



The International Treaty
ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES
FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Overview of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

**Symposium on Possible Interrelations between the
International Treaty and the UPOV Convention, Geneva,
26 October 2016**

Kent Nnadozie
Secretary *a.i.*, International Treaty

<http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/>

Plant Genetic Resources for Food Security and Sustainable Development

- Over 1 billion people suffer from chronic hunger and malnutrition.
- The world population will increase to over 9 billion by 2050.
- Agricultural production must increase by 70%.
- 70% of the increase in cereal production is expected to come from increased yields.
- Plant genetic resources are essential for future food security and sustainable development.
- Instrumental to cope with climate change challenges

<http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/>

Specificity of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture - PGRFA (1)

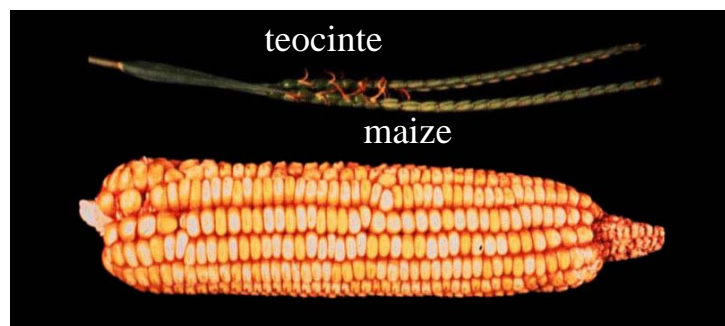


- Reliance on human management, farmers altered original wild plants, and further developed by breeders;
- They created diversity by adapting crops to new ecosystems and new human needs;

<http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/>

Specificity of PGRFA (2)

Many crops cannot survive in nature: Maize, with its very tight ears, cannot seed itself. Compared to the original wild *teocinte*, maize is almost unrecognisable



<http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/>

All countries interdependent on PGRFA

- **All countries are interdependent on each other for PGRFA:** they all depend for their food and agriculture on crops that originated elsewhere.
- On average, 70% (and, in some places, up to 100%) of each country's agricultural crops originated elsewhere.

<http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/>

The International Treaty on PGRFA

GLOBAL INTERDEPENDENCY REQUIRED A DIFFERENT WAY OF DEALING WITH FOOD CROPS – hence the Treaty.

- Adopted in 2001;
- Entered into force 2004;
- Operational since 2007;
- Membership: 141 Contracting Parties so far

<http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/>

What are the objectives of the Treaty?

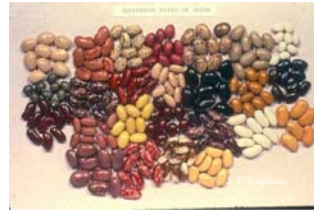


- The conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture
- The fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from their use, **in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity**, for sustainable agriculture and food security

<http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/>

The scope of the Treaty (1)

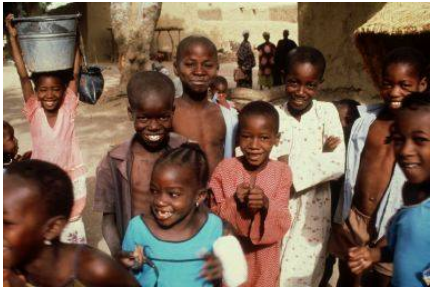
Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA)



<http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/>

The scope of the Treaty (2)

Conservation, Exploration, Collection, Characterization, Evaluation and Documentation



Each Contracting party shall ... , in cooperation with other Contracting Parties ..., promote an integrated approach to the exploration, conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture

<http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/>

The scope of the Treaty (3)

Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources



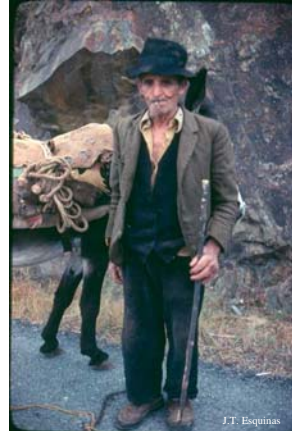
The Contracting parties shall develop and maintain appropriate policy and legal measures that promote the sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

<http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/>

The scope of the Treaty (4)

Farmers' Rights

- Recognition of the enormous contribution that farmers and their communities have made and continue to make to the conservation and development of plant genetic resources.
- Farmers' Rights include the protection of traditional knowledge and the right to participate equitably in benefit-sharing and in national decision-making about plant genetic resources.
- Governments are responsible for realizing these rights.



<http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/>

The scope of the Treaty (5)

Global Information System

Contracting Parties shall cooperate to develop and strengthen a [global information system](#) to facilitate the exchange of information, based on existing information systems, on scientific, technical and environmental matters related to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

[...]

<http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/>

The scope of the Treaty (6)

The Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing (MLS)

The Treaty establishes a multilateral system, both to facilitate access to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, and to share, in a fair and equitable way, the benefits arising from their use.



<http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/>

The Multilateral System ...

- ... consists of genetic material of a set of crops, listed in *Annex I* to the International Treaty, and other crops;
- Those crops provide about 80% of our food from plants.



<http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/>

The Benefit-Sharing Fund...

Supports projects aimed at smallholder farmers in developing countries who conserve and sustainably use plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

- Priorities of the Benefit-Sharing Fund:
 - sustainable use;
 - on farm management and conservation;
 - information exchange, technology transfer and capacity building.

<http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/>

Benefit-sharing includes...

- Facilitated access, which is, itself, a major benefit
- Exchange of information
- Access to and transfer of technology
- Capacity building
- The sharing of monetary and other benefits of commercialization

<http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/>

Improving the System: the MLS Enhancement Process

- **GB decided to develop a range of measures that will**
 - (a) increase user-based payments and contributions to the Benefit-sharing Fund in a sustainable and predictable long-term manner
 - (b) enhance the functioning of the Multilateral System by additional measures
- **Options and measures (Resolution 1/2015):**
 - (a) **Revised SMTA** to make provision for a **Subscription System** and to possibly include a termination clause, user/crop categories, differentiated payment rates;
 - (b) Adapting the **coverage of the MLS**;
 - (c) Issues regarding **genetic information associated with the material** accessed from the MLS.
- **CP regions, stakeholder groups, consultations and submissions**

<http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/>

Possible areas of interrelations with UPOV and WIPO

<http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/>

Overview of the process

- **GB Resolution 8/2013:** "... to jointly identify possible areas of interrelations among their respective international instruments."
- **Inputs and submissions** by CPs and stakeholders
- **ACSU-2 (2015):** Preliminary list of issues
- **GB Resolution 5/2015:** "... to jointly, and including through a participatory and inclusive process, as appropriate and subject to availability of resources, finalize the process for identification of possible areas of interrelations between their respective instruments and the Treaty"

<http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/>

Preliminary List of Possible Issues

- Developed on the basis of **inputs received from Contracting Parties, stakeholders and others**
- Reviewed by the Ad Hoc Technical Advisory Committee on Sustainable Use (ACSU) and forwarded to **UPOV** and **WIPO**
- The ACSU also noted that the **different instruments** recognize and promote **different forms of innovation in the use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture** by farmers and breeders, including **formal and informal systems**.

<http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/>



The International Treaty
ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES
FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**

Thank you!

Kent Nnadozie

Secretary *a.i.*, International Treaty

kent.nnadozie@fao.org

<http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/>