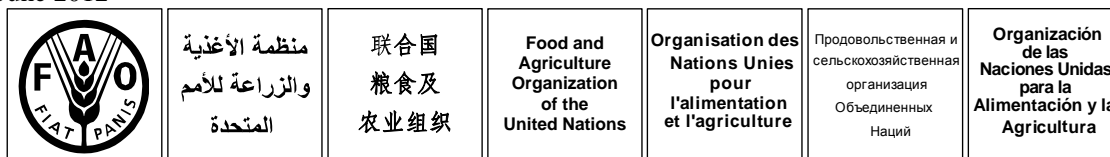


June 2012

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# COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

## AD HOC TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING FOR GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

### First Session

Longyearbyen (Svalbard), Norway, 11 - 13 September 2012

### INFORMATION NOTE FOR PARTICIPANTS

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**FIRST SESSION OF THE AD HOC TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON ACCESS AND  
BENEFIT-SHARING FOR GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

**Longyearbyen (Svalbard), Norway  
11-13 September 2012**

**1. MEETING ARRANGEMENTS**

**Date and place of meeting**

1. The First Session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing for Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Working group), will be held at Longyearbyen kulturhus (Longyearbyen House of Culture) in Longyearbyen (Svalbard), Norway, from 11 to 13 September 2012. Longyearbyen kulturhus is located close to the Radisson Blu Polar Hotel and the University Centre, within a short walk from the Post Office, bank, shops and other places of interest. The opening session will take place on Tuesday, 11 September 2012, at 10:00 a.m.

**Communications**

2. All correspondence related to the meeting should be addressed to the Secretary of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture as follows:

Ms Linda Collette  
Secretary  
Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture  
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations  
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla  
00153 Rome  
Italy  
E-Mail: cgrfa@fao.org  
Tel: +39 06 5705 4986

**Admittance of participants**

3. The Members of the Working Group, as elected by the Commission at its Thirteenth Regular Session, are as follows:

Africa: Cameroon, Eritrea, Togo, Tunisia, Zambia.  
Asia: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Indonesia, Lao (People's Democratic Republic), Thailand.  
Europe: Norway, Spain, Switzerland, Netherlands, United Kingdom.  
Latin America and the Caribbean: Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay.  
Near East: Iran (Islamic Republic of), Lebanon, Yemen.  
North America: Canada, United States of America.  
Southwest Pacific: Australia, Cook Islands.

4. Members of the Commission which are not members of the Working Group may participate in the Working Group, upon request to the Commission Secretariat, in an observer capacity. The Working Group, or the Bureau of the Commission on behalf of the Working Group, may invite experts, as well as representatives of specialized international organizations, to attend the meeting to provide inputs to the Working Group.

5. The Director-General would appreciate receiving by 15 June 2012 the name(s), official title(s) and address(es) of the representatives of Working Group Members or, in the case of non-members of the Working Group, the name(s), official title(s) and address(es) of the observers designated to attend the meeting. The name(s), the official title(s) and address(es), including telephone, fax numbers and e-mail address(es) of each representative should be communicated to the Secretary of the Commission.

## Registration

6. Registration will take place at the registration counter located in the Radisson Blu Polar Hotel in Longyearbyen. Registration will commence on Monday, 10 September 2012, from 15:00 to 16:30 hours, and will continue the following days from 9:00 to 13:00 and 14:00 to 17:00 hours. All participants should register soon after arrival in Longyearbyen. In order to register, all participants must show an identity card or passport and, as applicable, a letter, on official letter-headed paper, confirming their nomination to participate in this session.

## Documentation

7. The working documents of the session are posted on the Commission's website at <http://www.fao.org/nr/cgrfa/>. Participants are kindly reminded to bring their own copies of the pre-session documents, including the information documents and background study papers.

## 2. ENTRY FORMALITIES

### Visa

8. A valid Schengen visa is required. Norway is a member of the Schengen cooperation. As a consequence, nationals of countries participating in this cooperation may travel freely between the member countries. The same applies to foreign nationals holding a residence permit in one of the member countries, or that have been granted a visitor's visa (up to 90 days duration) to the Schengen area.

9. Exemption to the visa requirement also applies to nationals of countries that have a visa exemption agreements with Norway. Nationals from countries with exemption agreements can stay in Norway for up to 90 days.

10. Norway has visa exemption agreements with the following countries (members of the Schengen cooperation in bold letters):

A: Andorra, Albania (holders of biometric passports), Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, **Austria**  
 B: Bahamas, Barbados, **Belgium**, Bermuda (BDTC passport), Bosnia and Herzegovina (holders of biometric passports), Brazil, Brunei, Bulgaria  
 C: Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, **the Czech Republic**  
**D: Denmark**  
 E: El Salvador, **Estonia**  
**F: Finland, France**  
**G: Germany, Greece, Guatemala**  
 H: Honduras, Hong Kong (SAR passports and BNO passports), **Hungary**  
**I: Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy**  
 J: Japan  
 K: Republic of Korea  
**L: Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg**  
 M: Macau (SAR passport), Macedonia (holders of biometric passports), Malaysia, **Malta**, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro (holders of biometric passports)  
 N: **The Netherlands**, New Zealand, Nicaragua  
 P: Panama, Paraguay, **Poland, Portugal**  
**R: Romania**  
 S: San Marino, Serbia (holders of biometric passports), the Seychelles, Singapore, **Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, St. Kitts and Nevis, Sweden, Switzerland**  
 T: Taiwan (holders of Taiwanese passports that contain an ID card number),  
 U: The UK, Uruguay, the USA  
 V: The Vatican City State, Venezuela

11. Participants, who require visas, should apply for this at the Norwegian embassies in their respective country of residence, <http://www.norway.info/>  
 A visa to the Schengen area is valid as a visa to Norway and all other European countries participating in the Schengen cooperation. Consequently, persons from countries whose citizens are required to have a visa need only one visa even if they are to visit several Schengen countries.

12. **However, while Norway is included in the Schengen area, Svalbard is not. Participants from countries requiring a visa must therefore have a visa allowing two entries into the Schengen area. This must be indicated in the official application form.**

13. Participants are advised to apply for a visa sufficiently in advance as the processing of visa applications for the Schengen Area can take 30 days.

14. The application should be on the official form which should be presented with a valid passport, a passport sized photograph and documentation certifying the participation at the meeting. For some countries, applicants have an option of registering the visa application online at <https://selfservice.udi.no/>

Application forms for Schengen Visas can be downloaded at

[http://www.udi.no/PageFiles/17602/Visum\\_engelsk\\_skrivbart.pdf](http://www.udi.no/PageFiles/17602/Visum_engelsk_skrivbart.pdf)

More information in multiple languages at

<http://www.udi.no/Norwegian-Directorate-of-Immigration/Oversiktsider/Fact-sheets/Fact-sheet-Visa/>

## **Passport**

15. Entry into Norway requires the presentation of a valid passport. Pursuant to the Schengen Regulations, the identity of all travellers crossing any Schengen external border must be checked. As Svalbard is not a part of the Schengen area, the identity of all travellers between Svalbard and the Norwegian mainland must be verified. The identity of all travellers will be checked both upon entry and departure. This will apply to both Norwegian citizens and foreign nationals (i.e. both individuals covered by the EEA agreement or the EFTA convention and third country nationals).

Passports or national identity cards presented should satisfy Schengen regulation requirements for identity verification. Norwegian citizens can prove their identity by presenting driver's licences issued after 1998, bank-issued identity cards, or the Norwegian Armed Forces' identity card.

## **3. TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS**

16. Participants are responsible for making their own travel arrangements, with the exception of those participants from developing country Working Group Members being supported by Norway. Given the limited number of flights in and out of Longyearbyen, participants are kindly invited to book flights as soon as possible. A limited number of flight tickets for the destination Oslo-Longyearbyen-Oslo (Departure times: Monday 10 September 2012 at 9.55 and Friday 14 September 2012 at 2.45) has been reserved. Flights can be booked prior to 30 June 2012 on a first-come, first-served basis at: <http://www.conferencemanager.dk/wg-abs-booking/the-event.html>

## **4. TRANSPORT**

17. Participants will be met at Longyearbyen airport on 10 September and transported by bus to the hotel, and transported to the airport in time for departure on 14 September.

## **5. HOTEL ACCOMMODATION**

18. Hotel rooms and meals at conference rates can be booked at Radisson Blu Polar Hotel <http://www.conferencemanager.dk/wg-abs-booking/radisson-blu-polar-hotel-spitsbergen.html> where a limited number of rooms have been reserved at special rates. Special rates for the Working Group Meeting has been negotiated:

Single room incl. breakfast and WIFI NOK 995 per night.

Double room incl. breakfast and WIFI NOK 595 per person per night.

Useful sites for other accommodation can be found at [www.spitsbergentravel.com/Start/](http://www.spitsbergentravel.com/Start/) and [www.svalbard.net/?set\\_lang=en](http://www.svalbard.net/?set_lang=en).

## **6. SUPPORT FOR THE PARTICIPATION OF DEVELOPING COUNTRY WORKING GROUP MEMBERS**

19. The Government of Norway has kindly agreed to cover the costs of participation of one Working Group Member from developing countries. The support will cover travel costs and full

board accommodation for one Working Group representative from each developing country. Relevant Working Group Members are invited to inform the Secretary of the Commission, at the above address, of the wish to avail themselves of this offer, and the name of the representative, by no later than **15 June 2012**.

## **7. SIDE EVENTS**

20. Side events may take place in the Auditorium of Longyearbyen kulturhus and at Radisson Blu Polar Hotel Spitsbergen. Requests for side events should be submitted to the Secretary. The deadline for receipt of requests is 1 August 2012.

## **8. RECEPTION/ ARCTIC SUPPER**

21. On Monday, 10 September 2012, participants may attend an introductory session to Svalbard which will be held at the Svalbard Museum from 15:00 to 16:30. All participants are also invited by the Government Norway to attend a welcome reception and Arctic supper on Monday evening. The reception commences at 19:00 and will take place at the University Centre.

22. On Friday, 14 September 2012, prior to their departure, participants will have the opportunity to take part in guided sightseeing tours.

## **9. IMPORTANT LOCAL INFORMATION**

### **Catering facilities/meals**

23. The Radisson Blu Polar Hotel Spitsbergen provides a hot buffet lunch with choice of meat, fish and vegetarian dishes between 13.00-15.00, and an evening buffet from 17.30-19.30. For lunch, participants may also preorder a lunchbag. Special rates for the Working Group Meeting have been negotiated:

Sandwich buffet 10 September NOK 220.

Lunch buffet 11, 12 and 13 September NOK 260 per day.

Dinner buffet 11, 12 and 13 September NOK 315 per day.

Lunch bag 11, 12 and 13 September NOK 129 per bag.

The Rabalder Cafe at Longyearbyen kulturhus offers salads and sandwich lunches.

There are a number of restaurants in Longyearbyen catering for evening meals.

### **Climate**

24. The mean temperature in Longyearbyen in September is 0°C, with very changeable weather. There is often a cold stiff wind. This means that it can feel about ten degrees colder than the indicated temperature. You can check daily temperatures in Longyearbyen on <http://www.yr.no/place/Norway/Svalbard/Longyearbyen/long.html>

### **Clothing**

25. It is necessary to bring warm and windproof outerwear, warm underwear, heavy shoes, a woollen sweater, scarf, warm head wear and mittens. As far as dress code is concerned, Svalbard is fairly informal. Buildings, including your hotel, are well heated. It is customary to remove your shoes when entering buildings (including the hotel and meeting-hall). This keeps the floors clean and dry. You may wish to bring a pair of slippers, or light shoes to change into for this purpose.

### **Currency/Exchange facilities**

26. The currency in use in Svalbard is the Norwegian krone (crown). You can get this at the bank or ATM machine on the upper (departure) level of the Oslo airport or at the ATM located in the bank

building in Longyearbyen. Norwegian kroner can be used over the whole of Svalbard, including the Russian settlements. Credit cards can be used in most shops and restaurants.

### **Electricity**

27. 220V, AC. The standard European plugs are used.

### **Emergency telephone numbers in Longyearbyen**

28.

Medical assistance: +47 79 02 42 00 (Longyearbyen Hospital)  
Police (Sysselmannen/Governor of Svalbard): +47 79 02 43 00  
Telephone to police officer on call: + 47 79 02 12 22 / +47 41 40 31 65 (mobile phone)  
Telephone to emergency line: 11

### **Health and Safety**

29. The water is safe to drink from the tap. First aid will be available throughout the meeting. There is a pharmacy as well as a small hospital in Longyearbyen, Svalbard (+47 79 02 42 00).

30. Polar bears can be found anywhere anytime in Svalbard. They are extremely fast and dangerous. They are not commonly seen in Longyearbyen and walking within the town centre is generally considered safe unless you are informed otherwise. Under no circumstances should you venture outside the town without being accompanied by someone with a gun. On organised tours the guides will be in charge of safety and carry weapons and other necessary equipment. You may also see reindeer and Arctic fox while in Svalbard. These are not dangerous.

### **Internet access**

31. Free WIFI facilities are provided in the Auditorium of Longyearbyen kulturhus and to guests at the Radisson Blu Polar Hotel Spitsbergen. In Longyearbyen kulturhus computers with free internet facilities are also available.

### **Language**

32. English is widely spoken both in Norway and on Svalbard.