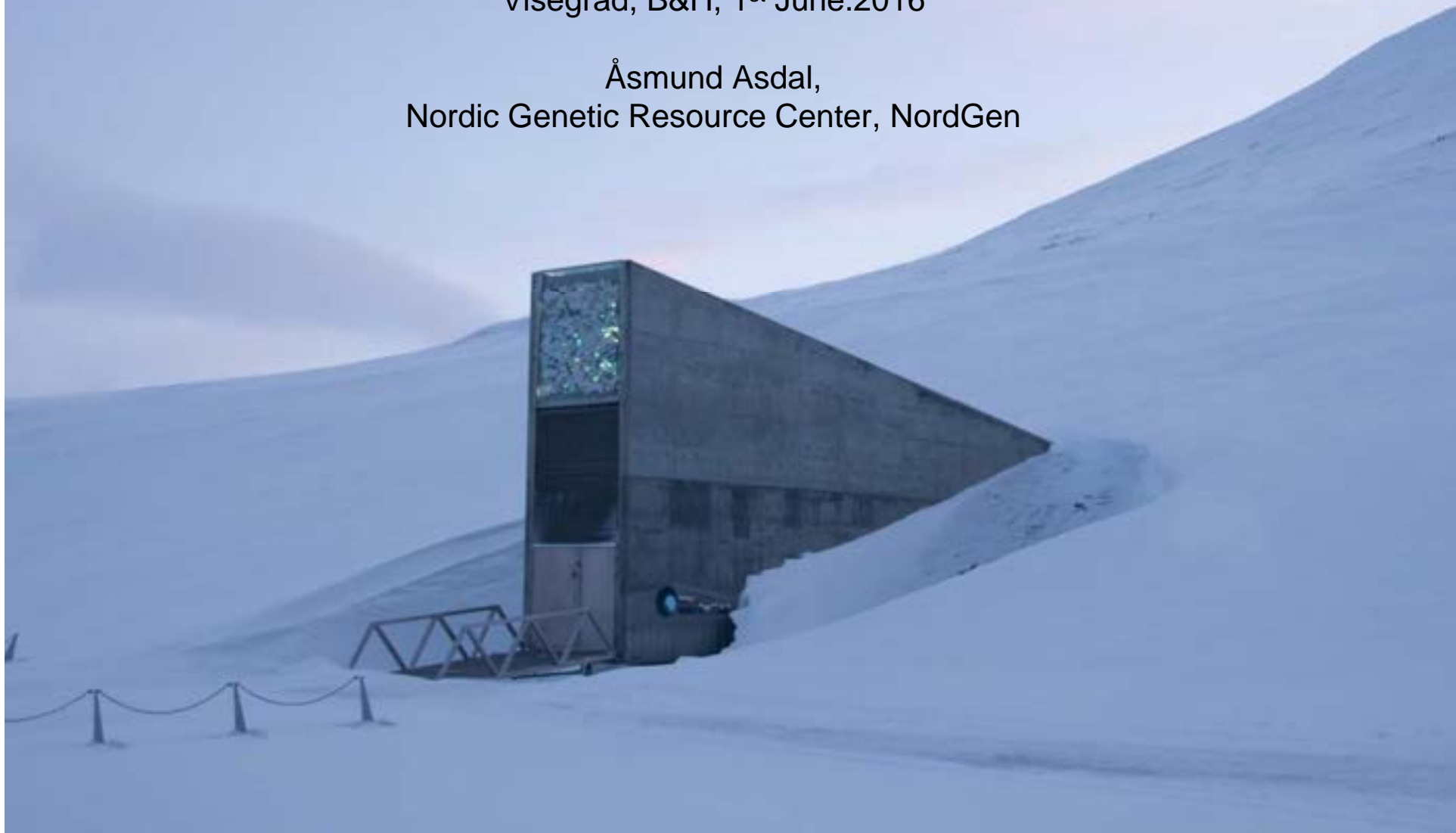


The Svalbard Seed Vault and collaboration with ECPGR

ECPGR Steering Committee
Visegrad, B&H, 1st June.2016

Åsmund Asdal,
Nordic Genetic Resource Center, NordGen



How to increase ECPGR / SGSV collaboration?

This presentation:

- a) General SGSV information
- b) Discuss and initiate cooperation
- c) Encourage use of the Seed Vault from European gene bank collections
- d) Identify bottlenecks and discuss how to eliminate these
- e) Establish country contacts for further information and cooperation



*A European Genebank
Integrated System*

Agreed SGSV objectives:

All unique gene bank seed accessions conserved in national, regional and international gene banks are safety duplicated in Svalbard Global Seed Vault

What can ECPGR do?

- a) Stress the need for safety duplication of seeds (documents, meetings, information platforms etc.)
- b) Facilitate contact between ECPGR member states and their gene bank collections

Can National Coordinators act as mediators between SGSV / ECPGR and gene banks in Europe?

What can SGSV offer:

- Safe storage of gene bank duplicates
 - ‘Safest seed store on the globe’, free of charge
 - Information about facility and options, e.g. seminars, meetings, visits for potential depositors etc.
 - Smooth cooperation on seed deposits
- Publicity and commitment about conservation of PGR.
 - Interest for the SGSV mission from media and politicians is significant / overwhelming
 - SGSV can cooperate with ECPGR and NPs/gene banks on public awareness / information events and efforts



NordGen

Svalbard Global Seed Vault

- brief history

- Need for safety facility discussed since the 80-ies, Svalbard suggested a suitable site
- Pilot storage of back-up seeds from the Nordic Gene Bank in cole mine
- An updated evaluation of options was requested in the spring 2004 (after ITPGRFA)
- Project announced by the Nordic prime ministers in June 2006
- The SGSV was opened in February 2008
- All gene banks are invited to deposit safety duplicate seeds at SGSV.



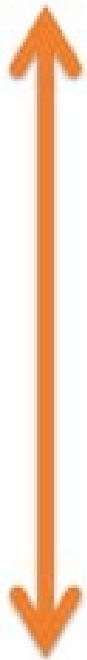
Why Svalbard:

- According to Norwegian commitment on biological diversity and PGR
- Svalbard well suited because of cold climate, (permafrost), geologically stable, remote site, good infrastructure and low level of potential conflicts.
- Countries and gene bank trust that Norway and partners will take care of treasure seeds

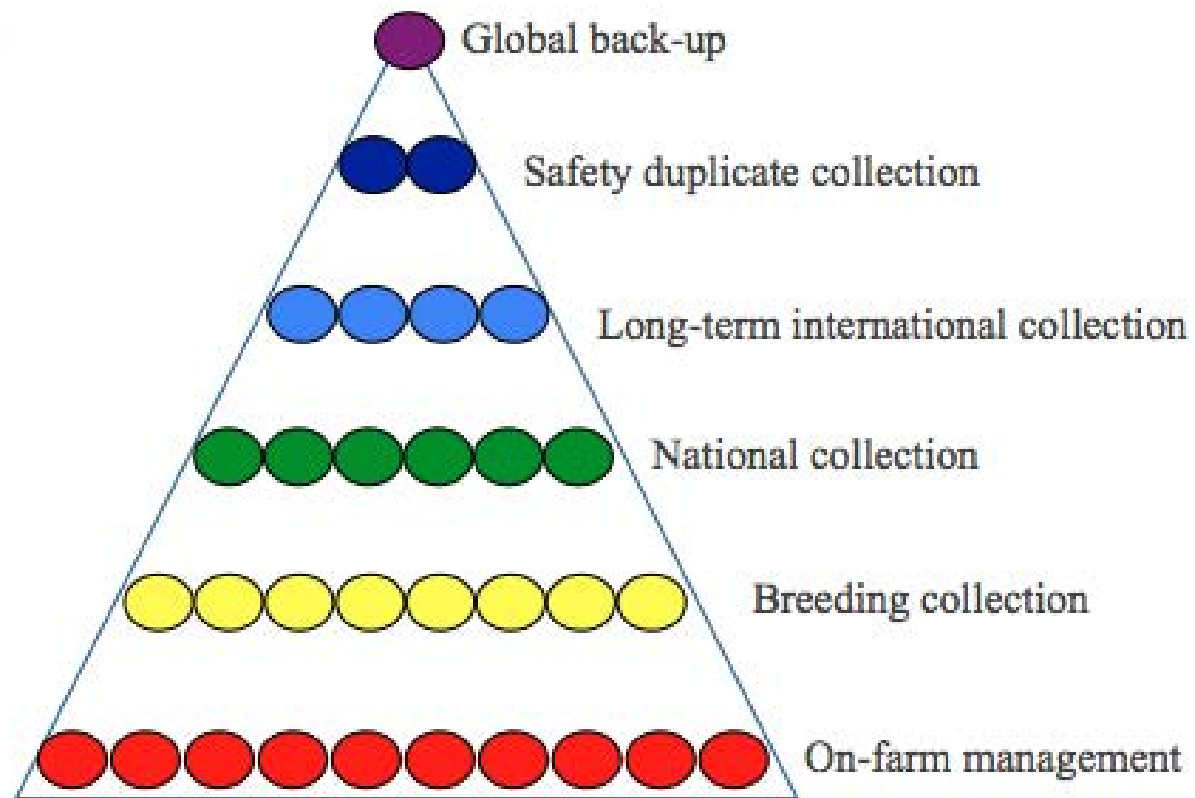


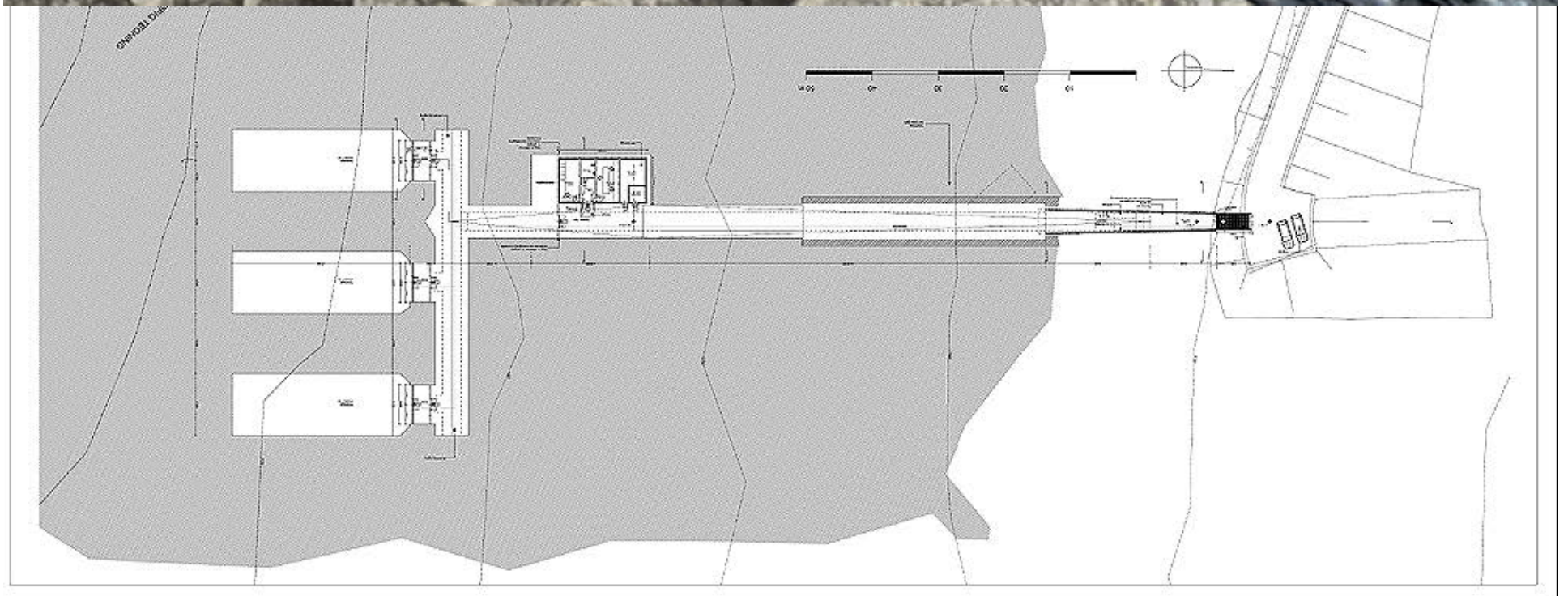
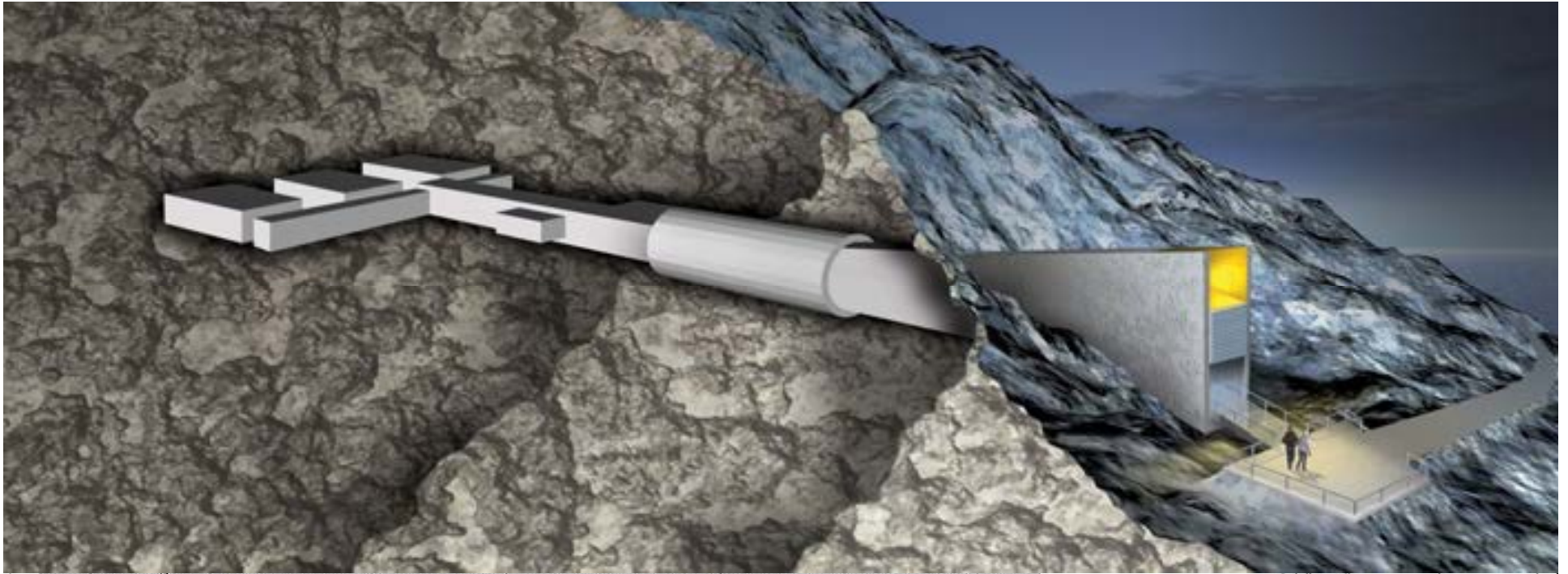
The global system for conservation of PGR

Conservation



Use





The Structure

- Storage halls embedded in solid rock (120 m. into the mountainside)
- 130 m. above sea (above worst case climate change scenario for ice melting)
- Geologically stable location
- Temperature maintained at -18°C
- Permafrost provides natural freeze guarantee at -4°C in the event of equipment failure
- Monitoring and surveillance with gas- and temperature-detectors and security camera



The Organization

- **The Norwegian government**
 - The owner, funder and liable national authority
- **The Global Crop Diversity Trust**
 - Partly funding the Seed Vault as part of the global conservation system
- **NordGen**
 - Responsible for the management and operation
- **Statsbygg**
 - Responsible for servicing and continuous surveillance
- **International Advisory Council**
 - Oversees the operation of the Vault



Global policy context

- ITPGRFA: “cooperate to promote the development of an efficient and sustainable system of *ex situ* conservation...”
- GPA: “develop a rational, efficient, goal oriented, economically efficient and sustainable system of *ex-situ* conservation and use ...”

