



**FOURTH CALL FOR PROPOSALS
OF THE BENEFIT-SHARING FUND:**

**Benefit-sharing Fund
of the
International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and
Agriculture**

1. INTRODUCTION

The *International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* (the Treaty) aims to promote and support the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA) and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their use, in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity.

To help realise these aims, and to support the direct implementation of plans and programmes for farmers in developing countries who conserve and sustainably use PGRFA, the Governing Body of the Treaty has established a Benefit-sharing Fund that operates at field level through projects targeting vulnerable and marginalized communities in developing countries. The Governing Body uses the financial resources in the Benefit-sharing Fund strategically, to play a catalytic role in international cooperation for the conservation and use of plant genetic resources in the face of climate change. It has agreed to give priority to the areas of:

1. Information exchange, technology transfer and capacity-building;
2. Managing and conserving plant genetic resources on farm,
3. The sustainable use of plant genetic resources;

2. RATIONALE AND GOAL

2.1. Rationale

For many developing countries climate change poses what is arguably the most serious threat to agriculture and is already resulting in less predictable harvests and the emergence of new pests and diseases. Such change undermines rural development, resulting in greater pressures on the most vulnerable farming communities - those that are least able to cope with extreme weather events such as floods or droughts, and by shifts in the timing and duration of growing seasons.

Plant genetic resources for food and agriculture underpin farmers' efforts to achieve sustainable food security. Managing and sustainably using plant genetic diversity is a vital option for farmers in developing countries in their efforts to adapt farming systems to climate change.

Climate change creates a need for new interaction between stakeholders and to bring technology and knowledge to a community and farm level where they can be enhanced. There is an urgent need to select, find and test genes well-ahead of the climate curve. The Benefit-sharing Fund can play a catalytic role in this regard.

2.2. Goal

The goal of this Fourth Call for Proposals (CFP4) is:

To enable that farmers around the world use and conserve adapted varieties leading to increased productivity and on-farm incomes, increased availability of nutrient-rich food, reduced adverse impacts to the environment, and enhanced resilience to production shocks.

And to ensure that:

Biodiversity for food security is safeguarded for the future.

To achieve this goal, partners will be funded to work together under a programmatic approach to establish linkages between projects and across Regions. This will maximize impact beyond individual projects and contribute to the scaling up and sustainability of funded interventions. It will also enable greater visibility of the Benefit-sharing Fund programme and of the Treaty. The established goal does not imply a broadening or modifying of the three agreed priorities of the Benefit-sharing Fund.

The CFP4 programme focuses on farmers, who are the ultimate beneficiaries of the conservation and sustainable utilization of PGRFA. Attention will be given to enhancing the policy environment and funding opportunities for Treaty implementation as well as to filling gaps along the seed-value-chain¹ and. The CFP4 programme will contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including its Target 2.5.

2.3. Funds available and type of projects to be funded

The amount of funding available for the Fourth Call for Proposals is expected to be at least US\$ 5 million.

The CFP4 programme will aim to support both multi-country projects and single-country projects, to maximize impact within Contracting Parties of the International Treaty. Funding will be provided to selected applicants within developing countries that are Contracting Parties to the Treaty. The CFP4 programme will fund interventions across all FAO Regions where there are developing countries within.

Applicants preparing single-country projects for consideration are requested to submit pre-proposals for funding up to 250 000 US\$ and those aiming to prepare multi-country projects are asked to submit pre-proposals for funding up to 450 000 US\$. The duration of all projects is expected to be between 18 months and 4 years.

2.4. Timeline and selection process

Overview of process

Applicants will be assessed by the independent Panel of Experts against selection criteria detailed in [Appendix 5](#), including, the experience and capacity of applicant organisations to contribute towards the CFP4 programme goal, outcomes and targets. Consideration will also be given to the

¹ Activities addressing the gaps and shortcomings in a given seed-value-chain would encompass areas such as in situ and on-farm conservation, seed production and distribution, or breeding.

particular strengths applicant organisations can bring to the CFP4 programme and the complementarity and diversity of partners.

Successful applicants will enter a full programme development and project design phase of approximately 3-4 months, during which time they will be required to further define and document their detailed activity designs and implementation plans in a full project proposal.

During this period applicants will be supported to produce a design document that details the objectives and scope of activities and further includes specific plans for monitoring and evaluation, gender, institutional and knowledge management and a sustainability and exit strategy.

Successful applicants will be resourced to participate in the full programme development and project design phase to develop their full proposal design products. The Treaty Secretariat, along with the Help Desk will produce project proposal templates, and provide technical assistance during the full programme development and project design phase.

Project designs will be primarily driven by in-country implementation partners and are expected to build on their existing relationships and activities. It is envisaged that further consultation with communities, government and other stakeholders will be undertaken throughout the full programme development and project design period. Particular attention is expected to be given to the inclusion of women farmers and vulnerable groups in the consultation process.

A partnership approach is anticipated throughout the full programme development and project design period. Successful applicants will be resourced to attend design workshops that will bring together selected partners to build and strengthen individual project designs, as well as the programme as a whole.

Overview of key dates

The indicative dates for the application process of the Fourth Call are:

1. *Pre-proposal phase*

- Submission of pre-proposals, through National Focal Points, Permanent Representatives or other official channels to FAO, received by the Secretariat of the Treaty.

Deadline: 1 March 2018

2. *Full programme development and project design*

- Invitations to submit full project proposals sent out to selected partners: **1 May 2018**
- Submission of full project proposals, through National Focal Points or Permanent Representatives to FAO received by the Secretariat of the Treaty: **1 July 2018**. In exceptional cases where there are no National Focal Points or Permanent Representatives to FAO, submissions may be made through those countries that represent the FAO. These submissions must also be received by the Secretariat of the Treaty by 1 July 2018.

3. *Final approval of funded projects within the CFP4 programme: 1 September 2018*

2.5. *Applicants*

Pre-proposals may be submitted by governmental or non-governmental organizations in Contracting Parties eligible to apply for support, as listed in [Appendix 2](#).

Any governmental or non-governmental organization, including farmers and farmers' organizations, genebanks and research institutions, as well as regional and international organizations, based in countries that are Contracting Parties to the International Treaty, may

apply for grants under the Benefit-sharing Fund. Applicants must meet the eligibility criteria established by the Governing Body² and found in [Appendix 2](#) of this Call for Proposals.

2.6. Submissions

All applications must be submitted through the recognized authorities of an eligible Contracting Party of the Treaty, i.e. through the National Focal Points or the Permanent Representatives to FAO. A list of National Focal Points and Permanent Representatives to FAO of eligible Contracting Parties is included in [Appendix 3](#).

All applications must be made using the Submission Form for pre-proposals in [Appendix 5](#). Pre-proposals may be submitted in any of the Treaty languages, plus, where necessary, a translation to a working language (English, French, Spanish), as stipulated by the Operational Procedures adopted by the Governing Body.

Applications must be sent by the national authorities of eligible Contracting Parties to the Secretariat of the Treaty at Treaty-Fund@fao.org or by fax (39) 0657056347.

2.7. Helpdesk

In order to facilitate the process of preparing pre-proposals and full proposals for funding from the Benefit-sharing Fund, the Secretariat of the Treaty has established a Helpdesk. Applicants are invited to contact the Helpdesk at Treaty-Fund@fao.org for further elaboration and explanation of the information contained in this document, or to seek answers to any other questions that they may have regarding the submission of pre-proposals or proposals. The Helpdesk will operate in English, French, Spanish and Arabic and may conduct workshops for partners invited to participate in the CFP4 programme and submit full proposals.

3. Overview of the CFP4 Programme

3.1. Introduction

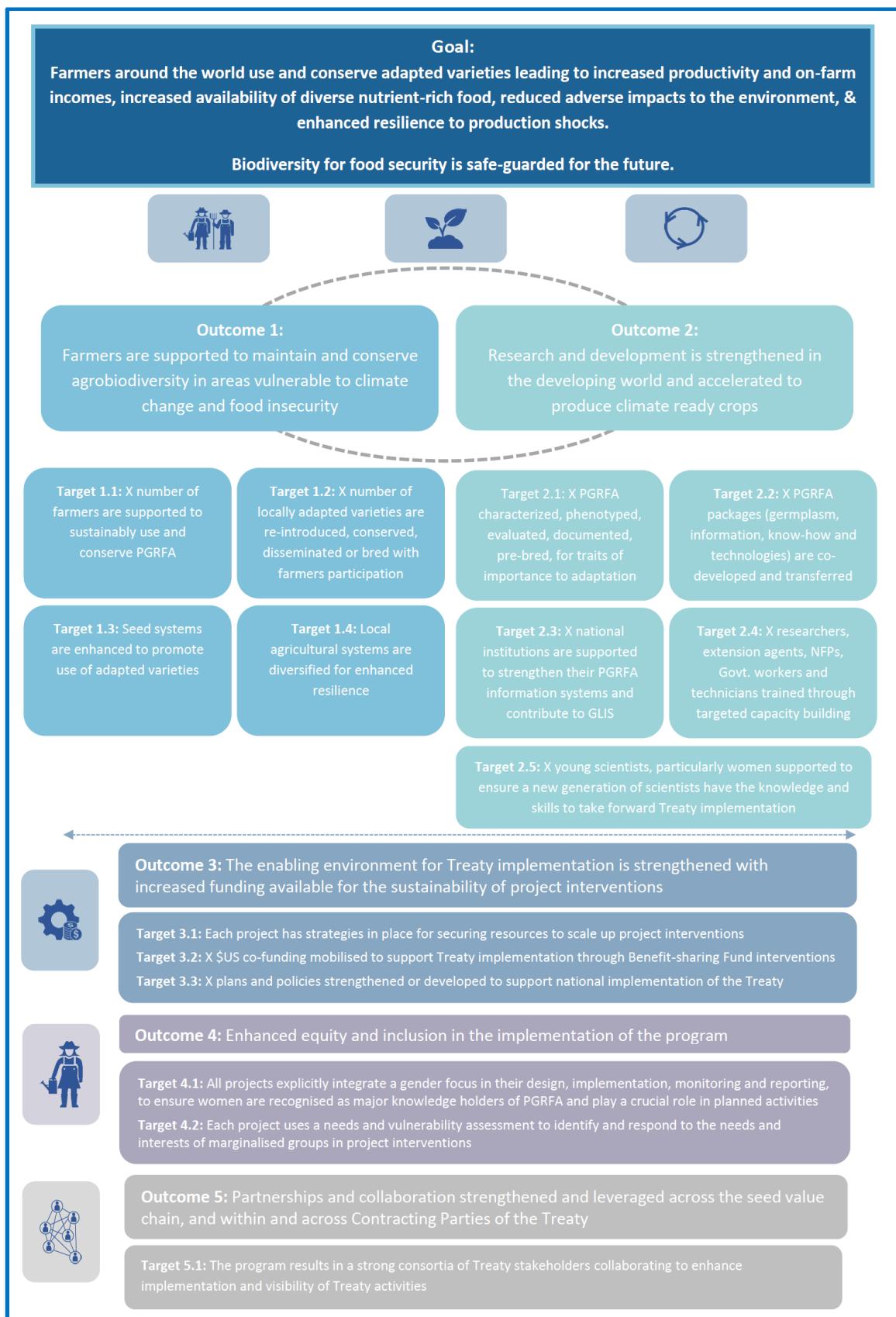
The CFP4 programme has five outcomes with corresponding targets under each. It is structured around two main outcomes (*Outcome 1* and *Outcome 2*) that are related to windows for funding of previous Call for Proposals - Window 2 and Window 3 respectively.³ Projects will focus on either Outcome 1 or Outcome 2, or address a combination of the targets of these main outcome areas. The CFP4 programme also contains a number of cross-cutting outcomes (*Outcomes 3-5*) to which all projects should contribute to. These cross-cutting outcomes are important to improve the sustainability, partnership approach, equity and inclusion and visibility of the CFP4 programme. These cross-cutting outcomes will enable the development of clear impact pathways to catalyse the widespread dissemination of results and bring about change within target communities, and also for indirect beneficiaries.

The Outcome Matrix below details the goal, outcomes and targets of the CFP4 programme. An explanatory guide to the matrix is provided in [Appendix 1](#) of the Call.

² IT/GB-2/07/Report, *Appendix D.2*.<http://www.fao.org/3/a-be160e.pdf>

³ Window 2: Immediate Action Projects
Window 3: The Co-development and Transfer of Technology

3.2. CFP4 Programme Outcome Matrix



3.3. CFP4 Programme beneficiaries

Managing and sustainably deploying plant genetic diversity is one of the key – and often one of the very few – options available to vulnerable farmers in their efforts to achieve food and nutrition security and make their farming systems resilient. Greatly increased attention and support are needed if farmers are to reap the full benefits of genetic diversity.

In many areas of the developing world, climate change is beginning to undermine rural development, resulting in greater pressures on the most vulnerable farmers and farming communities, those that are least able to cope with extreme weather events such as floods or droughts, and by shifts in the timing and duration of growing seasons. Farmers have also to cope with less predictable harvests and the emergence of new pests and diseases.

The programme will focus in particular in responding to the needs of the poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind, in order to contribute to the realization by Contracting Parties of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. The ultimate beneficiaries⁴ of projects supported through CFP-4 will be vulnerable local and indigenous communities and farmers in the target countries. The projects should also take into account and enhance the key role that women play in biodiversity management, farming and rural development in most parts of the developing world.

3.4 Programme support to the implementation of the International Treaty and other policies

All projects must comply with relevant national policy, legislation and regulations. The CFP4 programme will support the strengthening of national plans and programmes for the implementation of the International Treaty.

The CFP4 programme has been designed to support implementation of the Programme of Work on Sustainable Use, including in particular to support the wider use of diversity of varieties and species in on-farm management.⁵ Proposals are expected to focus on PGRFA listed in *Annex I* of the Treaty. Other plant genetic resources within the scope of the Treaty and that are significant for local food security and adaptation to climate change can be included if they are important for the development of diversification strategies.

All *Annex I* materials developed through projects funded by the Benefit-sharing Fund must be available to the Multilateral System through the use of the Standard Material Transfer Agreement.⁶ Information generated by the projects must be made publicly available within one year of project completion through the information system provided through Article 17 of the Treaty.⁷

Special attention will be paid to projects or project components that make existing material from the Multilateral System available to and used by potential users, especially farmers. Improving the capacities of users in the developing world to benefit from the Multilateral System will also necessitate strengthening the skills and know how on use characterization and evaluation information, including any phenotypic and genotypic data that is relevant to the Multilateral System.

⁴ [Article 13.3 of the Treaty](#) provides that benefits arising from the use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture that are shared under the Multilateral System should flow primarily, directly and indirectly, to farmers in all countries, especially in developing countries, and countries with economies in transition, who conserve and sustainably utilize plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

⁵ [Resolution 4/2015](#), para. 3

⁶ [Resolution 2/2013](#), para. 9

⁷ [Text of the Treaty](#)

The Benefit-sharing Fund should play a catalytic role in support of the implementation of the overall Treaty Funding Strategy. Projects funded should aim at establishing linkages between different funding sources and exploring collaborative planning and co-spending opportunities with other funding partners.

Projects funded will be encouraged to use, when appropriate, any relevant guidelines or other instruments developed by the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, as well as other relevant FAO protocols and standards, such as those for quality declared seed or plant material.

LIST OF APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1: EXPLANATORY GUIDE TO OUTCOME MATRIX

Notes: This Explanatory Guide to the CFP4 Outcome Matrix further elaborates the programme targets. It provides information on the indicative outputs that the CFP4 programme aims to achieve. The outputs described are those examples critical to the achievement of the overall CFP4 programme outcomes and goal. They are not an exhaustive list of outputs; others could be added, or further developed, by applicants in the development of their project proposals.

APPENDIX 2: ELIGIBILITY AND SCREENING CRITERIA FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS

Notes: The eligibility and screening criteria that will be used in the CFP4 will follow the Operational Procedures for the use of resources under the direct control of the Governing Body as adopted by the governing Body at its Fifth Session.

APPENDIX 3: LIST OF COUNTRIES ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR SUPPORT UNDER THE BENEFIT-SHARING FUND

Notes: The list has been elaborated based on the classification of economies of most the recent list of the World Bank. The list will be updated before the opening of the call.

APPENDIX 4: LIST OF NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES TO FAO OF ELIGIBLE CONTRACTING PARTIES

Notes: Contact information of National Focal Points and Permanent Representatives of eligible Contracting Parties will be provided to applicants. The information will be updated before the opening of the call.

APPENDIX 5: SUBMISSION FORM FOR PRE-PROPOSALS

Notes: [The Submission Form for Pre-proposals](#)

[Guidelines for Submission of Pre-proposals](#)