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SUMMARY OF THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE INTERNATIONAL TREATY ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE: 30 OCTOBER – 3 NOVEMBER 2017

The seventh session of the Governing Body (GB 7) of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) convened from 30 October - 3 November 2017, at the Kigali Convention Centre in Kigali, Rwanda. More than 500 participants from parties and other governments, international, non-governmental and farmers' organizations, international agricultural research centers, and industry attended the session, which was preceded by two days of regional and inter-regional consultations, and a special event on genomics information.

Held under the theme "The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Role of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture," the session addressed items on general policy and implementation of the Treaty and its Multilateral System (MLS) of access and benefit-sharing (ABS); and administrative and budgetary matters. The session approved Kent Nnadozie as the new Secretary, and adopted 14 resolutions, including on: establishment of an *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group on farmers' rights; extension of the mandate of the intersessional Working Group on Enhancing the MLS to develop a proposal for a growth plan to attain the enhanced MLS and revise the text of the Standard Material Transfer Agreement (SMTA); a decision to put on the GB 8 agenda the item of digital sequence information; and reconvening the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Funding Strategy and Resource Mobilization to, *inter alia*, develop the updated Funding Strategy.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ITPGRFA

Concluded under the auspices of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), the ITPGRFA is a legally-binding instrument that targets the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA), and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of their use, in harmony with the 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); and institutionalizes monetary and non-monetary benefit-sharing from the utilization of these resources in the areas of commercialization, information exchange, technology transfer, and capacity building.

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 144 parties.

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 for intersessional consideration of the rules of procedure and financial rules for the Treaty's GB, procedures for compliance, and the terms of the SMTA. An open-ended intersessional working group revised the rules of procedure and financial rules of the GB, as well as the funding strategy, and prepared a draft resolution on compliance for GB 1 consideration. An expert group considered options for the SMTA terms and draft

IN THIS ISSUE

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structure, and recommended establishment of an intersessional contact group, which 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, providing two options. Firstly, the recipient can choose to pay 0.77% of gross sales from commercialization of new products incorporating material accessed from the MLS, if its availability to others for further research and breeding is restricted. Alternatively, the recipient can choose to 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 Crop Trust; and a model agreement with the international agricultural research centers of the CGIAR Consortium and other international institutions.

GB 2: The second session of the GB (October-November 2007, Rome, Italy) addressed, *inter alia*, the 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 the 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 2012-2013, 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* Open-ended Working Group to Enhance the Functioning of the MLS, with the mandate to develop measures to increase user-based payments and contributions to the Benefit-Sharing Fund (BSF), as a priority, as well as additional measures to enhance the functioning of the MLS. GB 5 also adopted a resolution on the funding strategy for the BSF containing a list of innovative approaches to increase voluntary contributions, 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.

GB 6: The sixth session of the GB (October 2015, Rome) extended the Working Group's mandate, and requested it, among other issues, to: elaborate a full draft revised SMTA; elaborate options for adapting coverage of the MLS, based on different scenarios and income projections; and consider issues regarding genetic information associated with material accessed from the MLS. The meeting adopted a work programme for the Global Information System (GLIS), and resolutions on a series of substantive, cooperation-related and administrative items, with a focus on addressing the shortfall in the BSF and on strengthening the implementation of Treaty provisions regarding conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA on-farm, through the work programme on sustainable use and farmers' rights.

ITPGRFA GB 7 REPORT

On Monday, GB 7 Chair Muhamad Sabran (Indonesia) thanked the host country and underscored the session's heavy agenda. FAO Assistant Director-General René Castro-Salazar highlighted challenges for the agricultural sector, including the need to soon feed 10 billion people, reduce carbon emissions, and preserve agricultural biodiversity, and emphasized the Treaty's role in ending hunger by 2030.

ITPGRFA Secretary *ad interim* Kent Nnadozie drew attention to Rwanda's implementation of, and support for, the Treaty. He highlighted successes, including exchanges of material, capacity building, and deployment of the GLIS; and called for maintaining the momentum needed to address remaining challenges.

Marjory Jeke, farmer, Zimbabwe, reported on a project supported by the BSF on policies and practices facilitating PGRFA conservation and use for food and nutrition security in changing climate conditions, urging increased BSF support.

Jean-Christophe Gouache, President, International Seed Federation (ISF), called attention to the declaration of commitment signed by 41 seed companies supporting an enhanced MLS that "makes business sense," meets legal and economic conditions, and respects standard business practices.

Timothy Fischer, Crop Trust, noted the need for collaboration on technical issues, as well as awareness- and fund-raising, to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 (zero hunger). Ann Tutwiler, Director-General of Bioversity International, emphasized the role of CGIAR Consortium in supporting the contribution of PGRFA to achieving SDG 2, 3 (good health and wellbeing), 13 (climate action), 15 (life on land) and 17 (partnerships for the Goals); and its commitment to support processes on the MLS, the GLIS and farmers' rights, among others.

Gerardine Mukeshimana, Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Rwanda, stressed that more innovative, productive and diversified agricultural systems are required to protect and enhance the natural resource base, while feeding a growing population. She underscored the importance of operationalizing the BSF to ensure respect for farmers' rights, including on benefit-sharing.

René Castro-Salazar stressed that support is most needed in farmers' fields, as farmers continue to be the key custodians of agricultural biodiversity. José Graziano da Silva, FAO Director-General, via video message, highlighted that plant genetic diversity is crucial for the future of our planet and an integral

part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda).

REGIONAL STATEMENTS: Ecuador, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China (G-77/China), reaffirmed the importance of farmers' rights. Lebanon, for the Near East, noted the BSF persistently suffers from a lack of funds, and supported adoption of a subscription system and expansion of Annex I.

The Netherlands, on behalf of the European Regional Group (ERG), stressed facilitated access as a major accomplishment of the Treaty, and prioritized: critical progress in MLS enhancement; agreement to update the Funding Strategy; and adoption of a realistic budget.

Cameroon, on behalf of Africa, underscored the need for: an effective and transparent MLS; successful negotiations on revising the SMTA; and a working group on farmers' rights. He expressed readiness to discuss expansion of Annex I, provided that certain conditions are met. He particularly highlighted the need to enhance BSF disbursements, and address access to digital sequence information, including protected technologies.

Indonesia, on behalf of Asia, and Australia, for South West Pacific, supported the appointment of Kent Nnadozie as Secretary for the next biennium and expressed appreciation to former Secretary Shakeel Bhatti. Australia highlighted their financial contribution to support the launch of the fourth BSF cycle.

Southeast Asia Regional Initiatives for Community Empowerment (SEARICE): urged establishing a working group on farmers' rights; supported mandatory user payments at a level fully supporting *in situ* conservation needs; opposed expanding the MLS until a new subscription system has proven to be working; and argued for discussing digital sequence information. A farmers' representative urged immediate action to prevent privatization of seeds through patenting of digital sequence information, and to fully realize farmers' rights.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS: On the agenda (IT/GB-7/17/1 and 2), Africa, supported by the G-77/China, requested adding an agenda item on digital sequence information. The US opposed, pointing to an already heavy agenda; and, with the European Union (EU) and Japan, suggested addressing the issue under "any other matters." Switzerland proposed discussing it in conjunction with the multi-year programme of work (MYPOW). Noting the danger of "a very full agenda becoming a very empty one" if digital sequence information is not addressed early in the meeting, Namibia reminded participants that the issue is not new, and underscored its implications for other agenda items. Brazil noted that the topic is already expected to be discussed under the MLS, GLIS and MYPOW. Following Bureau deliberations during lunchtime, plenary adopted the agenda as amended to include consideration of digital sequence information under the MYPOW.

Plenary then approved Bureau members Cathrine Stephenson, Christiane Deslauriers, and Médi Moungui, as designated by Australia, Canada, and Cameroon, respectively; elected Tetsuya Otomo (Japan) as Rapporteur; and approved the list of observers (IT/GB-7/17/03). Plenary established a credentials committee and a budget committee.

REPORTS: On Friday morning, plenary took note of the Chair's report (IT/GB-7/17/4) and the Secretary's report (IT/GB-7/17/5). Secretary Nnadozie emphasized the significant depletion of resources in the special fund to support participation of developing country delegates and appealed to donors to contribute to the fund.

Plenary met from Monday to Friday under the chairmanship of Muhamad Sabran, and Antonio Sá Ricarte (Brazil), who chaired plenary sessions on Thursday night and Friday morning. The budget committee and contact groups on enhancing the MLS, and farmers' rights met throughout the week. Plenary adopted all resolutions on Friday evening.

2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Plenary discussed this item on Tuesday and Thursday. On Tuesday, the Secretariat presented the relevant document (IT/GB-7/17/6). Many delegates emphasized the Treaty's role in achieving SDG 2.5 (genetic diversity) and 15.6 (fair and equitable benefit-sharing and appropriate access). Brazil and Cameroon, for Africa, said the 2030 Agenda presents opportunities to mobilize resources and establish partnerships for Treaty implementation. Brazil further stressed the need to better communicate the importance of crop genetic diversity to donors and decision makers. The ERG called for a more action-oriented resolution, highlighting the indirect contribution of the Treaty, including its MLS, also to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1 (no poverty), 12 (responsible consumption and production), 13 (climate action) and 17 (partnerships). Argentina underscored the role of innovative agricultural technologies in increasing productivity.

Chile suggested language recognizing farmers' important contribution by maintaining resilient and sustainable agricultural systems. The US requested clarifying that parties, not UN entities, provide information regarding SDG monitoring.

The International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC) underscored the need for free access to genetic information to safeguard farmers' rights. Oxfam stressed challenges, including the extreme concentration of wealth and power, poverty proliferation, dematerialization of genetic resources, the impact of intellectual property rights (IPRs), and the need to protect farmers' rights.

On Thursday, delegates addressed a revised draft resolution. They debated language on: the monitoring process for SDG targets 2.5 and 15.6; financial obligations according to Treaty provisions; an ERG proposal on the MLS contribution to the achievement of the SDGs; and a US proposal to delete reference to farmers' rights in relation to mainstreaming plant genetic diversity into national development strategies. On Friday, plenary adopted the resolution without further discussion.

Final Outcome: In the resolution (IT/GB-7/L1 Rev.2), the GB calls upon parties to: fully implement the Treaty to achieve sustainable agriculture and food security; mainstream plant genetic diversity into their national development strategies, including farmers' rights and sustainable use of PGRFA; and comply with their financial obligations under the Treaty. It further encourages parties to mainstream Treaty implementation into their national programmes related to the 2030 Agenda.

The GB urges parties to regularly revise and update their notifications to the Treaty, and to make efforts to ensure the long-term conservation of PGRFA by 2020. It requests the Secretary to continue raising awareness about the Treaty's contribution in relevant fora, and make available information provided by parties and others to be used in the monitoring process on achieving SDG Targets 2.5 and 15.6.

MULTILATERAL SYSTEM

IMPLEMENTATION: The item was discussed in plenary on Monday and Thursday. On Monday, the Secretariat introduced

relevant documents (IT/GB-7/17/9, 10, 11, and 24). On availability of material in the MLS, the ERG: recommended that the Secretariat increase communications on new notifications to acknowledge parties' efforts and alert users of new material; opposed encouraging voluntary use of Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) of the GLIS for identifying material available; and encouraged reporting on non-Annex I material. The US, for North America, supported inviting voluntary use of DOIs.

ISF requested expanding the reports to include information on the amount of genetic resources that remain within provider countries and those that cross borders, among other issues. CGIAR called for information on the kind of resources that are circulated, and aggregate data on the type of recipients.

On the practice of CGIAR Centers for PGRFA under development, the ERG highlighted unnecessary duplication of reporting requirements. The Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC) supported provision of information on the status of the implementation of the CGIAR Principles on the Management of Intellectual Assets. The US suggested reflecting the procedures and reporting already in place in the CGIAR system. Civil Society expressed concern that CGIAR Centers have applied for patents and plant variety protection without consulting the GB, and called for clear disclosure of their interests and decisions on IPRs. Via Campesina called for the MLS to effectively safeguard farmers' rights and halt restrictions on seeds by profit-oriented companies.

On Thursday, delegates agreed, *inter alia*, on: urging parties to identify at accession level material that is part of the MLS and include passport data in the GLIS; inviting parties to use the World Information and Early Warning System on PGRFA (WIEWS), Genesys, or other existing information systems for the notification of data; appealing to parties and others to make available non-confidential characterization and evaluation data; requesting the Secretariat to provide GB 8 information on germplasm distribution within the MLS, including a separate analysis for parties and Article 15 institutions; subjecting regional training workshops to availability of funds; and noting that the Intellectual Assets Principles explicitly require CGIAR to comply with their ITPGRFA-related obligations and serve as a mechanism for monitoring and compliance.

On Friday, delegates agreed: to eliminate language calling upon developed countries to comply with their obligations to allow developing countries to meet their commitments; and that CGIAR Centers' communications to the Treaty should include cases where "germplasm, or parts thereof," are the subject matter of patent or plant variety protection applications.

Final Outcome: The final resolution (IT/GB-7/17/L5 Rev.3) contains five parts: availability of material in the MLS; MLS operations; practice of the CGIAR Centers for PGRFA under development; operation of the Third Party Beneficiary; and reviews and assessments under the MLS and of the implementation and operation of the SMTA.

On the availability of material in the MLS, the GB:

- urges parties that have not yet done so to identify at accession level the material that forms part of the MLS and include the respective passport data into GLIS, inviting parties to use WIEWS, Genesys, or other existing information systems, as well as to use, on a voluntary basis, the DOIs of GLIS as one of the identification methods;
- emphasizes the importance of collections that are fully characterized and evaluated, appealing to parties, and natural and legal persons, to make them available in the MLS, together with the relevant non-confidential characterization and evaluation data; and
- requests the Secretariat to update, for GB 8, the report on availability of material in the MLS.

Regarding MLS operations, the GB invites parties and relevant international organizations to make available resources and collaborate with the Secretariat in the organization of training programmes and workshops on the MLS, and requests the Secretariat to:

- provide for GB 8 information on the germplasm distribution within the MLS, including separate analysis for parties and Article 15 institutions;
- organize regional training workshops to support parties in strengthening the operations of the MLS and the SMTA; and
- continue collaboration with Bioversity International and work with the CGIAR Centers to build capacities to implement the MLS and report on SMTAs.

On the practice of the CGIAR Centers for PGRFA under development, the GB invites the CGIAR System to provide the GB annual reports concerning the status of implementation of the CGIAR Principles on the Management of Intellectual Assets, including in cases where the germplasm the CGIAR Centers manage, parts thereof, or information generated from its use are the subject matter of patent or plant variety protection application or is included in partnerships that qualify as restricted use of limited exclusivity agreements.

On reviews and assessments under the MLS and of the implementation and operation of the SMTA, the GB decides to undertake the relevant reviews and assessments at GB 8.

ENHANCEMENT OF FUNCTIONING OF THE MLS AND PROPOSAL FOR AMENDMENT: This item was discussed in plenary on Monday and Friday; and in a contact group chaired by Javad Mozafari (Iran) and Bert Visser (the Netherlands) from Monday through Thursday, as well as during informal consultations.

Amendment to the Treaty: On Monday, Switzerland introduced an amendment to the Treaty's Annex I proposing it cover all PGRFA (IT/GB-7/17/8), recommending its adoption in conjunction with a revision of the SMTA. The ERG and North America supported the proposal, GRULAC opposed it, and the Philippines, for Asia, expressed willingness to consider it. North America preferred amending Annex I and revising the SMTA at the same time but, with the ERG, noted the possibility to discuss a staged approach to expanding the coverage. Namibia, for Africa, stressed that, in the spirit of compromise, the region has agreed to discuss improving benefit-sharing in parallel with expanding the MLS scope. Kenya emphasized that problems in the current functioning of the MLS do not derive from the current Annex I scope. Switzerland stressed the need to enhance the MLS both in terms of benefit-sharing and Annex I coverage.

Revised SMTA: On Monday, the Secretariat introduced the reports of the Working Group (IT/GB-7/17/7 and Add.1); and the Co-Chairs' proposal (IT/GB-7/17/31). France supported a multi-option subscription system, with attractive payment rates. CGIAR cautioned against creating disincentives for public research organizations and small companies. Civil Society considered the proposal from industry to pay in 0.007% of seed revenues generated from Annex I crops inadequate vis-à-vis farmers and future generations.

The contact group focused on outstanding issues in the SMTA: access mechanism, including payment conditions; termination and withdrawal; benefit-sharing, in particular within the subscription system; enforceability; and digital sequence information in relation to the SMTA. Deliberations proceeded on the basis of a dual-access mechanism, including a subscription and single-use access, and focused on: whether to retain both mandatory and voluntary payments; and whether to cover all Annex I crops in a subscription system, or allow for subscription to single crops or categories of crops. Different options were discussed in relation to traceability, expansion of Annex I, and digital sequence information.

On Thursday, the contact group addressed a consolidated text of the draft SMTA proposed by the Co-Chairs, following previous discussions in the contact group. Co-Chairs Mozafari and Visser explained that: the basis of the proposed text is the subscription system with an option for single-use access; efforts have been made to distinguish between "withdrawal" and "termination"; changes have been made to sections on terminology regarding "sales" and "genetic parts or components," rights and obligations of the recipient and subscriber, termination, bankruptcy, amendments to the agreement, rate and modalities of payment, and terms and conditions of the subscription system; and the text is tabled primarily to inform the deliberations, rather than be accepted or rejected. Discussions focused on, *inter alia*: ways to ensure that previous proposals are not lost and that new suggestions can be made in the future; withdrawal; enforcement and damages; more general issues regarding enforceability of the SMTA, also in relation to the Third Party Beneficiary processes; and digital sequence information in relation to benefit-sharing obligations.

Future Process: The contact group also considered a draft resolution, as delegates noted that further work was needed to develop a package of measures. Discussions focused on the Working Group's mandate for the next biennium, including finalization of the SMTA and development of a proposal for a growth plan.

During Friday morning's plenary, contact group Co-Chair Visser reported that the contact group reached agreement on the resolution, and requested a Co-Chairs' summary of discussions to inform intersessional work. Bolivia and Ecuador expressed frustration about parallel contact groups, with Bolivia reserving her right to propose new text in GB 8, and requesting the meeting report reflect her disagreement with the procedure. Delegates agreed to: take note of the work accomplished, rather than "welcoming significant progress made," by the Working Group in the biennium; and recognize that further work is needed to develop the package of measures "contained," rather than "agreed," in Resolution 2/2013. No agreement was reached on extending the mandate of the Working Group for the 2018-2019 biennium, or tasking it to "finalize," or "further work on," the text of the revised SMTA.

During Friday's evening plenary, following informal consultations, Canada expressed preference that the Working Group revise the SMTA, rather than finalize its text, with Namibia suggesting that it should also do so on the basis of proposals that have or may be submitted by parties and stakeholders. Delegates adopted the resolution as amended.

Final Outcome: In the resolution (IT/GB-7/17/L13), the GB:

- welcomes the significant progress made by the Working Group and recognizes that further work is needed to develop the package of measures, and that nothing is agreed until everything is agreed;
- takes note of the proposal from Switzerland to amend Annex I;
- extends the mandate of the Working Group, which will hold two meetings during the next intersessional period, and requests it to: develop a proposal for a growth plan to attain the enhanced MLS, taking into account the relevant annex, as appropriate; revise the SMTA based on the Working Group's report and taking into account the Co-Chairs' summary from GB 7 and their proposed consolidated text for the revised SMTA, and further information and proposals from parties and stakeholders; elaborate criteria and options for possible adaptation of the coverage of the MLS, taking into account proposals presented at GB 7; and liaise with the Committee on the Funding Strategy in its review of the Strategy, including its work on mobilization of funding and other resources for the BSF;
- requests the Secretariat to regularly update the Bureau and parties on the Working Group's work; and
- invites a commitment from all parties to fulfil the mandate of the Working Group and appeals to stakeholders using PRGFA under the Treaty to assist the Working Group in finalizing the process for enhancing the MLS, including by continuing to develop concrete proposals for consideration by the Working Group.

The resolution contains in an annex: a growth plan prepared by the Co-Chairs for GB 7; and the Co-Chairs' summary arising from GB 7, including their proposed consolidated text for the revised SMTA. On the latter, the Co-Chairs report that:

- some members of the contact group wondered if the process to revise the SMTA would meet their expectations regarding the level of benefit-sharing, as well as the necessary transparency regarding the exchange of PGRFA, stating that a more general review of efforts undertaken so far would benefit further intersessional work;
- common understanding has been reached to: develop an effective and balanced dual-access system (subscription system and single-access mechanism); provide access to PGRFA under conditions of mandatory payments only; and finalize a subscription system where the subscription would cover all PGRFA within Annex I;
- the term "withdrawal" was understood to mean an act by the subscriber, and "termination" an act by the Third Party Beneficiary;
- common understanding has been reached to incorporate: a minimum subscription period of 10 years, a withdrawal provision for the subscription system, and a termination provision for both access mechanisms;
- no consensus was reached on the length of any continuing subscription obligation after withdrawal, and the inclusion of a withdrawal option in relation to single access;
- the contact group did not address the payment rates, but stressed their importance in relation to realizing effective benefit-sharing;
- the regions agree that the SMTA should be an enforceable contract, but no consensus was reached on whether the current SMTA provides for effective enforcement measures;
- their proposal made provision for the concept of digital sequence information to be reflected in the revised SMTA through a new definition of genetic parts and components

(which reads "elements of which they are composed or the genetic information/traits that they contain"); and
- no consensus was reached on if and how to reflect issues related to digital sequence information in the text of the revised SMTA.

FUNDING STRATEGY

This item was discussed in plenary on Tuesday and Thursday. On Tuesday, Pierre du Plessis (Namibia) and Alwin Kopse (Switzerland), Co-Chairs of the Advisory Committee on the Funding Strategy, reported on the Committee's work (IT/GB-7/17/12), and the Secretariat introduced the report on implementation of the Funding Strategy (IT/GB-7/17/13). Brazil supported the establishment of new financial targets, while the US, for North America, highlighted any new target "needs to be realistic in its revenue expectations."

North America called for an effective monitoring and evaluation strategy for funded projects, and the ERG supported a results-based framework with clear objectives, indicators and targets linked to relevant SDGs. Canada suggested reporting on the impacts of BSF-funded projects on enhanced PGRFA conservation status and utilization, and on complementarity between on-farm and *ex situ* activities. Honduras, with Indonesia, noted developing countries' willingness to contribute voluntarily to the BSF, which is linked to the need for the Advisory Committee to monitor funded projects and their impacts. Argentina, Chile and Namibia opposed using criteria for country eligibility under the BSF beyond those in the Treaty.

Japan, for Asia, supported the Advisory Committee on the Funding Strategy becoming a standing committee, while the ERG, North America, Australia, and Argentina disagreed. The ISF emphasized the need to recognize different forms of non-monetary benefit-sharing as part of the Committee's renewed mandate. Civil Society recommended considering expansion of Annex I only after three years of operation of the renewed funding strategy.

On Thursday, delegates debated, among other issues, whether: the Committee meetings will be funded by the core budget, and BSF project reports should provide references to the genetic diversity of the crops in question and the complementarity between on-farm and *ex situ* conservation.

Final Outcome: The final resolution (IT/GB-7/17/L9 Rev.2) contains sections on: review and implementation of the Funding Strategy.

Regarding the review of the Funding Strategy, the GB decides to:
- update the Funding Strategy so as to improve funding opportunities, strengthen linkages between funding sources and partners, and provide for a process for monitoring, evaluating and learning;
- adopt the new vision for the Funding Strategy to secure funding in a long-term, coordinated, synergistic and effective manner;
- rename the Committee as the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Funding Strategy and Resource Mobilization and reconvene it, with two representatives from each region and a revised mandate to: develop the updated Funding Strategy, including the Results Framework for GB 8 consideration; advise on resource mobilization efforts and on leveraging funding and developing synergies; improve communication and visibility of funding tools; recommend measures to promote the delivery of non-monetary benefit-sharing; and develop terms of reference for a potential standing committee on the funding strategy and resource mobilization for GB 8 consideration;
- include the costs of up to two meetings of the committee in the core budget; and
- include only criteria established in the Treaty as eligibility criteria for the use of funds under direct GB control.

The GB:
- takes note of the annotated outline for an updated Funding Strategy, annexed to the report of the Committee for GB 7 (IT/GB-7/17/12);
- requests the Secretariat to develop a reporting format based on the draft matrix of funding tools, contained in Appendix 2 of the Annotated Outline; and
- requests parties to provide information on bilateral programmes and funding for national and regional PGRFA activities to inform the finalization of the updated Funding Strategy.

Regarding the implementation of the Funding Strategy, the GB:
- welcomes the financial contributions by parties and the seed sector in the fourth round of the BSF project cycle, as well as by parties to the Fund for Agreed Purposes and other funds;
- emphasizes the importance of continuing the work on resource mobilization, communication and promotion to enhance funding for, and the visibility of, the BSF and the Funding Strategy, stressing the importance of communicating the results of projects funded by previous cycles and ongoing work, and recommending the provision of concrete references to the genetic diversity of the crops species worked with; and
- requests the Secretariat to evaluate the need for a donor conference until the review of the Funding Strategy is finalized.

The annotated outline for an updated Funding Strategy includes: its rationale and vision; a programmatic approach to enable Treaty implementation; instruments under the direct control of the GB; a framework of results; and a matrix of funding tools and the areas and programmes under the Treaty.

FARMERS' RIGHTS

This item was discussed in plenary on Tuesday and Friday, in a Friends of the Chair group on Tuesday evening, and in a contact group from Wednesday to Friday afternoon. On Tuesday, the Secretariat presented the report on the implementation on farmers' rights (IT/GB-7/17/17), drawing attention to the finalization and publication of the educational module on farmers' rights, which was welcomed by many delegates.

The US, Canada, and Australia emphasized that implementation of farmers' rights under Article 9 falls under national responsibility. Uruguay underscored the need for specific recommendations to support smallholder farmers and realize their rights as custodians of genetic resources. Zimbabwe emphasized the need to respect farmers' rights through the development of dispute-settlement mechanisms and ensure coherence with other international instruments. Honduras called for supporting farmers to obtain high-quality seeds regulated by national laws on certified seeds. Peru underscored prior informed consent for traditional knowledge utilization. The ERG suggested inviting parties to review and adjust their national measures affecting the realization of farmers' rights. India drew attention to national policies, including farmers' rights to: register farmer crop varieties as breeders; save and use seeds as cultivators; and receive compensation for landraces as conservers. The

African Seed Association underscored the need to protect new varieties with IPRs, and farmers' right to good-quality seeds from improved and new varieties.

On relevant international processes, Switzerland noted that the intersessional process should identify areas of interrelation between the Treaty, the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV), and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). UPOV outlined the conclusions of the 2016 Symposium of possible interrelations between the Treaty and UPOV (IT/GB-7/17/Inf.14), and noted UPOV's decision to review the "Frequently Asked Question" on the interrelations between the two treaties. The European Seed Association welcomed collaboration with UPOV, and lamented lack of stakeholder participation in consultations on farmers' rights. Bolivia suggested acknowledging relevant work under the UN Human Rights Council.

On intersessional work, Indonesia, also on behalf of Norway, reported on the outcome of the Global Consultation on Farmers' Rights (IT/GB-7/17/Circ.1), which included a proposal to establish a working group. Ghana for Africa, Argentina for GRULAC, Sudan for the Near East, Norway, IPC, and Via Campesina supported establishing a working group to develop guidelines for national implementation. Australia, the US, and Canada opposed. Africa said the working group should also address, among others: policies supporting seed-sharing practices and farmer seed systems; measures that parties can choose from to implement farmers' rights; and participatory approaches. Switzerland noted that the intersessional process should be party-driven and include development of: a study on best practices and lessons learned; development of terms of reference for producing guidance for national implementation; and voluntary options for farmers' rights implementation. The CGIAR expressed commitment to support the development of voluntary guidelines on farmers' rights. Highlighting that farmers are the principal actors on this issue, Civil Society supported a working group including representatives of farmers' associations, social movements and NGOs; and called for a study on the impacts of digital sequence information on farmers' rights.

In Thursday's contact group, delegates discussed the terms of reference for a working group, technical expert group or advisory committee. They considered whether the group should: produce an inventory of national measures that may be adopted, best practices, and lessons learned for the realization of farmers' rights; and develop, in an inclusive and participatory manner, voluntary guidelines on the realization of farmers' rights at the national level, with a regional group requesting to clarify that the guidelines be non-prescriptive. A delegate preferred that the group consider options for encouraging and promoting the realization of farmers' rights based on the inventory, instead of developing guidelines. After much deliberation, delegates agreed the group will comprise up to five government representatives per region, up to three farmers, and up to three other stakeholders.

During Friday morning's plenary, contact group Co-Chair Regine Andersen (Norway) reported on agreement to establish an *ad hoc* technical expert group on farmers' rights with a mandate to produce: an inventory of national measures that may be adopted, best practices and lessons learned for realization of farmers' rights under Article 9; and options for encouraging, guiding and promoting the realization of farmers' rights. Delegates debated language on submissions of experiences and best practices as examples of possible options for national implementation of Article 9 for the expert group's inventory of national measures. Parties agreed to eliminate references to submitting electronic copies of legislation on the implementation of farmers' rights, and requesting a Secretariat study on lessons learned from the implementation of farmers' rights. Delegates also debated language on funding, with the US stressing that the group should not be funded out of the core budget. Following another meeting of the contact group in the afternoon to finalize language on the relationship with UPOV and ongoing work at the UN Human Rights Council on a declaration on the rights of peasants, Friday evening's plenary adopted the revised draft resolution with minor amendments.

Final Outcome: In the final resolution (IT/GB-7/17/L12 Rev.1), the GB invites parties to:

- consider developing national action plans for the implementation of farmers' rights;
- consider reviewing and, if necessary, adjusting national measures affecting the realization of farmers' rights, in particular regarding variety release and seed distribution;
- engage farmers' organizations and relevant stakeholders regarding the realization of farmers' rights; and
- promote sustainable biodiverse production systems and facilitate participatory approaches, such as community seed banks, community biodiverse registries, participatory plant breeding, and seed fairs.

In addition, the GB, among others:

- invites parties and stakeholders, especially farmers' organizations, to submit views, experiences, and best practices as examples of possible options for national implementation of farmers' rights;
- requests the Secretariat to continue the Joint Capacity Building Programme, and its relationship with UPOV, and explore possible interrelations with WIPO, in an inclusive and participatory manner;
- requests the Secretariat to follow processes relevant to farmers' rights within and outside FAO; and
- notes the ongoing work of the Human Rights Council on a possible declaration on the rights of peasants.

The resolution includes in an annex the terms of reference for an *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group on Farmers Rights, which may consider the proceedings from the Global Consultation on Farmers' Rights, Bali 2016, as well as other relevant consultations, and will:

- produce an inventory of national measures that may be adopted, best practices, and lessons learned;
- develop options for encouraging, guiding and promoting the realization of farmers' rights;
- comprise up to five members designated from each region, up to three representatives of farmers' organizations, and up to three other stakeholders, including the seed sector; and
- report back to GB 8.

GLOBAL INFORMATION SYSTEM

This item was discussed in plenary on Tuesday and Friday. On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced relevant documents (IT/GB-7/17/14 and 15). Axel Diederichsen (Canada), Co-Chair of the Scientific Advisory Committee on GLIS, reported on the committee's meetings, stressing the need for further work on the Digital Object Identifiers system and on processes to facilitate participation of more PGRFA holders and users.

Brazil called for: building capacity in developing countries to increase the use of available information and facilitate access to PGRFA-related information by farmers; and exploring ways to prevent the utilization of digital sequence information that leads to bypassing the Treaty's benefit-sharing requirements. The ERG called for strategic partnerships to avoid duplication of efforts, including with WIEWS on PGRFA and the reporting system for the Second Global Plan of Action on PGRFA. Canada stressed communication and interaction with relevant organizations and initiatives. The ERG and the US stressed the Scientific Advisory Committee should provide scientific and technical advice on digital sequence information related to GLIS implementation.

Uganda, for Africa, emphasized broader consultation with agricultural communities, noted that efforts on digital sequence information should focus on triggering benefit-sharing, and called on the Treaty to take the lead in engaging with relevant discussions in other fora. Egypt, for the Near East, highlighted their regional workshop (May 2017, Cairo, Egypt), which encouraged the use of standards and criteria for the facilitation of PGRFA registration in GLIS.

Noting that information on identity, location and transfer of PGRFA is useful to identify cases of biopiracy, Civil Society warned that digital sequence information poses an existential threat to the Treaty, and added that scientists would often "rather share a toothbrush than data they think is valuable." Via Campesina stressed that access to digital sequence information may lead to violating the Treaty provisions on farmers' rights. Namibia, with Brazil, opposed by Australia, proposed text recognizing the need for legal clarity about the use of digital sequence information and related benefit-sharing obligations.

Delegates discussed a potential memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the Treaty and DivSeek. The US and the ERG supported developing an MoU, while the ETC Group stated serious concerns about DivSeek's lack of competence in understanding farmers' needs.

Following continued deliberations and informal consultations, on Friday evening, plenary adopted the revised resolution.

Final Outcome: In the resolution (IT/GB-7/17/L11 Rev.1), the GB welcomes the voluntary use of the Digital Object Identifiers and the publication of Descriptors and Digital Object Identifiers Guidelines, and requests the Secretariat to:

- intensify efforts to use the system as a central element of GLIS, linking to existing information systems, and to provide pointers from GLIS to PGRFA-related information in existing systems and avoid duplication;
- interact with a broad range of user categories to define through user cases the user-oriented entry points in the portal, and facilitate, on a voluntary basis, the incorporation of Digital Object Identifiers into the workflow of existing databases and systems;
- develop a detailed master plan describing prioritized desired functionalities of the GLIS;
- link the GLIS and provide pointers to: PGRFA in *ex situ* collections documented in Genesys and WIEWS; on-farm management of PGRFA in the monitoring system of the Global Plan of Action; and open research data from the DivSeek contributions; and
- invite DivSeek to report on its activities for 2018-2019 for GB 8 consideration.

Furthermore, the GB decides to include in the terms of reference of the GLIS Scientific Advisory Committee for 2018-2019: the review of the master plan and the activities for collaboration with partners; and the consideration of scientific and technical issues of relevance to genetic sequence information, as far as it is generated from PGRFA use and related to GLIS implementation, with any proposals for review of the work programme recommended by the Committee to be submitted to GB 8 for consideration.

SUSTAINABLE USE

This item was discussed in plenary on Tuesday and Thursday. On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced the relevant document (IT/GB-7/17/16).

On approaches to sustainable use, Via Campesina called for addressing the issue of digital sequence information also in relation to sustainable use. ISF recommended recognizing the contribution of the private sector to sustainable use. Bolivia, with Namibia, proposed regional capacity-building workshops also on sustainable biodiverse production systems. On Friday morning, delegates agreed to add reference to: producing "documentation and reporting thereon," regarding the organization of regional capacity-building workshops; and reducing parties' reporting "duplication."

On links with other international processes, several delegates supported exploring the possibility of establishing a joint programme on biodiversity in agriculture for sustainable use in PGRFA with other organizations, with Brazil suggesting a link with the FAO platform on mainstreaming biodiversity in the agricultural sector. On Friday morning, plenary agreed on cooperating with CGRFA in supporting the finalization of draft voluntary guidelines for farmers' varieties/landraces.

On the link with farmers' rights, Zambia for Africa, the ERG, Brazil, and Bioversity International emphasized the link with farmers' rights, with the Philippines requesting policy guidance on developing national legislation to implement Treaty provisions on sustainable use and farmers' rights. On Thursday, the US cautioned against references to farmers' rights until a resolution on that topic is addressed. On Friday morning, delegates agreed to delete reference to farmers' rights.

On intersessional work, Namibia, Zambia, Libya, Ecuador, Yemen, Uruguay, Bolivia, and others, opposed by Canada and the ERG, recommended reconvening the Technical Committee on Sustainable Use. Civil Society urged prioritizing work on farmers' rights and providing core-budget funding for the proposed working group on farmers' rights. On Friday morning, delegates in favor of reconvening the Committee agreed to it being subject to availability of funds. The US opposed, suggesting that GB 8 decide whether it is necessary to reconvene it. Ecuador further proposed, opposed by the US, amending the terms of reference for the Committee to "elaborate a proposal for a joint programme on biodiversity in agriculture for sustainable use of PGRFA, involving relevant international organizations and other stakeholders, with a view to enhancing the mission and goals of the programme of work on sustainable use beyond 2019 through the establishment of a long-term programme 2020-2030 for consideration at GB 8."

On Friday evening, delegates adopted the revised draft resolution with minor amendments.

Final Outcome: In the final resolution (IT/GB-7/17/L2 Rev.2), the GB decides to reconvene the *Ad Hoc* Technical Committee on Sustainable Use, which will meet electronically, and, if necessary, hold one meeting in person in the next biennium. It also requests the Secretariat, among others, to:

- continue cooperating with, *inter alia,* the FAO, the CBD, international agricultural research centers; the private sector, and civil society;
- cooperate with the CGRFA in its work, among others, on voluntary guidelines, global networking, and global targets and indicators regarding sustainable use;
- explore the possibility of establishing a joint programme on biodiversity in agriculture for sustainable use of PGRFA;
- organize regional capacity-building workshops on topics such as participatory plant breeding, community seed bank development, sustainable biodiverse production systems and promoting the value of farmers' varieties; and
- support national programmes in policy development and convene regional meetings on advancing sustainable use.

MULTI-YEAR PROGRAMME OF WORK

The item was discussed in plenary on Wednesday and Friday. On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced the relevant document, including a draft MYPOW for 2018-2025 (IT/GB-7/17/26). Ecuador underlined the importance of farmers' rights, and Brazil and Namibia urged addressing the implications of use of digital sequence information for Treaty implementation. The ERG and the US called for simplification and prioritization of activities already agreed upon by the GB.

Iran emphasized the need to identify whether the MYPOW refers to the GB or the entire set of Treaty activities. Cameroon expressed preference for a flexible MYPOW for the GB. Canada and Iran drew attention to the CGRFA MYPOW as an example. Namibia, with Switzerland, underscored the relationship between MYPOW drafting and discussions on the programmatic approach on the Funding Strategy.

Noting that adoption of a MYPOW may not be feasible at this session, delegates debated whether to establish a contact group or an intersessional working group. They eventually agreed to task the Bureau with working alongside the Secretariat to finalize the MYPOW. Via Campesina, Civil Society, and IPC called for a MYPOW that provides sufficient means to fully debate, support and implement farmers' rights.

DIGITAL SEQUENCE INFORMATION: The item was discussed on Monday and on Wednesday through Friday.

On Wednesday, Cameroon, for Africa, introduced a proposal to: endeavor to include digital sequence information on PGRFA in the MYPOW as a work stream leading to a substantive discussion at GB 8 and keeping it on the agenda in the future; request the Secretariat to share the outputs of work in other fora; invite governments and stakeholders to provide information on terminology, actors involved, and types and extent of uses for GB 8 consideration; request the Secretariat to evaluate and follow up on areas for additional investigation identified in the scoping study on the implications of new synthetic biology and genomics research trajectories presented at the special event on genomics information held prior to GB 7; invite users of digital sequence information on PGRFA obtained from the MLS who derive benefits from its utilization to make substantial voluntary contributions to the BSF, pending clarification of their benefit-sharing obligations; and set up an advisory expert group to meet once before GB 8. Brazil, Bolivia, Argentina, Peru, and Civil Society supported the proposal. Bolivia called for discussing impacts on access, use, benefit-sharing, and farmers' rights. Iran underscored the need to consider the issue in the SMTA and in other aspects of benefit-sharing, calling upon the Secretariat to explore ways to make it compatible with the Treaty activities, and cooperate with other fora.

The US recommended focusing GB 7 discussions on procedural aspects, called for collaboration with other fora, and opposed creating an expert group. Estonia, for the EU, supported by Australia, Japan, and the ISF, stated that the ITPGRFA applies to physical material, therefore digital sequence information is outside the Treaty's scope; and the Treaty should promote free availability of, and wide access to, digital sequence information as part of benefit-sharing. With Switzerland and Canada, she called on the Secretariat to engage in ongoing work under the CGRFA and CBD, and report on progress at GB 8.

Namibia, with Ecuador, stressed that genetic resource utilization through sequencing and genetic manipulation entails benefit-sharing obligations, noting that genetic resources "re-materialized" on the basis of digital information are genetic resources in every sense of the term. The CBD highlighted ongoing cooperation with the Treaty, noting that the Treaty and CGRFA Secretariats participate in the expert group established at the thirteenth meeting of the CBD Conference of the Parties. The ISF cautioned against misguided actions, which could hamper conservation and research.

Emphasizing that there is no point in enhancing the MLS if sequences are privatized to the benefit of a few, Civil Society stressed that utilization of digital sequence information with no benefit-sharing breaks the relationship between seeds and farmers. He further underscored the ethical dimensions of patenting digital sequence information by certain CGIAR Centers. Highlighting the fast pace of scientific developments, DivSeek supported establishing an expert group. Via Campesina called for farmer participation in a potential advisory expert group. The International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) noted that their patented traits: do not affect availability of MLS accessions or provision of improved seed to farmers; and ensure that commercial exploitation of varieties comprising the protected traits lead to monetary benefits to the MLS.

On Thursday, delegates debated whether to address the issue in a self-standing resolution or in the resolution on the MYPOW.

On the African proposal, Africa suggested including references to the relevant decisions under the Nagoya Protocol and the CGRFA. Cautioning against duplication of work, the ERG called for engaging in ongoing work under the CBD and CGRFA, to ensure PGRFA perspectives are taken into account, and reporting on progress at GB 8. The ERG proposed requesting the Secretariat to provide the draft scoping report on potential implications of new synthetic biology and genomic research trajectories on the ITPGRFA to the CBD and CGRFA Secretariats to inform their processes. The ERG and the US proposed deleting language on: keeping the issue on the agenda after GB 8; evaluating and following up on the identified areas for additional investigation in the scoping report; establishing an expert advisory group; and urging users of digital sequence information on PGRFA obtained from the MLS, who derive benefits from its utilization, to make voluntary contributions to the BSF. The US further suggested deleting language linking digital sequence information to Treaty implementation. Bolivia, opposed by the US, proposed adding reference to "new emerging applications/uses of digital material" alongside any reference to digital sequence information.

On Friday, Africa reiterated his proposal to note Decision 2/14 of the Nagoya Protocol Meeting of the Parties (MOP) on digital sequence information alongside the relevant CBD decision, to which delegates agreed. The US, supported by the ERG, requested deletion of language inviting users of digital sequence information obtained through the MLS to make voluntary payments to the BSF. The paragraph was deleted, with Africa noting that compulsory payments may be developed and included in the system.

Final Outcome: In the final resolution on the MYPOW (IT/GB-7/17/L10 Rev.1), the GB notes CBD Conference of the Parties (COP) Decision XIII/16 and Nagoya Protocol MOP Decision 2/14, as well as the work stream established at CGRFA 16 on digital sequence information, with a footnote stating that terminology is subject to further discussion. The GB requests the Bureau to develop the MYPOW for the GB, for consideration at GB 8; and decides to consider the potential implications of the use of digital sequence information for the Treaty objectives at GB 8, considering inclusion of the issue in the MYPOW.

The GB further invites governments, stakeholders and individuals with relevant expertise to provide information on, *inter alia*, terminology used, actors involved with, and types and extent of uses of digital sequence information on PGRFA such as characterization, breeding and genetic improvement, conservation, and PGRFA identification, as well as the relevance of digital sequence information on PGRFA for food security and nutrition to facilitate consideration at GB 8 of the potential implications of the use of digital sequence information for the objectives of the Treaty.

The GB requests the Secretariat to: compile the views received and make them available to parties to inform GB 8 discussions; continue following relevant discussions in other fora and to coordinate with CBD and CGRFA Secretariats to ensure coherence and avoid duplication of efforts; and inform the GB of the outcomes of the CBD and CGRFA processes as they relate to the potential implications of the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources for the objectives of the Treaty.

COMPLIANCE

The item was discussed in plenary from Wednesday to Friday. On Wednesday, Amparo Ampil (the Philippines), Compliance Committee Vice-Chair, presented the Committee's report (IT/GB-7/17/18). Many delegates urged parties to submit their compliance reports, lamenting that only 14 reports have been received to date. The US, for North America, proposed the Compliance Committee consider holding its meeting electronically, and that the funding of Committee member participation be subject to available resources. The ERG, supported by Canada, proposed the compliance report format be harmonized with that used under the Second Global Plan of Action on PGRFA.

Final Outcome: In the final resolution (IT/GB-7/17/L3 Rev.2), the GB:

- urges parties to submit their compliance reports, noting they are to be submitted every five years;
- requests the Compliance Committee to review the standard reporting format, considering harmonization with the FAO's Second Global Plan of Action for PGRFA;
- reiterates the Committee's role to offer parties advice and legal assistance, when requested; and
- invites the Committee to hold at least one meeting in the next biennium, if needed, either electronically or in person.

COOPERATION

CBD: The item was discussed in plenary on Wednesday and Thursday. On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced the relevant document (IT/GB-7/17/19). The CBD Secretariat reported on relevant outcomes of the 2016 Cancún Biodiversity Conference, including on: mainstreaming biodiversity in the agricultural sector; the preparatory process for following up on the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020; and intersessional work on digital sequence information.

Many expressed support for continued cooperation with the CBD. India, for Asia, urged greater international engagement on the GLIS, benefit-sharing, and the SDGs. The ERG emphasized attention to programmes that will support Treaty implementation during the seventh replenishment of the Global Environment Facility (GEF-7) and development of strategic guidance for GEF-8, which was eventually resolved during Thursday's evening session. The ETC Group called for increased cooperation with the CBD on digital sequence information. Brazil suggested a footnote in the resolution regarding the current lack of consensus on the terminology around digital sequence information. Canada promoted the application of DNA sequence-based technology for the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources. IPC noted the Treaty should cooperate with the CBD to examine ways to ban all IPRs that limit access to PGRFA of the MLS or farmers' rights.

On Thursday, Canada requested bracketing reference to CBD Article 8(j) (traditional knowledge), in requesting cooperation with the CBD on developments and practical implementation experiences, and Namibia suggested reference to the Nagoya Protocol in relation to engagement in capacity-building activities on harmonious and mutually supportive implementation with the CBD. These were resolved during the evening session.

Final Outcome: In the resolution (IT/GB-7/17/L4 Rev.2), the GB requests the Secretariat to:

- continue monitoring and participating in the relevant CBD and Nagoya Protocol processes, to promote appropriate interfaces among them, including the development of criteria for specialized instruments under the Nagoya Protocol;
- develop, together with the Bureau and the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Funding Strategy and Resource Mobilization, strategic guidance for GEF-8;
- continue collaborating and coordinate with the Secretariats of the CBD, CGRFA, and other partners on digital sequence information issues for coherence and mutual supportiveness in their respective activities;
- cooperate with the CBD Secretariat by providing information on developments within the Treaty to inform future discussions on CBD Article 8(j) and Nagoya Protocol Article 10; and
- continue exploring technical options for increasing GLIS visibility with regard to the ABS Clearing-House in areas of mutual interest for the parties' and users' benefit.

CROP TRUST: The item was discussed in plenary on Wednesday and Thursday. On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced the relevant document (IT/GB-7/17/20). The Crop Trust presented the Trust's report (IT/GB-7/17/21). Ecuador requested the Trust prioritize national genebanks and databases. The ERG emphasized the importance of the world's *ex situ* collections uploading their materials to Genesys while Brazil underscored the need for balance between *ex situ* and *in situ* conservation. Via Campesina stressed that farmers do not need improved seeds, highlighting that community seed banks are the

most secure way of achieving conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA. The ETC Group called for a new funding window under the Trust focused on farmers and communities. Replying to the Third World Network, the Crop Trust indicated that they do not currently intend to fund DivSeek. On Thursday, following a brief discussion, delegates retained text on collaboration between the Trust and the Treaty on development of standards for quality management of MLS material.

Final Outcome: In the resolution (IT/GB-7/17/L7 Rev.2), the GB:

- requests the Chair and Secretariat to inform the Trust's Executive Board on the GB decisions to update the Treaty's Funding Strategy;
- provides policy guidance to the Trust on resource mobilization, scientific and technical matters, the GLIS, and communication and outreach;
- invites the Trust to continue supporting the work of the *Ad Hoc* Advisory Committee on the Funding Strategy;
- invites the Trust to continue and expand cooperation with the Secretariat to mobilize technical support for the orderly maintenance of the genetic resource collections held under ITPGRFA Article 15;
- encourages the Trust to support synergies in its activities with the programme of work on the GLIS;
- recommends the Secretariat to formalize GLIS-Genesys synergies through a MoU;
- recommends the Trust to submit relevant information on any potential implications of the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources for the three objectives of the Treaty; and
- recommends the Trust, with the Treaty, to develop outreach and communication products on PGRFA's contribution to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

CGRFA: The item was discussed in plenary on Wednesday. CGRFA Secretary Irene Hoffmann introduced the document (IT/GB-7/17/22). Delegates encouraged continued cooperation, with Brazil stressing the importance of collaboration on reporting systems and Senegal prioritizing collaboration on reporting and the GLIS. The ERG requested reporting on the advantages and disadvantages of a common information system at GB 8. Canada noted the creation of a new FAO Department on Climate, Biodiversity, Land, and Water, hosting both CGRFA and ITPGRFA and allowing for greater integration and coherence.

Civil Society welcomed cooperation with a mutual focus on promoting farmers' seed systems protected by farmers' rights. IPC called for information and support to enable participation of smallholder farmers and indigenous peoples; and stressed that work on technical guidelines on farmers' varieties/landraces and global networking on *in situ* conservation and on-farm management of PGRFA must respect local knowledge.

Final Outcome: In the resolution (IT/GB-7/17/L8 Rev.2), the GB requests the Secretariat to collaborate with the CGRFA Secretariat to:

- assist countries identify and raise awareness of features and practices of subsectors of GRFA in the context of the Elements to Facilitate Domestic Implementation of ABS for Different Subsectors of genetic resources for food and agriculture;
- promote coherence in the development and implementation of the two bodies' respective programmes of work, and, in particular, regarding ABS, the GLIS, and WIEWS, and the monitoring and implementation of the Second Global Plan of Action for PGRFA, including work on voluntary guidelines on farmers' varieties/landraces and global networking on *in situ* conservation and on-farm management of PGRFA.

The GB also:

- welcomes the establishment of the new FAO Department on Climate, Biodiversity, Land, and Water, noting that this will strengthen collaboration between the Treaty and the Commission;
- welcomes the invitation to coordinate with the Commission to address in a complementary way the distinctive features and specific uses of PGRFA, and to exchange information regularly on the process of enhancing the MLS to avoid duplication of efforts; and
- requests the Treaty and CGRFA Secretariats to explore technical options that allow users of one system to either refer to or use information previously submitted to the other system.

OTHER BODIES: The item was discussed in plenary on Wednesday and Thursday. On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced the relevant report (IT/GB-7/17/25) and Norway presented the report on the management of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault (IT/GB-7/17/25 Add.1), including an invitation to the GB Chair to act as Chair of the meetings of the International Advisory Panel of the Seed Vault.

Canada and the ERG emphasized that the Vault's role as a safety net was confirmed in 2015 when the International Center for Agriculture Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) retrieved part of its heritage seed collection lost during the war in Syria.

Rwanda highlighted CGIAR's contribution to the MLS, noting that four million samples have been distributed worldwide from 2007 to 2016. Civil Society urged the GB to: ensure full disclosure of patent applications and related policy changes by the CGIAR; and request suspension of any further CGIAR patent applications until the GB gives its consent, and, together with farmers organizations, urged the Secretariat to "take bolder initiatives" in engaging with UPOV and WIPO.

The Secretariat outlined reports from institutions with agreements with the GB (IT/GB-7/17/24), including Costa Rica's Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center's (CATIE) decision to discontinue their genebank. Argentina, for GRULAC, expressed hope that CATIE's material can continue to be effectively managed. Brazil, on Thursday, proposed text taking note of the Treaty's collaboration with the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR).

Jordan underscored the need for an adaptation strategy, calling for *in situ* conservation. Malaysia highlighted programmes impacting the conservation and sustainable utilization of PGRFA, with delegates debating whether to refer to "use" or "utilization" of PGRFA on Thursday; and called for more capacity-building activities in developing countries. IPC suggested cooperation between the Treaty and the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

Final Outcome: In the resolution (IT/GB-7/17/L6 Rev.2), the GB requests the Secretariat to:

- continue strengthening the collaboration with the African Union Commission and seek opportunities to establish cooperation with other relevant regional organizations and institutions;
- facilitate parties' initiatives to strengthen harmonious and mutually supportive implementation with the Treaty, to promote policy coherence and improve efficiency at all levels;
- continue, strengthen, and expand the collaboration with Bioversity International, the CBD Secretariat, and the ABS

Capacity Development Initiative in their support to parties in implementing the Treaty;
- continue participating actively in the Biodiversity Liaison Group's relevant activities; and
- continue attending relevant meetings of UPOV, and the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge, and Folklore of WIPO, subject to the availability of financial resources.

On Article 15 Institutions, the GB: requests the Secretariat to hold consultations with Article 15 institutions on implementation of the agreements and policy guidance; takes note of the ongoing efforts to secure the international collections; requests the Secretariat to continue exercising their Article 15 responsibilities in collaboration with host governments and relevant institutions capable of providing technical support to these efforts; and invites parties, donors, and other stakeholders to provide necessary financial and material support to facilitate these efforts.

On the management of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, the GB: renews its commitment and support to the Svalbard Seed Vault; welcomes the invitation of Norway for the GB Chairperson to act as the Chairperson of the Seed Vault's International Advisory Panel; and requests the Secretariat to further explore with Norway other practical means to enhance linkages between the Treaty and the Svalbard Seed Vault.

WORK PROGRAMME AND BUDGET

On Monday, the Secretariat introduced documents on the work programme and budget for the next biennium (IT/GB-7/17/27, 27 Add.1, 28 and 28 Add.1-2). The budget committee met throughout the week. On Friday, Matthew Worrell (Australia), Co-Chair of the budget committee presented the proposed budget for the next biennium, noting that it is appropriate for the full delivery of the Treaty's programme. Delegates adopted the work programme and budget, as well as the indicative scale of contributions, without amendments.

Final Outcome: In the final resolution (unnumbered), the GB:
- urges parties to provide resources to the core budget, including those that made no, or limited, contributions in previous biennia, and invites non-parties and other entities to also contribute;
- recommends project proposals and invites donor governments and institutions to provide funding for their implementation;
- approves the level of the Working Capital Reserve at US$580,000, noting that parties who have not contributed will be requested to do so by separate voluntary contributions;
- approves the Secretariat staffing structure for the next biennium;
- takes note of the provisional proposed contribution from FAO of US$2,000,000 and invites FAO to minimize administrative burdens; and
- encourages parties and other donors to replenish the Fund to Support the Participation of Developing Countries in the amount of US$700,000 for the next biennium, as well as parties to contribute to the Trust Fund for Agreed Purposes.

The GB further requests the Secretariat to: continue to seek opportunities to hold Treaty meetings back-to-back with other relevant meetings to cut expenses; identify and use the most cost-effective ways to undertake its activities; and report on progress on income, expenditures and adjustments to the current budget.

Annexed to the resolution and referring to the next biennium are: the core budget and work programme, totaling US$7,809,269; maintenance and core implementing functions; possible donor-funded supporting projects; the Secretariat staffing table; and the indicative scale of contributions by country.

APPOINTMENT OF THE SECRETARY

This item was discussed in plenary on Thursday and Friday. Annick van Houtte, FAO Legal Office, reported that the FAO Director-General selected Kent Nnadozie (Nigeria) for the position of GB Secretary for two years, subject to confirmation by the GB (IT/GB-7/17/29). All regional groups approved the appointment of Kent Nnadozie. North America and South West Pacific stressed that the exceptional process for Secretary selection in 2016 must not create a precedent for future appointments.

Van Houtte outlined a proposed new long-term procedure for the appointment and renewal of the Secretary (IT/GB-7/17/30), underscoring that the Treaty indicates that the GB Secretary shall be appointed by the FAO Director-General, with GB approval. Cameroon, for Africa, supported subjecting the appointment to FAO standard procedure, cautioning against politicizing the process. Indonesia, for Asia, called for: ensuring transparency in shortlisting; and, supported by Iran, for the Near East, and Ecuador, including all Bureau members on the selection committee. The ERG recommended that the selection panel should: comprise more party representatives; ensure gender balance; and, supported by the Near East, shortlist a maximum of three candidates. The US, supported by Ecuador, Australia, and Brazil, considered it premature to adopt the procedure proposed by FAO. Australia, supported by the ERG, proposed that the Bureau be tasked with reaching a compromise.

On Friday, delegates adopted the report of the meeting, which includes a section on this item.

Final Outcome: In the report of the meeting (IT/GB-7/17/DraftReport), the GB:
- approves the appointment of Kent Nnadozie as Secretary for a period of two years;
- notes that the FAO Director-General and the GB both have a role to play in the appointment and selection of the Secretary; and
- given lack of consensus on the proposed procedures due to concerns raised about the shared responsibility of the FAO Director-General and the GB, requests the FAO Secretariat to reconsider, in close consultation with the Bureau, the proposal, for GB 8 consideration.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

On Thursday, the Secretariat introduced the communication strategy (IT/GB-7/17/23) in plenary, outlining key objectives, messages, target audiences and resources needed. Many underscored the importance of an effective communication strategy. The ERG, with the US and Canada, objected to the creation of a new position for a communication and outreach officer; while Africa, Ecuador, and Brazil supported it. Chair Sabran noted consensus on welcoming the communication strategy and acknowledged different opinions about the new position.

Final Outcome: In the report of the meeting (IT/GB-7/17/DraftReport), the GB: welcomes the communication strategy; encourages all parties to implement it; and notes the importance of the strategy in awareness raising and resource mobilization.

CLOSING PLENARY

On Friday evening, plenary elected new Bureau members as nominated by regional groups, including: Anna Willock (Australia); Charles Murekezi (Rwanda); Christine Dawson (US); Akio Yamamoto (Japan); Javad Mozafari (Iran); Svanhild-Isabelle Batta Torheim (Norway); and Mónica Martínez Menduiño (Ecuador). Christine Dawson (US) was elected GB 8 Chair. Plenary noted that GB 8 will be held in 2019.

Plenary then considered the report of the meeting (IT/GB-7/17/DraftReport). Delegates adopted the report with amendments, *inter alia*, to reflect that: two parties did not agree with the process and outcomes on the work on enhancement of the MLS and its annex, did not intend to block consensus, and reserve the right to submit new textual proposals for a revised SMTA at GB 8; and the GB considered a proposal from Africa on digital sequence information before adopting the resolution on MYPOW.

Indonesia, for Asia, underscored agreement on farmers' rights, noting the significant role of PGRFA for the 2030 Sustainable Agenda, and calling for support to parties, in particular developing countries, through capacity building, technology transfer, and information exchange for the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA and the achievement of the SDGs. Argentina, for GRULAC, highlighted the role of the intersessional period prior to GB 8 to help the system progress. Cameroon, for Africa, appealed to all stakeholders to "do everything possible to make the Treaty function well."

The Netherlands, for the ERG, and Iran, for the Near East, commended progress on farmers' rights and enhancement of the MLS. Canada, for North America, highlighted that PGRFA teach us "we are all interdependent." Delegates acknowledged the long-term dedication and important contributions of Bert Visser (the Netherlands), Pat Mooney (ETC Group) and Ruaraidh Sackville Hamilton (IRRI) to PGRFA conservation and sustainable use before and after ITPGRFA adoption. Via Campesina underscored her commitment to contribute to the intersessional process on farmers' rights.

Secretary Nnadozie expressed commitment to maintain momentum to make meaningful contributions towards global food security and the SDGs. Mark Bagabe, Rwanda Agricultural Board, welcomed the initiation of work on digital sequence information, the roadmap for enhancing the MLS and addressing the expansion of Annex I, and steps forward on farmers' rights, noting their relevance to tackling the challenges that the Treaty is facing. Chair Sabran drew the meeting to a close at 10:54 pm.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE MEETING

All the flowers of all the tomorrows are in the seeds of today (Indian proverb)

The first ever meeting of the Governing Body (GB) of the International Treaty of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) to be held in Sub-Saharan Africa was teeming with expectations. Following an intense biennium, representatives of governments, farmers, the private seed sector, and other stakeholders gathered in Kigali, Rwanda, ready for a "make it or break it" week ahead. The revision of the Standard Material Transfer Agreement (SMTA) and the possible revamping of the entire Multilateral System (MLS) of access and benefit-sharing (ABS) of the Treaty was certainly in the spotlight. Many thought intersessional work had set solid ground for decision-making on these items, hoping GB 7 would succeed in resolving remaining outstanding matters. There was more on the agenda, though: many participants thought the time had come for the Treaty to finally make a breakthrough on farmers' rights, a unique feature of the Treaty that several consider systematically sidelined since its inception.

Much has happened in the broader international policy landscape since the last meeting of the GB in 2015. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was launched, intending to provide a comprehensive framework for sustainable development. The UN Biodiversity Conference in Cancún, Mexico, moved ahead with implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and its Protocols, addressing mainstreaming of biodiversity in production sectors, including agriculture, and deciding, for the first time in the biodiversity realm, to consider the issue of digital sequence information and its implications for biodiversity and ABS. The FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) followed suit, and at its latest meeting, agreed to set up a process for addressing the matter and its implications for genetic resources for food and agriculture. The Treaty addressed this issue immediately prior to GB 7, at a special event on genomics information, but did not include it on the meeting's agenda. Many developing-country delegates were quick to pick this up, insisting on the necessity and urgency of discussions. Indeed, as one observer put it, the rapid pace of scientific and technological developments regarding bioinformatics and synthetic biology, accompanied by dramatic market concentration in the agricultural sector and expansion of intellectual property rights (IPRs), may threaten to make the Treaty obsolete, unless digital sequence information is addressed.

Can the Treaty evolve quickly enough, amidst all these changes, to serve its own goals of sustainable agriculture and food security, as well as contribute to the 2030 Agenda? This brief analysis will assess the meeting's outcomes on enhancing the MLS, digital sequence information, and farmers' rights, with this question in mind.

ENHANCING THE MULTILATERAL SYSTEM: WHITHER FROM HERE?

A decade after the Treaty's entry into force it became widely realized that the system established by the currently used SMTA generates no benefit-sharing payments. This led to the GB 5 request to review the SMTA, including by creating a subscription system for access to MLS material. An intersessional working group was established in 2013 and made considerable progress. Several participants came to Kigali hoping to solve any outstanding matters during this session. As many acknowledged, however, the GB did not manage to follow up on the momentum generated in the working group. Some common ground was found during late nights in Kigali: delegates agreed to continue developing the subscription system as the basis for access to the MLS, but allow also for a single-access mechanism along the lines of the current system, as an alternative. It was generally agreed that the subscription system would cover all plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA) in Annex I. Finally, benefit-sharing would be only mandatory under the revised SMTA, unlike the current system, which provides also for voluntary benefit-sharing payments. Regional groups' positions were clarified; and a discussion on contract enforceability shed light on more general legal issues awaiting resolution. Several technicalities, nonetheless, remained to be resolved, most importantly the payment rates regarding benefit sharing and consideration (or not) of digital sequence information in the

SMTA. Most fundamentally, some developing-country delegates started to question the general direction taken: would the revised SMTA ensure the desirable benefit-sharing levels? Would it ensure the required transparency regarding PGRFA exchanges? And are there any alternatives? This led some to wonder whether a champion is needed to push the benefit-sharing agenda forward with a more imaginative vision for the working group to finalize its work in the next biennium.

DIGITAL SEQUENCE INFORMATION: DE- AND RE-MATERIALIZING GENETIC RESOURCES

Digital sequence information, a term that is subject to further discussion but generally refers to the information component of genetic resources, or of their parts and components, is not explicitly covered by the Treaty or any other ABS instrument. Acquired via bioinformatics, digital sequence information may lead to resynthesizing genetic resources in the lab, in what increasingly becomes a standard practice in bio-based research and development. Many stress that this trend could eventually render physical access to the genetic resource itself unnecessary, and the Treaty superseded by real-world developments.
In addition, given the lack of a governance and regulatory framework, exchange of digital sequence information escapes the Treaty's benefit-sharing requirements, although it may well lead to commercial applications. Farmers' rights are also in peril, as applications may misappropriate and privatize traditional seeds and related knowledge. As aptly put by a Via Campesina representative, "Digital sequence information is a cross-cutting matter affecting the entire Treaty agenda."

Deliberations were difficult. A draft resolution sponsored by Africa, supported by the G-77/China, and applauded by civil society and farmers organizations, was met with opposition by developed countries, who insisted that the scope of the Treaty does not cover information, but only genetic resources in their physical form. These developed-country delegations further pointed to ongoing processes under the CBD and the CGRFA, arguing that the Treaty could collaborate with, and contribute to, those processes, rather than duplicate efforts.

Eventually, the approach envisioned by Africa, including the establishment of an expert advisory group and interim voluntary benefit-sharing payments, did not fully materialize, as part of the compromise reached. The GB did, however, agree to consider the implications of the use of digital sequence information for the Treaty objectives at the next GB session. GB 8 deliberations will be informed by an intersessional process based on submissions by parties and stakeholders. Several participants lamented that an opportunity was lost for the GB to engage more proactively with the issue. Others however welcomed the prospect of exploring, through their submissions, implications for unique aspects of the Treaty, such as farmers' rights, that are not going to be explicitly addressed in related processes under the CBD and the CGRFA.

FARMERS' RIGHTS: PLEASE MIND THE GAP

The topic of farmers' rights has been controversial since the negotiation of the Treaty. Discussions at GB 7 highlighted once again the traditional dichotomy between delegations favoring independence of domestic action, and those stressing the need for international guidance to promote national-level implementation. Beyond this, the issue is also fraught with difficulties in balancing the needs of farmers, particularly smallholders and subsistence ones, who have been creating agricultural biodiversity and conserving it in their fields since time immemorial, and the interests of a variety of other users, such as researchers and breeders in the Western scientific sense of the term.

In what many delegates described as a breakthrough, GB 7 agreed to set up a technical expert group to produce an inventory of national measures that may be adopted, and develop options for encouraging and guiding implementation of farmers' rights. Many participants emphasized, in particular, the need for guidance on recognition of informal seed systems alongside formal ones, highlighting that their value lies in their extreme diversity, in contrast to the uniformity characterizing commercial varieties. Farmers' and indigenous peoples' representatives expressed cautious satisfaction with the result, waiting to see if their full and effective participation will be realized in the expert group. "Farmers need to finally receive the recognition they deserve as experts and innovators working in the field," stressed farmers' representatives from Africa, "We are not consumers of technology developed by others." An indigenous representative further explained, "The seed is not a commodity and it is more than a genetic resource, it incorporates the knowledge of the farmer involved but also the identity of the entire community." A Via Campesina member from Romania offered an illustration: every new couple in her village receives parcels of seeds as gifts, to help them start a new life.

FURTHER AND BEYOND: THE TREATY IN CONTEXT

Technicalities and controversies aside, several delegations at GB 7 emphasized that the Treaty is in a unique position to showcase the importance of PGRFA for sustainable development and make a valuable contribution to several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on poverty, sustainable production, and partnerships—well beyond the more narrowly conceived Targets 2.5 on genetic diversity and 15.6 on fair and equitable sharing of benefits and appropriate access to genetic resources. This recognition was linked to the importance of close cooperation with relevant processes, the CBD in particular, as well as linkages with non-traditional partners in the intellectual property realm, such as the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV).

While developing a mutually satisfactory relationship with UPOV and other IPR-related fora has been a matter of contention since the Treaty's inception, many long-standing participants shared the view that the Treaty has increasingly become a unique source of inspiration, creating communities across sectors both in the global policy arena and on the ground. An emotional closing plenary celebrated the life-long contribution of three individuals working side-by-side for most of their lives to represent a cross-section of Treaty stakeholders—governments, civil society and a CGIAR center. Veteran negotiator from the Netherlands Bert Visser, ETC Group's Pat Mooney, famous for coining the terms "biopiracy" and "terminator seeds," and IRRI's bridge-builder Ruaraidh Sackville Hamilton were celebrated with standing ovations for their contribution to the Treaty and PGRFA conservation and sustainable use. Furthermore, side-events showcased a multitude of participatory programmes, community projects, and networks steadily working on agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use, within the Treaty framework but without the visibility they deserve. In the words of an African saying, "Many small people, in many small places, do many small things, which can alter the face of the world." The challenge for the Treaty, as an expert summed up, is to bring them all together and let the world know.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

FAO Council: The 158th regular session of the FAO Council will address reports, and organizational and budgetary matters. **dates**: 4-8 December 2017 **location**: Rome, Italy **contact**: FAO Council and Protocol Affairs Division (CPA) **phone**: +39-6-570-57051 **email**: FAO-Council@fao.org **www**: http://www.fao.org/about/meetings/council/cl158/documents/en

CBD SBSTTA 21 and 10th Meeting of the Article 8(j) Working Group: The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will meet from 11-14 December 2017, to address, *inter alia*, the links between the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the SDGs, biodiversity and health, and biodiversity mainstreaming in the energy, mining and infrastructure sectors. The tenth meeting of the CBD *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions will meet from 13-16 December, to consider, among other issues, repatriation and progress towards Aichi Target 18 on traditional knowledge. **dates**: 11-16 December 2017 **location**: Montreal, Canada **contact**: CBD Secretariat **phone**: +1-514-288-2220 **fax**: +1-514-288-6588 **email**: secretariat@ cbd.int **www**: https://www.cbd.int/meetings/

CBD SBSTTA 22: The twenty-second meeting of the CBD SBSTTA will address, *inter alia,* biodiversity and climate change, and digital sequence information on genetic resources. **dates**: 2-7 July 2018 **location**: Montreal, Canada **contact**: CBD Secretariat **phone**: +1-514-288-2220 **fax**: +1-514-288-6588 **email**: secretariat@cbd.int **www**: https://www.cbd.int/meetings/SBSTTA-22

CBD SBI 2: The CBD Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI) will address, among other items: review of the effectiveness of the Nagoya Protocol, the global multilateral benefit-sharing mechanism under the Protocol, and specialized international access and benefit-sharing mechanisms. **dates**: 9-13 July 2018 **location**: Montreal, Canada **contact**: CBD Secretariat **phone**: +1-514-288-2220 **fax**: +1-514-288-6588 **email**: secretariat@cbd.int **www**: https://www.cbd.int/meetings/SBI-02

CFS 45: The 45th session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) will hold discussions on policy convergence on food security and nutrition in the context of the 2030 Agenda, convene a Global Thematic Event on the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security, and celebrate World Food Day. **dates**: 15-20 October 2018 **location**: Rome, Italy **contact**: CFS Secretariat **email**: cfs@fao.org **www**: http://www.fao.org/cfs/cfs-home/en/

UPOV Council 52: The 52nd Council of the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV) is expected to address legislative, administrative and technical matters. **date**: 2 November 2018 **location**: Geneva, Switzerland **contact**: UPOV Secretariat **phone**: +41-22-338-9111 **fax**: +41-22-733-0336 **email**: upov.mail@upov.int **www**: http://www.upov.int/

CBD COP 14, Cartagena Protocol COP/MOP 9, and Nagoya Protocol COP/MOP 3: The 14th meeting of the CBD Conference of the Parties, the 9th Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the 3rd Meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing are expected to address a series of issues related to implementation of the Convention and its Protocols. **dates**: 10-22 November 2018 (tentative) **location**: Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt (to be confirmed) **contact**: CBD Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-288-2220 **fax**: +1-514-288-6588 **email**: secretariat@cbd.int **www**: https://www.cbd.int/meetings/

CGRFA 17: The 17th regular session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture will address a range of issues related to its MYPOW. **dates**: 18-22 February 2019 **location**: Rome, Italy **contact**: CGRFA Secretariat **phone**: +39-6-570-54981 **fax**: +39-6-570-53152 **email**: cgrfa@fao.org **www**: http://www.fao.org/nr/cgrfa/cgrfa-home/en/

ITPGRFA GB 8: The 8th session of the Governing Body to the ITPGRFA is expected to be held in 2019. **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.fao.org/plant-treaty/en/

For additional upcoming events, see http://sdg.iisd.org/

GLOSSARY

2030 Agenda	2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
ABS	Access and Benefit-sharing
BSF	Benefit-sharing Fund
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CGRFA	FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
ERG	European Regional Group
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
GB	Governing Body
GLIS	Global Information System
GRULAC	Latin American and Caribbean Group
IPC	International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty
IPRs	Intellectual property rights
ISF	International Seed Federation
ITPGRFA	International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
MLS	Multilateral System
MYPOW	Multi-Year Programme of Work
PGRFA	Plant genetic resources for food and agriculture
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMTA	Standard Material Transfer Agreement
UPOV	International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization