



## SUMMARY OF THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE INTERNATIONAL TREATY ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE: 5-9 OCTOBER 2015

The sixth session of the Governing Body (GB) of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) convened from 5-9 October 2015, at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN, in Rome, Italy. Approximately 450 participants from parties and other governments, international, non-governmental and farmers' organizations, international agricultural research centers (IARCs) and industry attended the session, which was preceded by two events held on Saturday, 3 October: an information event on the outcomes of the *Ad hoc* Open-ended Working Group to Enhance the Functioning of the Multilateral System (MLS) of Access and Benefit-sharing (ABS) during the biennium; and a special event on farmers' rights under the ITPGRFA, to share experiences and discuss future actions to strengthen implementation. A summary of these events is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol09/enb09651e.html>.

The meeting adopted 13 resolutions on a series of substantive, cooperation-related and administrative items. Deliberations revolved around two main themes: addressing the shortfall in the Benefit-sharing Fund (BSF), through a review of the Funding Strategy, an exploration of short-term measures and a continued intersessional effort aiming to enhance user-based payments through a subscription system for access to the MLS; and strengthening implementation of Treaty provisions with regard to conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA) on-farm, through the work programme on sustainable use and farmers' rights. Issues related to the management of PGRFA-related information and data systems, and the Treaty's role in this regard were also among the meeting highlights, as the GB adopted a work programme for the Global Information System (GLIS), aiming to respond to challenges ahead.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ITPGRFA

Concluded under the auspices of the FAO, the ITPGRFA is a legally-binding instrument that targets the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of their use, in harmony with the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), for sustainable agriculture and food security. The Treaty contains sections on general provisions, farmers' rights, supporting components, and financial and institutional provisions. It establishes an MLS for facilitated access to a specified list of PGRFA including 35 crop genera and 29 forage species (Annex I), balanced by benefit-sharing in the areas of information exchange, technology transfer, capacity building and commercial development.

The Treaty was adopted on 3 November 2001 by the FAO Conference, following seven years of negotiations. It entered into force on 29 June 2004, and currently has 136 parties.

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**ITPGRFA INTERIM COMMITTEE:** From 2002-2006, the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA), acting as the ITPGRFA Interim Committee, set the terms of reference (ToRs) for intersessional consideration of the rules of procedure and financial rules for the GB, procedures for compliance, and the terms of the standard material transfer agreement (SMTA). An open-ended intersessional working group revised the rules of procedure and financial rules of the GB, and the funding strategy, and prepared a draft resolution on compliance for GB 1 consideration. An expert group on the SMTA considered options for the SMTA terms and draft structure, and recommended establishment of an intersessional contact group that developed the basic structure and specific elements of the SMTA, for GB 1 consideration.

**GB 1:** The first session of the ITPGRFA GB (June 2006, Madrid, Spain) adopted the SMTA and the Funding Strategy. The SMTA includes provisions on a benefit-sharing scheme, according to which the recipient shall pay 1.1% of gross sales in case of commercialization of new products incorporating material accessed from the MLS, if its availability to others is restricted; and an alternative formula whereby recipients pay 0.5% of gross sales on all PGRFA products of the species they accessed from the MLS, regardless of whether the products incorporate the material accessed and regardless of whether the new products are available without restriction. The GB further adopted: its rules of procedure, including decision making by consensus; financial rules with bracketed options on an indicative scale of voluntary contributions or voluntary contributions in general; a resolution establishing a Compliance Committee; the relationship agreement with the Global Crop Diversity Trust; and a model agreement with the IARCs of the CGIAR Consortium and other international institutions.

**GB 2:** The second session of the GB (October-November 2007, Rome, Italy) addressed a series of items, including implementation of the Funding Strategy, the material transfer agreement for non-Annex I crops, cooperation with the CGRFA, and sustainable use of PGRFA. Following challenging budget negotiations, the meeting adopted the work programme and budget for 2008-09. It also adopted a resolution on farmers' rights, as well as a joint statement of intent for cooperation with the CGRFA.

**GB 3:** The third session of the GB (June 2009, Tunis, Tunisia) agreed to: a set of outcomes for implementation of the Funding Strategy, including a financial target of US\$116 million for the period July 2009 - December 2014; a resolution on implementation of the MLS, including setting up an intersessional advisory committee on implementation issues; procedures for the Third Party Beneficiary; and a resolution on farmers' rights. The meeting also adopted the work programme and budget for 2010-11; agreed to finalize the outstanding financial rules at GB 4; and established intersessional processes to finalize compliance procedures by GB 4 and review the SMTA.

**GB 4:** The fourth session of the GB (March 2011, Bali, Indonesia) adopted procedures and mechanisms on compliance, and reached consensus on the long-standing item of the financial rules of the GB. It also adopted a work programme and budget for the 2012-2013 biennium, including a moderate budget

increase, and resolutions on a number of items, including farmers' rights, sustainable use, and implementation of the Funding Strategy. The GB also outlined the intersessional process, including meetings of the Compliance Committee and *ad hoc* committees on MLS implementation, the Funding Strategy and sustainable use.

**GB 5:** The fifth session of the GB (September 2013, Muscat, Oman) established an *Ad hoc* Intersessional Working Group to Enhance the Functioning of the MLS, with the mandate to develop measures to increase user-based payments and contributions to the BSF, as a priority, as well as additional measures to enhance the functioning of the MLS. GB 5 also adopted a resolution on implementation of the Funding Strategy, containing a list of innovative approaches to increase voluntary contributions to the BSF; a work programme on sustainable use; a resolution on farmers' rights; and a finalized set of rules of procedure and a voluntary reporting format to support compliance.

The *Ad hoc* Open-ended Working Group to Enhance the Functioning of the MLS met four times during the last biennium, in May 2014, December 2014, June 2015 and October 2015, immediately before GB 6. It made a series of recommendations to GB 6, including elaboration of a subscription system for user-based payments to the MLS and revision of the SMTA.

## ITPGRFA GB 6 REPORT

On Monday, 5 October, Shakeel Bhatti, ITPGRFA Secretary, introduced a video on the GLIS, including interviews with farmers and scientists from the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI).

Via a video message, FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva stressed: that FAO's custodian role should go beyond safeguarding crop genetic material to include also related digital information; the importance of the Treaty in bringing together farmers and scientists; and the need to enhance the MLS and the GLIS to face future challenges.

Ahmed Nasser Al-Bakry, Vice Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, Oman, provided an overview of efforts during GB 5 and intersessional progress on enhancing the MLS, sustainable use of PGRFA, and farmers' rights.

Via a video message, Braulio Dias, CBD Executive Secretary, stressed the relationship between the Treaty and the CBD and its Nagoya Protocol on ABS, which entered into force in October 2014. He underlined the importance of implementing both agreements in a mutually supportive manner; and highlighted that joint interests of the CBD and the Treaty extend to broader aspects of PGRFA, including crop wild relatives and forestry.

Michael Keller, Secretary General, International Seed Federation (ISF), called for recognition of the seed sector's commitment and in-kind contribution to the Treaty, and noted the need for a more user-friendly system, and for extending Annex I to cover all PGRFA.

Alejandro Argumedo, ANDES Potato Park, Peru, stressed the contribution of local and indigenous farmers to conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA, and to the development of local responses to change. He highlighted the recent deposit by the Potato Park, along with partners, of germplasm of local potato varieties in the Svalbard Global Seed Vault.

Garlich Von Essen, Secretary General, European Seed Association (ESA), highlighted gaps in the material included in the MLS and the BSF's lack of income as main challenges, and anticipated a contribution to the Treaty of €300,000 to be made at the ESA annual meeting.

CGIAR Chief Executive Officer Frank Rijsberman outlined achievements of the Global Crop Diversity Trust and the process of developing "scuba rice," a new extreme flood-tolerant rice variety.

Robert Zeigler, IRRI Director General, highlighted efforts on the creation of varieties to address local needs, information sharing, and co-development and sharing of technologies, including on PGRFA conservation and sustainable use, landscape management, and market and policy analysis.

**STATEMENTS:** Ireland, for the European Regional Group (ERG), reconfirmed willingness to work for the success of the session. Iran, for the Group of 77 and China (G-77/China), stressed the need to: overcome the structural challenges preventing the MLS from achieving its objectives; share the responsibility for PGRFA conservation fairly and achieve targets for monetary support of developing countries; and give equal attention to *ex situ*, *in situ*, and on-farm conservation, by shifting towards greater support for farmers and smallholders.

Australia, for the Southwest Pacific, said benefit-sharing shortfalls are due to the time lag between accession and commercialization, noting that parties contribute voluntarily to compensate. The Philippines, for Asia, and Mauritius, for Africa, supported exploring the subscription system, and urged enhancing benefit-sharing. Asia also called for practical tools for *in situ* and on-farm conservation, whereas Africa urged recognizing farmers' role in facing climate change. Lebanon, for the Near East, called for facilitated access to technologies and enhanced delivery of resources to developing countries through benefit-sharing.

La Via Campesina expressed concern about the slow progress in benefit-sharing, noting that farmers feel excluded from research and initiatives to enhance the MLS. The ETC Group said GB 6 must resolve a crisis that involves parties that do not yet share their PGRFA, users that do not share benefits, and industry that shares neither PGRFA nor benefits.

**REPORTS:** On Monday, GB 6 Chair Matthew Worrell (Australia) reported on activities and major developments affecting the Treaty since GB 5 (IT/GB-6/15/4). He noted ratifications from the Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Serbia, Tonga, Swaziland and Iraq in the past biennium, and focused on partnerships and collaborations with other international processes.

Secretary Bhatti presented his report (IT/GB-6/15/5), highlighting the Treaty's role as the internationally agreed framework for ABS for cultivated plants in relation to targets 2.5 (maintaining the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and domesticated animals) and 15.6 (promoting fair and equitable benefit-sharing from and appropriate access to genetic resources) under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He identified challenges for the Treaty regarding the "dematerialization" of genetic resources, BSF financing, and the Treaty's place vis-à-vis the Nagoya Protocol, as well as advances regarding farmers' rights.

Indonesia reported on the third meeting of the Platform for the Co-Development and Transfer of Technologies (IT/GB-6/15/Inf.10); and Oman on the recent meetings of the High-Level Round Table and the High-Level Task Force on Resource Mobilization.

**ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS:** On Monday, plenary adopted the meeting's agenda and timetable (IT/GB-6/15/1 and 2); elected Nestor Altoveros (the Philippines) as Rapporteur; and established a credentials committee and a budget committee.

On Thursday, plenary elected the GB 7 Bureau: Francis Leku Azenaku (Cameroon) for Africa; Bell Batta Torheim (Norway) for ERG; Javad Mozafari (Iran) for the Near East; Michael Ryan (Australia) for the Southwest Pacific; Felicitas Katempa-Mupondwa (Canada) for North America; Antonio Ricarte (Brazil), for the Latin America and the Caribbean; and Muhamad Sabran (Indonesia) for Asia. Muhamad Sabran was also elected as GB 7 Chair.

### MULTILATERAL SYSTEM

This issue was discussed in plenary on Monday and Thursday, with further discussions occurring in a contact group, which met from Monday to Wednesday. Plenary adopted a resolution on Thursday.

On Monday, plenary considered relevant documents, including the report of the intersessional Working Group (IT/GB-6/15/6 Add.1 and Rev.1, IT/GB-6/15/8, 9, 10, 20 and Inf.13). Intersessional Working Group Co-Chairs Modesto Fernández (Cuba) and Bert Visser (the Netherlands) highlighted progress towards developing a subscription system, including agreed elements and major issues for further work.

All regions supported convening a contact group to develop the Working Group's future mandate. Africa, the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC), the Near East, and Asia said the Working Group should focus on elaborating the subscription system, stressing they will discuss an expansion of Annex I only once user-based payments have increased.

Australia and Canada said the Working Group should discuss a range of technical issues and elaborate concrete proposals for GB 7 consideration, with Canada noting that the subscription system should complement, not replace, existing payment schemes. The ERG said the Working Group should minimize changes to the Treaty and the SMTA, stressing that non-monetary benefits generated by the MLS already exceed expected monetary benefits by an order of magnitude. Many supported revising the SMTA but opposed amending the Treaty or developing a protocol. Brazil suggested that payments are mandatory whenever products are marketed for profit, not only when access to material is restricted. She also urged reviewing whether facilitated access should continue for natural and legal persons who have not made their materials available.

A representative of civil society and farmer organizations urged: mandatory payments by the seed industry to the MLS; emphasis on access combined with a ban on intellectual property rights (IPRs) on native traits, including from genebanks; and inclusion of private collections in the MLS.

Regarding MLS operations, the ERG called for postponing the reviews under Articles 11(2) (inclusion of private collections) and 13(2)(d)(ii) (payment levels) until GB 7. The ERG and



Canada called for improving information on the availability and accessibility of PGRFA in the MLS.

On the Third Party Beneficiary, the ERG requested ensuring integrity and confidentiality of information submitted by parties through the EasySMTA mechanism, suggesting that the IARCs explore ways to further facilitate use of the SMTA.

In a contact group, co-chaired by Bert Visser and Modesto Fernández, delegates agreed that the Working Group on Enhancing the MLS should: prepare a fully revised SMTA draft, especially on a subscription system, or, if considered necessary, a complete proposal for an appropriate legal instrument; elaborate options to expand MLS coverage; invite inputs or reports from stakeholders; and liaise with the *Ad hoc* Advisory Committee on the Funding Strategy, including on the link between increased user-based payments and exploration of proposals to develop a mechanism of contributions by parties.

Delegates debated whether stakeholder consultations should cover the subscription system only, or all options for access that may be included in the revised SMTA, eventually agreeing that they should cover all “proposed changes” to the SMTA.

Delegates debated at length whether a provision regarding genetic information should refer to “access and benefit-sharing,” “benefit-sharing,” or the “use” of such information, with some user countries initially preferring to delete the reference. A proposal was tabled to “consider the inclusion of provisions on the use of genetic information associated with materials under the MLS.”

A long discussion took place on whether to undertake or again postpone the reviews foreseen under Article 11(4) (assessment of progress in including relevant PGRFA in the MLS). No consensus was reached and a small group was formed for further deliberation, which eventually agreed on postponing the review.

During Thursday’s plenary, delegates endorsed the revised draft resolution, as agreed by the contact group, without amendment.

**Final Outcome:** In resolution 1/2015 (IT/GB-6/15/Res 1), the GB decides to extend the mandate of the *Ad hoc* Open-ended Working Group to Enhance the Functioning of the MLS for the 2016-2017 biennium and requests the Working Group to, *inter alia*:

- elaborate a full draft revised SMTA, focusing especially on the development of a subscription system and aiming to avoid the necessity of any other legal instrument, primarily through a revision of Article 6.11 (alternative system of payments) of the SMTA, and elaborate a complete proposal for an appropriate legal instrument, if it is deemed necessary;
- elaborate options for adapting the MLS coverage based on different scenarios and income projections;
- invite written inputs or reports from all relevant stakeholders and/or to establish small *ad hoc* Friends of the Co-Chairs groups, where needed;
- consult with existing and potential SMTA users on the attractiveness of the proposals;
- liaise closely with the *Ad hoc* Advisory Committee on the Funding Strategy; and
- consider the issues regarding genetic information associated with the material accessed from the MLS.

The GB further: requests a commitment from all parties to fulfil the mandate given to the Working Group; urges them to provide support and financial resources; and reiterates the urgency of putting user-based income on a sound and predictable footing to achieve agreed targets, including through an effective subscription system that reduces transaction costs and provides legal certainty for users.

On reviews and assessments foreseen under Articles 11(4), and 13(2)(d)(ii), the resolution states that the GB decides to again postpone such reviews to GB 7.

On increasing the availability of PGRFA through the MLS, the GB: emphasizes the importance of collections that are fully characterized and evaluated, and appeals to both parties and natural and legal persons to make them available in the MLS together with the relevant characterization information; and decides to review at GB 7 the availability of material in the MLS, including new accessions during the biennium.

### FUNDING STRATEGY

The item was discussed in plenary on Monday, Thursday and Friday, with further discussions occurring in a contact group that met on Wednesday and Thursday. Plenary adopted a resolution on Friday afternoon.

On Monday, many recommended that the review of the Funding Strategy (IT/GB-6/15/11, Inf.4 and Inf.14) should be conducted in close collaboration with the Working Group on enhancing the MLS. Developing-country regions called for sustainable and predictable levels of funding for all elements of the Strategy.

The Near East, Africa, Australia, Canada and the ERG supported strengthening the programmatic approach for the BSF, with Canada suggesting that it take into account the second Global Plan of Action (GPA) on PGRFA. Asia emphasized support for genebanks in developing countries, in particular in centers of diversity. The ERG called for addressing components beyond the BSF.

The Near East suggested a body of donors and recipients for more dynamic resource mobilization, whereas Africa called for a donor conference. Noting that the MLS must be the main Treaty resource mobilization element, Brazil considered establishment of a donor council or revision of the BSF structure premature.

Many supported reconvening the *Ad hoc* Advisory Committee, with Africa suggesting its members be experts from regional groups. The ERG opposed referencing the BSF’s annual target. Namibia proposed mention of a specific funding target in the draft resolution.

The ERG drew attention to Sweden’s annual contributions as a way to ensure sustainability. The UK noted its Darwin Initiative supporting Treaty implementation. Switzerland mentioned its analysis of resource allocation under the BSF. Norway stated the deposit to the Svalbard Seed Vault by Andean communities illustrates the BSF’s impact.

The US suggested countries prioritize PGRFA conservation in their own development strategies and build a strong accountability framework for the BSF. A representative of civil society called for simplifying BSF modalities to allow for project applications by farmers.

A contact group co-chaired by Bert Visser and Modesto Fernández was tasked with assessing the results achieved by the Funding Strategy and the Strategic Plan; and developing a funding target, taking into account the results of these assessments, as well as the scenario analysis to be developed by the MLS Working Group and the funding target used by the Global Crop Diversity Trust (Trust). After discussion, delegates rejected a proposal to qualify the funding target as “meaningful and realistic.”

A long discussion took place on whether to reference the annual target of US\$23 million, incorporated into the Strategic Plan for implementation of the BSF 2009-2014, in its extension on an *ad hoc* basis for the 2015-2017 biennium. Some participants argued that the annual target is unrealistic and will only add to future disappointment, while others underscored the importance of recalling the Treaty’s past ambition. Consensus was reached by moving the reference to the annual target into the preamble, also adding that “all relevant provisions” be considered when extending the BSF Strategic Plan to the next biennium.

Other amendments included: a reference to the development of a funding target for the BSF for the 2018-2023 period; and adding expected results, indicators and an appropriate monitoring and evaluation system to the objectives associated with the development of a long-term investment strategy for the BSF.

On short-term measures for resource mobilization, delegates discussed: a proposal to welcome contributions with a crop- or region-specific focus as a pilot measure; whether to hold a donor conference and its timing, with some noting that this would be inappropriate as a short-term measure; and a suggestion to strengthen collaboration with institutions working on climate change adaptation of agriculture.

Thursday’s plenary addressed the draft resolution as amended by the contact group. Discussion focused on the consideration of resource mobilization opportunities in strengthening appropriate cooperation with institutions such as the national operational focal points of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Trust, the CGIAR, and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The UK suggested reference to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, while Australia proposed reference to its relevant elements.

On Friday, Japan suggested and delegates agreed to consider the resource mobilization opportunities in the implementation of the relevant provisions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in strengthening appropriate cooperation with entities, such as the GEF, through appropriate channels, the Global Crop Diversity Trust, the CGIAR and the UNFCCC.

**Final Outcome:** Resolution 2/2015 (IT/GB-6/15/Res 2) contains two parts: review of the Funding Strategy and short-term measures to enable resource mobilization for the BSF.

The GB agrees that, at GB 7, it will undertake a review with a view to enhance the functioning of the Funding Strategy and, in order to provide a basis for this review, decides to reconvene the *Ad hoc* Advisory Committee on the Funding Strategy in the 2016-2017 biennium, with the following ToRs:

- assess the results achieved by the Funding Strategy, as well as the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2009-2013, and

update it, including the development of a funding target for the BSF for the 2018-2023 period;

- develop measures to strengthen the BSF programmatic approach to make its operations more attractive and predictable for prospective donors and recipients, including to: improve thematic coherence between individual projects and over project cycles; develop a long-term investment strategy for the BSF, with objectives, expected results and indicators, and an appropriate monitoring and evaluation system; and promote synergy between the BSF and the Funding Strategy, of which it is a part;
- consider the development of other measures to strengthen the implementation of the overall Funding Strategy and the possibility to welcome contributions with a regional or crop priority focus;
- advise on resource mobilization efforts during the biennium;
- consider the link between increased user-based payments and exploration of proposals to develop a mechanism of contribution by parties; and
- consider the resource mobilization opportunities in the implementation of the relevant provisions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in strengthening appropriate cooperation entities, such as through appropriate channels, the GEF, the Trust, the CGIAR, and the UNFCCC.

The GB further requests the Secretariat, subject to the revision of the Funding Strategy, to undertake preparations for a donor conference in the biennium 2017-2019.

On short-term measures to enable resource mobilization for the BSF, the GB, *inter alia*: extends the Strategic Plan for the implementation of the BSF 2009-2014, and all relevant provisions, on an *ad hoc* basis, for the 2015-2017 biennium; requests the Secretary to continue mobilization of resources through the Strategic Plan and make use of the mechanism of the High-level Task Force; urgently calls on members of national, regional and international private sector associations, NGOs, as well as parties and other donors, to make contributions on an exceptional basis to allow the launch of the fourth project cycle of the BSF for at least US\$10 million; and decides, on an exceptional basis, as a pilot project, to welcome contributions with a regional or crop priority focus, upon approval by the Bureau, for the next BSF cycle.

### GLOBAL INFORMATION SYSTEM

Delegates addressed this item on Tuesday in plenary and in a contact group.

Theo van Hintum (the Netherlands), Co-Chair of the Expert Consultation on the Global Information System, introduced the relevant document (IT/GB-6/15/7), including a draft vision, work programme and ToRs for the scientific advisory committee.

The ERG called for strengthening capacity to develop national inventories and regional information systems, and underscored that recipients of material are to make available to the MLS all non-confidential information. Canada stressed that the GLIS should integrate existing systems rather than develop new ones.

GRULAC called for incorporating initiatives for technology development and transfer into the GLIS. Brazil highlighted the need to monitor the system’s progress and results. Africa and the Near East underscored the high level of capacity development and technology transfer needed for all countries to benefit from

the GLIS. Africa requested taking into account implications for ABS regulations. The Near East noted that the last Consultation meeting did not include all regions.

On the ToRs for the scientific advisory committee, Australia supported membership on the basis of technical expertise. Ethiopia recommended participation of public researchers and farmers. Iran noted that the committee should be regionally balanced. Honduras and Argentina stressed the GLIS should take into account all user needs. The US supported free access to non-confidential, non-proprietary information related to PGRFA.

Questioning focus on the DivSeek initiative, which develops tools such as standardized data formats to facilitate the use of sequencing and phenotyping data, La Via Campesina stressed that farmers need information on agro-ecological systems, not gene sequences. A civil society representative added that systems such as DivSeek are inaccessible to farmers and lead to the false belief that seeds are not important. A contact group revised the draft resolution.

On Friday, the closing plenary adopted the resolution, taking note of text agreed during consultations regarding a work programme activity on awareness raising on traditional knowledge, in harmony with the CBD.

**Final Outcome:** In resolution 3/2015 (IT/GB-6/15/Res 3), the GB adopts the vision and the work programme on the GLIS and decides to establish the Scientific Advisory Committee on the GLIS. It invites parties to provide the necessary resources to implement a set of pilot activities; and requests the Secretary to:

- implement the work programme and submit progress reports to the GB;
- continue participating in the Joint Facilitation Unit of the DivSeek initiative with a view to enabling synergies with the GLIS;
- invite DivSeek stakeholders to report on the implications for the Treaty objectives of the technologies underlying the initiative and compile a synthesis report for GB 7 consideration;
- continue promoting initiatives to support national and regional programmes in the development and transfer of information technologies; and
- design a monitoring and assessment mechanism on the usefulness and effectiveness of the GLIS and report to GB 7.

The vision states that the GLIS integrates and augments existing systems to create the global entry point to information and knowledge for strengthening the capacity for PGRFA conservation, management and utilization. This vision is translated into a list of objectives.

The work programme on the GLIS 2016-2022, to be implemented through a phased approach and funded through extra-budgetary contributions, includes a series of actions on:

- creating a web-based platform with use-oriented entry points to PGRFA information;
- a comprehensive overview and facilitating access to sources of PGRFA and associated information;
- promoting and facilitating interoperability among existing systems by providing clear principles, technical standards and appropriate tools to support their operations in accordance to the principles and rules of the Treaty;
- promoting transparency on the rights and obligations of

users for accessing, sharing and using PGRFA-associated information;

- creating and enhancing opportunities for communication and collaboration;
- providing capacity development and technology transfer opportunities; and
- creating a mechanism to assess progress and monitor effectiveness.

The ToRs for the Scientific Advisory Committee include its objectives and its composition.

### SUSTAINABLE USE

Plenary considered the item on Tuesday. A contact group, co-chaired by Bell Batta Torheim (Norway) and Mario Maderazo (Philippines), addressed a draft resolution on sustainable use, including ToRs for the *Ad hoc* Technical Committee on Sustainable Use (ACSU) and a revised work programme.

François Pythoud (Switzerland), ACSU Co-Chair, reported on the intersessional ACSU meeting and on the third meeting of the Platform for the Co-Development and Transfer of Technologies (IT/GB-6/15/12 and Inf.10). He stressed the need for complementarity and strengthened synergies between the Treaty programmes and areas, and for involvement of farmer organizations at all levels.

Africa questioned Trust activities on crop wild relatives and opposed their mandatory inclusion in the MLS. Canada noted his understanding that genebank accessions of Annex I crop wild relatives are part of the MLS.

Canada stressed the need to develop close cooperation and agree on functional divisions with the CGRFA. The CGRFA suggested referencing components of the GPA on PGRFA.

On the work programme, GRULAC requested additional support for raising awareness on the importance of crop wild relatives, landraces, and under-utilized species. Brazil suggested several amendments to give special attention to the needs of farmers.

The ISF, supported by Canada, requested that the work programme take into account the contributions of *ex situ* conservation and plant breeding to sustainable use.

On Wednesday, the contact group addressed a revised draft resolution. Delegates discussed and agreed to language on: promoting access for all farmers, including smallholders, farmer organizations, indigenous peoples and local communities to PGRFA in the MLS; requesting the Secretariat to integrate sustainable use into the next BSF project cycle; convening regional meetings on PGRFA characterization and sustainable use, including the assessment of needs of local farmers and other local stakeholders; and collaborating with relevant initiatives, in particular under the CBD, on interactions between genetic resources, community and farmer-led sustainable use activities and protected area systems.

On the components and expected results of the revised work programme, delegates agreed on language on: possible implementing partners; the Secretariat monitoring technical and policy developments on PGRFA sustainable use and reporting to the GB; publication of the Toolbox and a first design of an online portal or webpage; and active outreach through workshops, publications and other appropriate means, for awareness raising on the value of crop wild relatives.



On Friday morning, the contact group addressed the ToRs for the ACSU, including pending items on the composition of the committee and development of a list of experts, and reached agreement on all outstanding issues. The closing plenary adopted the draft resolution with minor editorial amendments.

**Final Outcome:** In resolution 4/2015 (IT/GB-6/15/Res 4), the GB emphasizes the key role of sustainable use of PGRFA and the link between farmers' rights under Article 9 and the provisions on conservation and sustainable use under Articles 5 and 6 of the Treaty. It endorses the revised work programme, and decides to reconvene the ACSU, subject to available financial resources. It further requests all parties to promote, as appropriate, the access of all farmers, including smallholder farmers, farmer organizations, indigenous peoples and local communities, to PGRFA in the MLS.

The GB requests the Secretariat to, among others: consider integration of the sustainable use objectives, tools and initiatives into the next round of the funding cycle of the BSF, in consultation with the GB 7 Bureau; invite further inputs for the Toolbox on sustainable use; convene regional meetings on advanced characterization and sustainable use of PGRFA, including the assessment of needs of local farmers and other local stakeholders; collaborate with relevant initiatives, in particular the CBD, on the interaction between genetic resources, community and farmer-led system activities and protected area systems; and further develop collaboration with the CGIAR on training and capacity building on the sustainable use of PGRFA, including through joint resource mobilization.

According to its ToRs, the ACSU will provide advice to the Secretary on implementation of the work programme, cooperation with other processes, identification of additional activities and synergies, and elaboration of the current gaps in conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA.

The annexed revised work programme includes a vision, mission and goals, including on: providing support to parties and stakeholders to implement Treaty provisions that are relevant to the sustainable use of PGRFA; providing policy direction and guidance; monitoring technical support and expertise; strengthening collaboration and partnerships; and implementing the objectives of non-monetary benefit-sharing and the priority activities of the second GPA. Programmes include: implementation of and the toolbox for sustainable use; the platform for the co-development and transfer of technologies; training and capacity building on farmers' rights; and awareness raising on crop wild relatives.

### **FARMERS' RIGHTS**

The item was discussed in plenary on Tuesday and Friday, with further discussions occurring in a contact group that met from Wednesday to Friday. The GB adopted a resolution on Friday.

On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced relevant documents (IT/GB-6/15/13, Inf.5 and Inf.11). Africa supported developing voluntary guidelines, establishing a working group, conducting global consultation workshops, and strengthening partnerships with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV).

Many called for enhancing understanding of the interrelations between the Treaty, WIPO and UPOV. The ERG, Norway and the Near East supported a joint capacity-building programme with the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR). Norway suggested joint symposiums with WIPO and UPOV and, supported by Ethiopia and others, commissioning a study on the interrelations among them.

Asia urged developing an overall strategy for the protection of traditional knowledge and promoting farmers' participation in decision making, and noted that IPRs legislation may impose constraints on farmers' activities, including community seed banks and participatory plant breeding. Japan noted that IPRs pose no restrictions to the sharing of farmers' varieties. India pointed to national legislation balancing the rights of plant breeders and farmers. Canada stressed that responsibility for implementation rests with national governments, and called for information exchange, but not assistance, towards implementation.

Madagascar called for gender mainstreaming and a participatory process to ensure that benefits reach farmers on the ground. Venezuela highlighted national implementation efforts, including through labeling systems and local seed banks. Congo stressed supporting community seed banks.

Canada opposed a proposed pilot project on complementarity of formal and informal seed systems. GRULAC said the resolution should include references to the scope of farmers' rights and invite parties to ensure greater coordination and synergies among institutions working on the issue.

UPOV drew attention to confusion between seed registries, marketing regulations and plant variety protection, noting that seed systems regulation extends beyond plant variety protection. GFAR highlighted assistance to governments, upon request, to improve grassroots capacity, national decision making and awareness on farmers' rights, noting that the joint capacity-building programme aims to build the capacity of parties to implement farmers' rights.

Supporting the commissioning of a study, a representative of farmer organizations and civil society highlighted the impact of IPRs and stressed that farmers' rights are linked to human rights.

Contact group discussions, co-chaired by Mario Maderazo (Philippines) and Bell Batta Torheim (Norway), focused on a proposal to conduct a study on best practices, policies and legislation as options for national implementation or an alternative proposal to compile national experiences; whether this endeavor should also address interactions between the Treaty and relevant international instruments; the Joint Capacity-Building Programme with GFAR; linkages and duplications with the resolution on sustainable use; the educational module on farmers' rights under preparation by the Secretariat and whether the Bureau should be consulted; and references subjecting activities to the availability of financial resources throughout the document.

Delegates also addressed a paragraph regarding identification of possible areas of interrelation between the Treaty, UPOV and WIPO, as well as additional language on commissioning a study on such interrelations, and organizing a joint symposium and side-events. They agreed to request the Secretariat to continue engaging, in a mutually supportive manner, with UPOV and

WIPO, to jointly finalize the process for the identification of possible areas of interrelations between their respective instruments and the Treaty, including through a participatory process, as appropriate and subject to available resources, and report on the outcomes to GB 7.

Following small group deliberations on pending items, including on references to the availability of resources and the request for a study or compilation of national experiences on implementation of farmers' rights, the contact group agreed on the resolution, including a request to the Secretariat, subject to the availability of financial resources, to prepare a study on lessons learned from the implementation of farmers' rights as set out in Article 9 of the Treaty, including policies and legislation; and an invitation to parties and all relevant stakeholders, especially farmers, to submit views to highlight the diversity of approaches being taken as possible options for national implementation of Article 9 on farmers' rights.

**Final Outcome:** In resolution 5/2015 (IT/GB-6/15/Res 5), the GB invites parties to:

- consider developing national action plans for the implementation of Article 9;
- consider reviewing and, if necessary, adjusting national measures affecting the realization of farmers' rights;
- enhance interaction and coordination among the different institutions dealing with farmers' rights; and
- take initiatives to convene regional workshops and other consultations, including with farmers' organizations, to promote the realization of farmers' rights, and present the results at GB 7, while the Secretariat is requested to facilitate such initiatives upon request and depending on available resources.

The GB further requests the Secretariat, subject to the availability of financial resources, to:

- prepare a study on lessons learned from the implementation of farmers' rights as set out in Article 9, including policies and legislation, with parties and organizations submitting their views and experiences as possible options for national legislation, for presentation at GB 7;
- launch and implement a Joint Capacity-Building Programme with GFAR;
- finalize the educational module; and
- continue engaging, in a mutually supportive manner, with UPOV and WIPO to jointly finalize the process for the identification of possible areas of interrelations, and report to GB 7.

The GB also decides to consider at its next session success stories in national implementation.

## COMPLIANCE

The item was discussed in plenary on Tuesday. On Wednesday, plenary adopted a resolution.

The Secretariat introduced relevant documents (IT/GB-6/15/14 and Add.1). Many supported the draft resolution and the corrigendum to the Standard Reporting Format. The ERG, with Canada, suggested adding language, including a request to the Secretariat to complete its work to place the Standard Reporting Format online by the end of 2015, and to clarify the resolution should refer to reporting commitments under Section V of the Compliance Procedures.

On Wednesday, plenary confirmed regions' nominations for the Compliance Committee. The ERG suggested, and delegates agreed, to amend the paragraph on the Online Reporting System to request the Secretariat to complete its work by the end of 2015 to place the Standard Reporting Format online and, subject to available resources, to support parties in fulfilling their reporting commitments.

**Final Outcome:** In resolution 6/2015 (IT/GB-6/15/Res 6), the GB: requests parties to submit their reports according to Section V of the Compliance Procedures in a timely manner; requests the Secretariat to place the Standard Reporting Format online by the end of 2015 and, subject to available resources, to support parties in fulfilling their reporting commitments; and elects the members of the Compliance Committee for the 2016-2019 term.

The members of the compliance committee are: Konbate Koffi (Africa); Sadar Uddin Siddiqui (Asia); Susanna Paakkola (ERG); Armando Bustillo Castellanos (GRULAC); Hojat Khademi (Near East); Felicitas Katepa-Mupondwa (North America); and Valerie Tuia (Southwest Pacific).

## COOPERATION WITH THE CBD

The item was discussed in plenary on Tuesday and Wednesday.

On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced the relevant document (IT/GB-6/15/15). The CBD highlighted areas of cooperation between the Treaty and the CBD and its Nagoya Protocol on ABS, stressing decisions of the twelfth meeting of the CBD Conference of the Parties (COP 12) on: synergies and efficiencies among the multilateral agreements; the financial mechanism, regarding identification of funding priorities to the GEF; and the Multi-Year Programme of Work, including strategic actions to enhance national implementation.

Brazil requested that guidance to the GEF be added to the GB 7 agenda. The ERG said that a possible roadmap for the biodiversity-related conventions will increase synergies in implementation. Canada noted that the two Secretariats must work within their respective mandates. Africa drew attention to areas of tension between the Treaty and the Nagoya Protocol, calling for more coordination and harmonization of implementation at the national and international levels. On the basis of an African proposal, and comments by Canada and Japan, delegates agreed to add language urging parties and the Secretariat to fully engage in the process under Nagoya Protocol Article 10 to consider developing a global multilateral benefit-sharing mechanism.

On Wednesday, plenary adopted the revised draft resolution with two changes requested by Canada: that future GB sessions prepare elements of guidance to the GEF for consideration by the CBD COP, rather than by the GEF directly; and that the GB draws parties' attention to ongoing work on developing a global multilateral benefit-sharing mechanism under the Nagoya Protocol, rather than urging Treaty parties to engage in such work.

**Final Outcome:** In resolution 7/2015 (IT/GB-6/15/Res 7), the GB requests the Secretariat to continue monitoring and participating in relevant CBD and Nagoya Protocol processes; calls on parties, in reviewing and updating their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, and in implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi



Biodiversity Targets, to ensure that their commitments under the Treaty are fully reflected; and draws parties' attention to ongoing work on developing a global multilateral benefit-sharing mechanism under the Nagoya Protocol.

The GB also requests: the Bureau to develop elements of advice for the GEF; the Secretary to transmit the elements of advice to CBD COP 13 to be referred to the GEF; and the Secretary to include guidance to the GEF in the GB 7 agenda.

The GB further requests the Secretary to: continue exploring means and activities to further enhance this cooperation; and continue facilitating interactions between the ITPGRFA and CBD Secretariats, the African Union Commission, Bioersivity International, the ABS Capacity Development Initiative, and other partners on mutual supportiveness and appropriate implementation of the instruments.

### **COOPERATION WITH THE GLOBAL CROP DIVERSITY TRUST**

This item was discussed in plenary on Tuesday and Thursday.

On Tuesday, Marie Haga, Executive Director of the Trust, presented the Trust's report (IT/GB-6/15/16). She highlighted a ten-year project to collect, characterize and conserve crop wild relatives *ex situ*, and a forthcoming pledging conference. Reporting on the operations of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, Norway described the first withdrawal to reestablish parts of the collection of the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), formerly located in Aleppo, Syria, which had been lost due to civil war and drought.

On the draft resolution, the ERG asked to reflect the Trust's role in providing transparent and complementary policy guidance and establishing quality management systems in genebanks. Japan suggested strengthening coordination with the Trust on the review of the Funding Strategy. Canada encouraged increased cooperation between the Trust and the Treaty.

Brazil suggested enhancing the Trust's accountability to all countries and developing joint fundraising activities with the Treaty. Ecuador called for support to national collections. Ethiopia stressed the need for the Trust to function within the Treaty governance system. Brazil and Namibia called for policy guidance that balances *ex situ* and *in situ* conservation. Iran highlighted persisting challenges in optimizing coordination between the Treaty and the Trust. Namibia stressed that global food security depends on smallholder farmers, not *ex situ* collections, and opposed DivSeek work on crop wild relatives.

A civil society representative stressed: the need for more clarity on the difference between *ex situ* and *in situ* conservation; the shift towards the "dematerialization" of genetic resources, cautioning against national genebanks turning into genome banks; and the need for the Trust to address the issue of IPRs on digital DNA sequences.

The US noted its financial contribution to the Trust and the importance of genebank standards for donors.

A contact group met on Wednesday. On Thursday, plenary adopted, with a minor addition, the draft resolution as amended by the contact group, including on: cooperation between the Trust and the Treaty on resource mobilization to enhance complementarities, synergies and implementation of different elements of the Funding Strategy; a request to publicize the Trust's Global Crop Conservation Strategies as key guiding

documents for *ex situ* conservation; establishment of minimum Quality Management Systems to be implemented in all genebanks receiving long-term support from the Trust; a recommendation to the Trust to develop more programmatic and synergistic approaches with the Treaty at the project level; and collaboration on the GLIS, including through the joint development of GeneSys and the DivSeek initiative.

**Final Outcome:** In resolution 8/2015 (IT/GB-6/15/Res 8), the GB provides policy guidance to the Trust on resource mobilization, scientific and technical matters, the GLIS, and communication and outreach.

On resource mobilization, the GB: urges parties and donors to provide financial support to enable a successful pledging conference for the Trust endowment fund; and invites the Trust to support the work of the *Ad hoc* Advisory Committee on the Funding Strategy in developing measures to enhance the functioning of the Funding Strategy, and to continue and expand cooperation with the Treaty on resource mobilization, in particular joint fundraising activities.

On scientific and technical matters, the GB: recommends to the Trust to support the development of an efficient and sustainable *ex situ* conservation system defined in Treaty Article 5(e) in complementarity and mutual support with other elements of the Funding Strategy; recognizes the Trust's guiding documents for such a conservation system; commends the Trust's quality management systems in genebanks; encourages the Trust to identify measures to address gaps in the existing *ex situ* conservation system; and recommends enhanced collaboration and complementarity with the Treaty and more programmatic and synergistic approaches on the project level.

On the GLIS, the GB: encourages the Trust to support synergies and complementarities with the GLIS Work Programme in recognition of the mandate and standard-setting capacity of the GB and to continue collaborating with the Treaty Secretariat on the joint facilitation of the DivSeek Initiative; and invites the Trust to appoint one expert to participate in the Scientific Advisory Committee of the GLIS.

On communication and outreach, the GB: recommends the Trust to continue coordinating and jointly organizing with the Treaty its outreach and communication activities; invites the GB 7 Chair and Bureau to continue facilitating the cooperation with the Trust Chair and Executive Board; and invites the Trust to report to GB 7 on progress made towards reaching the endowment target and plans for resource mobilization beyond 2018 and filling current gaps and needs in the development of an efficient and sustainable system of *ex situ* conservation.

### **COOPERATION WITH THE CGRFA**

On Wednesday, Treaty Secretary Shakeel Bhatti introduced the item (IT/GB-6/15/18, Inf.8 and Inf.9) and CGRFA Officer in Charge Dan Leskien presented the CGRFA's report and information on the financial and administrative implications of a transfer of activities from the CGRFA to the Treaty (IT/GB-6/15/ Inf.8 and Inf.9). All delegates supported increased cooperation to enhance complementarity.

Brazil opposed the transfer of activities, citing difference in constituencies and the Treaty's shortfall of resources, and suggested there is no need to keep the item under review. The ERG, Ethiopia, Kenya, Canada, Australia, Ecuador and

the Philippines noted late circulation of the information on implications and supported considering the issue at GB 7. Delegates adopted the draft resolution without amendments.

**Final Outcome:** In resolution 9/2015 (IT/GB-6/15/Res 9), the GB requests the Secretary to continue strengthening collaboration with the CGRFA Secretary to promote coherence in the development and implementation of ITPGRFA and CGRFA respective work programmes in particular with regard to: ABS; the preparation of the third report on the State of the World's PGRFA and the third GPA; and the monitoring and implementation of the second GPA.

### **COOPERATION WITH OTHER BODIES AND ORGANIZATIONS**

On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced relevant documents (IT/GB-6/15/20, 21, Inf.11 and Inf.12).

The CGIAR outlined the work of the Consortium contributing to implementing the Treaty and its MLS, highlighting: the transfer of 2.3 million samples to recipients around the world since 2007; cooperation on training, technology transfer and capacity building, including on crop improvement in developing countries; and joint resource mobilization. GFAR reported on activities on sustainable use, farmers' rights, and technology co-development and transfer, noting national awareness raising and a joint roadmap with the Treaty for the next biennium. WIPO outlined the work of the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC), and information tools; and took note of the proposed exercise to identify possible areas of interrelation between WIPO, UPOV and the Treaty. The Southern African Development Community highlighted work on policy and legislation, and strengthening human capacity, including in PGRFA collection and identification.

Guatemala drew attention to capacity-building activities with Bioversity International on Treaty implementation in Mesoamerica. The Democratic Republic of the Congo called for enhanced cooperation with standard-setting bodies such as the International Plant Protection Convention.

Africa requested that the CGIAR report detail information on transfers of non-Annex I materials under the SMTA, including whether prior informed consent was obtained from suppliers. Kenya asked to assess existing capacity before strengthening CGIAR genebanks.

The Near East called for strengthening collaboration with regional organizations to improve access to MLS materials in the region. The ERG and GRULAC suggested welcoming the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and SDGs, in particular targets 2.5 and 15.6.

Civil society said a proposed joint study with WIPO and UPOV should focus on the impacts of IPRs and plant variety protection on farmers' rights.

In the evening, plenary agreed on language on the adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and on institutions that have signed agreements with the GB under Article 15 (*ex situ* collections held by the CGIAR and other institutions) and adopted the revised draft resolution.

**Final Outcome:** In resolution 10/2015 (IT/GB-6/15/Res 10), the GB invites parties to take initiatives to strengthen harmonious and mutually supportive Treaty implementation,

urges them to take measures to enhance synergies among the biodiversity-related conventions to promote policy coherence, improve efficiency and enhance coordination and cooperation at all levels, and invites international organizations and donors to provide financial resources to encourage these synergies.

The GB requests the Secretariat to continue:

- pursuing close cooperation with CGIAR Centers and governing structures at the system level, including for the implementation of the agreements concluded under ITPGRFA Article 15;
- collaborating with other conventions and international organization on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- participating in the UNEP Information and Knowledge Management Initiative (InforMEA) and Portal;
- strengthening partnership and collaboration with GFAR;
- enhancing partnerships with relevant organizations such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the GEF to support BSF implementation;
- participating in relevant UPOV and WIPO meetings;
- collaborating with Bioversity International on the Treaty benefit-sharing mechanisms and the Joint Capacity-Building Programme; and
- participating in relevant activities of the Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions and of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

The GB requests Article 15 institutions to report to the next GB session on their transfer of non-Annex I materials under the SMTA, resolving to conduct a review of this use of SMTA at GB 7; invites them to continue engaging in non-monetary benefit-sharing activities and to harmonize their distribution policies; and invites other relevant institutions to sign agreements under Article 15.

Finally, the GB invites the WIPO IGC to expedite and complete its work to prepare an international legal instrument or instruments.

### **FUNCTIONAL AUTONOMY OF THE TREATY WITHIN FAO**

On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced the report (IT/GB-6/15/23).

The ERG supported delegating to the GB 7 Chair to follow up and discuss with the FAO Director-General any relevant issues aimed at improving and implementing the functional and operational autonomy of the Treaty. In the evening, plenary agreed to insert this language in the meeting's report.

### **WORK PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 2016-2017**

The item was discussed in the budget committee throughout the week, on the basis of relevant documentation (IT/GB-6/15/24, 25, 25 Add 1 and Inf. 7). On Friday, plenary adopted the outcome without further discussion.

**Final Outcome:** In resolution 11/2015 (IT/GB-6/15/Res 11), the GB: adopts the Treaty's Work Programme and the Core Administrative Budget for the biennium 2016-2017, as well as the indicative scale of contributions; urges all parties, as well as those who made no, or only limited, contributions in previous biennia, and invites other states, organizations and other entities, to contribute to the Core Administrative Budget to provide the

resources required; appeals to donors to urgently replenish the Fund to Support the Participation of Developing Countries, and to parties to urgently contribute to the Trust Fund for Agreed Purposes; and requests the Secretariat to facilitate the convening of regional consultations, subject to regional requests and availability of funds.

The resolution contains three annexes. Annex 1 includes the Core Administrative Budget and Work Programme, Maintenance Functions and Core Implementing Functions for the 2016-2017 biennium, as well as an addendum on possible donor-funded supporting projects for which funding will be sought. Annex 2 includes the Indicative Scale of Contributions for 2016-2017, and Annex 3 contains the Secretariat staffing table for the same period.

The core budget amounts to US\$7,105,517 for the 2016-2017 biennium. Donor-funded supporting projects include the Benefit-sharing Support Programme, the Joint Capacity-Building Programme, the GLIS, and Conservation, Sustainable Use of PGRFA and Farmers' Rights under Articles 5, 6 and 9 of the Treaty.

#### **TERM OF OFFICE OF THE TREATY SECRETARY**

The item was discussed in plenary on Thursday and Friday. On Thursday, the FAO Legal Counsel presented, and plenary addressed, the relevant document (IT/GB-6/15/26), including proposals for selection, appointment and renewal of the Treaty Secretary. Delegates tasked Chair Worrell, in consultation with the Legal Counsel, to draft a revised text.

On Friday afternoon, plenary discussed a draft resolution. Discussion focused on the intersessional process for preparation of renewal procedures and possible adjustments to the appointment procedures, for GB 7 consideration. Some delegates stressed that the appointment procedures had been agreed upon at GB 1 and questioned the need for adjustments. Following clarifications, plenary agreed that any adjustments to the appointment procedures would be proposed if necessary for the development of renewal procedures, and would apply to future selection processes. Delegates also debated whether a sentence noting that "the Secretary shall be appointed for a term of four years, renewable only once for a further term of four years" should remain in the resolution, with some saying that the proposed intersessional process should discuss the issue of term limits. Plenary agreed to replace the sentence with language noting that the process will examine also the matter of maximum term limits for the Secretary, and adopted the resolution as amended.

**Final Outcome:** In resolution 12/2015 (IT/GB-6/15/Res 12), the GB: notes the process for appointment of a Secretary for the Treaty GB decided upon at GB 1 in 2006; decides to include in the GB 7 agenda an item on appointment of the Secretary; invites the FAO Director-General to extend the appointment of the current Secretary until a new appointment, following approval by the GB, at GB 7 in 2017; agrees that the current Secretary shall be allowed to apply for the position to be filled in 2017; requests the FAO Secretariat to prepare, in close consultation with the Bureau, a procedure for renewal of the appointment of the Secretary, for consideration and adoption by GB 7, as well as to propose any adjustments to the appointment procedures if necessary for the development of renewal procedures, which

would apply to future selection processes, with the note that the process shall also examine the matter of maximum term limits for the Secretary; and requests the FAO Legal Office to examine, in the context of the intersessional process above, the possibility that the list of applicants for the Secretary post be circulated to parties, subject to considerations of confidentiality.

#### **DRAFT MULTI-YEAR PROGRAMME OF WORK**

This issue was discussed in plenary on Wednesday and Thursday, while informal discussions took place on Thursday. The GB adopted a resolution on Thursday evening.

On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced the relevant document (IT/GB-6/15/22), including general principles and a draft multi-year programme of work (MYPOW) for the 2016-2025 period.

The ERG called for a simplified and focused MYPOW, including outputs, indicators, milestones, a timetable, the MLS as a cornerstone and, if possible, financial resources, and asked for redrafting the document for adoption at GB 7. Canada said that the draft MYPOW is adequately simple and its structure acceptable. He pointed out, supported by Australia, that the theme for GB 9 (supporting the custodians of food crops) should be expanded to cover all farmers.

Brazil tabled its disagreement with many elements of the document, both substantive and procedural. She stressed they do not favor delegating to the Bureau the elaboration of a detailed implementation plan and, with Ethiopia and Iran, called for further discussions.

After informal discussions, on Thursday plenary approved with minor amendments, a revised draft resolution on the MYPOW.

**Final Outcome:** In resolution 13/2015 (IT/GB-6/15/Res 13), the GB requests the Secretary to develop: with inputs from parties, a MYPOW for 2018-2025 for consideration at GB 7, which should include outcomes, outputs and milestones, as well as an indication of the donor-supported activities and expected additional financial and human resources required; and, under the guidance of the Bureau, as an interim measure, a document outlining expected outcomes, outputs and milestones for the implementation of the Treaty in the 2016-2017 biennium. The GB further agrees on the GB 7 theme "The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Role of PGRFA."

#### **CLOSING PLENARY**

On Friday afternoon, plenary convened to adopt the report of the meeting (IT/GB-6/15/Draft Report) and pending resolutions, including on sustainable use, farmers' rights, the Funding Strategy, the GLIS, the Secretary, and the work programme and budget. The Secretariat noted that no offers had been received with regard to the hosting of GB 7, which is expected to be held in the second semester of 2017.

Delegates gave a standing ovation to bid farewell to long-standing ITPGRFA delegates Elizabeth Matos (Angola) and Modesto Fernández (Cuba) to recognize their achievements as delegates, Bureau members and meeting Chairs. Matos expressed disappointment about the slow pace of farmers' rights implementation and lack of attention to benefit-sharing. Fernández encouraged delegates to enhance the Treaty to prove that PGRFA can be conserved for future generations.



GRULAC appealed to parties to fully commit to the Treaty's enhancement, while ensuring balanced implementation of all its elements. The ERG said this enhancement will enable the Treaty to deliver on objectives on which it has fallen short. The Southwest Pacific called on delegates to work towards concrete proposals for GB 7.

Italy announced a contribution of €1.084 million to the BSF, the Treaty's core operations and implementation of the work programme on sustainable use. Asia asked that the GB remain a space to discuss farmers' rights. Africa pleaded for more support for farmers' rights implementation at the national and regional levels.

La Via Campesina regretted that after 30 years of international discussions, farmers' rights are still not implemented, and requested that the Treaty stop collaborating with the DivSeek initiative, noting that genome sequencing facilitates biopiracy. Civil society recommended that the GB switch to a partnership model of stakeholder engagement, and requested that it investigate possible contradictions between WIPO, UPOV and the Treaty.

ESA suggested that future GB sessions give more consideration to voluntary non-monetary benefit-sharing and the contributions of *ex situ* conservation and plant breeding to sustainable use. ISF welcomed the planned review of availability of material under the MLS and encouraged the GB to clarify that farmers' rights are implemented at the national level only, noting that international guidelines would create confusion.

Treaty Secretary Bhatti congratulated delegates on decisions that will strengthen the contribution of PGRFA to SDGs implementation, highlighting resolutions on enhancing the functioning of the MLS, the GLIS and sustainable use. Chair Worrell thanked delegates for their hard work and gavelled the meeting to a close at 7:51 pm.

## A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE MEETING

"This Treaty is undergoing a fundamental crisis! We have parties that don't share their PGRFA, users that don't share benefits, and a private sector that shares neither." The emphatic wake-up call launched by a civil society representative during the opening plenary, in stark contrast to the otherwise positive response to reports about the Treaty's performance, sparked discussions at GB 6 throughout the week. While delegates at the last session of the Governing Body had accepted the need for action and launched a process to revise the Treaty, few would have called the current situation "a crisis." Especially since at past GB sessions the Treaty was often hailed as a poster child for international cooperation. Nonetheless, while acknowledging the challenges ahead, most participants felt a new sense of urgency at GB 6 and the adopted resolutions are expected to increase momentum towards the Treaty's review. This analysis assesses the status of the Treaty after the entry into force of the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) Nagoya Protocol on access and benefit-sharing, and discusses how GB 6 decisions can "take the Treaty to the next level," as demanded by one regional group in its closing statement.

## WAKING UP TO A CRISIS?

To understand why some participants spoke of a crisis it is useful to remember that the Treaty seeks to provide a balance between countries that are primarily providers of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA) and their interest in fair and equitable benefit-sharing, and those that are primarily users of PGRFA and their focus on facilitated access. Both sides agree that an effective system for ABS is essential to the future conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA. However, their evaluation of the Treaty's performance depends not only on progress in implementation overall, but also the perceived balance between provider and user interests. This means that in order to be evaluated as successful by all parties, the Treaty needs to serve multiple goals: facilitate access to PGRFA, generate meaningful streams of monetary and non-monetary benefits, and effectively channel those benefits to communities in provider countries to support *in situ* and on-farm conservation.

Ten years after the Treaty's entry into force, the implementation of its core mechanism, the Multilateral System (MLS) for ABS with regard to PGRFA is stagnating. While the number of materials placed within the MLS grew quickly in the beginning, mostly through the addition of large collections by the CGIAR Consortium and some developed country parties, many parties still haven't notified the Governing Body of their collections. In many cases lack of capacity is the main reason, however some parties also have not made Treaty implementation a priority. Moreover, the majority of other holders, including the private sector, remain reluctant to place their collections in the MLS.

To date, no notable amounts of user payments have been received, mostly because such payments are typically due once new varieties incorporating materials from the MLS have been commercialized. This typically takes place 10-15 years after MLS material has been accessed. In the absence of user-based payments, the Treaty's Benefit-sharing Fund, its main mechanism for benefit-sharing, is financed through donor contributions as an interim solution.

None of these phenomena are new to the Treaty and parties did not expect significant improvements over the past biennium. This was the reason why an intersessional Working Group had been established to find ways to increase user-based payments. The Working Group made significant progress, including a suggestion to devise a subscription system for access to the MLS. So why was there a sudden increase in urgency at GB 6?

To some, the identification of a crisis was simply an expression of a growing sense of frustration among PGRFA providers, who are eagerly waiting for user-based payments to materialize. To them, this would also prove that the MLS is fully functioning. A number of delegates also pointed to the entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol on ABS. A closer look at the historical relationship between the Treaty and the CBD can explain why.

The initial interpretation of the CBD text was that ABS would be realized through the negotiation of bilateral contracts based on national law. Concerned that such a model would not be practical for PGRFA, agricultural experts set out to negotiate the Treaty, under which parties would pool their PGRFA in an MLS and use a single standard contract to manage access to

PGRFA and enforce benefit-sharing. While the coverage of the MLS was limited to a subset of PGRFA specified in Annex I, the expectation was that, in time, coverage would be expanded to eventually cover all PGRFA, and that the MLS, if successful, could become a model for international cooperation on other genetic resources such as animal, forest or aquatic genetic resources for food and agriculture.

The Nagoya Protocol recognizes the Treaty as a specialized instrument for ABS regarding PGRFA that was negotiated “in harmony with the CBD,” and is therefore supportive of the Treaty as it is. At the same time however, the Protocol provides the option to establish a global multilateral system or systems for ABS for subsets of genetic resources. This means that there could be alternative avenues to realize benefit-sharing for non-Annex I crops and other genetic resources for food and agriculture. In the short run, the Nagoya Protocol will provide a more reliable basis for bilateral contracts, which could be attractive for certain high-value crops that are currently excluded from Annex I, such as coffee. In the long term, parties to the Nagoya Protocol could, in theory, engage in the development of other multilateral systems for non-Annex I PGRFA. While it would be difficult to mount support for such an endeavor, as it would be perceived to be against the spirit of mutual supportiveness between the CBD and the Treaty, the possibility now exists.

At GB 6 this scenario was not mentioned; however some interventions by provider countries show that they have considered the option. GRULAC, Africa, Asia and the Near East clearly stated that they will not agree to negotiate an expansion of Annex I until there is proof of user payments. The result was that, in the next biennium, the Working Group on Enhancing the Functioning of the MLS will focus on the elaboration of a subscription system, whereas the development of options to adapt coverage of the MLS, including possible expansion of Annex I, was not discussed during GB 6.

Few delegates expect the Nagoya Protocol to generate higher benefit-sharing streams soon, however the fact that parties can now look for alternatives under the Protocol, places the Treaty under pressure to prove first that it can generate meaningful streams of user-based income and second that it can turn these funds into tangible benefits delivered to the custodians of PGRFA—farmers on the ground. The following sections discuss the main challenges in reaching full implementation and evaluate to what extent the decisions at GB 6 can support these objectives.

### **INCREASING REVENUE FLOWS**

The first challenge for the Treaty is to prove that it can generate meaningful and stable revenue flows for benefit-sharing. Current revenue flows are limited because of the time lag between access and commercialization, limits in coverage, as collections held by some parties and the private sector have not yet been placed in the MLS, and the possibility for the private sector to bypass the system by obtaining material from genebanks in non-parties.

The envisaged subscription system would directly address the first problem by replacing, or complementing, the current payment obligations after commercialization with an upfront regular payment of fees for access to materials in the MLS. The

subscription option could also reduce transaction costs arising out of tracking obligations, and increase legal certainty if it includes a termination clause that clearly specifies at what point users are no longer obliged to provide payments or other forms of benefit-sharing. Whether a carefully designed subscription system will make the MLS more attractive depends to a large extent on agreement over the payment rate or rates. GB 6 requested that the Working Group work closely with stakeholder groups to test the viability of suggested payment options. This will provide an important opportunity to assess what level of payments would be considered adequate by users, in particular the private sector, and whether the revenues generated at these levels can meet the expectations of PGRFA providers.

The Global Information System (GLIS) could provide additional incentives for users to access PGRFA through the MLS. Although a series of challenges related to compliance with ABS requirements remains to be addressed, information about potentially valuable traits, and contextual data about interactions between traits, phenotypes and environmental conditions constitute important value added for users. This could, over time, allow the MLS to develop a unique package, and thus a competitive advantage with regard to other PGRFA sources. Taken together, the subscription option and the GLIS could be important steps to sweeten the deal for the private sector to prefer the MLS to other sources of PGRFA. Whether these measures will be sufficient to convince the private sector to contribute to the MLS by placing their own collections in it remains to be seen.

### **REACHING FARMERS**

The second challenge that the Treaty needs to address to prove itself is to show that it can effectively support *in situ* conservation and on-farm management by delivering benefits to the custodians of PGRFA, farmers on the ground. According to the Secretary’s report, more than 340,000 farmers and community members directly benefited from the BSF’s second project cycle and the report estimates that more than 760,000 individuals will benefit indirectly. Despite these figures, it is a common critique that the project partners in most cases were research institutes and gene banks, rather than farming communities. The ANDES Potato Park in Peru is a rare case of a community initiative funded directly by the BSF. The reason put forward is that most communities and farmer organizations lack the capacity to comply with complex BSF application and project execution procedures. The question also remains whether the BSF priorities align with farmer practices with regard to PGRFA management. In the eyes of some, there is still too much focus on identifying new varieties and placing them into *ex situ* collections, and too little on the more holistic agro-ecological approaches that farmers have traditionally been using for PGRFA conservation. Devising the required governance-related structures so that the BSF can respond to the needs of both the public research community and farmers in developing countries, particularly smallholders, to serve global food security objectives is certainly a daunting task. Yet it needs to be addressed if the Treaty is to fulfil its objectives.

The proposed integration of the objectives, tools and initiatives of the work programme on sustainable use into the BSF project cycle procedures might be the first step towards

addressing this challenge. This could broaden the BSF scope to include projects that are more amenable to be managed by communities and deliver more tangible benefits directly. In addition, the work programme's capacity-building element for the implementation of farmers' rights could empower farmer communities and organizations to take a more pro-active role in acquiring projects from the BSF, while at the same time enabling improvements to national support systems.

### MOVING FORWARD

Almost ten years after GB 1, with stagnation in the Treaty's implementation and the Nagoya Protocol in force, the Treaty is in urgent need of an upgrade. The decisions taken at GB 6 and the mandate given to the MLS Working Group provide significant room to negotiate and implement improvements, and bring out the Treaty's full potential in promoting sustainable agriculture and global food security objectives in a changing international policy landscape. The commitment of parties and stakeholders, however, will determine whether the revision process will result in a minor update or a fully-fledged ITPGRFA 2.0. Choices must be made, and these choices may influence not only the Treaty's position with regard to other multilateral environmental agreements, but also its role with regard to the entire value chain linked to agricultural research and development.

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

**Committee on World Food Security:** The 42nd session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) is held under the theme "Making a Difference in Food Security and Nutrition." The meeting will address: CFS and the sustainable development challenge; policy convergence, including a policy round table on water for food security and nutrition, and the framework for action for food security and nutrition in protracted crises; coordination and linkages between CFS and other food security and nutrition stakeholders at the global, regional and national levels; ongoing workstreams, including the Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition, the outcomes of the High-Level Forum on Connecting Smallholders to Markets, the report on the findings of the CFS effectiveness survey, and the multi-year programme of work and priorities for 2016-2017; the role of CFS in advancing nutrition; and organizational issues. Special events will be held on youth for food security and nutrition and resilience building for sustainable food security and nutrition. **dates:** 12-15 October **location:** Rome, Italy **contact:** CFS Secretariat **email:** [cfs@fao.org](mailto:cfs@fao.org) **www:** <http://www.fao.org/cfs/cfs-home/cfs42/en/>

**UNCCD COP 12:** The 12th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification will discuss agenda items and develop decisions on issues related to desertification, land degradation and drought, including how to pursue the target to achieve land degradation neutrality and how to align the UNCCD's goals and parties' action programmes with the recently adopted SDGs. Parties will also consider messages for the Paris Climate Change Conference. The UNCCD's two subsidiary bodies, the Committee on Science and Technology and the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, will also convene in parallel to the COP. **dates:** 12-23 October 2015 **location:** Ankara,

Turkey **contact:** UNCCD Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-2800 **fax:** +49-228-815-2898/99 **email:** [secretariat@unccd.int](mailto:secretariat@unccd.int) **www:** <http://www.unccd.int/>

**CITES PC 22:** The 22nd meeting of the Plants Committee of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora will be held to address matters related to plant species trade and conservation, and cooperation with other biodiversity-related agreements. **dates:** 19-23 October 2015 **location:** Tbilisi, Georgia **contact:** CITES Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-81-39/40 **fax:** +41-22-797-34-17 **email:** [info@cites.org](mailto:info@cites.org) **www:** <https://cites.org/eng/com/pc/22/index.php>

**III World Biodiversity Congress:** Organized by the Global Scientific Research Foundation and the Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia, the Third World Biodiversity Congress will convene under the theme, "Integrated Conservation Strategies for Threatened Biodiversity and Geodiversity for Global Sustenance." The Congress will address, among other issues, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use and management of traditional knowledge. **dates:** 26-29 October 2015 **location:** Mecavnik - Mokra Gora, Serbia **contact:** Global Scientific Research Foundation **phone:** +91-80-23602836 **fax:** +91-80-23608346 **email:** [info@gsrfindia.com](mailto:info@gsrfindia.com) **www:** <http://www.wbc2015.in>

**Seventh International Conference on Agricultural Statistics (ICAS VII):** The Seventh International Conference on Agricultural Statistics will take place under the theme "Modernization of agricultural statistics in support of the Sustainable Development Agenda." Organized by the Italian National Institute of Statistics in collaboration with the FAO, the conference, which will bring together economists, statisticians, researchers and analysts working on agricultural and rural statistics, is expected to discuss changing needs and opportunities for agricultural statistics, particularly in the context of the development of the indicator framework for the SDGs. **dates:** 26-28 October 2015 **location:** Rome, Italy **contact:** Kafkas Caprazli, FAO **phone:** +39-6-570-54916 **email:** [Kafkas.Caprazli@fao.org](mailto:Kafkas.Caprazli@fao.org) **www:** <http://icas2016.istat.it/>

**UPOV Council 49:** The 49th Council of UPOV will address, *inter alia*, technical and legal issues related to breeders' rights and plant variety protection, and the draft programme and budget for the biennium 2016-2017. **date:** 29 October 2015 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** UPOV Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-338-9111 **fax:** +41-22-733-0336 **email:** [upov.mail@upov.int](mailto:upov.mail@upov.int) **www:** [http://www.upov.int/meetings/en/details.jsp?meeting\\_id=36742](http://www.upov.int/meetings/en/details.jsp?meeting_id=36742)

**CBD SBSTTA 19 and 9th Meeting of the Article 8(j) Working Group:** The nineteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 19) will convene from 2-5 November and will address, among other issues, strategic, scientific and technical issues related to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020; and the 2014-2018 Work Programme of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and relationship with the CBD Subsidiary Body on Implementation. The ninth meeting of the CBD *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Article 8(j) will convene from 4-7 November and will address, among other



issues, guidelines on prior informed consent, fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from traditional knowledge, unlawful appropriation of traditional knowledge, and repatriation of traditional knowledge. **dates:** 2-7 November 2015 **location:** Montreal, Quebec, Canada **contact:** CBD Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-288-2220 **fax:** +1-514-288-6588 **email:** secretariat@cbd.int **www:** <https://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=SBSTTA-19>; <https://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=WG8J-09>

**IFPRI at 40 - Looking Back, Looking Forward:** This invitation-only event will mark the 40th anniversary of the International Food Policy Research Center (IFPRI), a member of the CGIAR Consortium. The event will address the historic evolution and current challenges of food policy. Keynote addresses, panel discussions and other presentations will cover issues such as policies for facilitating sustainable food supplies, making agricultural markets and trade work for the poor, and linking agriculture and nutrition. IFPRI's contributions to gender-focused food policy research and the development of food policies at country and regional levels will also be a focus. **date:** 18 November 2015 **location:** Washington, DC, US **contact:** International Food Policy Research Center **phone:** +1-202-862-5600 **fax:** +1-202-467-4439 **email:** IFPRI40thAnniversary@cgiar.org **www:** <https://www.ifpri.org/event/ifpri-40>

**FAO Council:** The 153th regular session of the Council is organized by FAO. **dates:** 30 November - 4 December 2015 **location:** Rome, Italy **contact:** Council and Protocol Affairs Division (CPA) **phone:** +39-6-570-57051 **email:** FAO-Council@fao.org **www:** <http://www.fao.org/about/meetings/council/cl153/documents/en/>

**CBD SBSTTA 20 and SBI 1:** The twentieth meeting of SBSTTA and the first meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity will be held back to back, in Montreal, Canada. **dates:** 25 April-7 May 2016 **location:** Montreal, Quebec, Canada **contact:** CBD Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-288-2220 **fax:** +1-514-288-6588 **email:** secretariat@cbd.int **www:** <https://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=SBSTTA-20> and <https://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=SBI-01>

**Second Global Consultation on Farmers' Rights:** The second Global Consultation on Farmers' Rights will be organized in July 2016 in Indonesia. **dates:** to be confirmed **location:** to be confirmed **contact:** Indonesian Agency for Agricultural Research and Development **phone:** +62-21-7806202 **email:** sekretariat@litbang.deptan.go.id **www:** <http://www.litbang.pertanian.go.id>

**CITES COP17:** The Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora will convene for its seventeenth session. **dates:** 24 September- 5 October 2016 **location:** Johannesburg, South Africa **contact:** CITES Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-81-39/40 **fax:** +41-22-797-34-17 **email:** info@cites.org **www:** <https://cites.org/cop17>

**CBD COP13, Cartagena Protocol COP/MOP8, and Nagoya Protocol COP/MOP2:** The 13th meeting of the CBD Conference of the Parties, the 8th Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the 2nd Meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing are expected to take place concurrently in 2016. **dates:** 4-17

December 2016 **location:** Cancun, Mexico **contact:** CBD Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-288-2220 **fax:** +1-514-288-6588 **email:** secretariat@cbd.int **www:** <http://www.cbd.int/>

**CGRFA 16:** The sixteenth regular session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture of the FAO is expected to address a series of sectoral and cross-sectoral issues of relevance to genetic resources for food and agriculture. **dates:** 30 January - 3 February 2017 [tentative] **location:** Rome, Italy **contact:** CGRFA Secretariat **phone:** +39-6-5705-4981 **fax:** +39-6-5705-5246 **email:** cgrfa@fao.org **www:** <http://www.fao.org/nr/cgrfa/en/>

**ITPGRFA GB 7:** The 7th session of the Governing Body to the ITPGRFA will be held in the second half of 2017. **dates:** to be confirmed **location:** to be confirmed **contact:** ITPGRFA Secretariat **phone:** +39-6-570-53441 **fax:** +39-6-570-56347 **email:** pgrfa-treaty@fao.org **www:** <http://www.planttreaty.org>

## GLOSSARY

ABS	Access and Benefit-sharing
ACSU	<i>Ad Hoc</i> Technical Committee on Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
BSF	Benefit-sharing Fund
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CGRFA	FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
ERG	European Regional Group
ESA	European Seed Association
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
GB	Governing Body
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GFAR	Global Forum on Agricultural Research
GLIS	Global Information System
GRULAC	Latin American and Caribbean Group
GPA	Global Plan of Action
IARCs	International agricultural research centers
IPRs	Intellectual property rights
ISF	International Seed Federation
ITPGRFA	International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
MLS	Multilateral System
PGRFA	Plant genetic resources for food and agriculture
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMTA	Standard Material Transfer Agreement
ToRs	Terms of reference
UPOV	International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization