

ITPGRFA GB 11 Highlights: Friday, 28 November 2025

In plenary, text-based negotiations ensued throughout the day and in the evening. Delegates engaged in the review of draft resolutions on the Treaty's capacity-development strategy and action plan, cooperation with other international instruments and processes, the Global Information System (GLIS), and the Funding Strategy, among other items. Deliberations on farmers' rights continued in a contact group and in various informal settings. Consultations also continued on conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA).

In the morning, Alwin Kopše (Switzerland), Chair of the 11th session of the Governing Body (GB 11), reported that consultations on the enhancement of the Multilateral System (MLS) of access and benefit-sharing (ABS) of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) are ongoing but have not reached consensus yet.

Plenary

Capacity-Development Strategy and Action Plan: Delegates addressed a draft resolution. On a paragraph stating that the strategy seeks to enhance functional and technical capacities for implementation of all parts of the Treaty, including conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA, farmers' rights, the MLS, GLIS, and other supporting components, delegates held a lengthy debate on a proposal by JAPAN to exclude Category 10 (legal measures for implementing farmers' rights) of the "Options for encouraging, guiding, and promoting the realization of farmers' rights." Delegates noted that the reference to Category 10 is confusing and does not relate to the main parts of the Treaty listed. JAPAN proposed, as an alternative, to exclude intellectual property from the scope of the strategy. NORWAY, SOUTH AFRICA, ARGENTINA, CZECHIA, PAPUA NEW GUINEA, and CHILE opposed. Following a proposal by Chair Kopše, plenary agreed to replace the list of the titles of the main parts of the Treaty with references to Articles 5, 6, 9, 10-13, and 17. JAPAN requested stating that category 10 of the "Options" is excluded from the scope of the capacity-development strategy.

The debate was repeated in the context of a footnote outlining a list of topics that national action plans may address, which included a reference to the "Options." JAPAN proposed excluding specifically Category 10 or intellectual property. Delegates, including the US, TOGO, ARGENTINA, CZECHIA, and CHILE, questioned the proposal, pointing to, among others, States'

sovereign right to develop national plans as they wish. Following a proposal by Chair Kopše, the footnote was deleted.

On guiding principles, delegates debated a reference to a multi-stakeholder and "gender- and youth-responsive" approach. SWITZERLAND suggested retaining the reference, while the US preferred deleting it or replacing it with a reference to "women and youth," which was agreed. A reference to the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in a list of relevant frameworks remains bracketed, as requested by the US and ARGENTINA, pending discussions in an informal group on references to SDGs across draft resolutions.

On the draft action plan, plenary agreed to engage the Standing Committee on the Funding Strategy in the development of indicators to monitor implementation of the strategy, rather than establish an informal group of experts. Delegates also decided to invite the Secretariat to coordinate with the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) on relevant capacity-development initiatives "as appropriate," following a suggestion by ARGENTINA. The resolution was approved as amended.

GLIS: Plenary resumed addressing a draft resolution. On the improvement of national databases, delegates agreed, after extensive deliberations, to request the Secretariat to promote capacity-development, and technology transfer upon mutually agreed terms, and the mobilization of financial resources from all sources.

The US reported that, following informal consultations, agreement was reached to "take note of the developments in relevant international fora related to digital sequence information/genetic sequence data (DSI/GSD)." Delegates further agreed to request the Scientific Advisory Committee to advise on closer cooperation between GLIS and the World Information and Early Warning System on PGRFA, removing a request for "interoperation or merging," following a suggestion by URUGUAY. The resolution was approved as amended.

Contribution of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO): Delegates continued addressing the draft resolution. They agreed to encourage FAO to continue identifying and pursuing cooperation between the Benefit-sharing Fund (BSF) and other multilateral funding mechanisms such as the Global Environment Facility, the Small Grants Programme, the Green Climate Fund, and the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund; and approved the resolution as amended.

Cooperation with the CGRFA: Delegates continued their deliberations on the draft resolution, focusing on a paragraph requesting the Secretariat to continue collaboration with the

CGRFA Secretariat, including on a desk study on the effects of seed policies, laws, and regulations on farmers' ability to access seeds. Following informal consultations and debate in plenary, they agreed on language acknowledging respect for Parties' national sovereignty and recalling the ITPGRFA objectives. With this and other minor changes, delegates approved the draft resolution.

Cooperation with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD): Delegates addressed a draft resolution. On a paragraph requesting the Secretariat to follow developments on the CBD multilateral benefit-sharing mechanism from DSI use (MLM), BRAZIL proposed adding language requesting the Secretariat to follow developments on DSI/GSD within the CBD and its Nagoya Protocol, and to collaborate with the CBD Secretariat on these issues to promote coherence and mutual supportiveness. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA and CANADA opposed, and the proposal was bracketed.

Regarding a paragraph calling to the GB to take note of the CBD work programme on Article 8(j) on Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs), JAPAN proposed additional language emphasizing cooperation between the Secretariats while respecting Parties' sovereignty and recalling the Treaty's objectives, which was accepted. A lengthy debate ensued on the IPLC terminology and whether a comma should be used to separate "Indigenous Peoples" from "local communities." SWEDEN, the US, EGYPT, and CANADA supported using a comma, while BRAZIL, the REPUBLIC OF KOREA, and COLOMBIA opposed, calling for consistency with CBD practice. Chair Kopše noted the contact group on farmers' rights may address the issue.

Implementation and Operations of the MLS: Delegates addressed outstanding issues in the draft resolution. Diverse views persisted among delegates on a request to the Secretariat to include additional types of information on the MLS data store and reporting tools. The US suggested that "any disclosure pertaining to this data collection must be done in line with the terms of use of the current information technology system on collection and use of information." MOROCCO reiterated their proposal concerning reporting on the providers and recipients under the Standard Material Transfer Agreements (SMTAs) and the PGRFA accessions shared. In an attempt to move forward, MOROCCO proposed alternative text regarding keeping SMTAs available for the Third Party Beneficiary; informing the GB where they are stored and how they can be obtained; and supplying basic information, including the SMTA reference number, provider and recipient data, date of acceptance, and identification of accession number. The US opposed, and the issue remained unresolved, pending informal consultations.

Implementation of the Funding Strategy: Delegates addressed a draft resolution. On resource mobilization for the BSF, Chair Kopše proposed setting a tentative target range of 6-8 million USD to assist future deliberations, based on regions' proposals during the 11th meeting of the Standing Committee on the Funding Strategy. BRAZIL proposed including an alternative target range of 8-12 million USD. URUGUAY suggested adding that the figure is based on the current number of accessions available in the MLS. Both proposals were kept in brackets.

A suggestion by BRAZIL to recognize that the implementation of the enhanced MLS is expected to lead to a significant increase in user-based income to the BSF remained in brackets, pending the

outcome of the negotiations on the enhancement of the MLS. The US proposed, and delegates agreed to, delete a paragraph noting that the BSF received no voluntary contributions from the private sector in the 2024-2025 biennium.

Delegates agreed that future summary reports will be on the "results and outputs" of projects supported by the BSF, rather than their "impact," following a suggestion by URUGUAY.

Cooperation with Other Bodies and Organizations: Delegates resumed consideration of the draft resolution. They engaged in a lengthy discussion on a paragraph welcoming the community of practice of National Genebanks of Latin America and the Caribbean and inviting Parties to recognize and support it. The US suggested deleting references to: "equitable" access to genomic tools and DSI/GSD; resilience to climate change; and ensuring fair and inclusive participation in global benefit-sharing mechanisms. URUGUAY offered a streamlined version of the provision. TOGO proposed broadening it, requesting the Secretariat to facilitate technical exchanges, mobilization of resources, and coordination of activities conducted within the framework of communities of practice. The paragraph remained in brackets, following a request by the US.

On a request to the Secretariat to continue fostering cooperation with international organizations and others, delegates agreed to add references to "respecting Parties' sovereignty" and recalling the Treaty's objectives, following a suggestion by JAPAN.

Article 15 Institutions: Delegates approved the draft resolution with minor changes, to be integrated in the resolution on cooperation with other bodies and organizations.

DSI/GSD: Delegates addressed a draft resolution. They agreed to take note of CBD Decision 16/2 (DSI on genetic resources), state that it does not affect the rights and obligations of ITPGRFA Parties, and delete text on state sovereignty over PGRFA in the MLS.

Plenary also agreed to delete a request to the Secretariat to make an inventory of national ABS measures related to DSI/GSD and a request to Parties to provide information on, among others, activities to promote technology transfer, training and capacity-development, and scientific cooperation. A paragraph encouraging CBD Parties to take into account the relevant ITPGRFA provisions in implementing the MLM was kept in brackets.

In The Corridors

With the end of the meeting rapidly approaching, delegates worked hard to clean draft resolutions for adoption. In the meantime, with no report coming out of the closed-door consultations, observers wondered on the state of negotiations on the enhancement of the MLS. "There will be no outcome," some predicted, noting that positions on benefit-sharing from DSI/GSD are impossible to bridge; others pointed to small interregional groups working on the payment structure and rates, highlighting a real possibility for a limited but effective reform. The GB has one more day to reach agreement on the remaining draft resolutions, including on farmers' rights, conservation and sustainable use, and the budget, as well as adopt a revised SMTA, a draft resolution on the enhancement of the MLS, and possibly a Treaty amendment.

The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* summary and analysis of GB 11 will be available on Tuesday, 2 December 2025 at enb.iisd.org/plant-genetic-resources-food-agriculture-itpgrfa-gb11