



**GLOBAL CROP DIVERSITY TRUST
Donors' Council
8th Meeting**

SUMMARY RECORD

24th October 2011, Rome

**Annex 1 Agenda
Annex 2 List of Attendees**

Welcome from the Chair of the Meeting

Peter Waddell-Wood, Chair of the Donors' Council, opened the meeting and welcomed the members of the Donors' Council. He provided a brief introduction to the Council's role and responsibilities within the governance framework of the Global Crop Diversity Trust.

The Chair informed Donor Council members that they were to elect two new Board members during this meeting, one of whom will begin serving in 2012 and the other in 2013. He indicated that there were two high-level nominees available for the two Board vacancies, and a brief biography of each was made available for Donor Council members to review. Mr. Waddell-Wood also informed members that his tenure as Chair of the Donors' Council was at an end, and therefore members would need to appoint a new Chair and Vice-Chair.

Mr. Waddell-Wood noted with sadness the recent passing away of Executive Board Member Wangari Maathai. He explained that Professor Maathai was a major supporter of the Trust, a member of its Executive Board and its first Vice-Chair. Her death is a considerable loss not only to the Trust but also to the world of conservation.

The provisional agenda was adopted by attending members.

Updates and Highlights of 2011

Cary Fowler, Executive Director of the Trust, gave a presentation on the highlights of 2011. He reminded the Council that the Trust's mission was to ensure that plant genetic resources were not only properly conserved, but also readily available for use. He highlighted the Trust's work in rescuing and safeguarding important diversity, effectively putting together the missing pieces for a global system of plant genetic resources conservation, which then will be maintained and conserved in perpetuity through the Trust's endowment.

The Executive Director described how the Trust is a small organization, with fewer than 20 staff members, which is nevertheless contractually active in over 80 countries. He also described how the work of the Trust has evolved over the last few years, explaining that the Trust had called on scientific experts of the different crops to identify the world's most important collections. The Trust then reviewed the genebanks holding these and discovered that half the "conserved" samples were seriously vulnerable and that many of the samples held were at risk of extinction.

Through partnerships with national institutions, the Trust has provided technical assistance and financing, thereby rescuing 73,000 unique crop varieties to date - the largest biological rescue project in agriculture ever. Unfortunately 10,000 accessions of the original target group were reported to be dead – representing options for agriculture which are lost forever, as we will never know what genetic diversity these accessions contained.

The Trust has also supported research in conservation techniques for vegetatively propagated crops, which are difficult and costly to conserve and distribute. The Trust has supported the development of protocols for expensive to conserve crops, with notable success with yams and aroids. Those protocols are now in use for tissue culture and cryopreservation.

In addition to ensuring samples are properly conserved, it is vitally important to know *what* is being conserved. Many genebanks conserve and maintain crop samples about whose characteristics they know very little. The Trust therefore also supports the evaluation of collections. This area of work continues to evolve with the use and introduction of new technologies to increase the odds of finding important traits, which will make future efforts in this area more cost-effective and impactful.

In addition, the Trust work supported the development of a genebank management software programme. In collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), GRIN -Global was developed, a version of USDA's state-of-the-art system which can be rolled out and made available to developing countries. This program is open access, free to use, and a number of genebanks are adopting it. This will increase access and use of genetic resources at a time when it is most needed.

The Executive Director went on to talk about one of the most high profile initiatives of the Trust, which is also at the heart of the global system - the Svalbard Global Seed Vault. The success of the Vault is in large part due to the excellent partnership with Nordgen and the Government of Norway. The Vault now contains the most diverse collection of crop diversity in the world. Fowler added that this was a marvelous testament to what can be achieved

through collective international action. The Director congratulated the staff of the Trust involved in shipping samples, who have coordinated the sending of over 520,000 crop samples to the Vault.

In other developments, the Director reported on efforts to upgrade and improve the Vavilov Institute, while also seeking to provide assistance with saving the Pavlovsk Experimental Station in Russia from destruction. He explained that the Station is still being threatened by developers, and that the Trust had brought international media attention to this. The Russian Parliament is now discussing the issue and is considering saving the collections.

Council members followed up with some clarifying questions, and thanked the Trust for the achievements and progress over the past year.

New Costings and New Endowment Target

The Director also reported on a new costing study of the CGIAR genebanks - the first truly rigorous study on this. He explained that as the core mandate of the Trust is to provide financial support to selected genebanks, it was important to have a precise and detailed amount on the costs of the genebanks.

The findings of the study indicate that the annual costs of conservation and distribution for CGIAR Centers and other institutes amount to USD 16.2 million. In order to generate this amount annually, the Trust would need to have an endowment of USD 470 million.

The costs include efforts to conserve the plant genetic material (approximately USD 275 million); making the material available – for example growing out seeds, etc. (this is especially costly for vegetatively propagated crops); and distribution of material. That the study increased the target endowment for the Trust is not surprising, as the original target was set a decade ago, and costs have increased and collections have grown, and techniques have become more effective and more expensive.

The results of the study have implications for the work at the Trust, as it highlights the need to keep costs down and the need to develop a rational global system for crop conservation and use. The International Treaty for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture provides the framework for such a system but political will and courage is needed to fully implement it.

Fowler explained that the Treaty is based on the premise of cooperation and multilateralism. He made a special request to donors not only for financial support, but for political support at the level of the Governing Body. He

explained the need, in the interest of all, to carve out a place within the plant genetic resources field where good scientific work can be carried out unimpeded by politics.

Council members expressed support for the work of the Trust, and expressed a willingness to become more involved in supporting the Trust as needed at Governing Body meetings.

Communications

Julian Laird, Director of Development and Communications, reported on the communication efforts of the Trust in the past year. The Annual Report continues to serve as the main report to donors on programmatic activities and achievements of the Trust. The Annual Report is sent electronically to Governing Body, Donors, and Treaty representatives, and is also shared online using social web tools allowing for ease in viewing the report online.

He explained that the Pavlovsk Experimental Station campaign, reported on earlier by Cary, had a significant impact on the number of contacts and online audience. The Trust database is now over four times larger, a dramatic increase in the number of people receiving communications and newsletters from the Trust. The Trust also communicates with an online audience using social media.

Mr. Laird presented the Council members with the current in-progress redesign of the Trust website, which will allow the Trust to showcase its impacts more effectively. He also noted that the Seed Vault continues to attract significant interest, and this is used by the Trust for reporting on stories on the importance of crop diversity.

Future Headquarters of the Trust

Mr. Fowler reported that, following a selection process, the Board had accepted an offer from the German government to host the Trust in Bonn. The Trust plans to move in mid-2012, once the headquarters agreement with Germany is finalized. He explained that this decision is the result of a seven-year process, and that the offices in Rome were only temporary as the Trust had no legal status in Italy. He explained that the move to independence is a big opportunity, as it will help to expand the Trust's network to include the 19 UN agencies in Bonn, including the UNFCCC.

The move will have a number of positive impacts on the operations of the Trust: it will provide a great deal more office space, thus allowing for expansion and more use of interns; the lower costs of the location and significant annual financial support for operational expenses will mean greater long-term sustainability. He further explained that the German

government has also promised high-level political support which the Trust regards as essential to achieving its fundraising targets in the coming years.

Donors inquired how future relationships with government donors would continue with no permanent representatives in Bonn, and how relations with agencies of Rome will be maintained. Cary Fowler assured the donors that strong relations would continue with the Rome-based partners. He pointed out that these organisations worked internationally, had devolved structures, and that maintaining good relationships should not be a problem as long as it was recognized as a priority. One option would be to maintain a small office in Rome for the Trust. Relationships with many government donors are direct with capitals, and Fowler suggested that this would probably become the case for most donors following the move, though this was not yet clear.

Mr. Waddell-Wood thanked the three countries who bid for the Trust's permanent headquarters and congratulated Germany on its successful bid, and donors look forward to high level political support for the Trust.

New Programme on Crop Wild Relatives

Cary Fowler reported on the new ten-year initiative being undertaken by the Trust and funded through generous support from the government of Norway. The Crop Wild Relatives (CWR) will be the largest project the Trust has ever undertaken. Fowler explained that CWR projects would fill in a significant missing piece in building a global system, as it will fill in gaps in genebank collections. CWR are under-collected and under-represented in genebanks, and are the biggest source of untapped diversity in world. The diversity found in CWR will be a major component in adapting crops to climate change.

The development phase of the project was quite substantial, and included expert meetings with international centers and Stanford University. The project was also reviewed at Executive Board meetings and planning meetings with Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

The project should lead to extraordinary results for adapting agriculture to climate change. If the Trust is able to find one trait that is marginally important for one crop for one region, the benefits would more than pay for the project. He further explained that all the work the Trust conducts will be under contracts facilitating access under the terms of the International Treaty for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, and therefore this work should be considered as a major contribution to the Treaty.

The project provides good leverage for additional and new donors, as the Trust can easily increase the impact by including other crops, which would

then run alongside the project infrastructure providing excellent value to new donors.

Donors thanked the government of Norway for supporting the project and for the foresight and vision which this project represents. Fowler added that in this field, in terms of cost-benefit, the only “competing project” would be the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, also supported by the government of Norway.

Long-Term Grants

Mellissa Wood, Director of Operations, reported on the long-term grants of the Trust - the in-perpetuity grants provided to genebanks from the endowment. To date, the Trust has given out over USD 7 million in long-term grants from its endowment.

Ms. Wood then presented data on the indicators used to measure the genebanks’ progress, including on critical core operations, leadership activities and global collaboration. She informed Members that the Trust is also planning to undergo the first long-term grant review, which are foreseen to take place every 5 years. Reviews will ensure funds provided to the genebank are being used efficiently, but also offer an in-depth analysis of the activities of each genebank grantee. This first review in 2012 will be of the IRRI genebank in the Philippines and the rice collection they hold ‘in trust’.

Report Card

Melissa Wood also presented the report card, which is designed to provide donors and Board members a quick and easily-understood overview of the Trust’s progress.

Donors asked the Trust to continue with the development of such tools, in particular looking at impact over time. Mr. Fowler explained that the Trust is working in further refining such reports and explained that the Trust appreciates that this is a challenge that must be met. He stated that the Trust is also working on briefing papers to address how the Trust is addressing particular issues such as food security or water scarcity. Council members indicated that it would also be important to identify where the Trust’s work fits on issues such as food security and climate change, and how that meshes with donors’ priorities.

Finance and Investment

Cary Fowler then proceeded to present the finance and investment paper. He described the Trust’s investment policy, and explained that the already conservative financial management has in fact become more so in the past 12 months, as the target drawdown rate has been reduced from 4.5% to 4%.

The Trust also recently changed financial advisors and is now being advised by Cambridge Associates (CA).

Cary Fowler also informed the Donors Council Members that the Executive Board adopted a new investment policy statement, which he shared with members.

Budget 2012

Mr. Fowler then presented the 2012 budget, which the Council endorsed.

Fundraising

Julian Laird, Director of Development and Communications, reported on the fundraising efforts of the organization. He reported that the Trust is happy to welcome the Netherlands as a new donor, with an initial contribution of US\$2.5 million over 2 years.

He stated that the Trust is hoping to hear more good news before the end of the year in terms of fundraising, but that there has not been a significant increase in number of donors or donations. He explained that there have been a number of external events which are having an effect on Trust fundraising, in particular the reworking of the endowment target and the financial crisis, with many donor agencies undergoing significant budget reductions.

The Trust is also in talks to restructure its relationship with the CGIAR, which provides an opportunity to take on a more proactive role with relation to the genebanks. In addition, the move to Germany comes at a time when an enhanced political profile is required for our fundraising, and so the offer of political support was one of the most interesting parts of the offer from the German government.

He explained that the Trust's main aim is to secure the endowment, but pointed out that the Trust is continuing to do its work while that endowment is raised. It is important, therefore, to judge the success of the Trust separately from its success in fundraising. In addition, the endowment can be conceptually divided - for example a \$275 million target could be presented, which would cover the in-perpetuity conservation of crops, but which would not then include distribution or availability.

He explained that the Trust needed a new approach to address this increased target, and in particular required a collective response from donors. This would most likely be best achieved through a donors' conference, which would also allow the Trust to transmit a renewed sense of urgency.

For this to be successful, it would be necessary to secure high-level political support, in addition to a more active involvement of the Executive Board. The Trust will also need, in due course, to increase staffing, and develop a communications strategy around this effort. The donors' conference would not occur before the second half of 2013 at the earliest, allowing for time for the Trust to relocate and fully develop its strategy for such a conference.

Donors welcomed the presentation and the approaches being considered.

Nominations to the Board

Peter Waddell-Wood presented the two nominations for two new Board member seats: Tim Fischer and Klaus Töpfer. He explained that these positions will be replacing Margaret Catley-Carlson from Canada and John Lovett from Australia.

He informed Donor Council members that Professor Klaus Töpfer is the former Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) in Nairobi as well as having served as Under Secretary General of the United Nations, and is currently founding director of the Institute for Advanced Sustainable Studies (IASS) based in Potsdam, Germany. Prof. Töpfer has also been a member of the German Bundestag and held office as Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, and as Federal Minister of Regional Planning, Building and Urban Development.

Ambassador Tim Fischer from Australia served as Leader of the National Party, Minister for Trade and Deputy Prime Minister. He served as Chairman of the Crawford Fund and helped focus outreach on agricultural topics. His most recent appointment was as Australian Ambassador to the Holy See.

Mr. Waddell-Wood stated that since we have two excellent candidates for two positions, elections should be straightforward. Professor Töpfer was nominated for 2012, while Ambassador Tim Fischer for 2013. Donors' Council Members endorsed the candidature of both nominees.

Mr. Waddell-Wood then turned to the elections of the Donors' Council Chair and Vice-Chair. He stated that Germany has been nominated for the position of Chair, though no specific name has been presented as the representative. This was approved by the Council. The Chair urged Germany to select one person to serve all 3 years, as continuity is important.

Peter Waddell-Wood then asked for nominations for Vice Chair, and indicated that Jostein Leiro, representing Norway, had offered to serve as Vice Chair of the Council. Donors' Council Members endorsed the nomination and selection of Germany as Chair and Norway as Vice-Chair.

Executive Board Report

Margaret Catley Carlson, Chair of the Trust's Executive Board, and Executive Board Members John Lovett, Peter Crane as well as Shivaji Pandey, Director of AGP Division at FAO, joined the Donors' Council meeting.

Ms. Catley-Carlson gave a report to the Donors' Council members on current activities at the Trust and the role the Executive Board has taken. The major work of the Board during the year had clearly been the decision over a permanent headquarters location. She explained the reasons for the success of the German bid to host the Trust, and also explained that the move to Germany would not affect relationships with Italy or the Rome-based food agencies.

Donor Council Members thanked her for her report and for the work of the Board.

OTHER BUSINESS

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

Ms. Catley Carlson thanked Peter Waddell-Wood for his work as Chair of the Donors Council over two terms, from its very first meeting. She expressed gratitude on behalf of the Trust staff and the Executive Board for his diligence, his support and his real interest in the Trust and its mandate. Peter Waddell-Wood thanked the Trust for making a genuine difference in the world, and said he was honored to have been involved from the start.

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

Provisional Agenda

9.00	1	Welcome and Introductions
	2	Adoption of Provisional Agenda and Timetable
9.15	3	Highlights of 2011, Forward to 2012
10.30		Coffee
11.00	4	A progress report – the Report Card
11.30	5	EB paper – Finance and Investment Report
12.00		Lunch
13.00	6	EB paper - 2012 Budget
13.30	7	EB paper - Fundraising Report and Strategy
14.30	8	Election of Executive Board members
15.15		Coffee
15.30	9	Election of Donors' Council Chair
16.15	10	Executive Board Report
17.00	11	Other Business
17.30		Meeting Close

**Followed immediately by joint reception with Donors' Council,
Executive Board and Trust staff**



Donors' Council Meeting: October 24th 2011

Donor Representative	Donor
Peter Waddell-Wood (CHAIR)	Australia
Deborah Fulton	Australia
Pedro Machado	Brazil
Marco Valicenti	Canada
Mitja Mehrtens	Germany
Jostein Leiro	Norway
Santiago Menendez	Spain
Christina Blank	Switzerland
Christine Greider	Switzerland
Franklin Moore	USA
Radha Ranganathan	International Seed Federation

List of Attendees
Global Crop Diversity Trust: Staff and Board Attending

Julian Laird	Director of Development and Communications
Cary Fowler	Executive Director
Mellissa Wood	Director of Operations
Jane Toll	Project Manager
Anne Clyne	Director of Finance
Jenin Assaf	Programme Specialist