

Minutes of the 16th Meeting of the Donors' Council of the Global Crop Diversity Trust

7 March 2017, Rome, Italy

The Donors' Council of the Global Crop Diversity Trust ('Crop Trust') met on 7 March 2017 at FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy. The meeting was chaired by the Netherlands, and attended by representatives of current and prospective donor parties as well as multilateral partners. Annex 1 provides the list of attendees. Annex 2 shows the meeting agenda. Several background papers were issued to invitees prior to the meeting.

1. Introductions and Adoption of the Agenda

The Chair opened the meeting, extending a welcome to all representatives. The goal of the 16th meeting of the Donors' Council was to inform Donors on the Crop Trust's technical support to genebanks, to provide an update on Crop Trust funding strategies and the Food Forever Initiative, and to inform Donors of four upcoming elections in the Fall of 2017.

The Minutes of the 15th meeting of the Crop Trust Donors' Council held on 21 October 2016 were adopted. The meeting agenda was adopted.

2. The Genebank Platform (2017-2020): A new partnership with the CGIAR System Organization

The Crop Trust introduced the newly implemented Genebank Platform (2017-2022) which replaced the Genebank CGIAR Research Programme (CRP) (2012-2016). The achievements of the CRP were highlighted. The new Genebank Platform is organized into three modules: Policy, Use, and Conservation. The Platform separates conservation and use into separate objectives and places an emphasis on facilitating more effective access and use of germplasm. It was also noted that reporting made under the Policy module is made directly to the CG, and not to the Crop Trust.

3. Quality Management Systems for genebanks

The Crop Trust provided Donors with an overview of genebank Quality Management Systems (QMS). A total of 30 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) have been developed from the careful documentation of the procedures carried out by genebank staff. Genebank operations and procedures have been the focus of 4 GOAL Workshops, which provide a platform for genebank staff from national, regional, and international genebanks to discuss the practices used at their respective genebanks. The Crop Trust highlighted that the FAO standards provide the foundations on which the genebank QMS is based.

The Donors inquired about the measurement of QMS implementation. It was noted that QMS is not meant to provide a comparison between individual genebanks. Rather, QMS allows genebanks to measure internal progress. The Crop Trust has received positive feedback from the genebank staff and other sources, as QMS has allowed their hard work and dedication to be recognized and has provided a means to strengthen staff succession.



4. Information on the proposed Food Forever initiative

Management presented on the Alliance for Agro-biodiversity discussed at the 15th Meeting of the Donors' Council. The Alliance has since been re-named the 'Food Forever Initiative.' The Initiative is an awareness-raising campaign for the implementation of Target 2.5 of the UN SDGs. Management emphasized that the Initiative is inclusive and plans to encompass all aspects of agro-biodiversity. Management stressed that Food Forever is an advocacy, not fundraising, campaign. The Crop Trust will act as convener and Secretariat of the Initiative.

The Chair noted that he will represent the Netherlands in the Initiative and stressed that Food Forever will be a strong advocate for the action and implementation of SDG Target 2.5.

The representative from Australia expressed support to the Initiative on behalf of his Government. It was noted that although the Government of Australia cannot appoint a Champion, they are open to providing other means of support.

The Donors inquired about how the Crop Trust will collaborate with other organizations such as FAO, CBD, ITPGRFA, the Commission on PGRFA, etc. The question was raised as to how the Initiative will contribute to the goal of the "assessment of progress to date of global commitments to Target 2.5." Clarification was requested on tangible actions to be taken by the Initiative. The Chair answered that FAO must—and desires to—play a key role in leading the Initiative, and that achieving the assessment of progress to date will require its support. The Chair reiterated that as an inclusive Initiative, invitations will be extended to all relevant parties, including livestock-related partners. It was clarified that the Initiative will raise awareness of the conservation of genetic resources for agro-biodiversity, but as planning is still underway, there is discussion—both internally and with our partners—on how this Initiative can increase availability and access of genetic resources and how the Initiative will be represented by all parts of the value chain, including small farmers organizations.

Donors inquired if funding for the Initiative will come from the Crop Trust. The Chair noted that the budget of the Initiative is separate from that of the Crop Trust, and three countries, Norway, the Netherlands, and Germany, are ready to financially support the Initiative. The Initiative is also looking toward private partners for support.

Donors inquired if the Initiative will be launched solely by the Crop Trust, or in collaboration with other partners, and if the Initiative will include private sector representatives as well. Management answered that the Initiative will be launched with as many Champions and partners as possible, but the Initiative will also encourage and accept members after the launch. The Chair noted that Management is in discussion with the seed sector for their support.

5. Updates from the Executive Board of the Crop Trust

Management provided Donors with an update from the previous Executive Board Meeting that took place on 24-25 October at the Crop Trust in Bonn, Germany. Management first noted that the Chair of the Donors' Council attends all Board meetings. Management updated Donors on the visit to the Svalbard Global Seed Vault in February 2017, which included a deposit from ICARDA of the accessions withdrawn in October 2015. The return of these seeds served as a successful first test of the feasibility of the Vault. It was noted that the Crop Trust appointed two new asset managers for oversight of the Crop Trust Endowment Fund, Deutsche Bank and Mercer. Management felt hopeful that the concessional loan offer from KfW of Germany, proposed to the Board in October 2016, would soon be ready for finalization.



Management provided Donors with the agenda for the Executive Board Meeting taking place 21-23 March 2017 in Los Baños, Philippines. Management noted that an additional topic for discussion will be an 18-month contract with Edelman London to develop and implement a new communications strategy. The strategy will include two campaigns; one in support of crop-based fundraising, most likely coffee, and the second in support of the Crop Trust and its mission. Management noted that the Endowment Fund status of USD 189 million would be reported to the Executive Board. The Chair of the Donors' Council will report to the Board on the 16th Meeting of the Donors' Council.

Management provided an overview of options for financial support to the Crop Trust. This overview detailed all ways in which the Crop Trust receives funds. It was noted that crop-based fundraising would focus on coffee, in particular the Article 15 collection at CATIE in Costa Rica. The fundraising strategy will be important for smallholder farmers in developing countries and is expected to be funded in partnership with private-sector partners.

The Donors inquired on how the communications strategy will target different audiences. Clarification was requested regarding how the communications strategies of the Crop Trust and of the Food Forever Initiative are related. Management highlighted that the strategy will include a strong social media component to reach the wider public audience and will be complemented with crowdfunding campaigns. Management explained that the communications strategy of the Crop Trust would be separate from the strategy of the Food Forever Initiative.

6. Overview of the process for nominating candidates from the Donors' Council to the Executive Board of the Crop Trust

Management recognized 4 upcoming elections to take place at the 17th Meeting of the Donors' Council in October 2017. On the Donors' Council, these include the appointment of the Chair (currently Netherlands) and Vice Chair (currently Germany) of the Donors' Council, both eligible for re-appointment. Management explained that the Chair can be re-appointed for one further term of 3 years, and the Vice Chair can be re-appointed for one further term of 2 years. From the Executive Board, the appointment of Ambassador Walter Fust of Switzerland, current Chairperson of the Board, and Mr. Alexander Mueller of Germany expire at the end of 2017. As the Ambassador has met the term limit of 8 consecutive years on the Board, he will not be eligible for re-appointment, thus a new candidate must be nominated from among the members of the Donors' Council. Mr. Mueller is eligible for the re-appointment to a second term of 3 years. Information regarding procedures and timelines for upcoming appointments will be communicated in due time.

7. Any Other Business and Conclusion

The Chair offered his thanks to the Donors for their attendance and support, encouraging all to stay active in the developments of the Crop Trust and in the Food Forever Initiative. Minutes of this meeting will be circulated for comments to attending donors and partners, along with the presentations shown during the meeting. The Chair announced that the 17th Meeting of the Donors' Council is to take place on Tuesday, 10 October 2017 at the FAO Headquarters in Rome. Further information will be issued closer to the date of the meeting.



Annex 1: List of Participants

(a) Donors' Council Members

Australia:	Chris Chung
Brazil:	Larissa Costa
Canada:	Eric Robinson
Egypt:	Ahmed Shalaby
Germany:	Christoph Kessler
Italy:	Marco Platzer
Netherlands:	Hans Hoozeveld (Chair of the Donors' Council), Kim van Seeters
Norway:	Inge Nordang
Spain:	Antonio Flores, Beatriz Zamora, Marina Dobrenko
Switzerland:	Liliane Ortega
DuPont Pioneer:	Paolo Marchesini

(b) Donors' Council Observers

European Union:	Victoria Zicos
FAO:	Irene Hoffmann
Mexico:	Angeles Gomez
Peru:	Diana Calderón Valle

(c) Crop Trust Staff

Michael Koch, Director of Partnerships and Innovative Finance (Secretary of the Donors' Council)
Charlotte Lusty, Genebank Programmes Coordinator
Amanda Fuller, Partnerships Fellow
Gerald Moore, Legal Advisor



Annex 2: Meeting Agenda

16th Meeting of the Donors' Council of the Global Crop Diversity Trust

7 March 2017, Rome, Italy

Agenda

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| 14:00 | 1. | Welcome, introduction and adoption of the Agenda; approval of report from last Donors' Council meeting held on 21 October 2016 |
| 14:15 | 2. | The Genebank Platform (2017-2022):
A new partnership with the CGIAR System Organization |
| 14:35 | 3. | Quality Management Systems for genebanks |
| 15:00 | 4. | Information on the proposed Food Forever Initiative |
| 15:30 | 5. | Updates from the Executive Board of the Crop Trust |
| 16:00 | 6. | Overview of the process for nominating candidates from the Donors' Council to the Executive Board of the Crop Trust |
| 16:30 | 7. | Questions and answers |
| 16:45 | 8. | Any Other Business and wrap-up |