



**Global Crop Diversity Trust  
Executive Board Meeting (EB/2018/4)  
24-25 October 2018, Bonn, Germany**

**Summary Report**

Attending Members of the Executive Board

Peter Crane (Acting Chair)  
Prem Lal Gautam  
Alexander Müller  
Mary-Ann Sayoc  
Marcio de Miranda Santos  
Knut Storberget  
Emmy Bartz Simmons  
Gebisa Ejeta  
Marie Haga (Executive Director of the Crop Trust)

Apologies

Tim Fischer	Crop Trust Chair
René Castro	FAO representative
Kent Nnadozie	International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources
Hans Hoogeveen	Chair of the Donors' Council

Attending Observers

Andre Zandstra	CGIAR
Onno Steenbeek	Finance & Investment Committee

Attending Crop Trust Staff

Luigi Guarino	Director of Science and Programs
Janet Muir	Director of Finance
Sebastian Winkler	Head of Partnerships
Christoph Beck	Head of Human Resources and Corporate Operations
Neil Palmer	Head of Communications
Rodrigo Barrios	Food Forever Initiative – Campaign Manager
Erin Gleeson	Partnerships Fellow, Minute Taker
Bernhard Stocker	Executive Assistant

The status of decisions and actions arising from **EB 2018/4** is provided in the table below:

<b>No.</b>	<b>Decisions</b>
1	The Executive Board adopted the Agenda for the EB/2018/4.
2	Members adopted the Minutes of EB 2018/1, EB 2018/2, EB 2018/3.
3	The Executive Board approved the Revised 2018 budget.
4	The Executive Board approved the 2019 Annual Budget, and takes note of the envisaged 2020 and 2021 budgets.
5	The Executive Board reaffirmed the approval of the Indirect Cost Policy.
6	The Executive Board approved the FIC's recommendation to retain PWC as auditors for two years (Audits 2018 and 2019).
7	The Executive Board approved that the Audit Partner be rotated after 2-years.
8	The Executive Board considered and approved the Institutional Risk Matrix for 2019.
9	The Executive Board noted the IT roadmap 2019-2021 starting with the implementation of a more efficient IT system.
10	The Executive Board encourages further development and implementation of innovative finance mechanisms, including the crowdsourcing campaign. Management is requested to report back on the progress of the implementation of the crowdsourcing campaign during the Executive Board meeting in May 2019 at which stage the board will decide on the next steps.
11	The Executive Board encourages the CGIAR and the Crop Trust to identify the optimal scenario for reaching the endowment target of USD 500 million to ensure long term funding for the Essential Operations of the Article 15 Crop collections. Members furthermore request that Management convey to the CGIAR System Council the importance of delinking Windows 1 & 2.
12	The Executive Board encourages the Crop Trust Secretariat to proceed with a similar Donors' Council meeting format in 2019.
13	The Executive Board approved the Crop Trust Work Plan for 2019.
14	The Executive Board reconfirmed that EB/2019/1 be held at the Oak Spring Garden, in Upperville, Virginia, USA on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> of May 2019. A closed session of the Board will be held in the afternoon of the 1 <sup>st</sup> of May
15	The Executive Board approves EB/2019/2 to be held in Bonn on the 29 <sup>th</sup> and 30 <sup>th</sup> of October. It is further suggested that a FIC meeting will be held at the Crop Trust on the 28 <sup>th</sup> of October 2019.
16	The Executive Board approves EB 2020/1 to be held at ICARDA, Morocco, on the 24 <sup>th</sup> and 25 <sup>th</sup> of March 2020.
17	The Executive Board authorises the Executive Board Chair and the Executive Director to sign the Statement of Assurance for 2017. Going forward, and in advance of the signing of a Statement of Assurance to the CGIAR, all Centers involved in the Genebank Platform be asked to sign the same Statement of Assurance to the Crop Trust to be assured that there have been no financial irregularities etc. with respect to the funds disbursed by the Crop Trust.

No.	Actions Arising	Status
1	The Crop Trust will provide separate financial reporting on the Food Forever Initiative to EB/2019/1.	Rodrigo Barrios
2	The FIC to revert to the Executive Board with the final proposals with respect to the asset liability modelling study	Janet Muir
3	Mr. Steenbeek to share information with respect to evolution of market performance of the pension fund industry with the Executive Board	Janet Muir
4	The Director of Finance to discuss with PWC its contract extension for the 2018 and 2019 audits and its fee levels.	Janet Muir
5	Corporate Operations and HR will provide sound feedback on both the status and costing of the IT roadmap along with feedback on staff recruitment to the next Executive Board meeting.	Christoph Beck
6	The Science Team to prepare a paper on whether management of genomics data should be considered basic genebank operations.	Luigi Guarino
7	The Crop Trust will prepare a report from the next meetings of the Innovative Finance Working Group and the Executive Board will wait to make any decisions regarding the governance of the Donors' Council until then.	Sebastian Winkler
8	The Crop Trust will circulate the Food Forever Initiative Terms of Reference to the Executive Board.	Rodrigo Barrios
9	The Crop Trust will review the name "Board of Overseers" of the Food Forever Initiative and try to think of a new name for this group.	Rodrigo Barrios
10	The Crop Trust will for next year provide more transparency regarding who is responsible for each activity in the work plan and how it is connected to the budget.	Marie Haga
11	The Communications Team will discuss the role and purpose of the <i>Crop Trust Annual Report</i> and come up with a way to document internal processes.	Neil Palmer

#### **EB/2018/4-1**

#### **Welcome, Introduction and Adoption of the Agenda for EB/2018/4**

The Acting Chair of the Executive Board, Mr. Crane, opened the meeting. Sir Peter welcomed all participants, including the representative from the Crop Trust's Finance and Investment Committee. The Board Chair's apologies were conveyed.

1. Decision: The Executive Board adopted the Agenda for the EB/2018/4.

#### **EB/2018/4-2**

#### **Minutes and Actions Arising from EB 2018/1, EB 2018/2, EB 2018/3**

At the EB 2018/1 meeting in St. Petersburg, Russia, it was agreed to provide separate financial reporting for the Food Forever Initiative. All other actions from EB 2018/1, EB 2018/2, EB 2018/3 were implemented.

2. Decision: Members adopted the Minutes of EB/2018/1, EB/2018/2 and EB 2018/3.
  1. Action: The Crop Trust will provide separate financial reporting on the Food Forever Initiative to EB/2019/1 in May.

### **EB/2018/4-3**

#### **Executive Director's Oral Report**

Ms. Marie Haga, the Executive Director, provided the Executive Board with a high-level update on the status and activities of the Global Crop Diversity Trust. Ms. Haga highlighted five developments of special importance to the Crop Trust since the Board's last physical meeting in St. Petersburg in March 2018, including:

- The signing of the Long-Term Partnership Agreement (LPA) with IRRI, which is a "proof of concept" for the Crop Trust.
- German funding for the upgrading of five national genebanks in Africa, including Nigeria, Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Zambia. Ms. Haga expressed tremendous appreciation to the German government, as well as the hope that other donors could use this as a model to support additional national genebanks.
- The upgrading of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, which is in progress and the reopening celebration will be in February 2020.
- A successful first bi-annual meeting of the Donors' Council was held in Bonn in June 2018. Ms. Haga expressed that the goals of the first bi-annual meeting were achieved, which included high-level representation from capitals and headquarters, as well as higher level representation.
- The Food Forever Initiative is coming together nicely with the new Chair, Mercedes Araoz, the Vice President of Peru. Ms. Haga informed the Board that FAO has come on board in the secretariat structure.

### **EB/2018/4-4**

#### **Report from Finance and Investment Committee Meeting 22 October 2018**

Mr. Steenbeek, an external member of the Finance & Investment Committee (FIC) attended for this agenda item. Mr. Steenbeek informed the Executive Board that the FIC had met for a full day of meetings in Bonn on 22 October 2018 with the focus of the meeting being to review the Investment Policy Statement and strategy going forward; investment manager performance; and a workshop to explore innovative finance mechanisms. He outlined that both Mercer and DWS were in attendance. Mr. Steenbeek presented a summary overview of performance of the portfolios of each investment manager since their appointment in July 2016 and also outlined the views of both managers with respect to market outlook. Both managers confirmed that they were not invested in agriculture or food commodities in line with the Investment Policy Statement.

Mr. Steenbeek provided an update to members on the asset liability modelling study that is in progress to establish a single Strategic Asset Allocation for the portfolio, and this was discussed as part of a workshop with Mercer during the FIC meeting. He also highlighted the result of the recently circulated survey to Executive Board and FIC members which aimed to dive deeper into the qualitative risks around the endowment fund in an uncertain world and to assess the risk appetite of members. Further analysis is required, and FIC will report back to the Executive Board shortly. In response to a query on the evolution of market performance of both managers, Mr. Steenbeek agreed to share information with respect to the pension fund industry with the Executive Board.

The Executive Board thanked Mr. Steenbeek, the FIC Chair, members and management for the highly productive engagement at this meeting.

## **EB/2018/4-5**

### **Finance and Investment Report**

Ms. Janet Muir, the Director of Finance, updated the Executive Board on the endowment fund investment management and UNPRI reporting; the status of the KfW loan; proposed changes to the Investment Policy Statement; the revised budget for 2018; the Multi-Year Budgets for 2019, 2020 and 2021; a review of the Crop Trust's Indirect Cost Policy and a proposal with respect to external auditor rotation.

As at 30 June 2018, the total estimated value of the portfolio (excluding KfW loan proceeds) amounted to USD 221.2 million against a value of USD 222.4 million at 31 March 2018, which represents a (0.6%) return (net of fees) on the USD endowment fund in Quarter 2 against a policy benchmark return of 2% over the same period. For the USD fund, the annual one-year return amounted to 5.4% against the policy benchmark of 7%. Since inception in 2005, the portfolio has achieved an average annual investment return of 4.2% per year against a policy return of 6.1%. For the EUR fund, which represents the KfW loan proceeds, the return for the year to 30 June 2018 amounted to (1.2%) against a benchmark of (0.8%).

The Executive Board, on 20 March 2018, approved a Responsible Investment Policy which has now been incorporated into the overall Investment Policy Statement of the Crop Trust. The Crop Trust is a signatory to the United Nations Principles of Responsible Investment (PRI) and as part of its commitment to the PRI, the Crop Trust is committed to undertake annual PRI reporting, the results of which are publicly disclosed.

Ms. Muir highlighted that Mercer has reviewed the Crop Trust's United Nations Principles of Responsible Investment (UNPRI) assessment for the year 2017/18 and compared the results to the median signatory scores provided by the UNPRI (Annex F). In summary, the Crop Trust has achieved an overall rating of "A" with several areas of strong improvement since the first UNPRI assessment report in 2016. Mercer notes that there are only limited areas remaining where the Crop Trust scores are lower relative to the PRI median, and they provide recommendations of the areas to build on and to continue the incorporation of responsible investment over time. The Crop Trust will work through the recommendations made by Mercer in advance of the next UNPRI report submission in March 2019. The Executive Board welcomed the significant progress made in this regard.

Ms. Muir presented the Revised Budget 2018 which was included in the circulated document along with a detailed variance analysis report of the revised budget against the Executive Board approved budget for 2018 based on an analysis of actual expenditure to 31 July 2018 and projected expenditure for the remainder of the year, following consultation with budget-holders. Overall, the draft Revised Budget 2018 is projecting a balanced budget to 31 December 2018. The key assumption in this revised budget is that only 2% withdrawal of income will be made from the endowment fund in 2018 to fund the Genebank Platform and operations with an additional USD 5.5 million to come from donors in order to fill the "funding gap" which represents the difference between the commitment to the Genebank Platform in 2018 and the amount withdrawn from the endowment fund to meet this commitment. The

Crop Trust is working with the Donor Council Innovative Finance Working Group (IFWG) to fund this gap as part of its Terms of Reference.

Ms. Muir presented the Multi-Year Budgets 2019-2021, which were included in the circulated document that provided detailed analysis of forecasted income and expenditure and the key assumptions used in developing the multi-year budget. The Executive Board considered the main income and expenditure movements over the three-year period and noted that the multi-year budgets were prepared following detailed consultation with all budget-holders and the Project Development Team.

Ms. Muir highlighted a number of new initiatives being developed by the Crop Trust that, although not factored into the multi-year budgets, could have a material positive impact on the multi-year budget and this will result in a revised plan being submitted to FIC and the Executive Board as and when required.

A key objective for the period 2019-2021 will be to withdraw a maximum 2% from the endowment fund and to obtain donor support to fund the Crop Trust's commitment to the Genebank Platform so that investment income earned can be reinvested in the fund rather than withdrawn. Projected support from donors has been included in the income projections.

Ms. Muir highlighted that the external auditors, PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PWC), met with the FIC on 22 October 2018 to outline their approach to the audit and their main areas of focus, to discuss the implementation of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and to provide guidance on best practice with respect to auditor rotation and retention. Members noted that PWC have been retained since the 2013 financial audit and 2018 will be their fifth term. While the standard rotation period tends to be ten years, with a rotation of seven years for the audit partner, members agreed to retain PWC for a further two years (2018 and 2019 audits) after which time the engagement of audit services will be considered further. The Executive Board asked that this be discussed with the auditors along with the level of fees.

Ms. Muir presented the Crop Trust's Institutional Overhead Policy, approved by the Executive Board in October 2014, for its periodic review. The objective of this policy is to inform organizations how the Crop Trust will contribute towards their indirect costs or overheads when they enter into an agreement with the Crop Trust. The policy provides direction to determine which costs are eligible for compensation. It aims to ensure uniformity of application Ms. Muir highlighted that, at this time Crop Trust management are not proposing any changes to this policy.

3. Decision: The Executive Board takes note of the investment management update provided in the report.
4. Decision: The Executive Board approved the Revised 2018 budget.
5. Decision: The Executive Board approved the 2019 Annual Budget and takes note of the envisaged 2020 and 2021 budgets.

6. Decision: The Executive Board approved the extension of the audit contract with PWC for two more years.
7. Decision: The Executive Board approved the Institutional Overhead Policy.
2. Action: The FIC to revert to the Executive Board with the final proposals with respect to the asset liability modelling study.
3. Action: Mr. Steenbeek to share information with respect to evolution of market performance of the pension fund industry with the Executive Board.
4. Action: The Director of Finance to discuss with PWC its contract extension for the 2018 and 2019 audits and its fee levels.

#### **EB/2018/4-6**

##### **Institutional Risk Matrix**

Ms. Muir provided an overview on the institutional risk management matrix, its methodology, process and purpose. She advised that the goal of the matrix is to ensure there are appropriate policies in place to identify, address and mitigate risks where possible. She highlighted that the Project Development Team, in conjunction with the individual teams, has undertaken an assessment of risks over seven categories – strategy, performance, governance, finance and investment, operations, programs, and fundraising and communications – and that the Crop Trust has identified 47 risks for 2019 (2018: 47) of which eight have a residual risk score of significant.

8. The Executive Board considered each risk in detail and approved the Institutional Risk Matrix for 2019.

#### **EB/2018/4-7**

##### **Human Resources and Corporate Operations**

Mr. Christoph Beck, Head of Human Resources and Corporate Operations, presented the team's report. Mr. Beck's update included information regarding the IT roadmap for 2019 - 2021, as well as a general update on corporate operations and human resources.

Mr. Beck explained how the firm, Ideal State, was hired in September 2018 to look in detail at the Crop Trust's processes and provide advice on how the work of the Crop Trust can be best supported through IT systems. The objectives of this new IT roadmap are to create a modern digital workplace to support the work of the Crop Trust, and to help implement a sustainable process for keeping the systems relevant and up to date.

Mr. Beck explained that Corporate Operations strives to increase organizational effectiveness through the review of policies and processes. These can be improved by examining best practices from other international organizations, utilizing processes that are already in place (e.g. results of United Nations procurement), and taking advantage of processes that come with the new IT systems.

9. Decision: The Executive Board noted the IT roadmap 2019 – 2021 starting with the implementation of a more efficient IT system.
5. Action: Human Resources will provide sound feedback on both, the status of the IT roadmap along with the costing as well as the staff recruitment, to the Executive Board in May.

## **EB/2018/4-8 Science Report**

### *Program Report*

Mr. Luigi Guarino, Director of Science and Programs, presented a paper summarizing the Crop Trust's technical work under the following headings: CGIAR-Crop Trust Genebank Platform, the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, the Crop Wild Relatives Project and Information Systems Development.

Mr. Guarino provided an overview of the Genebank Platform and its Online Reporting Tool (ORT), which involves the 11 genebanks of the CGIAR. Mr. Guarino reminded the Executive Board of two major events that occurred recently: 1) the relocation of the ICARDA genebank from Aleppo, Syria to decentralized operations in Morocco and Lebanon; and 2) the "repatriation" of AfricaRice to Bouaké, Côte d'Ivoire. Mr. Guarino provided an update on current work on the gap analysis and provided a description of the proposed next phase of genebank reviews.

Mr. Guarino provided an overview and update on the Crop Wild Relatives project, specifically on the collecting and pre-breeding phases. An external review of the project will be carried out from October 2018 to February 2019 and will address three areas: 1) capacity development across the project; 2) all the collecting work; 3) the pre-breeding work that has happened so far.

### *Project Development*

Mr. Guarino gave an update on projects that are currently being developed, focusing specifically on the upgrading and long-term support to national genebanks proposed under the BMZ and GCF projects currently in preparation. Mr. Guarino specified that increased efforts on national genebanks are not detracting from the Crop Trust's focus on fundraising for the CGIAR genebanks. Mr. Guarino also provided an update on the FOOD project, which builds on the complementarity of *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation.

6. Action: The Science Team to prepare a paper on whether management of genomics data should be considered basic genebank operations.



## *Update from the CGIAR*

André Zandstra Director of Funding & External Engagement for the CGIAR gave a short presentation and update on the activities happening within the CGIAR as well as an introduction to different elements of their business plan. Mr. Zandstra highlighted joint efforts between the Crop Trust and the CGIAR, including shared responsibility of the Genebank Platform.

### **EB/2018/4-9**

#### **Partnerships Report**

Mr. Sebastian Winkler, Head of Partnerships, presented the Partnerships Report to the Executive Board and highlighted the different innovative finance mechanisms that make up the organization's fundraising strategy. He provided an overview of the Innovative Finance Working Group (IFWG) that was established at the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of The Crop Trust Donors' Council in June 2018. The IFWG will meet three times, and individual members of the Working Group will each take ownership of different mechanisms. The IFWG will also discuss the financing of the Genebank Platform and address issues in regard to the composition of the Donors' Council. The results of this Working Group will be presented at the spring 2019 meeting of the Donors' Council.

10. Decision: The Executive Board encourages further development and implementation of innovative funding mechanisms, including the crowd-sourcing campaign. The Secretariat is requested to report back on the progress of the implementation of the crowd-sourcing campaign during the Executive Board meeting in May 2019 at which stage the Board will decide on the next steps.

#### *Financing of the Genebank Platform*

Mr. Winkler presented the challenges and opportunities associated with fully funding the CGIAR genebanks by 2022, which would require an endowment fund of USD 500 million. At the end of the current Genebank Platform in 2022, the Crop Trust will fund the essential operations of the genebanks that reach agreed performance targets and fulfil eligibility criteria. The total figure expected to be provided by the Crop Trust at that time will be between USD 15 to 17 million per annum. The terms of the long-term partnership agreements between the Crop Trust and CGIAR Centers oblige the latter to provide matching funding.

In 2018, the Crop Trust is committed to contributing USD 9 million to the CGIAR Genebank Platform (2019 USD 11.5 million; 2020 USD 13.3 million). If the Crop Trust restricts the amount withdrawn from the endowment to 2% instead of 4% in 2018 there would be a funding gap this year of approximately USD 5.5 to be filled. Under a 2% withdrawal from the endowment fund, the speed at which the fundraising target of USD 500 million is reached increases substantially. The Crop Trust is working with members of the Donors' Council to find ways to fill the funding gap to support the endowment fund and allow Crop Trust to achieve its overall objective of securing long term funding for the effective conservation and ready availability of crop diversity.

André Zandstra, Director of Funding and External Engagement for the CGIAR, echoed that it is in the interest of the Crop Trust as well as the CGIAR to find solutions for pursuing a 2% withdrawal scenario. He mentioned that the CGIAR will be asking for donor commitments over 3 years, and that they will work for delinking of Window 1 and Window 2.

11. Decision: The Executive Board encourages the CGIAR and the Crop Trust to ensure long term funding for the essential operations of the CGIAR genebanks. Members furthermore request the Secretariat to convey to the CGIAR System Council the importance of delinking Windows 1 & 2.

#### *Oral Report from the Donors' Council Meeting*

Mr. Winkler provided an oral report on the 19<sup>th</sup> Donors' Council meeting that took place on 23 October 2018 in Rome, Italy. The Chair of the Donors' Council, Ambassador Hans Hoogeveen, Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the UN Organizations for Food and Agriculture, chaired both the Bonn and Rome meetings.

12. Decision: The Executive Board encourages the Crop Trust Secretariat to proceed with a similar Donors' Council meeting format in 2019.
7. Action: The Executive Board is expecting a report from the IFWG in the spring and will wait to make any decisions regarding governance of the Donors' Council until then.

#### **EB/2018/4-10**

#### **Communications Report**

Mr. Neil Palmer, Head of Communications, presented an overview on the communications activities of the Crop Trust in 2018. Mr. Palmer's update detailed recent communications efforts from the Crop Trust, as well as the Food Forever Initiative. Mr. Palmer introduced the idea of updating the format of the *Crop Trust Annual Report* due to its short shelf life and limited reach. He introduced the idea of the *Crop Trust Magazine* as a way to help raise awareness and educate the general public, donors, media and others about the work of the organization, including the Svalbard Global Seed Vault and the Global System of crop conservation.

Mr. Palmer informed the Executive Board that the Svalbard Global Seed Vault Communications Working Group has now been established. This group consists of representatives from the Government of Norway, NorGen, and the Crop Trust. This group will help to ensure that all parties involved in public communications about the seed vault, inform each other of plans for media outreach and events, involve each other in communications activities, coordinate with partners on crisis management, and collaborate on visitor policies.

## **EB/2018/4-11**

### **Food Forever Initiative**

Mr. Neil Palmer provided an update on the Food Forever Initiative (FFI), which is a global awareness raising campaign to support the implementation of UN SDG Target 2.5. The Food Forever Initiative developed substantially in 2018, specifically on the communications side. The initiative now has its own website that tells the story of SDG 2.5 in a more engaging way. Mr. Palmer mentioned efforts to reach new audiences by creating media moments like the Food Forever Experience: NYC, that took place on 25 September 2018 on the same day of the United Nations Global Day of Action. This event was covered by CBS Television, an important news channel in the United States.

Mr. Rodrigo Barrios, who joined the Crop Trust in August 2018 as Campaign Manager of the Food Forever Initiative, informed members of the Executive Board that the Vice President of Peru, Mercedes Araoz, has agreed to be the new Chair of the Food Forever Initiative. Mr. Barrios also mentioned that the Secretariat of the Food Forever Initiative now consists of the Crop Trust, the Government of the Netherlands, and FAO. FAO established a “Board of Overseers” to help create the workplan, and approve new FFI Champions and partners.

8. Action: Circulate the Food Forever Initiative Terms of Reference to the Executive Board.
9. Action: The Crop Trust will review the name “Board of Overseers” of the Food Forever Initiative and try to think of a new name for this group.

## **EB/2018/4-12**

### **Work Plan 2019**

Ms. Haga provided a summary of the Crop Trust’s achievements in 2018, and presented the proposed Annual Work Plan for 2019. The proposed work plan was created based on the Strategic Work Plan 2017-2020.

13. Decision: The Executive Board approved the Work Plan 2019.
10. Action: Next year, the Crop Trust will provide more transparency regarding who is responsible for each activity in the work plan.
11. Action: The Communications Team will discuss the role and purpose of the *Crop Trust Annual Report* and come up with a way to document internal processes.

## **EB/2018/4-13**

### **Board Business**

14. Decision: The Executive Board reconfirmed that EB/2019/1 be held at the Oak Spring Garden Foundation, in Upperville, Virginia, USA on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of May 2019. A closed session of the Board will be held in the afternoon of the 1<sup>st</sup> of May.

15. Decision: The Executive Board approved EB/2019/2 to be held in Bonn on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of October. It is further suggested that a FIC meeting will be held at the Crop Trust on the 28<sup>th</sup> of October 2019.

16. Decision: The Executive Board approved EB 2020/1 to be held at ICARDA, Morocco, on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of March 2020.

17. Decision: The Executive Board authorizes the Executive Board Chair and the Executive Director to sign the Statement of Assurance for 2017. Going forward, and in advance of the signing of a Statement of Assurance to the CGIAR, all Centers involved in the Genebank Platform be asked to sign the same Statement of Assurance to the Crop Trust to be assured that there have been no financial irregularities etc. with respect to the funds disbursed by the Crop Trust.

#### **EB/2018/4-14**

#### **Any Other Business**

No issues raised.