



The International Treaty

ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE



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Item 6 of the Draft Provisional Agenda

FIRST MEETING OF THE *AD HOC* TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE USE OF PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Rome, Italy, 8-9 November 2012

Development of a toolbox on Sustainable Use of PGRFA

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its Third Session (Tunis, 2009) the Governing Body of the Treaty requested the Secretary to clarify the notion of a toolbox to assist countries in the design of measures to promote sustainable use, in order to come to a common understanding with regard to such an instrument and submit the document to the attention of Contracting Parties at the Fourth Session of the Governing Body.

2. At its Fourth Session (Bali, 2011), the Governing Body requested the Secretary to further explore, in collaboration with FAO technical units and other stakeholders and subject to the availability of financial resources and the priorities of the Work Programme and Budget agreed by the Governing Body, the development of a Toolbox on sustainable use of Plant Genetic resources for Food and Agriculture in order to assist Contracting Parties in the implementation of Article 6 of the Treaty¹ and requested to identify, in further exploring the development of a toolbox, *inter alia*:

- existing efforts in the area of sustainable agriculture that can contribute to the sustainable use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, in order to avoid duplication of costs and efforts;
- areas of work where the International Treaty might add value to existing activities, such as modelling climate change and farmers' choices in variety adoption and use;
- mechanisms to ensure effective cooperation with the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) and its activities related to sustainable use of Plant Genetic resources for Food and Agriculture;
- a methodology to categorize and organize tools for sustainable use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and to report back to the Bureau on the results of this work.

¹ Resolution 7/2011.

3. A Toolbox for sustainable use of PGRFA is conceptualised as a one-stop shop from which institutions or individuals can draw selectively from a common and comprehensive set of instruments to tailor solutions to specific needs.

4. It is therefore envisaged as a compendium including a comprehensive set of resources (such as technical information, policy options, regulatory guidelines, training opportunities, decision tools, and others materials) that, used in customized combinations or as stand-alone resources, could enhance effectiveness towards the “*use of PGRFA by farmers, plant breeders and seed specialists in the development and deployment of new varieties, in a manner that does not diminish the available genetic diversity for future crop improvement*”.

5. The concept of the Toolbox and the justification for its development are described in detail in document IT/ACSU-1/12/Inf.4. This document also lists a sample of elements that may be included in the Toolbox, its functions, how it might be developed and the potential beneficiaries. It is important to emphasize that the document does not contain the Toolbox itself, but rather a description of the concept, which is being provided to enable a uniform understanding by the Contracting Parties of this innovative tool.

II. ADVICE SOUGHT FROM THE COMMITTEE

6. The Committee is invited to evaluate the proposed text for the Toolbox, taking into consideration the information contained in the document “*The Toolbox: description of the concept, components, and how it might be developed*”², and to provide comments and suggestions for its improvement.

² IT/ACSU-1/12/Inf.4