of the international genebanks organized under the Genebanks CGIAR Research Programme (CRP), and has also provided guidance and advice on such

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<sup>5</sup> Resolution 10/2017, para.5

issues as use of the Standard Material Transfer Agreement (SMTA), on an ad hoc basis. The Secretariat has undertaken, during the biennium, collaborative or mutually supporting activities with partners, including the Crop Trust, in support of other germplasm collections held under Article 15, such as the one maintained by the South Pacific Community or the collections of coconut genetic materials maintained in Côte d'Ivoire and Papua New Guinea.

16. The Crop Trust and the Secretariat have continued collaborating in the project Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change: "Collecting, Protecting and Preparing Crop Wild Relatives" during this biennium,<sup>6</sup> and intend to continue to do so during the next biennium.

17. The Governing Body recommended that the Secretariat and the Crop Trust enhance their collaboration and complementarity on scientific and technical matters. The collaboration has focused in improving linkages in the updating and implementation of the Global Crop Conservation Strategies. In recent years, crop strategies have been successfully developed and implemented by the Crop Trust for a number of important crops, so far, but there are many other plants that contribute to global food security and sustainable agriculture. The provision of baseline data and metrics on these plants is essential for decision-makers at global, regional and national levels in order to develop strategies to ensure the adequate conservation and use of these plant genetic resources.

18. The Secretariat, the Crop Trust and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), with financial support from the Government of Norway, are working together to prepare and publish a background study assessment, provisionally titled, *The plants that feed the world: baseline information to underpin strategies for their conservation and use*. The information on crops important for food security and their genetic diversity is increasingly available but scattered throughout a number of information systems and databases (including GLIS, WIEWS and Genesys, but also FAOSTAT and others) and the scientific literature. This analysis intends to bring together, for the first time, all the information available from these different sources to provide baseline and a number of metrics for conservation and availability for use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

19. The aim of the partners is that this background study will become, in time, a flagship publication for the Treaty community as it can be regularly updated, and improved as information becomes available, in order to demonstrate progress in global conservation and availability of around 350 plants used in food and agriculture. The assessment will provide standardized and reproducible metrics on interdependence and importance of the crops, as well as availability and demand of their genetic resources. The partners intend to make available the background study, and all the underlying baseline information in a professionally curated and user-friendly manner, in 2020.

20. The Secretariat and the Crop Trust, together with partners, will use information arising from the background study for various follow up joint activities on resource mobilization and outreach and communication, and in particular to develop a dynamic system for developing, implementing and updating Crop Conservation Strategies, with a view to enhancing their use by Treaty Contracting Parties and stakeholders as practical tools to realize the implementation of the International Treaty.

21. The background study will be made available to the Governing Body at its next Session so that the Governing Body will be able to consider whether and how it may wish to integrate any follow up activities in its Multi-Year Programme of Work.

### **C. Global Information System**

22. In the context of the implementation of the Programme of Work on the Global Information System (GLIS), under Article 17 of the Treaty, the Secretariat has continued collaborating with the Crop Trust on Genesys. The two Secretariats met annually to exchange information and plan some joint activities, mainly on the connection of Genesys to the Global Information System, and on training and documentation of PGRFA. The Crop Trust also participated in the third meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee of GLIS in 2018. During the biennium, Genesys and GLIS were connected and

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.cwrdiversity.org/>

both systems exchange information automatically on new records and on incomplete information. Thanks to the use of Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) they also share and display links and pointers to other PGRFA datasets.

23. As part of the collaboration on training and capacity development activities, the Secretariats of the Treaty and the Crop Trust have participated in meetings on information systems and PGRFA documentation organized by the other in various regions, both physically and by electronic means. Most of the joint activities focused on the use of Digital Object Identifiers, the identification of material available in the Multilateral System through the Global Information System, the use of Easy-SMTA, the documentation of complex phenotypic datasets and the management of PGRFA catalogues.

#### **D. Outreach and Communication**

24. While no outreach and communication products have been joint developed by the time of the publication of this document, the Secretariats of the Crop Trust and the Treaty are planning to do so in the context of the collaborative work being undertaken on the Cost of Inaction and the systematization of baseline data to underpin crop conservation and use strategies. The Crop Trust also intends to do a number of side events, including through the Food Forever initiative, on the margins of the Eighth Session of the Governing Body.

### **IV. GUIDANCE SOUGHT**

25. The Governing Body is invited to review the activities and cooperation reported in this document and in the document, IT/GB-8/19/15.2.2, *Report from the Global Crop Diversity Trust*, and adopt a Resolution to provide further guidance, taking into account the elements contained in the *Appendix* to this document.

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**RESOLUTION XX/2019**
**POLICY GUIDANCE TO THE GLOBAL CROP DIVERSITY TRUST**


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**THE GOVERNING BODY,**

**Recalling** that the Global Crop Diversity Trust (the Crop Trust) is an essential element of the Funding Strategy of the International Treaty, in relation to the *ex situ* conservation and availability of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture;

**Recalling** that pursuant to Article 1(5) of its Constitution the Crop Trust shall operate in accordance with the overall policy guidance to be provided by the Governing Body of the International Treaty;

**Taking note** of the Report from the Crop Trust, which addresses matters requested by Resolution 10/2017;

**1. PART I: POLICY GUIDANCE**

1. **Thanks** the Executive Board of the Crop Trust for having submitted its annual report on the activities of the Crop Trust to the Bureau of the Governing Body in 2018 and to the Governing Body in 2019, as requested in Resolution 10/2017;
2. **Thanks** the Executive Director of the Crop Trust, Ms Marie Haga, for her active support to the implementation of the International Treaty throughout the last seven years, and in particular for the increasingly positive and productive interactions between the Crop Trust and the Secretariat, the Bureau and other intersessional bodies;
3. **Requests** the Chairperson of the Governing Body and the Secretary to inform the Executive Board of the Crop Trust on the decisions made by the Governing Body, in particular those related to the enhancement of the Multilateral System for Access and Benefit-sharing (Multilateral System) and to the update of the Funding Strategy, of which the Crop Trust is an essential element, and **provides** policy guidance to the following key areas:

**A. Resource Mobilization**

4. **Thanks** governments and other donors that have provided funds for the Crop Trust Endowment Fund in particular towards enabling to secure long-term funding for collections held pursuant to Article 15 of the Treaty, with contributions paid into the endowment standing, as reported by the Crop Trust, at USD 273.8 million by 31 December 2018;
5. **Welcomes** the steps being taken by the Crop Trust towards a more diversified fundraising strategy including to mobilize innovative financing that would bring new and additional resources to the implementation of the International Treaty;
6. **Invites** the Crop Trust to continue its active support to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Funding Strategy and Resource Mobilization (Funding Committee), and in particular to support the development by the Committee of a strategy to mobilize funds from food processing industries, as called for in Article 13.6 of the Treaty, and a range of initiatives to mobilize funds from innovative sources and mechanisms;
7. **Recommends** that the Crop Trust to continue expanding cooperation with the International Treaty on resource mobilization, in particular on joint fundraising activities with the Secretariat, and **calls upon** donors to give priority to initiatives, projects and programmes that are jointly designed and implemented by the Crop Trust and the Secretariat;

8. **Invites** the Crop Trust to provide information, at the Ninth Session of the Governing Body, on progress made with resource mobilization during the next biennium for the Crop Trust Endowment Fund as well as in relation to mobilization of project-based funds to support selected national genebanks in developing countries;

### **B. Scientific and Technical Matters**

9. **Welcomes** the support provided by the Crop Trust during the current biennium to the enable long-term conservation and availability of crop diversity within collections held pursuant to Article 15 of the International Treaty, and **invites** the Crop Trust to continue and expand cooperation with the Secretariat, in accordance with Article 15.1(g) of the International Treaty, on mobilizing technical support for the orderly maintenance of the collections of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture held under Article 15 of the International Treaty;
10. **Welcomes** the steps being taken to increase support to national genebanks that are part of the Multilateral System and **invites** the Crop Trust to take advantage of its cooperation with the Secretariat to undertake joint capacity building of national partners on the Multilateral System and the Global Information System;
11. **Welcomes** the collaboration between the Secretariat, the Crop Trust and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) to identify and systematize baseline data of a wide range of crops and their genetic resources that is essential for decision-makers at global, regional and national levels in order to develop strategies to ensure the adequate conservation and use of these plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, including Crop Strategies, and **recommends** that the background study resulting from such collaboration and underlying baseline information be made available in a user-friendly manner as soon as possible, including for consideration by the Governing Body at its next Session.
12. **Recommends** the Crop Trust to further enhance its collaboration and complementarity with the International Treaty on scientific and technical matters, and in this context **invites** the Crop Trust to expand cooperation with the Secretariat to elaborate a dynamic system for developing, implementing and updating Crop Conservation Strategies, with a view of enhancing their use by Contracting Parties and relevant stakeholders, as practical tools to realize the implementation of the International Treaty, and **invites** the Crop Trust and the Secretary to report on progress made to the Ninth Session of the Governing Body;

### **C. Global Information System**

13. **Welcomes** the close collaboration of the Crop Trust with the International Treaty and FAO for the connection of the Global Information System, Genesys and WIEWS, in a synergistic and complementary approach, and **invites** them to continue collaborating on training and capacity development activities in the area of information systems and documentation of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.
14. **Further invites** the Crop Trust to continue participating in the Scientific Advisory Committee of the Global Information System and provide regular updates on the implementation of its activities relevant to the Global Information System;

### **D. Communication and Outreach**

15. **Recommends** the Crop Trust to continue and strengthen cooperation with the International Treaty to jointly develop outreach and communication products, including through Food Forever and similar initiatives, on the contribution of plant genetic resources for food and

agriculture to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and in particular on the importance of implementing the International Treaty in this context.

## **2. PART II: OTHER**

- 16.** ***Calls upon*** the Executive Board of the Crop Trust to continue to submit its report annually on the activities of the Crop Trust to the Governing Body for its regular session, as provided in Article 3(3) of the Relationship Agreement, and for an intervening year to the Bureau of the Governing Body, and decides that the submission to the Bureau of such reports shall constitute a fulfilment of the obligation under the Relationship Agreement;
- 17.** ***Requests*** the Bureau of the Ninth Session to carry out the selection and appointment of members to the Executive Board to fill any vacancy that may arise during the 2020-2021 biennium, in accordance with the Procedures for the Selection and Appointment of Members of the Executive Board of the Global Crop Diversity Trust, so to ensure the continued smooth and efficient functioning of the Executive Board.