



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



The International Treaty
ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES
FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

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Item 18 of the Provisional Agenda

NINTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY

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Draft Work Programme and Budget for the 2022-23 Biennium – Donor-supported activities under the Special Fund for Agreed Purposes

Executive Summary

This document is presented to the Governing Body as an addendum to the draft Work Programme and Budget for the 2022-2023 biennium.

It provides a summary list of possible supporting projects to be carried out during the next biennium with additional financial contributions outside the Core Administrative Budget.

Guidance Sought

The Governing Body is invited to acknowledge and welcome the contributions made to the Special Fund for Agreed Purposes. It is also invited to endorse the proposed donor-supported activities contained in Section II. Should it so wish to do so, it may also suggest priority areas for the consideration of donors that intend to provide funds during the 2022-2023 biennium for proposed activities.

FAO-ITPGRFA documents can be consulted at: www.fao.org/plant-treaty/meetings/meetings-detail/en/c/1259571/

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This document is presented to the Governing Body as an addendum to the draft Work Programme and Budget for the 2022-2023 biennium.
2. It provides a summary list of possible supporting projects to be carried out in the next biennium with additional financial contributions outside of the Core Administrative Budget.
3. Proposals of such project are referred to in Paragraph 6 of draft Resolution XX/2022 on the Work Programme and Budget 2022-2023, through which the Governing Body is invited to recommend the project proposals to donor Governments and institutions, and invite them to provide the funding necessary for the implementation of these projects, which will be critical for the continued successful implementation of the International Treaty in the 2022–2023 biennium.
4. Such additional voluntary contributions will be received in the Special Fund for Agreed Purposes and managed based on the individual agreements made between respective donors and the Secretary, including developing and implementing specific projects.
5. As in previous biennia, and as noted through paragraph 32 of the Funding Strategy 2020-2025, the Special Fund for Agreed Purposes plays a critical role in the implementation of decisions of the Governing Body, in particular to strengthen the global Treaty-enabling mechanisms, implement agreed priorities, build capacity at international and regional levels, and facilitate decision-making of the Governing Body to enhance Treaty implementation.
6. The Operations Manual expresses that Sessions of the Governing Body should provide opportunities to acknowledge and welcome contributions, as well as garner future concrete commitments to the Fund.¹ The main contributors during the current biennium have been the governments of, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland, as well as the European Union and the Global Crop Diversity Trust.

II. PRIORITY AREAS FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF DONORS

Conservation, Sustainable Use of PGRFA and Farmers' Rights under the Articles 5, 6 and 9 of the International Treaty

7. Supporting Contracting Parties in their efforts to promote the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA as well as the realization of Farmers' Rights as provided in the International Treaty requires the development and maintenance of a broad spectrum of policy, administrative, legal and technical measures. It also depends upon the engagement of a wide range of stakeholders, including farmers and farmers' organizations, civil society, public and private institutions.
8. Following the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Technical Committee on Conservation and Sustainable Use of PGRFA, activities to enhance the implementation of Articles 5 and 6 focus on:
 - i. Strengthening and capitalizing on ongoing initiatives to increase their benefit, impact, and visibility, including:
 - the Toolbox for Sustainable Use of PGRFA, as a valuable source of information supporting Contracting Parties and stakeholders in implementing Articles 5 and 6;
 - the Joint Programme on Biodiversity in Agriculture for Sustainable Use of PGRFA;
 - country/region-specific studies to address bottlenecks in the implementation of Articles 5 and 6 of the Treaty.
 - ii. Possible new activities to further support Contracting Parties and stakeholders in the implementation of Articles 5 and 6 of the International Treaty:
 - regional briefings among Contracting Parties and interested stakeholders on the implementation of Articles 5 and 6;
 - development of a series of training materials on conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA, including on cryopreservation;

¹ Resolution 3/2019, Funding Strategy of the ITPGRFA 2020-2025, Annex 1: Operations Manual: Fund For Agreed Purposes, paragraph 7

- policies and regulatory frameworks supporting the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA, including crop wild relatives (CWR), and recognition schemes for local and indigenous communities and farmers;
- awareness-raising on the value of crop genetic diversity and local activities; and
- enhanced coordination and partnerships among public institutions, researchers, private entities, and other stakeholders.

9. To continue the progress made in the implementation of Article 9, some capacity building, awareness raising and outreach activities would include to:

- Update, promote and disseminate the *Inventory of national measures, best practices, and lessons learned on the implementation of Farmers' Rights, as set out in Article 9 of the International Treaty*, along with the *Options for encouraging, guiding and promoting the realization of Farmers' Rights as set out in Article 9 of the International Treaty* (once endorsed by this Governing Body); and the educational module on Farmers' Rights;
- Support and facilitate the initiatives of Contracting Parties and relevant organizations on the promotion and realization of Farmers' Rights, such as seminars, workshops and consultations;
- Conduct a background study on the state of implementation of Farmers' Rights; and
- Organize a Global Symposium to share experiences and discuss possible future work on Farmers' Rights.

Estimated Cost: USD 300,000

Article 17 and the Global Information System on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture – Support to Contracting Parties and stakeholders in the use of DOIs

10. Since the adoption of the Programme of Work on the Global Information System (GLIS) for the activities of the Governing Body has made financial provision for only a limited set of activities of the GLIS within the Core Administrative Budget. Consequently, the Secretary has repeatedly called for funds for agreed activities and developed project proposals for specific activities.

11. The document IT/GB-9/22/11, *Report on the Implementation of the Global Information System*, provides information on some of the priorities identified by the Fourth meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee, including on the further improvement of the GLIS Portal, the support to developing countries for the adoption of Digital Object Identifiers and the training and direct support for the digitalisation of characterisation and evaluation records.

12. At the same time, the Secretariat has received several requests for collaboration for the development of new crop descriptors lists for millet and for other important crops lists prioritized by the Fourth meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee.²

13. At its Eighth Session, the Governing Body took note of the project, *Development of a Globally Agreed List of Descriptors for in situ Crop Wild Relatives Documentation*. The project presented to the Governing Body the document, IT/GB-9/22/11/Inf.1, *Towards a strategic approach to the development and implementation of national databases of CWR*. Some of the main activities that can be supported for the development of national inventories include: the provision of guidance and support for the development of a national database on Crop Wild Relatives, the strengthening of capacity in the use of the global *in situ* CWR descriptors, and the development of relevant technical guidelines.³

14. Specific proposed activities to be supported include:

- At least, one meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee;
- Review of two descriptors for millet and the development of at least four crop descriptors globally;

² See annex 2 of the Report of the Committee, IT/GB-9/SAC-GLIS-4/21/Report, available at www.fao.org/3/cb5340en/cb5340en.pdf

³ Available at www.fao.org/3/ni642en/ni642en.pdf

- Development of a graphic relationship browser for breeders and farmers to find germplasm through national and international inventories and specialised data repositories;
- Direct technical assistance to developing countries for the adoption of DOIs, particularly for material available in the Multilateral System;
- Support the development of national inventories of Crop Wild Relatives in selected developing countries.

Estimated Cost: USD 450,000

Implementation of the updated Funding Strategy

15. At its Eighth Session, the Governing Body decided to adopt a new Funding Strategy of the International Treaty for the period 2020 to 2025 and decided to make the Committee a standing Committee, composed of up to three representatives from each region.

16. Since the adoption of the Funding Strategy, the Standing Committee on the Funding Strategy and Resource Mobilisation (the Funding Committee) developed a 5-year Operational Plan for its implementation that encompasses the requests made by the Governing Body through Resolution 3/2019 and its Annexes. The Funding Strategy and Operational Plan set a heavy agenda for the Funding Committee to take forward, and as such, it is imperative that progress is made in the biennium ahead.

17. The proposed activities to be supported, which are derived from the new Funding Strategy and its Operational Plan, are as follows:

- Implementation of the approved Food Processing Industry Engagement Strategy;
- Compilation of tools and best practices for better integration of PGRFA into national development plans;
- Development of communication tools, products and platforms to help resource mobilization efforts and to increase outreach with users of the Multilateral System, new donors and stakeholders and the visibility and recognition of donors;
- Ongoing monitoring and review of the Funding Strategy's implementation;
- Further development of the Matrix of Funding Tools;
- Development of draft policy criteria for specific assistance under the Funding Strategy, as called for in Art.13.4 of the Treaty;
- Development of a methodology for measuring Non-monetary Benefit-sharing.

Estimated Cost: USD 500,000

Benefit-sharing Support Programme

18. The Benefit-sharing Fund (BSF) is a unique mechanism within the International Treaty that supports high-impact projects for small-scale farmers in developing countries, addressing livelihoods, food security and adaptation of crops to climate change. This is achieved by enhancing the management of plant genetic diversity, strengthening local seed value chains and developing a community of practice to share plant genetic material, data and knowledge.

19. The Benefit-sharing Fund gives the international community an opportunity to advance implementation of the International Treaty's objectives, make progress on the achievement of global biodiversity targets and contribute to the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): SDG 1 (No poverty), SDG 2 (Zero hunger), SDG 13 (Climate action), SDG 15 (Life on land) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

20. In 2019, the Governing Body adopted a new Operations Manual for the Benefit-sharing Fund, with targeted priorities, an improved monitoring, evaluation and learning framework, and a stronger focus on knowledge management and communication and visibility.

21. The BSF mechanism has constantly evolved, and its grant making process and interventions will continue to be streamlined through the implementation of the new programmatic approach of the BSF and its Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework.

22. The BSF is a critical element of the updated Funding Strategy and there are increasing opportunities to mobilize funds from innovative sources and mechanisms through the programmatic approach of the new Funding Strategy. There is an ambition to maximize efforts to further diversify the sources of funding to the BSF by the end of 2025. Furthermore, the programmatic approach of the BSF aims to support the development of long-term partnerships with donors for the provision of predictable and long-term funding.

23. In order to maintain the momentum in the recent policy developments, this component will include activities to support the implementation of the revised Funding Strategy and the enhancement of the programmatic approach of the BSF, as follows:

- Resource mobilization in line with the revised Funding Strategy. This includes exploration of innovative approaches to mobilize resources for the BSF, including by further engaging the private sector, especially the seed and the food processing industries, to make further contributions to the BSF on a multi-annual basis;
- Implementation of the new Monitoring, Evaluation and Monitoring Framework, including:
 - Enhancing the knowledge and learning functions of the Benefit-sharing Fund, to contribute to supporting the implementation of the Treaty. This involves contribution to the enhancement of the cyclical and mutually enhancing relations between the MLS and the BSF and using evidence to increase the visibility and influence of the Treaty - towards supporting the Contracting Parties and stakeholders of the Treaty to access and generate PGRFA for food and nutrition security and climate resilience.
 - Strengthening outreach and communication area to translate knowledge and evidence from local, national, regional and global levels into compelling narratives to increase the visibility of the International Treaty.
 - Strengthening the monitoring at outcome level to assess the benefits for farmers of projects funded.
 - Enhancement of the programmatic and partnership approach of the BSF, by organizing a knowledge-sharing workshops to assess the main achievements of the Fourth project cycle and to further enhance synergies and complementarities between funded projects;
 - Establishment of the BSF community of practice for communication and knowledge sharing as to enable partners to build linkages between different funding sources and explore collaborative planning and co-sponsoring opportunities;
- Finalization and deployment of a communication toolkit to support BSF partners to effectively communicate the results and achievements arising from BSF projects within the framework of the broader communication strategy of the International Treaty;
- Strengthen linkages between different funding sources and partners, by pursuing co-sponsoring opportunities through analysis of appropriate channels and activities to mobilize co-funding resources;
- Further promotion of non-monetary benefits sharing under the International Treaty (exchange of information; access to and transfer of technology; capacity building) and dissemination of the information and data arising from such schemes.

Estimated cost: USD 500,000

Multilateral System Support and Extension Programme: safeguarding collections from emergencies

24. The International Treaty community benefits from a science-based system of ex situ conservation of germplasm collections in order to make them available for research, breeding and training on a global scale. A global network of national and international collections is essential for the future of global food security and sustainable agriculture, so it remains critical to strengthen the

operations of those collections operating within the Multilateral System and to safeguard collections facing emergencies and that conserve unique and globally valuable genetic diversity.

25. Germplasm collections of important food crops around the world are suffering significant damage or are under imminent threat of damage due to a range of emergency or rapidly changing circumstances. These includes the COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters, pest and pathogen outbreaks, institutional changes, land ownership issues and conflict. Damage to unique germplasm collections is not only a loss for the holding institution, but also for the global agricultural research and breeding communities, as well as farmers and society at large. In armed conflict situations, FAO, the International Treaty and partners such as the Global Crop Diversity Trust (Crop Trust) and the Svalbard Seed Vault, have been actively cooperating with countries, including Yemen, Syria, Iraq and currently Ukraine, in order to safeguard and rehabilitate plant germplasm collections and to assist farmers to rehabilitate affected crop systems based on locally adapted germplasm.

26. In the biennium 2020-2021, resource mobilization efforts for germplasm collections at risk have concretized in the establishment of a joint initiative with the Crop Trust, the Emergency Reserve for Germplasm Collections at Risk. The Emergency Reserve addresses requests for urgent and critical support and accelerates interventions to safeguard international and national collections. Cooperation with the Treaty's network of partners, including donors, is advancing to resolve emergencies being faced by national collections, such as the case of Ukraine.

27. With regard to international collections, agreements under Article 15 of the International Treaty are in place with international institutions and host governments holding the collections (Article 15 agreements), and the management of some of those collections, i.e. for the most part, those under the management of CGIAR Centers is supported by the Crop Trust.

28. Field collections play an essential role, both in terms of conservation of unique material and as a complement to in situ conservation in the context of local agricultural systems. In situ and field collections are particularly vulnerable as they are exposed to environmental and development threats. Hence, the need to secure resources that can be mobilized rapidly to respond to immediate threats to unique, international germplasm field collections that fall under framework the International Treaty, with a status in all respects equivalent to the ex situ collections under the management of CGIAR Centers.

29. In accordance with the responsibilities ensuing from the Article 15 agreements, the International Treaty has a mandate to respond to local situations where the orderly maintenance of collections is destabilized by unforeseen events. The agreements stipulate that the Secretary must provide assistance when collections are impeded or threatened by whatever event. However, no dedicated resources are currently available to the Secretary to facilitate the delivery of this vital support, which, as reported to the Governing Body at this Session, is currently needed in several cases.

30. Coupled with such support and on a mutually reinforcing basis, the network of Article 15 collections can be expanded through new agreements with interested international institutions and host governments. The Governing Body has regularly mandated the Secretary to explore prospects for new agreements and, in the execution of such mandate, new agreements have been signed or are under consideration. In cases where new agreements are in place, the Secretary, in close collaboration with technical partners, should also provide initial support to facilitate the availability of germplasm and related data in the Multilateral System, e.g. through Easy-SMTA, Digital Object Identifiers, and Genesys. The allocation of financial resources to the expansion of the network of Article 15 agreements would allow for upgrading these activities into a coherent programme that is jointly designed and implemented with CGIAR Centers and the Crop Trust, coordinated with an updated, rational system of international germplasm conservation and availability. Proposed activities will include:

- Facilitating the rapid mobilisation and deployment of technical and financial assistance in emergency situations for Article 15 field collections, in complementarity to existing mechanisms, e.g. the Benefit-Sharing Fund, and mandates e.g. the Crop Trust, CGIAR;
- Devising and implementing short-term measures to safeguard continuous accessibility of threatened unique germplasm;
- Planning and implementing a programme of expansion of Article 15 collections;

- For new signatory institutions, delivering backstop support for the operation of the Multilateral System.

Estimated cost: USD 450,000

Capacity Development Programme for Mutual Supportiveness between the International Treaty, and the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Nagoya Protocol

31. The objectives of the International Treaty are attained by close linkages with the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the Governing Body has repeatedly stressed the need to enhance such linkages. The Convention's Conference of the Parties, in adopting the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing, formally recognized the International Treaty as one of the complementary instruments that constitute the International Regime of Access and Benefit-sharing. Since the entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol, the Secretariat and Bioversity International (now, The Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT) have been implementing capacity building activities for mutual supportiveness with the International Treaty in the context of the on-going Joint Capacity Building Programme. Such activities have contributed to maintaining the relevance of the International Treaty in the context of wider access and benefit-sharing initiatives, and to promoting the implementation of the Multilateral System within, or in parallel with, new or revised access and benefit-sharing frameworks.

32. However, continuing and enhancing such activities into an ad hoc, specific capacity development programme for mutual supportiveness between the International Treaty and the Nagoya Protocol in the next biennium is necessary and justified. While membership in the Nagoya Protocol continues to increase, the upcoming fifteenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention is likely to generate new impetus for implementation of the Protocol in the context of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and its supporting components. In addition, several processes under the Nagoya Protocol, e.g. on digital sequence information, on its Article 10 regarding global benefit-sharing mechanisms, on Article 4 regarding the relationship with other international instruments, are likely to impact on the positioning of the International Treaty. This continuous evolution generates the need to strengthen, on a wider scale, policy dialogue and operative coordination between national authorities responsible for the International Treaty and environmental authorities in charge of the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol, at international, regional and national levels.

33. Under the proposed Capacity Building Programme for Mutual Supportiveness, dialogue and coordination will be promoted through:

- Preparing joint decision-support tools for relevant ministries in implementing the Nagoya Protocol and the Multilateral System, and the development of specialized awareness-raising and outreach material on the International Treaty and the Nagoya Protocol;
- Joint capacity-building workshops for the national focal points and competent authorities of both agreements, on selected themes of reciprocal, immediate relevance, including in the context of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework;
- Technical and expert advice to governments upon request for the harmonious and mutually supportive implementation of the access and benefit-sharing provisions of the Multilateral System and the Nagoya Protocol.

34. With the resources made available for the Capacity Development Programme for Mutual Supportiveness, it will also be possible to connect International Treaty stakeholders to the frameworks and initiatives for capacity building under the Convention and the Protocol, through coordination with the various implementing entities. A coherent and coordinated approach to capacity development will be pursued in order to integrate the programme into wider ABS experience sharing and lesson learning, for the efficient utilization of available resources and expertise.

Estimated cost: USD 800,000