

November 2003



Item 3 of the Provisional Agenda

COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

WORKING GROUP ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Second Session

Rome, 5 – 7 November 2003

PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA AND TIMETABLE

1. **Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair(s)**

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”.

2. **Election of the Rapporteur**

The Working Group may also wish to appoint a *Rapporteur*.

3. **Adoption of the agenda and timetable**

A provisional timetable is in Appendix 1 to the present document, for consideration by the Working Group.

4. **The Global Plan of Action: for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture**

4.1 Implementing the Global Plan of Action: Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

a. Towards the Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA): Strengthening Plant Breeding

At its Ninth Session, the Commission emphasized the importance of promoting the sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, through germplasm characterization, evaluation and plant breeding. The document CGRFA/WG-PGR-2/03/2, considers a series of issues related to plant breeding and outlines practical steps to establish and eventually address crop breeding priorities. The issues are: support for core breeding activities for neglected crops and sub-optimal environments; investments in base-broadening activities; the promotion of farmers' and stakeholders' participation in plant breeding activities; ways of bridging the gap between conventional plant breeding and applied biotechnologies; ways to facilitate capacity building, transfer of technology and public/private partnership; ways in which national plant breeding programmes can be assisted in the identification of areas for strategic resource allocation and enhanced partnerships for plant breeding. The Working Group is invited to express its views regarding the way forward in strengthening the sustainable use of PGRFA, suggest priorities for FAO's study on plant breeding capacity and encourage countries to participate in the study. It is also requested to consider a consultation with stakeholders/partners in order to further enhance the paper for consideration at the next session of the Commission.

b. Strengthening Seed Systems

The Commission at its Ninth Session, decided that the Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources would consider, at its second meeting, issues related to the use of PGRFA through strengthening germplasm conservation, plant breeding and seed production systems. As part of its preparations for this meeting, FAO organized three technical workshops on seed policy, on seed emergency relief, and on Quality Declared Seed (QDS). Document CGRFA/WG-PGR-2/03/3, presents a summary report of this wide consultation which is aimed at strengthening seed systems as a means to achieve the objectives of the Global Plan of Action and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. The document builds on the outputs of the four workshops and reviews on seed systems, FAO's previous and planned activities in the seed area, policy issues and recommendations for FAO and stakeholders. The views and comments of the Working Group are sought on a number of issues presented in the recommendations of the workshops reported in this document.

4.2 Progress Report on Monitoring the Implementation of the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

The Commission has requested that FAO play a proactive and creative role in facilitating and monitoring implementation of the Global Plan of Action. During its Ninth Session, the Commission "highlighted the importance of monitoring the implementation of the Plan through a country-driven and flexible system that could respond to different and evolving national and regional needs and priorities, while ensuring the necessary level of standardization". FAO with the collaboration of the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI), has developed a tool-kit to facilitate the establishment and operation of national information-sharing mechanisms for the implementation of the Global Plan of Action. The document CGRFA/WG-PGR-2/03/4 describes the main components of these national information-sharing mechanisms and reports on the progress in the implementation of the monitoring and pilot testing activities. The Working Group is invited to provide guidance on the ongoing application of the new monitoring approach to countries, on the integration of the monitoring activities with the preparation of the second report on the State of the World's PGRFA, and on the mobilization of the necessary extra-budgetary funds.

4.3 Facilitating Mechanism for the Implementation of the Global Plan of Action

The renewed efforts to promote implementation of the Global Plan of Action, through the development of a facilitating mechanism was considered by the Commission at its Ninth Session. The Commission recommended that the “future development of the Facilitating Mechanism be guided by the Commission and its Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture”. Document CGRFA/WG-PGR-2/03/5, prepared by FAO and IPGRI, reports on the follow-up activities undertaken to further develop the establishment of the Facilitating Mechanism. A Stakeholder Meeting was organised in this connection, and the Report of the meeting is presented in document CGRFA/WG-PGR-2/03/5/Annex. The Working Group is invited to provide further advice on the establishment and operation of the Facilitating Mechanism, including mobilization of support and resources with a view to enhancing the implementation of the Global Plan of Action.

5. Progress Report on Certain Elements of the FAO Global System for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

The Global System on PGRFA comprises global agreements, cooperation, information and action in the conservation of plant genetic resources and their sustainable utilization. The Commission agreed that the Working Group should provide further guidance: on the preparation of the second report on the *State of the World’s Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*; on the development of plant genetic resource networks, and the assessment of their effectiveness; and on the possible need to update elements of the *Code of Conduct for Plant Germplasm Collecting and Transfer*, which are three elements of the Global System. Document CGRFA/WG-PGR-2/03/6 reports on progress in the follow-up of these three elements. The process of the preparation of the second *State of the World* report is described, and guidance is requested from the Working Group concerning the preparatory process, its timetable, thematic area priorities, and obtaining necessary resources. On Networks, a process is described that was initiated to enhance the synergy between networks, and to assist them to assess and improve their own effectiveness and efficiency. The Commission also requested Member countries to provide information and suggestions about the implementation of the *Code* and the current relevance of each of its elements. Responses received have been summarised and the Working Group is requested to consider the possible need and requisite mechanisms for updating elements of the *Code*.

6. Other Business - Progress Report on the Global Crop Diversity Trust

The information document CGRFA/WG-PGR-2/03/Inf.1 provides a brief overview of the recently established Global Crop Diversity Trust, which is a part of the funding strategy for the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. It provides information on the outcome of a meeting of the International Panel of Eminent Experts of the Trust.

7. Adoption of the Report of the Working Group.

APPENDIX 1**PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE**

Date & Time	Agenda Item No.	Title	Working Documents
Wednesday, 5 Nov. 2003			
10:00-10:15	1.	Introductory Remarks from ADG, AG,	
	2.	Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair(s), and appointment of the <i>Rapporteur</i>	
10:15-11:00	3.	Adoption of the Agenda and timetable	CGRFA/WG-PGR-2/03/1/Rev.1 CGRFA/WG-PGR-2/03/1/Add.1
11:00-13:00	5.	Progress Report on Certain Elements of the FAO Global System for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture	CGRFA/WG-PGR-2/03/6
14:30-16:00	4.2	Progress Report on Monitoring the Implementation of the <i>Global Plan of Action</i> for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture	CGRFA/WG-PGR-2/03/4
16.00-17.30	4.3	Facilitating Mechanism for the Implementation of the <i>Global Plan of Action</i>	CGRFA/WG-PGR-2/03/5 CGRFA/WG-PGR-2/03/5 Annex.
Thursday, 6 Nov. 2003			
09:30-12:30	4.1b	Strengthening Seed Systems	CGRFA/WG-PGR-2/03/3
14:30-17:00	4.1 a	Towards the Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA): Strengthening Plant Breeding	CGRFA/WG-PGR-2/03/2
17:00-17:30	6.	Other Business - Progress Report on the Global Crop Diversity Trust	CGRFA/WG-PGR-2/03/Inf.1

**Friday, 7
Nov. 2003**

09:30-12:30	Preparation of the Report of the Working Group
14:30-17:30	7. Adoption of the Report of the Working Group