

**Minutes of the 20th Meeting of the Crop Trust Donors' Council
of the Global Crop Diversity Trust**

29 March 2019, Rome, Italy

The Donors' Council of the Global Crop Diversity Trust ('Crop Trust') met on the 29th of October 2018 at FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy. The meeting was chaired by the Netherlands, and attended by representatives of donor parties, and observers. A list of those in attendance can be found in Annex 1. Annex 2 shows the meeting agenda. Several background papers were issued to invitees prior to the meeting.

1. Welcome, Introduction and Adoption of Agenda and Minutes

The Chair of the Donors' Council, Ambassador Hans Hoogeveen, opened the meeting and extended a welcome to all participants. The objectives of the 20th meeting were to engage with the Donors' Council on recent developments at the Crop Trust including updates on technical work and the Food Forever Initiative, to seek guidance on future fundraising efforts based on the report of the Donors' Council Innovative Finance Working Group recommendation, and to have a discussion on the Crop Trust Governance structure.

The agenda for the 20th Meeting of the Donors' Council was adopted and the minutes from both the 18th and 19th Meetings of the Donors' Council were approved.

2. Recent Developments in the Crop Trust: An Oral Update

The Executive Director of the Crop Trust, Ms. Marie Haga, presented a review and oral update of recent developments and activities at the Crop Trust since the last meeting of the Donors' Council in October 2018.

1. Long-term Agreement with IRRI

The Executive Director informed the Donors' Council that the Crop Trust has entered into the first long-term partnership agreement with the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in the Philippines. The Executive Director said that the agreement is a first off and that the Crop Trust intends to enter into further long term partnership agreements with major crop collections containing unique genetic materials of global importance provided that the genebanks have reached agreed standards. She emphasized that another important requirement is that there needs to be sufficient level of funding in the endowment to support these collections in the long term.

2. Seeds4Resilience Project

The Executive Director informed the Donors' Council that the Crop Trust is in the initial phases of entering into an agreement with the Government of Germany to support national genebanks which will allow for the upgrading of five national genebanks in

Africa. She said that the Crop Trust is extremely grateful to the Government of Germany for funding this Project called Seeds4Resilience. The project is linked to another proposal being prepared in collaboration with BMZ to be submitted to the Green Climate Fund to support national genebanks. This initiative is envisioned to be scalable to support genebanks in other parts of the world with funding support from other donor countries.

3. Clean External Audit – 2018

The Executive Director informed the Donors' Council that the Crop Trust received a clean audit for 2018 with no management letter points. The Executive Board has approved the accounts and the annual report will be sent out soon. The Crop Trust received an "A" rating in the UNPRI last year and the UNPRI report for 2018/2019 has officially been submitted.

4. The Innovative Finance Working Group

The Executive Director acknowledged the challenges related to securing ODA funding from governments for long-term issues and thanked the Donors' Council and Stefan Schmitz of Germany (BMZ) for the work on the Innovative Finance Mechanisms. A summary report of the Innovative Finance Working Group was included in the background documents circulated for discussion in the meeting. Recommendations from the Donors' Council with regards to the Innovative Finance Mechanisms will be brought to the Executive Board in May.

5. Svalbard Update and Crop Trust Magazine

The Executive Director addressed concerns related to the Global Seed Vault that have been present in recent media. She informed the Donors' Council that while there had been challenges with the vault, the ongoing construction and the application of new technology will result in a fully water-proofed vault. She expressed gratitude to the Government of Norway for establishing the vault and investing in the new construction and upgrades.

The Executive Director also introduced the Crop Trust Magazine, which is intended to bring the work of the Crop Trust to a wider audience. The magazine will be circulated to Donors' in the near future.

6. Food Forever Update

The Executive Director provided a brief summary of the purpose of the Food Forever Campaign (FFI) and outlined that the FFI Secretariat is composed of the Crop Trust Secretariat, the Government of the Netherlands, and FAO. She acknowledged She informed participants that FFI is planning to convene "Food Forever Dialogues," which are dialogue-based awareness-raising campaigns that will be held in different parts of the world. The Executive Director closed her presentation with a brief overview of the Food Forever Experiences, which are events held in cooperation with partners such as Google to advocate for greater use of diversity in diets and to highlight the importance of diversity within crops.

The Chair congratulated the Executive Director and the Secretariat for the excellent work that has taken place since the last meeting of the Donors' Council. Members of the Donors' Council asked that information regarding staff changes within the Crop Trust Secretariat be reported to donors. Members of the Donors' Council also inquired about the selection process for the countries included in the Seeds4Resilience Project. In response, the Executive Director described previous work that has been done with support from KfW to review more than 1,700 crop collections to identify countries based on the criteria established by the Crop Trust in consultation with experts in plant genetic resources for safeguarding unique genetic materials in the global system for *ex situ* conservation. The representative of KfW spoke about the preparation of a project proposal for the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and mentioned that the Seeds4Resilience Project is seen as co-funding contribution to the GCF proposal and the selected countries fit requirements of the GCF and the One World-No Hunger initiative of the Government of Germany. He emphasized that other donor countries can also use this concept as a basis to fund other national collections across the globe.

3. Future Funding for Safeguarding Crop Diversity: Recommendations from the Innovative Finance Working Group of the Crop Trust Donors' Council

The Director of Finance for the Crop Trust Secretariat, Ms. Janet Muir, gave a detailed presentation and summary on the work of the Innovative Finance Working Group (IFWG) established at the 17th meeting of the Crop Trust Donors' Council. The mandate of the IFWG was to analyze and review potential innovative finance mechanisms to help secure sustainable and long-term funding for safeguarding crop diversity. Her presentation also included a comprehensive overview of the potential innovative finance mechanisms that were discussed by the IFWG. Ms. Muir's overview provided information about each mechanism along with an estimated timeline and cost. The mechanisms that were discussed are as follows:

1. **Food Security Bond** – issuance of bonds in the international capital markets that open up funding for priority national genebanks. These bonds would be repaid by selected agri-food sector companies over time.
2. **Member Country Loans** - market rate loans given by World Bank member countries to the International Bank for Reconstruction & Development (IBRD) Trust Funds as part of its regular borrowing program.
3. **Debt-for-Nature Swaps** - financial transactions in which a portion of a developing nation's foreign debt is forgiven in exchange for local investments in environmental conservation measures.
4. **Crop-based Fundraising** – awareness raising and financial support for specific crops.
5. **Crowd-sourced Funding** – a mechanism that allows for small amounts of funds to be raised from large numbers of individuals or legal entities to fund businesses, projects, or other good causes that attract public support.
6. **Investment Sharing Facility** - An equity mutual fund managed by DWS, invested in global stocks according to ESG-compliant (environment, social and governance) principles.

Mr. Jonathan Wadsworth of the World Bank, who had also participated in the working group, concluded this segment of the presentation by describing how the original rationale for the Crop Trust endowment fund was for Donors' to come together and

contribute via conventional and unrestricted grants. He reminded everyone that there are ten other international and national genebanks that require input and also that the endowment itself was innovative when it was setup. He emphasized that the ultimate goal of the Crop Trust, a fully funded endowment, has not changed. With a fully funded endowment fund, the Crop Trust could support the global system in the long-term without having to approach donors for further contributions or to support the annual routine costs of the international crop collections.

Mr. Harnisch, a member of the IFWG, provided a detailed explanation of the high-level summary table presented in the IFWG summary report (table 1) which outlined the IFWG assessment of each mechanism in terms of cost, effort and likelihood of success.

The Chair thanked Ms. Muir and Mr. Wadsworth for their presentation, along with members of the IFWG for the time and work they provided towards helping to secure long-term funding for safeguarding crop diversity. The Chair suggested that the Donors' Council examine each individual recommendation as they are listed in the IFWG Summary Report (Document 4).

Overall recommendations from the Donors' Council to the Executive Board are as follows:

1. Food Security Bond

Norway described this mechanism as priority number "3" and suggested that this was not the preferred innovative funding mechanism. Germany supported this statement from Norway and suggested that this mechanism would require a large amount of staff resources and should not be a priority for the Crop Trust Secretariat.

The following decisions were adopted:

- *The Donors' Council recommends that the Crop Trust Secretariat pursue funding for a cost-benefit feasibility study to gauge the potential success of a Food Security Bond*
- *The Donors' Council recommends that the Crop Trust Secretariat approach the private sector to gauge the level of interest from impact investors in supporting a bond*
- *The Donors' Council also acknowledged the IFWG's overall ranking for probability of success in mid-term as "low"*

2. Member Country Loans

Norway described this mechanism as priority number "2" due to the fact that it has been pre-established by the World Bank, which would make it simpler for other member countries to get involved. Participants inquired about which institution, the Crop Trust or the World Bank, would provide the resources required. The Crop Trust Secretariat would plan these high-level meetings and provide the resources required to set up this mechanism with support from the World Bank.

The following decisions were adopted:

- *The Donors' Council recommends that the Crop Trust Secretariat identify member countries of the World Bank or foundations that would be interested in providing a loan to IBRD*

- *The Donors' Council recommends that the Crop Trust Secretariat Plan 10 high level outreach meetings with member countries to gauge interest in an MCL*
- *The Donors' Council also acknowledged the IFWG's overall ranking for probability of success in mid-term as "high"*

3. Debt-for-Nature Swaps

The following decisions were adopted:

- *The Donors' Council recommends that the Crop Trust Secretariat prioritize other more promising mechanisms while still continuing to identify possible collaborations with other eligible indebted countries where possible*
- *The Donors' Council also acknowledged the IFWG's overall ranking for probability of success in mid-term as "low"*

4. Crop-based Fundraising

Norway described this mechanism as priority number "1," due to the low marginal costs required, small amount of time and strain on resources, as well as the large potential for awareness raising through crop-based fundraising.

The following decisions were adopted:

- *The Donors' Council recommends that the Crop Trust Secretariat pursue specific crop fundraising for the conservation strategies that have already been established (coffee, apple and tea) with the private sector, either in parallel with crowd-sourcing or for larger endowment fund contributions to conserve these collections in their entirety*
- *The Donors' Council recommends that the Crop Trust Secretariat Consider how to incorporate the existing global crop conservation and use into fundraising campaigns, including a potential crowd-sourcing campaign*
- *The Donors' Council also acknowledged the IFWG's overall ranking for probability of success in mid-term as "medium"*

5. Crowd-sourced Funding

Participants suggested that the Secretariat should not limit a crowd-sourcing campaign to the food and beverage sector exclusively. Participants also discussed the potential risk of "green washing" that maybe associated with the proposed crowd-sourcing campaign and requested that the Crop Trust Secretariat give more consideration to avoiding the potential risk of "green washing" in developing the crowd-sourcing campaign.

The following decisions were adopted:

- *The Donors' Council recommends that the Crop Trust Secretariat continue to consider an appropriate name for the campaign and consider ways to avoid "green-washing" during the campaign*
- *The Donors' Council to the Executive Board of the Crop Trust to proceed with implementation of a crowd-sourcing campaign*

- *The Donors' Council recommends that donors consider pledging matching funds for amounts raised in their countries*
- *The Donors' Council also acknowledged the IFWG's overall ranking for probability of success in mid-term as "high"*

6. Investment Sharing Facility

The following decisions were adopted:

- *The Donors' Council recommends that donors advocate for the Investment Sharing Facility and consider ways that this can be replicated in their countries as a form of Public Private Partnership*
- *The Donors' Council recommends that the Crop Trust Secretariat speak with Deutsche Asset Management (DWS) and consider a new acronym for the Investment Sharing Facility in order to avoid confusion with the International Seed Federation (ISF)*
- *The Donors' Council also acknowledged the IFWG's overall ranking for probability of success in mid-term as "medium"*

Financing of the CGIAR Genebanks

The final section of this agenda item discussed was the Financing of the CGIAR genebanks. Ms. Muir presented an overview of the Crop Trust Secretariat's total commitment to the Genebank Platform, which shows an increasing share of the financing for the Platform to 2021.

Mr. Andre Zandstra from the CGIAR provided a summary of recent conversations between the Crop Trust Secretariat and the CGIAR, including information regarding the Delinking of Window 1 and Window 2 in the CGIAR Financing Plan for the period 2019-2021, which allows donors to contribute to reducing the funding gap by investing in Window 2. He also noted that a new program will be launched in 2021.

The Donors' Council supported the following statements regarding the financing of the genebank Platform. In order to close this "funding gap", donor support is required in two ways:

- *Contributions to the Endowment Fund – this has the effect of raising the level of the endowment fund to increase the USD amount that can be withdrawn now and in the future*
- *Contributions to the Genebank Platform – direct contributions to the Crop Trust to close the funding gap and also to minimize withdrawals from the endowment fund while it is still growing. As a result of the delinking of Windows 1 and 2, additional contributions to the Platform via Windows 2 will be additive*

Members discussed the future role of the Innovative Finance Working Group and agreed that the IFWG should continue to convene biannually in order to monitor and support the implementation of the recommendations of the Donors' Council in relation to the innovative finance mechanisms.

The Following decision was adopted:

- *The Donors' Council recommends that the IFWG continue to meet in order to monitor and support the implementation of the recommendations of the Donors' Council*

4. An Update on the Technical Work of the Crop Trust

Ms. Nelissa Jamora, Monitoring and Evaluations Specialist at the Crop Trust Secretariat, provided an in-depth presentation of the Crop Trust's technical work. She mentioned the recent signing of the Long-Term Partnership Agreement to cover the essential operations of the IRRI genebank and explained that there is a review process in place before a long-term partnership can be initiated with any of the genebanks.

She provided information on the Online Reporting Systems (ORT) with the CGIAR genebanks that allows genebank performance to be monitored, as well as Quality Management Systems (QMS) and regular technical genebank reviews. She described how the Crop Trust Secretariat works with the genebanks to make sure that germplasm is being used by breeders, scientists and research both inside and outside the CGIAR system. She provided an overview of the genebank technical reviews and provided examples of concrete actions and recommendations from such activity, including the transfer of the AfricaRice collections from Benin and Nigeria to one location in Côte d'Ivoire in order to improve efficiency in genebank operations.

She described the Secretariat's technical work with national genebanks, including information regarding the Crop Wild Relative Project (CWR). This project is supported by a partnership with the Millennium Seed Bank (MSB) and funding from the Norwegian Government. Crop wild relatives (CWR) serve as the genetic base for adapting crops to climate change, and as of 2019 more than 4,000 samples have been collected and safety duplicated. The Secretariat is also actively engaging with other partners and countries on pre-breeding with crop wild relatives.

In 2018 the CWR Project management team initiated a review of the technical work of the CWR Project. A team of reviewers were able to document capacity building in collecting and processing of wild relatives, in pre-breeding, and information management. Ms. Jamora concluded her presentation by describing the work to improve information systems in genebanks. The Crop Trust will continue to work with the CGIAR genebanks to improve germplasm data in order to enhance the management and availability of information regarding plant genetic resources.

The Chair thanked Ms. Jamora for her informative presentation and opened the floor for questions. Participants inquired about pre-breeding data availability and the fluctuations in the distribution of accessions from genebank to genebank. Ms. Jamora addressed these inquiries and informed the Donors' Council that all data from pre-breeding programs will be made available and easily accessible for users. She also spoke about the implementation of a "user-survey" that should identify reasons why certain materials are being requested from CGIAR genebanks.

Brazil highlighted Brazil's participation in the CWR project and stated that tremendous advances were made with this new data and information. Brazil and EMBRAPA are open to continuing these efforts.

Other members inquired about the potential for emergency funding for genebanks that are devastated by natural disasters or similar catastrophe. The Crop Trust Secretariat does in fact have some emergency funds available, however, these are distributed by a more *ad hoc* approach. The Treaty Secretariat stated that it would be extremely beneficial to have emergency funding that is immediately available to help with any crises.

5. Crop Trust Governance structure and the role of the Crop Trust Donors' Council

The Executive Director summarized the governance policies of the Donors' Council as they are outlined in the [Crop Trust Constitution](#). The Donors' Council was established as the forum to advise the Executive Board on fundraising and other financial matters, as well as provide a forum for donors to express their view on the operation of the Crop Trust. Members of the Donors' Council consist of both public and private donors from both developing and developed countries, who have made a significant contribution to the Trust. The Executive Director addressed the potential effects that new innovative finance mechanisms could have on Donors' Council membership. The Crop Trust Secretariat provided recommendations for how to manage these potential new donors, and the overall recommendation was that none of these mechanisms should lead to a change in the governance policy as it is stated in the constitution.

The Donors' Council adopted the following recommendations related to Donors' Council governance and the innovative finance mechanisms:

- *Invite Deutsche Asset Management (DWS) to participate as an observer due to their role in pioneering a new financial instrument in support of the Crop Trust*
- *Provide Donors' Council membership to governments that pledge legally binding commitments above 25,000 to a Food Security Bond or similar mechanism*

The Executive Director also described the Donors' Council policy on Observer status and emphasized that the Crop Trust recognizes the importance of including all relevant stakeholders, i.e. youth, in Donors' Council meetings. One way to involve informed youth is to invite the young Genebank Impact Fellows to be observers at Donors' Council meetings. These Impact Fellows are young people that are already familiar with the work of the Crop Trust and come from a variety of different countries across the globe. The chair informed the Donors' Council that an initiative is currently being developed to create a Youth Council for the Rome Based Agencies in order to give the youth a voice in these organizations. This Youth Council could also participate in Crop Trust Donors' Council meetings, which could be another productive way to involve and engage youth in the work of the Crop Trust.

The Donors' Council discussed the different options and concluded that further information about the Young Genebank Impact Fellows is needed, as well as further discussions on balanced representation and more information about the Youth Council should be provided in the future. The Donors' Council members concluded that a decision should be made in the next meeting of the Donors' Council.

The Chair of the Donors' Council thanked the Executive Director for her presentation and suggested that the Donors' Council continue to discuss how to involve other regions of the world. He also emphasized that voting rules of the Donors' Council

should not change, but there has to be a mechanism to have a better balance of representation.

Members stated that it could be interesting to have recipient countries engaged as observers and also that it would be easier to include these countries if the Donors' Council meetings allowed for better virtual communication.

6. The Road to 2020: An Update on the Food Forever Initiative

The Executive Director presented a summary and update on the Food Forever Initiative, an awareness raising campaign in support of Target 2.5 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The role of the Crop Trust is to be part of the secretariat structure and to drive this initiative jointly with the Government of the Netherlands and FAO. She thanked the governments of Germany, Norway, Switzerland, and the Netherlands for providing funding for the FFI.

The Executive Director summarized the concrete activities of FFI, specifically with regards to the four pillars: increase of outreach, underpin implementation, promote new knowledge, and strengthen governance. She provided the example of the Food Forever Experiences, which are events where chefs advocate for agrobiodiversity by cooking with uncommon, diverse ingredients. She informed the Donors' Council that each FFI Champion has been asked to make a pledge of concrete actions for the year. These pledges are significant because they serve as the foundation of the FFI Annual Workplan for 2019.

Members inquired about targets, indicators, and outputs of the campaign. Ms. Haga described how the FFI secretariat is continuously measuring the feedback from press releases, social media posts, and other content published by partner organizations and champions under the FFI umbrella.

7. Housekeeping and Next Steps

The Executive Director informed participants of the Donors' Council meeting, that there are four members of the Crop Trust's Executive Board that are elected by the Treaty, and four others elected by the Donors' Council. Unfortunately, Tim Fischer, who served as the Chair of the Executive Board, had to step down as Chair and Board member due to health reasons. Therefore, Sir Peter Crane was unanimously elected by the Executive Board to succeed Tim Fischer and serve as Chair. She also informed participants that Mary Ann Sayoc with East-West Seed cannot be re-elected to the board this year, meaning that there are now two new openings on the board. The Crop Trust Secretariat plans to ask for nominations as well as circulate a background document with more details for these elections before summer. The elections for these two board positions will be held at the next meeting of the Donors' Council.

8. Closing Remarks

The Chair of the Donors' Council thanked the Crop Trust Secretariat for preparing this meeting, and participants for their active involvement. The exact date and location of the Fall Donors' Council will be discussed and scheduled with the circulation of the

minutes. Members briefly discussed the location of the next meeting and some had a preference for Rome because it would make a broader participation feasible, while others reflected on the successful Donors' Council meeting that was held in Bonn. The Executive Director thanked participants for their participation, and the Chair for facilitating the meeting. The Chair closed the meeting.

Annex 1: List of Participants

Affiliation	Name	Role
Alliance between Bioversity International and CIAT	Juan Lucas Restrepo	CEO of the Alliance between Bioversity International and CIAT
Canada	Jennifer Fellows	Alternate Permanent Representative to the Food and Agriculture Agencies of the UN
Australia	Rosie Staude	Second Secretary - Australian Embassy in Rome
India	B. Rajender	Minister of Agriculture for the Embassy of India in Rome
USAID, United States of America	William Berger	Alternate Permanent Representative, Senior Humanitarian Advisor, U.S. Agency for International Development
Czech Republic	Vlastimil Zedek	Head of Unit of Renewable Energy Sources and Environmental Strategies, Department of the Environment and Organic Farming, Ministry of Agriculture
Switzerland	François Pythoud	Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to FAO, IFAD and WFP
Spain	Paula Hernández	Technical Assistant
Brazil	Renata Negrelly Nogueira	Alternate Permanent Representative of Brazil to FAO, IFAD and WFP
Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the Food and Agriculture Agencies of the UN	Hans Hoogeveen – <i>Chair</i>	Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the UN Organizations for Food and Agriculture
NORAD, Norway	Daniel Van Gilst	Senior Advisor - Department for Climate, Energy and Environment Section for Environment and Food Security
CGIAR	André Zandstra	Head of Funding and External Engagement
The World Bank Group	Jonathan Wadsworth – <i>Teleconference</i>	Lead Agriculture Specialist
KfW Development Bank, Germany	Jochen Harnisch	Head of Division, Agriculture, Water, Biodiversity for West Africa and Madagascar
International Seed Federation	Michael Keller	Secretary General

ITPGRFA	Kent Nnadozie	Secretary, International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture at FAO
The Global Crop Diversity Trust	Dezreen Cameron-Stein	Finance and Investment Manager
The Global Crop Diversity Trust	Janet Muir – <i>Teleconference</i>	Director of Finance
The Global Crop Diversity Trust	Erin Gleeson	Partnerships Fellow
The Global Crop Diversity Trust	Nelissa Jamora	Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist
The Global Crop Diversity Trust	Marie Haga	Executive Director

Annex 2: Agenda

20th Meeting of the Crop Trust Donors' Council Agenda

29 March 2019
Rome, Italy

Time	Topic
10:00	Coffee and Registration
10:15	1. Welcome, Introduction and Adoption of Agenda and Minutes Approval of the minutes from the 18 th and 19 th Donors' Council meetings held on 14-15 June 2018 and 23 October 2018 Hans Hoogeveen , Chair of the Crop Trust Donors' Council (Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the FAO)
10:30	2. Recent Developments in the Crop Trust: An Oral Update Marie Haga , Executive Director (Crop Trust Secretariat)
10:45	3. Future Funding for Safeguarding Crop Diversity: Recommendations from the Innovative Finance Working Group of the Crop Trust Donors' Council Stefan Schmitz , Head of Division Rural Development and Food Security (Germany, BMZ) and Janet Muir , Director of Finance (Crop Trust Secretariat)
12:00	Light Lunch
12:30	4. An Update on the Technical Work of the Crop Trust Nelissa Jamora , Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist (Crop Trust Secretariat)
13:15	5. Crop Trust Governance structure and the role of the Crop Trust Donors' Council Marie Haga , Executive Director (Crop Trust Secretariat)
14:15	6. The Road to 2020: An Update on the Food Forever Initiative Marie Haga , Executive Director (Crop Trust Secretariat)
15:00	7. Housekeeping and Next Steps
15:30	Closing Remarks