



**Global Crop Diversity Trust  
Executive Board Meeting (EB/2020/2)  
22 July 2020, Videoconference**

**Summary Report**

Attending Members of the Executive Board

Peter Crane (Chair)  
Hanne Blåfjelldal  
Mercedes Aráoz Fernandez  
Masa Iwanaga  
Alexander Müller  
Marcio de Miranda Santos  
Emmy Bartz Simmons  
Eliane Ubalijoro  
Knut Storberget  
Jean-Christophe Gouache  
Stefan Schmitz (Executive Director of the Crop Trust)

Attending Crop Trust Staff

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Luigi Guarino   | Director of Science                                  |
| Janet Muir      | Director of Finance                                  |
| Rodrigo Barrios | Food Forever Initiative – Campaign Manager           |
| Manuel Rosini   | Head of Partnerships                                 |
| Hannah Bisset   | Head of Communications                               |
| Christoph Beck  | Director of Human Resources and Corporate Operations |
| Erin Gleeson    | Partnerships Assistant, Minute Taker                 |

The status of decisions and actions arising from **EB/2020/2** is provided in the table below:

| No. | Decisions  |
|-----|--|
| 1   | The Executive Board adopted the Agenda for the EB/2020/2.  |
| 2   | Members adopted the Minutes and Actions arising from EB/2020/1.  |
| 3   | The Executive Board provided a soft “green light” for the Crop Trust to continue exploring the second Phase of FFI along this trajectory.  |
| 4   | The Executive Board confirmed the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EB 2020/2 will be held on 5 and 6 November 2020 via videoconference.</li> <li>• EB 2021/1 will be held in either the end of February or early March. The Crop Trust Secretariat will recommend 3 potential dates at the next meeting of the Executive Board in November 2020.</li> </ul> |

| No. | Actions Arising   | Owner           |
|-----|---|-----------------|
| 1   | The OneCGIAR reform process will become an agenda item on the next meeting of the Executive Board.  | Stefan Schmitz  |
| 2   | The Crop Trust Secretariat to present a “Business Continuity Plan during COVID-19” at the next meeting of the Executive Board.  | Stefan Schmitz  |
| 3   | The Crop Trust Secretariat to circulate the slide deck for EB/2020/2-4 to all Executive Board members.  | Stefan Schmitz  |
| 4   | The Crop Trust Secretariat to present an update on the Food Security Bond at the next meeting of the Executive Board.   | Janet Muir      |
| 5   | The Crop Trust and FFI teams to provide an evaluation of what has been achieved so far under FFI before a final decision is taken on the second phase of the campaign.    | Rodrigo Barrios |
| 6   | The Crop Trust secretariat will provide a full briefing on the FFI proposal as well as the overall relationship with IFAD at the November meeting of the Executive Board. | Stefan Schmitz  |

### **EB/2020/2-1**

#### **Welcome, Introduction, and Adoption of the Agenda**

The Chair of the Executive Board, Sir Peter Crane, opened the meeting and welcomed all participants. Members of the Executive Board agreed to adopt the Agenda for the current meeting.

1. **Decision:** The Executive Board adopted the Agenda for EB/2020/2.

### **EB/2020/2-2**

#### **Minutes and Actions Arising from EB/2020/1**

Minutes and Actions Arising from EB/2020/1 were introduced.

The Executive Director, Mr. Stefan Schmitz, indicated the strong inclination of the Executive Board to discuss implications of COVID-19, contingency planning, and the Food Forever Initiative, all of which will be addressed in today’s meeting. Board members inquired about



the possibility of receiving an update on the OneCGIAR reform process, and what this means for the Crop Trust, especially the Genebank Platform.

2. **Decision:** The Executive Board adopted the Minutes and Actions arising from EB/2020/1.
1. **Action:** The OneCGIAR reform process will become an agenda item on the next meeting of the Executive Board.

### **EB/2020/2-3 COVID-19 Update**

Mr. Stefan Schmitz described how the Crop Trust had been affected by COVID-19 in three different ways. First, internal measures taken by the Secretariat during the COVID-19 pandemic included the shift to remote work, and the utilization of technical opportunities for meetings via videoconferencing. The Crop Trust followed the example of the UN Organizations in Bonn, including slow return to the office in two separate shifts of staff in order to reduce the number of staff present in the office on a given day. The day-to-day business of the Crop Trust is running smoothly, however, project work, which requires presence on the ground in partner countries has been reduced as a result of COVID-19.

The Director of Finance, Ms. Janet Muir, informed the Executive Board of the status of the endowment fund in the last 5-months. The Finance and Investment Committee met in March, and John Gandolfo, Chair of the Committee, highlighted that the endowment fund was highly diversified for the long term, and even though it had fluctuated due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In March, the endowment fund dipped from USD 312 million to USD 271 million, however, as of the week of 15 July 2020, the fund has risen back to USD 314 million. Additionally, the Crop Trust is expecting 5.5 million from a USAID contribution and EUR 4 million from KfW/BMZ, which would bring the endowment to 324 million and provide some liquidity to pay the Crop Trust's genebank commitments out of contributions just received. The Crop Trust is working closely with investment managers, and the next meeting of the FIC will take place in September.

The Director of Science, Mr. Luigi Guarino, provided a short oral report on the CGIAR genebank operations as described in the background document associated with this agenda item (EB/2020/2-3). He informed the Executive Board that essential operations are reduced in all the genebanks, however, in some cases there has been a gradual return to normal. The *in vitro* collections were the most affected, but the Crop Trust has not received any reports of losses of material due to inability to access the collections for sub-culturing. The last two genebank reviews have been successfully performed virtually.

2. **Action:** The Crop Trust Secretariat to present a "Business Continuity Plan during COVID-19" at the next meeting of the Executive Board.

### **EB/2020/2-4 Outlook for the Financial Development of the Crop Trust 2020 to 2030**

Mr. Stefan Schmitz opened this agenda item and provided a summary of the development of the endowment fund over the last 15 years. Overall, the value of the endowment fund is higher than the total cumulative contributions received from donors to date, despite the fact that more than USD 44 million has been taken out to deliver on legal commitments and support the Crop Trust's overall mandate. Gains from the endowment fund are largely spent on cooperation with the CGIAR genebanks under the Genebank Platform. In total, USD 13 million has been committed by the Crop Trust to support the Genebank Platform in 2020.



At the Spring 2020 meeting, participants highlighted the possibility that the current COVID-19 crisis could be prolonged. Therefore, the Crop Trust was asked to prepare for various financial scenarios. These scenarios were presented to the Executive Board for information. The first scenario was a “worst-case” scenario, which took the assumption that there would be no additional donor commitments beyond what is already committed by donors. In this scenario, the Crop Trust would still be able to provide basic funding for the global system of *ex situ* conservation, however, there would be no further progress in its development. Investment income would allow for a gradual increase in funding for key components of the global system. The second scenario was calculated under the assumptions that there would be moderate additional commitments from existing donors, and that an ambitious innovative financing mechanism, the Food Security Bond totaling USD 500 million, would successfully be implemented.

The Executive Director provided an overview of the Food Security Bond mechanism. He highlighted that investors may be interested in this mechanism due to the government guarantee element and therefore the low risk involved, however, this will only be possible if a Triple A rated sovereign state or development finance institution agrees to provide a default guarantee for the bond. The Crop Trust is actively discussing this proposal with potential donors.

3. **Action:** The Crop Trust Secretariat to circulate the slide deck for EB/2020/2-4 to all Executive Board members.
4. **Action:** The Crop Trust Secretariat to present an update on the Food Security Bond at the next meeting of the Executive Board.

### **EB/2020/2-5 Funding the Genebank Platform**

Ms. Muir opened this agenda item with a detailed graphic displaying the funding required for the genebanks from 2012 to the end of the Genebank Platform commitment. For the first 5-years, the Crop Trust had small commitments as part of a CGIAR research program (CRP). Long-term grants of USD 2.5 million were signed in 2012, which contributed to the costs of running the genebanks, totaling approximately USD 2.5 million. From 2017 to 2021 the Crop Trust entered into the Genebank Platform with annual amounts increasing to USD 15 million by 2021. These amounts have been funded to date through a combination of endowment fund income and donor support.

In 2020, the Crop Trust’s commitment to the Genebank Platform totals USD 13 million. The Director of Finance outlined the Crop Trust’s various sources of income, which include the endowment fund in USD, the endowment fund in EUR, and the unrestricted reserves. Overall, after the 4% withdrawal from the USD Endowment Fund, and the USD 1.1 million commitment from the European Commission, there is a total funding gap of USD 4.5 million. The Crop Trust is currently in discussions with a donor to fund this shortfall. The Director of Finance emphasized that the purpose of bringing this information to the Executive Board is for information only.

The Crop Trust is currently undergoing the 2020 budget revision process, which will identify savings in 2020 due to reduced expenditure. The Crop Trust is also preparing the Annual Budget 2021, which will provide a clearer picture of what the funding gap will look like in 2021. During the November Executive Board meeting, Ms. Muir will provide an update on the status of the funding gap and budget process. To conclude, Ms. Muir outlined to the Executive Board that, as of July 2020, there is approximately USD 320 million in the endowment fund and after 2022, only an estimated 2.6% will have to be taken from the endowment to fund the Crop Trust’s legal commitments.

**EB/2020/2-6**  
**Food Forever 2030**

The Executive Director summarized the history of the Food Forever Initiative (FFI), which was launched in 2017 with the goal to raise awareness on the issues of plant genetic resources and agrobiodiversity as it is described in UN SDG Target 2.5.

The Chair advised that the Crop Trust proceed with caution when further developing this proposal for a second phase of FFI. The Crop Trust secretariat agreed to provide a full briefing on this proposal at the November meeting of the Executive Board.

3. **Decision:** The Executive Board provided a soft “green light” for the Crop Trust to continue exploring the second phase of FFI along this trajectory. Approval will be sought after additional development of the proposal, and the responsibilities of the Executive Board will be clearly defined.
5. **Action:** The Crop Trust and FFI teams to provide an evaluation of what has been achieved so far under FFI before a final decision is taken on the second phase of the campaign.
6. **Action:** The Crop Trust secretariat will provide a full briefing on the FFI proposal as well as the overall relationship with IFAD at the November meeting of the Executive Board.

**EB/2020/2-7**  
**Any Other Business**

With regards to the OneCGIAR reform, Mr. Stefan Schmitz informed the Executive Board that he is in contact with the CGIAR System Council in Montpellier, and the Crop Trust Science Team stays in day to day contact with the genebank managers of the CGIAR. A few weeks ago, Mr. Stefan Schmitz sent a letter to all genebank managers and CGIAR institutions to clarify that the Crop Trust will deliver on all commitments under the Genebank Platform. Beyond 2021, the Crop Trust plans to enter into Long-Term Partnership Agreements (LPAs) with individual genebanks that are up to standard, replacing the current Long-Term Grants (LTGs).

4. **Decision:** The Executive Board confirmed the following:
  - That EB 2020/2 will be held on 5 and 6 November 2020 via videoconference.
  - That EB 2021/1 will be held in either the end of February or early March. The Crop Trust Secretariat will recommend 3 potential dates at the next meeting of the Executive Board in November 2020.