



# Report of the Steering Committee



Tenth Meeting, 5-8 September 2006,  
Jurmala, Riga, Latvia

European  
Cooperative  
Programme  
for Crop  
Genetic  
Resources  
Networks

**ECP/GR**



**European Cooperative Programme for  
Crop Genetic Resources Networks (ECP/GR)**

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**REPORT OF THE TENTH STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

**5-8 September 2006, Jurmala, Riga, Latvia**

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## Opening

The meeting was opened by Isaak Rashal, National Coordinator for plant genetic resources in Latvia, who welcomed all the participants to the Tenth Meeting of the Steering Committee (SC) of the European Cooperative Programme for Crop Genetic Resources Networks (ECP/GR).

Representatives from 34 member countries were present, together with observers from 5 non-member countries and representatives of ESA, EUCARPIA, FAO, IPGRI, NGB and of the NGOs.

Janis Birgelis, from the Ministry of Agriculture, Republic of Latvia, also welcomed everybody on behalf of the host country and expressed his/her wishes for good results.

J. Turok, IPGRI's Regional Director for Europe, welcomed everybody to the meeting, noting that several people were attending for the first time. He drew attention to the importance of this Phase VII Mid-term Meeting for reviewing the Networks' activities, and emphasized that one of the main aims of the meeting is the decision to be taken on the further development of the concept of a European Genebank Integrated System (AEGIS). He reminded the group that the genetic resources community is living through an important moment in its progress, with the recent entering into force of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA), and the adoption of the Standard Material Transfer Agreement (SMTA) at the first meeting of the Governing Body in Madrid in June 2006. He welcomed any insight emerging from this current meeting which could be important for IPGRI's work globally. He further mentioned that unfortunately it was not possible to hold the current meeting in Israel as planned, but that it was a pleasure to hold an ECP/GR meeting for the first time in Latvia, and thus, to benefit from the excellent support and collaboration with the Latvian National Programme.

The agenda was adopted with a few minor changes. The participants briefly introduced themselves.

The different sessions were chaired respectively by I. Rashal, Latvia; Å. Asdal, Norway; D. Benediková, Slovakia; G. Kleijer, Switzerland, M. Veteläinen, Finland; J. Engels, IPGRI; G. Aleksidze, Georgia, M. Ibbotson, United Kingdom; and J. Turok, IPGRI.

Background documents were circulated by the Secretariat in advance of the meeting and uploaded on the ECP/GR Web site at:

[www.ecpgr.cgiar.org/SteeringCommittee/SC10/SC10\\_backdocs.htm](http://www.ecpgr.cgiar.org/SteeringCommittee/SC10/SC10_backdocs.htm)

All the PowerPoint presentations will be made available on the ECP/GR Web site.

## Status of implementation of Phase VII

### ***Report on the implementation of ECP/GR Phase VII***

L. Maggioni, ECP/GR Coordinator, presented the report on the implementation of ECP/GR Phase VII. A number of issues were raised requiring feedback and decisions by the SC, summarized as follows:

### **Terms of reference**

The SC appreciated the usefulness of the document on "Terms of reference for the ECP/GR operational bodies" and requested the Secretariat to further develop it by drafting definitions of "Working Group Chair", "Database Manager of an ECP/GR Central Crop Database" and "Network Coordinator".

The procedure for the election of the Working Group Chair and the duration of this position also needs to be clarified in the document. The draft will need to be short (bullet points) and circulated to the SC for comment and approval before the end of 2006.

### Country quota

It was considered that the limited use made by some countries of their quota does not necessarily need to be interpreted negatively, since it may correspond to the conscious decision to reserve the opportunity to send participants only to the relevant meetings for the given country.

The following decisions were taken:

- 1) The country quota should not be counted for Working Group members belonging to the host country organizing the meeting. This measure will, therefore, serve as an incentive to organize meetings.
- 2) The participation of the DB managers in WG meetings should be counted as part of country quota and the Chair's quota can be used in case the DB manager is not the official member representing the country which is hosting the central database.
- 3) Country quotas only apply to countries and not to institutions, therefore NGB staff can participate in Working Group meetings at the cost of country quotas of any of the Nordic countries. Table 1 of the Phase VII Mid-term report will be revised following application of three country quotas to specific Nordic countries, in order to account for the participation of NGB staff to three meetings so far.

### Networks

It was noted that the share-out of the Crop Networks' budgets in Phase VII had been based on criteria related to the size of the Networks and not on the importance of the crops and/or the existing needs. Appropriate criteria will have to be used in the future in order to assign to each Network its share of the total budgets.

It was also suggested that a suitable balance should be found in the proportion of regular meetings and planned activities, *ad hoc* meetings and *ad hoc* actions to be undertaken. It was proposed to define a maximum percentage that could be spent for each category of activities.

It was considered important that the Networks be kept informed by the Secretariat on the level of expenditure of the Networks' funds, in order to allow the most effective use of the available financial resources.

The success of recently introducing the possibility for the Networks not only to organize meetings, but also to undertake actions was acknowledged, as well as that a certain degree of flexibility needed to be maintained. At the same time, the importance of the Working Group meetings was reiterated, being these the tools that allow, *inter alia*, every country to get involved in the Programme's activities.

### Public awareness

The ECP/GR draft brochure addressed to the wider public was welcomed by the SC as a potentially useful product. However, the SC requested some changes so as to make it clear that the target group is the "consumer of genetic resources products".

It was suggested that the brochure should include concrete suggestions of what the target group could do to take advantage of the existing agrobiodiversity, for example by indicating how to access and use the plant diversity that is conserved in the genebanks and on farms.

Following further consideration of the brochure by the Secretariat, in collaboration with the NGO Pro Specie Rara, this product will be printed by IPGRI in a limited number of copies in English (allocated budget is 4000 €). The template will be provided to all the

National Coordinators, who will have the opportunity to translate the brochure into the local language and to reproduce it for national use.

The SC felt that the main responsibility for public awareness should be left to the National Programmes. A large number of products (brochures, leaflets, posters, video, etc.) are being prepared in many countries. The Secretariat was invited to establish a collection of the various existing products and to make these available on the Web. IPGRI offered to assist in defining an ECP/GR public awareness strategy.

### **Thematic cross-cutting issues**

The SC accepted that any interested individuals and institutions would be welcome to propose initiatives or actions to be undertaken with thematic cross-cutting issues' funds and that these do not have to necessarily be formulated by the Network Coordinating Groups (NCGs).

### **ECP/GR membership**

The SC expressed the wish that European countries which are only represented here by observers will soon become members.

### **Relationship between ECP/GR and the EU**

The importance of involving the European Union as a member of ECP/GR was reiterated. The difficulties of finding the most suitable entry point for a dialogue with the European Commission (EC) were noted, especially in view of the fact that the responsibility for genetic resources issues is split amongst different EC Directorates.

The SC decided that a short strategy paper (1-2 pages) should be formulated, to be addressed to the EC, in its capacity as a Party to the International Treaty. This document should set out strongly the relevance of the ECP/GR for the EU, with the ultimate aim of establishing a permanent collaboration. The ECP/GR position on the future of Regulation 870/2004 should also be expressed. IPGRI on behalf of ECP/GR offered to prepare the first draft of this document, to be circulated to the SC for comments and subsequent adoption, by the end of 2006.

The efforts being made by IPGRI to prepare a presentation on relevant issues at a high-level policy meeting (European Council on Agriculture) were acknowledged as also providing an opportunity to raise awareness about the ECP/GR. This initiative will require the active support of the country that holds the Presidency of the Union.

### **Listservers**

The SC expressed warm thanks to the NGB for the maintenance of the ECP/GR listservers for several years. The SC appreciates that this valuable service will be continued in the future.

### **ECP/GR name and acronym**

A small group discussed during an evening session the proposal by Germany to change the name of the Programme and to modify the acronym by removing the "slash" (/).

The group agreed that the name and acronym of ECP/GR should be simplified as follows:  
*European Cooperative Programme for Plant Genetic Resources (ECPGR)*

The main argument for this change was the need for simplification and elimination of unnecessary words and symbols. Reference to "plants" versus "crops" was not meant to modify the scope of the Programme, which will continue to focus on agricultural crops.

However, reference to “plants” was considered to be more in line with the titles of the Global Plan of Action and of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. Furthermore, it was felt that the reference to “Networks” in the title is confusing and thus, can be deleted without any problem. However, the logo will be retained with the deletion of the words “Crop” and “Networks”.

#### **Comments on Annex I of the Mid-Term report of Phase VII**

The SC considered and commented on the recommendations made at the Network Coordinating Group (NCG) meeting in Bonn, Germany (29-31 March 2006) as they subsequently appeared in the overall agenda.

- **AEGIS**

*Bonn Recommendation:* that the SC should support the broad implementation of AEGIS, especially the need to accept the obligations relating to National Programmes.

*SC response:* the SC confirmed that the concept of AEGIS, which builds on national, regional and sub-regional activities, is to be a major European regional initiative to increase the efficiency and quality of germplasm collections’ management and the utilization of these collections, as well as aiming to optimize the use of available resources. The process of how to proceed with the AEGIS project until the end of Phase VII is described at pp. 10-12.

In-depth consideration of the future of AEGIS will need to be taken at the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the SC.

- **Global Conservation System**

*Bonn Recommendation:* that the SC should continue to support the global initiatives and processes (CBD, GCDT, IT, etc) by making the ECP/GR’s knowledge, germplasm, training and capacity-building available.

*SC response:* the SC is committed to further support the above global processes and initiatives, and sees the realization of AEGIS as a vehicle to fulfil this commitment.

- **Efficiency in conservation, documentation and facilitated use of PGR**

*Bonn Recommendation:* that the SC should consider the future prioritization of activity areas.

*SC response:* the SC recognizes the input made by the Networks within the four priority areas (characterization/evaluation, task sharing, *in situ* and on-farm conservation, and documentation/information) and emphasizes the need to keep them in focus for the remainder of this phase of the programme, with a possibility of re-evaluating the priorities for Phase VIII.

- **Increase inter-regional cooperation (Europe with other regions)**

*Bonn Recommendation:* that the SC should consider reinforcing the relationships between ECP/GR and other international networks, including national and international development agencies.

*SC response:* the SC wishes to underline the value and further need for inter-regional cooperation.



- **Role of EURISCO as a central platform of *ex situ*, *in situ* and on-farm data**

*Bonn Recommendation:* that the SC should clarify the relationships between EURISCO, the National Inventory/National Focal Points and the Central Crop Databases (CCDBs), as well as considering how to strengthen the conditions for the functioning of the CCDBs.

*SC response:* the SC took note of this concern and foresees that this will be dealt with by the Documentation and Information Thematic Network. Support for developing a central data platform may be provided within the EPGRIS2 project recently submitted within the scope of EC 870/2004 Regulation. The SC invites the Documentation and Information Network to propose recommendations to the next SC meeting, should the EPGRIS2 application be rejected.

- **Implications of the International Treaty**

*Bonn Recommendation:* that the SC should investigate the implications of the IT for national programmes at the international level.

*SC response:* the SC considered this an important issue, and recommended that a number of practical steps be taken for implementation of the Treaty at the national level (see p. 8, The International Treaty for PGRFA and ECP/GR).

- **Strengthening the efficiency of national programmes**

*Bonn Recommendation:* that the SC should assess the selection process for country representatives in the various activities and enables their operation at the ECP/GR level.

*SC response:* the SC took note of this and encouraged the National Coordinators to invite WG Chairs and Network Coordinators to open a dialogue on national needs and options with a wide range of stakeholders.

- **Coverage of crops**

*Bonn Recommendation:* that the SC should consider broadening the scope of crops of Networks and present clear guidance on this matter.

*SC response:* The issue on possible expansion of the Networks by establishing new crop WGs is intimately linked to the current financial situation of the programme. It was therefore dealt with in the light of budget implications below.

- **Budget implications**

*Bonn Recommendation:* that the SC – not least because of high inputs-in-kind contributions by institutions – should consider various budget scenarios, as well as giving attention to a fund-raising role.

*SC response:* the SC concluded that a future expansion of the ECP/GR activities would be entirely dependent on additional funding. Fund-raising possibilities should be explored by the ECP/GR Secretariat and the National Coordinators.

Although the SC recognized the importance of external funding to complement current Network budgets, it underlined the need for Networks to carefully consider each budget item against the priority areas decided by the Steering Committee.

The SC also decided to assign a Task Force (TF) with the aim of defining the appropriate division between WG meetings, actions and *ad hoc* meetings, and to look at criteria that would enable evaluating the relevance of the proposed actions and outputs, as well as the ratio of distribution of ECP/GR funds over the Networks.

The TF, including the ECP/GR Secretariat, is composed of: Germany (coordinator), Belgium, Czech Republic, Romania and Switzerland, and will provide a first draft by the end of 2006, for comments and adoption by the SC.

- **ECP/GR and EU relationship**

**Bonn Recommendation:** that the SC should consider facilitating an improved communication process between ECP/GR and relevant European Commission services.

(Comment: see p. 3 under “Relationship between ECP/GR and the EU”.)

## Review of Networks’ progress during Phase VII

(Chair: Å. Asdal)

### **Review progress of three Networks: Cereals; Forages; Oil and Protein Crops**

(Introduced by Z. Bulinska)

No progress report had been delivered to the SC from the Coordinator of the Oil and Protein Crops Network.

The progress of both the **Cereals** and the **Forages Network** were well in line with the priority areas previously decided by the SC, and the work reviewed provided support for a broad future implementation of AEGIS. Both Networks reported on efforts which had been made to improve the status of collection data (description, characterization and evaluation data, etc.) although work still remains to import data from DB managers, as well as harmonizing the data structures of CCDBs with that of EURISCO.

*In situ* conservation activities had hitherto not been targeted properly, and need to be addressed more constructively during the remainder of Phase VII.

Both Networks reported progress in the area of task sharing, notably safety-duplication, and the development of regeneration standards. The current development of conservation strategies by the Global Crop Diversity Trust is of obvious importance, and members of both Networks are actively taking part in this work.

### **Review progress of two Networks: Fruit; Sugar, Starch and Fibre Crops**

(Introduced by J. Weibull)

The **Fruit Network** reported progress in all four priority areas. One exception was the *Vitis* WG which had only received limited funding for Phase VII. The progress reports, however, indicated some dissatisfaction because of the problems of obtaining updated information from curators. The SC noted some incongruities in the budget table, which were interpreted as typing errors. Some SC members encouraged the Network to produce electronic catalogues instead of printed documents and therefore save funds.

The **Sugar, Starch and Fibre Crops (SSFC) Network** reported reasonably good progress in the areas of characterization/evaluation, task sharing and documentation/information. Less progress was reported in the area of *in situ*/on-farm management, with the exception of work on wild *Beta* relatives. The Potato WG had made good progress in updating relevant DBs.

To be able to move forward in the documentation work, the SSFC Network had prepared and submitted a one-year project proposal to be considered by the SC. The proposal included appointing a DB manager to work specifically on developing the Flax DB, at a cost of ca. 42% of the Network budget. While recognizing the flexibility of Networks to plan actions, the SC was however not prepared to accept that a too large proportion of the budget can be allocated to one single action. A decision was made to look at criteria for within-budget divisions between WG meetings, actions, and *ad hoc* meetings (see p. 5, Budget implications).

### **Review progress of one Network: Vegetables, Medicinal and Aromatic Plants**

(Introduced by L. Ayerbe)

The **VEGMAP Network** reported good progress in most of the targeted areas, including *in situ*/on-farm management depending on the crop (notably *Allium* and MAPs).

The Network proposed establishing a new thematic network specifically aiming at addressing issues related to biotechnological methods (including cryopreservation) as a means of assisting WGs dealing with vegetatively propagated crops.

The SC discussed this option but was of the opinion that proposals for a specific workplan with clear goals and outputs would be a more appropriate solution to the problem.

Within-Network discussions had led to the common understanding that because of the approaches and activities of the MAP WG, its organizational placement would be more appropriate within the Sugar, Starch and Fibre Crops Network.

The SC therefore decided to move the MAP WG to the SSFC Network. This change implies that the MAP WG will not join the Vegetables Network during its coming meeting in 2007, but will retain a share of the funds sufficient to hold a WG meeting. The name of the VEGMAP Network will return to its previous name, i.e. the “Vegetables Network”.

### **Review progress of three Networks: Documentation and Information; In situ and On-farm Conservation; Inter-regional Cooperation**

(Introduced by S. Strajeru)

The **Documentation and Information Network** reported concrete achievements with regard to the continuing development of EURISCO (increased numbers of data and of National Inventories). Also the conceptual achievement was noted that EURISCO will be the central platform for existing *in situ* and on-farm data. Plans were made for the remainder of Phase VII, to be implemented through projects submitted to the EC Regulation 870 (EPGRIS2 and EGRISI).

The **In situ and On-farm Conservation Network** made progress mainly through the EU-funded PGR Forum project, culminating in the achievement of a Crop Wild Relatives (CWR) catalogue for Europe and the Mediterranean – and a methodology was developed for CWR prioritization, gap analysis and genetic erosion assessment. Future activities, through the EGRISI project, will be devoted to the establishment of an EU Network of *in situ* national Focal Points and production of National CWR inventories.

The On-farm Task Force reported preliminary and limited results, mainly consisting in collections of examples of methodologies provided by individual countries.

The **Inter-regional Cooperation Network** focused on documentation and information systems and on policy implementation. The main collaborating partners were the networks from Sub-Saharan Africa.

The definition of the future role and profile of the regional networks was identified as the main issue on which it would be possible to have an impact with the limited funds available. A regional network coordinators' meeting is planned during the remainder of Phase VII.

Common constraints for all the Networks were the lack of involvement of a sufficient number of members of Networks in the specific activities, weak communication and collaboration between Thematic Networks and Crop Networks and under-funding.

The activities carried out within each Thematic Network were in line with the specific objectives defined at the onset of Phase VII, during the Ninth Steering Committee Meeting, held in Izmir, Turkey, 2003. Considerable progress in fulfilling planned activities was achieved by implementing collaborative projects funded from external sources (PGR Forum), in which all Task Force members were involved.

The SC welcomed these informative reviews at the mid-term of Phase VII and in particular recognized the invaluable in-kind contributions made by institutes and individuals.

The SC also underlined the importance of the global dimension of the work being carried out and therefore that it is important to engage actively with institutions outside the region.

### **Sub-regional Networks and their linkages with ECP/GR**

Invited presentations were made on three sub-regional initiatives, namely the Nordic-Baltic cooperation by B. Skovmand, SEEDNet (South-East European Development Network on PGR) by E. Thörn and CATCN-PGR (the Central Asia and Trans-Caucasus Network on PGR) by J. Engels, on behalf of M. Turdieva. The discussions addressed the opportunities for complementarities and synergies between these initiatives and ECP/GR.

The Steering Committee welcomed these informative presentations and requested the Secretariat to facilitate the exchange of information between the three initiatives and the SC.

### **The International Treaty for PGRFA and ECP/GR**

Invited presentations were made on the International Treaty (by Gerald Moore), the Standard Material Transfer Agreement (by Bert Visser and Frank Begemann) and EURISCO (by Frank Begemann and Sonia Dias). The information provided was very much appreciated as it was highly relevant and timely, in particular with regard to the outcomes of the first session of the Governing Body of the Treaty. A number of questions were clarified during the discussions.

The SC welcomed the outcome of the first session of the Governing Body of the IT held in Madrid in June 2006. In the view of the SC, this makes the IT fully operational. Furthermore, conscious of the complementarity of the objectives of the IT and those of ECP/GR, the SC encourages those ECP/GR member countries that have not yet ratified the IT to do so.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Twenty-seven European countries out of forty-five had ratified the Treaty at the time of this meeting. The status of signatures and ratifications can be checked at [www.fao.org/AG/cgrfa/itpgr.htm](http://www.fao.org/AG/cgrfa/itpgr.htm)

For those ECP/GR member countries which have ratified the IT, the SC wishes to encourage full implementation at the national level as rapidly as possible, taking into account the specific conditions of the individual country.

A checklist of steps that might be taken from a technical and operational point of view to achieve the implementation of the Treaty was agreed upon and is included in Annex A.

The SC invites the ECP/GR Secretariat to initiate a discussion with the IT Secretariat to explore the possibility of using EURISCO as the reporting mechanism on the use of the SMTA and the designation of germplasm to the multilateral system (MLS).

## **Information on new developments in international fora/institutions**

The representative of the European Seed Association, K. Noome, made a presentation on relevant developments in the seed industry and offered the Association's collaboration in communication with the relevant offices in the European Commission.

S. Diulgheroff from FAO made a presentation about the implementation and monitoring of the Global Plan of Action and the preparation of the second report on the State of the World on Plant Genetic Resources.

The importance of the preparation of country reports was acknowledged by the SC.

The representative of the European NGOs, B. Bartha, emphasized the challenges they have in coordinating among themselves and because of this, to dialogue in an authoritative manner with ECP/GR.

Furthermore, the SC took note of the request by the NGO representative to receive financial support for coordination. The SC believes that this coordination problem might be best resolved through an active participation of the NGOs at the national level and the National Coordinators are encouraged to facilitate this process.

B. Skovmand, Director of the Nordic Gene Bank, informed the SC about the Svalbard initiative and suggested that these to-be-constructed facilities should also be used by the ECP/GR member countries. Furthermore, he invited the SC to hold its next meeting in 2008 at Longyearbyen, Svalbard Islands, after the facilities are completed, which is expected by the end of 2007.

The SC welcomed this invitation and will take it into consideration.

The president of EUCARPIA, J. Prohens, informed the meeting about the relevant activities and forthcoming events of EUCARPIA, in particular its Genetic Resources Section. He invited ECP/GR members to strengthen collaboration with EUCARPIA, especially through their participation in meetings and the use of scientific publications.

The members of the SC found this presentation very interesting and welcomed future exchanges of information and joint activities with EUCARPIA.

A presentation was made on the new strategy of IPGRI by J. Turok, highlighting the main focus areas, including agrobiodiversity for nutrition and health. He also emphasized the ongoing commitment to building accession-level regional information systems (such as EURISCO), policy support for the implementation of the Treaty and awareness-raising on the importance of PGR.

The SC welcomed information on the new strategy of IPGRI.

It was noted that additional information had been provided as background documents by N. Maxted on the European Plant Conservation Strategy and by S. Sharrock on Botanic Gardens Conservation International. There was not sufficient time to discuss these documents in detail, but the SC members were invited to provide comments to the Secretariat.

## **AEGIS**

L. Maggioni presented the results of the feasibility study on AEGIS, based on the model crop groups' reports. G. Kleijer and D. Astley presented in a role play a report on the implementation of AEGIS in the year 2015, respectively playing the role of a Steering Committee member and of the Chair of the *Allium* Working Group. B. Visser and F. Begemann presented the issues related to the possible steps towards actually preparing a concrete future for AEGIS, and L. Maggioni introduced some ideas on possible ways to raise resources for AEGIS.

A discussion then took place during a session held on Friday 8 September, with the purpose to exchange views on the concept of AEGIS, to raise any issues of concern, and to reach a common understanding on further steps and actions (see Annex B).

### **Steps to be taken in the framework of the AEGIS project until the end of Phase VII**

On the basis of detailed discussions, the ECP/GR Steering Committee took the following decisions:

#### *Decisions of the Steering Committee*

1. The SC recognized the significance of the crop groups' reports, and the relevance of their different approaches. Furthermore, the Committee proposed that this work should be followed up by further consideration of the practical aspects of implementation of the AEGIS project.
2. The meeting recognized the relevance and importance of the Strategy Framework for the implementation of the AEGIS Discussion Paper as a general approach. It was decided to review this paper in light of the SC discussion (cf. Annex B) and it was recommended that the document should be published as an ECP/GR product, after consultation with the National Coordinators for comments.
3. More details on the European collections of the four model crops are necessary in order to further develop the AEGIS model, including the identification of Most Appropriate Accessions, and the development of criteria for such identification. The development of quality systems, as well as recommendations on how to involve all relevant stakeholders from the European region will also be needed. The four model crop groups are requested to provide a report addressing the above-mentioned activities. An integrated report featuring a synthesis and generic conclusions on the further work of the four model crop groups is expected.
4. No overview of (estimated) operational costs for collection maintenance before or after the introduction of AEGIS is currently available. It is highly relevant to make calculations soon of the costs of the maintenance of the model crops, in order to assess how much money such rationalization efforts may make available for reallocation and alternative expenditure within the budgets available to collection holders, taking into consideration the fact that the

costs should be comparable between countries. For this exercise, implying the involvement of expert economists, the ECP/GR Secretariat is requested to prepare a draft study outline.

5. Development of draft quality management systems for the four model crops is vital. In-kind contributions by genebanks and/or member states will enable such efforts.

6. Development of a list of proposed specific accessions of each of the four model crops to be designated for their incorporation into the European collections is needed. The four model crop groups are each requested to perform such exercise.

7. Development of a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for signature by the Ministries, specifying the political consent of the national authorities for task sharing, and taking into account the relationship with the obligations of the IT, is an absolute priority requirement. Such MoU will include attention for the possible transfer and exchange of accessions. Development of such agreement is the responsibility of and might be overseen by the AEGIS Steering Committee.

8. Development of a draft model institutional contract covering operational issues related to the implementation of AEGIS is an additional requirement. A subgroup of the AEGIS Steering Committee, in collaboration with managers of institutions holding collections should be given the task of advising on such model institutional contract. The ECPGR Secretariat is requested to initiate this task.

9. A survey of (potential) capacity and availability amongst European institutions to develop European task-sharing in the context of AEGIS is also needed. This will include an assessment of the need for upgrading various facilities and training new experts. The ECP/GR Secretariat is requested to conduct such survey.

10. The SC recommends that the ECPGR Secretariat should start as soon as possible the process of further preparation of draft decisions and possible implementation mechanisms for the AEGIS concept. In this respect it fully supports and appreciates the GEN RES project application. In case no EU funding for AEGIS can be secured from Regulation 870/2004, an amount of between 150 K € and 170 K € will be needed to further prepare for decisions on the implementation of the AEGIS concepts and the development of European collections. Such additional funds will be made available through the reallocation of funds available for ECP/GR's current phase (see Tables 1 and 2). This rather painful exercise reflects the decision of the SC to give top priority to the "sharing of responsibilities" during the remaining part of Phase VII.

11. The Steering Committee regards a direct involvement of the European Union in realizing an integrated system of European collections as highly relevant and will seek to engage the European Commission in its work (see SC decision on "Relationship between ECP/GR and the EU", p. 3).

The Secretariat was requested to propose a reallocation of funds from the Phase VII budget, on the basis of the conclusions of the SC during the review of Networks' progress in Phase VII. The proposed reallocation was approved for immediate action with minor modifications (see Tables 1 and 2).

**Table 1.** Reallocation of funds from Phase VII budget for AEGIS activities (in €)

	in €
<b>Network operations - Crop Networks</b>	
<b>Cereals</b>	
Barley technical meeting of DB managers	3500
<b>Fruit</b>	
Printed catalogues of various crops	4000
Technical leaflets with protocols for <i>in situ</i> /on-farm conservation	2000
<b>Oil and Protein Crops</b>	
Balance of <i>ad hoc</i> meeting	2147
<b>Sugar, Starch and Fibre Crops</b>	
Employment of a scientist by the Network	37095
<b>Vegetables, Medicinal and Aromatic Plants</b>	
Reserve funds	25000
Remaining <i>Brassica</i> and <i>Allium</i> lower priority funds	5460
Umbellifer crops WG meeting	16000
Umbellifer crops meeting report	5000
<b>Network operations - Thematic Networks</b>	
<b><i>In situ</i> and on-farm conservation</b>	
Publication cost of "European landrace conservation"	5000
<b>Documentation and Information</b>	
Limited support to highly-relevant D&I Network-related activities	5000
EURISCO	7500
<b>Inter-regional cooperation</b>	
Meeting between regional network coordinators	2500
<b>Public awareness tools/actions</b>	<b>13282</b>
<b>Thematic cross-cutting issues</b>	
Remaining attendance CWR conference	1897
NGO and PGR Network meeting	5000
Meeting on genebanks and genomics	5000
Available	5410
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150791</b>

**Table 2.** Budget for AEGIS (2007-2008)

	in €
50% coordination for 2 years	100000
Policy support	15000
Meeting of <i>Prunus</i> WG	19000
Meeting of Heads of genebanks	16791
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150791</b>



## Planning for subsequent Phase VIII – Networks’ workplans

### Proposals from the NCGs for Networks’ activities during Phase VIII

Z. Bulinska, J. Weibull, L. Ayerbe and S. Strajeru presented the proposals submitted by the Network Coordinators for Networks’ activities during Phase VIII and the respective budget proposals.

After some discussion, the SC concluded that the Networks had given appropriate attention in general to the priority issues defined for Phase VII, and these will still be valid for Phase VIII, as modified:

- 1) **“Task sharing and capacity building”** will be the top priority issue for Phase VIII, considering the need to keep up the momentum for the implementation of AEGIS project. The element of “capacity building” was added for Phase VIII, upon consideration of the additional need to devote part of the existing collaboration to enhancing the capacity of the less developed sectors of the European genetic resources community.
- 2) **“Characterization and evaluation”** will still be very important, since this is the activity that enables making the connection between *ex situ* conservation and use.
- 3) **“In situ and on-farm conservation and management”** will still be important and due consideration should be given to the urgency of preventing or reducing the loss of *in situ* and on-farm genetic diversity.
- 4) **“Documentation and information”** will still be very important, in support of actions 1-3 above.

The SC felt that more information is needed from the Networks in the next two years in order to approve detailed budgets and activities and requested the Network Coordinators to revise their proposals as follows:

Keeping in mind the priority issues as described above and the criteria to be developed by the TF (see p. 5), Network Coordinators are requested to provide a list of proposed actions for Phase VIII, including clearly measurable outputs. The Networks are requested to provide workplans for each of the three possible financial scenarios:

- 1) 100% (same budget level as in Phase VII)
- 2) 115% (inflationary adjustment)
- 3) 125% (although a substantial increase in the budget of ECP/GR is unlikely, the SC may have the possibility to assign increased budgets to specific Networks, should additional funding be made available from external sources and/or upon considerations of importance of the proposed activities and outputs).

In the development of their proposals for Phase VIII, the Crop Networks are requested to rank the Working Groups in order of priority and to keep this ranking in mind for the definition of the proposed budgets.

## Conclusion

The report, including all the decisions and recommendations, as well as the annexes and the budget were approved with a few modifications.

The Steering Committee wished to thank the Secretariat for its constructive support throughout the meeting. Warm thanks were also given to the local hosts for their hospitality and for the big efforts made in the organization of the meeting. The Steering Committee felt very comfortable and at ease during the meeting days in Latvia.

## **Annex A. Recommended steps for the implementation of the International Treaty at the national level**

### ***Designation of Annex I PGRFA***

1. Initiate the designation process, under the responsibility of the Ministries of Agriculture (MOA), of the material to be included in the multilateral system (MLS) according to Article 11.2 of the Treaty.
  - a. Identify and list the accessions of Annex I crops/species that are under management and control of the MOA (including subordinated institutions) and in the public domain.
  - b. Contact other institutions that are not subordinated to the MOAs but that hold PGRFA collections (e.g. botanic gardens, research institutes, etc.) in order to identify and list Annex I accessions.
  - c. Contact all other holders of PGRFA, such as private plant breeders and NGOs, with encouragement to include those PGRFA listed in Annex I in the MLS of the Treaty.
2. Document, through the National Focal Points for the National Inventories, in these inventories the accessions as identified in the above points 1a, b and c.
3. Forward the above information documented in the National Inventories through EURISCO to the Secretariat of the Treaty at FAO.
4. Inform all the institutions holding PGRFA designated to the MLS according to points 1a, b and c that for these accessions the SMTA has to be used. The institutions can choose whether to use the hard-copy signature, the shrink-wrap or the click-wrap method provided in Art. 10 of the SMTA for the acceptance of the agreement. Where the click-wrap or shrink-wrap methods are chosen, institutions providing materials will need to allow for recipients to opt for signature.
5. Instruct the aforementioned institutions to keep records of all issued SMTAs for future reporting requirements as mentioned in the SMTA text.

### ***Designation of non-Annex I PGRFA***

6. Initiate a discussion with the MOA to establish its preference whether or not to make PGRFA of non-Annex I crops available under the same terms and conditions as Annex I crops, i.e. under the SMTA. It should be noted that accessions that have been collected and included in the collections prior to the entrance into force of the CBD (i.e. Dec. 1993) generally do not have country of origin restrictions and could therefore be made available in accordance with the same conditions as Annex I material. Material collected and included after the entrance into force of the CBD requires consent from the country of origin.
7. Inform all institutions to include information on the conditions under which they will make the material that is not included in the MLS available in the institutional catalogues, Web site, etc.

## **Annex B. Notes of the roundtable discussion on AEGIS held on 8 September 2006**

The notes below are a summary of the discussions that took place during the Tenth Meeting of the ECP/GR Steering Committee (SC). The purpose of the session was to exchange views on the concept of AEGIS, raise any issues of concern, and reach a common understanding on further steps and actions. The discussions were facilitated by Jozef Turok and the notes taken by Jan Engels.

In general, the comments expressed about the concept of AEGIS were positive and supportive and it was felt that the AEGIS project had made substantial progress since its initiation, approximately two years ago, after the Ninth Meeting of the ECP/GR Steering Committee had approved the project. However, a number of issues were expressed and these are listed below, where possible with reference to the country of the member who made the comment. However, if the same point was raised later by another member, this has not been included in the points a second time.

1. As only a relatively small number of SC members have been directly involved in the actual project discussions and the implementation process, it is necessary to improve the communication with the Steering Committee to keep all members adequately informed about progress of AEGIS. It was also noted that the partners within the National Programmes need to be kept well informed as well (Czech Republic).
2. The involvement of **all** countries in AEGIS was declared to be essential (Czech Republic).
3. It would be important to carefully review the current draft Strategy Framework document as some of the concepts used were unclear (e.g. the envisaged establishment of a “regional multilateral system”), and that any substantial changes should be reflected in the objectives of AEGIS. Concern was also expressed regarding the “loss of national sovereignty” over the germplasm accessions that will be identified as AEGIS accessions and included in the “European collection” (Spain).
4. There is a need to be forward looking, especially since “the world gets smaller and smaller” and there is an increasing need to collaborate with each other. Three imperatives were identified that are seen as major challenges for AEGIS:
  - There is a need for a political basis for AEGIS. ECP/GR operates in phases (of 5 years each) whereas AEGIS is intended to be long-term. The latter will need a political consensus and a long-term commitment;
  - The issue of national sovereignty: AEGIS accessions are intended to have a “supreme ownership” (i.e. European) as individual countries use their respective sovereign rights to place identified accessions in the European public domain, whereas they as individual countries are simultaneously expected to accept long-term conservation responsibilities for these accessions;
  - The International Treaty concept has a parallelism to AEGIS and we have to ensure that these two approaches are completely compatible and complementary and in harmony with each other. Important concepts in this respect are the question of sovereignty and the multilateral system as well as the crop/species scope of the two (UK).
5. It was pointed out that the term “ownership” does not occur in the Treaty because of the very specific nature of agricultural crops, in particular with respect to difficulties in

identifying “country of origin”. Consequently, the Treaty refers to sovereignty. It was suggested that the collection holders could be seen as the agents of the multilateral system (MLS) (The Netherlands).

6. Solid political support for AEGIS is critically important as it will allow a logical opportunity to inform the National Coordinators and others of what they are allowed to do and what not in the context of AEGIS (Austria).
7. It is important to explain better how AEGIS fits into the Treaty framework, in particular how AEGIS follows the principles of the Treaty and what the concrete links are. AEGIS is an important way to implement the Treaty, but it should be noted that AEGIS extends much further as it includes not only conservation of germplasm but also characterization, evaluation and other important activities (Germany).
8. AEGIS is based on voluntary participation of countries and on the inclusion of germplasm accessions in the “European collection”. The sharing of responsibilities for conservation needs to be better expressed, as it includes the aspect of having access to all the material that is included in such a European collection (Germany).
9. Access to genetic resources is not, or should not, be the only concern of AEGIS. For instance the regeneration of germplasm conserved *ex situ* is a serious problem to many genebanks and this activity should be considered as an integral part of AEGIS. Sharing of information, knowledge and expertise are key considerations for the future development of AEGIS (Russian Federation).
10. Clarification of the roles and responsibilities between the several institutions belonging to distinct ministries in the implementation of AEGIS should be addressed as a matter of high priority (Portugal).
11. A concern was expressed about the fact that no clear idea yet exists about the costs of implementing AEGIS. It was asked whether extra expenses will have to be sustained by the National Programmes when implementing AEGIS. The suggestion was also made to review the current expenditures of ECP/GR, especially with regard to the necessity of having funds cut from all existing Crop and Thematic Networks with the intention of making superfluous funds available to AEGIS (Poland).
12. It is anticipated that countries will not be able to make more funds available to ECP/GR (including AEGIS) without very strong arguments. One of the aspects that relate to this point is the question of responsibilities that a given country will accept by signing the Memorandum of Understanding for AEGIS. The concern was also expressed that not all European countries and institutions may get involved in AEGIS, and this was seen as an important issue. Finally, there might be a gradual shift from ECP/GR activities to AEGIS activities and such developments need to be adequately formalized (Switzerland).
13. Related to the participation of institutions, it was re-stated that AEGIS is **not** just about storage of germplasm but that related activities such as characterization/evaluation, regeneration, information management, the availability of the right kind of environmental conditions and expertise for specialized activities, etc. are an integral part of the AEGIS system. It can even be considered to have (sub-)regional regeneration programmes. Consequently, it is better to speak of “institutions” and not of “genebanks” as being the partners of AEGIS (Germany).
14. One of the problems for a country like Romania is that it is currently not participating in any of the AEGIS activities, although it was foreseen that all Working Groups would eventually have become involved. A direct involvement was felt essential in order to be able to understand and discuss the issues. The opinion was expressed that it would be difficult to agree with a gradual transformation of ECP/GR into AEGIS (Romania).

15. AEGIS is seen as a “global” project that deals with all important aspects of PGR management, including the socioeconomic aspects, and that the latter also have to be adequately communicated. Although cost efficiency is a key consideration, it is also important that trust and confidence between partners should become stronger as this will provide the basis for improved collaboration (Belgium).
16. As the principles of ECP/GR are based on networking, it would be wrong to reduce the budgets of the existing networks. Steps should certainly be taken to guard against the development of two parallel systems (Czech Republic).
17. Considerations should be given by AEGIS to specific problems, for example regarding how institutions can be assisted in cases where they face serious economic difficulties and/or where existing collections are threatened by genetic erosion or could become unavailable through privatization. The important *Prunus* collection in Hungary is a case in point! Some of the definitions used in the AEGIS Strategy Framework document are confusing and/or overlapping, in particular those of base, active and working collections, and should be reformulated (Hungary).
18. It has been foreseen from the very beginning that AEGIS activities are an integral part of the ECP/GR programme! Therefore, it might be better to avoid the term “AEGIS” where it could be confusing, e.g. to speak of “European collection” instead of AEGIS collection (Germany).
19. The AEGIS concept is OK and thus, work on it should be continued. What remains unclear about AEGIS is the budget and exactly what we want to achieve through the project. For instance, is it necessary to build a new European genebank? With regard to possible donors, it was asked why the EU was not present and why we failed to get them involved. Furthermore, we may have to spend more time on lobbying outside our countries and in the EU for more support. In the same vein, should we not get other stakeholders like university professors, curators, etc., involved in AEGIS? Finally, it is suggested that AEGIS should develop through small and incremental steps rather than being established through a “revolution” (Israel).
20. The Nordic countries are unclear on how NGB would fit into AEGIS, in particular as it is difficult to delegate responsibilities twice! Furthermore, in discussions with the Ministry concerns were expressed regarding the conformity of AEGIS with the Treaty (Finland).
21. The Nordic countries strongly subscribe to the principle of rationalization, but several questions were raised when discussing AEGIS, which could not easily be answered. However, the impression was given that there was no more room for discussions, and with the existing level of understanding, it would not be possible to endorse the Strategy Framework document! In order to convince the decision-makers more answers are needed (Denmark).
22. It was never intended to make final decisions on AEGIS during this meeting, instead only to raise for discussion the next steps that could be undertaken until the end of the current ECP/GR phase. The concern was expressed that we should not proceed too fast, but also not too slowly! We now have a great opportunity and the momentum to develop the AEGIS concept, contributing to the implementation process of the International Treaty at the same time, and this provides us with a clear timeframe! It was observed that some of the Crop Working Groups were starting to turn in circles and this certainly needs to be avoided. Finally, the views expressed by some of the Nordic countries with respect to the participation of NGB were surprising. It is expected that NGB will definitely benefit from an active participation as all the countries would (The Netherlands).

23. It was noted that Finnish germplasm preserved in the Nordic Gene Bank is in the public domain. The Finnish national programme of PGR coordinates all the national conservation efforts on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. Conservation and maintenance is managed by the holder institutes themselves (Finland).
24. NGB was established to conserve germplasm of Nordic countries' origin and this focus has always been maintained. Against this background it was felt necessary to elaborate and clarify some of the intentions of AEGIS. The importance of economic analysis was stressed once again as an essential basis for rationalization of genetic resources, giving the published work on economic aspects of conservation by the CGIAR as an example. It will be of great importance to get a better understanding of what savings, and from where, the cost savings associated with the implementation of AEGIS would be obtained (NGB).
25. It was noted that it will be important to include germplasm of economic interest in the European collection as this may be one way of generating revenues from the germplasm we conserve. It would be important to create a "market" for germplasm in order to get something in return for the conservation efforts. In the long term we cannot expect to receive funds from the government for conservation (Ukraine).
26. Based on the recognition of the importance of economic analyses and the development of tools that allow genebanks to use them in their day-to-day work, it was proposed also to use these "economic considerations" when establishing new collections or genebanks (SEEDNet).
27. It was pointed out that it would be easier to establish "political agreements" if there was clarity about the benefits of creating synergies and complementarities between countries and institutions. In this context, we might want to consider what for instance the Nordic countries have been able to "save" through the establishment of NGB and to use this as an illustration in the AEGIS documentation (UK).
28. A concern was expressed that economic analyses are not that simple and that one has to be very clear on the criteria and procedures used as a basis for the analysis. It was pointed out that the kind of economic analysis in question is very likely to be an integral part of the country reports that are being produced as part of the formulation of the second report of the State of the World's PGRFA by FAO. A plea was made to build on earlier discussions and decisions with respect to the establishment of sub-regional genebanks (an idea that failed to be taken up) and the acceptance of taking a crop- and accession-level approach to regional conservation (Germany).
29. Maintaining cultural heritage is an important issue for Europe (and other parts of the world) and is much better understood by policy-makers and the broad public than keeping agriculture high on the agenda or than the long-term conservation of genetic resources. We might want to take this into consideration when "selling" AEGIS to donors. It was also suggested that we might want to consider taking an AEGIS-like approach at the sub-regional level (Belgium).
30. The role of the EU in the implementation of AEGIS was emphasized once more and it was agreed that the drafting of a strategy on this very point by IPGRI and its putting into action with the support of the SC members would be a good way forward (Germany).
31. It was suggested that a brief and easy-to-read brochure on the key points of AEGIS for decision-makers should be produced. Furthermore, it was pointed out that once AEGIS is fully operational it might provide a very helpful framework to address questions such as the one raised by Hungary – how to maintain collections at threat due to serious economic constraints (The Netherlands).

32. It was noted that it might well be that the “recognition” by AEGIS of germplasm maintained in a given national collection as part of the European collection would help in securing long-term funding commitments from the respective government (Denmark).
33. The already noted concern of several countries regarding how rationalization of collections can be reconciled with the active participation of all countries and/or institutions in AEGIS, as well as the likely competition for resources among them, led to the suggestion being made to address this question in a strategic paper for further discussion (Italy).
34. The abovementioned point also led to the expression of concern that in case a given national genebank could not play an active role in AEGIS, this could result in the loss of the still available human resources in such a genebank (Latvia).
35. One important way of avoiding “exclusion” of countries/genebanks/institutions from AEGIS would be to take a broad view on the conservation activities that it involves. This would allow the system to involve institutions/countries that have a comparative advantage in terms of available expertise, their environmental situation, etc. Furthermore, the target group for AEGIS is the breeders and it is hoped that a more rational conservation approach will also result in improved evaluation of the AEGIS accessions and thus, the facilitating of their use. In fact, the possible savings to be made in conservation should be used for more evaluation and research. Finally, the development of common standards will also help to make sure that the conserved material is better used and thus, to get more benefits out of our AEGIS efforts (Germany).
36. It is not the intention of AEGIS to centralize or decentralize tasks but to build on the strengths that we have through proper coordination. By sharing and even exchanging tasks we may be able to create win-win situations. The example was given that CGN is maintaining two collections (i.e. *Vicia faba* and oats) that are not being used in the Netherlands and that CGN is prepared to hand them over to a collaborating European genebank that is interested in maintaining the material as part of a European effort. The savings CGN would be able to make could be used for other activities (The Netherlands).
37. From the discussions so far the impression was created that AEGIS would be doing “everything”. Whatever the case might be it is certain that conservation will need to be a top priority (NGB).
38. With the earlier reference to breeders being the main user group, a comment was made that more and more germplasm is being used for other purposes, such as maintaining agroecosystems, producing biofuel, etc. Therefore, we should keep clearly in mind the various opportunities for broadening the use of the germplasm when deciding on the various activities (Poland).
39. The conviction was stated that everybody would benefit from increased collaboration. It was also emphasized that an accession-oriented approach would not lead to competition. The opinion was expressed that the role of the Working Groups in AEGIS is very important but that there is a need for further clarification of the organizational framework (Czech Republic).
40. It was asked how far “historical collections” as they exist in Ireland would be of interest to AEGIS and whether they can get incorporated into the European collection (Ireland).
41. At the end of the discussions the facilitator invited Jan Engels to summarize the discussions. He highlighted all the key points made and re-assured the participants that AEGIS represents a very participatory approach and that any impression that was made to the contrary was unintended and unfounded.

## Annex C. Agenda

### **Tenth meeting of the ECP/GR Steering Committee 5-8 September 2006, Riga, Latvia**

Background documents available at  
[http://www.ecpgr.cgiar.org/SteeringCommittee/SC10/SC10\\_backdocs.htm](http://www.ecpgr.cgiar.org/SteeringCommittee/SC10/SC10_backdocs.htm)

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#### **5 September 2006**

##### **Opening** (Chair: I. Rashal)

- 8:30 – 9:00 Opening statements by representatives of the host country and IPGRI  
9:00 – 9:30 Adoption of the Agenda

##### **Status of implementation of Phase VII** (Chair: I. Rashal)

###### **Background document (BD): Secretariat report**

- 9:30 – 10:15 Report on the Implementation of ECP/GR Phase VII (*ECP/GR Coordinator*)  
10:15 – 10:45 *Coffee break*  
10:45 – 11:45 **Discussion and recommendations**

##### **Review of Networks progress during Phase VII** (Chair: Å. Asdal)

###### **BD: WG Progress standard reports / Network's revised budgets**

- 11:45 – 12:15 Review progress of 3 Networks: Cereals; Forages; Oil and Protein Crops  
(*Introduced by Z. Bulinska*)  
12:15 – 12:35 **Discussion and recommendations**  
12:35 – 14:00 *Lunch*  
14:00 – 14:30 Review progress of 2 Networks: Fruit; Sugar Starch and Fibre Crops  
(*Introduced by Jens Weibull*)  
14:30 – 14:50 **Discussion and recommendations**  
14:50 – 15:20 Review progress of 1 Network: Vegetables, Medicinal and Aromatic Plants  
(*Introduced by L. Ayerbe*)  
15:20 – 15:40 **Discussion and recommendations**  
15:40 – 16:10 *Coffee break*  
16:10 – 16:40 Review progress of 3 Networks: Documentation and Information; *In situ*  
and On-farm Conservation; Inter-regional Cooperation (*Introduced by*  
*S. Strajeru*)  
16:40 – 17:00 **Discussion and recommendations**

##### **Sub-regional Networks and their linkages with ECP/GR** (Chair: D. Benediková)

- 17:00 – 17:20 Nordic-Baltic cooperation (*B. Skovmand*)  
17:20 – 17:40 SEEDNet (*E. Thörn*)  
17:40 – 18:00 Central Asia and Trans-Caucasus Network on PGR (*J. Engels, on behalf of*  
*M. Turdieva*)
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**6 September 2006****The International Treaty for PGRFA and ECP/GR** (Chair: G. Kleijer)

- 8:00 – 8:30 The International Treaty (IT) (*G. Moore*)  
 8:30 – 9:00 The Standard Material Transfer Agreement (*B. Visser and F. Begemann*)  
 9:00 – 9:30 EURISCO and the International Treaty (*F. Begemann and S. Dias*)  
 9:30 – 10:30 Small groups exercise (*Steps for the implementation of the IT at national level*)  
 10:30 – 11:00 *Coffee break*

**Information on new developments in international fora/institutions** (Chair: M. Veteläinen)***BD: Abstracts of presentations***

- 11:00 – 11:20 Introduction  
 11:20 – 11:40 The European Seed Association and ECP/GR (*Kees Noome*)  
 11:40 – 12:00 PGR developments - FAO (*S. Diulgheroff*)  
 12:00 – 12:20 The NGOs and ECP/GR (*B. Bartha*)  
 12:20 – 12:40 The International Safety World Project (Svalbard initiative) (*B. Skovmand*)  
 12:40 – 14:10 *Lunch*  
 14:10 – 14:30 EUCARPIA – Genetic resources activities (*J. Prohens*)  
 14:30 – 14:50 Agricultural biodiversity for human well-being: a new strategy for IPGRI (*J. Turok*)

***Additional information provided as hard copy:***

- European Plant Conservation Strategy and SEBI 2010 (*provided by N. Maxted*)  
 Botanic Gardens Conservation International (*provided by S. Sharrock*)

**Planning for subsequent Phase VIII** (Chair: J. Engels)• **AEGIS**

- 14:50 – 15:20 Report of the AEGIS feasibility study (*ECP/GR Coordinator*)

***BD: AEGIS feasibility study report***

- 15:20 – 15:50 *Coffee break*  
 15:50 – 16:20 AEGIS vision for the future (WG and SC perspective in 2015) (*D. Astley and G. Kleijer*)

***BD: AEGIS Strategy Framework Document***

- 16:20 – 16:40 AEGIS: which future? (*Introduced by B. Visser and F. Begemann*)  
 16:40 – 17:00 Resources for AEGIS (*Introduced by L. Maggioni*)

**7 September 2006**• **AEGIS (continued)**

- 8:30 – 10:00 **Discussion and recommendations**  
 10:00 – 10:30 *Coffee break*

**Planning for subsequent Phase VIII (continued)** (Chair: G. Aleksidze)• **Networks workplans*****BD: Networks' proposals, as part of the Bonn's meeting report***

- 10:30 – 13:10 Proposals from the NCGs for Networks activities during Phase VIII  
 (*Z. Bulinska, J. Weibull, L. Ayerbe and S. Strajeru*)

**Discussion and recommendations**

- 13:10 – 14:30 *Lunch*

- 15:00 *Excursion to Riga and dinner at Lido Recreation Centre*

## **8 September 2006**

### **Wrap-up**

- 8:30 – 13:00 Drafting and finalizing the Steering Committee recommendations.  
*Members who are not involved in the drafting are free in the morning*
- 13:00 – 14:30 *Lunch*

### **Conclusion** (Chair: M. Ibbotson)

- 14:30 – 16:30 Approval of recommendations
- 16:30 – 17:00 Any other business and closing remarks
- 16:30 – 17:00 *Coffee*  
*Social dinner*

## Annex D. List of participants

### *Tenth meeting of the ECP/GR Steering Committee 5-8 September 2006, Jurmala, Riga, Latvia*

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