



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**



The International Treaty
**ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES
FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

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SIXTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY

Rome, Italy, 5 – 9 October 2015

**Report of the Secretary of the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) on
the collaboration with the International Treaty**

Executive Summary

This document contains the report of the Secretary of the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) on activities relevant to the Programme of Work of the International Treaty and on the collaboration undertaken during the current biennium. It also provides the elements for a roadmap to further strengthen collaboration and increase synergies on various areas of mutual interest during the 2016-2017 biennium.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Nearly two decades ago, the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) was established as a multi-stakeholder mechanism enabling all those around the world concerned with the generation, access and use of agricultural knowledge and innovation to joint efforts and address key global challenges.
2. GFAR brings together the voices and collective actions of stakeholders through inclusive and equitable processes, fostering immediate actions and working to ensure agricultural innovation deliveries with development impact. Established between FAO and IFAD as an open and inclusive forum, GFAR works to transform and strengthen agricultural research and innovation systems, to improve the lives and livelihoods of farmers and family farmers across the developing world.
3. GFAR plays a critical role in the future of agriculture, articulating the needs of the poor, promoting basic human rights, including the right to food and nutrition security, enabling viable rural livelihoods and generating resilient and sustainable agricultural productive systems.
4. GFAR recognizes the role that knowledge plays in the development of agriculture. Knowledge generation and use is increasingly based on global research systems and networks, and on-farmer-led experiments and innovations. In this context, there is an urgent need to better harness agricultural knowledge and innovation, whether from formal and informal seed systems, to help eradicate hunger and malnutrition, alleviate poverty and ensure sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.
5. The Global Forum on Agricultural Research made a significant contribution to the success of the negotiation of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, and since then has supported its implementation, particularly in relation to the sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture and Farmers' Rights. Cross cutting collaboration between the Secretaries of GFAR and the Treaty has become stronger during the past biennium.
6. In 2013 farmers' organizations, civil society and other stakeholders requested the Executive Secretary of GFAR to analyse the CGIAR Intellectual Asset Principles, in light of the need to reconcile Breeders' Rights and Farmers' Rights under the International Treaty. The study and its recommendations were taken into account by the *CGIAR Consortium* when developing the guidelines for implementing the Intellectual Asset Principles.
7. Since 2013 and to date, GFAR has supported developing countries, upon request, in their awareness, capacity and legal and policy development frameworks to improve the realization of Farmers' Rights under the International Treaty at national and local levels.
8. Additionally, the Secretariats of GFAR and the International Treaty will be hosting a special side event on Farmers' Rights in the margins of the Sixth Session of the Governing Body.
9. This document will recall past resolutions of the Governing Body relevant for strengthening the collaboration between the International Treaty and GFAR; and explain the activities undertaken during this biennium in the framework of this partnership. It also provides elements for a roadmap to further strengthen collaboration and increase synergies on various areas of mutual interest during the next biennium (2015-2017).

II. RELEVANT PAST RESOLUTIONS OF THE GOVERNING BODY

10. The Governing Body at its Fifth Session, through Resolution 6/2013:
- recognized the importance of enhancing synergies among relevant international organizations, institutions and partners, whose work or mandate relate to or impact the International Treaty, in particular at the national and local levels; and
 - stressed the need to continue to explore areas of cooperation with other relevant international organizations to further develop synergies and mutual supportiveness in the overall implementation of the Treaty and ensure that the Treaty is taken into account in their processes.
11. At the same Session, the Governing Body requested the Treaty Secretariat to further develop the collaboration with GFAR and Bioversity International on training and capacity building for the sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA), including through joint resources mobilization. The Governing Body also endorsed the Programme of Work on Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and Supportive Initiatives, which goals include references to implementing partners, including GFAR (Resolution 7/2013).
12. At the Fourth Session, the Governing Body considered that the development of a toolbox may be useful for the development of a work programme on sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture and that such work programme should be developed in a participatory manner and in collaboration with other relevant international processes and fora, including GFAR (Resolution 7/2011).
13. The Governing Body requested GFAR to work with its networks and partners to promote the expanded use of local and locally adapted crops and underutilized crops to better meet the sustainable development objectives (Resolution 7/2011).

III. MAJOR ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN AND OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

14. GFAR Secretariat has undertaken activities and attended meetings during this biennium in the framework of its partnership with the International Treaty, particularly supporting the implementation of Farmers' Rights and the Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.
15. Regarding GFAR's support to Article 6 of the International Treaty and specially the development of the toolbox of the Work Programme on Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, GFAR attended the Second Meeting of the Ad-Hoc Technical Committee on Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture held in Rome on March 2015, where GFAR reported on its activities and collaboration with the Treaty supporting the implementation of Articles 6 and 9 of the Treaty. The Committee recognized the opportunity and value of cooperation with other initiatives and processes, including with the Global Forum on Agricultural Research.
16. GFAR Secretariat, in cooperation with national and international partners, including the Development Fund of Norway, has supported developing countries increasing their capacity and awareness on Farmers' Rights, and providing legal advice for policy and legal measures to improve local and national implementation of Farmers' Rights under the International Treaty. Pilot cases were undertaken in Guatemala, Honduras and Malawi. GFAR and its partners' support has been materialized in the development of capacity building materials on Farmers' Rights for smallholder farmers, decision-makers and relevant stakeholders; the organization of national meetings on Farmers' Rights; support to seed and agrobiodiversity fairs; and legal advice to improve legal and policy frameworks on seed regulations, to ensure the recognition of the

informal seed system; Farmers' Rights and their mutual support with Breeders' Rights. The outcomes achieved on these three countries are available at <http://www.egfar.org/our-work/accountability-actions/farmers-rights>

17. Based on the work done by GFAR and its partners supporting Farmers' Rights under the International Treaty, the Global Forum on Agricultural Research and the International Treaty developed the Joint Capacity Building Programme on the Implementation of Farmers' Rights, to improve the implementation of Farmers' Rights in developing countries at national and local levels, responding to national and local demand. Its objectives include to increase awareness on Farmers' Rights among smallholder farmers, decision makers and relevant stakeholders; increase awareness of the role women's farmers play in agriculture and food security; provide policy direction and guidelines for the development of policies and legal instruments implementing Farmers' Rights and promote the co-existence and mutual reinforcing of Farmers' Rights and Breeders' Rights. The Programme operates through close partnerships with international, regional and national stakeholders, including national and regional farmers' organizations, non-governmental organizations; governmental stakeholders; universities; and research institutions. A strong express of interest in supporting the Joint Capacity Building Programme has been received from the GEF Small Grants Programme.

18. During this inter-sessional period, GFAR Secretariat has participated at relevant international meetings, including the World Farmers' Organization General Assembly in Buenos Aires, Argentina in March 2014; and the International Encounter "Family Farming and Research organized by CIRAD in Montpellier, France in June 2014, where GFAR submitted the document "*Family Farming and Farmers' Rights*".

19. GFAR Secretariat also co-organized the E-discussion on Rights of Farmers to Data, Information and Knowledge, with approximately 100 contributors from around the world.

III. THE JOINT ROADMAP

20. GFAR and the International Treaty have developed a Joint Roadmap to strength their collaboration and synergies. This joint roadmap ensures that the cooperation and partnership between the International Treaty and GFAR is realized on the basis of common interest and mutual benefit.

21. Information about the joint roadmap is included in Appendix 1 of this document.

APPENDIX 1

Joint Roadmap to strengthening collaboration and synergies between the Global Forum on Agricultural Research and the International Treaty¹

VISION

Enhance agricultural innovation and better use of plant genetic resources for food and nutrition security, income for the poor and sustainable production systems

ACTIVITIES

- Joint Capacity Building Programme on the Implementation of Farmers' Rights
- Training programme on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture under the International Treaty
- Joint awareness events and resource mobilization activities
- Fostering open access and information exchange & knowledge about plant genetic resources for food and agriculture
- Promote the value and use of underutilized species for food security
- Plant genetic resources for food and agriculture value chains described and intervention points determined

OUTPUTS

- Farmers' capacities developed in interested Contracting Party developing countries in Farmers' Rights, conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture
- GB6 commitments on Articles 5, 6 and 9 implemented
- Increased national investments in innovation for sustainable use
- Innovation products based on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture developed, linked with Investment Facility for Agricultural Innovation & Rural Enterprise

JOINT WORK PLAN

- Implement the Joint Capacity Building Programme on the Implementation of Farmers' Rights
- Provide direct training for community based organizations and Treaty stakeholders
- Support awareness raising, including resource mobilization
- Support local and regional events
- Develop learning materials and training tools
- Enable on farm conservation and sustainable use of local varieties into participatory plant breeding
- Strengthen value chains for underutilized species

¹ The annex to this appendix contains a diagram showing the correlation between the major areas of work of both of GFAR and the ITPGRFA and number of elements identified for a joint work plan during the 2016-2017 biennium.

Annex

Major areas of work and harmonised work plans