

Minutes of the 21st Meeting of the Donors' Council of the Global Crop Diversity Trust

28 October 2019, Rome, Italy

The Donors' Council of the Global Crop Diversity Trust ('Crop Trust') met on the 28th of October 2019 at the headquarters of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome, Italy. The meeting was chaired by the Netherlands, and attended by representatives of donor parties, multilateral partners, and members of the Crop Trust Secretariat. 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 21st Meeting of the Donors' Council was the final Donors' Council meeting of Ms. Marie Haga's tenure as Executive Director of the Crop Trust. The Chair praised the Executive Director's leadership and spoke on behalf of the Donors' Council in wishing her well in the future.

The Minutes of the 20th Meeting of the Crop Trust Donors' Council held on 29 March 2019 were approved.

2. 15 Years of the Crop Trust & Priorities in the Time Ahead

The Chair of the Crop Trust Executive Board, Sir Peter Crane, presented a history of the Crop Trust and summarized the organization's achievements over fifteen years. The Chair of the Executive Board thanked donors for their support on behalf of the Crop Trust and reiterated the importance of continued support for the Endowment.

The Executive Director stated that it has been a pleasure working with the Crop Trust and continued the discussion by reiterating the significance of the Crop Trust's accomplishments over the last fifteen years. The Executive Director stated that we are beginning to see how an efficient, global ex-situ conservation system works, and what the future of crop diversity conservation looks like. The Executive Director emphasized the importance of supporting national genebanks moving forward.

3. Report on Crop Trust Finances: Institutional Budgets, the Endowment Fund & an Update from the Innovative Finance Working Group

The Director of Finance presented an update on the current status of organizational finances. Topics included investment management, the assessment report of the

United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment (UNPRI), budget revisions in 2019, multi-year budgets (MYB) for 2020-21, and the Innovative Finance Working Group (IFWG).

The Director of Finance reported that as of 30 September 2019, the valuation of the Crop Trust Endowment Fund is USD 301 million. As of the 21st Meeting of the Crop Trust Donors' Council, the Fund has a 11.9% return versus a policy benchmark of 5.2%. The status of the Endowment Fund includes a loan of EUR 50 million from KfW, which has grown by approximately EUR 2.4 million.

The Director of Finance reported that in March 2019, the UNPRI performed its annual reporting process. In the final review, the UNPRI gave the Crop Trust an "A" rating regarding investment strategy, outreach, and main asset clauses. The Director of Finance also reported considerable progress on responsible investment integration and strategy, outreach and collaboration, and manager monitoring and engagement.

The Director of Finance reported that the Crop Trust Finance & Investment Committee approved a Revised Budget for 2019 on 1 October 2019, to be considered for approval by the Executive Board on 30 October 2019. The Revised Budget allows for a 2% Endowment withdrawal plus donor support to fill the CGIAR Platform "funding gap," the difference between Platform commitment and endowment withdrawal. Program expenditure in the Revised Budget also increased by USD 1.8 million to fund existing and new projects.

The Director of Finance summarized highlights from the multi-year budgets (MYB) for 2020-2021. The update included information regarding anticipated operational and programmatic expenses. The Director of Finance highlighted the opportunity for programmatic financial support from partners.

The Director of Finance provided an overview and update from the Innovative Finance Working Group (IFWG). At the fourth meeting of the IFWG in August 2019, participants agreed to prioritize 3 mechanisms for the next three meetings: (1) Member Country Loans (MCLs) in the Fall of 2019, (2) the Food Security Bond (FSB) in Winter 2019, and (3) Crowdsourcing and Crop-based fundraising for April 2020.

The Chair thanked the Director of Finance for her presentation and requested comments or questions. The CGIAR inquired about the status of the "funding gap" for 2019, and the Executive Director reaffirmed that the Crop Trust intends to fulfill its commitments to the Genebank Platform, while withdrawing as little as possible from the endowment so that it can continue to grow over time.

4. Crop Trust Programs and Technical Work: Actions for Supporting the Global System

The Monitoring & Evaluations Specialist from the Crop Trust Secretariat presented an update on current technical work at the Crop Trust. Topics included the CGIAR Genebanks, Genesys, the diversity trees gap analysis, crop conservation strategies, Seeds4Resilience, and the Genebank Impact Fellows.

The Monitoring & Evaluations Specialist informed the Donors' Council that the Crop Trust is currently undergoing a second technical review of CGIAR genebanks, after the first review in 2012-2016. After more than ten years of partnership, the CGIAR Genebank Platform now hosts around 773,000 accessions, and considerable progress has been made in making seeds available for use. In 2018, the Platform distributed around 100,000 germplasm samples to around 100 countries worldwide. 56,303 samples were distributed outside CIGAR, and 77% of these samples went to developing countries.

The Monitoring & Evaluations Specialist then provided an update on Genesys and reported improvements in data quality. The database now holds 4,069,638 accessions, and more than 800,000 accessions with Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs). Additionally, a new and improved website has enhanced data accessibility.

The Monitoring & Evaluations Specialist summarized the diversity trees gap analysis project, where 16 analyses of landrace coverage in CGIAR genebanks have been completed, and 6 are still in progress.

The Monitoring & Evaluations Specialist provided an update on the Crop Conservation Strategies. In October 2017, the Governing Body of the ITPGRFA recommended enhanced collaboration by updating and implementing crop strategies. Funded by the German Federal Ministry for Food and Agriculture (BMEL) and with support from the German Federal Office for Agriculture and Food (BLE), the Crop Trust and the ITPGRFA will update crop conservation strategies for at least 4 crops and develop new crop conservation strategies for at least 6 crops or crop groups. The kick-off meeting was held in Bonn 14-15 October 2019.

The Monitoring & Evaluations Specialist provided an update on the Crop Wild Relatives Project and thanked the Government of Norway for its support. A total of 4,644 samples have been collected in 14 countries, and 3,477 accessions have been sent to the Millennium Seed Bank at the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew for long-term storage and distribution to pre-breeding programs. The Monitoring & Evaluations Specialist summarized the current pre-breeding and evaluation phase and announced a USD 1.85 million contribution from the Templeton World Charity Foundation to support pre-breeding efforts from 2019-2022.

The Monitoring & Evaluations Specialist summarized the National Seed Collections for Climate-Resilient Agriculture in Africa (Seeds4Resilience) project. Supported through a partnership with KfW, the project provides both long-term support through

a EUR 11.5 million contribution to the Endowment Fund, and short-term support through EUR 8.5 million for upgrading and capacity building of up to five national genebanks in Africa. The national genebanks supported include Ethiopia, Kenya, Zambia, Ghana, and Nigeria.

The Monitoring & Evaluations Specialist provided an update on the Genebank Impact Fellowships. Through the program, 7 fellows have conducted 9 impact studies on 9 genebanks including ICARDA, CIMMYT, IRRI, and CIP.

The Chair thanked the Monitoring & Evaluations Specialist for her detailed presentation and requested comments and questions. Meeting participants requested that the presentation be circulated among members of the Donors' Council, and the Chair asked for further clarification on how the Crop Trust's technical programs are contributing towards UN SDG 2.5. The Executive Director explained that there are many examples of the impact of these programs, however, the Crop Trust needs donors to help tell these stories and emphasize the importance of the conservation and utilization of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

5. Elections to the Executive Board of the Crop Trust

The Chair summarized the responsibility of the Donors' Council to fill two vacancies on the Crop Trust Executive Board. The Donors' Council was presented with three candidates for two seats, one of which must be filled by an appointee from a developing country. Background documents clearly outlining the procedure for elections to the Executive Board according to the Crop Trust Constitution were circulated prior to the meeting.

The Chair moved to unanimously appoint Mercedes Fernandes Aráoz, Vice President of the Republic of Peru, to the Crop Trust Executive Board. With no objection, Ms. Aráoz was confirmed as one of the two new appointees of the Donors' Council. The Chair the Executive Director clarified that Ms. Aráoz' involvement with the Food Forever Initiative does not constitute a conflict of interest.

Regarding the second vacant seat for which two candidates were to be considered, the Chair moved to postpone the election for further informal consultation. The Chair recommended this course of action in order to present a clean slate for the second vacant seat on the Executive Board. With no objection, the meeting participants approved the Chair's motion to postpone the election.

The Treaty provided an update on the Bureau of the Governing Body's discussion regarding appointees to the Executive Board, stating that the appointees would likely be determined before or during the upcoming meeting of the Governing Body.

6. Funding Basis and Strategy for the ITPGRFA

The Chair clarified the funding mechanisms and structure of the ITPGRFA, including the roles of the Benefit Sharing Fund and the Crop Trust. Considering the Crop Trust's funding and financial successes, the Chair initiated a discussion regarding how a stronger cooperation can be established between the Treaty, the Benefit Sharing Fund, and the Crop Trust. The Chair encouraged further collaboration and knowledge sharing between the Innovative Finance Working Group to the Benefit Sharing Fund, to help increase further cooperation between private and public sectors.

7. Gearing Towards 2020: The Food Forever Initiative

The Food Forever Initiative Campaign Manager provided an overview of the Food Forever Initiative and an update of recent events and achievements. In summarizing the Initiative's achievements thus far, the Campaign Manager highlighted specific events as well as the trajectory of exposure and awareness in social media outreach, and partnerships with a number of organizations from the public and private sectors.

Meeting participants clarified and discussed the relationship between the Crop Trust and the Food Forever Initiative. The Crop Trust is only one of three partners that make up the Food Forever Initiative's governance structure, along with FAO and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

8. Conclusions and Next Steps

The Fall Donors' Council meeting is tentatively scheduled for the third week of March 2020, and the exact date will be confirmed with the circulation of the minutes. The Crop Trust Secretariat will discuss plans for the next meeting based on the aforementioned decisions, and in consultation with the Chair of the Donors' Council.

In closing, the Chair thanked the Executive Director for her strong commitment, service to the Crop Trust, and passion for the issue of crop diversity.

The Executive Director of the Crop Trust and the Chair of the Donors' Council thanked participants for their meaningful and active involvement. The Chair closed the meeting.

Annex 1: List of Participants

Affiliation	Name	Role
Australia	Teresa Pilosi	Secretary, Embassy of Australia, Rome
Brazil	Renata Nogueira	Alternate Permanent Representative of Brazil to FAO, WFP, and IFAD
Canada	Jennifer Fellows	Alternative Permanent Representative of Canada to the Food and Agriculture Agencies of the U.N.
CGIAR – System Management Board	Andre Zandstra	Director, Funder & External Engagement
Czech Republic,	Jirí Jílek	Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to FAO, Embassy of the Czech Republic in Rome
Ethiopia	Addisu Melkamu	Alternate Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to UN Agencies in Rome
European Commission, DEVCO	Victoria Zicos	Attaché, International Relations, Information & Communication
European Union	Caterina Scarponi	Intern, EU Delegation to the Holy See, the Order of Malta, the UN Organizations in Rome, and the Republic of San Marino
FAO	Irene Hoffmann	Secretary, Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
Germany	Tom Kreutel	Intern, Permanent Representation of the Federal Republic of Germany to the UN Organizations in Rome
Germany, KfW	Jürgen Fechter	Senior Technical Advisor in Agriculture
International Seed Federation	Michael Keller	Secretary General
International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture	Kent Nnadozie	Secretary
Netherlands, MoFA	Hans Hoogeveen	Ambassador, Perm. Rep. of the Netherlands to the FAO
Netherlands, MoA	Kim van Seeters	Senior Policy Officer, European Agricultural and Fisheries Policies and Food Security
Norway	Gunnvor Berge	Deputy Permanent Representative, Norwegian Mission to the U.N. Organizations in Rome
Republic of Korea	Hyojoo Kang	First Secretary, Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Rome
Spain	Miriam Matías	Intern, Spanish Permanent Representation to FAO

Annex 2: Meeting Agenda

21st Meeting of the Crop Trust Donors' Council Agenda

28 October 2019
Rome, Italy

Chair: Ambassador Hans Hoogeveen (The Netherlands)

Time	Topic
10:00	1. Welcome, Introduction and Adoption of Agenda and Minutes Approval of the minutes from the 20 th Donors' Council meeting held on 29 March 2019 Ambassador Hans Hoogeveen , <i>Chair of the Crop Trust Donors' Council</i>
10:15	2. 15 Years of the Crop Trust & Priorities in the Time Ahead Sir Peter Crane , <i>Chair of the Crop Trust Executive Board</i> and Marie Haga , <i>Executive Director of the Crop Trust</i>
10:45	3. Report on Crop Trust Finances: Institutional Budgets, the Endowment Fund & an Update from the Innovative Finance Working Group Janet Muir , <i>Director of Finance</i>
11:45	4. Crop Trust Programs and Technical Work: Actions for Supporting the Global System Nelissa Jamora , <i>Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist</i>
12:30	Lunch
13:00	5. Elections to the Executive Board of the Crop Trust (2 vacancies) Ambassador Hans Hoogeveen , <i>Chair of the Crop Trust Donors' Council</i>
13:30	6. Funding Basis and Strategy for the ITPGRFA Ambassador Hans Hoogeveen , <i>Chair of the Crop Trust Donors' Council</i>
14:00	7. Gearing Towards 2020: The Food Forever Initiative Rodrigo Barrios , <i>Campaign Manager, Food Forever Initiative</i>
14:30	8. Conclusions and Next Steps