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

Apologies
Gebisa Ejeta

Attending Observers
Barbara Wells           General Director, CIP, CGIAR
René Castro             FAO
Kent Nnadozie           International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources
Hans Hoogeveen          Chair of the Donors’ Council

Attending Crop Trust Staff
Luigi Guarino           Director of Science and Programs
Janet Muir              Director of Finance
Charlotte Lusty         Head of Programs, Genebank Platform Coordinator
Christoph Beck          Head of Human Resources and Corporate Operations
Erin Gleeson            Partnerships Fellow, Minute Taker
The status of decisions and actions arising from **EB 2019/3** is provided in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Decisions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Executive Board adopted the Agenda for the EB/2019/3.</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>The Executive Board confirmed the following related to future Executive Board meetings:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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**EB/2019/3-1**

**Welcome, Introduction and Adoption of the Agenda for EB/2019/3**

The Chair of the Executive Board, Mr. Crane, opened the meeting. Sir Peter welcomed all participants. Gebisa Ejeta’s apology was conveyed.

1. Decision: The Executive Board adopted the Agenda for the EB/2019/3.

**EB/2018/3-2**

**Minutes and Actions Arising from EB 2018/4, EB 2019/1, EB 2019/2**

Minutes from EB/2018/4, held in Bonn on 24-25 October 2018, EB/2019/1 (by telephone) & EB/2019/2 (by correspondence) were introduced.


**EB/2019/3-4**

**Executive Director’s Oral Report**

Ms. Marie Haga, the Executive Director, provided the Executive Board with a review and oral update of recent developments and activities of the Global Crop Diversity Trust. These developments included:

- Ms. Haga reminded the Board about the signing of the Long-Term Partnership Agreement (LPA) with IRRI as a “proof of concept” for the Crop Trust. She commended Charlotte Lusty, Ruaraidh Sackville Hamilton, and the IRRI team for their invaluable contributions to the process that made this LPA possible.
Ms. Haga informed the Executive Board that the Crop Trust is in the final phases of entering into an agreement with the Government of Germany to support national genebanks which will allow for the upgrading of five national genebanks in Africa. The Crop Trust is extremely grateful to the Government of Germany for funding this Project called Seeds4Resilience. The project is linked to another proposal being prepared in collaboration with BMZ to be submitted to the Green Climate Fund to support national genebanks. This initiative is envisioned to be scalable to support genebanks in other parts of the world with funding support from other donor countries.

Ms. Haga provided updated information on the progress of the upgrade of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault. The Executive Director conveyed that the upgrade of the Global Seed Vault is in progress and that the celebratory reopening will be in February 2020.

Ms. Haga mentioned the Crop Trust’s financial statements for 2018. Highlights include a clean audit for 2018 with no letter to management. The annual report will be sent out soon to the Executive Board for approval. The Crop Trust received an “A” rating for the UNPRI report in 2017/2018 and the UNPRI report for 2018/2019 has officially been submitted. Additionally, Ms. Haga provided some background on the establishment of the Innovative Finance Working Group (IFWG) of the Donors’ Council. The outcomes of the IFWG will be presented by Crop Trust Director of Finance, Janet Muir, during her presentation on the Finance and Investment report.

Ms. Haga provided a brief summary of the purpose of the Food Forever Campaign (FFI) and outlined that the FFI Secretariat is composed of the Crop Trust Secretariat, the Government of the Netherlands, and FAO. She informed participants that FFI has convened one “Food Forever Dialogue” in Nairobi, and four more will be held in different parts of Africa. Ms. Haga closed her presentation with a brief overview of the Food Forever Experiences, which are events held in cooperation with partners such as Google to advocate for greater use of diversity in diets and to highlight the importance of diversity within crops.

The Chair congratulated Ms. Haga and the Secretariat for the work that has taken place since the last meeting of the Executive Board. The Secretary of Treaty, Mr. Kent Nnadozie, Director General of CIP, Ms. Barbara Wells, and the Assistant Director General of FAO, Mr. Rene Castro, provided short updates on the recent work of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA), the CGIAR, and the FAO respectively.

**EB/2019/3-5**

**Status of the Genebank Platform and Future Cooperation between Crop Trust and CGIAR**

The Head of Programs, Genebank Platform Coordinator, Charlotte Lusty, provided the Executive Board with an update on the progress and achievements of the Genebank Platform under the following headings: Improved Conservation, Efficiencies and Better Alignment.
**Improved Conservation**

Ms. Lusty specified that improvements to conservation in CGIAR genebanks include an overall increase in availability of plant genetic resources for international distribution. Safety duplication is challenged by several constraints including ICARDA’s retrieval of deposits from the Svalbard Seed Vault in order to reconstitute its active collection in Lebanon and Morocco. Ms. Lusty explained that the conservation of clonal crops in cryopreservation is also important for the safety duplication of clonal crops. There are now five genebanks that are reaching the 90% availability target, including: AfricaRice, CIMMYT-Wheat, ICRISAT, IITA and IRRI.

**Efficiencies**

The Platform has allowed genebanks to pursue efficiencies to suit their needs. Ms. Lusty informed the Board that IRRI has been able to explore automation such as a custom-built seed sorter that processes seeds through the night. Whereas, AfricaRice has brought their active and base collections together for the first time in 15 years in a newly built genebank in Cote d' Ivoire. A team of technicians have been built up at CIP to work on cryopreservation of potato on a large scale. Currently, more than 50% of the potato collection at CIP is preserved in cryopreservation, making it one of the largest cryopreserved crop collections in the world.

**Better Alignment**

Through the so-called “Green-Pass System,” the CGIAR Germplasm Health Units are planning to develop and attain high standards of phytosanitary controls so as to facilitate the movement of germplasm from CGIAR genebanks across international borders. Additionally, Ms. Lusty described how a majority of genebank are now adopting a shared data management system for accession data, GRIN-Global. There is strong intercontinental movement of germplasm from the CGIAR centers, and the largest proportion of what the centers are sending out are traditional cultivars and wild species. For the second year in a row, centers are distributing more germplasm to recipients outside of the CG system, and more than 2/3 of the material is distributed to developing countries.

Ms. Lusty described the costing and technical reviews that are currently underway. She proposed the establishment of a High-level technical panel in order to review the findings and proposed budgets across the system. Ms. Lusty mentioned that Geoff Hawtin, who also chaired the panel who reviewed genebank costs for the first costing study in 2010, has agreed to chair this panel. The proposal is for a six-member panel with one representative each of the donors, CGIAR, Crop Trust, Article 15 Genebanks, and expert reviewers. Ms. Lusty presented proposed Terms of Reference for the panel.

3. Decision: The Executive Board agreed that a High-Level Technical panel be established to review and advise on future budgets for Article 15 collections.

1. Action: The Executive Board asked that the Crop Trust Secretariat consult relevant stakeholders on the composition of the panel and provide an update to the October 2019 meeting of the Executive Board.
Mr. Luigi Guarino, Director of Science, summarized the Crop Trust’s technical work.

**Crop Wild Relatives Project**

Mr. Guarino provided an overview and update on the Crop Wild Relatives Project (CWR), a USD 50 million, 10-year project funded by the Government of Norway that is currently in its 8th year. The collecting component of this project is now complete and has resulted in partnerships with 25 countries all over the world, leading to the collection of over 4000 accessions of CWR taxa. The processing of these materials is ongoing. The project is fully focused on its pre-breeding phase now, which is organized in a series of partnerships on 19 crops involving about 60 national and international partners around the world.

Mr. Guarino informed the Executive Board that the CWR Project has recently undergone a rigorous external review which addressed three areas: 1) capacity building across the project; 2) all the collecting work; 3) the pre-breeding work that has happened so far. Finally, Mr. Guarino informed the EB that the scientific journal, Crop Science, will publish a special issue on pre-breeding, which allows the Crop Trust to showcase the CWR pre-breeding work.

2. **Action:** The Crop Trust Secretariat will make the 2018-2019 External Review of the Crop Wild Relatives Project available to the EB and will circulate it with the EB documents at the next meeting.

**Information Systems**

Regarding information systems, Mr. Guarino highlighted recent improvements to Genesys, including a new version of the public website coming out in the next few weeks. Around half of the total number of accessions in Genesys were refreshed within the last year. There have been multiple workshops in the last year on genebank documentation and procedures, as well as on-site support to CGIAR genebanks for the purpose of capacity building. Mr. Guarino informed the Board that the Genesys Catalog, a 2-year project funded by the Federal Office for Agriculture and Food (BLE), Germany, has been completed. It is now possible to curate and upload phenotypic data in the Genesys Catalog, and this project has specifically supported the genebanks of Banque Nationale de Gènes (Tunisia), CATIE (Costa Rica), GeRRI (Kenya), MARDI (Malaysia), National Plant Genetic Resources Laboratory (NPGRL, Philippines) & WorldVeg (Taiwan).

3. **Action:** The Crop Trust Secretariat will provide a more in-depth analysis on the use of the Genesys platform at the next Executive Board meeting.

**The Svalbard Global Seed Vault**

Ms. Haga provided an update on the status of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault. The upgrading work is scheduled to end early next year. Ms. Haga informed the Executive Board about recent discussions regarding the visitors policy. The Ministry of Agriculture of Norway has said that they wish to close the Vault to all visitors for security reasons. The Executive Board agreed to endorse a carefully worded but firm letter drafted by the Crop Trust Secretariat to the Ministry of Agriculture of Norway explaining the Crop Trust’s concern for restricting access to the Seed Vault.

4. **Action:** The Executive Board will send a letter drafted by the Crop Trust Secretariat to the Ministry of Agriculture of Norway explaining the Crop Trust’s position on the visitors policy.
The Role of Data on DNA Sequences and Genotypes in Genebank Management

Mr. Guarino informed the Board that funding of collection, management, and use of genotypic information on accessions is important, but it falls outside of the scope of "essential operations," or the procedures that you need to apply to every single accession in a genebank to make sure that they are alive and available in the long term.

EB/2019/3-7
Project Development Report

Mr. Guarino provided an update on projects that are currently being developed, focusing specifically on the upgrading and long-term support to national genebanks proposed under the Seeds4Resilience Project in partnership with KfW. This project began on 1 May 2019 and will support up to 5 genebanks in Africa. Mr. Guarino provided an update on the status of the Templeton Foundation project, which is proposed to begin at the end of the summer and is made up of two components: 1) pre-breeding of finger millet and grasspea, complementing current CWR Project work; and 2) the exploration of innovative finance mechanisms. Finally, Mr. Guarino updated the Executive Board on the status of the FOOD project, which builds on the complementarity of in situ and ex situ conservation in the centers of origin for crops.

EB/2019/3-8
Human Resources and Corporate Operations Report

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, the envisaged EU pillar assessment and a general update on corporate operations and human resources.

IT Roadmap 2019-2021

Mr. Beck reminded the Executive Board about Ideal State, the firm that was hired to develop a 3-year digital roadmap for the organization as a whole. Ideal State looked in-depth at content and data as well as information sharing and collaboration and came up with specific recommendations tailored to the organizational needs of the Crop Trust. They recommended the adoption of three systems: 1) data management platform; 2) contact management system and 3) modern financial accounting system. This report suggested specific systems such as Box for data management and Salesforce for contact management. These systems are cloud based, so they can be continually updated.

EU Pillar Assessment

Mr. Beck introduced the EU Pillar Assessment, which is an EU assessment of policies and procedures across these seven areas: procurement, financial instruments, grants, sub-delegation, external audit, accounting, and internal control. The EU Pillar Assessment is the pre-condition for being officially entrusted by the European Commission to carry out budget implementation tasks which makes reporting to the EU easier and keeps the Crop Trust up to speed with other international organizations that have already passed the EU Pillar Assessment. Mr. Beck proposed a way forward whereby the organization will take advantage of the synergies between the IT roadmap and the EU pillar assessment. Both, the phase 1 of the IT roadmap as well as the initial
work on the pillar assessment require to systematically capture all of the Crop Trust’s processes in standardized SOPs.

*Human Resources and Corporate Operations Update*

Mr. Beck highlighted the Crop Trust’s regular staff changes as of 31 December 2018. Currently, the Crop Trust staff consists of 29 regular staff members. There are 19 nationalities represented at the Crop Trust, and currently 45% of the staff is female while 55% is male.

Mr. Beck explained that human resources should align with the workplan and intended achievements of the organization. Staff development in 2019 will consist of an online learning platform for all staff through an existing United Nations contract, individual staff development on request, and optional German language courses. Mr. Beck also mentioned plans for a staff trip in 2019 to the Leibniz Institute of Plant Genetics and Crop Plant Research (IPK) in Gatersleben/Quedlinburg in order to create a deeper understanding amongst staff from different parts of the organization around some of the key issues related to the mandate of the Crop Trust.

4. Decision: The Crop Trust Secretariat will move ahead with the IT Roadmap and take note of the caution expressed by the Board on EU Pillar Assessment.

5. Action: The Crop Trust Secretariat will report back on the status of the EU Pillar Assessment in March 2020 once there is a more detailed understanding of what the process will entail.

*EB/2019/3-9 Finance and Investment Report*

Ms. Muir presented the Finance and Investment report, which provided the Executive Board members with an overview of the activities of the Finance & Investment Committee (FIC) since its last report to the Executive Board in October 2018. This report outlined the following:

- High level summary of financial highlights and an analysis of key performance indicators for the period 2015-2018
- Investment Management

Ms. Muir highlighted that the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2018 were approved by the FIC and Executive Board members on 26 March 2019 by email procedure and were signed by the Executive Director and Director of Finance on 28 March 2019. It was noted that the Annual Report will be published shortly.

Ms. Muir outlined that, as part of the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2018 two statements have been added that are recommended by PWC and considered best practice:

- Board Statement on Management – this sets out the responsibilities with respect to risk management, the process for reviewing risk and a statement on whether the Board is satisfied with the attention paid by management to risk management and that risk governance is sufficient to identify, manage and monitor key risks to the Crop Trust’s organization. This Statement will be signed by the Executive Board Chair.
● Management Statement of Responsibility for Financial Statements – a statement on the responsibilities for the compilation of the Financial Statements and the system of internal controls. This Statement is signed by the Executive Director and Director of Finance.
● For the Financial Statements 2019 the Director of Finance proposes adding in a “Statement from the Executive Board Chair” which will provide a summary on the performance for the year and the outlook for the coming year.

Ms. Muir provided a high-level summary of the financial highlights and an analysis of key performance indicators for the period 2015-2018. The Executive Board noted that the withdrawal from the endowment fund for 2018 was USD 5 million (or 2.5% of the average market value of the fund over the previous quarters) and that 91% of this withdrawal was allocated to the CGIAR genebanks. As discussed earlier in the meeting the funding for the genebank platform is being discussed with donors and will be included as an agenda item at the Fall meeting.

Ms. Muir updated the Executive Board on the status of the KfW loan proceeds and outlined that no commitment has been made against the income generated from the funds as the priority is to ensure the interest payments are met. She also provided an update on investment management and the performance of the endowment fund to 31 December 2018 and post year end. Ms. Muir outlined that Mercer is currently conducting an asset liability modeling exercise to stress test the portfolio and to identify an overarching strategic asset allocation for the endowment fund and the outcome of this review will be considered by the Finance & Investment Committee with a recommendation to come to the Executive Board shortly.

EB/2019/3-10
Innovative Finance

Ms. Muir presented the circulated document entitled “Report from the Working Group on Innovative Finance” to:

● Update the Executive Board on the work of the Innovative Finance Working Group (IFWG) since its inception in June 2018;
● To provide recommendations for consideration at the Spring 2019 meeting of the Crop Trust Donors’ Council with respect to innovative finance, governance and financing of the CGIAR international genebanks;
● To provide an update on the recommendations made by the Donor’s Council to the Executive Board at its Spring meeting 29 March 2019 in Rome.

The circulated report provides a comprehensive review of potential mechanisms and recommendations that were made for the Donors’ Council and Executive Board’s consideration. Their report identified possible innovative finance solutions that could be pursued by the Crop Trust, with the support of its Donors’ Council and other potential donors, to provide long term sustainable funding to protect and conserve crop diversity, a crucial pre-requisite for food security.

The Donors Council and Executive Board agreed that the mechanisms identified could be classified as: (1) Current/Ongoing (Investment Sharing Facility); (2) Approval by Executive Board to explore further (Member Country Loans; Crop based fundraising; Crowdsourcing) and (3) Requires further study (Food Security Bond; Debt for nature swaps)

The Executive Board agreed that the Crop Trust should work to explore further the Member Country Loans, crop-based fundraising and crowdsourcing mechanisms. The Executive Board also agreed that the IFWG continue its work going forward to monitor progress following the Donors’ Council and Executive Board recommendations and provide oversight of all the above
areas of work. The IFWG proposes to meet twice a year going forward and will report back to each Donors’ Council meeting.

EB/2019/3-11 Partnerships Report

Fundraising Approach 2019 – 2020

Ms. Haga presented the Fundraising Approach 2019 – 2020 document. She highlighted the four fundraising priorities for 2019 and 2020, which included: 1) contributions to the endowment fund either through government grants, contributions from high net worth individuals (HNWI), or Innovative Finance Mechanisms; 2) project funding to upgrade national genebanks, similar to what KfW and the Crop Trust are proposing in the Seeds4Resilience project; 3) project funding to underpin the global system, including safety duplication in Svalbard as well as collecting and cryopreservation efforts; and 4) funding of the CGIAR genebank platform by filling the “funding gap.”

Ms. Haga explained the rationale for an “Implementation Conference” at the end of 2020 in order to create momentum for fundraising for the long-term goals of the Crop Trust, and for new donors to come on board while previous donors recommit their support. 2020 is also an important year for the international community due to the projected implementation of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and SDG 2.5. This conference should involve the entire range of partners who have an interest in the work of the Crop Trust, including governments, financial institutions, private sector actors, and HNWI.

5. Decision: Board members recognized the opportunity to have an “Implementation Conference” and agreed that this event should be held in the fall of 2020. The location of this event will be determined at a later time.

Mr. Hoogeveen, Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and Chair of the Crop Trust Donors’ Council commended the Crop Trust for impressive work, and summarized the discussion and decisions made by the Donors’ Council at the meeting held on 29 March 2019.

EB/2019/3-12 Communications Report

Ms. Haga presented the Communications Report and the recently developed Crop Trust Magazine to the Executive Board. Ms. Haga explained that more capacity has been added to the Communications team, specifically in social media. Ms. Haga presented some of the materials that have been produced as part of the Crop Wild Relative project, including website posts and stories published in outlets such as the New Food Magazine, PBS, and Science Magazine. She reminded the Board about the formation of the Svalbard Communications Working Group, which is made up of the Norwegian Ministry of Agriculture and Food, NordGen, and the Crop Trust, and is working together to plan for the re-opening event in February of 2020.
Ms. Haga provided an update on the activities related to the Food Forever Campaign working to increase outreach and underpin the implementation of SDG Target 2.5. The Food Forever Initiative has recently published a new version of the website, as well as press-releases and other stories, which can now be found on the website. Food Forever is working jointly with Danielle Nierenberg from Food Tank, who is a current Food Forever champion and has agreed to produce one op-ed every month on relevant topics. To fulfill the “underpinning implementation” pillar of the Food Forever Initiative, Champions signed concrete and time-bound pledges at the last FFI Annual Meeting in Wilmington, Delaware. The Food Forever Secretariat is now following up with different champions to ensure that their pledges are fulfilled.

Ms. Haga concluded her presentation by summarizing other ongoing Food Forever activities, including joint programs such as the Food Forever Dialogues in Africa, and a travelling exhibit on agricultural biodiversity in partnership with multiple botanic gardens. The next Food Forever annual meeting will take place in Abu Dhabi in December, and is hosted by His Excellency, Dr. Thani Ahmed Al-Zeyoudi, Minister of Climate Change and Environment for the United Arab Emirates.

EB/2018/4-13
Board Business

1. Election of Crop Trust Executive Board Vice Chair for 2019 and 2020

Sir Peter Crane was elected Chair of the Board on 12 March 2019. Since Sir Peter was the previous Vice Chair of the Executive Board, this post is now open. It was agreed in the meeting on 12 March that election of the new Vice Chair would be deferred until the May Board meeting.

6. Decision: The Executive Board elected Marcio de Miranda Santos as Deputy Vice Chair until 31 December 2019

2. Confirmation of election of Sir Peter Crane as Executive Board Chair

Due to the Board's decision to elect Peter Crane as Board Chair, and the fact that he is appointable in the capacity as Board Chair to serve another two years on the Board in addition to the 6 years he already has served on the Board, Ms. Haga recommended that the Executive Board elect Sir Peter Crane as Chair for the period 2020 – 2021, and that the Bureau of the Governing Body is informed about this decision before any decisions are made on nominations from the Governing Body.

7. Decision: Executive Board Members elected Sir Peter Crane, in line with Article 5 (1) (f) of the Crop Trust Constitution, to serve as Executive Board Chair for the period 2020 – 2021.

3. Upcoming Executive Board meetings

8. Decision: The Executive Board confirmed the following:

- That EB/2019/4 be held in Bonn on the 30th and 31st of October, and that a FIC meeting be held at the Crop Trust on the 22nd of October 2019

- That EB 2020/1 be held at ICARDA, Morocco, on the 24th and 25th of March 2020
- That EB 2020/2 be held in Bonn on the 28th and 29th of October 2020, and that an FIC meeting be held at the Crop Trust on the 27th of October 2020

4. CGIAR Statement of Assurance 2018

6. Action: Once all Statement of Assurances have been received from the Genebank Platform Centers the Executive Board Chair and the Executive Director is asked to sign the Crop Trust's Statement of Assurance 2018 to the CGIAR.

EB/2018/4-14
Any Other Business

No issues raised.