



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



**International Treaty  
on Plant Genetic Resources  
for Food and Agriculture**

**INTERNATIONAL TREATY ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES  
FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

**ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE AD HOC OPEN-ENDED WORKING  
GROUP TO ENHANCE THE FUNCTIONING OF THE  
MULTILATERAL SYSTEM**

**Rome, Italy, 16–18 April 2024**

**Annotated Provisional Agenda and Timetable**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. At its Ninth Session, the Governing Body decided to re-establish the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group to Enhance the Functioning of the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing (Working Group), to finalize the enhancement of the functioning of the Multilateral System by the Eleventh Session of the Governing Body,<sup>1</sup> tentatively scheduled for 24–29 November 2025.
2. The Governing Body noted that while a range of views exist among Contracting Parties on the matter, Contracting Parties commit to working together towards adopting a package of measures to enhance the functioning of the Multilateral System through the process established in the Resolution, with the following shared aims:
  - Increase the benefits that arise from the Multilateral System for all Contracting Parties and users, both monetary and non-monetary;
  - Increase user-based income to the Benefit-sharing Fund in a sustainable and predictable long-term manner;
  - Expand the crops and plant genetic diversity available through the Multilateral System;
  - Improve the availability of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture in the Multilateral System;
  - Make the Multilateral System more dynamic given that there are developments and emerging issues in science, innovation, plant breeding and global policy environment;
  - Create legal certainty, administrative simplicity and transparency for everyone participating in the Multilateral System.
3. The Governing Body decided that the process to enhance the functioning of the Multilateral System will have the following features:
  - Be inclusive, regionally and gender balanced and including all stakeholder groups;
  - Be open-ended, so that any Contracting Party may attend, provided that speaking rights are limited to a certain number of members;
  - Be supported by robust regional or interregional consultations; and

<sup>1</sup> [Resolution 3/2022](#)

- Be supported by virtual meetings and/or consultations (including hybrid meetings) as well as physical meetings which are held in a transparent manner, while decisions would be made at physical meetings.

4. The Governing Body appointed Mr. Sunil Archak (India) and Mr. Michael Ryan (Australia) as the two Co-Chairs of the Working Group.

5. At its Tenth Session, the Governing Body further elaborated the mandate of the Working Group. In particular, it endorsed the proposal of the Working Group to use the “June 2019 draft package” as a starting point for its further work; and it requested the Co-Chairs to give early attention to the three identified “hotspots”: digital sequence information/genetic sequence data, expansion of Annex I, and payment structure and rates.<sup>2</sup>

6. Additionally, the Governing Body took note of decision 15/9 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity on Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources and urged the Working Group to take this decision and related developments into account when addressing the issue of digital sequence information/genetic sequence data in the context of the process to enhance the functioning of the Multilateral system.<sup>3</sup>

7. The Working Group had originally been established by the Governing Body at its Fifth Session.<sup>4</sup> It met nine times between 2014 and 2019, and for the tenth time in July 2023, following its re-establishment. The reports of all its previous meetings are available on the website of the International Treaty at [www.fao.org/plant-treaty/meetings/en/](http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/meetings/en/).

8. A general overview and summary of relevant background information is available at [www.fao.org/plant-treaty/areas-of-work/the-multilateral-system/enhancement-process/en/](http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/areas-of-work/the-multilateral-system/enhancement-process/en/).

## ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

9. The eleventh meeting of the Working Group will be held at FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy, from 16 to 18 April 2024. Arrangements have been made to allow Regions to hold regional and interregional consultations on Monday, 15 April 2024.

10. The opening session will begin at 10.00 on Tuesday, 16 April 2024.

11. The meeting will be held in Arabic, English, French and Spanish, in accordance with Resolution 3/2022.

## ITEM 2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

12. The present document annotates the *Provisional Agenda* and contains a provisional indicative timetable, for the consideration of the Working Group, so that it could adopt its agenda and organize its work for this meeting.

13. The list of documents prepared for this meeting is contained in document IT/OWG-EFMLS-11/24/2/Inf.1, *List of Documents*. The documents are available on the website of the International Treaty at [www.fao.org/plant-treaty/meetings/meetings-detail/en/c/1674749/](http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/meetings/meetings-detail/en/c/1674749/).

## ITEM 3. THE “JUNE 2019 DRAFT PACKAGE”

14. In Resolution 3/2023, the the Governing Body endorsed the suggestion of the Working Group to use the “June 2019 draft package” as a starting point for its further work.

15. In the document, IT/OWG-EFMLS-11/24/3, the Co-Chairs provide an overview of the main elements of the “June 2019 draft package”. The full package is contained in Appendix 2 of the document, as well as in the document, [IT/OWG-EFMLS-9/19/Interim Report](http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/meetings/meetings-detail/en/c/1106601/) (pages 19-42), which is available in all six UN languages at [www.fao.org/plant-treaty/meetings/meetings-detail/en/c/1106601/](http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/meetings/meetings-detail/en/c/1106601/).

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<sup>2</sup> [Resolution 3/2023](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Resolution 3/2023](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Resolution 2/2013](#), Part IV

16. At its Ninth Session, the Governing Body decided that the process should build upon previous progress and achievements both in terms of structure and content and integrate new ideas, if relevant, and address, in a balanced manner, all three blocks of the package of measures developed previously (revised SMTA; expansion of Annex I; implementation measures through a Resolution of the Governing Body).<sup>5</sup>

17. Under this agenda item, the Working Group is invited to recall the main elements and concepts of the “June 2019 draft package” and to provide general guidance to the Co-Chairs on further revisions or updates to the “June 2019 draft package” so that they could prepare a negotiating text for the twelfth meeting.

#### **ITEM 4. DEVELOPMENTS IN OTHER RELEVANT FORA**

18. Since the last meeting of the Working Group in July 2023, several meetings have taken place in other fora, which may be of interest or relevance to the work of the Working Group.

19. Under the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Benefit-sharing from the Use of Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources held its first meeting in November 2023.

20. A summary of its first meeting and of other relevant developments will be provided at the meeting.

21. The Working Group may wish to consider the relevance and potential implications of these processes and developments for its work.

#### **ITEM 5. CO-CHAIRS’ OPTIONS FOR THE THREE “HOTSPOTS”**

22. At its Tenth Session, the Governing Body requested the Co-Chairs to give early attention to the three identified “hotspots”, namely digital sequence information/genetic sequence data (DSI/GSD), expansion of Annex I, and payment structure and rates.<sup>6</sup>

23. The Co-Chairs prepared an options paper for consideration of the Working Group, as a basis to discuss concepts and approaches for these key areas. The options paper is contained in the document IT/OWG-EFMLS-11/24/5.

24. The discussions of options to address the three “hotspots”, together with a review of the starting point for the negotiations under Agenda Item 3, the “June 2019 draft package”, will inform the preparations of a draft negotiating text by the Co-Chairs for the twelfth meeting of the Working Group later this year.

25. The Working Group is therefore invited to discuss the options to address the three “hotspots” and possible further revisions and additions to the “June 2019 draft package”. The Working Group is also invited to provide input on the way forward suggested by the Co-Chairs in the document.

#### **ITEM 6. OTHER MATTERS**

26. Under this agenda item, the Working Group may wish to discuss any other relevant matters that may be raised by its members.

#### **ITEM 7. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT**

27. Under this agenda item, the Working Group is invited to consider and approve the report of its meeting.

28. Following the practice of the Working Group at its earlier meetings, the draft report will be available in English only, while interpretation into the other languages will be provided during the

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<sup>5</sup> [Resolution 3/2022](#), para. 4

<sup>6</sup> [Resolution 3/2023](#)

report adoption session. This will optimize the use of time on the last day, since no time for the translation process needs to be scheduled.

29. The meeting is expected to end at 18.00 on 18 April 2024.

*Appendix***PROVISIONAL INDICATIVE TIMETABLE**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Documents</b>
<b>Tuesday, 16 April 2024</b>			
<b>Morning</b>			
<b>10.00-13.00</b>	1	Opening of the meeting	
	2	Adoption of the agenda and organization of work	Resolution 3/2023 Resolution 3/2022 IT/OWG-EFMLS-11/24/2 IT/OWG-EFMLS-11/24/2.2 IT/OWG-EFMLS-11/24/2/Inf.1
	3	The “June 2019 draft package”	IT/OWG-EFMLS-11/24/3 IT/OWG-EFMLS-11/24/3/Inf.1
<b>Tuesday, 16 April 2024</b>			
<b>Afternoon</b>			
<b>15.00-18.00</b>	3	<i>The “June 2019 draft package” (continued)</i>	
	4	Developments in other relevant fora	In-session presentations
	5	Co-Chairs’ options for the three “hotspots” a. Overview	IT/OWG-EFMLS-11/24/5 IT/OWG-EFMLS-11/24/3 IT/OWG-EFMLS-11/24/3/Inf.1
<b>Wednesday, 17 April 2024</b>			
<b>Morning</b>			
<b>10.00-13.00</b>	5	Co-Chairs’ options for the three “hotspots” b. Expansion of Annex I c. Digital sequence information / genetic sequence data	IT/OWG-EFMLS-11/24/5 IT/OWG-EFMLS-11/24/3 IT/OWG-EFMLS-11/24/3/Inf.1 In-session presentations
<b>Wednesday, 17 April 2024</b>			
<b>Afternoon</b>			
<b>15.00-18.00</b>	5	Co-Chairs’ options for the three “hotspots” c. <i>Digital sequence information / genetic sequence data (continued)</i> d. Payment structure and rates	IT/OWG-EFMLS-11/24/5 IT/OWG-EFMLS-11/24/3 IT/OWG-EFMLS-11/24/3/Inf.1 In-session presentations

<b>Thursday, 18 April 2024</b>			
<b>Morning</b>			
<b>10.00-13.00</b>	5	Co-Chairs' options for the three "hotspots" <i>d. Payment structure and rates (continued)</i> <i>e. Conclusions and way forward</i>	IT/OWG-EFMLS-11/24/5 IT/OWG-EFMLS-11/24/3 IT/OWG-EFMLS-11/24/3/Inf.1
	6	Other matters	
<b>Thursday, 18 April 2024</b>			
<b>Afternoon</b>			
<b>15.00-18.00</b>	7	Adoption of the Report	