

ECPGR operational structure: analysis and recommendations

Bert Visser

Chair Task Force Operational Structure

December 2012



Elements of this report

- Task Force: process
- Analysis of current structure
- Considerations for a new structure
- Recommendations
 - Networks and working groups (1-8)
 - Steering Committee (9)
 - Executive Committee (-)
 - Secretariat (10-11)
 - Hosting Organization (12)



Process

- ExCo established task force in March 2012
 - Külli Annamaa, Gordana Djuric, Lorenzo Maggioni and Jan Engels, Bert Visser
- Preparatory questionnaire distributed via ECPGR list server
- Task force met at Bioversity
 - 9 – 11 May 2012
- Report finalized after meeting
- Alternative recommendations Secretariat (10 – 11)
- Evaluation by SC (Sept 2012)



ECPR goals and outcomes vis-à-vis ECPGR structure

- Operationalization AEGIS
- Improving EURISCO
- Agreeing on *in situ/on-farm* concepts
- Strengthening user relations
- Crop WGs
- Network Info/Docu
- Network *In situ/on-farm*
- ?? Crop WGs??



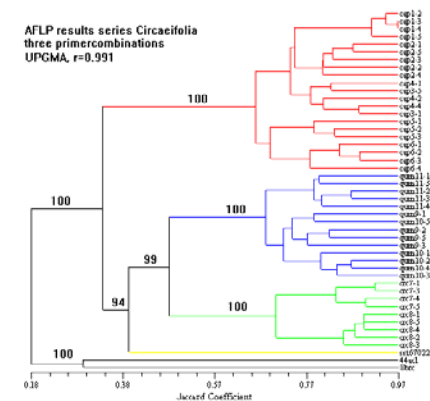
Analysis current structure: strengths

- Clear and detailed structure
- Bundling of expertise in Europe
- Facilitating information exchange
- Capacity building forum
- Joint analysis of common issues
- Facilitating project proposal development
- Authority of WGs across region
- *Common effect: More regional coherence*



Analysis current structure: weaknesses

- Limited innovation
 - Response to technological & political changes
- Unequal activities across WGs
 - Causes: lack of capacity, lack of commitment, lack of engagement
- Poor user engagement
- Complex two-layered structure
- Representation as major organization principle
 - Challenge to agree on and reach certain outputs



Potential gains

- Smaller dedicated activities →
more focused outputs
- Flexibility in WG activities over phase →
better need response
- Establishment WG member pools →
more expertise driven
- Selection available experts from pools →
output orientation
- *Condition: retain capacity building options*

Recommendations: Working groups (1)

1. Maintain WGs, dissolve networks
 - Little added benefit from network level
 - Networks not supported in questionnaire response
2. Establish pool of experts per WG, organize WG activities in subgroups
 - Abolish country quota
 - Organize work in smaller groups
 - Maintain engagement of all countries
 - by changing composition of subsequent groups
 - by ECPGR/wide communication progress and results
 - **ExCo recommends to retain quota system**



Recommendations: Working groups (2)

3. Identification of WG members, selection of subgroup per activity
 - Virtual expert pools established
 - 12 members total per activity/subgroup
 - Incl. 4 members for capacity building purposes
4. Activities both bottom-up and at the SC request
 - WG chair proposes/composes activity subgroups
 - In consultation with Secretariat
 - Agreement of NCs required
 - **ExCo not in favor of cap dev**



Recommendations: Working groups (3)

5. Members pledge commitment to activity
 - Via Expression of interest
 - Only active members (12) in meetings
 - Increased output levels
6. Part of WG budget reserved for initiatives
 - Facilitate bottom-up activities
 - Accommodate innovation
 - E.g. allow project proposal development



Recommendations: Working groups (4)

7. NCs *nominate* user rep's and WG chairs
involve user rep's
 - Benefit from user involvement
 - In line with agreed Bratislava outcomes
8. Task Force enabling user engagement
 - Response to outcome identification
 - Identification of specific user interests



Recommendations: Steering Committee

9. Increase communication between NCs and country experts/stakeholders
 - Decrease SC distance from the “ floor”
 - NCs should not only be active in the SC or at the time of SC meetings
 - Role of NCs to oversee activities, capacity and needs/gaps in the country



Recommendations: ExCo

- No recommendation
 - ExCo only two years in operation
 - First experiences highly positive



Recommendations: Secretariat

10. Keep current staff size, give more priority to fundraising
 - Increase budget secretariat not likely
 - Fundraising as long-term need recognized
 - Reduction of some support functions
11. Transform chair of ExCo into Executive Director
 - Chair is representing members
 - Exec. Director a part-time in-kind contribution

Different proposal by Secretariat



Recommendations: hosting organization

12. Tender procedure for hosting the ECPGR Secretariat

- Bioversity long-time host
- Partly free services → full cost recovery
- European Regional Office dissolved
- Less expertise and focus on *ex situ* PGR
- High share of secretariat costs in total budget
- Value for money

Meanwhile initiated by ExCo



On activities

- € 25K → € 15K per activity
- Allowing 7 → 11 – 12 activities per year
- Yes/**no** strict limit to number of participants
- Collegium of EG Chairs
 - Meeting electronically of adjacent to SC



Alternative proposals

- Country quota system (rec 2)
- Capacity building facility (rec 3-4)
- Functions secretariat (rec 10)
 - Fund raising
- Role ExCo Chair/Executive Director (rec 11)
- Activity budgets (Appendix)



Concluding remarks

- Major theme
 - Representation vis-à-vis output focus
 - How to (better) combine both principles?
- Spirit TF
 - Full harmony
 - How to enhance functioning of ECPGR?
- Large agreement TF and ExCo
- *Can we re-invent ECPGR?*

