

**Technical Committee**

**TC/59/7**

**Fifty-Ninth Session  
Geneva, October 23 and 24, 2023**

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**VARIETY DESCRIPTION DATABASES**

*Document prepared by the Office of the Union*

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. The purpose of this document is to report on developments concerning variety description databases and invite members of the Union to report on work concerning the development of databases containing morphological and/or molecular data.
2. The TC is invited to note the matters for information reported in this document.
3. The following abbreviations are used in this document:

- TC: Technical Committee
- TWA: Technical Working Party for Agricultural Crops
- 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

4. The structure of this document is as follows:

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**BACKGROUND**

5. At its forty-fifth session<sup>1</sup>, the TC noted from the developments reported in document TC/45/9 "Publication of Variety Descriptions" that members of the Union were developing databases containing morphological and/or molecular data and, where considered appropriate, were collaborating in the development of databases for the management of variety collections, particularly on a regional basis. The TC agreed that it could be beneficial to offer the possibility for members of the Union to report on that work in a coherent way to the TC, the TWPs and the BMT. On that basis, the TC agreed to replace the agenda item "Publication of variety descriptions" with an item for "Variety description databases" on the agendas of the forthcoming sessions of the TC, TWPs and the BMT. In that respect, it recalled the importance of the list of criteria for consideration for the use of descriptions obtained from different locations and sources as set out in document TC/45/9, paragraph 3, and reproduced below. The TC also agreed that the information presented would not need to be related to the publication of descriptions (see document TC/45/16 "Report", paragraph 173).

"3. At its forty-third session, held in Geneva, from March 26 to 28, 2007, the Technical Committee (TC) agreed the list of criteria for consideration by the Technical Working Parties (TWPs) for the use of descriptions obtained from different locations and sources as follows:

<sup>1</sup> TC, fifty-fourth session, held in Geneva from March 30 to April 1, 2009

- “(a) to consider the species for which they see a real interest in creating an international database with variety descriptions;
- “(b) to specify the aim and benefits expected;
- “(c) to select the characteristics for which descriptions should be published;
- “(d) to specify for each characteristic the degree of harmonization already achieved or aimed at (in the latter case, to specify if actions should be planned in order to improve the level of harmonization: ring tests, revision of the description of the way of observation in the guideline, ...);
- “(e) to study the pertinence of a “regional approach”, rather than an “international approach” (to consider groups of countries and to compare descriptions within those groups only);
- “(f) to propose minimum distances when making comparisons of data, for the relevant characteristics;
- “(g) to list the countries which would contribute to the publication;
- “(h) to consider the type of access (free or restricted to the contributors); and
- “(i) to consider the cost of any project.”

6. Following the decision by the TC, at its forty-fifth session, it is recalled that members of the Union are invited to report to TC and TWPs on work concerning the development of databases containing morphological and/or molecular data.

#### DEVELOPMENTS AT THE TECHNICAL WORKING PARTIES AT THEIR SESSIONS IN 2023

7. At their sessions in 2023, the TWV<sup>2</sup>, TWA<sup>3</sup>, TWO<sup>4</sup> and TWF<sup>5</sup> noted that document TWP/7/6 “Variety description databases” contained matters for information only (see documents TWV/57/26 “Report”, paragraph 84; TWA/52/11 “Report”, paragraph 55; TWO/55/11 “Report”, paragraph 58; and TWF/54/13 “Report”, paragraph 53).

#### “Bigdata Platform for DUS examination”

8. The TWO, at its fifty-fifth session<sup>4</sup>, received a presentation on “Bigdata Platform for DUS examination” from an expert from China. A copy of the presentation is provided in document TWO/55/7 (see document TWO/55/11 “Report”, paragraph 37).

#### Pomological descriptive databases

9. The TWF, at its fifty-fourth session, received a presentation on the “New Australian PBR Database Search”, from an expert from Australia. A copy of the presentation would be provided in document TWF/54/3. The TWF noted the availability of variety data in searchable format, including descriptions and DUS trial data (see document TWF/54/13 “Report”, paragraph 26).

10. The TWF, at its fifty-fourth session, received a presentation on “Pomological descriptive databases” by an expert from the International Community of Breeders of Asexually Reproduced Ornamental and Fruit Varieties (CIOPORA). A copy of the presentation is provided in document TWF/54/8 (see document TWF/54/13 “Report”, paragraph 27).

*11. The TC is invited to note the matters for information reported in this document.*

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<sup>2</sup> TWV, fifty-seventh session, held in Antalya, Türkiye, from May 1 to 5, 2023.

<sup>3</sup> TWA, fifty-second session, held via electronic means, from May 22 to 26, 2023.

<sup>4</sup> TWO, fifty-fifth session, held via electronic means, from June 12 to 16, 2023.

<sup>5</sup> TWF fifty-fourth session, held at Nimes, France, from July 3 to 7, 2023.