



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



The International Treaty
ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES
FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

RESOLUTION 6/2022

IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLES 5 AND 6, CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

THE GOVERNING BODY,

Acknowledging the paramount importance of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA) and the vital role of their conservation and sustainable use in addressing global challenges, including food insecurity, biodiversity loss, climate change adaptation, and poverty alleviation;

Noting that in the last three years, 2020–2022, the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA has been implemented mostly during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has significantly affected and will continue to affect the global policy and operational environment;

Further noting the ongoing discussion on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and, when adopted, its implementation, which is expected to contribute to the enhancement of the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA; and that, likewise, the implementation of Articles 5 and 6 of the International Treaty will also contribute to the Framework's prospective goals and targets;

Recalling Resolutions 7/2011, 7/2013, 4/2015, 6/2017 and 5/2019;

1. **Takes note** of the Report of the Ad Hoc Technical Committee on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (the Committee), and **thanks** the Committee for carrying out its work and for defining possible indicative future areas of work to advance implementation of Articles 5 and 6 of the International Treaty;
2. **Decides** to reconvene the Committee with the Terms of Reference contained in *Annex 1* to this Resolution;
3. **Welcomes** the efforts of the Secretary to update and improve the usability, relevance, and effectiveness of the Toolbox for Sustainable Use of PGRFA (Toolbox) as a useful online database of valuable information for the management and sustainable use of PGRFA, and **takes note** of the new prototype of the Toolbox and its communication and visibility plan;
4. **Requests** the Secretary to continue to promote, disseminate, regularly update and monitor the Toolbox, and **invites** Contracting Parties and stakeholders to continue to share information resources and to encourage its use;
5. **Takes note of** the Concept Note of the Joint Programme on Biodiversity in Agriculture for Sustainable Use of PGRFA (Concept Note of the Joint Programme) as contained in *Annex 2* of this Resolution and **thanks** the Committee, experts and initial partners for their work.
6. **Welcomes** the *Background Study on the Bottlenecks and Challenges to the Implementation of Articles 5 and 6 of the International Treaty* (Background Study); **requests** the Secretary to continue to analyze and monitor the identified gaps and needs; and **calls upon** Contracting Parties to share information on the difficulties and challenges encountered in the implementation of Articles 5 and 6 of the International Treaty, as well as possible new initiatives, activities, and approaches that could be undertaken to address them;

7. **Takes note** of the future areas of work on the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA, as outlined in paragraph 36ii in document IT/GB-9/22/12;

8. **Requests** the Secretary, in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders, and subject to the availability of financial resources, to:

- organize regional consultations on the implementation of Articles 5 and 6 of the International Treaty, with a particular focus on identified bottlenecks, to update Contracting Parties and stakeholders on progress and relevant developments;
- revise and finalize the Concept Note, for consideration of the Governing Body at its Tenth Session;
- strengthen collaboration with organisations such as CGRFA, CGIAR, FAO, on the activities which are already supporting the implementation of the International Treaty, and consider joint efforts that could be mutually reinforcing;
- facilitate and monitor the activities carried out by Contracting Parties, stakeholders, and international organizations in support of Articles 5 and 6 of the International Treaty;
- continue to facilitate training and capacity building aimed at advancing characterization and sustainable use of PGRFA, including the assessment of needs of local farmers and other relevant local stakeholders and the identification of possible means to address those needs;
- support national programmes in policy development for the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA, and in building partnerships and mobilizing resources;

9. **Calls upon** the Secretary to continue to collaborate and cooperate with relevant units within FAO, the Convention on Biological Diversity, other entities and institutions, such as the national and international agricultural research centres, as well as the public and private sector and civil society, in promoting the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA and strengthening the interaction between different stakeholders in genetic resources, community and farmer-led system activities, and protected area systems, subject to the availability of financial resources;

10. **Calls upon** Contracting Parties to support the activities outlined in this Resolution, including through the provision of financial resources in line with the provisions of Articles 7 and 8 of the International Treaty;

11. **Thanks** the Government of Italy for the generous financial and in-kind support it has continued to provide towards the implementation of the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA and **calls on** Contracting Parties and other donors to provide additional financial resources for the implementation of Articles 5 and 6 of the International Treaty, in line with the provisions of Articles 7 and 8 of the International Treaty.

Annex 1

Terms of Reference for the Ad Hoc Technical Committee on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

1. The Ad Hoc Technical Committee on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture will:
 - i. provide inputs to the Secretariat for the revision and finalization of the Concept Note of the Joint Programme;
 - ii. develop suggestions on future strategies to address the bottlenecks identified in the Background Study, for the consideration of the Governing Body at its Tenth Session.
2. The Committee will comprise up to five members each from the Africa Region, the Asia Region, the Europe Region and the Latin America and the Caribbean Region; three from the Near East Region; and two each from the North America Region and the South West Pacific Region; as well as seven technical experts designated by the Bureau, upon proposal by the FAO Regions and relevant stakeholders, in particular farmers' organizations, taking into account the required range of technical expertise, and regional and gender balance. Two Co-Chairpersons from Contracting Parties to the International Treaty will form part of the Committee – one from a developing country and one from a developed country. The two Co-Chairpersons shall be in addition to the members of the Committee nominated by the Regions. The Governing Body delegates the authority to designate the Co-Chairpersons to the Bureau of the Tenth Session.
3. The Secretary will continue to maintain and update the list of experts for future reference. This will be made available to Contracting Parties, with a possible view to expanding the pool of experts on the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA.
4. The Committee may hold two virtual meetings in 2023, subject to the availability of financial resources. The Secretary will facilitate the process and assist the Committee in its work.
5. The Committee will report to the Governing Body on its work, for further consideration at the Tenth Session.

Concept Note

THE JOINT PROGRAMME ON BIODIVERSITY IN AGRICULTURE FOR SUSTAINABLE USE OF PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

A. Rationale

The world's population continues to grow, and the increasing demand for food places unprecedented pressure on natural resources. It is estimated that by 2050, a global population of 9.7 billion will demand 7 percent more food than that consumed today.¹ The benefits of a more diverse diet are widely recognized. Dietary diversity, founded on diverse farming systems and growing nutrient-dense foods, delivers better nutrition and greater health, with additional benefits for human productivity and potential contributions to increasing livelihoods.

However, biodiversity for food and agriculture is declining globally, threatening future agricultural production, food security, and overall ecological integrity. In the last century, parts of the world's food crop diversity disappeared forever, thereby reducing coping strategies and resources needed to grow more resilient, more productive, and nutritious crops. The loss of diversity depletes the very resources that are the foundation of our ability to adapt to ongoing global environmental changes. In addition, most of the current food production practices have had, and continue to have, adverse ecological and environmental impacts, including biodiversity loss, land degradation and food systems that contribute significantly to climate change.

In this context, the United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) was convened to address the issue of improving food production systems and consumption, to take into account the environmental and socio-economic perspectives. The international community called for bold new actions to transform the world's food systems and deliver progress on all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), each of which relies on healthier, more sustainable, and equitable food systems.

Given the inherent interlinkages among biodiversity, climate change, livelihood and nutrition, PGRFA are key to enhancing food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture, improving rural livelihoods, and supporting the maintenance of biodiversity in production landscapes, as well as adjacent and distant ecosystems by reducing pressures on them and meeting the challenges of adapting to climate change. Consequently, the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA are crucial to making our food systems more sustainable.

Knowledge and decisions related to the genetic diversity of crops are undoubtedly an essential service not only for nutrition but also in environmental and social terms. Transgenerational practices and knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities still allow the preservation of varietal diversity. Still, knowledge is also seriously threatened in today's world, to a similar degree as biological diversity. . Moreover, the benefits and contribution of this knowledge to the soil, water and environmental health have not yet been fully measured. This joint effort among agencies is fundamental to a better understanding the links between genetic, cultural and environmental diversity and to establishing a solid framework for cooperation between *in situ* and *ex situ* strategies.

¹ FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, WHO. 2018. *The state of food security and nutrition in the world 2018. Building climate resilience for food security and nutrition*. FAO, Rome.

B. A food-system approach to food and nutrition security and ensuring resilience to climate change and other emerging challenges

To address the interconnected challenges of biodiversity loss, food and nutrition insecurity and climate change, food production requires sustainable food systems that are based on diversified, innovative, dynamic and resilient agricultural systems.²

In this context, the proposed Joint Programme is expected to respond to the call for a transformation of contemporary food systems so that they become more sustainable, equitable and resilient, and to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs and the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), once adopted. It is expected that the proposed Joint Programme will contribute specifically to SDGs 2 and 15 and all the relevant goals, as well as to the proposed Action Targets of the GBF aimed at:

- (i) reducing threats to biodiversity;
- (ii) meeting people's needs through sustainable use and benefit-sharing; and
- (iii) adopting tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming.

Therefore, the Joint Programme will work towards agricultural and food production that is nutrition-sensitive and gender-responsive while promoting the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity for food and agriculture.

C. General objective of the Joint Programme

The general objective of the Joint Programme is to strengthen the capacities of different actors in the following key areas:

- study, disseminate and exchange knowledge and information;
- raise awareness, conserve, use and manage biodiversity for food and agriculture; and
- promote healthy diets and sustainable food systems while strengthening agricultural systems' resilience to climate change and other emerging challenges.

D. Specific objectives of the Joint Programme

The specific objectives of the Joint Programme are to:

- boost conservation activities of crop diversity, crop wild relatives and wild edible species on the ground through an integrated approach to in situ, on-farm and ex situ conservation strategies, including/adopting ecosystem approaches;
- foster the sustainable use of crop diversity to support an ecological transition toward sustainable and resilient food systems that ensure food security, health and nutrition and improved livelihoods, as well as sustainable production and consumption, and resilience to climate change and other emerging challenges;
- raise awareness about the importance of promoting the sustainable use of PGRFA and build capacity at all levels and across scales to promote the exchange of experiences, technical advice and support, set up strategies and action plans, and establish a supportive and enabling legal and policy environment; and
- identify financial instruments for implementation of the Joint Programme.

² FAO. 2019. *The state of the world's biodiversity for food and agriculture*. J. Bélanger & D. Pilling (eds.). Rome. www.fao.org/3/CA3129EN/CA3129EN.pdf

E. Strategy and approach

The Joint Programme will be a collaboration between and among relevant international organizations, governments and interested stakeholders committed to working together with the shared ambition and goal of transforming our food systems and improving livelihoods in a sustainable, inclusive and gender-responsive manner. This will be achieved by promoting multistakeholder, multisectoral collaboration and partnerships to tap into the wealth and diversity of knowledge, information, competencies and expertise.

The Joint Programme will be developed in close collaboration with potential partners and build on their respective programmes, projects, partnerships and experiences. It will strategically address existing gaps and identify drivers of biodiversity loss as far as they relate to agriculture and food systems.

Joint actions/activities can be promoted at three levels of intervention:

1. global and regional level – advocacy, awareness-raising, promotion of South-South/North-South cooperation for sustainable use of PGRFA;
2. national level – advocacy, promotion of an enabling policy environment and identification of financial instruments; and
3. local level – capacity development and community empowerment.

By addressing these levels in an integrated manner and actively fostering linkages between them, the Joint Programme is expected to deliver broad impacts that contribute to the above-mentioned objectives. Some pilot areas could be selected to develop projects on local/academic knowledge co-production regarding the varietal diversity of crops capable of combating desertification, salinity and high temperatures.

The Joint Programme will be reviewed four years from its commencement, expected to be in 2026, with regular progress reports at each session of the Governing Body. The next biennium, 2023–2024 will mainly be focused on a communication and advocacy campaign to highlight the experiences, lessons learned and results achieved by the different partners and interested stakeholders on the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA.

F. Areas of collaboration

- awareness-raising on the importance of sustainable food systems and the role of sustainable use of PGRFA in achieving the SDGs;
- aligning policies and metrics to support nutrition-sensitive production and consumption where PGRFA are an integral factor;
- strengthening rural-urban linkages – including physical, economic, socio-cultural and political connections – linking in particular to farmers who manage and sustainably use PGRFA;
- developing incentive mechanisms for the use of local crops (e.g. payment schemes or public procurement programmes) and value chains for local crops;
- knowledge management – facilitating coordination, synergy and management of scientific and traditional knowledge for sustainable use and documentation and dissemination of good practices and sustainable approaches;
- developing a compendium of case studies: Youth knowledge and transfer of crop varietal diversity; and
- identify financial instruments to unlock private and public funding for biodiversity and plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

G. Potential partners

The initial partners include:

- Secretariat of the International Treaty
- CGIAR - Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT
- CIHEAM - Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari
- SCBD - Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
- UNDP - United Nations Development Programme
- UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
- Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and other relevant units of FAO

The Secretariat of the International Treaty will lead the Joint Programme and work with actual and potential partners to promote the areas of collaboration listed in section F.

The Joint Programme will be inclusive of partners and collaborators, with broad participation at all levels. In order to ensure effectiveness and efficiency, it would be envisaged as a multisector, multistakeholder partnership that brings together international and intergovernmental organizations, governments, technical development cooperation/funding institutions, civil society organizations, research and academia, and farmers' organizations whose work is relevant to PGRFA recognize the fundamental importance of crop genetic diversity and sustainable use of PGRFA.

All interested stakeholders can become a donor to the Joint Programme. In addition, partners will undertake joint resource mobilization to carry out relevant activities, as necessary and appropriate.