

*Symposium on Possible Interrelations
between the
ITPGRFA and the UPOV Convention*

**Overview of initiatives involving the
ITPGRFA and UPOV**

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PREVIEW

- Information initiatives
- Practical initiatives
- Mutual attendance, participation, and information exchange

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What is the relationship between the UPOV Convention and international treaties concerning genetic resources, e.g. the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA)?

The UPOV Convention, the CBD and the ITPGRFA are all international instruments.

The objectives of the CBD and the ITPGRFA are the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources and the sharing of benefits arising from their use.

Both the ITPGRFA and the UPOV Convention aim to support plant breeding activities and to encourage the development of new varieties of plants. The ITPGRFA does so by providing a system for facilitated access to plant genetic resources, while the UPOV Convention does so by establishing a system for plant variety protection. When implemented by UPOV members, the relevant legislations dealing with these matters should be compatible and mutually supportive.

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DECLARATION FROM THE SECOND WORLD SEED CONFERENCE

Responding to the challenge of population growth and high quality food

held at the FAO Headquarters, Rome, 20-21 October 2009

World food security: urgent measures on seed needed
Urgent government measures and increased public and private investment in the seed sector are required for the long term if agriculture is to meet the challenge of food security in the context of population growth and climate change.

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Governments are strongly encouraged to implement a predictable, reliable, user friendly and affordable regulatory environment to ensure that farmers have access to high quality seed at a fair price. In particular, **FAO member countries are urged to participate in the internationally harmonized systems of the OECD, UPOV, ITPGRFA and ISTA. Participation in those systems will facilitate the availability of germplasm, new plant varieties and high quality seed for the benefit of their farmers, without which their ability to respond to the challenges ahead will be substantially impaired. [...]**

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Conference conclusions:

- **Plant breeding** has significantly contributed and will continue to be a major contributor to increased food security whilst reducing input costs, greenhouse gas emissions and deforestation. With that, plant breeding **significantly mitigates the effects of population growth, climate change and other social and physical challenges.**
- **ITPGRFA** is an innovative instrument that aims at providing food security through conservation, as well as facilitated access to genetic resources under its multilateral system of access and benefit-sharing. The multilateral system represents a reservoir of genetic traits, and therefore constitutes a central element for the achievement of global food security.
- Intellectual property protection is crucial for a sustainable contribution of plant breeding and seed supply. **An effective system of plant variety protection is a key enabler for investment in breeding and the development of new varieties of plants. A country's membership of UPOV is an important global signal for breeders to have the confidence to introduce their new varieties in that country.**

[...]

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2011



The Council agreed with the request of the secretariat of ITPGRFA for the Office of the Union to cooperate with ITPGRFA on a research project on the economics of the Multilateral System of the ITPGRFA, based on information available from the Plant Variety Database (PLUTO).

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2012



UPOV members approved the participation of the Office of the Union in the ITPGRFA Platform for the Co-Development and Transfer of Technologies.

2013

UPOV members agreed that the Office of the Union explore how the information in the PLUTO, GENIE and UPOV Lex databases might be made available through that platform

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2014



In coordination with the Secretary of the ITPGRFA, the UPOV Office held a side-event entitled

“UPOV: Encouraging the use of Plant Genetic Resources for the Benefit of Society”

during the Seventh Session of the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture of the CGRFA and provided a report of the activities undertaken by UPOV in relation to plant genetic resources.

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2015



“Workshop on the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and preparation for the accession to the International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants”

organized by the Ministry of Environment and Water of the United Arab Emirates, in collaboration with the ITPGRFA, UPOV, ICARDA and ICBA.

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Inter-relations

October 2013

The representative of the FAO, on behalf of the Secretary of the ITPGRFA, reported that in the Resolution “Implementation of Article 9, Farmers’ Rights” the Governing Body had requested the Secretary of the ITPGRFA to invite UPOV and WIPO to jointly identify possible areas of interrelations among the respective international instruments. In that regard, he reported that the Secretary of the ITPGRFA would contact the Secretary-General of UPOV in the near future. The representative noted that the process could potentially lead to a joint-publication by UPOV, WIPO and the ITPGRFA, on interrelated issues among their respective international instruments.

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Other participation

UPOV Office has participated in:

- Sessions of the Governing Body of the ITPGRFA
- 2010 High Level Round Table on the Importance of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in Meeting the Climate Change Challenges, Enhancing Food Security and addressing Agro-biodiversity Erosion
- 2013 ITPGRFA initiative to Promote Public-Private Partnerships for Pre-Breeding “Towards an International Public-Private Partnership for Pre-Breeding”
- 2016 Second Global Consultations Conference for Farmers’ Rights organized by the Governments of Indonesia and Norway and with the support of Secretariat of ITPGRFA

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