

# International workshop on the promotion of Public-Private Partnerships for Pre-Breeding

2-4 February 2015  
Agropolis, Montpellier, France

## **Introduction**

The role of pre-breeding, through the collective action of germplasm curators and plant breeders, with due consideration to farmers' needs, is increasingly recognized as an essential step to increase genetic diversity and the diversity of cultivated material by the identification of desirable traits and /or genes of interest in unadapted material and their transfer to intermediate pre-bred material that can be utilized in variety and crop improvement for the benefit of end-users. The adoption of pre-breeding in crop improvement initiatives is an important step as it represents a paradigm shift to contribute to resilience of production systems and improved adaptation to dynamic climatic conditions changes, abiotic and biotic stress. The importance of pre-breeding is emphasized by a number of initiatives by several international organizations such as the FAO and its Global Partnership Initiative for Plant Breeding Capacity Building initiative, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research and the Global Crop Diversity Trust. The Secretariat of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, in collaboration with the Italian Academy of Sciences has recently convened a "Technical Consultation to Promote Public-Private Partnerships for Pre-breeding" in Rome in May 2013, with the objective to buy in all stakeholders, especially the private sector, for enhanced pre-breeding for broadening the genetic base of crops.

## **Purpose**

The paradigm shift in breeding programs based on pre-breeding activities requires a number of actions related to germplasm access, management and utilization of genetic resources, ranging from training up to policy issues. This workshop is built upon the outcomes of the pre-breeding consultation held by the Secretariat of the International Treaty. It aims at taking stock of pre-breeding and associated research activities, and addressing specific issues concerning access to germplasm and use, emerging trends with respect to the sustainable use of Plant Genetic resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA), scientific approaches, Intellectual Property Rights, and partnerships.

## **Workshop Objective**

The workshop will address the state of knowledge on public-private partnerships on pre-breeding and in crop improvement, and will focus on fine-tuning the aims, the scope of activities, the structure and the governance of a possible public-private platform to discuss and agree issues, identify priorities, and act as a force to promote the importance of pre-breeding globally. It aims to share the experience gained by different partners, so as to mutually benefit from such initiatives for establishing, in particular, a process or mechanism to promote best practice in public-private partnerships for pre-breeding.

The workshop will focus on:

1. Providing the framework towards the establishment of a global platform for the development of crop specific public-private partnerships for pre-breeding, to underpin plant breeding engagement for long term breeding goals and improved resilience of agricultural systems.
2. Sharing of the state of knowledge on public-private partnership on pre-breeding, and discussing the need for strategic investments into pre-breeding, from both public and private stakeholders.
3. Identifying the need and plans for providing guidelines, methods, best practices, recommendations, and try to set standard forms for consortia agreements, collaboration and governance contracts, and funding models.

These will be achieved by bringing together actors from a wide range of disciplines and areas from germplasm curators to end-users and policy makers.

## Organization and participation

Under the aegis of the Secretariat of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the financial support from French and Norwegian institutions and partners, the international workshop on pre-breeding will be held in Montpellier, France, from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> February 2015. Key partners and actors involved in pre-breeding activities will be encouraged to participate, share experience and contribute towards the setting up of the platform.

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