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INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR THE PROTECTION OF NEW VARIETIES OF PLANTS
GENEVA

**WORKING GROUP ON BIOCHEMICAL AND MOLECULAR
TECHNIQUES AND DNA PROFILING IN PARTICULAR**

Thirteenth Session
Brasilia, November 22 to 24, 2011

INTERNATIONAL GUIDELINES ON MOLECULAR METHODOLOGIES

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1. At its tenth session, held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, from November 21 to 23, 2006, the Working Group on Biochemical and Molecular Techniques, and DNA-Profiling in Particular (BMT) discussed the draft UPOV Guidelines for DNA-profiling: molecular marker selection and database construction (BMT Guidelines). In relation to Section B: 5.2 “Quality criteria”, the BMT was informed that the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the Codex Alimentarius Commission were developing guidelines. The BMT agreed that it would be useful to invite relevant experts to make a presentation on those guidelines at the eleventh session of the BMT.

2. At the forty-fourth session of the Technical Committee (TC), held in Geneva from April 7 to 9, 2008, Mrs. Katalin Ertsey (Hungary), President of the Executive Committee of the International Seed Testing Association (ISTA), reported that ISTA and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) were jointly working on harmonization in molecular markers for variety verification and confirmed that ISTA would be glad to make a presentation on that subject at the eleventh session of the BMT. The TC agreed to invite ISTA and OECD to make a presentation on their joint work on harmonization

in the development of sets of markers which might be used for variety verification, at the eleventh session of the BMT.

3. At its eleventh session, held in Madrid, from September 16 to 18, 2008, the BMT received a presentation by ISO, based on document BMT/11/25 and a presentation by Ms. Selma Doyran, Senior Food Standard Officer, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), based on document BMT/11/26.

4. At its eleventh session, the BMT was informed that ISTA was unable to attend the BMT session but had provided some information: there was no formal collaboration arrangements between ISTA and OECD regarding harmonization in the development of sets of markers to be used for variety verification. In 2007, the ISTA Variety Committee had established a Working Group on DNA-Based Methods, which had finalized its first comparative test with SSR markers to distinguish varieties of several species. First results had been reported at the ISTA Annual Meeting in June 2008.

5. At its forty-fifth session, the TC noted the developments concerning international guidelines on molecular methodologies, as set out above.

6. The Technical Working Party for Agricultural Crops (TWA), at its thirty-eighth session, held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, from August 31 to September 4, 2009 noted that ISTA had been unable to attend the eleventh session of the BMT, held in Madrid, from September 16 to 18, 2008. It agreed that the Office of the Union should contact ISTA to investigate how the work of UPOV and ISTA might, where appropriate, be coordinated. On that basis, the Vice Secretary-General of UPOV wrote to Mr. Muschick, Secretary General of ISTA on October 29, 2009, to explore where the work of UPOV and ISTA might, where appropriate, be coordinated in that regard. It was suggested that, in the first instance, a report on ISTA's activities in this area could be made at the twelfth session of the BMT, to be held in Ottawa, Canada, from May 11 to 13, 2010.

7. At its twelfth session, held in Ottawa, Canada, from May 11 to 13, 2010, the BMT received a presentation by Ms. Cheryl Dollard (International Seed Testing Association (ISTA)), based on document BMT/12/16 "Development of an International Seed Testing Association (ISTA) DNA- Based Approach for Testing Variety Identity", a copy of which was provided in document BMT/12/16 Add. (see document BMT/12/24 "Report", paragraphs 60 to 62).

8. Also at its twelfth session, the BMT received a presentation by Mr. Michael Sussman (Chairman of the Subcommittee ISO/TC 34/SC 16 (molecular biomarker analysis)), based on document BMT/12/20 "Horizontal Biomarker Analysis — ISO/TC 34/SC 16", a copy of which is provided in document BMT/12/20 Add. (see document BMT/12/24 "Report", paragraphs 63 and 64). Mr. Sussman explained that ISO collaborated with other standard setting organizations; for example, ISO had provided methods to the Codex Alimentarius Commission and had sought to avoid overlap with ISTA work on seed.

9. The Technical Committee, at its forty-seventh session, held in Geneva, from April 4 to 6, 2011, noted the information on international guidelines on molecular methodologies presented to the BMT at its twelfth session, as set out in paragraphs 7 and 8 above (see document TC/47/26 "Report", paragraph 17).

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