

CGIAR Genetic Resources Policy Committee

proposed new

Terms of Reference and Composition

Introduction

The Genetic Resources Policy Committee (GRPC) was established at International Centres Week, 1994, with the objectives of keeping CGIAR members and Centres abreast of developments in genetic resources policy and advising them on necessary action. The Consultative Council, at its meeting in Brussels in January 1999, considered that there was still a need for such a committee and recommended to the CGIAR that it be retained. However, it was felt that the terms of reference of the GRPC and its composition needed to be re-examined. The Director General of IPGRI was requested to review these matters, in consultation with the GRPC and other stakeholders, and to recommend any changes needed for the consideration of the CGIAR at the Mid-term Meeting, Beijing, May 1999.

The terms of reference and composition presented below have been developed in response to the request of the Consultative Council. They are based on the experience of the past four years as well as on feedback from many stakeholders.

There is broad agreement among stakeholders that the GRPC should continue to have general oversight responsibility for policy, focusing on political, legal and ethical aspects of genetic resources at the system level. The Committee would thus continue to recommend the broad policy framework within which individual Centres and the System-wide Genetic Resources Programme (SGRP) operate. The SGRP will provide technical advice and backstopping to the GRPC. It was widely agreed that specific responsibility for oversight and governance of the SGRP's strategy, programme and management should be vested in the Board of Trustees of IPGRI, the SGRP's Convening Centre. It is proposed that the Director General of IPGRI serve as an *ex-officio* member of the Committee. The Director General is the Programme Leader of SGRP and an *ex-officio* member of both the IPGRI Board of Trustees and the GRPC and thus would help to ensure the necessary liaison between these groups.

Given the sensitivity and significance of many of the issues the GRPC is likely to consider, it is widely, although not unanimously, felt that the Committee should include representatives of the major CGIAR stakeholder groups.

Proposed Terms of Reference

The GRPC will report to the CGIAR as a whole on policy issues relating to genetic resources. In carrying out its duties, the Committee will consult with appropriate CGIAR Committees and stakeholder groups as needed.

In particular the GRPC will:

- 1) monitor and analyze policy developments concerning genetic resources, focusing on political, legal and ethical issues, at the national level and in relevant international fora, and will recommend appropriate policy positions and action to the CGIAR.
- 2) monitor and analyze policy, legal and ethical developments within the CGIAR relating to genetic resources and will recommend action as necessary;
- 3) monitor the implementation of the agreements that placed the CGIAR germplasm collections within the International Network of *Ex Situ* Collections, under the auspices of FAO. Where necessary, the Committee will also assist in the interpretation of the agreements and propose any necessary changes;
- 4) keep developments in intellectual property protection under review and will advise the CGIAR on the further modification and implementation of its IPR guiding principles and related policies.

Proposed Composition

Chair – to be appointed by the Chair of the CGIAR

FAO Representative (appointed by FAO)

NGO representative (appointed by the CGIAR Chair on advice of the NGO Committee)

Private Sector representative (appointed by the CGIAR Chair on advice of the Private Sector Committee)

NARS representative (appointed by the NARS Secretariat)

TAC member (appointed by TAC)

Board Chair (appointed by CBC)

2 Centre Directors (appointed by CDC)

Director General of IPGRI (Secretary to the Committee)