

Working Group on Variety Denominations

UPOV/WG-DEN/4/2

**Fourth Meeting
Geneva, October 27, 2017**

Original: English
Date: September 29, 2017

REVISION OF DOCUMENT UPOV/INF/12/5 “EXPLANATORY NOTES ON VARIETY DENOMINATIONS UNDER THE UPOV CONVENTION”

Document prepared by the Office of the Union

Disclaimer: this document does not represent UPOV policies or guidance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this document is to provide background information to assist the Working Group on Variety Denominations (WG-DEN) in its consideration of the proposals for a revision of document UPOV/INF/12/5 “Explanatory Notes on Variety Denominations under the UPOV Convention”, as presented in document UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 4.

2. The WG-DEN is invited to:

(a) note the matters agreed by the WG-DEN at its third meeting, as reported in paragraph 6 of this document; and

(b) consider document UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 4, as set out in paragraph 9 of this document.

3. The structure of this document is as follows:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	1
BACKGROUND	2
DEVELOPMENTS BY THE WG-DEN, AT ITS THIRD MEETING.....	2
MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE WG-DEN AT ITS FOURTH MEETING.....	3
ANNEX I A COMPILATION OF ALL COMMENTS RECEIVED AND DISCUSSED AT WG-DEN MEETINGS AND OTHER RELEVANT MEETINGS, IN RELATION TO THE TEXT OF DOCUMENT UPOV/INF/12/5 UP TO MARCH 2017	
ANNEX II RESPONSE FROM AUSTRALIA TO UPOV CIRCULAR E-17/135	
ANNEX III RESPONSE FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION (CPVO) TO UPOV CIRCULAR E-17/135	
ANNEX IV RESPONSE FROM FRANCE TO UPOV CIRCULAR E-17/135	
ANNEX V RESPONSE FROM THE NETHERLANDS TO UPOV CIRCULAR E-17/135	
ANNEX VI RESPONSE FROM NEW ZEALAND TO UPOV CIRCULAR E-17/135	
ANNEX VII RESPONSE FROM SOUTH AFRICA TO UPOV CIRCULAR E-17/135	
ANNEX VIII RESPONSE FROM ESA/ISF TO UPOV CIRCULAR E-17/136	

4. The following abbreviations are used in this document:

- CAJ: Administrative and Legal Committee
- CAJ-AG: Administrative and Legal Committee Advisory Group
- WG-DST: Working Group for the Development of a UPOV Denomination Similarity Search Tool
- WG-DEN: Working Group on Variety Denominations

BACKGROUND

5. The background to this matter is provided in document UPOV/WG-DEN/3/2 "Revision of document UPOV/INF/12/5 'Explanatory Notes on Variety Denominations under the UPOV Convention'".

DEVELOPMENTS BY THE WG-DEN, AT ITS THIRD MEETING

6. The WG-DEN, at its third meeting, held in Geneva, on March 21, 2017, considered document UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 3 and agreed the following with regard to a possible revision of document UPOV/INF/12/5:

(a) Section 2.3, conceptual criteria in the UPOV guidance might not be suitable due to the difficulties for the harmonized implementation of the conceptual aspect at the international level; and

(b) Section 2.4, the term "variety" related to the definition of variety as defined in Article 1(vi) of the 1991 Act of the UPOV Convention and, in particular the term "variety" was wider than protectable variety.

7. The WG-DEN agreed to consider the following items at its fourth meeting:

(a) The WG-DEN agreed to issue a circular in order to explore the frequency that UPOV members were faced with existing denominations that did not meet their own criteria and the frequency that synonyms were created as a result. In addition, the WG-DEN agreed to issue a circular to users on whether the current practices created problems;

(b) Section 2.3.3 (c), the WG-DEN concluded that, at that time, there was no agreement to change the current wording of Section 2.3.3(c), but before finally concluding on that matter the WG-DEN requested members of the WG-DEN to provide examples/guidance in the implementation of the following element of Section 2.3.3(c) "In some limited cases an exception may be acceptable, for example a variety which was never commercialized, or was only commercialized in a limited way for a very short time" and the WG-DEN agreed to send a circular for that purpose;

(c) Section 2.3.4 "Identity of the breeder", the WG-DEN agreed to reflect further on whether PVP Offices should seek to have a role in recognizing breeders practices in naming varieties (e.g. prefixes, themes) or whether that should be left to other mechanisms (e.g. trademarks). It was also agreed that the Office of the Union should send a circular inviting comments on that matter;

(d) Section 2.5 "Variety denomination classes: a variety denomination should not be used more than once in the same class", the WG-DEN noted that, for some UPOV members, the acceptability of similar denominations varied according to class. For example, in the case of a class following the general rule (one genus/one class) a similar denomination might be accepted for a different species within the same genus. The WG-DEN agreed that UPOV members should be invited to provide information on such approaches by means of the circular to be issued; and

(e) Paragraph 4 [Prior rights of third persons], the WG-DEN agreed to propose additional text to explain that, if an authority allows a denomination to be registered when the breeder of the variety is also the holder of a trademark that is identical to the variety denomination, the authority should inform the breeder of the obligation to allow the use of the denomination in connection with the variety, even after the expiration of the breeder's right. This matter will be considered under Section 1.2.

8. UPOV Circular E-17/135 and UPOV Circular E-17/136, both of July 26, 2017, were issued to members and observers of the WG-DEN, respectively, on the above basis.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE WG-DEN AT ITS FOURTH MEETING

9. Document UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 4 incorporates the proposals that have been agreed by the WG-DEN or have been agreed to be considered further.

10. Annex I to this document provides a compilation of all comments that have been received and discussed at WG-DEN meetings and other relevant meetings, in relation to the text of document UPOV/INF/12/5, as background information up to March 2017 (third meeting of the WG-DEN).

11. Contributions from members and observers of the WG-DEN in response to UPOV Circular E-17/135 and UPOV Circular E-17/136 are reproduced in the Annexes to this document as follows:

- Annex II Response from Australia to UPOV circular E-17/135
- Annex III Response from the European Union (CPVO) to UPOV circular E-17/135
- Annex IV Response from France to UPOV circular E-17/135
- Annex V Response from the Netherlands to UPOV circular E-17/135
- Annex VI Response from New Zealand to UPOV circular E-17/135
- Annex VII Response from South Africa to UPOV circular E-17/135
- Annex VIII Response from ESA/ISF to UPOV circular E-17/136.

12. With regard to Section 2.3.4 “Identity of the breeder”, as recalled in paragraph 7, the WG-DEN, at its third meeting, agreed to reflect further on whether PVP Offices should seek to have a role in recognizing breeders practices in naming varieties (e.g. prefixes, themes) or whether that should be left to other mechanisms (e.g. trademarks). In order to assist the WG-DEN in its consideration of this matter, trademark experts from WIPO have been invited to make a presentation on the protection offered by trademarks at the fourth meeting of the WG-DEN.

13. The WG-DEN agreed at its third meeting that the Office of the Union should investigate the background that led to the adoption in the Convention of the principle “Identity of the breeder” at the 1961 Diplomatic Conference (see document UPOV/WG-DEN/3/3 “Report”, paragraph 9). The preparatory work contained in Publication 316 “Records of the International Conferences for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants 1957-1961 1972” (French only available at http://www.upov.int/edocs/pubdocs/fr/upov_pub_316.pdf) did not provide the background to the principle “Identity of the breeder” contained in the Convention.

14. *The WG-DEN is invited to:*

(a) *note the matters agreed by the WG-DEN at its third meeting, as reported in paragraph 6 of this document; and*

(b) *consider document UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 4, as set out in paragraph 9 of this document.*

[Annexes follow]

ANNEX I

COMPILATION OF ALL COMMENTS RECEIVED AND DISCUSSED AT WG-DEN MEETINGS AND OTHER RELEVANT MEETINGS, IN RELATION TO THE TEXT OF DOCUMENT UPOV/INF/12/5

Note

Footnotes will be retained in published document.

Endnotes are background information

Text proposed in relation to document UPOV/INF/12/5:
to **add** as underlined; to **delete** as ~~striketrough~~.

Text agreed by the WG-DEN, at its third meeting:
to **add** as underlined; to **delete** as ~~striketrough-yellow highlighted~~

Text in boxes:

- Proposals at CAJ and CAJ-AG: grey highlighted
- Proposals at WG-DST: grey highlighted
- Proposals at WG-DEN, at its first and second meeting, and UPOV Circular E-16/088 of April 13, 2016: grey highlighted
- Information provided for consideration at the WG-DEN, at its third meeting: grey highlighted
- Proposals at WG-DEN, at its third meeting: yellow highlighted

EXPLANATORY NOTES ON VARIETY DENOMINATIONS
UNDER THE UPOV CONVENTION

Preamble

1. The Council of the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV) refers to the International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV Convention), and in particular to Articles 5(2) and 20 of the 1991 Act, and Articles 6(1)(e) and 13 of the 1978 Act and the 1961 Convention, which provides that a variety must be given a suitable denomination which will be registered at the same time as the breeder's right is granted.
2. The Council recalls that, according to the relevant provisions of the UPOV Convention, a variety denomination must be suitable as a generic designation and must enable the variety to be identified; it must not be liable to mislead or to cause confusion concerning the characteristics, value or identity of the variety or the identity of the breeder.
3. The Council emphasizes that the main purpose of these Explanatory Notes is to ensure that, as far as possible, protected varieties are designated in all members of the Union¹ by the same variety denomination, that the approved variety denominations establish themselves as the generic designations and that they are used in the offering for sale or marketing of propagating material of the variety, even after the expiration of the breeder's right.

The WG-DEN, at its third meeting.

The WG-DEN agreed to issue a circular in order to explore the frequency that UPOV members were faced with existing denominations that did not meet their own criteria and the frequency that synonyms were created as a result. In addition, the WG-DEN agreed to issue a circular to users on whether the current practices created problems.

4. Whilst noting that the only binding obligations for members of the Union are those contained in the UPOV Convention itself, the Council considers that the aim set out in paragraph 3 can only be achieved if the broadly worded provisions on variety denominations under the UPOV Convention are uniformly interpreted and applied by the members of the Union, and that the adoption of appropriate explanatory notes is therefore advisable. Those Explanatory Notes should not be interpreted in a way that is inconsistent with the UPOV Convention.
5. The Council considers that the adoption of such Explanatory Notes for the uniform interpretation and application of the provisions on variety denominations will be of assistance not only to the authorities² of members of the Union but also to breeders in their selection of variety denominations.
6. The Council, having regard to the UPOV Convention (Article 26(5)(x) of the 1991 Act and Article 21(h) of the 1978 Act and the 1961 Convention), under which it has the task of taking all necessary decisions to ensure the efficient functioning of the Union, and in the light of the experience acquired by members of the Union in connection with variety denominations, recommends that the authorities of the members of the Union,
 - (i) base their decisions on the suitability of proposed variety denominations on these Explanatory Notes;
 - (ii) take into account the guidance in these Explanatory Notes concerning the procedure for assessing the suitability of proposed variety denominations and the exchange of information;
 - (iii) provide comprehensive information concerning these Explanatory Notes, to assist breeders when selecting variety denominations.

Prior guidance on this matter, provided by the "Explanatory Notes on Variety Denominations under the UPOV Convention" (document UPOV/INF/12/3), is superseded by these Explanatory Notes.

¹ "Member of the Union" means a State party to the 1961 Convention/1972 Act, the 1978 Act or a State or intergovernmental organization party to the 1991 Act (Article 1(xi) of the 1991 Act).

² The "authority" means the authority entrusted with the task of granting breeders' rights (Article 30(1)(ii) of the 1991 Act and Article 30(1)(b) of the 1978 Act and 1961 Convention).

**EXPLANATORY NOTES ON VARIETY DENOMINATIONS
UNDER THE UPOV CONVENTION**

The Explanatory Notes below correspond to the paragraph numbers within Article 20 of the 1991 Act and Article 13 of the 1978 Act and 1961 Convention, unless indicated otherwise.

Paragraph 1

(Paragraphs 1 and 3 of Article 13 of the 1961 Convention)

[Designation of varieties by denominations; use of the denomination] The variety shall be designated by a denomination which will be its generic designation. Each member of the Union shall ensure that, subject to paragraph (4), no rights in the designation registered as the denomination of the variety shall hamper the free use of the denomination in connection with the variety, even after the expiration of the breeder's right.

Explanatory Notes – Paragraph (1)

1.1 Article 5(2) of the 1991 Act and Article 6(1)(e) of the 1978 Act and the 1961 Convention require that the variety is designated by a denomination. Paragraph (1) provides for the denomination to be the generic designation of the variety, and subject to prior rights, no rights in the designation shall hamper the free use of the denomination of the variety, even after the expiration of the breeder's right. The obligation under paragraph (1) should be considered together with the obligation to use the variety denomination in respect of the offering for sale or marketing of propagating material of the variety (see paragraph (7)).

1.2 The obligation under paragraph (1) to allow for the use of the denomination in connection with the variety, even after the expiration of the breeder's right, is of relevance if the breeder of the variety is also the holder of a trademark which is identical to the variety denomination. It should be noted that where a name is registered as a trademark by a trademark authority, the use of the name as a variety denomination may transform the trademark into a generic name. In such cases, the trademark may become liable for cancellation³. In order to provide clarity and certainty in relation to variety denominations, authorities should refuse a variety denomination which is the same as a trademark in which the breeder has a right. The breeder may choose to renounce the trademark right prior to the submission of a proposed denomination in order to avoid its refusal.

The WG-DEN, at its second meeting, agreed to consider the following proposal at its third meeting

If an authority did allow a denomination to be registered when the breeder of the variety was also the holder of a trademark that was identical to the variety denomination, the authority should inform the breeder of the obligation to allow the use of the denomination in connection with the variety, even after the expiration of the breeder's right.

³ WIPO Publication No 489 "WIPO Intellectual Property Handbook

Proper Use of Trademarks

"2.397 Non-use can lead to the loss of trademark rights. Improper use can have the same result, however. A mark may become liable for removal from the Register if the registered owner has provoked or tolerated its transformation into a generic name for one or more of the goods or services in respect of which the mark is registered, so that, in trade circles and in the eyes of the appropriate consumers and of the public in general, its significance as a mark has been lost.

2.398 Basically, two things can cause genericness: namely, improper use by the owner, provoking transformation of the mark into a generic term, and improper use by third parties that is tolerated by the owner. [...]

2.400 The basic rule is that the trademark should not be used as, or instead of, the product designation. [...]

2.404 However, it is not enough just to follow these rules: the trademark owner must also ensure that third parties and the public do not misuse his mark. It is specifically important that the trademark should not be used as or instead of the product description in dictionaries, official publications, journals, etc."

The WG-DEN, at its third meeting, agreed

To propose additional text to explain that, if an authority allows a denomination to be registered when the breeder of the variety is also the holder of a trademark that is identical to the variety denomination, the authority should inform the breeder of the obligation to allow the use of the denomination in connection with the variety, even after the expiration of the breeder's right.

Paragraph 2

[Characteristics of the denomination] The denomination must enable the variety to be identified. It may not consist solely of figures except where this is an established practice for designating varieties. It must not be liable to mislead or to cause confusion concerning the characteristics, value or identity of the variety or the identity of the breeder. In particular, it must be different from every denomination which designates, in the territory of any member of the Union, an existing variety of the same plant species or of a closely related species.

Explanatory Notes – Paragraph (2)

General comment by the European Union (CPVO)^a

Articles 3, 4 and 7 of the CPVO Guidelines on variety denominations provide some more detailed guidance on this subject.

Agreed by the WG-DEN, at its first meeting^b

There are four categories of denominations: pronounceable words; letters only (not in the form of pronounceable words); letters and figures; and figures only.

The WG-DEN, at its second meeting, agreed to consider the following proposal at its third meeting

The definition of “words” and the four categories of denominations: pronounceable words; letters only (not in the form of pronounceable words); letters and figures; and figures only.

The WG-DEN, at its third meeting.

noted that there were some significant differences in the detailed criteria for variety denomination suitability between UPOV members and that it might be difficult to achieve complete harmonization. The WG-DEN noted that such differences in criteria would not lead to the creation of a synonym if authorities accepted the denomination that was submitted and registered with the first application, even if the denomination would not have met the criteria in their territory.

2.1 Identification

Provisions under paragraph (2) emphasize the “identification” role of the denomination. Bearing in mind that the main objective of the denomination is to identify the variety, sufficient flexibility should be given to incorporate evolving practices in designating varieties.

Proposal by the European Union (CPVO)^a

It would be important to mention the difference between fancy names and codes.

Proposal by New Zealand^c

Section 2.1 proposed examples: Identification now includes the use of Genus or species prefixes Agapanthus 'Agapetite', Lavender 'Lavang12'.

The WG-DEN, at its second meeting, agreed to consider the following proposal at its third meeting

The WG-DEN noted that some members considered two elements on Section 2.3.1 "Characteristics of the variety", (a) the denomination should not convey the impression that the variety has a particular characteristics which in reality it does not have; and (b) the denomination should not refer to specific characteristics in such a way that the impression is created that only the variety possesses them, whereas in fact other varieties or species in question also have or may have the same characteristics, with Section 2.1

2.2. Solely of figures

2.2.1 Paragraph (2) states that the denomination may not consist "solely of figures" except where this is an "established practice" for designating varieties. The expression "solely of figures" refers to variety denominations consisting of numbers only (e.g. 91150). Thus, denominations containing both letters and figures are not subject to the "established practice" requirement (e.g. AX350).

2.2.2 In the case of denominations consisting "solely of figures," the following non-exhaustive elements may assist the authorities to understand what might be considered to be "established practice":

(a) for varieties used within a limited circle of specialists, the established practice should reflect that specialist circle (e.g. inbred lines);

(b) accepted market practices for particular variety types (e.g. hybrids) and particular genera^d/species (e.g. Medicago, Helianthus);

(c) "established practice" is determined to be when registration has been accepted for one species or group, so that it can be used in other species which have not yet registered any variety whose denomination consists solely of figures.

Agreed by the WG-DEN, at its second meeting

The current text could eventually allow the use of a denomination consisting solely of figures in all denomination classes, and agreed that the current text was appropriate, on that basis.

2.3. Liable to mislead or to cause confusion

Paragraph (2) states that the denomination must not be liable to "mislead or to cause confusion concerning the characteristics, value or identity of the variety or the identity of the breeder." These aspects are considered below:

Proposal by the European Union (CPVO)^a

In the draft proposal prepared by the CPVO for the revision of its own guidelines on VDs, we propose 3 criteria for assessment of similarity between VDs: visual, phonetic and conceptual; such criteria are especially considered for the assessment of similarity between trademark. We considered that the problematic is very similar in this other IP system and that this approach is the outcome of a huge experience with many court cases and judgements.

Proposal by the European Union (CPVO)^a

To include a section providing guidance on the assessment of similarity of variety denominations consisting of “first names”.

The WG-DEN, at its second meeting, agreed to consider the following proposal at its third meeting

Concerning three aspects: visual; phonetic; and conceptual, it was noted that introducing a conceptual aspect would necessitate consideration of linguistic and cultural aspects, which could potentially increase the risk of synonyms because, for example, differences in conceptual meanings could be linked to specific understandings in different languages that would not be understood in other languages, and it was agreed to consider whether it would be appropriate to introduce the conceptual aspect with information to be provided by CPVO.

The WG-DEN agreed to consider the following proposal at its third meeting

“First names” to be considered based on the information provided by the CPVO on its consideration on “first names” under the explanation of the conceptual differences.

Concluded by the WG-DEN, at its third meeting

Conceptual criteria in the UPOV guidance might not be suitable due to the difficulties for the harmonized implementation of the conceptual aspect at the international level.

2.3.1 Characteristics of the variety

Proposal by the European Union (CPVO)^a

Section 2.3.1 to provide more detailed guidance and provide clear examples of suitable and non-suitable proposals for VDs.

The denomination should not:

(a) convey the impression that the variety has particular characteristics which, in reality, it does not have;

Example: a variety denomination “dwarf” for a variety which is of normal height, when a dwarfness trait exists within the species, but is not possessed by the variety.

Agreed by the WG-DEN, at its second meeting

The example in the section provided clear guidance.

~~(b) refer to specific characteristics of the variety in such a way that the impression is created that only the variety possesses them, whereas in fact other varieties of the species in question also have or may have the same characteristics; for example where the denomination consists solely of descriptive words that describe attributes of the variety that other varieties in the species may also possess.~~

~~*Example 1:* “Sweet” for a fruit variety;~~

~~*Example 2:* “Large white” for a variety of chrysanthemum.~~

[agreed to delete by the WG-DEN, at its second meeting]

The WG-DEN agreed the followings, at its second meeting

To propose to delete the current text in Section 2.3.1(b) and to consider alternative guidance to be provided by the CPVO, at its third meeting.

~~(c) convey the impression that the variety is derived from, or related to, another variety when that is not, in fact, the case;~~

~~Example: a denomination which is similar to that of another variety of the same species or closely related species, e.g. "Southern cross 1", "Southern cross 2", etc., giving the impression that these varieties are a series of related varieties with similar characteristics, when, in fact, this is not the case^e~~

[agreed to delete by the WG-DEN, at its first meeting]

The WG-DEN, at its second meeting, agreed to consider the following proposal at its third meeting

To consider two elements together, botanical relationship of varieties and confusion in relation to the identity of the breeder, to cover refusal of following cases:

(i) a variety denomination "Dannys Royal Gala" even if it had little botanical relation with variety denomination "Royal Gala"; and

(ii) a breeder submitting a type of variety denomination, which resulted in a copy of another breeders well known practice. For instance, the practice of a breeder that proposes denominations consisting of names of mountains.

Proposed to add by the WG-DST, at its second meeting

(d) contain the botanical or common name of the genus to which that variety belongs. The identity of the denomination and that of the genus to which it belongs could become unclear and confusing.

Example in section 2.3.1 (d): Carex variety "Sedge". Carex is the botanical name of the genus, for which the common name is sedge.^f

Agreed by the WG-DEN, at its first meeting^g

To consider the following issues with regard to confusion concerning the use of botanical and common names in relation to denominations at the second meeting of the WG-DEN:

(i) to consider the guidance of the International Code for the Nomenclature of Cultivated Plants (ICNCP) of the International Commission for the Nomenclature of Cultivated Plants of the International Union for Biological Sciences (IUBS Commission) on the use of botanical and common names with a view to exploring greater harmonization (see below);

(ii) whether to refuse the use of all botanical names and only accept certain common names that had a wider meaning;

(iii) whether to broaden the guidance proposed by the WG-DST in new paragraph (d) to cover the use of any genus/species name that was covered by the same variety denomination class or was in the same crop category;

(iv) whether to provide guidance on the use of part of the genus/species name or a slightly changed version of the genus/species name in a variety denomination; and

(v) whether to consider all languages of UPOV members in relation to common names of the genus to which a variety belongs.

Proposal by France submitted in conjunction with other proposals for UPOV Circular E-16/088 of April 13, 2016

We think it should be avoided if it may mislead concerning the identity of the variety, or if it prevents users from identifying the variety amongst others. Latin or common names of the species/genera which the variety belongs (as such, or with an evocating word) should not be the only word of the denomination. Example of non-acceptable denominations because preventing from identifying the variety: 'Lolius' for a *Lolium perenne* variety, 'Sunflow' for a sunflower variety. On the contrary, a denomination proposal 'Pineapple' or 'Cherry' for a tomato variety may be suitable, provided that it does not cause any confusion concerning the characteristics of the variety. In our opinion, the notion of "crop sector" used in the EU to authorize botanical name used as denomination as soon as it belongs to another crop sector than the one concerned by the variety works quite well (e.g. a botanical name of an ornamental species for a denomination of an agricultural variety).

Extract from ICNCP provided by CPVO

21.20. Except where linguistic custom demands, a name is not established if on or after 1 January 1996 its cultivar epithet contains the Latin or common name(s) of the genus to which it is assigned.

Ex. 33. *Castanea* 'Pale Chestnut', *Gladiolus* 'Pink Gladiolus', *Narcissus* 'Davis Daff', *Narcissus* 'Granny's Daffodil', *Paeonia* 'Sussex Peony', *Phlox* 'Phlox of Sheep', and *Rhododendron* 'Rhododendron Mad' may not be established.

Ex. 34. *Dianthus* 'Rupert's Pink' is established; "pink" is not the common name for all plants in the genus *Dianthus*.

Ex. 35. *Prunus* 'Sato-zakura' is established; "zakura" is the Japanese word for flowering cherries, rather than a name for the whole genus.

Ex. 36. *Pyrus bretschneideri* 'Ya Li' contains the word "li", which is the Chinese common name for the genus *Pyrus*. According to Chinese linguistic custom, "li" is inseparable from "ya", and its inclusion in the cultivar epithet is therefore necessary and acceptable.

21.22. A name is not established if on or after 1 January 1959 its cultivar epithet is the name of a genus or the common name of a species or other denomination class if use of such epithets might lead to confusion.

Ex. 39. The names *Erica* 'Calluna' and snowdrop 'Snowflake' may not be established since, by referring to them in the market place as 'Calluna' heather and 'Snowflake' snowdrop respectively, people might be confused. However names such as ash 'Veronica', *Dianthus* 'Victoria', *Lilium* 'Erica', *Magnolia* 'Daphne', and *Rhododendron* 'Calypso' would all be acceptable since, although the epithets are names of genera, they are unlikely to cause confusion if written 'Veronica' ash, 'Victoria' *Dianthus*, 'Erica' *Lilium*, 'Daphne' *Magnolia*, and 'Calypso' *Rhododendron* respectively.

Ex. 40. *Calluna* 'Heather', *Geranium* 'Herb Robert', and *Silene* 'Jupiterbloem' could not be established since "heather" is the English common name for the genus *Calluna*, "herb robert" is an English common name for *Geranium robertianum*, and "jupiterbloem" is a Dutch common name for *Silene flos-jovis*.

Ex. 41. The names of the plum cultivars 'Apricot' and 'Peach', or *Prunus domestica* 'Apricot' and *Prunus domestica* 'Peach' (Hogg, 1866), published well before 1959, can be considered established names.

Ex. 42. *Dahlia* 'Northwest Cosmos' (named after the American baseball/football team), *Dianthus* 'Giulia Viola', and *Rhododendron* 'Nancy Stipa' are established names.

Ex. 43. *Lilium* 'Henri' is acceptable even though there is a *Lilium henryi*; *Clematis* 'Florida Blue' is acceptable even though there is a *Clematis florida* ("Florida" only forms part of the cultivar epithet and is a place name).

Agreed by the WG-DEN, at its second meeting

The use of any botanical name as a variety denomination was unsuitable except for certain common names that had a wider meaning and for which there was no likelihood of confusion.

2.3.2 Value of the variety

The denomination should not consist of, or contain, comparative or superlative designations.

Example: a denomination which includes terms such as "Best", "Superior", "Sweeter".

Proposal by the European Union (CPVO)^a

More detailed guidance and examples in the Section 2.3.2 dealing with the value of the variety.

Proposal by New Zealand^c

Section 2.3.2: the current guidance is too simplified. It should not be enough just to include superlatives or comparatives, a more complete evaluation should be used considering the whole context and presence and position of other words in the denomination. 'Pink Supreme', 'Best Wishes' and 'Lake Superior' contain superlatives but viewed as a whole, may be acceptable denominations.

Agreed by the WG-DEN, at its first meeting^h

- Superlatives and comparatives should only be unacceptable if they misled or caused confusion concerning the characteristics of the variety.
- Examples of acceptable and unacceptable use of superlatives and comparatives should be provided in document UPOV/INF/12.

UPOV Circular E-16/088 of April 13, 2016, invited members of the WG-DEN to submit examples of acceptable and unacceptable use of superlatives and comparatives, and received proposals as follows:

Proposal by France

In general we do not accept denominations including this type of terms, provided that (specially for superlative terms) it has not been proved by the competent authority and may thus be misleading. Examples: 'EXCELSIOR', 'EXCELLIUM'.

Proposal by the Netherlands

Acceptable are:

- 'Excellent', 'Brilliant Taste'.

Unacceptable are:

- 'Longest of All', 'Best Ever', 'Germany's Best'.

Proposal by New Zealand

Trachelium 'Lake Superior' The use of superior has no connection with value or worth. Acceptable.

Clematis 'Best Wishes' Best has no connection with value, worth. Acceptable.

The superlative 'Supreme' has been accepted in denominations, 'Regal Supreme', 'Pink Supreme', 'Thai Supreme' but note that the word order appears to significant because there are very few, if any, denominations where use of 'Supreme' is acceptable when used first 'Supreme XXX'.

Dahlia 'Best Bet' A colloquial term in New Zealand for "the best", "guaranteed". Not acceptable

Magnolia 'Best Purple' Implies the best purple Magnolia. Not acceptable.

The WG-DEN, at its second meeting, agreed to consider the following proposal at its third meeting

To consider examples of acceptable and unacceptable uses of superlatives and comparatives.

2.3.3 Identity of the variety

(a) As a general recommendation, a difference of only one letter or one number may be considered to be liable to mislead or cause confusion concerning the identity of the variety, except where the:

Proposal by WG-DST^j

Section 2.3.3 (a): to differentiate between letters in the form of words and other cases as follows:

- (i) in the case of denominations consisting of letters not in the form of words, a difference of a single letter should be regarded as a clear difference, with examples to be provided;
- (ii) in the case of denominations consisting of figures, a difference of a single figure should be regarded as a clear difference, with examples to be provided; and
- (iii) in the case of denominations consisting of figures and letters, not in the form of words, one letter or figure difference should be regarded as clear difference, with examples to be provided.

Proposal by New Zealand^c

Section 2.3.3 (a): the same guidance should apply to alpha numeric combination denominations as it does to all other denominations containing letters and numbers.

Proposal by ESA/ISF^k

Section 2.3.3 ~~(b)~~ (a): propose to simplify and thereby improve the readability of the first line of the sentence in the following way: "For denominations consisting solely of letters, as a general recommendation..."

The WG-DEN, at its second meeting, agreed to consider the following proposal at its third meeting

Possible exceptions to Section 2.3.3 (a).

Agreed by the WG-DEN, at its second meeting

The proposal that for all categories of denominations including pronounceable words, a difference of one letter or one figure should not be considered to be liable to mislead and cause confusion concerning the identity of the variety should not be pursued.

(i) difference of one letter provides for a clear visual or phonetic difference, e.g. if it concerns a letter at the beginning of a word:

Example 1: in the English language, 'Harry' and 'Larry' would not cause confusion; However, 'Bough' and 'Bow' might cause confusion (in phonetic terms);

Example 2: ~~in the Japanese and Korean languages there is no difference between "L" and "R" sounds, thus "Lion" and "Raion" are exactly the same although these are distinguishable for English mother tongue speakers;~~

Proposal by ESA/ISF^k

Section 2.3.3 ~~(b)~~ ~~(iii)~~ (a) (i): refers to a case where a difference of one letter at the beginning may not provide a clear visual and phonetic difference. The example given in the first bullet however does not have a difference of one letter in the beginning but of two letters and is therefore somewhat confusing.

Agreed by the WG-DENⁱ

To add “Helena” and “Elena” as an example of a clear visual difference that may not provide a clear phonetic difference in a language other than English (in Spanish).

To consider the example of “Bow” and “Bough” at the second meeting.

- (ii) denominations consist of a combination of letters and figures;

Proposal by New Zealand^c

Section 2.3.3 (a) (ii): consider whether this exemption should continue from the general recommendation.

- (iii) denominations consist “solely of figures”.

(b) The use of a denomination which is similar to that used for a variety of another species or genera in the same denomination class (see section 2.5) may cause confusion.

(c) In order to provide clarity and certainty in relation to variety denominations, the re-use of denominations is, in general, discouraged, since the re-use of a denomination, even where that relates to a variety which no longer exists (see section 2.4.2) may, nevertheless, cause confusion. In some limited cases an exception may be acceptable, for example a variety which was never commercialized, or was only commercialized in a limited way for a very short time. In those cases, a suitable period of time after discontinued commercialization of the variety would be required before the re-use of the denomination in order to avoid causing confusion in relation to the identity and/or the characteristics of the variety.

Proposal by WG-DST^j

New section 2.3.3 (d): to recommend that consideration be given to avoiding re-use of denominations in all cases. However, it clarified that it would be important to consider only denominations of varieties (i.e. plant groupings that meet the definition of variety in Article 1 (vi) of the 1991 Act) and, in addition, to expand the content of PLUTO database to include all varieties, including those that had not been, or were no longer, registered/protected.^l

Proposal by the European Union (CPVO)^a

To make clear in section 2.3.3 dealing with the identity of the variety, that the re-use of the same or a similar VDs is possible under certain conditions, especially when an earlier variety has disappeared.

Proposal by New Zealand^c

New section 2.3.3 (d): to re-use of denominations should be possible for genera that require ongoing maintenance, such as annual seed crops. It may be possible to sufficiently establish that a variety no longer exists. For vegetatively propagated species it may be much more difficult to adequately establish that a variety no longer exists. The re-use of denominations should not be entirely ruled out.

Proposal by ESA/ISF^k

Section: 2.3.3 (d): propose to mention 10 years as an example of suitable period. This is what is indicated in the CPVO guidelines on variety denominations.

Proposal by ESA/ISF^k

WG-DST has proposed to include all varieties in PLUTO, also those which had not been or were no longer registered/protected. We understand that this may cover varieties that may have been marketed under a "test-marketing regime" prior to registration. Breeders would like to be able to re-use names which have not yet been registered and not yet been marketed. These are rare cases but still too restrictive rules are not favored. As outlined also above, we propose to allow re-use of denominations after a period of 10 years.

Agreed by the WG-DEN^k

- (a) to clarify that the guidance only concerned the re-use of denominations in the same denomination class;
- (b) to consider, at its second meeting, whether a time period of 10 years after the variety was no longer commercialized was appropriate for international guidance, given:
 - (i) the difficulty of obtaining information on commercialization in different territories,
 - (ii) the presence of varieties in genebanks, and
 - (iii) that farmers would probably remember varieties over a considerably longer time than 10 years.

Concluded by WG-DEN, at its third meeting.

at that time, there was no agreement to change the current wording of Section 2.3.3(c), but before finally concluding on that matter the WG-DEN requested members of the WG-DEN to provide examples/guidance in the implementation of the following element of Section 2.3.3(c) "In some limited cases an exception may be acceptable, for example a variety which was never commercialized, or was only commercialized in a limited way for a very short time" and the WG-DEN agreed to send a circular for that purpose.

2.3.4 Identity of the breeder

The variety denomination should not mislead or cause confusion concerning the identity of the breeder.

Proposal by New Zealand^c

Section 2.3.4 examples: the identity of the breeder is often shown using prefixes of various kinds Apple 'Scired', Apple 'Scifresh', Rose 'Macrexy', Rose 'Macgenev'.

UPOV Circular E-16/088 of April 13, 2016, invited members of the WG-DEN to provide examples and information on the use of prefixes to identify the breeder and issues that could arise, and received proposals as follows:

Proposal by France

France considers breeder as defined by the Art 1 of the UPOV Convention. Furthermore, as licensees may be different depending on the geographical areas concerned and may change depending on commercial strategy of companies and timeframe, we strongly support the necessity to stick to the following principle: a breeder's identifier in a denomination should only refer to the original breeder or breeding company. The use of breeder's identifier in a denomination is not compulsory, but when used, it should not be misleading regarding identity of the breeder *sensu stricto*. Example: 'ABC' is the prefix commonly used by breeding company A, while 'DEF' is the one used by the breeding company D. For a said crop, A company gives some licenses to D company; for the consistency of D portfolio, A company propose 'DEF Mano' for one of the varieties bred by ABC and licensed to D company. From our point of view, this proposal is not acceptable because cause confusion regarding breeder's identity.

Proposal by the Netherlands

The German Rose breeder Kordes has 'KOR' as the prefix for their varieties; e.g. 'Korbin', 'Korgazell' & 'Korkuma'. It would be misleading if other Rose breeders would use the same prefix.

Proposal by New Zealand

Eucomis 'Eudun1' The breeder of this variety is the first to use the prefix 'Eu', indicating the genus of the variety. Does this also indicate the breeder?

Other examples *Agapanthus* 'Agapetite', *Carex* 'Carfit01', *Westringia* 'WES08'

If a breeder is the first to use a genus prefix to identify their varieties, could this prevent other breeders of that genus from using the genus prefix?

The WG-DEN, at its third meeting, agreed

To reflect further on whether PVP Offices should seek to have a role in recognizing breeders practices in naming varieties (e.g. prefixes, themes) or whether that should be left to other mechanisms (e.g. trademarks). It was agreed that the Office of the Union should send a circular inviting comments on that matter. It was also agreed that the Office of the Union should investigate the background that led to the adoption in the Convention of the principle in Section 2.3.4 "Identity of the breeder" at the 1961 Diplomatic Conference.

2.4. *Different from an existing variety of the same plant species or of a closely related species*

2.4.1 Paragraph (2) states that the denomination must be "different" from an existing variety of the same plant species or a closely related species⁴.

Proposal by ESA/ISF^k

Section 2.4 is intended to provide guidance on what it means that the denomination has to be different from any other denomination designating an existing variety of the same plant species or of a closely related species. We propose to also specify here that this does not only refer to denominations used for protected varieties but also denominations registered under national variety registration laws.

Agreed by the WG-DEN^l

The term "variety" related to the definition of variety as defined in Article 1 (vi) of the 1991 Act of the UPOV Convention.

⁴ Article 20(2) of the 1991 Act refers to "plant species" and Article 13(2) of the 1978 Act and 1961 Convention refers to "botanical species"; the divergence in terminology does not contain any difference in substance.

Agreed by the WG-DEN, at its third meeting

The term “variety” related to the definition of variety as defined in Article 1(vi) of the 1991 Act of the UPOV Convention and, in particular the term “variety” was wider than protectable variety. The WG-DEN noted that the role of PLUTO in that matter would be considered under a separate agenda item.

2.4.2 The following explanation is for the purposes of variety denominations and without prejudice to the meaning of a “variety whose existence is a matter of common knowledge” in Article 7 of the 1991 Act and in Article 6(1)(a) of the 1978 Act and the 1961 Convention. In general, the re-use of denominations is discouraged but, under exceptional circumstances (see section 2.3.3(c)), the denomination of an old variety could, in principle, be registered for a new variety.

2.5. *Variety denomination classes: a variety denomination should not be used more than once in the same class*

Proposal by the European Union (CPVO)^a

To make clear in Section 2.5 dealing with variety denomination classes, in cases of UPOV classes containing more than one genus, that the situation where the genera are different is taken into account with a more lenient approach in respect of the similarity between VDs used for varieties belonging to different genera. This could also apply, in certain cases, to different species within a genus.

2.5.1 For the purposes of providing guidance on the third (see section 2.3.3(b)) and fourth sentences of paragraph 2 of Article 20 of the 1991 Act and of Article 13 of the 1978 Act and the 1961 Convention, variety denomination classes have been developed. A variety denomination should not be used more than once in the same class. The classes have been developed such that the botanical taxa within the same class are considered to be closely related and/or liable to mislead or to cause confusion concerning the identity of the variety.

Proposal by New Zealand^c

Section 2.5.1 additional sentence proposed:

For certain genera (e.g. Prunus) there may be sufficient botanical difference between species within the genus to permit the same denomination to exist in the same genus (class). A cherry variety is generally considered not likely to be confused with an apricot variety.

Agreed by the WG-DEN^m

The guidance concerning denominations belonging to the same denomination class should be the same, irrespective of whether the denomination class followed the general rule or was one of the exceptional classes.

The list of denomination classes in document UPOV/INF/12 Annex I “List of Classes” might be need to be reviewed to better reflect current practices of members of the Union.

UPOV Circular E-16/088 of April 13, 2016, invited members of the WG-DEN to make proposals concerning a possible revision of the variety denomination classes, and received proposals as follows:

Proposal by the Netherlands

For harmonization we suggest to follow the denomination classes of the International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants (ICNCP); see appendix V ICNCP. If wished Naktuinbouw can make a comparison and a list of relevant additions. A copy of appendix V of the ICNCP is attached as Annex III to this document.

Proposal by New Zealand

There currently exist more than one *Prunus* variety with the same denomination because there exists clear species divisions within the genus; plum, peach, apricot, cherry. Should there be classes within *Prunus*?

In a similar way, should there be classes within *Rubus*; blackberry, raspberry, hybrid berry?

The WG-DEN, at its third meeting, noted that

There had been no proposals to amend the list of classes in document UPOV/INF/12.

The changes in the list of classes in the ninth edition of the International Code of the Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants (ICNCP) of March 2016. It noted that there was agreement on the general rule for denomination classes (one genus/one class) between UPOV and the International Commission for the Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants (IUBS Commission) but there was a wide divergence on the exceptional classes. The WG-DEN agreed that UPOV should explain its exceptional classes to the IUBS Commission with a view to achieving greater harmonization in the tenth edition of the ICNCP.

For some UPOV members, the acceptability of similar denominations varied according to class. For example, in the case of a class following the general rule (one genus/one class) a similar denomination might be accepted for a different species within the same genus. The WG-DEN agreed that UPOV members should be invited to provide information on such approaches by means of the circular to be issued.

2.5.2 The variety denomination classes are as follows:

(a) General Rule (one genus / one class): for genera and species not covered by the List of Classes in Annex I, a genus is considered to be a class;

(b) Exceptions to the General Rule (list of classes):

(i) classes within a genus: List of classes in Annex I: Part I;

(ii) classes encompassing more than one genus: List of classes in Annex I: Part II.

2.5.3 It is recommended that the UPOV Plant Variety Database (“PLUTO database UPOV-ROM”) used in the process to check if, in the territory of any member of the Union, the proposed denomination is different from denominations of existing varieties of the same genus or, if appropriate, variety denomination class (see Annex I). Attention is drawn to the “General Notice and Disclaimer” of the UPOV-ROM to ensure that the information contained in the UPOV-ROM is considered in an appropriate way.

Paragraph 3

(Paragraph 4 of Article 13 of the 1961 Convention)

[Registration of the denomination] The denomination of the variety shall be submitted by the breeder to the authority. If it is found that the denomination does not satisfy the requirements of paragraph (2), the authority shall refuse to register it and shall require the breeder to propose another denomination within a prescribed period. The denomination shall be registered by the authority at the same time as the breeder's right is granted.

Explanatory Notes – Paragraph (3)

3.1 If the authority has found no grounds for refusal under paragraph (2), and knows of no grounds for refusal under paragraph (4), the proposed denomination shall be registered, published and communicated to the authorities of the other members of the Union.

3.2 In the event of prior rights (paragraph (4)) or other grounds for refusal, any interested person may file an objection to the registration. The authorities of the other members of the Union may submit observations (see Explanatory Notes of paragraph (6)).

3.3 Relevant objections and observations should be communicated to the applicant. The applicant should be given the opportunity to reply to the observations. If the authority considers the denomination unsuitable within its territory, it will require the breeder to submit another denomination. Failure to submit a proposal within the prescribed period should entail the rejection of the application.

3.4 The examination of the proposed denomination and of the other conditions for the protection of the variety are procedures which should be undertaken in parallel in order to ensure that the denomination can be registered at the time the breeder's right is granted.

Proposal by ESA/ISF^k

Paragraph 3

In the introductory text it is stated that "*the authority shall refuse to register it and shall require the breeder to propose another denomination with a prescribed period*". The words "prescribed period" indeed appear in Article 20(3) of the UPOV Convention but in practice the breeder may propose a new denomination at any time before the grant. In order to avoid confusion it would be useful to clarify that the "*prescribed period*" basically refers to before grant.

Agreed by the WG-DENⁿ

Not to change the current text of the explanatory note.

Paragraph 4

(Paragraph 10 of Article 13 of the 1961 Convention)

[Prior rights of third persons] Prior rights of third persons shall not be affected. If, by reason of a prior right, the use of the denomination of a variety is forbidden to a person who, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (7), is obliged to use it, the authority shall require the breeder to submit another denomination for the variety.

Explanatory Notes – Paragraph (4)

4. In deciding on the suitability of the proposed denomination and examining objections and observations in relation to prior rights of third persons, the following are intended to assist authorities.

(a) An authority should not accept a variety denomination if a prior right, the exercise of which may prevent the use of the proposed denomination, has already been granted to a third party under plant breeder's right law, trademark law or any other intellectual property legislation. It is the responsibility of the title holder of a prior right to assert his rights through the available objection or court procedures. However, authorities are encouraged to make prior searches in relevant publications (e.g. official gazettes) and databases (e.g. UPOV-ROM) to identify prior rights for variety denominations. They may also make searches in other registers, such as trademark registers, before accepting a variety denomination.

Proposal by CAJ-AG^o

To modify 4(a) as follows:

“(a) An authority should not accept a variety denomination if a there is an existing prior right, the exercise of which may prevent the use of the proposed denomination, ~~has already been granted to a third party under plant breeder's right law, trademark law or any other intellectual property legislation.~~ It is the responsibility of the title holder of a prior right to assert his rights through the available objection or court procedures. However, authorities are encouraged to make prior searches in relevant publications (e.g. official gazettes) and databases (e.g. UPOV Plant Variety Database (PLUTO) <http://www.upov.int/pluto/en/>) to identify prior rights for variety denominations. They may also make searches in other registers, such as trademark registers, before accepting a variety denomination.”

Proposal by the European Union (CPVO)^a

It is stated that an authority should not accept a variety denomination if it exists already a prior right. In the opinion of the CPVO this paragraph should allow also other approaches, in the case of the CPVO, the office doesn't refuse ex officio a proposal for VD in case of existence of an identical prior right (trade mark). In such cases the CPVO informs the applicant about a situation of identity with a prior right (trade mark) and refuses the proposal only in case of formal objection by the owner of the prior right (trade mark).

UPOV Circular E-16/088 of April 13, 2016, invited members of the WG-DEN to submit comments/proposals on Section 4(a), in relation to their practices concerning searches and measures concerning prior rights, and received proposals as follows:

Proposal by France

National Office for Plant Breeder's Rights (INOV) applies the following approach: assuming that a prior right of a third party may prevent users or PBR holder to use the denomination, we may not accept denomination identical to a trade mark on common products. A limited waiver may lead us to accept this denomination. For national listing purposes, a slightly different approach is followed, in line with Community Plant Variety Office's (CPVO) one: in case of denomination proposal identical to a third person trade mark, applicant is informed of risk of confusion and likelihood of infringement, and therefore invited to take a conclusion whether to go on with this proposal or to propose another denomination.

Proposal by the Netherlands

It often happens that a new variety denomination already registered by a trademark office in in class 31, but the trademark is not in use for the crop concerned. E.g. 'Grand Bleu' is a registered trademark since 1999 (WIPO 719128). In practice it is in use for *Caryopteris xclandonensis* 'Inoveris'. When a *Hydrangea* breeder wants to use it as a variety denomination for *Hydrangea macrophylla*, he should be able to use it when the trademark owner has no objection.

Proposal by New Zealand

It is routine to search the NZ trade mark register Class 31 as part of the denomination examination. The search is made using a proprietary similarity search tool called ACSEPTO. If there is a conflict between a mark and the proposed denomination, the applicant is notified and given time to decide their position. When the Class 31 mark is in a goods or service category that differs from denomination usage, the denomination may be accepted. For example, the denomination of a milling wheat variety may conflict with a Class 31 mark used to sell live animals or animal food. The denomination may be accepted because the two are unlikely to cross over in the market place. It is also advisable for the denomination proposer to communicate with the mark holder and if the applicant advises that the mark holder has no objection to the usage of the denomination, the proposed denomination may also be accepted.

(b) The notion of prior rights should include those rights which are in force, in the territory concerned, at the time of publication of the proposed denomination. For rights whose duration starts at the filing date of the application, the filing dates are those relevant for prior right considerations, provided those applications lead to the granting of rights.

(c) In the case of two conflicting proposed variety denominations (see paragraph (2)) in the same or different territories, the one with an earlier publication date should be retained and the relevant authority should request the breeder, whose proposed denomination was or might have been published at a later date, to submit another denomination.

(d) If, after the granting of a breeder's right, it is discovered that there was a prior right concerning the denomination which would have resulted in the rejection of the denomination, the denomination should be cancelled and the breeder should propose another suitable denomination for the variety. Article 22(1)(b)(iii) of the 1991 Act states that, if the breeder does not propose another suitable denomination, the authority may cancel the breeder's right.

(e) The following items provide some guidance on what might constitute a "prior right", the exercise of which may prevent the use of the proposed denomination:

(i) A trademark may be considered as a prior right when the proposed denomination is identical to a trademark registered for an identical good. For all practical purposes, such identity of goods is most likely to occur in respect of trademarks registered for goods under Class 31 of the Nice Classification⁵, although it is recalled that, in certain countries, trademarks may also be protected on the basis of use and without registration. If the trademark and proposed denomination are not identical, but similar, the trademark, in some cases, may constitute a prior right, the exercise of which may prevent the use of the proposed denomination, and the breeder may be required to propose another denomination. If, in spite of the similarity between the proposed denomination and the trademark, the exercise of the latter will not

⁵ Nice Agreement concerning the International Classification of Goods and Services for the Purposes of the Registration of Marks, of June 15, 1957, as revised in Stockholm on July 14, 1967, and Geneva on May 13, 1977, and amended on September 28, 1979.

prevent the use of the proposed denomination, the denomination may be accepted; rejections of denominations by the authority on the basis of similarity to a trademark will, in general, result from oppositions of trademark holders, observations of authorities responsible for trademark registration, or judgments from a competent court. In cases of mere similarity or small likelihood of ~~association~~ confusion by users, waivers granted to breeders by prior trademark right holders could be a suitable solution;

(ii) If the proposed denomination is identical with or similar to a well-known mark, it may be unsuitable, even if the well-known mark applies to goods other than those appearing in Class 31 of the Nice Classification;⁶

(iii) Prior rights might also concern trade names⁷ and names of famous persons;

(iv) Names and abbreviations of intergovernmental organizations, which are excluded by international conventions from use as trademarks or parts of trademarks, are not suitable as variety denominations;⁸

(v) Prior rights concerning appellations of origin and geographical indications (e.g. "Scotch") may exist under national legislation on grounds of common law or registration;⁹

(vi) In certain cases, prior rights in geographical names (e.g. names of cities or States) may exist; however, there is no general rule on these cases and assessment should be based on the probatory material presented on a case-by-case basis.

⁶ Well-known marks are protected by the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property (Article 6*bis*) and the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects on Intellectual Property Rights (Article 16.2 and 3 of the TRIPS Agreement). See also the 1999 WIPO Joint Recommendation Concerning Provisions on the Protection of Well-known Marks.

⁷ Article 8 of the Paris Convention.

⁸ This recommendation includes names and abbreviations notified pursuant to Article 6*ter* of the Paris Convention.

⁹ Articles 22 to 24 of the TRIPS Agreement provide for an obligation for WTO Members to protect geographical indications; the Lisbon Agreement for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and Their International Registration sets up international registration procedures for appellations of origin in the States party to that Agreement.

Paragraph 5

[Same denomination in all members of the Union] A variety must be submitted to all members of the Union under the same denomination. The authority of each member of the Union shall register the denomination so submitted, unless it considers the denomination unsuitable within its territory. In the latter case, it shall require the breeder to submit another denomination.

Explanatory Notes – Paragraph (5)

5.1 This provision reflects the importance of a single variety denomination for the effective operation of the UPOV system.

5.2 *Paragraph (5)* provides clear directions both for breeders and authorities:

(a) In relation to subsequent applications of the same variety, the breeder must submit in all members of the Union the denomination that was submitted with the first application. An exception to the above obligation might be appropriate when the proposed denomination is refused by one authority before the denomination is registered by any of the other members of the Union, in which case the breeder is encouraged to submit a new denomination to all authorities in order to obtain a single denomination in all territories.

(b) The essential obligation under paragraph (5) is that authorities should accept the denomination that was submitted and registered with the first application, unless such denomination is unsuitable in their territory (see section 5.3). On that basis, although certain provisions on variety denominations allow for authorities to develop individual guidance concerning best practices, the obligation under paragraph (5) should be given priority, unless there is direct conflict with the provisions of the UPOV Convention. In that respect, it is also recommended to avoid any narrow interpretation of the provisions of the UPOV Convention and related guidance or best practices, which could lead to the unnecessary refusal of variety denominations and, consequently, the unnecessary creation of synonyms for a variety;

UPOV Circular E-16/088 of April 13, 2016, invited New Zealand and other members of the WG-DEN to provide information of cases in which the denomination accepted in the first application was not the denomination used by other authorities when a different denomination was accepted by a second authority, and received proposals as follows;

Proposal by France

We are in the opinion that necessity of synonyms should be limited to very specific cases (i.e. already existing variety of the same UPOV class with the same denomination registered/listed in UPOV Member territory or very clear non-acceptable denomination). Following this statement, it is necessary to act for a more harmonized guidance for denomination evaluation, and for a Pluto updating with national/regional consolidated data as soon as possible.

Examples provided by Netherlands and New Zealand

(c) Due to different alphabetic scripts or systems of writing, it may be necessary to transliterate or transcribe the submitted denomination to enable its registration in another territory. In such cases, both the variety denomination submitted in the application and its transliteration or transcription are regarded as the same denomination. However, a translation would not be considered as the same denomination.

5.3 Whilst a degree of flexibility is appropriate, the following non-exhaustive list may assist the authorities in deciding what is unsuitable. A proposed denomination may be refused by an authority of a member if it transpires that, despite best endeavors (see section 5.5), in its territory

- (a) it does not conform to the provisions in paragraphs (2) and (4); or
- (b) it is contrary to public policy.

5.4 In order to permit the correct identification of a variety registered with different denominations due to exceptional cases (see section 5.3 above), in different territories, a regional or international synonym register may be developed by UPOV and/or by some members of the Union.

5.5 To reduce the risk of a variety denomination being considered to be unsuitable within a territory in which protection is to be sought, members of the Union are encouraged to make available to other authorities and breeders, the criteria, guidance and best practices which they apply for variety denominations. In particular, authorities are encouraged to make available any electronic search functions which they use in the examination of denominations in a form which would allow the on-line checking of a proposed variety denomination, against databases of relevant varieties and, in particular, the UPOV Plant Variety Database. Members of the Union may also choose to provide customized variety denomination checking services. Members of the Union are encouraged to use the UPOV website to provide information on, and links to, such resources.

Proposal by New Zealand^c

Paragraph 5

The principle of one denomination per variety worldwide should not be diminished however it could be helpful to provide guidance for an approved approach where two denominations exist. Such guidance goes against Article 20(5), the principle of a single denomination, but unfortunately this does occur all too frequently. Should an authority following a number of other denomination proposals or approvals for earlier foreign applications, accept the first approved denomination or accept the most common denomination?

Paragraph 6

[Information among the authorities of members of the Union] The authority of a member of the Union shall ensure that the authorities of all the other members of the Union are informed of matters concerning variety denominations, in particular the submission, registration and cancellation of denominations. Any authority may address its observations, if any, on the registration of a denomination to the authority which communicated that denomination.

Explanatory Notes – Paragraph (6)

6.1 Provisions of paragraph (6) indicate the importance of cooperation and exchange of information among authorities.

6.2 The obligation to inform other members of the Union of matters concerning variety denominations relies on the exchange of official gazettes and other means of publication. It is recommended that the layout of the official gazette be based on the UPOV Model Plant Breeder's Right Gazette (document UPOV/INF/5), in particular, the chapters containing information on variety denominations, should be appropriately identified in the table of contents. However, the UPOV Plant Variety Database is an important mechanism by which to maximize the availability of information for members of the Union concerning variety denominations in a practical form.

6.3 Paragraph (6) provides for the possibility for a member of the Union to make observations if it considers that a proposed denomination in another member of the Union is unsuitable. In particular with respect to the provisions of paragraph (5), the authority should take into account all observations made by the authorities of other members when deciding on the suitability of a proposed denomination. If the observations refer to an obstacle for approval which, according to the provisions on variety denominations under the UPOV Convention, applies to all members, then the proposed denomination should be refused. If the observation refers to an obstacle to approval only in the member of the Union which has transmitted the observation (e.g. prior trademark right within that territory), the applicant should be informed accordingly. If it is envisaged that protection will be applied for, or if it can be expected that reproductive or propagating material of the variety will be marketed in the territory of the member of the Union which has transmitted the observation, the authority examining the proposed denomination should request the applicant to propose another denomination.

6.4 The authorities making observations and the authority conducting the examination should, as far as possible, endeavor to reach an agreement on the acceptability of a variety denomination.

6.5 It is recommended that a communication of the final decision be addressed to any authority which has transmitted an observation.

6.6 Authorities are encouraged to send information on variety denominations to authorities dealing with the protection of other rights (e.g. authorities responsible for registering trademarks).

6.7 A model form for observations on proposed denominations submitted in another member of the Union can be seen in Annex II. A model form for a reply to observations can be seen in Annex III. Copies of these communications should be sent at the same time to the authorities of the other members of the Union.

Proposal by New Zealand^c

Paragraph 6

The current explanatory notes are correct in a broad sense with cooperation and exchange of information still of importance, but do not reflect current operational practice for many authorities. PLUTO and in the future similarity search tools are now the key resources and not structured observation or notification between authorities. Journals and Gazette remain important for legal publication requirements however their role in informing about denominations between authorities has decreased.

Agreed by the WG-DEN^P

The document UPOV/INF/12 should be amended to encourage members of the Union to contribute data to the PLUTO database in accordance with the guidance provided in document UPOV/INF/15 "Guidance for Members of UPOV".

Quote from document UPOV/INF/15 "Guidance for Members of UPOV"

"Variety Denominations (PLUTO database)

24. The contribution of data by members of the Union to the PLUTO Plant Variety Database provides support in particular for the examination of variety denominations.

25. Members of the Union are encouraged to provide data as soon as practical after it is published by the authority(ies) concerned. The PLUTO database will be updated with new data as quickly as possible after receipt, in accordance with the uploading procedure. The PLUTO database can, as necessary, be updated with corrected data, in accordance with the uploading procedure."

Paragraph 7

[Obligation to use the denomination] Any person who, within the territory of one of the members of the Union, offers for sale or markets propagating material of a variety protected within the said territory shall be obliged to use the denomination of that variety, even after the expiration of the breeder's right in that variety, except where, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (4), prior rights prevent such use.

Explanatory Note – Paragraph (7)

7.1 If it is found that prior rights of a third party prevent the use of the registered variety denomination, the authority shall require the breeder to submit another denomination. Article 22(1)(b)(iii) of the 1991 Act provides that the breeder's right may be cancelled if "the breeder does not propose, where the denomination of the variety is cancelled after the grant of the right, another suitable denomination."

7.2 The following items provide guidance in relation to changes of registered variety denominations:

(a) The UPOV Convention requires a change of the registered denomination where the denomination of the variety is cancelled after the grant of the right. The competent authority should cancel a variety denomination if:

(i) by reason of a prior right, the use of the denomination of a variety is forbidden to a person who, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (7), is obliged to use it (see paragraph (4) "Prior rights of third persons");

(ii) the denomination is unsuitable because it is contrary to the provisions in paragraph (2) "Characteristics of the denomination";

(b) In cases where the registered denomination is subsequently refused in another member of the Union because it is unsuitable in that territory (e.g. prior right), at the request of the breeder, the authority may consider it appropriate to change the denomination to the denomination registered in the said other member of the Union (see provisions in paragraph (5) "Same denomination in all Contracting Parties"); and

(c) In general, subject to (a) and (b) above, it would not be appropriate for the authority to change a registered denomination following a request by the breeder.⁹

Paragraph 8

[Indications used in association with denominations] When a variety is offered for sale or marketed, it shall be permitted to associate a trademark, trade name or other similar indication with a registered variety denomination. If such an indication is so associated, the denomination must nevertheless be easily recognizable.

This provision is self-explanatory.

Proposal by New Zealand^c

Paragraph 8

Explanatory notes could be helpful because commercial synonyms often become the effective variety identifier. Commercial synonyms, other than registered trademarks, have no legal standing and are not covered by UPOV guidance, but there are many examples where protected varieties effectively have two names, but only one being the approved denomination. UPOV guidance should resemble practical reality and further elaboration should be considered.

Agreed by the WG-DEN^f

To investigate the reasons that breeders used names other than variety denominations with a view to considering whether a change to document UPOV/INF/12 could reduce such practices.

Reasons provided by Netherlands submitted in conjunction with other proposals for UPOV Circular E-16/088 of April 13, 2016

UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 4

ANNEX I

UPOV Variety Denomination Classes:
A Variety Denomination Should not be Used More than Once in the Same Class

For the purposes of providing guidance on the third and fourth sentences of paragraph 2 of Article 20 of the 1991 Act and of Article 13 of the 1978 Act and the 1961 Convention, variety denomination classes have been developed. A variety denomination should not be used more than once in the same class. The classes have been developed such that the botanical taxa within the same class are considered to be closely related and/or liable to mislead or to cause confusion concerning the identity of the variety.

The variety denomination classes are as follows:

- (a) General Rule (one genus / one class): for genera and species not covered by the List of Classes in this Annex, a genus is considered to be a class;
- (b) Exceptions to the General Rule (list of classes):
 - (i) classes within a genus: List of classes in this Annex: Part I;
 - (ii) classes encompassing more than one genus: List of classes in this Annex: Part II.

LIST OF CLASSES

Part I

Classes within a genus

	<u>Botanical names</u>	<u>UPOV codes</u>
Class 1.1	Brassica oleracea	BRASS_OLE
Class 1.2	Brassica other than Brassica oleracea	other than BRASS_OLE
Class 2.1	Beta vulgaris L. var. alba DC., Beta vulgaris L. var. altissima	BETAA_VUL_GVA; BETAA_VUL_GVS
Class 2.2	Beta vulgaris ssp. vulgaris var. conditiva Alef. (syn.: B. vulgaris L. var. rubra L.), B. vulgaris L. var. cicla L., B. vulgaris L. ssp. vulgaris var. vulgaris	BETAA_VUL_GVC; BETAA_VUL_GVF
Class 2.3	Beta other than classes 2.1 and 2.2.	other than classes 2.1 and 2.2
Class 3.1	Cucumis sativus	CUCUM_SAT
Class 3.2	Cucumis melo	CUCUM_MEL
Class 3.3	Cucumis other than classes 3.1 and 3.2	other than classes 3.1 and 3.2

UPOV/WG-DEN/4/2
Annex I, page 30

	<u>Botanical names</u>	<u>UPOV codes</u>
Class 4.1	Solanum tuberosum L.	SOLAN_TUB
Class 4.2	Tomato & Tomato rootstocks	
	Solanum lycopersicum L. (synonym: Lycopersicon esculentum Mill.)	SOLAN_LYC
	Solanum cheesmaniae (L. Ridley) Fosberg (Lycopersicon cheesmaniae L. Riley)	SOLAN_CHE
	Solanum chilense (Dunal) Reiche (Lycopersicon chilense Dunal)	SOLAN_CHI
	Solanum chmielewskii (C.M. Rick et al.) D.M. Spooner et al. (Lycopersicon chmielewskii C. M. Rick et al.)	SOLAN_CHM
	Solanum galapagense S.C. Darwin & Peralta (Lycopersicon cheesmaniae f. minor (Hook. f.) C. H. Müll.) (Lycopersicon cheesmaniae var. minor (Hook. f.) D. M. Porter)	SOLAN_GAL
	Solanum habrochaites S. Knapp & D.M. Spooner (Lycopersicon agrimoniifolium Dunal) (Lycopersicon hirsutum Dunal) (Lycopersicon hirsutum f. glabratum C. H. Müll.)	SOLAN_HAB
	Solanum pennellii Correll (Lycopersicon pennellii (Correll) D'Arcy)	SOLAN_PEN
	Solanum peruvianum L. (Lycopersicon dentatum Dunal) (Lycopersicon peruvianum (L.) Mill.)	SOLAN_PER
	Solanum pimpinellifolium L. (Lycopersicon pimpinellifolium (L.) Mill.) (Lycopersicon racemigerum Lange)	SOLAN_PIM
	and hybrids between those species	
Class 4.3	Solanum melongena L.	SOLAN_MEL
Class 4.4	Solanum other than classes 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3	other than classes 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3

LIST OF CLASSES (Continuation)

Part II

Classes encompassing more than one genus

	<u>Botanical names</u>	<u>UPOV codes</u>
Class 201	Secale, Triticale, Triticum	SECAL; TRITL; TRITI
Class 202	Megathyrsus, Panicum, Setaria, Steinchisma	MEGAT; PANIC; SETAR; STEIN
Class 203*	Agrostis, Dactylis, Festuca, Festulolium, Lolium, Phalaris, Phleum and Poa	AGROS; DCTLS; FESTU; FESTL; LOLIU; PHALR; PHLEU; POAAA
Class 204*	Lotus, Medicago, Ornithopus, Onobrychis, Trifolium	LOTUS; MEDIC; ORNTP; ONOBR; TRFOL
Class 205	Cichorium, Lactuca	CICHO; LACTU
Class 206	Petunia and Calibrachoa	PETUN; CALIB
Class 207	Chrysanthemum and Ajania	CHRY5; AJANI
Class 208	(Statice) Goniolimon, Limonium, Psylliostachys	GONIO; LIMON; PSYLL
Class 209	(Waxflower) Chamelaucium, Verticordia	CHMLC; VERTI; VECHM
Class 210	Jamesbrittania and Sutera	JAMES; SUTER
Class 211	(Mushrooms) Agaricus Agrocybe Auricularia Dictyophora Flammulina Ganoderma Grifola Hericium Hypsizigus Lentinula Lepista Lyophyllum Meripilus Mycoleptodonoides Naematoloma Panellus Pholiota Pleurotus Polyporus Sparassis Tricholoma	AGARI AGROC AURIC DICTP FLAMM GANOD GRIFO HERIC HYPSI LENTI LEPIS LYOPH MERIP MYCOL NAEMA PANEL PHLIO PLEUR POLYO SPARA MACRO
Class 212	Verbena L. and Glandularia J. F. Gmel.	VERBE; GLAND
Class 213	Eupatorium L. Acanthostyles R. M. King & H. Rob. Ageratina Spach Asplundianthus R. M. King & H. Rob. Bartlettina R. M. King & H. Rob. Campuloclinium DC. Chromolaena DC. Conoclinium DC. Cronquistianthus R. M. King & H. Rob. Eutrochium Raf. Fleischmannia Sch. Bip. Praxelis Cass. Vioreckia R. M. King & H. Rob.	EUPAT - AGERT - - - - - - - EUTRO - - -

[Annex II follows]

* Classes 203 and 204 are not solely established on the basis of closely related species.

UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 4

ANNEX II

Model Form for Observations on Proposed Variety Denominations Submitted
to Another Member of the Union

From:

Your ref.

Our ref.

Observations on a Submitted Variety Denomination

To:

Submitted Variety Denomination: _____

Genus/Species (Botanical name): _____ UPOV Code: _____

Gazette: _____
(number/year)

Applicant: _____

Observations: _____

If the observations refer to a trademark or another right, name and address of the holder thereof (if possible):

Copies sent to the authorities of the other members of the Union

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Model Reply to Observations on Proposed Variety Denominations
Submitted to Another Member of the Union

From:

Your ref.

Our ref.

Reply to Observations on a Submitted Variety Denomination

To:

In reply to your objection to the denomination [.....] for the variety of [Botanical name/UPOV code], we wish to inform you that:

1. In our opinion there is sufficient difference between the names and both in writing and pronunciation. Therefore the [authority] sees no reason to reject the denomination.
2. The [authority] accepted this denomination and no objections were received during the prescribed period after publishing.
3. This variety has been registered under this name on
4. First publication as proposed denomination in
5. The applicant has been requested for another denomination.
6. This is the same variety.
7. Application on the variety has been withdrawn/rejected.
8. The applicant has withdrawn the proposed denomination for the variety.
9. Other

Copies sent to the authorities of the other members of the Union

Date: _____

Signature: _____

[Annex III follows]

INTERNATIONAL CODE OF NOMENCLATURE FOR CULTIVATED PLANTS (ICNCP)
APPENDIX V SPECIAL DENOMINATION CLASSES (8TH EDITION)
[This Annex is not a part of document UPOV/INF/12/5]

Special denomination classes

Appendix V

APPENDIX V

SPECIAL DENOMINATION CLASSES

The denomination class is the unit within which the use of a cultivar, Group or grex epithet may not be duplicated except when reuse of an epithet is permitted in accordance with Art. 30 (but see also Art. 21.8) [Art. 6.1].

A denomination class under the provisions of this *Code* is a single genus or hybrid genus unless a special denomination class has been determined by the ISHS Commission for Nomenclature and Cultivar Registration [Art. 6.2].

The ISHS Commission has determined the following special denomination classes:

ANACARDIACEAE

Denomination Class: *Mangifera indica* L.

Denomination Class: *Mangifera* L., other than *M. indica* L.

CACTACEAE

Denomination Class: **Tribe *Hylocereeae*** (Britton & Rose) Buxb.: *Disocactus* Lindl.; *Epiphyllum* Haw; *Hylocereus* (A. Berger) Britton & Rose; *Pseudorhipsalis* Britton & Rose; *Selenicereus* (A. Berger) Britton & Rose; *Weberocereus* Britton & Rose and their hybrids and their synonyms

CRASSULACEAE

Denomination Class: *Jovibarba* Opiz; *Rosularia* (DC.) Stapf; *Sempervivum* L. and their synonyms

CUPRESSACEAE

Denomination Class: *Chamaecyparis* Spach; *Cupressus* L.; *Xanthocyparis* Farjon & T.H. Nguyễn and their hybrids and their synonyms

IRIDACEAE

Denomination Class: *Gladiolus* L., large-flowering types

Denomination Class: *Gladiolus* L., species and early-flowering types

Denomination Class: *Iris* L., bulbous types

Denomination Class: *Iris* L., non-bulbous types

Appendix V

Special denomination classes

MALVACEAE

Denomination Class: *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* L.

Denomination Class: *Hibiscus* L., other than *H. rosa-sinensis* L.

ORCHIDACEAE

The following are the special denomination classes in *Orchidaceae* within which grex and Group names may not be repeated. With the exception of the genus *Pleione* the denomination class for orchid cultivar epithets is the species or grex. In *Pleione* the denomination class for cultivar, Group and grex epithets is the genus.

Denomination Class: *Anguloa* Ruiz & Pav.; *Ida* A.Ryan & Oakeley; *Lycaste* Lindl. and their hybrids and their synonyms

Denomination Class: *Ascoentrum* Schltr. ex J.J. Sm.; *Vanda* Jones ex R.Br. and their hybrid and their synonyms

Denomination Class: *Cochlioda* Lindl.; *Cyrtorchilum* Kunth; *Miltonia* Lindl.; *Odontoglossum* Kunth; *Oncidium* Sw. and their hybrids and their synonyms

Denomination Class: *Doritis* Lindl.; *Kingiella* Rolfe; *Phalaenopsis* Blume and their hybrids and their synonyms

ROSACEAE

Denomination Class: *Potentilla fruticosa* L. sensu lato and its synonyms

Denomination Class: *Potentilla* L., other than *P. fruticosa* L. sensu lato and its synonyms.

UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 4
ENDNOTES

-
- a Proposal by the European Union (CPVO) in reply to UPOV circular E-15/276 of December 3, 2015 (see document [CAJ/72/9](#) "Report", paragraph 23 (d))
- b See document [UPOV/WG-DEN/1/6](#) "Report", paragraph 7.
- c Proposal by New Zealand in reply to UPOV circular E-15/276 of December 3, 2015 (see document [CAJ/72/9](#) "Report", paragraph 23 (d))
- d See document [UPOV/WG-DEN/1/6](#) "Report", paragraph 9.
See document [UPOV/WG-DEN/1/6](#) "Report", paragraph 15.
- f Proposal by WG-DST at its second meeting held in Geneva, on June 9, 2015 (see document [CAJ/72/9](#) "Report", paragraph 23 (d))
- g See document [UPOV/WG-DEN/1/6](#) "Report", paragraph 17.
- h See document [UPOV/WG-DEN/1/6](#) "Report", paragraphs 18 and 19.
- i See document [UPOV/WG-DEN/1/6](#) "Report", paragraph 22.
- j See document [UPOV/WG-DEN/1/4](#) "Expansion of the content of PLUTO Database".
- k See document [UPOV/WG-DEN/1/6](#) "Report", paragraph 27.
- l See document [UPOV/WG-DEN/1/6](#) "Report", paragraph 32.
- m See document [UPOV/WG-DEN/1/6](#) "Report", paragraphs 33 and 34.
- n See document [UPOV/WG-DEN/1/6](#) "Report", paragraph 37.
- o Proposal by CAJ-AG based on an initial proposal by ESA of June 25, 2014 and submitted by ESA in the reply to UPOV Circular E-15/276 of December 3, 2015 (see document [CAJ/72/9](#) "Report", paragraph 23(d))
- p See document [UPOV/WG-DEN/1/6](#) "Report", paragraph 45.
- q In reply to UPOV Circular E-15/276 of December 3, 2015, ESA made the following comment on a proposed text for Section 7.2(c) made by APBEBES to the CAJ-AG on October 24, 2014:
"Under point 7.2 (c) a proposal from Apbrebes has been inserted. In general, we believe that the scenario described by point 7.2(c) would be very seldom since points (a) and (b) already cover the scenarios in which normally a breeder would request a change of the denomination. Further on, we do not fully understand whether the last sentence of the proposal (starting with "If the denomination is changed...") refers only to a change under point (c) or would also apply to points (a) and (b). If this would be the case, we would like to point out that it would not be possible to continue to mention the old name next to the new name since under (a) this would still constitute an infringement of the trademark and under (b) the breeder would certainly not want to continue mentioning a name next to the new name which may be offensive for example."
- The proposed text by APBEBES was not retained in the version adopted by the Council in October 29, 2015. Therefore, the above comment made by ESA is not relevant for the present text of Section 7.2(c).
- r See document [UPOV/WG-DEN/1/6](#) "Report", paragraphs 47 and 48.

[Annex II follows]

ANNEX II

RESPONSE FROM AUSTRALIA TO UPOV CIRCULAR E-17/135

Dear Sir/Madam

Please see the response below from Australia:

(a) **Examples of re-use of denomination:** In Australia we allowed to reuse a denomination 'Kiora' in wheat. The original application (Application No: 2011/209) was withdrawn by the applicant and the variety has never been commercialised. We accepted another application from the same applicant under the same name 'Kiora' (Application No: 2014/102). The re-use of the denomination was accepted under the following conditions of Article 30.1 of ICNCP, 2009. These conditions are, that the variety:

- 1) is no longer under cultivation, and
- 2) has ceased to exist as a breeding material, and
- 3) may not be found in any gene bank or seed bank, and
- 4) is not a known component in the pedigree of other cultivar, and
- 5) the name has been rarely used in publication, and
- 6) the re-use is unlikely to cause confusion.

There is another example in waxflower (*Chamelaucium*). We had allowed the re-use of the denomination 'Ruby's Delight' (Application No: 2009/124 and Application No: 2016/235) under the same condition. Please note that the re-use of a denomination is extremely rare and can only be permitted on a case by case basis under the conditions listed above.

(b) **Role in recognising Breeder's practice in naming varieties:** We generally recognise breeder's practice in naming varieties, however, that practice must also comply with section 27 of the Australian Plant Breeder's Rights Act 1994 (the Act). Issues, such as conflict with trademark or likely to deceive or cause confusion (e.g. confusion with the identity of the breeder) are considered on their individual merits.

(c) **Provide examples and criteria for differences in the acceptability of similar denominations according to class:** We strictly adhere to the general rule of UPOV (one genus one class) plus the exception to the general rule (list of denomination classes). We do not go to species level unless it is listed as an exception to the general rule.

(d) **Provide the number of denominations, in the past 12 months, that had previously been accepted by another member of the Union that did not meet the criteria for acceptance in your territory and, of those, the number that:**

- a. were accepted in your territory despite the fact that they did not meet the criteria for acceptance in your territory - Nil.
- b. were rejected in your territory because they did not meet the criteria for acceptance in your territory – 7

I hope this satisfy your query.

Thanking you

Tanvir Hossain
Chief of PBR (A/g)
Plant Breeder's Rights
IP Australia



P 02 6283 7984 | M 0430 658 142 | E tanvir.hossain@ipaaustralia.gov.au
Visit us at <http://www.ipaustralia.gov.au>

[Annex III follows]

RESPONSE FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION TO UPOV CIRCULAR E-17/135

Bénédicte Legrand

Denomination expert

Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO)

Office Communautaire des Variétés Végétales (OCVV)

3 boulevard Maréchal Foch • CS 10121

49101 ANGERS CEDEX 2 • France

Tel. +33 (0)2 41 25 64 66 • Fax +33 (0)2 41 25 64 10

legrand@cpvo.europa.eu • cpvo.europa.eu



From: mail, Upov [<mailto:upov.mail@upov.int>]

Sent: mercredi 26 juillet 2017 13:59

To: mail, Upov

Subject: UPOV Circular E-17/135 - Request for information by September 15, 2017

Circular E-17/135 July 26, 2017

Distribution: WG-DEN members

Madam,
Sir,

The purpose of this circular is to invite members of the Working Group on Variety Denominations (WG-DEN), **by September 15, 2017**, to:

- (a) provide examples of allowing the re-use of denominations (see information concerning document UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 3, Section 2.3.3(c) below);

"In those cases, a suitable period of time after discontinued commercialization of the variety would be required before the re-use of the denomination in order to avoid causing confusion in relation to the identity and/or the characteristics of the variety" Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the Office applies the rule of the 10-year waiting period. This rule is regarded as meeting the recommendation concerning the 'suitable period of time' and is applicable to both identical and similar variety denominations.

- (b) comment on whether PVP Offices should have a role in recognizing breeders practices in naming varieties (e.g. prefixes, themes) or whether that should be left to other mechanisms (e.g. trademarks) (see information concerning document UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 3, Section 2.3.4 below)

The Art. 2. already makes reference to the recognition of practices *"It may not consist solely of figures except where this is an established practice for designating varieties"*. Therefore, the practice cannot be ignored. This is also in the interest of breeders in case such practices (e.g. prefix, suffix, company identifiers, series identifiers etc.) is a clear indication on the identity of the variety and/or the breeder.

Examples:

- The use of company acronyms or company identifiers in variety denominations:
'KWS', 'SY', 'RGT', 'ES', 'DK' respectively identify 'Klein Wanzlebener Saatzeit', 'Syngenta', RAGT, Euralis Semences, Monsanto (common practice).
These company identifiers cannot be used in the denominations of varieties of which they are not the breeder, the title holder or their successor in title. '**KWS Jocker**' is not suitable if Syngenta is the Breeder of the variety.

- '**Melbravo**' *Lolium perenne* L.
'MEL' is an identifier commonly used by ILVO plant Genetica en Veredeling (common practice).
A variety of the same species 'Bravo' already exists. A company using a denomination identical or similar to an existing one and just adding its company or series identifier might take an unfair profit of well-known denominations established in the market. The proposal was refused.

- '**5232674**' *Spinacia oleracea* L.
The proposal concerns a spinach variety which is a parental line. The use of numbers for parental lines is of common practice. The proposal was accepted.

- '**Petradur**' *Triticum durum* Desf.
The suffix 'dur' is commonly used by breeders to identify *Triticum durum* varieties (common practice).
A variety of the same species 'Petra' already exists.
A company using a denomination identical or similar to an existing one and just adding a generic suffix might take an unfair profit of well-known denominations established in the market. The proposal was refused.

(c) provide examples and criteria for differences in the acceptability of similar denominations according to class (e.g. in the case of a class following the general rule (one genus/one class), accepting a similar denomination for a variety of a different species within the same genus that would not be accepted for the same species) (see information concerning document UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 3, Section 2.5 below)

- '**Flamengo**' *Prunus armeniaca* L. <> '**Flamingo**' *Prunus persica* (L.) Batsch
The denomination was accepted considering that:
 - There is no risk of confusion not for the end user and certainly not for professionals, as 'Flamengo' is an apricot variety, whereas 'Flamingo' is a peach variety;
 - The applicant does not export his variety in the three countries where 'Flamingo' is registered exclusively;
 - Subsequently the variety has been commercialized with this denomination amongst arboriculturists and nurserymen for more than three years;
 - A change in name would lead to confusion for at least some of them.

- '**Amibla**' *Festuca glauca* Vill. <> '**Amila**' *Dactylis glomerata* L.
The denomination was accepted considering that:
Despite a certain level of visual and phonetic similarity, the two varieties are of different species belonging to different genera which limits the risk of confusion between the two varieties.

- '**Monlori**' *Prunus persica* (L.) Batsch <> '**Lory**' *Prunus avium* L.
The denomination was accepted considering that:
 - 'Mon' is a series identifier of the breeder René Monteux-Caillet (Moniron, Monlir, Monroi, Monabri, Monnoir, Mondoré, Mongros..)
 - The series identifiers are removed in the assessment of the similarity.
 - 'Lori' and 'Lory' are short words: this makes the different letter visually more prominent, despite the phonetic similarity in the majority of the EU languages.
 - The fact that the varieties are of two different species limits the risk of confusion between the two varieties.

- **'Camilie'** Cichorium endivia L. <->'Camila' Lactuca sativa L.

The denomination was accepted considering that:

Although the denomination 'Camilie' is visually sufficiently distinct from 'Camila', it is considered as phonetically and conceptually close.

However, as the two varieties belongs to different species, the risk of confusion between the denominations is low.

(d) provide the number of denominations, in the past 12 months, that had previously been accepted by another member of the Union that did not meet the criteria for acceptance in your territory and, of those, the number that:

- (i) were accepted in your territory despite the fact that they did not meet the criteria for acceptance in your territory

Only one case in 2016: 'Conpitto' for a *Pittosporum tenuifolium* Gaertn. (2014/1900) accepted by the Office although 'Pitto' is part of the common species name.

- (ii) were rejected in your territory because they did not meet the criteria for acceptance in your territory

(see information concerning document UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 3, paragraph 5 below)

The Office refused 17 denominations in 2016 and 6 denominations in 2017 (period 01/01 to 24/8) that were accepted in other procedures (not necessarily PBR) leading to the creation of synonyms.

The Office also refused 19 denomination proposals in 2016 and 5 in 2017 (period 01/01 to 24/8) because the varieties were registered in other countries under a different denomination and asking for that denomination, avoided the creation of 19 synonyms.

[...]

[Annex IV follows]

RESPONSE FROM FRANCE TO UPOV CIRCULAR E-17/135

(a) provide examples of **allowing the re-use of denominations**

☺ : dénomination réutilisable à l'identique

☹ : dénomination réutilisable à l'identique sous-conditions

☹ : dénomination non-réutilisable à l'identique

Cas de figures	Signification	Pratiques actuelles du GEVES et de l'INOV	Pratiques futures envisagées par le GEVES et l'INOV
La variété n'est plus protégée (protection)	La variété a été protégée ; elle ne l'est plus. = abandon de la protection ou fin de droits	La dénomination est réutilisable sous-réserve du respect de la règle des 10 ans de l'OCVV. ☹	La dénomination n'est pas disponible et ne peut donc pas être réutilisée. ☹ <i>Expl : Avec la règle des 10 ans, la variété est considérée comme ne plus exister. C'est bien là le problème. Il convient toujours de prendre en compte l'existence « physique » des vieilles variétés, des variétés présentes dans les collections de référence et dans les réseaux de ressources phytogénétiques.</i>
La variété n'est plus inscrite (catalogue)	La variété a fait l'objet d'une inscription au catalogue ; elle ne l'est plus. = radiation du catalogue	La dénomination est réutilisable sous-réserve du respect de la règle des 10 ans de l'OCVV. ☹	La dénomination n'est pas disponible et ne peut donc pas être réutilisée. ☹ <i>Expl : Avec la règle des 10 ans, la variété est considérée comme ne plus exister. C'est bien là le problème. Il convient toujours de prendre en compte l'existence « physique » des vieilles variétés, des variétés présentes dans les collections de référence et dans les réseaux de ressources phytogénétiques.</i>
La variété n'est pas protégée (protection)	La variété a fait l'objet d'une demande de protection mais la procédure n'a pas abouti. = retrait en cours de procédure	La dénomination est réutilisable immédiatement (pas de règle des 10 ans) car l'on suppose qu'il n'y a pas eu de commercialisation. ☺ Mais comment en être certaines ?	La difficulté est de savoir si la variété a été commercialisée en dehors de l'inscription au catalogue européen, ie dans d'autres registres commerciaux. ☹ Pour ce faire, l'idée serait de rendre disponible cette information dans les bases de données afin de permettre cette vérification préalable à la décision finale de réutilisation de la dénomination à l'identique.
La variété n'est pas inscrite. (catalogue)	La variété a fait l'objet d'une demande d'inscription mais la procédure n'a pas abouti. = retrait en cours de procédure	Avant de se prononcer, nous vérifions l'existence éventuelle d'une APV : - en l'absence d'APV, la dénomination est réutilisable. ☺ - En présence d'une APV, la dénomination ne peut pas être réutilisée ; la commercialisation est supposée avoir eu lieu. ☹	= > idem. Même raisonnement.

D'où la nécessité de disposer dans les bases de données des informations supplémentaires comme :

- date de commercialisation,
- demande d'APV oui/non
- date d'octroi de l'APV / date de fin de l'APV

b) comment on whether PVP Offices should have a **role in recognizing breeders practices** in naming varieties (e.g. prefixes, themes) or whether that should be left to other mechanisms.

Sur la pratique des obtenteurs. Certains utilisent :

- un **identifiant** permettant de reconnaître leur identité.
Exemple : KWS-..., RGT-..., BAR-...,
- une **partie de mot** pour identifier une série.
Exemple : CODI donné par Caussade Semences à une série de variétés
- un **thème**.
Exemple : le thème oiseau, le thème musicien, le thème montagne ...

Sur le rôle de l'office.









L'office de protection joue un rôle de vérification sur les points i) et ii) ci-dessus.

Exemple : l'INOV vérifie que la variété déposée avec une dénomination CODI correspond bien à un dépôt effectué par Caussade Semences et non pas par un autre obtenteur.

En revanche, l'INOV ne se prononce pas sur le point iii) pour les raisons suivantes :

- la difficulté première réside dans la détection d'une série à laquelle est appliquée un thème particulier,
- il n'y a aucune raison à ce qu'un thème soit réservé à un obtenteur.

c) provide **examples** and **criteria** for differences in the **acceptability of similar denominations** according to **class** (e.g. in the case of a class following the general rule (one genus/one class), accepting a similar denomination for a variety of a different species within the same genus that would not be accepted for the same species).

Cas de figures	Pratiques actuelles du GEVES et de l'INOV :	Pratiques futures envisagées par le GEVES et l'INOV :
<p>CAS 1 : cas général 1 classe/1 genre</p>	<p>Application stricte du principe général selon lequel une dénomination candidate est refusée s'il existe déjà une dénomination <u>identique</u> ou <u>similaire</u> dans la même classe.</p> <p><i>Exemple du genre du prunus pour lequel il existe une seule classe.</i></p>	<p>Si 2 dénominations <u>identiques</u> dans la même classe : dénomination candidate est refusée : </p> <p>Si 2 dénominations <u>similaires</u> dans la même classe, l'INOV :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - refuse la dénomination candidate s'il s'agit d'espèces identiques :  - pourrait accepter la dénomination candidate s'il s'agit d'espèces différentes :  (ex : <i>abricotier et pêcher</i>). => Nos experts techniques ont été sollicités sur la question.
<p>CAS 2 : 1 classe / plusieurs genres</p>	<p>Deux dénominations <u>identiques</u> pour deux genres différents ne sont pas acceptées du fait de l'appartenance à la même classe.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>Deux dénominations <u>similaires</u> pour deux genres différents ne sont pas acceptées du fait de l'appartenance à la même classe.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p><i>Exemple : classe 205 avec les 2 genres « cichorium » et « lactuca »</i></p>	<p>Si 2 dénominations <u>identiques</u> pour 2 genres différents de la même classe, l'INOV pourrait accepter la réutilisation au motif que les genres sont différents.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>Si 2 dénominations <u>similaires</u> pour 2 genres différents de la même classe, l'INOV pourrait accepter la réutilisation au motif que les genres sont différents.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>=> Nos experts techniques ont été sollicités sur la question.</p> <p>Ce raisonnement est vrai pour la classe 205 (<i>laitue et de la chicorée industrielle</i>). Le principe serait-il applicable à d'autres classes ?</p>
<p>CAS 3 : 1 genre / plusieurs classes</p>	<p>Respect du principe de la classe.</p> <p>Acceptation des dénominations <u>identiques</u> ou <u>similaires</u> dans un même genre dans des classes différentes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p><i>Exemple du genre « beta » dispatché sur les classes 2.1, 2.2 et 2.3.</i></p>	<p>=> idem. Même raisonnement.</p>

(d) provide the **number of denominations**, in the past 12 months, that had previously been accepted by another member of the Union that did not meet the criteria for acceptance in your territory and, of those, the number that:

- (i) were accepted in your territory despite the fact that they did not meet the criteria for acceptance in your territory
- (ii) were rejected in your territory because they did not meet the criteria for acceptance in your territory

Il s'agit tout au plus de 1 à 2 cas par an. Il existe très peu de cas. Ceci tient au fait que le GEVES et l'INOV utilisent quotidiennement les bases de données communes (*variety finder et pluto*) et appliquent en permanence les règles officielles. Les exemples ci-dessous sont des cas exceptionnels confrontés à un conflit de règles.

CAS 1 :

Dénomination proposée à l'identique d'une dénomination antérieure

Pour des espèces différentes mais de même classe

La variété antérieure a été radiée depuis moins de 10 ans

= > la dénomination candidate aurait dû être refusée mais elle a été, cependant, acceptée du fait que la variété candidate fut commercialisée hors UE afin de respecter le principe d'unicité de la dénomination.

CAS 2 :

Dénomination candidate similaire à une dénomination antérieure

Pour des espèces identiques (même classe)

La variété antérieure est toujours inscrite au catalogue européen

=> la dénomination aurait dû être refusée du fait de la similarité de la dénomination pour des espèces de même classe. Néanmoins elle fut acceptée du fait que la variété candidate fut commercialisée hors UE, et ce, afin de respecter le principe d'unicité de la dénomination.

[Annex V follows]

RESPONSE FROM THE NETHERLANDS TO UPOV CIRCULAR E-17/135

The purpose of this circular is to invite members of the Working Group on Variety Denominations (WG-DEN), **by September 15, 2017**, to:

(a) provide examples of allowing the re-use of denominations (see information concerning document UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 3, Section 2.3.3(c) below);

>> We fully agree with this article; we don't have examples.

(b) comment on whether PVP Offices should have a role in recognizing breeders practices in naming varieties (e.g. prefixes, themes) or whether that should be left to other mechanisms (e.g. trademarks) (see information concerning document UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 3, Section 2.3.4 below)

>> In our opinion PVP offices shouldn't have a role in this. So in principle prefixed (code) denominations are also acceptable for other breeders. We suggest to illustrate the article with clear examples:

Rosa 'Kor023' is acceptable for another Rose breeder if there already is a series of prefixed names Rose breeder Kordes (e.g. "Korenlo", 'Korescal', 'Koresmini', etc.).

It is not acceptable to use the full name of the Rose breeder; e.g. 'Kordes Pride' or 'Kordes023' are not allowed for other Rose breeders than Kordes.

This view is also in line with Recommendation 21J of the ICNCP.

(c) provide examples and criteria for differences in the acceptability of similar denominations according to class (e.g. in the case of a class following the general rule (one genus/one class), accepting a similar denomination for a variety of a different species within the same genus that would not be accepted for the same species) (see information concerning document UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 3, Section 2.5 below)

>> We are satisfied with the existing general rule one class/one genus. Exceptions of his rule can be listed in Annex 1 (list of Classes part 1 or part 2). Removing or adding Genera and species mentioned in these lists could be discussed.

One of our suggestions is to add some species and genera from the ICNCP as suggested before. We think that is not necessary to add the whole list, because many crops are not relevant for PBR. If wished we can send a list of some relevant genera/species in order to harmonize with appendix V of the special denomination classes..

(d) provide the number of denominations, in the past 12 months, that had previously been accepted by another member of the Union that did not meet the criteria for acceptance in your territory and, of those, the number that:

>> We selected the year 2016 were 1529 denominations have been applied:

In 2016 two cases:

- One variety that has been registered in Turkey; the denomination was not acceptable in NL.*
- One variety that has been registered in Italy, we asked a take-over, but the denomination has been disapproved by CPVO.*

(i) were accepted in your territory despite the fact that they did not meet the criteria for acceptance in your territory

>> Comes to occasional cases where we disagree with the objection of the CPVO and we then approve a variety denomination or at national level. Can only for ornamental varieties that only for EN PBR. So it occurs, but not more than 5 cases on an annual basis.

(ii) were rejected in your territory because they did not meet the criteria for acceptance in your territory (see information concerning document UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 3, paragraph 5 below)

>> In 2016: 154 problematical names, ca. 10% of the total amount.

It occurs regularly that applicants propose another denomination their selves (ca. 15%)

ANNEX VI

RESPONSE FROM NEW ZEALAND TO UPOV CIRCULAR E-17/135

- (a) provide examples of allowing the re-use of denominations (see information concerning document UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 3, Section 2.3.3(c) below);

Potato 'Leonardo' An application was made in the Netherlands in December 1993 and subsequently withdrawn in 1994

A different breeder made application in the Netherlands for a potato variety with the same denomination 'Leonardo' in December 2006 and granted in 2009.

Depending on the national situation, it can be difficult to determine whether or not a variety is commercialized while under provisional protection or even after withdrawal. A vegetatively propagated variety does not generally require a maintainer or have the maintenance requirements of seed propagated varieties. It is questionable whether it can ever be said that a vegetatively propagated variety "no longer exists".

- (b) comment on whether PVP Offices should have a role in recognizing breeders practices in naming varieties (e.g. prefixes, themes) or whether that should be left to other mechanisms (e.g. trademarks) (see information concerning document UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 3, Section 2.3.4 below)

The breeders practice of identifying themselves using a prefix or similar in denominations is already widespread. By approving such denominations, the authority is effectively legitimizing such practices. There are many existing examples.

Rose 'Dicgrow'	Dickson Roses
Alstroemeria 'Zantrice'	Van Zanten Plants
Strawberry 'Drissstrawsixteen'	Driscolls Inc.
Potato 'Crop34'	NZ Institute for Plant and Food Research Ltd.

- (c) provide examples and criteria for differences in the acceptability of similar denominations according to class (e.g. in the case of a class following the general rule (one genus/one class), accepting a similar denomination for a variety of a different species within the same genus that would not be accepted for the same species) (see information concerning document UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 3, Section 2.5 below)

One of the reasons for denomination classes is to avoid confusion in the market place, for example , a mixture of turf grass seed were both constituent varieties have the same name, reference to Class 203. This idea of "in the same bag" name confusion could now be applied to a new level, a grass fungal endophyte variety contained in the ryegrass variety, both with the same denomination. Should the genus *Epichloe* be added to Class 203?

More widely, as common practice, should genera of endophyte varieties be included in the same class as their host genera?

NZ follows the practice of accepting the same denomination in a genus, for varieties of different species, where there is no or very low possibility of confusing the identity of the variety.

Vaccinium, a cranberry variety is unlikely to be confused with a blueberry.

Rubus, a raspberry is unlikely to be confused with a boysenberry

- (d) provide the number of denominations, in the past 12 months, that had previously been accepted by another member of the Union that did not meet the criteria for acceptance in your territory and, of those, the number that:

- (i) were accepted in your territory despite the fact that they did not meet the criteria for acceptance in your territory

1. The denomination 'UEB33752', was accepted in NZ despite the denomination not being the first accepted ('Luna'), contrary to Recommendation 5. A different denomination was accepted because several of NZ's major trading partners had accepted the second denomination.

Apple variety 'Luna', 'UEB33752' the same variety

2. The denomination 'Carfit01', was approved in NZ despite the denomination not being the first accepted ('Fiwhite'), contrary to Recommendation 5. A different denomination was accepted because several of NZ's major trading partners had accepted the second denomination.

Carex variety 'Carfit01', 'Fiwhite', the same variety

The two examples above represent the situation where the national application is the fourth or fifth globally and that authority must decide which of the two denominations already accepted or approved, to use. For New Zealand, an important factor is the denomination used by the closest countries and trading partners.

- (ii) were rejected in your territory because they did not meet the criteria for acceptance in your territory

No denominations were rejected where acceptance or approval had already occurred in earlier applications.

[Annex VII follows]

ANNEX VII

RESPONSE FROM SOUTH AFRICA TO UPOV CIRCULAR E-17/135

- (a) provide examples of allowing the re-use of denominations (see information concerning document UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 3, Section 2.3.3(c) below);

It is not South Africa's practice to allow the re-use of denominations, and such a practice is strongly discouraged as it can lead to confusion concerning the identity of the variety. Recently we had a case of a grape variety of which an application was submitted in 2008 and the PBR was rejected in 2013. Another applicant submitted an application for another grape variety in 2016, using the same variety denomination of the variety that was rejected in 2013. The PVP office rejected the denomination and requested the applicant to propose another denomination.

- (b) comment on whether PVP Offices should have a role in recognizing breeders practices in naming varieties (e.g. prefixes, themes) or whether that should be left to other mechanisms (e.g. trademarks) (see information concerning document UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 3, Section 2.3.4 below)

South Africa's PVP Office is recognizing breeders practices in naming varieties e.g. for maize the PHB prefix to identify Pioneer, DKC to identify Monsanto, etc. We have not had a situation where another breeder had submitted a variety denomination with a prefix already recognized as that of another breeder (in the same class). However if such a case could arise, we would probably reject such a denomination because it would lead to confusion concerning the identity of the breeder.

Also, in cases where a breeder licences their varieties, the practice allowed is for that breeder to retain the prefix and not change it to identify the licensee. For example if Company ABC licences a variety ABC123 to another company DEF, then it is not allowed for the breeder to change the variety denomination from ABC123 to DEF123.

- (c) provide examples and criteria for differences in the acceptability of similar denominations according to class (e.g. in the case of a class following the general rule (one genus/one class), accepting a similar denomination for a variety of a different species within the same genus that would not be accepted for the same species) (see information concerning document UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 3, Section 2.5 below)

South Africa follows the general rule (one genus/one class). Similar denominations within a class are often accepted when they are provided by the same breeder. For example in Maize the following denominations have been accepted: PHBX13A488 R, PHBX13A488 BR

South Africa does not allow similar denominations in cases of varieties of species within the same genus. For example a breeder (Herholdt) proposed a variety denomination Buccaneer for a peach variety and later withdrew the application, though commercialization of variety continued. Years later another breeder (Zaiger) proposed the same denomination (Buccaneer) for an interspecific plum variety. The PVP Office rejected the denomination and requested the breeder to propose another denomination.

- (d) provide the number of denominations, in the past 12 months, that had previously been accepted by another member of the Union that did not meet the criteria for acceptance in your territory and, of those, the number that:
- (i) were accepted in your territory despite the fact that they did not meet the criteria for acceptance in your territory
In the past 12 months SA had none
 - (ii) were rejected in your territory because they did not meet the criteria for acceptance in your territory
In the past 12 months SA had none

(see information concerning document UPOV/INF/12/6 Draft 3, paragraph 5 below)

[Annex VIII follows]

RESPONSE FROM ESA/ISF TO UPOV CIRCULAR E-17/135



Mr. Peter Button
UPOV
34 chemin des Colombettes
CH-1211 Geneva 20

Nyon, 15 September 2017

Ref: UPOV Circular E-17/136

Dear Mr. Button,

ISF and ESA would like to thank you for your circular E-17/136 of the 26th of July, inviting observers representing breeders to submit their comments on the questions raised by the Working Group DEN during its last meeting. ISF and ESA consulted their members and got enough feedback to provide answers representing the practice of seed companies of all size and located in different parts of the world. This feedback is submitted to you in a joint letter co-signed by ISF and ESA given the fact that we have nominated one joint representative to the UPOV WG DEN.

(a) Provide information on the frequency, within the last 12 months, that a variety denomination that had previously been accepted by a member of the Union was rejected by another member of the Union because it did not meet the criteria for acceptance in the latter's territory

Each company reported at least one issue per year regarding the choice of denomination of their varieties due to different evaluation processes amongst countries members of the UPOV Convention.

Some companies have anticipated this problem and choose automatically different names when they commercialize their varieties in different countries (see question c for the practical consequences on seed companies' business). This is especially the case for the commercialization between Europe, the US and South America.

Companies also reported that some countries members of UPOV (Turkey, Middle East countries) do not check outside their country for the availability of the names or do not consider



the same classes as in the UPOV Guidelines. This easily leads to situations where a variety name is accepted in these countries but rejected elsewhere.

On the other extreme, some countries, like the Netherlands, practice a complete screening of all the names of the variety when the seeds enter or pass through the country during the shipment, even though it is not commercialized on the territory. This hinders the product movement if the name does not meet their criteria for acceptance.

It was also reported that some countries apply stricter rules than the regional rules. For example, in Europe, when a company uses a company-specific-prefix attached to the variety name, both parts of the name are screened separately: the prefix as well as the fancy name, despite the fact that this is a single variety name. Thus, it is becoming more and more difficult to create a proper denomination suitable for all the foreign subsidiaries. Companies have to create synonyms to avoid administrative delay.

Some countries have also different requirements regarding the use of special characters (# not allowed in Europe), the number of characters (maximum 10 in Europe, at least one letter in Australia), or the use of a space in the denomination ("no space" allowed in Europe but for example in Russia it is sometimes imposed). Even though it seems to be a tiny difference and sometimes does not lead to phonetical difference regarding the variety name, this creates administrative burden for companies.

(b) Provide information on the frequency, within the last 12 months, that a variety denomination that had already been used in the market place was affected by the situation described in (a);

Each company reported at least one issue per year where they had to change the denomination of a variety already in the market place.

(c) Comment on the extent of problems that arise from the use of different denominations in different members of the Union, taking into account the challenge in achieving fully harmonized denomination acceptance criteria for all members of the Union;

In addition to the difficulty to find socially acceptable terms in different languages, having to deal with different names for a single variety leads to practical difficulties such as:

- the need to hire in-house a denomination expert to follow the different regulations and issues with the national PVP offices. Moreover, it is necessary to organize a close follow-up with OECD when different names are used for a single variety due to the certification requirements.

- logistics issues: use of different packaging for each different name of the same variety. When the variety is already in the market place, bags need to be resent to the head-office to be repacked and resent to the distributors. This leads to great delays in the supply of the seeds to the distributors and then the farmers. As mentioned under part a, some countries practice an extensive variety denomination screening, even when the seeds are only passing through the country during their shipment. This hinders the movement of the seeds.



- marketing issues: the management of different commercial references creates confusion and increases the chances of mistakes by people in charge of ordering, shipping, packing. Advertising of one single variety with different names also causes confusion for the sales persons and extra-work for the marketing persons.

- difficulties at the consumer level: as mentioned above, these issues in finding the right denominations lead to delay in providing the seeds to the farmers. Moreover, when a variety is already on the market and the name needs to be changed, the consumer is lost.

(d) Provide information on measures that breeders have taken to avoid the creation of synonyms.

Seed companies have to put in place an effective in-house follow-up for the denomination of their varieties. The expert must have a close look at the UPOV Guidelines but also the possible regional guidelines (such as the CPVO ones) and the national regulations. To avoid rejections by national offices, companies put in place strict internal procedures which is time-consuming.

Breeders find online search tools useful (CPVO variety finder, USDA database, ASF website, WIPO trademark register).

However, due to subjectivity and national interpretation of UPOV guidelines, some grey areas remain (descriptiveness, acceptable difference between existing variety names etc...). In order to avoid a delay in the application procedure or the use in the market place, many proposals have to be rejected internally. A company reported 67% internal rejections of proposals for the last 12 months. It is becoming more and more difficult to find suitable variety names therefore, it is critical that the rules become more transparent and harmonized. Harmonization would not only benefit seed companies but also national authorities which could avoid screening denominations previously approved in other countries.

We remain at your disposal may you have further questions on the above,

Sincerely Yours,

Michael Keller
ISF Secretary General

Szonja Csörgő
ESA Director IP and Legal Affairs