

Report of the Steering Committee

Sixteenth (Mid-Term) Meeting
7-9 June 2022, Malmö and Alnarp, Sweden



The **European Cooperative Programme for Plant Genetic Resources (ECPGR)** is a collaborative programme among most European countries aimed at rationally and effectively conserving *ex situ* and *in situ* plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, providing access and increasing their sustainable use (<http://www.ecpgr.cgiar.org>).

The Programme, which is entirely financed by the member countries, is overseen by a Steering Committee composed of National Coordinators nominated by the participating countries. The Coordinating Secretariat is hosted by the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT.

The Programme operates through Working Groups composed of pools of experts nominated by the National Coordinators. The ECPGR Working Groups deal with either crops or general themes related to plant genetic resources (documentation and information, *in situ* and on-farm conservation, and cryopreservation). Members of the Working Groups carry out activities based on specific ECPGR objectives, using ECPGR funds and/or their own resources.

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Cover illustration: From top to bottom: NordGen building in Alnarp; Steering Committee meeting in Malmö; Steering Committee visiting the NordGen experimental fields in Alnarp; Malmö castle. Credit: ECPGR/N.Capozio

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PART I. SUMMARY OF THE ISSUES DISCUSSED AND CLARIFICATIONS GIVEN

Part I of this report (includes short summaries of the presentations, which are available on the [ECPGR website](#)) and/or refers to existing online background documents. Main clarification points and discussed items are also summarized. All the recommendations and decisions agreed by the Steering Committee (SC) during the discussion are listed in Part II.

1. Opening session

(Chair: M. Lefort)

Opening statements by representatives of the host country

Jens Weibull, National Coordinator (NC) for Sweden, welcomed all participants to Malmö, Scania and Sweden. He shared memories of his 20 years in ECPGR and his appreciation for the achievements made by the programme. He also pointed out the importance of this community's response to assist the Ukrainian genebank during the current dire times.

Lise Lykke Steffensen, Head of the Nordic Genetic Resource Center (NordGen), a permanent observer to the ECPGR Steering Committee, welcomed everyone to the Nordic countries. She expressed her delight and honour to host ECPGR here on this occasion, following a tradition of hospitality for ECPGR meetings that started 40 years ago. NordGen, which is financed by the Nordic Council of Ministers to work for the conservation and sustainable use of Nordic genetic resources, inaugurated this year a new building in Alnarp, where the final part of the SC meeting will be hosted.

Welcome address by the Chair and adoption of the Agenda

Marianne Lefort, Chair of the Executive Committee (ExCo), welcomed participants online and in the room, with special greetings for the new National Coordinators, meeting observers and in particular the observer from the Ukrainian genebank. The meeting was postponed to 2022 to ensure it could be held in person, but also because the finalized Plant Genetic Resources Strategy for Europe (PGR Strategy hereafter) enables the group to better discuss priorities for the future. She was looking forward to reviewing the results of the first part of Phase X, but especially to setting up the scene for a new Phase XI.

The main points of the agenda were presented, and the draft agenda was adopted, with the understanding that additional time would be needed to discuss a proposal for support to the Ukrainian genebank, to be elaborated during the meeting.

2. Reporting on Phase X

(Chair: B. Maças)

Technical and financial report of Phase X

(L. Maggioni, S. Goritschnig and S. Weise)

Lorenzo Maggioni gave an account of the first three years of Phase X implementation and the financial status of the Programme. Sandra Goritschnig reported about the establishment and development of the European Evaluation Network (EVA) and the launching of the *Genetic Resources* journal. Stephan Weise gave an account of the EURISCO developments during Phase X. (See online [background documents](#) 'Mid-term report on ECPGR Phase X (January 2019 – April 2022)', '2021 Financial Report' and [presentation](#)).

Clarifications were given to J. Weibull regarding the composition of the task force for the establishment of a European Coordination and Information Centre on Genetic Resources,

including members from ECPGR (M. Lefort, F. Begemann, L. Maggioni and S. Csörgö) and the European Regional Focal Point for Animal Genetic Resources (ERFP) (S. Hiemstra, M. Castellanos, C. Danchin, J. Bormann and J. Schneider)

It was clarified to Frank Begemann that EURISCO is organizing training specifically for National Focal points, but is also planning training for the transfer of phenotypic data within the EVA network. F. Begemann also remarked that AEGIS should have been a criterion for the selection of accessions to be evaluated within EVA. This has only been occasionally considered, such as by RICP, Czech Republic, for the production of Single Seed Descent (SSD) lines of the AGENT project's precision collection, which will enter the EVA network's evaluation.

Theo Van Hintum pointed out the importance of the continued availability of the EVA material. It was confirmed that all accessions are exchanged through Standard Material Transfer Agreement (SMTA) and are thus part of the multilateral system.

The SC noted the current remarkable availability of funds for the programme, amounting to an estimated total of ca. €600,000, resulting from reduced expenditures of the regular budget.

Report from the ExCo on its activities during Phase X

(M. Lefort)

M. Lefort presented the report of the ExCo activities during Phase X.

(See online background document "Report from the ExCo on its activities during Phase X").

Discussion

Dylan Wallman, observer from the European Coordination Let's Liberate Diversity, asked whether ECPGR was involved in the discussions related to the reform of the EU seed regulation. It would be appreciated if ECPGR could develop a position in this regard. It was replied that delegates from EU member countries participate in the discussion and the experience developed within the genetic resources network can be used to inform them. However, ECPGR is not organized as a political body and cannot easily develop a consensus policy position, especially when the various countries and stakeholders it represents have different views and expectations. Moreover, ECPGR involves also non-EU countries that cannot interfere with EU policies.

Th. van Hintum reminded the Committee that failure to influence policymakers and orient the legislative process with technical knowledge may generate serious problems. This has been the case with the Plant Health Regulation, which does not distinguish commercial seed and conservation material, or the Nagoya Protocol, which encourages countries to exchange genetic resources material through complex bilateral arrangements rather than simple and standard multilateral ones. He also suggested that ECPGR could draft papers on the potential impact of future legislation on genetic resources.

Marc Lateur remarked that it would be useful to have an indicator of the effort made by the various national coordinators to raise the visibility of genetic resources issues to policymakers.

F. Begemann asked the reasons why several Working Groups (WGs) did not receive funds (such as the Potato WG), what the relation is between WGs and the EVA Networks, and whether the activities for EVA are absorbing the main focus of the WGs at the expense of other areas of work.

The discussion clarified that the WG activities often depend on the proactiveness of the Chairs. Regarding the participation in EVA, WG Chairs are mostly involved in or informed

about the respective EVA Networks' activities.

A few NCs and observers were of the opinion that the WGs had been important ECPGR bodies in the past, but that lately the main achievements of ECPGR have been obtained independently from WGs, through targeted action, such as the EVA networks, the development of the PGR Strategy and the ExCo activity. The work should be driven by ECPGR objectives, so it is necessary to identify the highest priorities and not maintain inactive WGs. It might be time to reconsider the role and usefulness of WGs and assign more tasks to specific task forces or ad hoc groups.

Other NCs and observers were of a different opinion: WGs remain very important bodies and the backbone of ECPGR, and the apparent reduction of their impact is due, inter alia, to the inability to physically meet for a very long time. The recent requests and establishment of new WGs are indicative of the attractiveness and effectiveness of this structure when it is empowered to function at its best.

A few opinions were also expressed, indicating that the WGs should be given more opportunities to define their priorities, such as at the beginning of each Phase, and to influence the direction of ECPGR from the bottom up. Others thought, on the contrary, that the SC should develop a wide perspective of what WGs should do and that a specific task force could look into options for their structure and mode of operation to bring to the SC for decision-making.

F. Begemann reminded the SC that, beyond the European perspective, we need to consider the European approach towards global issues and initiatives, such as those promoted by CGIAR, the Crop Trust, the FAO-Treaty and others.

Th. Van Hintum gave the example of the global crop strategies, for which ECPGR and the WGs could have a role in their implementation.

M. Lefort informed the group that the new ExCo member for the East sub-region has been approved by the Steering Committee. Pavol Hauptvogel from Slovakia will replace Vojtech Holubec as of 12 June 2022.

3. The PGR Strategy: a new framework for ECPGR activities

(Chair: B. Schierscher)

The Plant Genetic Resources Strategy for Europe

(Th. Van Hintum)

Th. van Hintum presented the PGR Strategy (see [online presentation](#)).

Feedback from the GenRes Bridge final event and follow-up initiatives regarding the implementation of the Genetic Resources Strategy for Europe and its linked PGR Strategy

(M. Lefort)

M. Lefort gave an update on follow-up initiatives to promote the implementation of the PGR strategy in Phase XI with the aim to raise policymakers' awareness through a meeting of the Working Party on Genetic Resources and Innovation in Agriculture, organized on 20 June 2022 in the framework of the French Presidency of the EU. The French Ministry of Agriculture decided to focus on some recommendations and ask the members of the Working Party to be prepared to indicate the priority recommendations among the selected ones (see [online presentation](#) and the very recent note sent to members of the Working Party on Genetic Resources and Innovation in Agriculture).

She invited all SC members to contact their representatives in the Working Party to better inform them on the Genetic Resources Strategy for Europe (GRSE) and domain-specific strategies and to prepare the answers to the questions raised in the note.

Discussion

F. Begemann thanked M. Lefort for her initiative and hard work during the elaboration of the strategies and her continued effort in raising awareness with the relevant policymakers. He then specified how the European Centre for Information and Coordination on Genetic Resources should relate to ECPGR. It should be a legal body (a EU institution) where the ECPGR Secretariat should be hosted, together with the ERFP Secretariat. This would show a real commitment for genetic resources by the EU, while until now only partial commitment through project funds has been offered. He encouraged NCs from EU countries to contact the respective ministries and inform them of the need to push the EC in this direction, since ECPGR alone would not have the resources to address the existing challenges and targets of the PGR Strategy. Also, he clarified that it is not expected that the EC adopts the GRSE as such since this remains an EC project document. The hope and expectation are that the EU develops a “European strategy” using the GRSE as guidance and inspiration.

L.L. Steffensen stressed the importance of cooperation between farm animals, forest and crop experts, as building on different strengths is an advantage and can also help to reach the authorities of different ministries.

Regarding the questions proposed by the French Ministry of Agriculture to the delegates in the Working Party meeting on 20 June, F. Begemann stressed the importance of maintaining the Strategy recommendations as a package and avoiding prioritizing among these. The risk would be, for example, that only the recommendation to increase funding would be prioritized and the fall-back reaction of the EC would still be to simply provide project funds.

A comment from Shelagh Kell in the chat insisted that the overarching GRSE could not be implemented only through the domain-specific strategies, as it seemed to be implied in the presentation by M. Lefort.

F. Begemann replied that both the overarching strategy and the sectorial ones have their importance, since the overarching strategy should eventually offer the umbrella defining the commitment of the EU, while the domain-specific strategies are important as guiding documents for the specific communities of experts that need to carry out implementation in the respective domains.

Ndoc Faslia asked whether ECPGR could help countries that lack human resources and capacities to update their national strategies. L. Maggioni replied that this task is not within the mandate and capacity of the Secretariat, but existing national strategies of other countries could be used as templates.

4. ECPGR towards Phase XI

(Chair: M. Lefort)

Proposal from Bioversity International for continued hosting of the Secretariat

(J. Luzon)

Josephine Luzon, Head of Bioversity International Financial Operations, connecting from Rome, explained the conditions for the renewal of the hosting agreement between ECPGR and the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT. She recalled the long-standing collaborative

relationship between IPGRI/Bioversity and ECPGR and explained that moving the headquarters from Maccaresse to Rome was prompted by the need to make the Alliance more visible as one of the Rome-based agencies working on food and agriculture. She also informed the group about the ongoing development toward the establishment of One CGIAR. The move of the Alliance to the centre of Rome resulted in a recalculation of facility costs and IT fees, but these will only be applied to ECPGR in the next Phase. She illustrated all the services that Bioversity is providing to the Secretariat, covering office space, staff recruitment, contract administration, finance and accounting, procurement, travel and IT services. She also advised that the renewal of the hosting agreement in Phase XI should limit its initial length to only two years, owing to the uncertainties of the ongoing change process of One CGIAR and the need to allow flexibility. She specified that a meaningful calculation of the hosting costs for the initial part of Phase XI can only be made in 2023. The main message that J. Luzon wished to convey, on behalf of the Director General, Juan Lucas Restrepo, was that Bioversity would be honoured and delighted to continue hosting ECPGR, which is considered a hosted institution deserving a preferential treatment.

F. Begemann appreciated the services received from IPGRI/Bioversity over several years. He advised that ECPGR would need sufficient time to consider the offer when this will include more details in terms of costs, and asked whether a flexible arrangement with annual renewal might be acceptable.

J. Luzon confirmed that estimates of the costs can be prepared in time for the next SC meeting of June 2023 and that the expectation is to enter into a dual mutual negotiation under friendly terms, reiterating openness, flexibility and preferential treatment for ECPGR. The year-by-year renewal would also be possible, with a clause for decision three months in advance before the expiration of the agreement.

Statements from all countries on participation in Phase XI, and comments from observers

All National Coordinators and permanent observers expressed their preliminary position regarding the possibility of participation of their country in a new ECPGR Phase starting in 2024, focusing on the implementation of the PGR Strategy.

Based on the potential commitment expressed by countries, the Secretariat will prepare a proposal for a new Phase, which will be submitted for approval to the next Steering Committee meeting in summer 2023.

Albania will participate in ECPGR's Phase XI and continue to provide its regular contribution. Albania also commits to focus their PGR activities in line with the PGR Strategy for Europe.

Austria will participate in ECPGR's Phase XI and maintain funding if no changes in fees are foreseen. Austria supports ECPGR objectives and the PGR Strategy. Areas of interest include *in situ* and on-farm, and crop wild relatives. Austria also announced that the new portal of the national genebank was recently launched.

Belgium will continue to support ECPGR in the next phase. Belgium's PGR focus is mainly on research, especially evaluation, pre-breeding and breeding.

Croatia is running their 3rd national programme for PGR conservation and sustainable use until 2027, which was approved by the government last year and, for the first time, includes farmers' associations and a strengthened focus on on-farm conservation, including the

extension of the database on-farm module. Croatia will continue to support ECPGR in its Phase XI upon approval of the Ministry and expect to maintain the level of contribution of Phase X.

The Czech Republic national programme for plants, animals and microbes lasts five years and will end in 2022. Preparations for the next 5-year programme are underway. The Czech Republic expects to continue in ECPGR's Phase XI and, pending approval from the Ministry of Agriculture, maintain funding.

Denmark supports the continuation of membership in ECPGR and financial contribution at the current level. Further commitment to the strategy implementation will need to be discussed with national bodies.

Estonia is currently in its fourth phase of the plant genetic resources programme, and will continue to participate in ECPGR's Phase XI and maintain the same level of contribution. An increased contribution would need to be discussed and approved.

In 2018, Finland has renewed for ten years their programme on agricultural, forest and aquatic genetic resources. In the next board meeting next week they will discuss the GR and PGR strategies. Finland is willing to continue to work with ECPGR, following the PGR Strategy.

France will continue in ECPGR's next phase and hopefully will very soon become a member of AEGIS. They're waiting for final approval from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. France supports working at the European level on the PGR Strategy, and will provide their contribution if in line with the previous phase.

Georgia plans to participate in Phase XI with support from the government. They are looking for financial support for international collecting missions of maize and vegetable crops and for other international projects.

Germany: F. Begemann announced this as his last meeting and had words of appreciation for ECPGR. Imke Thormann will be the National Coordinator starting in January 2023. He appreciated the ECPGR shift in approaches which reflect new developments from conservation to the sustainable use of PGR. For this reason, German stakeholders (breeders and research institutes) see ECPGR as a more interesting partner. The growing role of the ExCo should also be appreciated. Overall, ECPGR will increasingly have a leading role, considering the current challenge of climate change and the need to use genetic resources. Germany is currently revising the national genetic resources strategy in parallel to the biodiversity strategy. Germany will likely continue in Phase XI, and also continue hosting EURISCO at IPK, given its considerable improvement since its move. The overall budget of ECPGR should stay as is and it will be important to distinguish regular and voluntary payments, which are more flexible.

Ireland supports ECPGR and is not expecting any difficulty to pay contributions in the next Phase XI. They will endeavour to align initiatives in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) under national funding schemes with the PGR Strategy.

Italy is in favour of implementing the PGR Strategy, especially the elements relevant to the ITPGRFA. National instruments regarding conservation and use are in place and activities will continue and be extended to promote the diversified use of GR. The intention is to continue in ECPGR.

Latvia is fully committed to participate in the next phase. The strategies can provide a framework to formalize activities in Latvia. There are currently project-based activities and hope to convince the Ministry to provide more strategic funding.

Montenegro will continue to participate in Phase XI, upon approval of the Ministry. The existing national programme has not been updated since 2017. In 2022, a new programme needs to be developed by the national focal point. It is good timing, as this can be aligned with the Strategy for Europe and will include all important objectives, as much as possible, taking into consideration the situation of a small country.

The Netherlands works with 5-year programmes (2022-2027), with a significant budget increase and is committed to continued collaboration with ECPGR in the next phase.

It is a priority in Norway to participate in networks at Nordic and European level. The national strategy was developed in 2019 and they are in the process of writing an action plan for 5 years, in line with the PGR Strategy. Financial support for domestic activities has not increased since 2015. The fee to ECPGR is part of the national budget and it requires continued justification and proof of the useful impact of the network.

Portugal will continue in principle with ECPGR and intends to align the CAP implementation with the genetic resources strategy in the national programmes during Phase XI.

Romania intends to continue to be a member of ECPGR. The implementation of the PGR Strategy in Romania has already started. On 30 May a national conference on biodiversity was held and the strategy was presented to participating breeding and research institutions. In September, they plan to present a Romanian PGR Strategy.

Serbia fully supports the continuation of its ECPGR membership and is committed to future collaboration. Despite the limited institutional and financial capacity, they will try to harmonize national legislation with the PGR Strategy.

Slovakia will continue to support ECPGR during the next phase. The focus is mainly on research, breeding and pre-breeding and also the participation in H2020 projects. The former national programme was terminated ten years ago and now funding is received only by the genebank from the Ministry of Agriculture.

In Slovenia, the national programme 2018-2024 incorporates elements from the PGR Strategy. There is a good commitment from competent authorities to support ECPGR in the next phase.

Spain is fully committed to joining the next phase and taking on board the strategy objectives, in line with the national programme. Things are progressively moving forward since the national coordination was shifted to the Ministry of Agriculture. There are no longer problems in paying the national contribution and it seems Spain will soon sign the MoU to be part of AEGIS.

In Sweden, the national programme is running until 2025. The overall objectives are well aligned with the PGR Strategy. ECPGR remains the central component of international collaboration. While struggling with national funding for activities, ECPGR funding comes from a different source. There is generally strong support for the continuation of ECPGR in Phase XI.

Switzerland will continue to be a member of ECPGR. Since 1997, there is a national action plan for the conservation and use of PGR, based on 4-year projects. The current objectives are in line with the PGR Strategy.

In Turkiye, the national programme is ongoing, with two genebanks and large collections. There are not enough funds for research, progress is slow and external funding is needed. They will continue to support ECPGR in Phase XI with the same contribution as in previous years.

Ukraine wishes to participate in ECPGR, but needs support and peace.

The United Kingdom will continue paying contributions and participating in Phase XI. They are developing their own strategy for genetic resources based on the PGR Strategy, also developing funding schemes to replace those of the EU for genetic resources. There will also be funds for a 3-year PhD on crop wild relatives to generate data for EURISCO.

Observers made the following statements:

The ITPGRFA Secretariat on behalf of FAO is happy to continue supporting ECPGR as per the MoU established, focusing on information on PGRFA and documentation, but open to the new challenges identified in the PGR Strategy. The Treaty is very interested in networks such as ECPGR, which are at the heart of PGRFA conservation, sustainable use and improved access, and is supportive of the new PGR Strategy. It will rely also on the expertise of the ECPGR Community in view of the next Governing Body meeting, which is hosted by India later in the year.

NordGen is very committed to working with ECPGR and sees good possibilities for the programme to evolve further to address the big societal challenges that we are facing.

Let's Liberate Diversity is happy to be an observer to the ECPGR Steering Committee, on behalf of European NGOs, and to provide a link with *in situ* and on-farm seed saver networks.

Support from ECPGR to the Ukrainian genebank

Kseniya Dokukina presented the situation in the National Centre for Plant Genetic Resources of Ukraine, the destruction of the experimental station and a list of priority needs.

Discussion

F. Begemann conveyed the sympathy of all the Steering Committee for the staff in the Ukrainian institute and the Ukrainian people who find themselves caught in a terrifying situation. He then explained the initiative involving a group that includes Germany, NordGen, Poland, Romania, Sweden, the ECPGR Secretariat, the UK, the Crop Trust, the ITPGRFA Secretary, USAID and Canada, aiming to support and eventually restore the Ukrainian genebank system. It's not a closed group, but a small proactive group able to be agile and act promptly. Several meetings took place with Ukrainian staff to understand the situation. The last one was last week, and included FAO staff in Kiev. They provided also a link with the Ministry of Agriculture to elevate the issue from a technical to a political level. The role of FAO will become more and more important at this level. Unfortunately, recently in the media, there were some erroneous interpretations of what happened to the Ukrainian genebank. Luckily some media did report things correctly. This group would like to provide support as an

immediate emergency reaction until the situation is more stable and a sounder programme for PGR restoration can be prepared and coordinated by FAO. There will be a chance for countries to contribute to this bigger project. ECPGR's ExCo already approved and sent a donation of €5,000 to our Ukrainian colleagues. Another 'bridging project' will have two donors – ECPGR and the Novo Nordisk Foundation.

L.L. Steffensen informed about the decision of the Novo Nordisk Foundation to grant €100,000 to be managed by NordGen for quickly cover emergency needs of the Ukrainian genebank, such as supporting people through payment of lost salaries.

V. Holubec advised that his institute is also currently helping the Ukrainian colleagues covering staff salaries for eight researchers in the Czech Republic, and additional money could be requested for currently running projects, and the employment of other Ukrainian researchers in the Czech Republic will be possible.

P. Hauptvogel informed the group that in Slovakia the recovery and resilience plan budgeted €15 million for Ukrainian researchers and doctoral students who wish to work in Slovakia. A call for proposals was launched, with the possibility to cover staff costs, the research contribution and indirect costs incurred by the hosting institution.

Th. van Hintum supported this initiative and agreed that priority goes to support staff and families. As the PGR community, we should also ensure that PGR are safety duplicated. The situation is not stable, and PGR needs to be preserved for future generations.

F. Begemann and L.L. Steffensen agreed that safety duplication of such valuable genetic material is key, especially considering that the situation continues to be unstable and insecure. It was confirmed that the FAO restoration project will include a component of regeneration and duplication of the newly harvested material outside of Ukraine and/or in Svalbard, as already agreed by Victor Ryabchun, head of the Ukrainian genebank.

Proposal to the attention of the ECPGR Steering Committee

During separate meetings involving F. Begemann, K. Dokukina, L. Maggioni, M. Marino, L.L. Steffensen and J. Weibull, and with video communication with V. Ryabchun from Kharkiv, it was possible to identify the most urgent needs of the Ukrainian genebank, which could be covered as part of a 'bridging funding provision project', jointly provided by ECPGR and NordGen, sponsored by the Novo Nordisk Foundation:

- Fraction of four months of Kharkiv staff salaries not covered by the government (40%): **€14,600** (the list of names of 26 staff members was provided)
- Fraction of four months of Ustymivka station staff salaries not covered by the government (95%): **€18,896** (the list of names of 20 staff members was provided)
- Diesel fuel (1,000 litres) and support for car renting for transportation of staff to the fields: **€5,000 Euro.**
- Wintersteiger laboratory threshing machine LD 180 for Kharkiv: **€12,600** (TBC) and LD 350 for Ustymivka: **€19,500** (TBC)
- Two diesel power generators: $€2,200 * 2 =$ **€4,400** (TBC)
- Cost of transportation of equipment to Ukraine: TBC

While the procurement of the equipment will require some more investigation to find the most suitable providers, an immediate donation can be provided jointly by NordGen and ECPGR

to cover staff salaries and fuel/car renting. The group agreed that ECPGR could provide the salaries for Ustymivka and the cost of fuel and car renting, totalling €23,896 and the SC was asked to approve this proposal.

Additionally, the SC was asked to delegate the ExCo with the responsibility to decide on further transfers of funds to the Ukrainian Institute, if appropriate and upon demand of the Ukraine support group, not exceeding €35,000.

Feedback from the ExCo meeting with the Working Group Chairs and options for a new mode of operation for Phase XI

(L. Maggioni)

L. Maggioni summarized the discussion and points of agreement raised by the WG Chairs during their meeting in April 2022, and proposed three options for a new mode of operation for Phase XI (See [online presentation](#)).

Discussion

In reply to questions from F. Begemann, L. Maggioni explained that WGs in the grant scheme are constantly encouraged to identify material for AEGIS and provide data to EURISCO. However, this cannot be easily enforced, as it is up to NCs to include data and material in the relevant databases. Regarding the country quota, this measure was requested by some countries as important insurance for participation in meetings. However, in practice, it limits smaller countries in their participation. In Phase X, the quota system was not implemented in practice, since very few meetings were held. The Secretariat would be happy to remove the bureaucracy associated with it, in the understanding that geographically balanced participation in meetings could be ensured by different means.

Th. Van Hintum advised that it would be more logical to first discuss objectives and priorities and then define structures and mode of operation that best enable an efficient implementation of the PGR Strategy. This recommendation was taken on board with the suggestion that subregional group discussion could follow this suggested sequence.

Regarding the role and function of WGs, various participants (M. Lateur, D. Rungis, L.L. Steffensen, J. Weibull) highlighted the importance of these bodies, which have established communities within ECPGR and their thematic areas, and these create a bond that facilitates collaborative actions and preparation of project proposals. They are also a good opportunity for young researchers to join and learn from a network that works on their crop of interest and acts as a capacity-building community. These are reasons to maintain the WGs as the backbone of ECPGR.

Opportunities for improvement and to fill existing gaps and needs were suggested, such as the need for better guidance on the operation of the WGs, number of meetings, rules of procedure and terms for the participating members, and ensuring the balance between WGs (conservation) and EVA (use). Also, a network of genebank managers would be useful to better connect people with this function and focus on their specific area of work (L.L. Steffensen).

Higher flexibility and effectiveness could be ensured by complementing the existing structure with the establishment of appropriate, temporary ad hoc task forces to address specific items, such as helping to complete the flagging of AEGIS accessions and the transfer of data to EURISCO (D. Rungis).

Ad hoc task forces with assigned budget lines would be useful to reduce the workload of ExCo and the Secretariat, and complement the existing structure with a flexible and effective instrument.

Implementation of a newly established Cryopreservation WG

(L. Maggioni)

L. Maggioni summarized the steps leading to the creation of a cryopreservation WG, the need to discuss the role of international organizations in this WG, and the Chair selection (See [online presentation](#)).

M. Lateur presented the CGIAR Global Plant Cryopreservation Initiative, including the conclusions and recommendations of an international feasibility study envisaging the creation of regionally situated specialized hubs (initially in Europe, Africa, and Latin America) (See [online presentation](#)).

Discussion

The discussion focused on clarification needed regarding at least two issues of possible concern for the SC:

- 1) The status and function of the Cryo-hub hosted by the Government of Belgium at KUL (Catholic University of Leuven)/Bioversity International genebank, the role of the FAO-Treaty and the underlying financial framework. Concerns were related to the possibility that ECPGR might be requested to contribute financially to this initiative.
- 2) The potential conflict of interest arising from the expression of interest to become Chair of the Cryopreservation WG that was recently submitted by a Working Group member from Belgium who is a staff member of both KUL and Bioversity International. Concerns were related to the possibility that the agenda of Bioversity International would not be sufficiently focused on the needs and interests of a European WG.
- 3) A message sent by the Secretariat to the SC in February 2022 was specifying that, for the time being, members of international organizations should not become Chairs of ECPGR WGs and not expect to receive ECPGR funds. This caveat was intended to allow proper discussion by the SC at the Mid-Term meeting.

Mario Marino explained that in 2019 at the eighth session of the FAO-Treaty Governing Body, an information document was presented by the Belgian government offering to host the Cryo-hub. It is his understanding that the One CGIAR initiative plans to build a network of three centres of excellence (South America, Africa and Europe) to serve as regional safety backups. The CGIAR and the Crop Trust will report on cryopreservation during the meeting of the Treaty Governing Body. The Treaty can offer space and possibly governance for discussion and development of cryopreservation initiatives at the global level, also involving the ECPGR WG.

M. Lateur wished to clarify that the Belgian Cryo-facility would be a secondary safety-duplication, aiming at conserving material that is already cryo-preserved in a primary location and would simply offer space under cryo-conservation at no cost, in a similar fashion as the Svalbard Seed Vault is doing for seed material. On the other hand, KUL is a capacity-building institute, developing cryopreservation protocols for various species.

V. Holubec informed the group that the cryo-bank in the Czech Republic is well established and the major costs are related to developing protocols for new crops, which is the most interesting and useful aspect of the future activities of the WG.

Some SC members thought that it would be very useful and appropriate to appoint as Chair a knowledgeable scientist, also well involved in global initiatives and that they did not see any conflict of interest, but the SC would always have the possibility to monitor the situation.

Others remained concerned that ECPGR might be dragged into an initiative that is not of primary importance to Europe and that potential requests for financial contributions should be avoided.

In conclusion, it was decided to specify in the letter of appointment of the Chair(s) the expectations of the SC regarding the WG activities. The WG is expected to develop a concept for the most rational and efficient way to collaboratively conserve under cryopreservation the relevant European material. A suitable number of European hubs that could share the tasks could be defined. Genebanks that are currently working on cryopreservation should be able to share and further develop their knowledge, also expanding it to other crops or genebanks, as appropriate, in order to collectively serve the regional needs. On the other hand, the transfer of material for secondary duplication to the Belgian cryo-facility would not be a priority for the time being and ECPGR will not contribute financially to it.

It was suggested to nominate two co-Chairs for this WG, in the understanding that they should operate under the supervision of the respective National Coordinators and guide the WG according to the interests of the European region.

The SC will review the work done by the WG on cryopreservation at the next SC meeting in June 2023 to verify the appropriateness of its continuation as part of the ECPGR permanent structure.

5. ECPGR towards Phase XI – Subregional groups discussion

(Chair: B. Lund)

Four subregional groups were formed and convened in four breakout rooms to openly discuss ECPGR priorities and mode of operation for Phase XI and bring proposals to the attention of the plenary. The groups worked on tables matching the outputs of Phase X and the new targets of the PGR Strategy and identified different levels of priority for each target. They also identified the preferred general option for a new mode of operation, selecting between the three proposed: Continuity, Revolution and Intermediate.

Reports from subregional rapporteurs

Rapporteurs from the North (Küllü Annamaa), East (Jelka Šuštar Vozlič), South (Petra Engel) and West (Audrey Didier) presented the results of each subgroup. All four groups selected the 'Intermediate' option for the future mode of operation, meaning that the WGs would be maintained as formal long-term structures, but their mode of operation would need to be revised and better guided. Complementary to the WGs, temporary ad hoc task forces would be defined to address specific issues or tasks, and these would be empowered by specific budget lines (See [online presentations](#)).

There was substantial agreement in the prioritization of targets by the subregional groups, with only some difference in the weighting of some priorities. The annexed tables collect the results of the prioritization exercise. These will be used to prepare a further developed workplan and respective budget for Phase XI, as well as for prioritization of the Grant Scheme activities.

Decisions on ECPGR priorities and mode of operation for Phase XI

The selection of an 'intermediate' option for the future mode of operation involves the review of the rules of procedure of the WGs, which will remain as long-standing structures, and establishing ad hoc task forces to accomplish specific tasks in an agile manner. The observation was made that for specific activities, such as capacity building, other instruments might be required.

The SC agreed to establish the following ad hoc task forces:

- 1) **Revision of ECPGR ToRs**, with the task to revise/update the role, function and mode of operation of all the ECPGR existing bodies, in particular the WGs (this will include the WG objectives, guidelines for the mode of operation, appointment of Chairs and members and their expected commitment, expected number of virtual and physical meetings, communication across WGs, reporting duties, relationship with EVA, etc.).
- 2) **Capacity development**, with the task to identify or create opportunities for capacity development of the genetic resources community, in particular young people, for example via study exchanges, webinars and courses.
- 3) **Communication and dissemination of results**, with the task of developing mechanisms to spread information about the results and achievements of ECPGR more thoroughly, both internally across the ECPGR community and through scientific publications.

6. Visit to NordGen and Alnarp campus

On the morning of 9 June, the SC visited the NordGen and the Alnarp campus.

7. Conclusion

(Chair: M. Lefort)

Discussion and approval of the report

The report prepared by the Secretariat, including Part II (Decisions), was approved with a few modifications.

Concluding remarks of the meeting

M. Lefort thanked the Secretary and the Secretariat staff for all the work done, NordGen for their hosting, L.L. Steffensen and all the team for the excellent organization of the meeting, and congratulated them for the very nice and comfortable new facilities. Special thanks were given to F. Begemann and J. Weibull, who will soon retire. Their invaluable work for many years with the ECPGR community is greatly appreciated and impossible to forget.

The SC warmly thanked Marianne for her ability, patience and guidance of the ExCo and SC.

PART II. DECISIONS

1. PGR Strategy

- The SC agreed that the proposed priority objectives of Phase XI correspond with the PGR Strategy.

2. ECPGR towards Phase XI

- The following ad hoc task forces were established (ToRs and budget to be defined by the ExCo and list of members to be identified):
 - 1) **Revision of ECPGR ToRs**, with the task to revise/update the role, function and mode of operation of all the ECPGR existing bodies, in particular the WGs (this will include the WG objectives, guidelines for the mode of operation, appointment of Chairs and members and their expected commitment, expected number of virtual and physical meetings, communication across WGs, reporting duties, relationship with EVA, etc.).
 - 2) **Capacity development**, with the task to identify or create opportunities for capacity development of the ECPGR community, in particular young people, for example via study exchanges, webinars and courses.
 - 3) **Communication and dissemination of results**, with the task to spread information about the results and achievements of ECPGR more thoroughly, both internally across the ECPGR community and through scientific publications.

3. Hosting arrangements

- The Secretariat was invited to negotiate a draft budget for Phase XI of ECPGR with the Finance office of Bioversity International, to be submitted to the attention of the SC at the next SC meeting in June 2023.

4. Support from ECPGR to the Ukrainian genebank

- ECPGR will provide as soon as possible a donation to the National Centre for Plant Genetic Resources of Ukraine, covering the salaries for the Ustymivka experimental station, and the cost of fuel and car renting, totalling **€23,896**.
- The SC delegated the ExCo with the responsibility to decide on further transfers of funds to the Ukrainian national genebank system, not exceeding **€35,000**.

5. Implementation of a Cryopreservation WG

- It was suggested to nominate two co-Chairs for this WG, in the understanding that they should operate under the supervision of the respective National Coordinators and guide the WG according to the interests of the European region.
- The letter of appointment of the Chairs will indicate the expectations of the SC regarding the WG activities. The WG is expected to develop a concept for the most rational and efficient way to collaboratively conserve under cryopreservation the relevant European material. A suitable number of European facilities that could share the tasks could be defined. Genebanks that are currently working on cryopreservation should be able to share and further develop their knowledge, also expanding it to other crops or genebanks, as appropriate, in order to collectively serve the regional needs. On the other hand, the transfer of material for secondary duplication to the Belgian cryo-facility would not be a priority for the time being and ECPGR will not contribute financially to it.

- The SC will review the work done by the WG on cryopreservation at the next SC meeting in June 2022 to monitor the appropriateness of its continuation as part of the ECPGR permanent structure.

6. Other issues

- The name of the Working Group on 'Wild Species conservation in genetic reserves' was changed to Working Group on 'Crop Wild Relatives'.
- The SC decided to renew the appointment of the Secretary at the end of Phase X until his Bioversity retirement date of April 2025. The process for recruitment of the new Secretary, including the provision of a period of hand-over, will be discussed at the End-of-Phase X SC meeting.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 – Agenda

Sixteenth meeting of the ECPGR Steering Committee

7-9 June 2022

Malmö /Alnarp, Sweden

Monday, 6 June 2022

Arrival of participants at Hotel Savoy, Malmö

Tuesday, 7 June 2022

Registration

8:30–9:00 *Conference venue: Sankt Gertrud conference, Östergatan 7B, 211 25 Malmö*

1. Opening (*Chair: M. Lefort*)

09:00–09:15 Opening statements by representatives of the host country

09:15–09:30 Welcome address by the Chair and adoption of the Agenda

2. Reporting on Phase X (*Chair: B. Maças*)

09:30–10:30 Technical and financial report of Phase X (*L. Maggioni, S. Goritschnig, S. Weise*)

10:30–10:45 Report from the ExCo on its activities during Phase X (*M. Lefort*)

10:45–11:15 *Coffee/Tea break*

11:15–12:30 Discussion

12:30–13:45 *Lunch*

3. The PGR Strategy: a new framework for ECPGR activities (*Chair: B. Schierscher*)

13:45–14:15 The Plant Genetic Resources Strategy for Europe (*Th. van Hintum*)

14:15–14:30 Feedback from the GenRes Bridge final event and follow up initiatives regarding implementation of the GR Strategy for Europe and its linked PGR Strategy (*M. Lefort*)

14:30–15:15 Discussion

15:15–15:45 *Coffee/Tea break*

4. ECPGR towards Phase XI (*Chair: M. Lefort*)

15:45 – 16:15 Proposal from Bioversity/ others? for continued hosting of the Secretariat

16:15 – 17:45 Statements from all countries on participation to Phase XI, centered on the implementation of the PGR Strategy, and potential financing of the programme; and comments from observers (*All National Coordinators and observers*)

17:45 – 18:30 Support from ECPGR to the Ukrainian genebank (*Introduced by F. Begemann*)
Dinner in Malmö (self-organized)

Wednesday, 8 June 2022

08:45 *Transfer to St. Gertrud conference venue*

5. ECPGR towards Phase XI (continued) (Chair: M. Lefort)

09:00–09:30 Feedback from the ExCo meeting with the Working Group Chairs and options for a new mode of operation for Phase XI (*L. Maggioni*)

09:30 – 10:30 Discussion

10:30–11:00 *Coffee/Tea break*

11:00–11:15 Implementation of a newly established Cryopreservation Working Group (*L. Maggioni*)

11:15–11:45 Discussion

Transfer to Alnarp

12:15–13:30 *Lunch*

6. ECPGR towards Phase XI – sub-regional groups discussion (Chair: B. Lund)

13:30–15:30 Four sub-regional groups are formed to openly discuss ECPGR priorities and mode of operation for Phase XI and bring proposals to the attention of the plenary

15:30–16:00 *Coffee/Tea break*

16:00 –16:40 Reports from sub-regional rapporteurs (10' each)

16:40–18:00 Discussion on ECPGR priorities and mode of operation for Phase XI

18:00–18:10 Wrap-up on decisions of the day (*M. Lefort*)

18:30 *Return to hotel*

20:00 *Social dinner*

Thursday, 9 June 2022**7. Study Tour**

08:30–12:00 Visit to NordGen and Alnarp campus

(Rapporteurs compile the draft report)

12:00–13:45 *Lunch*

8. Conclusion (Chair: M. Lefort)

13:45–14:45 Reading of meeting's report

14:45–17:30 Discussion and approval of report, *with 15 min coffee break at 16:00*

17:30–17:45 Concluding remarks of the meeting

18:00 *Return to hotel and / or*

Departure of participants

Annex 2 – List of participants

Sixteenth meeting of the ECPGR Steering Committee

7-9 June 2022, Malmö/ Alnarp, Sweden

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Annex 3 - Tables 1 to 6: Objectives and targets of PGR Strategy for Europe and associated priorities for ECPGR Phase XI

Tables correspond to the objectives as identified in section 2 (Conserving and sustainably using plant genetic resources) of the PGR strategy.

Priorities indicated in the last column are as reported from the subregional group discussions during SC 16, with comments included where relevant: E, East; N, North; S, South; W, West.

Priorities are color coded for ease of viewing: P1 – high; P2 – medium; P3 - low

Table 1: Expanding *in situ* conservation of crop wild relatives and wild food plants

PGR Strategy for Europe Objectives	PGR Strategy for Europe Targets	Responsibility (main level/ responsible bodies)	Type of action that ECPGR could undertake	Potential sources of funding to cover the ECPGR action	Priority level for ECPGR: P1: high P2: medium P3: lower
<p>By 2030, Europe has significantly increased its CWR and WFP inventories to enable a more comprehensive view of available CWR and WFP genetic diversity, to better understand how this diversity is distributed across the region and its neighbouring countries, and to identify which are the priority populations to actively conserve.</p> <p>By 2030, the European countries have elaborated and approved National CWR and WFP conservation strategies, and set up and manage a network for <i>in situ</i> management of priority CWR populations as part of an</p>	1. All countries in Europe have included CWR and WFP conservation in national PGR programmes and actions	National	Support of Wild relatives WG	EC project or external donor	N-P1
	2. All countries in Europe have identified CWR priority taxa and populations—including those in protected areas - forming the basis of their national and a European <i>in situ</i> network of CWR	National	Support of Wild relatives WG	EC project or external donor	N-P1
	3. Europe has a coherent, comprehensive, coordinated and centralized documentation of CWR and WFP <i>in situ</i> diversity.	EURISCO/ Doc&Info WG/Wild relatives WG	Implement extension of EURISCO	EURISCO budget	N-P2
	4. CWR priority populations within the European network of CWR are managed and monitored following agreed guidelines for the <i>in situ</i> management of CWR populations.	National and Wild relatives WG	Agree on demographic and monitoring techniques. Monitoring as proof of concept	ECPGR Grant	N-P3
	5. <i>In situ</i> conserved CWR populations are safely backed-up in <i>ex situ</i> collections and	National	Coordination/monitoring by Wild relatives WG	ECPGR Grant	N-P3

integrated CWR conservation strategy for Europe, in which active and sustainable long-term <i>in situ</i> conservation actions are implemented at national level.	made available to users.				All - P2
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Table 2: On-farm plant genetic resources conservation and management.

PGR Strategy for Europe Objectives	PGR Strategy for Europe Targets	Responsibility (main level/ responsible bodies)	Type of action that ECPGR could undertake	Potential sources of funding to cover the ECPGR action	Priority level for ECPGR: P1: high P2: medium P3: lower
<p>By 2030, an inventory of on-farm landraces has been made in Europe, based on national inventories, compiled in close collaboration with local actors and organizations and with periodic updating.</p> <p>By 2030, valuable landraces' identified diversity is comprehensively conserved on-farm, complemented with ex situ back-ups, and is made available for sustainable use.</p>	1. All countries in Europe include on-farm PGR conservation and management in national programmes and actions.	National	Support of On-farm WG	EC project or external donor	N-P1 E-P1
	2. A European Inventory of on-farm genetic diversity is formally established; a minimum set of passport and characterization descriptors for data exchange is defined.	EURISCO/ Doc&Info WG/On-farm WG	Design extension of EURISCO and implement it	EURISCO budget	E-P3
	3. All landraces recorded in the European Inventory have ex situ backup in national genebanks.	National	Coordination/monitoring by On-farm WG	ECPGR Grant	N-P3
	4. Conservation and management guidelines for on-farm landraces have been defined in the context of the European collaborative programme and are implemented at local level.	National and On-farm WG	Coordination/monitoring by On-Farm WG	ECPGR Grant	N-P1 E-P2

Table 3: Consolidating and sustaining ex situ conservation.

PGR Strategy for Europe Objectives	PGR Strategy for Europe Targets	Responsibility (main level/ responsible bodies)	Type of action that ECPGR could undertake	Potential sources of funding to cover the ECPGR action	Priority level for ECPGR: P1: high P2: medium P3: lower
<p>By 2030, the GR diversity in European genebanks is conserved reliably and made accessible for sustainable use, by improving the efficiency and efficacy of the European genebank infrastructure. Thus, the European <i>ex situ</i> conservation system will be raised to a level of excellence in terms of i) long-term quality (conservation management, viability, genetic integrity and phytosanitary protection), and ii) accessibility of conserved material to users, thereby positioning Europe as a primary contributor to the global PGR conservation and use effort.</p> <p>By 2030 European genebanks ensure the long-term conservation of PGR and provide access to appropriate samples of the genetic diversity that has occurred and/or is still occurring in European agriculture and in-nature. This covers the diversity needed for direct use, research and plant breeding that contributes to the continuous adaptation of European agriculture to current and future</p>	1.The AEGIS Certification System, guaranteeing the quality of genebank operations, has been developed and is widely recognized and implemented in Europe through a decentralized network of AEGIS-certified genebanks.	Task Force / Steering Committee	Develop the Certification System	External donor / ECPGR budget	N-P1 W-P1
	2. Up to one third of European genebanks have been AEGIS-certified (100 – 150, including all those with more than 1000 accessions), relying when needed on a capacity-building and support system to facilitate their upgrading to reach the AEGIS certification level.	National/Task Force/ Crop and Cryo WGs/ Secretariat	Implement Certif. System and capacity building services, including cryo, phytosanitary and duplication	External donor/ ECPGR budget	W-P1 (Need to clarify some wording as it will concern all genebanks and not only AEGIS) E-P3 (genebank upgrading to AEGIS through capacity building and support)
	3. The coordinated European collection (i.e. the combined collections of AEGIS-certified genebanks) contains a substantial part of the accessions conserved in European genebanks. All these accessions are conserved to AQUAS standards (see section 2.3.1) and fully available from the AEGIS-certified genebanks via a request system through EURISCO. All AEGIS material is safety-duplicated possibly in another European country and/or in	National/Genebanks EURISCO	Implement genebank review system	Genebanks / ECPGR budget / EURISCO budget	N-P1 W-P1 E-P1 (European collection maintained, membership increased) E-P2 (implementation of AQUAS)

PGR Strategy for Europe Objectives	PGR Strategy for Europe Targets	Responsibility (main level/ responsible bodies)	Type of action that ECPGR could undertake	Potential sources of funding to cover the ECPGR action	Priority level for ECPGR: P1: high P2: medium P3: lower
needs.	the Svalbard Seed Vault and/or at one of the CGIAR Centres				
	4. A comprehensive assessment of European plant genetic resources and diversity required by users for present and future needs in food and agriculture and the corresponding gaps in the conservation system has been completed and is regularly updated.	National and regional (Crop WGs)	Crop by crop assessment	External donor / ECPGR budget	W-P3
	5. The genetic diversity maintained in European AEGIS-certified genebanks includes: i) the vast majority of the European landraces; ii) a wide range of CWR diversity of crops grown in Europe; iii) a representative selection of developed varieties, and iv) other relevant material related to crops grown in Europe, including WFP	National and regional (Crop WGs)	Crop by crop assessment	External donor / ECPGR budget	N-P2 (points i, iii) N-P3 (points ii, iv) W-P3

Table 4 : Strengthening a comprehensive information system for plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (Documentation).

PGR Strategy for Europe Objectives	PGR Strategy for Europe Targets	Responsibility (main level/ responsible bodies)	Type of action that ECPGR could undertake	Potential sources of funding to cover the ECPGR action	Priority level for ECPGR: P1: high P2: medium P3: lower
<p>By 2030, the NFPs are supported in their activities to collect the passport data of all PGR genebanks in their countries and upload them to EURISCO. They are trained appropriately (e.g. on data standardization and quality), and feel part of a network that provides mutual support. The NFPs play an active role in supporting the genebanks in their country in improving the quality of the data, and support actors in the <i>in situ</i> community in providing access to their data. EURISCO grows to become a respected, well-known and well-used repository of European PGR passport data.</p> <p>By 2030, provide publicly available quality phenotypic data to EURISCO that is collected using standardized methods and in collaboration with various public and private partners. EURISCO acts as the phenotypic dataset's repository.</p> <p>By 2030, EURISCO comprehensively</p>	1. The EURISCO network of National Focal Points is optimally supported.	National EURISCO /	Training workshops	EURISCO budget	<p>W-P1</p> <p>E-P1 (All National Focal Points (NFPs) update national ex situ inventories effectively and timely)</p> <p>S-P2</p>
	2. EURISCO contains high-quality passport data of all European <i>ex situ</i> collections, progressively extended to include actively-managed <i>in situ</i> CWR populations and appropriate on-farm landraces data.	National	Training workshops	EURISCO budget	<p>W-P1</p> <p>S-P1</p> <p>E-P2 (C&E data in EURISCO included, with high quality and wide coverage)</p>

<p>applies the FAIR principles, and the NFPs are trained to also adopt the principles for local data sources (see 2.5.1). EURISCO's data governance and management are improved to reach an acceptable high standard. As a result, EURISCO becomes a trusted European and Global open-access database repository.</p>	<p>3. NFPs assure access to all publicly-available quality phenotypic data related to the conserved PGR, in collaboration with various public and private partners. Access is provided initially via inclusion in EURISCO.</p>	National	Crop support for data gathering and transfer	WG ECPGR Grant	<p>W-P1</p> <p>S-P1</p> <p>E-P3 (Inclusion of relevant in situ CWR data in EURISCO)</p>
	<p>4. European genebanks and other PGR holders have improved (or can improve) their data management practices through access to, and use of facilitating tools, resources and services, having adopted (or allowing them to adopt) the FAIR principles and becoming part of the open data community.</p>	Genebanks	Training workshops	External donor / EURISCO budget	<p>W-P1</p> <p>S-P2</p>
	<p>5. Both data in EURISCO and the associated IT infrastructure are compliant with the FAIR principles, allowing a better use of the data by a wide community of users across sectors and domains.</p>	EURISCO	EURISCO development	EURISCO budget	<p>W-P1</p> <p>S-P2</p>
	<p>6. EURISCO becomes a trustable repository in the arena of European and Global open-access databases with acceptably high governance and data-management standards</p>	EURISCO	EURISCO development	EURISCO budget	<p>W-P1</p> <p>S-P3</p>

Table 5: Promoting sustainable use of PGR.

PGR Strategy for Europe Objectives	PGR Strategy for Europe Targets	Responsibility (main level/responsible bodies)	Type of action that ECPGR could undertake	Potential sources of funding to cover the ECPGR action	Indicate Priority level for ECPGR: P1: high P2: medium P3: lower
<p>By 2030, assure access to well-documented genetic diversity that is conserved ex situ and, where and as appropriate, in situ in Europe.</p> <p>By 2030, PGR crop portals for European crops have been established and maintained.</p> <p>By 2030, promote and secure commitment for targeted phenotypic and genotypic characterization and evaluation of European PGR and improve digitization, harmonization, availability and exchange of existing and newly-generated PGR characterization and evaluation data for private and public actors.</p> <p>By 2030, achieve a coordinated and systematic use of CWR genetic diversity in research and crop improvement.</p>	1. Collections of PGR in Europe are increasingly characterized and evaluated under standard conditions, as well as genotyped with suitable sets of molecular markers.	EVA Network	Implement public-private partnerships	EVA budget (ECPGR) / External donor	W-P1 (integrate other projects) S-P1
	2. Data and accessions in the public domain, including those with relevant agronomic and quality traits identified at molecular level, are available to users through open centralized information systems, including Crop Portals.	National Research Centres	Support of Crop WGs	External donor / ECPGR grant	W-P3 (following progress in point 1) S-P1
	3. A wider use of pre-breeding of CWR and participatory-breeding on landraces on-farm generates added value to the unique diversity of these materials.	Research consortia	Support of Crop WGs	External donor	W-P3 (for direct use work also with 2.2) S-P2

<p>By 2030, farmers and civil society actors are better enabled to add value to European landraces through participatory breeding methodologies such as evolutionary breeding, thus contributing to crop diversity in landscapes and over time.</p> <p>By 2030, more diversified European agricultural and horticultural production systems are established for the benefit of sustainable food production, entrepreneurial development, and long-term management of PGR.</p>	<p>4. All elements of existing relevant legislation have been reviewed, and elements of previously developed disincentives for (small-scale) producers of diversified plant propagation material, are eliminated, where appropriate</p>	<p>Task Force involving crop and thematic WGs</p>	<p>Carry out analysis</p>	<p>External donor / ECPGR funds</p>	<p>W-P2 (ECPGR note on the impact of new regulations on PGR conservation and sustainable use - comms)</p> <p>S-P3</p>
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Table 6: Developing a system to monitor European conservation and sustainable use of PGR (Monitoring).

PGR Strategy for Europe Objectives	PGR Strategy for Europe Targets	Responsibility (main level/responsible bodies)	Type of action that ECPGR could undertake	Potential sources of funding to cover the ECPGR action	Indicate Priority level for ECPGR: P1: high P2: medium P3: lower
By 2030, sets of indicators of genetic resource conservation and use are developed/adapted and agreed by all stakeholders involved, and integrated and deployed within monitoring strategies to ensure that genetic diversity is maintained or increased in Europe	1. By 2025, sets of relevant indicators and associated baseline data to be collected for monitoring activities under this Strategy, have been consensually defined by all involved stakeholders. 2. By 2030, a sound system for the collection of all relevant baseline data has been set up and data are being actively collected and compiled, providing the baseline for further monitoring.	Task Force and WGs	Define and reach agreement on indicators	ECPGR budget	S-P1
		Next Phase XII			S-P2
By 2030: i) The proposed European coordination and information centre for conservation and sustainable use of agricultural genetic resources becomes the hub to gather and publish PGR conservation and use data provided by local and national networks under the guidance of ECPGR National Coordinators. ii) Trends in the conservation and sustainable use of PGR are assessed, analysed and published every 5 years and necessary corrective measures are proposed.	1. Trends in the conservation and use of PGR in Europe are being monitored, and the information from local, national and regional levels is compiled and available via the European coordination and information centre for conservation and sustainable use of agricultural genetic resources. 2. Information about trends in the conservation and use of PGR in Europe is readily available and regularly disseminated through different forms to PGR managers and users, policy-makers and the wider public. 3. Europe is actively and efficiently contributing to international reports on monitoring of conservation and use of genetic resources.	Next Phase XII			S-P3 S-P3 S-P3