International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA)

Isabelle Clément-Nissou
Thomas Weber
Unit E2 Plant health
Sector : Plant Reproductive material

3/02/2014
Background

- Interdependence of countries with regard to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA)

- Important contribution of all stakeholders to the conservation of PGRFA (farmers, breeders, scientists...)

- **Global challenges**: agricultural biodiversity, food security, climate change
  -> important and unique role of PGRFA in addressing these challenges
- Adoption in November 2001
- Entry into force in June 2004
- Council Decision concerning the conclusion on behalf of the EC, of the ITPGRFA (2004/869/EC)

EC ratifies Treaty 31.03.2004

- Adoption of the Standard Material Transfer Agreement (sMTA) in 2004
Conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA.

Fair equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of their use, in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity, for sustainable agriculture and food security.

Multilateral system (MLS) of access (facilitated) and benefit sharing. Coverage: list of 64 species (annex 1).
1- Facilitated access to PGRFA = major benefit

2- Other non monetary benefit sharing (BS): training, capacity building, exchange of information, tech. transfer...

3- Innovation resulting from the use of PGRFA from the MLS of the Treaty:

- Product which is **further freely available for research and breeding** -> **voluntary monetary benefit sharing to the Benefit Sharing Fund.**

- Product which is **not further freely available for research and breeding** -> **mandatory monetary benefit sharing to the Benefit Sharing Fund** (1.1% less 30%, of net sales).
Funding strategy adopted in 2006:

to finance projects supporting farmers in developing countries to conserve crop diversity in their fields and assisting farmers and breeders globally to adapt crops to changing needs and demands.

Benefit sharing fund: Target 116 million $ in 2014.

In 2013 around 20 million $ including:

- 6,5 million $ from EU,
- IT (2,7), ES (2,3), IR, DE
- 6,7 million $ from Norway (GB5),
- CH, AU, IFAD
- Canada (1,200 $ from mandatory payment)
- Syngenta (6,000 $ on a voluntary basis)
Decisions of GB5 => to explore a range of measures that will:

• Increase user-based payment and contribution in a sustainable and predictable long-term manner;

• Enhance the functioning of the MLS:
  
  ➢ Study estimating income to be expected from possible changes of the provisions of the MLS;
  ➢ Study on the feasibility and effects of such changes;
  ➢ Study on how to enhance mechanisms for capacity-building, technology transfer and exchange of information.
Decisions of GB5

- **Multilateral system**
  - Urge Contracting Parties to provide access to PGRFA.
  - Urge natural and legal persons to take steps to include PGRFA in the MLS.

- Funding strategy:
  - **Third call for proposal as soon as possible (End of February).**

- Farmers' rights
  - **ITPGRFA Secretary to invite UPOV and WIPO to identify possible areas of interrelations among their respective international instruments;**
  - **Farmers' organisation will report on the implementation of farmers' rights to GB6.**
Majority of regional groups indicated readiness to implement the ITPGRFA.

Additional measures = refers to measures to facilitate exchange and expand coverage of the MLS.

- **Inter-sessional work on the funding strategy, MLS, ...**
- **Might result in a rethinking of list of crops** (annex 1).

Parallel process championed by the **Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers** (CGIAR Centers).

*The outcome of the inter-sessional work 2013-2015 will influence whether the Treaty will answer to the challenges and become more important or less?*
Background

- **1983**: focused its attention on PGRFA.
- **1994**: agreements between FAO and institutions holding PGRFA (12 from CGRAI) ... *"in trust for the benefit of the international community"*
- **1995**: extension of its mandate to all components
- **2001**: adoption of the ITPGRFA
Background

- **Intergovernmental forum for negotiations and discussions by Governments on sectorial and cross-cutting matters related to biodiversity for food and agriculture.**
- **177 Countries and EU are Members.**
- **Rolling Multi-year programme of work (MYPOW):**
  - stretching over 10 years
  - main focus is laying on plant and animal resources, forest genetic resources
  - cross-issues related to ABS for GRFA, climate change, indicators, biotechnologies for conservation, contribution of biodiversity to nutrition, ...
  - Updated in 2011 up to 2021.
• PGRFA
  (2 States of the world on PGRFA + 2 Global Plan of Action, Leipzig 96 – Rome 2011)

• AnGRFA
  (State of the world on animal GRFA + First Global Plan of Action, Interlaken 2007)

• FGR (first State of the world in preparation 2014) + First Global plan of Action, Rome 2013

• Marine resources (1st SOW 2016-17)

• Micro-organisms, invertebrates (review of works)

• Agriculture biodiversity (1st SoW - 2017).
Access and benefit-sharing

- **2 binding international agreements on ABS**
  - Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) + Nagoya Protocol
  - International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture;
  - Both based on the premise that nations have the sovereign right over their natural resources.

- **Special needs (distinctive features and specific uses) of biological diversity** for food and agriculture to be reflected in international policy-making.
Cross sectorial issues

Access and benefit-sharing

- **Ad-hoc expert group on ABS** (POL, CH) – 2 experts /region
  - Draft elements to facilitate domestic implementation of ABS for different subsectors of GRFA;
  - To be considered by the 3 inter-gouvernmental technical WGs
  - Voluntary tools for national implementation
  - Existing international practices, initiatives, instruments relevant to all subsectors of GRFA and ITPGRFA
  - Matrix illustrating international practices and instruments
Cross sectorial issues

Biotechnology
- technical and policy developments related to GRFA.
- overview survey of biotechnology issues and trends.

Targets and indicators
- Characterize and monitor genetic diversity (gain & loss)
- Measure the effectiveness of programmes set up to slow down genetic erosion and improve conservation.

Ecosystem approach
- In situ conservation & sustainable farming systems.
- Ecosystem approach / conservation & sustainable use GRFA.

Biodiversity and nutrition
- Guidelines / mainstreaming biodiversity into nutrition plans
- Characterisation, utilisation, consumption of food biodiversity, breeding efforts / nutrient-rich food biodiversity, diversification of agriculture, diets to address malnutrition...
State of the world on Agriculture biodiversity

- **National focal point** – 30/11/2013
- **Country report** – 31/12/2014


- **Strategic planning and development:**
  - State/trends of the world’s biodiversity for f&A and of its conservation and use *(Genetic level, species and ecosystem level, Food and non-food agriculture products)*;
  - major drivers and their impacts in and around production systems;
  - contribution made by biodiversity to
    - sustainable production, resilience and adaptability,
    - livelihoods and incomes of small scale producers (farmers, pastoralists, forest dwellers and fisher folk);
    - delivery of ecosystem services
State of the world on Agriculture biodiversity

- National focal point – 30/11/2013
- Country report – 31/12/2014
  www.fao.org/nr/cgrfa/biodiversity/guidelines/en/ (paper or electronically)

- Strategic planning and development (continuation):
  - Stakeholders' involvement and collaboration between institutions/organisations;
  - Structured data collection and information;
  - Assessment of national priorities and needs; provisions/measures for the conservation and use of biodiversity for F&A, including lessons learnt;
  - Synergies with other programmes and process relevant to biodiversity for food and agriculture.