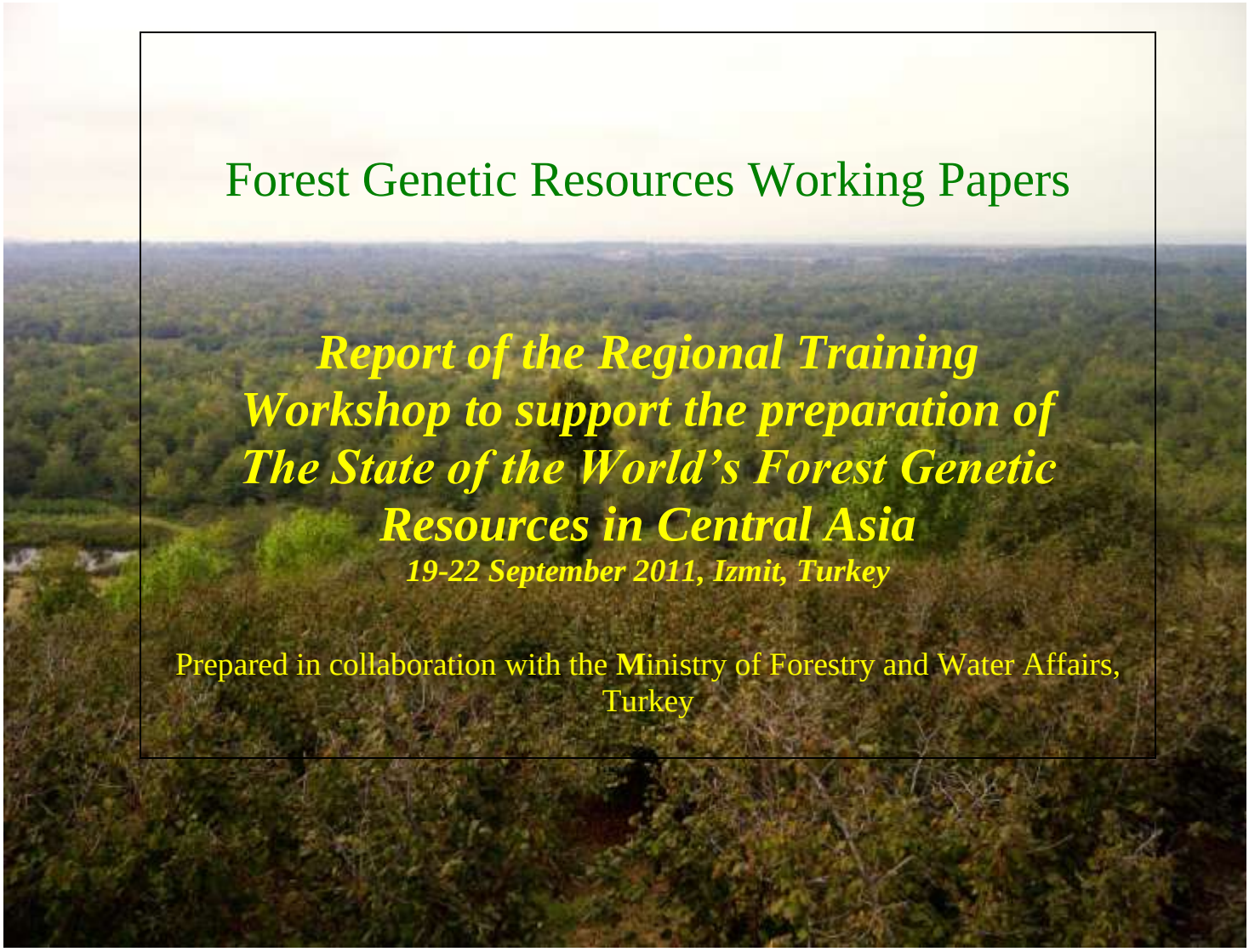
Forestry Department

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations



Forest Genetic Resources Working Papers

Report of the Regional Training Workshop to support the preparation of The State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources in Central Asia

19-22 September 2011, Izmit, Turkey

Prepared in collaboration with the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs, Turkey

Forest Assessment, Management and Conservation Division
Forestry Department

Working Document FGR/86E
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Summary

This report describes the proceedings of the regional workshop that was held to support the preparation of the *State of the world's forest genetic resources* (SOW-FGR). The workshop was attended by representatives from seven countries in central Asia and Eastern Europe: Russia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkey. The primary objective of the meeting was to insure that the guidelines produced are well understood and to train national focal points in preparing work plans for the production of national reports, which will then be collated to produce the global SOW-FGR report. The sessions in the workshop included provision of information on the process of preparing a report, examination of the guidelines for drawing up country reports, formulation of work plans for preparing these reports and discussion on the necessary means to support the process in the countries. After the group work, the focal points presented their work plans and thereafter received comments and suggestions for improvement

The meeting held from 19 to 22 September 2011 in Izmit, Turkey was organized by FAO in collaboration with Bioversity International and the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs of Turkey. The introductory section of this report describes the context of the meeting in relation to the forthcoming SOW-FGR document. Then the proceeding sections present the activities and outcomes of the three days of presentations, the activities of the working groups, the plenary discussions and the field trip.

The key issues addressed and the conclusions and resolutions of the meeting can be summarized as follows:

- Preparation of the country report for the SOW-FGR is an important exercise for national programmes and should be carried out in relation to other international programmes in the same field.
- It is important to make sure that country reports reflect the specific features of the countries and the region.
- A participatory approach is essential for report quality and also to ensure that the stakeholders assume ownership of its results and recommendations.
- The work plan should be adapted to the individual country's institutional structures, capacities and experience.
- Guidelines should be followed for to facilitate regional and global analysis and synthesis , but they should not be restrictive
- The report will be based on currently available information.
- The process will make use of existing expertise found at both the national and regional levels.
- Countries needing funding should make an effort to gather the necessary resources and contact potential source of funding including FAO to cover supplementary expenditure.
- The deadline for submission of country reports is the first week of January 2012
- The time left to complete the report is very short, nevertheless NFPs committed to do their best to meet the deadline.

Introduction

At its 11th session in June 2007, the Commission for Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) recognized the urgent need to conserve and ensure the sustainable use of Forest Genetic Resources (FGR) and requested that a *State of the world's forest genetic resources* (SOW-FGR) report be prepared and presented for examination at the commission's 14th session in 2013. The commission recommended that the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO) and FAO's regional forestry commissions be involved in preparation of this document.

At the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in May 2008, preparation of the report was welcomed. Then, FAO's regional forestry commissions were also informed about the project. At its 19th session in March 2009, COFO urged member countries to collaborate with FAO and its partner organizations in preparing the SOW-FGR.

In December 2008, FAO's Panel of Experts on Forest Gene Resources defined the scope and also proposed the structure of the report. It was agreed upon that the main source of data for the SOW-FGR will be country reports compiled with information available at the national level. National focal points will be responsible for overall coordination during the process. However, a number of thematic cross-sectoral studies should help to back up information in the country reports. In this regard, regional workshops were held in tropical countries in 2008 and 2009 to formulate proposals and recommendations. Consultations have also been held in Europe and North America.

At its 12th session in October 2009, the CGRFA endorsed the proposed plan and the tentative list of thematic studies. The commission stressed that preparation should be based primarily on the country reports, with support of thematic studies. It called for assistance and capacity building in developing countries for the preparation of country reports and appealed to FAO and donors to provide the necessary resources. The tenth meeting of the Conference of Parties to the CBD in October 2010 also invited donors to support preparation of the SOW-FGR.

The 12th session of the CGRFA set up the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on FGR (ITWG-FGR) that will review drafts of the SOW-FGR report. Intergovernmental working groups played major roles in preparing the first report on the *State of the world's animal genetic resources for food and agriculture* and the second report on the *State of the world's plant genetic resources for food and agriculture*.

Regional workshops to assist national focal points in preparing country reports for the SOW-FGR were organized for Latin America (in Colombia) in November 2010, the Pacific (in Fiji) in January 2011, Asia (in Malaysia) in March 2011, sub-Saharan Africa (in Kenya) in April 2011 and Near East and North Africa (in Tunisia) in June 2011. The present report is an account of the workshop organized for the Central Asia and Eastern Europe in September 2011 in Turkey.

Day 1: Monday, September 19, 2011

The opening session of the workshop started with introductory remarks from Erdoğan Sirin, Deputy Head of Department of Foreign Relations, Education and Research Department, Ministry of Forestry, Turkey. He welcomed the participants to Turkey and to the workshop. He then presented a detailed history of Turkey's efforts in conservation of Forest Genetic resources (FGR), including organisational structures of the forestry department, challenges and opportunities in FGR conservation.

Oudara Souvannavong, the Coordinator of the state of the World forest genetic resources report and Senior Forestry Officer, FAO addressed the participants next. Oudara explained the purpose of the meeting as to inform and guide the National Focal Points on the process of the report preparation. He mentioned that preparation of the SOWFGR report was priority of FAO forestry in the next five years. A brief note on the guidelines and their importance was given. In particular it was mentioned that the guidelines will allow information to be integrated into a common framework that will allow better comparative analysis and synthesis that will lead to regional and global conclusions. An outline of past series of regional and sub regional workshops was given, indicating that this was the last workshop of this type. Mr. Oudara was extremely appreciative to the Turkish government for organising the meeting despite the short notice and to major partner, Bioversity International, represented by Judy Loo for their commitment. He briefly indicated the importance of Bioversity as a scientific link to the reporting process and emphasised the significance of central Asian and eastern European countries in the process of preparing the SOWFGR report.

Judy Loo, Coordinator of Forest Genetic Resources at Bioversity International, followed putting emphasis to the mandate of Bioversity as CGIAR Centre in conserving FGR. She briefed the participants about the activities of Bioversity in conservation and sustainable use of FGR and their role in the SOWFGR report process; predominantly by coordinating the drafting of thematic studies. The urgency and timeliness of the SOWFGR report amidst the current various threats to forest genetic resources were pointed out. She stressed the importance of the SOWFRGR report and called upon the support of all the participating countries. She expressed her delight about all the progress regarding conservation of Forest genetic resources in Turkey.

Mr. Souvannavong described the 3 days programme and reiterated the objectives of the meeting. After the individual participants with their expectations had been introduced, the day's programme was followed, Albert Nikiema, Forestry Officer, FAO, proceeded to give a presentation.

The aim of Albert's presentation was to give background information and clarification on the entire reporting process. The specific objectives of the meeting were stated as:

- the provision of fuller information on the process of preparing the countries' reports on their FGR;
- explanation of the guidelines for preparing country reports and the provision of any necessary or useful clarification;
- development of a work plan and timetable for preparing national reports
- sharing of ideas, information and experience in the process of developing work plans;
- identification of potential sources of financial support

In his introductory remarks, Mr. Souvannavong underscored the importance of Forest genetic resources in sustainable forest management, poverty reduction and food security, justifying and reinstating the need for the SOW-FGR report. He then described the process behind the preparation of the SOW-FGR (as already outlined in the introduction of this report). He then elaborated the procedure of writing and submitting national reports, beginning with a brief review of the structure of the national reports provided in the guidelines.

The different chapters in the guidelines for compilation of country reports were highlighted; elaborating the expected information and its presentation during report writing. The outline of the chapters was presented as indicated on the FAO forestry website (http://www.fao.org/forestry/fgr/64585/en/). The following are the chapters in the guidelines for the country reports.

Chapter 1. The current state of forest genetic resources
Chapter 2. The state of *in situ* genetic conservation
Chapter 3. The state of *ex situ* genetic conservation
Chapter 4. The state of use and sustainable management of forest genetic resources
Chapter 5. The state of national programmes, research, education, training and legislation
Chapter 6. The state of regional and international collaboration
Chapter 7. Access to forest genetic resources and sharing of benefits arising from their use
Chapter 8. The contribution of forest genetic resources to food security, poverty alleviation and sustainable development.

It was emphasised that the presentation of data is preferred in the formats provided in the annexes of the guidelines. However, countries were allowed to include any data or descriptions they feel are important. It was also stressed that the primary input to the SOW-FGR will be Country Reports, with extra information provided by thematic studies and reports from international organisations. It was also pointed out that country reports should be based on existing information rather than new research.

After the clarification on the guidelines, Mr. Nikiema proceeded to clarify on the time frame and the mandatory steps required in the process of preparing for the SOWFGR national report writing. He reminded the participants that the time given to each of the steps has significance to the overall time needed to complete the report restating that the country reports should be completed by January 2012. The following were the major steps required in the process of data compilation and report writing.

- appointment of a national focal point (Completed in the representative countries);
- appointment of a national committee;
- establishment of working groups;
- holding of an information workshop to assist the various actors and stakeholders;
- gathering of information and drafting of the report;
- review by the stakeholders;
- Finalization of the report by the national committee.

Even if completed Country Reports will be due for submission to FAO by January 2012, Mr. Nikiema pointed out that late reports will also be accepted although late submission is not encouraged. After submission to FAO, Country Reports will be analysed and synthesised with thematic studies that are also due by January 2012. The resulting draft of the SOW-FGR produced in 2012 will be reviewed and presented to the CGRFA at its 14th session in 2013. In 2014 the report will be presented to COFO, the CBD and the United Nations Forum on Forests.

Mr. Nikiema acknowledged that the process of report preparation is difficult and may be such a huge challenge but he identified it as an opportunity for countries to understand the roles of FGR, defining countries' priorities, identifying shortcomings and needs for the formulation of national programmes, capacity building and developing networks.

Judy Loo then informed participants about the thematic studies; their back ground, scope, contributors and progress. She explained the rationale of the thematic studies, particularly mentioning that thematic studies will complement the country reports in compilation of the SOW-FGR. The role of Bioversity in the thematic studies was highlighted. The following were the topics of the thematic studies presented including progress of each.

- indicators of forest genetic diversity, erosion and vulnerability;
- understanding of the genetic diversity of tropical species in natural forests;
- new technologies and approaches to support conservation of FGR;
- use and transfer of FGR;
- role of FGR in adaptation to biotic and abiotic factors, with a focus on climate change;
- use of FGR in decentralized development with a view to boosting food security, reducing poverty and improving means of livelihood;
- effects of management practices on forest genetic diversity;
- use of native species in biodiversity restoration and management;
- trends in management of FGR by the private/corporate sector.

Thematic studies are not research studies but background papers to complement country reports
They were decided upon consultatively and volunteers will contribute to the writing.

After the presentation on thematic studies, Mr. Souvannavong chaired the more interactive session, giving participants time to ask questions or clarification about all the previous presentations. Here, he mentioned his anticipation that country reports will form the basis of national action plans for work on FGR besides contributing to the SOWFGR. He

emphasised the importance of developing the reports as a strategic exercise. Therefore information should be specific to FGR to adequately identify the needs and priorities for action in conservation and sustainable use of FGR.

Participants were also urged to refer to some existing reports on Forest genetic resources e.g. FGR reports www.fao.org/forestry/fgr/50371/en/), FAO's Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) 2010 (www.fao.org/forestry/fra/fra2010/en/), FAO's Panel of Experts on Forest Gene Resources reports, and the State of the World reports on animal and plant genetic resources. Other regional reports like the sub-Saharan Africa Forest Genetic Resources Programme (SAFORGEN), EUFORGEN for Europe were deemed very useful.

Mr. Nikiema and Mr. Oudara perused though the guidelines once more for much more clarity to the participants and to stimulate discussions and questions. Various clarifications were sought for specific chapters of the guidelines. These included; the species and ecosystems to include, which threats, which sources of information, the size of the report, among others. It was restated that:

- A common framework- provided in the annex should be used in data presentation. The framework is crucial to facilitate regional and global synthesis
- All important stakeholders should be included
- All data, species and ecosystems important to the country should be captured
- Gaps and needs should be identified in the process
- Review of the report by the stakeholders is important for report ownership
- The reports should be prepared with available information
- Refer to FRA (2010) for consistency of some definitions like a primary forest.
- Any useful descriptions can be added to the report

Day 2: Tuesday September 20th 2011

Mr. Souvannavong welcomed the participants and introduced the days programme. He called for more questions about the guidelines to insure that the necessary clarifications are given during the workshop. He then gave the floor to NFPs who have presentations to make:

Mr. Murat informed participants on the progress of Forest genetic conservation in Turkey, revealing the high forest biodiversity in Turkey. He reported on the progress of Turkey's country report for the compilation of the SOWFGR report highlighting the opportunities and challenges. Mr. Murat confirmed that they have completed the first three chapters of the report and are in the process of completing the rest of the chapters. ` The participants were interested in Turkey's practical experience in the preparation of the report especially the financial support, time and organisational issues e.g. procedure of forming a committee and how to involve all stake holders. Mr. Murat shared his experience on all these issues.

Natalia Demidova from Russia acquainted the participants with the Northern Research Institute in relation to conservation of Forest genetic resources, referring participants to their website http://www.sevin.ru/rusgenres/documents. She also presented findings pertaining to the SOWFGR report. Participants were curious to get Natalie's experiences in the report-

writing process; especially the constraints. In Russia, information availability was the major constraint.

Ihor Neyko from Ukraine on the status of forest resources in Ukraine citing lack of public interest, lack of information and poor government institutions as major constraints in FGR management. He also presented the progress with the report-writing.

Khodjimurat Talipov also gave his presentation about Uzebekistan in line with the guidelines of the SOWFGR report. He mentioned the ongoing collaboration with Turkey on *Pinus sylvestris* clonal test and plantations.

Overall, the challenges to FGR management included desertification, pollution, climate change, attack by insects and disease, forest fires, urbanization, lack of information on forest species and many other issues that should be taken into account when designing conservation strategies for the world's FGR.

After the presentations Ms. Loo went through the steps presented earlier by Mr. Nikiema giving highlights on each of the steps arguing each of the country representatives to fit it in their own situations for efficiency of data collection and time management. This was then discussed in the group work that followed.

Sharing experiences, discussion of opportunities, constraints and development of work plans for the preparation of country reports

Mr. Nikiema who facilitated group formation, reminded each of the participants to first review the guidelines, list their specific needs, the progress, and specific constraints. Thereafter, each group was expected to fit all the mentioned dimensions into a common framework. Two groups were formed, each supported by a resource person: an English speaking group comprising Turkey, Russia, Ukraine – with Judy as resource person and the Russian speaking group comprising Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan with Albert Nikiema (FAO) and Kiyal Guzel as translator. Each group drafted and presented a work plan and a summary of conclusions.

Day 3: Wednesday September 21st 2011

The draft work plans were presented in plenary session by representatives of the two working groups:

Group 1: Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan

Ekaterina Ebel from Kazakhstan presented for the first group. The following were mentioned as the major concerns and interest by the group

1) Need to financially support the report writing process in the countries
2) Need for technical support in some countries. Mobilising regional and or national experts will be essential for the quality of the report.
3) Including a regional dimension to the reporting process for the Central Asia countries will be an important contribution in improving the national forestry programmes in the region. The common pass history of most of these countries and the ecological

similarities are favourable factors. It was then suggested that regional workshop after completion of national report will be an opportunity to share information and discuss possible regional plan of action.

4) The issue of Benefit sharing in chapter 7 of the guidelines was raised for clarification.

Group 2 Turkey, Russia, Ukraine

Judy Loo presented for the second group. She presented country specific information collated in the discussions.

Russia

1. The state agency has declared support to the process of report writing
2. The NFP for Russia feels there is not sufficient time to form a national committee.
3. Data will be collected from different institutions
4. There is already an existing council that can be involved in reviewing the report
5. This council will be notified as soon as possible about the report progress and the need for its involvement in supporting the data collection and review of the report
6. The NFP intend to involve young scientists in the institute to compile data.
7. The first draft report may be submitted by December 1st and the final report submitted to FAO in January

Turkey

1. Working groups already exist in Turkey
2. They have completed the first four chapters of the report including the Introduction and are working on the rest of the chapters.
3. The government of Turkey agreed to fund the activities

Ukraine

1. The different experts needed for this report are in different institutions, hence there is a critical need for a workshop to bring together all these experts
2. Financing of the report in the country is absent, it is necessary to allocate financing support for working meetings.
3. Time is very limited for financial sourcing in other funding agencies
4. Because of time constraints, forming National committees will be difficult therefore not a good option.

In summary,

- The participants as a whole endorsed the steps proposed in the guidelines for drawing up reports in the various countries.
- The work plans will be adjusted to make them appropriate to the individual country's institutional structures, capacities and experience but bearing in mind the deadline of January 2012
- It was agreed on that time and money are a major constraint
- They recommended for financial support if possible especially for Ukraine where stakeholder are in different government departments

Mr. Nikiema and Judy Loo complimented the working groups on what they had achieved and on the complementarity of their plans of action. Nikiema recognized present difficulties over raising finance and reaffirmed the readiness of the FAO team to support countries in their search for the necessary funding. The National Focal Points then agreed that the possibilities of approaching FAO regional office to explore possibilities for TCP facility funds with the support of their governments. Search for funding needed to carry out the project should be broadened to other sources.

Field Visit

Field trips were organised during the second half of the day on the 21st and the entire day of 22nd. The first field trip started with a courtesy visit to the Adapazan Regional Forest Directorate. Mr Hasan Turkyilmaz welcomed all the workshop participants in this region and encouraged them to discover through the visit the important forest resources of the region. The participants were then guided by technicians from the region to visit "bottomland ash forest" in Adapazan where plantations and natural forest covering about 3000 ha are managed.

During the second field trip the participants visited clonal seed orchards of different pine species and other seed sources. Participants asked many questions to understand the breeding system used and the quality of seeds obtained. Murat mentioned during this visit that some of the clones have been tested and promoted in Azerbaijan in collaboration with the forestry service because of their high performance in adaptation and growth.



Conclusion and next steps

During the concluding session the participants were invited to comment on the workshop and make suggestions for the steps needed to complete the National Report.

All National Focal Points and other participants gave individual final comments:

- Expressing their commitment to lead the process in their country and to make possible efforts to meet the deadline for submitting the report.
- Calling for future regional collaboration in forest genetic resources conservation efforts.
- Expressing the need for urgent financial support for in some countries
- Expressing their gratitude to the government of Turkey and FAO for the successful organisation of the workshop.

Mr. Nikiema thanked the participants for their efforts during the workshop. He reminded the participants that they should as soon as possible finalise work plan, identify potential synergy/assistance in the country and seek assistance of FAO country or regional Office and should initiate or continue activities for the preparation of country reports for the SOW-FGR.

He then summarised the important steps towards the completion of the national reports as a results of the discussions during the workshop:

- The development of Country Reports is a national exercise and will help design more effective national resource management plans
- Guidelines should be followed for a systematic analysis and comparison, to facilitate regional and global analysis and synthesis but not restrictive.
- It is important to use a participatory approach to provide depth and breadth in the information presented in Country Reports
- Work plans for preparing Country Reports need to be adapted to a country-specific setting
- Country Reports should be based on existing knowledge; gaps will indicate areas for further work
- Information should be specific to FGR, to adequately identify the needs and priorities for action in conservation and sustainable use of FGR.
- Country Reports should make use of available expertise at National and regional level.
- The time frame for the delivery of Country Reports is the end of January 2012

The workshop closed with a re-invitation to all the participants to start the process immediately they return to their home countries given that there is little time left for the entire process.

Annex 1: Program of workshop

REGIONAL TRAINING WORKSHOP TO SUPPORT THE PREPARATION OF THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES IN CENTRAL ASIA AND EASTERN EUROPE

IZMIT, Turkey, 19-22 September 2011

Monday	**19 September**
8.30 – 9.00	Registration
9.00 – 9.30	Opening - Programme and Objective of the Workshop
9.30 – 10.30	Plenary session on the Update on SOW-FGR preparation process including preparation of country reports and thematic studies, clarifications
10.30 – 11.00	Coffee break
11.00 – 12.30	Plenary session on the Update on SOW-FGR preparation process including preparation of country reports and thematic studies, clarifications. (Cont.)
12.30 – 14.00	Lunch
14.00 – 16.00	Plenary session on the Presentation of drafts country reports and problems/constraints encountered in their preparation. Discussion.
16.00 – 16.30	Coffee break
16.30 – 18.00	Plenary session on the Presentation of drafts country reports and problems/constraints encountered in their preparation. Discussion. (Cont.)
Tuesday	**20 September**
8.30 – 18.00	Working groups focus on country reports with the support of resource persons.
Coffee breaks from 10.30 to 11.00 and from 16.00 to 16.30	
Lunch break from 12.30 to 14.00	
14.00 – 18.00	Working groups focus on country reports with the support of resource persons.
Wednesday	**21 September**
8.30 – 10.30	Presentation of results of working group sessions (status of preparation of country reports and plans for their completion).

10.30 – 11.00	Coffee break
11.00 – 12.30	Plenary session: Conclusion, follow-up and next steps
12.30 – 14.00	Lunch
14.00 – 18.00	Field Trip
Thursday	**22 September**
Field Trip	

Annex 2: List of Participants

REGIONAL WORKSHOP TO SUPPORT THE PREPARATION OF THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES CENTRAL ASIA
Izmit 19-22 September 2011

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