



# COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

## Item 2 of the Provisional Agenda

### INTERGOVERNMENTAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES

#### Sixth Session

13 - 15 April 2021

### PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA AND TIMETABLE

#### 1. Election of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson(s) and *Rapporteur*

In accordance with its Statutes, “the Working Group shall elect its Chairperson and one or more Vice Chairpersons from among the representatives of Members of the Working Group at the beginning of each session. These officers shall remain in office until the next session of the Working Group and shall be eligible for re-election”.<sup>1</sup> The Working Group may also wish to appoint a *Rapporteur*.

#### 2. Adoption of the agenda and timetable

The provisional agenda is contained in document **CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/1**. A provisional timetable is provided in Annex 1 to the present document, which provides annotations to the provisional agenda. The Sixth Session will be held as a virtual meeting. Annex 2 outlines the special procedures proposed for virtual meetings of the Commission's subsidiary bodies in 2021.

#### 3. Status of implementation of the *Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Forest Genetic Resources*

At its Seventeenth Regular Session, the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Commission) considered the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Forest Genetic Resources* (Global Plan of Action<sup>2</sup>). The Commission requested FAO to continue coordinating and supporting the implementation of the Global Plan of Action, in collaboration with regional networks on forest genetic resources and relevant

<sup>1</sup> CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/Inf.1.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.fao.org/publications/card/en/c/b7f4bcd7-0696-4f5a-aa3d-e1e19acfa735>

international organizations.<sup>3</sup> It also encouraged FAO to continue pursuing extra-budgetary resources to support developing countries in the implementation of the Global Plan of Action.

The document *Status of implementation of the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Forest Genetic Resources (CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/2)* summarizes the activities carried out by FAO in collaboration with its partners to support the implementation of the Global Plan of Action. The Working Group is invited to review the progress made in the implementation of the Global Plan of Action since the Commission's Seventeenth Regular Session and provide guidance to the Commission on the further implementation of the Global Plan of Action.

#### **4. Status of preparation of *The Second Report on the State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources***

The Commission, at its Seventeenth Regular Session, adopted the outline<sup>4</sup> and timeline<sup>5</sup> for the preparation of *The Second Report on the State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources* (Second Report), as well as the guidelines<sup>6</sup> for preparing country reports. It encouraged countries to initiate the collection of information and data for the preparation of their country reports and called upon them to submit their reports for the preparation of the Second Report by 30 June 2020. According to the timeline, the Working Group should consider the status of the preparation of the Second Report at its current session, and a draft Second Report at its Seventh Session.

The document *Status of preparation of The Second Report on the State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources (CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/3)* presents a summary of activities undertaken for the preparation of the Second Report, the status of the preparatory process and next steps. The Working Group is invited to consider the activities reported and provide guidance to the Commission on the preparation of the Second Report.

#### **5. Development of a new global information system on forest genetic resources**

The Commission, at its Seventeenth Regular Session, requested FAO to initiate the development of a new global information system on forest genetic resources, subject to the availability of extra-budgetary resources.<sup>7</sup> The Commission further encouraged FAO to consider ways to strengthen national and regional information systems on forest genetic resources, including by offering technical and financial support.

The document *Development of a new global information system on forest genetic resources (CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/4)* presents the background and planned and ongoing activities for this purpose. The Working Group may wish to take note of the activities and provide guidance to the Commission for the development of the new global information system on forest genetic resources.

#### **6. Access and benefit-sharing for forest genetic resources**

The Commission recalled that its Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW) foresees a review of its work on access and benefit-sharing (ABS) for its Eighteenth Regular Session and requested its Secretary to prepare, for review by the Commission's Working Groups:

- (i) a review of the Commission's work on ABS for genetic resources for food and agriculture (GRFA);
- (ii) an overview of developments under other international agreements and instruments relevant to ABS for GRFA;
- (iii) an up-to-date survey of existing legislative, administrative and policy approaches, including best practices, for ABS for the different subsectors of GRFA and traditional knowledge associated with GRFA held by indigenous peoples and local communities, with the aim of

<sup>3</sup> CGRFA-17/19/Report, paragraph 76.

<sup>4</sup> CGRFA-17/19/10.3, *Appendix I*.

<sup>5</sup> CGRFA-17/19/10/3, *Appendix II*.

<sup>6</sup> CGRFA-17/19/10.3/Inf.1.

<sup>7</sup> CGRFA-17/19/Report, paragraph 79.

identifying typical approaches and lessons learned from their implementation, as well as challenges and possible solutions; and

- (iv) a proposal for options for future work of the Commission on ABS for the different subsectors of GRFA.<sup>8</sup>

The document *Access and benefit-sharing for genetic resources for food and agriculture: Review and outlook (CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/5)* responds to the above requests. Inputs by Members on the above deliverables are contained in the document *Inputs by Members on access and benefit-sharing for genetic resources for food and agriculture (CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/Inf.4)*. The *Draft survey of access and benefit-sharing country measures accommodating the distinctive features of genetic resources for food and agriculture and associated traditional knowledge* is made available as document **CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/Inf.3**.

## **7. “Digital sequence information” on forest genetic resources**

The Commission agreed that there is a need for further review of “Digital sequence information” (“DSI”) on GRFA. It agreed to address, at its next session, the innovation opportunities “DSI” on GRFA offers, the challenges of capacity to access and make use of it and its implications for the conservation and sustainable use of GRFA and the sharing of benefits derived from GRFA. It requested its Working Groups to consider these matters with regard to existing subsector-specific examples related to conservation, sustainable use and development of genetic resources, food security and nutrition, food safety, and efforts to combat crop and animal pests and diseases.<sup>9</sup>

In response to the Commission’s request, document “*Digital sequence information” on genetic resources for food and agriculture: Innovation opportunities, challenges and implications (CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/6)*, reviews the innovation opportunities “DSI” on GRFA offers and identifies challenges associated with the capacity to access and make use of it and its implications for the conservation and sustainable use of GRFA and the sharing of benefits derived from GRFA. The Working Group is invited to provide guidance with regard to future work on “DSI”.

## **8. The role of forest genetic resources in mitigation of and adaptation to climate change**

The Commission requested FAO to prepare a scoping study on the role of GRFA in adaptation to and mitigation of climate change, including knowledge gaps, taking into account the special reports on terrestrial and marine systems by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and other available relevant sources, including examples from different regions and subsectors. The Commission requested its Working Groups to review the study and, if a global assessment of the role of GRFA is considered pertinent, to provide guidance to the Commission on its preparation.<sup>10</sup>

In response to the Commission’s request, the Secretariat updated, in collaboration with relevant units of FAO and partners, the study *Coping with climate change – The roles of genetic resources for food and agriculture*,<sup>11</sup> prepared in 2015 on the basis of thematic studies commissioned by the Secretariat in preparation of the Commission’s Thirteenth Regular Session in 2013.<sup>12</sup> The updated study *The role of genetic resources for food and agriculture in climate change adaptation and mitigation (CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/Inf.6)* has been prepared for review by the Working Groups.

In addition, the Commission requested the Secretariat to prepare a draft work plan, including for the preparation of a global country-driven assessment, for review by its Working Groups at their next sessions.<sup>13</sup> The draft work plan can be found in the document *Climate change and genetic resources for food and agriculture (CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/7)*. The document *FAO activities on climate change (CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/Inf.5)* gives an overview of FAO activities on climate change, in the context of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> CGRFA-17/19/Report, paragraph 19.

<sup>9</sup> CGRFA-17/19/Report, paragraph 23.

<sup>10</sup> CGRFA-17/19/Report, paragraph 29.

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3866e.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> See Background Study Papers Nos. 53–57.

<sup>13</sup> CGRFA-17/19/Report, paragraph 30.

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/i7175en/I7175EN.pdf>

## **9. Review of the work on biotechnologies for the conservation and sustainable use of forest genetic resources**

The Commission's MYPOW foresees for its next session a review of the work on biotechnologies for the conservation and sustainable use of GRFA.<sup>15</sup>

In response to the Commission's request, the Secretariat updated the document *Application and integration of biotechnologies for the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources for food and agriculture*,<sup>16</sup> that was provided to the Commission's Fifteenth Regular Session. The document *Review of the work on biotechnologies for the sustainable use and conservation of genetic resources for food and agriculture (CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/8)* summarizes FAO's technical activities specifically related to biotechnologies and reviews relevant work of FAO and the Commission's Working Groups on the application and integration of biotechnologies for the conservation and sustainable utilization of GRFA, for review by the Working Groups. The reporting period spans from July 2014 to October 2020 and thus comprises the period of the last six years that was not covered by the previous report.

Technical developments are reported in the document *Recent developments in biotechnologies relevant to the characterization, sustainable use and conservation of genetic resources for food and agriculture (CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/Inf.7)*.

## **10. Options for the organization of the Commission's future intersessional work**

The Commission requested its Secretary to prepare an options paper setting out different options (and their financial implications) for the future organization of the Commission's intersessional work, for consideration by the Working Groups and the Commission at their next sessions,<sup>17</sup> to:

- (i) address in a coherent, integrated and consistent way, biodiversity for food and agriculture, including micro-organism and invertebrate genetic resources; and
- (ii) consider how to enhance coordination and communication among the Commission's Working Groups, to raise awareness on subsectoral issues and strengthen coherence on cross-sectoral matters to effectively address the Commission's mission and goals.<sup>18</sup>

The document *Possible re-organization of the Commission's future intersessional work (CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/9)* presents an overview of options for consideration by the Working Group.

## **11. Other business**

## **12. Adoption of the report**

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<sup>15</sup> CGRFA-17/19/Report, *Appendix F*, Annex 1.

<sup>16</sup> CGRFA-15/15/7.

<sup>17</sup> CGRFA-17/19/Report, paragraph 97.

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.fao.org/cgrfa/overview/vision-mission/en/>

**Annex 1. PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE.**

<b>Date and time</b>	<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Working document</b>
<b>Tuesday, 13 April 2021</b>			
<b>Morning</b>			
10.00– 13.00	1	Election of Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons(s) and <i>Rapporteur</i>	
	2	Adoption of the agenda and timetable	CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/1 CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/1 Add.1
	3	Status of implementation of the <i>Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Forest Genetic Resources</i>	CGRFA/WG-FGR6/21/2
<b>Tuesday, 13 April 2021</b>			
<b>Afternoon</b>			
14:30– 17:30	4	Status of preparation of <i>The Second Report on the State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources</i>	CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/3
	5	Development of a new global information system on forest genetic resources	CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/4
<b>Wednesday, 14 April 2021</b>			
<b>Morning</b>			
10.00– 13.00	6	Access and benefit-sharing for forest genetic resources	CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/5
	7	“Digital sequence information” on forest genetic resources	CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/6
	8	The role of forest genetic resources in mitigation of and adaptation to climate change	CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/7
<b>Wednesday , 14 April 2021</b>			
<b>Afternoon</b>			
14:30– 17:30	9	Review of the work on biotechnologies for the conservation and sustainable use of forest genetic resources	CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/8
	10	Options for the organization of the Commission's future intersessional work	CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/9
	11	Other business	
<b>Thursday, 15 April 2021</b>			
<b>Afternoon</b>			
14:30– 17:30	12	Adoption of the report	

## **Annex 2. SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR A VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON FORESTGENETIC RESOURCES EXCEPTIONAL TO ITS SIXTH SESSION.**

1. The procedures outlined in this document apply on an exceptional basis to the Sixth Session of the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Forest Genetic Resources (Working Group) in light of the measures to contain the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting virtual modality of this Session. The adoption of such procedures shall not create a precedent for the working methods of the Working Group or any other subsidiary body of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Commission) for their future meetings.

## **FUNCTIONS OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES**

2. The Working Group, as laid down in its Statutes, shall:
- review the situation and issues related to agrobiodiversity in the area of forest genetic resources and advise and make recommendations to the Commission on these matters;
  - consider the progress made in implementing the Commission's programme of work on forest genetic resources as well as any other matters referred to the Working Group by the Commission; and
  - report to the Commission on its activities.
3. In order for the Working Group to carry out this mandate, the Commission assigns specific tasks to the Working Group.
4. The virtual modality of the Sixth Session of the Working Group does not alter any of the functions of the Working Group outlined above.

## **CONDUCT OF SESSIONS**

5. All plenary meetings of the Sixth Session of the Working Group will be conducted through the **Zoom platform**. Members and Observers of the Working Group will be granted equal accessibility and capability inside the Zoom platform, ensuring their ability to be seen, and to view who is in attendance in the virtual meeting, and to address the Working Group.
6. Participants may **request the floor** by using the 'raise hand' function in the Zoom platform. This will draw up a list of speakers that the Chairperson will use to call participants to take the floor.
7. The **Members of the Working Group** are listed in the document **CGRFA/WG-FGR-6/21/Inf.1**.
8. **Simultaneous interpretation** in all six languages of the Organization will be provided during the Sixth Session of the Working Group, in accordance with confirmation of participation by Members of the Working Group.
9. Given the virtual modality of the Sixth Session of the Working Group and the need to streamline the proceedings to ensure sufficient time during the session to complete all agenda items, participants are encouraged to **limit interventions** to three minutes, and regional interventions to five minutes. Regional statements are particularly encouraged to maximize the efficiency of the proceedings.
10. To facilitate interpretation and reporting, all participants are requested to provide written copies of their statements to the secretariat of the Working Group prior to the Sixth Session or as early as possible thereafter. Statements should be sent to: FO-ITWG-FGR@fao.org
11. Participants may use the **chat function of the Zoom platform** for exchanging information. However, views that should be taken into account in the preparation of the meeting report need to be orally expressed during the session.

## AGENDA, TIMETABLE AND DOCUMENTATION

12. All the **documents** for the session are prepared and made available as per established practice on the website of the Working Group.<sup>19</sup>
13. The **time zone applicable** to the Sixth Session of the Working Group will be Central European Time (UTC +2). This is the time zone of the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and the location of the Session as if it were held as a physical meeting.
14. The **meeting** of the Sixth Session of the Working Group will be scheduled from 10:00 to 13:00 hours and from 14:30 to 17:30 hours on Days 1 and 2 of the session. On Day 3, the afternoon session will run from 14:30 to 17:30 hours, unless it is decided otherwise.
15. The Chairperson of the Working Group may call for a **short break** of up to ten minutes at any time during the session.
16. All other **working methods** of the Working Group outlined in this Note, in relation to the agenda, timetable and documentation, will be applied to the Sixth Session of the Working Group in accordance with established practice.

## REPORTS AND RECORDS

17. The draft meeting report will be prepared by the *Rapporteur* of the Working Group, circulated by email to all participants and made available on the webpage of the Working Group on Day 3 at 13:30 hours. The Report will record the Working Group's consensus on the amended modalities for the session outlined in this Note.
18. All other working methods of the Working Group outlined in this Note, in relation to Reports and records of the session, will be applied to the Sixth Session of the Working Group in line with established practice.

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.fao.org/forest-genetic-resources/working-group/en/>