



**GLOBAL CROP DIVERSITY TRUST
Donors' Council
9th Meeting**

SUMMARY RECORD

22th October 2012, Rome, Italy

(Annex 1: Agenda; Annex 2: List of Attendees)

WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR OF THE MEETING

Mr. Bernt Farcke, Chair of the Donors' Council, opened the meeting, and introduced himself as the new Chair of the Donor's Council. He welcomed the members and representatives to the ninth meeting of Donors' Council of the Global Crop Diversity Trust.

The provisional agenda (Annex 1) was adopted by attending members.

UPDATES AND HIGHLIGHTS OF 2011

Julian Laird, Director of Development & Communications, provided an overview of the main achievements and issues for the Trust in 2012.

Personnel changes

After over 7 years as Executive Secretary, Cary Fowler has resigned as Executive Director, but continues to be involved as Special Advisor. The Trust is delighted to announce the recent appointment of Aslaug Marie Haga, who will assume the role of Executive Secretary in early 2013. Ms Haga has an impressive professional and diplomatic background, having served three times as a Minister in Norway, and currently runs Norway's largest non-profit organization. In addition, she is very familiar with the Trust, having served as an Executive Board Member, and having been, until her appointment, scheduled to take over as Chair of the Board in 2013.

As part of these changes, the Trust has developed a new organizational structure, which has included the creation of an Assistant Executive Director position. In January 2012, Dr. Paula Bramel was appointed to this role. Dr. Bramel has extensive experience in the conservation, maintenance and use of crop diversity through her extensive experience in the CGIAR, and brings to the Trust a wealth of technical and scientific experience in plant genetic resources.

Relocation

The process of relocating the Trust Headquarters has been a major undertaking in 2012. Mr. Laird invited the German Representative, Mr. Thomas Meier, to elaborate on current developments. Mr. Meier reported that the process was moving forward in a timely manner, but the work involved was more complicated than initially expected due to a number of legal issues

that needed to be addressed. The legal issues have since been resolved and the process is moving ahead steadily. In August, Germany became signatories to the Treaty. The Headquarters Agreement has now been signed and is now undergoing the legislative process. This will hopefully be concluded by November – leading to a legal status for Trust in Germany.

As for the renovation of the new Trust offices in Bonn, this has been ongoing and is on schedule. The new offices will be ready in mid-December 2012, which makes the planned move in early January 2013 possible.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Jane Toll, Project Manager, provided members with an update on the Trust's project work. This is the final year of a 5-year project, funded mainly by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and also the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) of Australia, aimed at developing a global system for crop diversity conservation and use. While finalizing activities of this Global System Project, staff were also accelerating work on a major initiative to collect, conserve and use the wild species related to major crops, a project funded by the Government of Norway.

Ms. Toll started with a brief explanation of the importance of these projects for crop improvement now and into the future. The Global System Project has rescued through regeneration about 75,000 unique accessions of 22 crops of major importance for worldwide food security, and safeguarded them from loss in the future through safety duplication into international genebanks. It involved 86 institutes in 77 countries. However, the rescue effort was too late for 12,255 accessions as they were found no longer viable, underscoring the importance of this work.

So far over 37,000 accessions have been transferred using the Treaty's SMTA (Standard Material Transfer Agreement) for backup conservation in international collections, mainly at CGIAR genebanks. This is a solid example that the SMTA is working. Twelve countries the Trust worked with were not a Party to the Treaty at the time the work started, but were willing to abide by the terms of its Multilateral System of access and benefit-sharing. The Project also supported the backup of the regenerated accessions as well as international collections at the Svalbard Global Seed Vault. Today the Vault holds nearly 750,000 accessions, over 550,000 supported by the Project.

The Global System Project also developed a genebank management information system in partnership with USDA, called GRIN-Global, which is freely available to any genebank, and a global portal to genebank databases, called GeneSys. The deployment of GRIN-Global to national programmes and development of GeneSys will continue under the Trust's Crop Wild Relative Project and the CRP Genebank. GeneSys now holds data on 2.5 million accessions from the CGIAR network, SINGER, the European network EURISCO, and the US GRIN system, and aims to have other genebanks join.

The Global System Project will undergo its final external review in early November.

Ms Toll also updated members on the new Crop Wild Relatives Project. The focus of the project is 26 Treaty Annex 1 crops. The wild species related to crops are important source of traits to adapt crops to climate change. The initiative includes a research phase to know what to collect, the actual collecting of the wild species, and pre-breeding and evaluation to prepare the materials for use in breeding programs. It also includes conservation.

For the past two years, efforts have concentrated on the research to determine what species to collect where. This involved modeling the distribution of the species in nature and identifying gaps in existing ex situ collections. A website has been developed to share the results and information with the public, and can be accessed online (<http://www.cwrdiversity.org/>).

Discussion

Mr. Orlando de Ponti, Donor Representative for the International Seed Federation commended the work of the Trust over the past year, indicating that the successes and achievements have been very impressive. He inquired whether there have been any efforts or activities on non-Annex 1 crops.

Although the Project was focused on Annex 1 crops, a priority for the Treaty and Trust, Ms. Toll informed the members that the support to the World Vegetable Center (AVRDC) in Taiwan and to CATIE in Cost Rica to overcome backlogs in regeneration and upgrade their operations, had covered collections of non-Annex 1 crops that they held internationally. The regenerated material is available under the SMTA.

Mr. Shobhan Pattanayak, Donor Representative from India, also commended the Trust on its excellent work and inquired as to the significant increase in plant breeder training noted in the paper's report card. Ms. Toll explained that the plant breeding training program was in collaboration with the FAO Global Partnership Initiative for Plant Breeding Capacity (GIPB), and the increase was due to the availability of the training program through an e-learning course, enabling more people to participate. Due to the current lack of plant breeding capacity, any effort to increase capacity and expertise is welcome and needed.

Mr. Pattanayak also inquired whether countries that are not Party to the Treaty have access to the plant genetic material being supported by the Trust. Ms. Toll explained that countries that agreed to accept Trust support are under obligation to provide access to the material in accordance with the terms of the Treaty. During the past five years, several countries that were not Parties at the start of the Project have become Parties to the Treaty, while others are still working on their internal policies.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Julian Laird, Director of Development & Communications, presented the new website of the Trust. He explained that the new website

(www.croptrust.org) includes a restructuring to better present the work of the Trust, as well as providing an interactive tool for exploring the projects and activities of the Trust (<http://www.croptrust.org/crop-map>). Launched in March 2012, the new website has proved popular, and statistics and metrics indicate that more people are visiting the website and accessing more pages of the website. This will continue to be developed as the work of the Trust further develops.

LONG-TERM GRANTS

Ms. Paula Bramel, Assistant Executive Director, updated representatives of the work of providing long-term grants to international genebanks for the conservation and maintenance of the vital food crops. She explained that the total amount of grants has reached \$2.39 million, which provides annual, in perpetuity, support to 17 specific collections held by 9 international centers, one regional genebank, as well as the Svalbard Global Seed Vault.

Ms. Bramel explained that as part of the grant, the Trust has also been monitoring specific indicators, and these have all pointed towards a positive trend measured since the beginning of the grants. Not only is safety duplication on the rise, but also availability of data and information on the crop being conserved is also on the increase. The biggest change that has been monitored over the years is the impact the grants have had on reducing backlogs of routine operations in genebanks. Other notable genebank successes reported in 2011 have included:

- Bar-coding of the yam genebank at IITA. This will lead to a reduction of accession mismatches and increase efficiencies in the management of collection.
- Discovery of a new bean species at CIAT. This species is the first one found in a very humid forest, and therefore may provide a rich source of traits for plant breeders in efforts to tackle fungal diseases in beans.
- ISO9001 certification for CIMMYT. This will lead to an enhancement of quality standard of the maize genebank to international standards.

In addition to monitoring indicators and reviewing technical reports on a regular basis, in 2012, the first technical and financial review of genebank funded by the long-term grants was held at IRRI. The review team found that the IRRI genebank is a model genebank for operations, but needed additional focus on staff succession planning. An upcoming review is slated at the end of the year for the ILRI genebank, where the review team (which includes an external chair from USDA) will look at the forage collection.

CGIAR RESEARCH PROGRAM FOR MANAGING AND SUSTAINING CROP COLLECTIONS

Perhaps the biggest opportunity for the Trust is the new arrangement with the CGIAR Consortium for managing and sustaining of international crop collections held at CGIAR genebanks. In this new arrangement, CGIAR crop collections will be supported through the CGIAR donors and the Trust long-

term grants. The Trust would be the management entity for the entire CGIAR genebanks, which is a great opportunity for increasing efficiencies.

Through the new arrangement, the Trust foresees an expanded performance management system with new indicators, conducting at least two reviews of genebanks a year, and an annual meeting of genebank managers each year with the attendance of the management of centers, Commodity CRP leaders, and staff from external genebanks. The first meeting will be held in Rome in November 2012, with a focus on external attendees from European genebanks. In 2013, the annual general meeting will most likely be held in the USA or Canada.

Due to the expected increase in management and oversight needs, the Trust has developed a new monitoring tool. The online system allows for reporting by genebanks to the Trust, and collects baseline information from all genebanks for a comprehensive record of progress. The annual meetings will also provide time for focusing on common issues and challenges facing genebanks.

This new agreement is also innovative as it allows for an opportunity for the Trust to work as a partner and provides a clear path for the facilitation of a global system. In addition, the new arrangement has the endorsement of the centers and genebanks, and includes two new centers the Trust does not currently have partnerships with: AfricaRice and ICRAF.

The basis for the arrangement came as a result of the costing study conducted in 2010, which aimed to provide specific costs for the maintenance and conservation of crop collections across the CGIAR Centers. The final costs were then included as the basis for the revised Trust endowment target, which would cover all core genebank costs, in perpetuity. This means that there is to be a transition from the current mixture of funding from Trust/CGIAR to total funds from the Trust once the endowment is completed. The proposal is not only a five-year funding, but a call to finish the endowment for securing these long-term collections.

Discussion

Ms. Adair Heuchan, the Canada representative inquired about the current Trust fundraising and whether there was any private sector funding. Mr. Laird responded that the Trust does have some contributions from the private sector, Syngenta and Pioneer, and the International Seed Federation have all contributed. He explained that there is, in theory, no reason why this should be limited to the seed industry, as the mission of the Trust is more far-reaching. He also pointed out that endowment funding is more difficult than project funding for many potential donors.

Mr. Orlando di Ponti asked if it would be possible to consider for the private sector to be involved in the work of the Trust. For example, he explained, ISF has been working with CGEN on both regeneration and evaluation projects, and this cooperation has worked very well. It has allowed for progress in both these areas, especially as evaluation requires high level of expertise.

FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

Ms. Anne Clyne, Director of Finance, presented the Finance and Investment paper. Ms. Clyne explained that the Trust has a conservative financial management has continued whereby the target drawdown rate has been reduced from 4.5% to 4%.

She explained that the new financial advisors, Cambridge Associates, have provided a series of investment portfolios for the Trust's investments. Though it has been a short period to review results, the 11 specialized portfolios have performed very well to date, and in most cases, they have outperformed the benchmark.

Ms. Clyne then presented the 2013 budget, which will be presented to the Executive board in the upcoming Executive Board meeting. Donors' Council representatives endorsed the budget.

FUNDRAISING & DEVELOPMENT

Julian Laird, Director of Development & Communications, provided an update on the fundraising activities of the Trust over the year. He informed representatives that the Trust received new contributions during the year of \$16 million to the endowment fund.

While fundraising for the endowment has continued in its traditional sense, and performed well during the past year, he explained that the new agreement with the Consortium Office of CGIAR for the funding of genebanks, described above, provides a huge opportunity for fundraising. In April 2011, that the CGIAR Fund Council highlighted the importance of completing the Trust's endowment, and the need for sustainable funding for the genebanks. The agreement is thus a major endorsement of the endowment target, as well as an endorsement of the importance of the role of the Trust.

The agreement with the Consortium also provides a structure for formal discussions by donors, and allows for a collective request to donors. The new agreement also provides a sense of urgency, as it has an end-date of 2017.

EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORT

Ms. Margaret Catley-Carlson, Chair of the Executive Board, joined the Donors' Council meeting. She thanked the donors for their work with the Trust, stating that the Trust would not be able to do the work it does without our donors.

She welcomed and introduced the other Executive Board members who have joined the meeting: Peter Crane, Walter Fust, John Lovett, Tim Fischer, Aslaug Marie Haga.

She reported on the monumental changes that the Trust has undergone in the past year. She reported on Cary Fowler's departure, and explained that he will remain with the Trust as a Special Advisor. With Prof. Fowler's departure,

the Board set up a sub-committee to search for a replacement, who contacted sister organizations, reviewed candidates, and presented them to the Board. The search criteria included someone with the capacity to significantly increase the profile of the Trust, especially in terms of fundraising. She said that she was happy to announce that they had found someone rather closer to the Trust than originally expected – namely, Aslaug Marie Haga from the Executive Board.

Ms. Catley Carlson also reported that her term as Board Chair end at the end of the year, and the Executive Board in the upcoming session will select a new Chair.

She also reported on the relocation of the Trust Headquarters to Bonn, Germany. The move would allow for an increase in office-space and support for the Trust. At the same time, the Board is working closely with the Trust Secretariat during the process of independence from the FAO and Bioversity International systems.

In terms of program, the ending of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation grant and the beginning of the Crop Wild Relatives, is a major shift in operations for the Trust, with new partnerships and stakeholders. In addition, the new agreement with the Consortium of the CGIAR Centers indicates a huge vote of confidence in the Trust.

One area of concern for the Trust is finding a suitable system for Executive Board replacements. Currently the Executive Board is made up of four members selected by the Donors Council, the Governing Body of the Treaty selects four members, and the Executive Board selects the two members, which makes a total of ten Executive Board members. A complication has arisen as the Governing body of the Treaty meets every 2-3 years, which does not coincide with the replacement schedule of the Executive Board. Therefore an interim arrangement was created to address this challenge, but it was never formalized. This has now created a serious issue that needs to be addressed as soon as possible to replenish Executive Board members to ensure an effective, well-represented Board is in place to guide the work of the Trust during these times. Ms. Catley-Carlson asked for donor representatives to take this issue seriously, and asked for their assistance in pushing this forward so that a formal system can be developed for Executive Board replacements.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair thanked the assembled donors for their support of the Trust.

The meeting was drawn to a close and followed by a reception.



Donors' Council 22nd October 2012

Provisional Agenda

Canada Room, FAO, Rome

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| 11.00 | 1 | Welcome and Introductions |
| | 2 | Adoption of Provisional Agenda and Timetable |
| 11.15 | 3 | Highlights of 2012 |
| | | Forward to 2013, challenges and opportunities for the year |

12.30 Lunch

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| 13.30 | 4 | A progress report – the Report Card |
| 14.00 | 5 | EB paper – Finance and Investment Report |
| 14.30 | 6 | EB paper - 2013 Budget |
| 15.00 | 7 | EB paper - Fundraising Report and Strategy |

15.30 Coffee

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| 16.00 | 9 | Executive Board Report |
| 16.45 | 10 | Other Business |
| 17.00 | | Meeting Close |

**Followed immediately by joint reception in the Aventino Room
(8th floor) with Donors' Council, Executive Board and Trust staff**

Donors' Council Meeting
October 22nd 2012
FAO, Canada Room (A356)
Rome, Italy

Attendees

Name	Country	Contact
Donors' Council Representatives		
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