

Technical Working Party for Agricultural Crops

Forty-Sixth Session

Hanover, Germany, June 19 to 23, 2017

TWP/1/24**Original:** English**Date:** May 25, 2017**Technical Working Party for Vegetables**

Fifty-First Session

Roelofarendsveen, Netherlands, July 3 to 7, 2017

Technical Working Party for Ornamental Plants and Forest Trees

Fiftieth Session

Victoria, Canada, September 11 to 15, 2017

Technical Working Party for Fruit Crops

Forty-Eighth Session

Kelowna, Canada, September 18 to 22, 2017

Technical Working Party on Automation and Computer Programs

Thirty-Fifth Session

Buenos Aires, Argentina, November 14 to 17, 2017

ORGANIZATION OF THE UPOV SESSIONS*Document prepared by the Office of the Union**Disclaimer: this document does not represent UPOV policies or guidance***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. The Consultative Committee, at its ninety-second session, held in Geneva on October 27, 2016, agreed to consider, at its ninety-third session, to be held on April 6, 2017, whether to organize a single set of sessions from 2018, in the period mid- to late November, with a more specific proposal for timing being developed after taking into account the views of the Technical Committee.
2. The purpose of this document is to report on consideration by the Technical Committee (TC) on the organization of the UPOV sessions from 2018 and the decisions of the Council.
3. The TWPs are invited to note that:
 - (a) the Council decided:
 - (i) to organize a single set of sessions of the bodies that meet in Geneva from 2018, in the period of October/November;
 - (ii) that the Enlarged Editorial Committee (TC-EDC) would meet twice a year, once in the period March/April and once in conjunction with the TC sessions later in the year;
 - (iii) that Test Guidelines that could not be prepared in time for adoption by the Technical Committee at its session could be adopted by correspondence on the basis of the recommendations by the TC-EDC;
 - (iv) on contingency measures to be used for 2018, as set out in paragraph 21 of this document;
 - (b) the TC agreed to propose that the meetings of the BMT be held on an annual basis;
 - (c) the TC agreed to propose that consideration be given to organizing the sessions of the TWC and BMT back-to-back in the same location to facilitate exchange of information;

(d) the TC agreed that the preparatory workshops in 2018 should be organized on the Monday/Tuesday of the TWPs sessions to encourage participation by all TWP participants; and

(e) from 2017, for certain documents, the TWPs will be invited to consider the same document on a particular topic, using a common document code.

4. The structure of this document is as follows:

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5. The following abbreviations are used in this document:

TC:	Technical Committee
TC-EDC	Enlarged Editorial Committee
TWA:	Technical Working Party for Agricultural Crops
TWC:	Technical Working Party on Automation and Computer Programs
TWF:	Technical Working Party for Fruit Crops
TWO:	Technical Working Party for Ornamental Plants and Forest Trees
TWPs:	Technical Working Parties
TWV:	Technical Working Party for Vegetables

BACKGROUND

6. The Consultative Committee, at its ninetieth session, held in Geneva on October 28 and 29, 2015, requested the Office of the Union to prepare a document with options and possible impacts of holding the sessions of the bodies that meet in Geneva consecutively, only once a year. It was anticipated that the main incentive for changing to a single set of sessions would be to deliver significant time and cost savings for members of the Union. At the same time, it was noted that organizing a single set of sessions would reduce the number of opportunities for members of the Union to meet.

7. The Consultative Committee, at its ninety-second session, agreed to consider, at its ninety-third session, whether to organize a single set of sessions from 2018, according to the following proposal, subject to comments from the TC, as follows (see document C/50/17 "Report by the Vice-President on the Work of the Ninety-Second Session of the Consultative Committee; Adoption of Recommendations, if any, Prepared by that Committee", paragraphs 62 and 63):

(a) after 2017, to hold a single set of sessions of UPOV bodies in the period mid- to late November, with a more specific proposal for timing being developed after taking into account the views of the TC, which would be invited to consider the matter at its fifty-third session, to be held in Geneva from April 3 to 5, 2017;

(b) an arrangement for the scheduling of the UPOV bodies, on the following basis:

Friday	Working Group (if appropriate)
Saturday	Working Group (if appropriate) / Enlarged Editorial Committee
Sunday	Working Group (if appropriate) / Enlarged Editorial Committee
Monday	Technical Committee
Tuesday	Technical Committee
Wednesday	Administrative and Legal Committee
Thursday	Consultative Committee
Friday	Council
Saturday	Symposium /Seminar/Working Group (if appropriate)

8. The Consultative Committee requested the Office of the Union to prepare proposals concerning:
- (i) opportunities for members of the Union to meet and exchange information in conjunction with the UPOV sessions;
 - (ii) the nature and content of session documents in order to make the sessions as efficient as possible; and
 - (iii) the examination of laws of future members.
9. In preparation for discussions at its ninety-second session, the Consultative Committee requested the Office of the Union to prepare a document with options and possible impacts of holding the sessions of the bodies that meet in Geneva consecutively, only once a year. The following information was provided in order to assist the TC to consider possible impacts in relation to the TC, Technical Working Parties (TWPs) and Enlarged Editorial Committee (TC-EDC).

CONSIDERATION BY THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Organization of the Technical Committee and Technical Working Party sessions

10. The TC, at its fifty-third session, held in Geneva from April 3 to 6, 2017, considered document TC/53/14 (see document TC/53/31 "Report", paragraphs 7 to 11).
11. The TC agreed that the TC sessions could be organized on a suitable date in the period from late October to early December.
12. The TC agreed to propose that Test Guidelines that could not be prepared in time for adoption by the Technical Committee at its session could be adopted by correspondence on the basis of the recommendations by the TC-EDC. The TC agreed that the TC-EDC should meet twice a year, once in the period March/April and once in conjunction with the TC sessions later in the year.
13. The TC agreed to use the following contingency measures for 2018, subject to the Council deciding that the TC should hold its fifty-fourth session in late 2018:
- (a) For Test Guidelines proposed for adoption in 2018, to use a procedure for adoption by correspondence as follows:
 - Draft Test Guidelines would be prepared as agreed by the TWPs and circulated with the recommendations of the TC-EDC;
 - In the absence of any objections the Test Guidelines would be adopted;
 - In the case of objections, the objections would be referred to the relevant TWP for consideration at their 2018 session, and the Test Guidelines considered for adoption by the TC at its fifty-fourth session, in 2018;
 - TC-EDC to meet on March 26 and 27, 2018, and in conjunction with the TC at its fifty-fourth session, in 2018, if necessary.
 - (b) For TGP documents, to invite the TC-EDC to consolidate comments made by the TWPs at their sessions in 2017 and, in the absence of consensus between the TWPs, formulate proposals for further consideration by the TWPs at their sessions in 2018;
 - (c) All other matters to be considered at the fifty-fourth session of the TC in 2018 in the normal way.

14. The TC agreed that the scheduling of *ad hoc* Working Group meetings in the period March/April could defeat the purpose of moving to a single set of sessions, because it would require experts to travel to Geneva. However, it agreed that if electronic participation was possible, such as was the case for the EAF meetings, meetings at that time could be an efficient approach.

15. The TC agreed to propose that the meetings of the BMT be held on an annual basis and that consideration be given to organizing the sessions of the TWC and BMT back-to-back in the same location to facilitate exchange of information (see document TC/53/31 "Report", paragraph 211).

Preparatory workshops

16. The TC noted that the TWPs would meet twice before the 2018 session of the TC, which could result in a reduction of the number of matters to be discussed. The TC agreed that the preparatory workshops in 2018 should be organized on the Monday/Tuesday of the TWPs sessions to encourage participation by all TWP participants (see document TC/53/31 "Report", paragraph 230).

Program for the development of new Test Guidelines and for the revision of Test Guidelines in 2018

17. As an additional contingency measure, the TC agreed that the program for the development of new Test Guidelines and for the revision of Test Guidelines in 2018 should be approved by the TC by correspondence on an exceptional basis (see document TC/53/31 "Report", paragraph 254).

Documents for consideration by all Technical Working Parties

18. In order to streamline the preparation and consideration of documents within UPOV, from 2017, for certain documents, the TWPs will be invited to consider the same document on a particular topic, using a common document code with the following format: "TWP/[series number]/[document number]", e.g. "TWP/1/2".

CONSIDERATION BY COUNCIL

19. The Council, at its thirty-fourth extraordinary session, held in Geneva on April 6, 2017, considered document C(Extr.)/34/3 (see document C(Extr.)/34/6 "Report on the decisions", paragraphs 12 to 14).

20. Based on the recommendation of the Consultative Committee, the Council decided to organize a single set of sessions from 2018, as follows:

(a) an arrangement for the scheduling of the UPOV bodies, on the following basis:

Monday	Technical Committee
Tuesday	Technical Committee
Wednesday	Administrative and Legal Committee
Thursday	Consultative Committee
Friday	Council (afternoon Symposium /Seminar (if appropriate))

(b) TC-EDC to meet twice a year; once in the period March/April and once in conjunction with the TC sessions later in the year;

(c) meetings of *ad hoc* working groups to take place during Monday to Friday of the annual sessions unless electronic participation was possible, such as was the case for the EAF meetings, in which case meetings could take place in the period March/April;

(d) with regard to timing of the UPOV sessions, it was recommended to retain the current timing of the October/November sessions.

21. Based on the recommendation of the Consultative Committee, the Council decided to adopt the proposals of the TC, at its fifty-third session, on the following measures:

(a) Test Guidelines that could not be prepared in time for adoption by the Technical Committee at its session could be adopted by correspondence on the basis of the recommendations by the Enlarged Editorial Committee (TC-EDC). The TC agreed that the TC-EDC should meet twice a year, once in the period March/April and once in conjunction with the TC sessions later in the year.

(b) to use the following contingency measures for 2018, subject to the Council deciding that the TC should hold its fifty-fourth session in late 2018:

- (i) for Test Guidelines proposed for adoption in 2018, to use a procedure for adoption by correspondence as follows:
 - Draft Test Guidelines would be prepared as agreed by the TWPs and circulated with the recommendations of the TC-EDC;
 - In the absence of any objections the Test Guidelines would be adopted;
 - In the case of objections, the objections would be referred to the relevant TWP for consideration at their 2018 session, and the Test Guidelines considered for adoption by the TC at its fifty-fourth session, in 2018;
 - TC-EDC to meet on March 26 and 27, 2018, and in conjunction with the TC at its fifty-fourth session, in 2018, if necessary.
- (ii) for TGP documents, to invite the TC-EDC to consolidate comments made by the TWPs at their sessions in 2017 and, in the absence of consensus between the TWPs, formulate proposals for further consideration by the TWPs at their sessions in 2018;
- (iii) all other matters to be considered at the fifty-fourth session of the TC in 2018 in the normal way.

22. *The TWPs are invited to note that:*

(a) *the Council decided:*

(i) *to organize a single set of sessions of the bodies that meet in Geneva from 2018, in the period of October/November;*

(ii) *that the Enlarged Editorial Committee (TC-EDC) would meet twice a year, once in the period March/April and once in conjunction with the TC sessions later in the year;*

(iii) *that Test Guidelines that could not be prepared in time for adoption by the Technical Committee at its session could be adopted by correspondence on the basis of the recommendations by the TC-EDC;*

(iv) *on contingency measures to be used for 2018, as set out in paragraph 21 of this document;*

(b) *the TC agreed to propose that the meetings of the BMT be held on an annual basis;*

(c) *the TC agreed to propose that consideration be given to organizing the sessions of the TWC and BMT back-to-back in the same location to facilitate exchange of information;*

(d) *the TC agreed that the preparatory workshops in 2018 should be organized on the Monday/Tuesday of the TWPs sessions to encourage participation by all TWP participants; and*

(e) *from 2017, for certain documents, the TWPs will be invited to consider the same document on a particular topic, using a common document code.*

[End of document]