

Working Group on DUS Support**UPOV/WG-DUS/2/3****Second Meeting
Geneva, February 8, 2023****Original:** English
Date: March 16, 2023

REPORT*Adopted by the Working Group on DUS Support**Disclaimer: this document does not represent UPOV policies or guidance***OPENING OF THE MEETING**

1. The Working Group on DUS Support (WG-DUS) held its second meeting via electronic means on February 8, 2023, chaired by Mr. Peter Button, Vice Secretary-General of UPOV. The Terms of Reference of the WG-DUS are presented in Annex I to this report.
2. The meeting was opened by the Chair, who welcomed the participants.
3. The list of participants is reproduced in Annex II to this report.

AGENDA

4. The WG-DUS adopted the draft agenda as proposed in document UPOV/WG-DUS/2/1.

OPTIONS TO ADDRESS ISSUES RAISED

5. The WG-DUS considered document UPOV/WG-DUS/2/2.

List of issues

6. The WG-DUS considered the following list of issues to improve the technical support provided by UPOV for DUS examination:

- (1) avoid unnecessary repetition of content across meetings;
- (2) integrating TWM-related matters into meetings/events with DUS examiners;
- (3) time for members' presentations on DUS procedures;
- (4) visits to field trials with sufficient time for engagement (e.g. ring-tests);
- (5) providing opportunities for experts to meet and exchange views;
- (6) facilitating training;
- (7) focus Test Guidelines (TG) discussion on revising existing TGs, including improving explanations and usability;
- (8) hybrid or online TG meetings to increase involvement of experts and members;
- (9) facilitate drafting national test guidelines through access to other members' test guidelines and experts who can assist drafting;
- (10) other cross-cutting matters historically considered by Technical Working Parties (TWP) (e.g. TGP documents, UPOV Codes etc.).

7. The WG-DUS provided comments on the list of issues as follows:

Issues:

- (1) avoid unnecessary repetition of content across meetings;
- (2) integrating TWM-related matters into meetings/events with DUS examiners;

8. The WG-DUS agreed that there was a need to better integrate TWM-related matters in the work of the TWPs, while retaining the TWM as the forum for experts to discuss developments on the matters within its terms of reference.

Issues:

- (3) time for members' presentations on DUS procedures;
- (4) visits to field trials with sufficient time for engagement (e.g. ring-tests);
- (5) providing opportunities for experts to meet and exchange views;

9. The WG-DUS agreed that technical visits were a fundamental element in supporting the work of technical experts. The WG-DUS also agreed that ring-tests were a particularly important means of technical support.

10. The WG-DUS agreed that more time during TWP meetings should be dedicated to technical visits and ring-tests. The WG-DUS agreed that technology should be used to enable virtual participants to join technical visits to the maximum extent possible. The WG-DUS noted that experts could also participate in ring-tests through the distribution of seed and propagating material.

11. The WG-DUS noted that the staff of the Office of the Union would not need to be involved in organizing technical visits and would not need to be physically present. The WG-DUS agreed that, given that participation in the other elements of the meeting would be possible by virtual means, this could substantially reduce the time and cost for the Office of the Union.

12. The WG-DUS agreed that TWP technical visits should demonstrate different models and arrangements for DUS examination used by UPOV members. In particular, the WG-DUS agreed that it should be possible for any member to host a TWP meeting.

Issue:

- (6) facilitating training;

13. The WG-DUS agreed that technical visits and ring-tests provided a means of sharing experiences but, beyond these aspects, TWPs were not the best forum to provide training. Training initiatives by the Office of the Union and UPOV members should be developed outside the scope of TWP meetings.

Issues:

- (7) focus TG discussions on revising existing TGs, including improving explanations and usability;
- (8) hybrid or online TG meetings to increase involvement of experts and members;
- (9) facilitate drafting national test guidelines through access to other members' test guidelines and experts who can assist drafting;

14. The WG-DUS recalled that the procedure to decide on revising and drafting new TGs was already covered by the present text of document TGP/7 "Development of Test Guidelines". The WG-DUS agreed that it would not be necessary to change those procedures substantially. The WG-DUS noted that the doubling of the number of Test Guidelines over the last 20 years had changed the emphasis away from drafting new TGs to revising the existing ones, as witnessed in the statistics from the TWPs. In relation to document TGP/7, it was agreed that there would be advantages in providing more flexibility in the use of the web-based TG Template in the process of drafting TGs.

15. The WG-DUS also agreed that TWP meetings should provide more flexibility on the amount of time allocated to discussing individual TGs, according to need.

Issue:

- (10) other cross-cutting matters historically considered by TWPs (e.g. TGP documents, UPOV code etc.).

16. The WG-DUS agreed to consider whether cross-cutting issues could be dealt with in sub-groups that would report to the TC, in order to maximize the time available for technical visits, ring-tests and TG discussions.

Next steps

17. The WG-DUS agreed that the discussions had provided new insights and had clarified the needs for technical support. Therefore, it agreed that it would not be appropriate to consider the proposed alternatives in document UPOV/WG-DUS/2/2. The WG-DUS requested the Office of the Union to prepare a document for its third meeting with recommendations in relation to the proposals in document TC/58/18, on the basis of the above conclusions. The document would be circulated two weeks prior to the third meeting of the WG-DUS.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

18. The WG-DUS agreed to hold its third meeting as a hybrid meeting in Geneva on March 20, 2023, from 13.00 to 15.30 (CET).

19. The Working Group on DUS Support adopted this report by correspondence on March 16, 2023.

[Annexes follow]

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE
WORKING GROUP ON DUS SUPPORT (WG-DUS)

PURPOSE

The purpose of the WG-DUS is to make recommendations to the Technical Committee at its fifty-ninth session on the proposals presented in TC/58/18 "Survey on the needs of members and observers in relation to TWPs".

COMPOSITION

(a) the following members of the Union and observers that expressed an interest to be part of the WG-DUS: Argentina, Australia, Belarus, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, the Czech Republic, the European Union, France, Germany, Ghana, Hungary, Japan, Kenya, Morocco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, the United Kingdom, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America, CIOFORA, CropLife International, ISF and SAA;

(b) other members of the Union would be free to participate at any meeting of the WG-DUS; and

(c) meetings to be chaired by the Vice Secretary-General.

MODUS OPERANDI

(a) The WG-DUS to:

(i) draft recommendations on the proposals presented in TC/58/18 "Survey on the needs of members and observers in relation to TWPs", including the possibility to present new proposals that would address the issues identified by participants in the interviews;

(ii) specify the objectives of each of the recommended proposals and identify performance indicators that would enable an objective measurement of the success of those proposals;

(iii) clarify the role of the Office of the Union, as appropriate, in each of the proposals;

(iv) present draft recommendations at the Technical Working Parties at their meetings in 2023; and

(v) present recommendations to the Technical Committee at its fifty-ninth session.

(b) the WG-DUS to meet at a time and frequency to address its mandate, by physical and/or virtual means, as agreed by the WG-DUS; and

(c) the documents of the WG-DUS to be made available to the TC.

[Annex II follows]

ANNEX II

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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