

# Report of the Technical Consultative Committee

*Sixth meeting  
21-23 September 1995  
Nitra, Slovakia*



**T. Gass, G. Kleijer, M. Waldman and  
E. Frison, editors**





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## Introduction

### *Opening remarks*

The sixth meeting of the Technical Consultative Committee of ECP/GR was opened by Ing. Gabriela Hanáková, Director of the Agroinštitút, Nitra. She welcomed the delegates, expressed her satisfaction in hosting the Technical Consultative Committee and wished the delegates a successful meeting.

The Group was then welcomed by Dr A. Zofajova, Head of the Slovak Genetic Resources Programme. She mentioned that this TCC meeting is taking place in Nitra at a time when Slovakia celebrates the 1000th day of its sovereignty. Nitra itself is located at the heart of the agronomic area of Slovakia and its University which was established in 1942 focuses on agricultural research. Dr Zofajova also introduced the National Programme of Slovakia. The lead institute is located at Piešťany and strong collaborative links exist with the University of Nitra in the area of collection and documentation. Dr Zofajova expressed her wish to see a successful meeting taking place in the Agroinštitút in Nitra.

Dr E. Frison then addressed the delegates on behalf of the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI). He thanked the Slovak Ministry of Agriculture for accepting to host this important meeting, thereby showing the increasing commitment of Slovakia to plant genetic resources. He also thanked the Agroinštitút for their assistance in organizing the meeting and for their warm hospitality.

Dr Frison reminded the delegates that ECP/GR was at a turning point when the Committee last met in Bulgaria in 1993. Following the unanimous recommendation to implement Phase V of the Programme, much effort was expended by National Coordinators and by IPGRI to transform this personal commitment into national commitments to the Programme. While previously the TCC met once per Phase of the Programme, it was recommended at the last meeting in 1993, that a mid-phase meeting be organized in 1995 to discuss the scope of the working groups and address issues regarding the *modus operandi* of the programme.

Dr Frison reaffirmed IPGRI's strong commitment to ECP/GR which it values as a model for collaboration. He expressed his satisfaction that all but one participating country was represented at this meeting.

The TCC expressed its regrets that Dr I. Byrne from Ireland, Dr G. Apostolatos and Dr R. Hardwick from the European Commission were unable to attend the meeting.

### *Election of officers*

Dr G. Kleijer from Switzerland was elected to Chair the meeting and Dr M. Waldman from Israel was elected as Vice Chairperson.

### *Adoption of the Agenda*

In consideration of the importance of the questions related to the structure of ECP/GR in several items on the agenda, it was suggested that the agenda be modified to regroup these at the beginning of the discussions. This suggestion was accepted by the Committee and the revised agenda presented in Appendix I was adopted.

### *Report of the ECP/GR Coordinator*

Dr T. Gass presented a report of the activities carried out within the framework of ECP/GR during the first part of Phase V (the report is included in Appendix II) . He described the efforts undertaken to secure the continuation of the Programme after the decision of the TCC in 1993 to implement Phase V. Currently 30 countries participate in the Programme and several more have expressed their interest in joining.

Dr Gass went on to describe the activities carried out within the working groups of which four have held meetings since the beginning of the Phase. In addition, *ad hoc* meetings on documentation and on *Malus* genetic resources have been held in close collaboration with ECP/GR. A new working group dealing with grain legumes held its first meeting in July 1995.

The Programme has also played an important role in facilitating the preparation of projects to be submitted to the EU Programme on Plant Genetic Resources (EC) 1467/94. Projects were submitted by members of each of the ECP/GR working groups existing at the time of the call for proposals of (EC) 1467/94.

Dr Gass then described the role ECP/GR had played in the preparatory process leading to the Fourth International Technical Conference on Plant Genetic Resources (Leipzig, June 1996). He expressed his satisfaction at the excellent response of countries to FAO's request for country Reports and emphasized the role ECP/GR had played as an information platform in the preparatory process.

Finally, Dr Gass presented the financial summary of Phase IV (Appendix II).

The report was adopted by the TCC.

## **Review of the objectives of ECP/GR**

The TCC reviewed the objectives established for ECP/GR by the TCC in 1993. These are:

- first and foremost to ensure the long-term conservation and to facilitate and encourage the increased utilization of plant genetic resources in Europe;
- to increase the planning of joint activities;
- to strengthen links between east and west European plant genetic resources programmes;
- to develop joint project proposals to be submitted to funding agencies;
- to contribute to monitoring the safety of plant genetic resources collections and take appropriate action when required, and
- to increase public awareness at all levels of the importance of plant genetic resources activities.

Recognizing:

- the role played by ECP/GR for the last 15 years in developing a pan-European collaboration on PGR;
- the experience gained in coordinating collaborative efforts in a cost effective way;
- the significant results obtained by the Programme;
- the entry into force of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the adoption by many countries of Agenda 21;
- the existence of various national, bilateral and regional activities in the European Region;
- the importance of international, regional and bilateral cooperation in the area of plant genetic resources, and
- the potential role of ECP/GR in implementing the Global Plan of Action in the European region as part of the FAO Global System on Plant Genetic Resources,

the group agreed that these objectives are still appropriate and that no changes are required. It was also noted that they formed part of the agreement signed by countries participating in Phase V of ECP/GR.

## **Structure of the Programme, new initiatives and role of the Steering Committee**

ECP/GR has operated for 15 years on the basis of crop-specific working groups. It was recognized that this had allowed the establishment of a strong basis for collaboration throughout Europe.

The TCC felt that regional collaboration needs to be extended beyond a limited number of crops and that ECP/GR should adapt its operational structure to allow activities on other

crops or themes to be carried out. Three proposals for new working groups were put forward:

- *Malus* and *Pyrus* (Appendix III)
- *Daucus* (Appendix IV)
- ECP/GR PGR documentation (Appendix V).

To respond to these requests and to allow more flexibility to extend beyond a limited number of crops, a new programme structure was agreed upon. This new structure was subsequently modified further after decision of the Committee during an extraordinary meeting on 25/9/95. The structure finally agreed upon is the following:

ECP/GR is overseen by a **Steering Committee**, consisting of National Coordinators nominated by participating countries. The EC and MAB are invited to nominate a representative as full member of this Committee. FAO, IPGRI, the Nordic Gene Bank and ASSINSEL are invited as observers. The Programme operates through broad networks in which activities are either carried out in the framework of **working groups** or as *ad hoc* actions.

The **Steering Committee** has the overall responsibility of the Programme, approves its budget and provides technical and policy guidance to the programme. It takes decisions regarding the general scope of the networks and the establishment or termination of working groups. The Steering Committee provides guidelines for and approves *ad hoc* activities. The Steering Committee mandates the Coordinating Secretariat to carry out decisions of the Steering Committee and reviews the progress made by the networks. The steering committee can also make recommendations regarding *ad hoc* activities which are funded from other sources.

The **Coordinating Secretariat** is currently provided by IPGRI as appointed by the Steering Committee.

The responsibilities of the Coordinating Secretariat are:

- to ensure the implementation of the programme in accordance with the mandate given by the Steering Committee;
- to coordinate the activities carried out in the framework of the programme;
- to be responsible for the financial management of the Programme;
- to provide technical and financial reports to the Steering Committee for approval;
- to provide support to working groups and ensure that the agreed workplans are carried out;
- to initiate *ad hoc* activities in accordance with guidance provided by the Steering Committee;
- to gather and distribute information;
- to assist in the formulation of project proposals for joint activities;
- to search for donors to support particular elements of workplans and *ad hoc* activities;
- to link with other regions, and
- to contribute to raising public awareness.



The **networks** are broad organizational structures that accommodate different types of activities contributing towards the general objectives of the Programme. The networks are crop or theme oriented. The networks are the structural elements through which progress of the Programme is reported and priorities are set.

The following networks are established:

1. Cereals network
2. Forages network
3. Grain legumes network
4. Industrial crops and potato network
5. Vegetables network
6. Fruits network
7. Minor crops network
8. Documentation and information network
9. *In situ* and on-farm conservation Network
10. Technical cooperation Network

The subject matter of networks and their number will be reviewed periodically and modified as required.

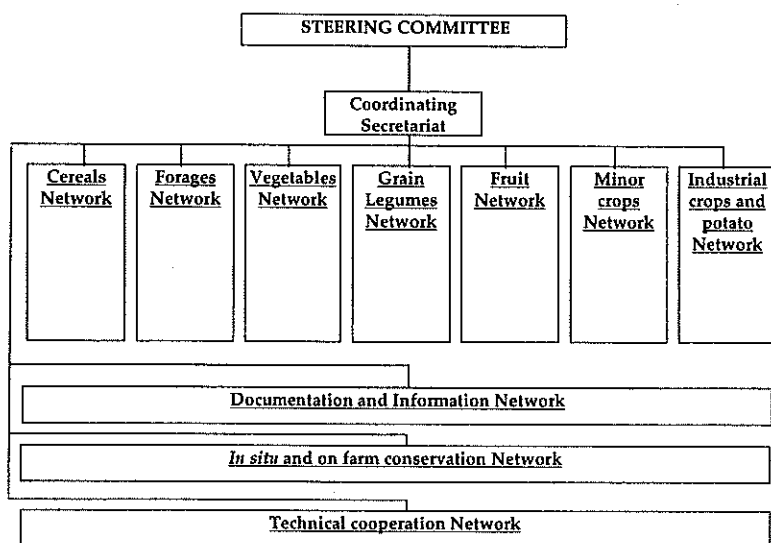
**Working groups** focus their activity on specific crops, crop groups or thematic areas. They are initiated following the approval of the Steering Committee. ECP/GR provides funding for the organization of working group meetings and the publication of the resulting reports. National Coordinators are invited to nominate an **Attending** or a **Corresponding Member** to represent the country's interest in the genetic resources activities that the working group focuses on. The working groups are expected to meet once or twice during Phase V of the Programme. Ideally the number of Members attending a specific meeting will not exceed 16. The actions carried out by the members of the working groups, for example, the management of European Crop Databases or the hosting of European Collections, are not *a priori* funded by the Programme. They are considered as an input in kind by participating institutions to the European cooperation on plant genetic resources. During Phase V a budget of USD 336,000 is foreseen for the organization of working group meetings. The continuation of a working group is decided on by the Steering Committee.

*Ad hoc* actions are initiated by the Secretariat, following the guidance of the Steering Committee. *Ad hoc* actions contribute towards the general objectives of the Programme and are carried out in the framework of the Programme's networks. *Ad hoc* actions can be *inter alia*:

- meetings of small groups dealing with specific technical issues or with crops not yet covered by existing working groups;
- technical symposia dealing with methodological aspects of plant genetic resources conservation;
- collaborative actions with other international and regional programmes and projects, and
- facilitate the participation of institutions from non-EU countries of the region in projects submitted to and accepted by the European Commission.

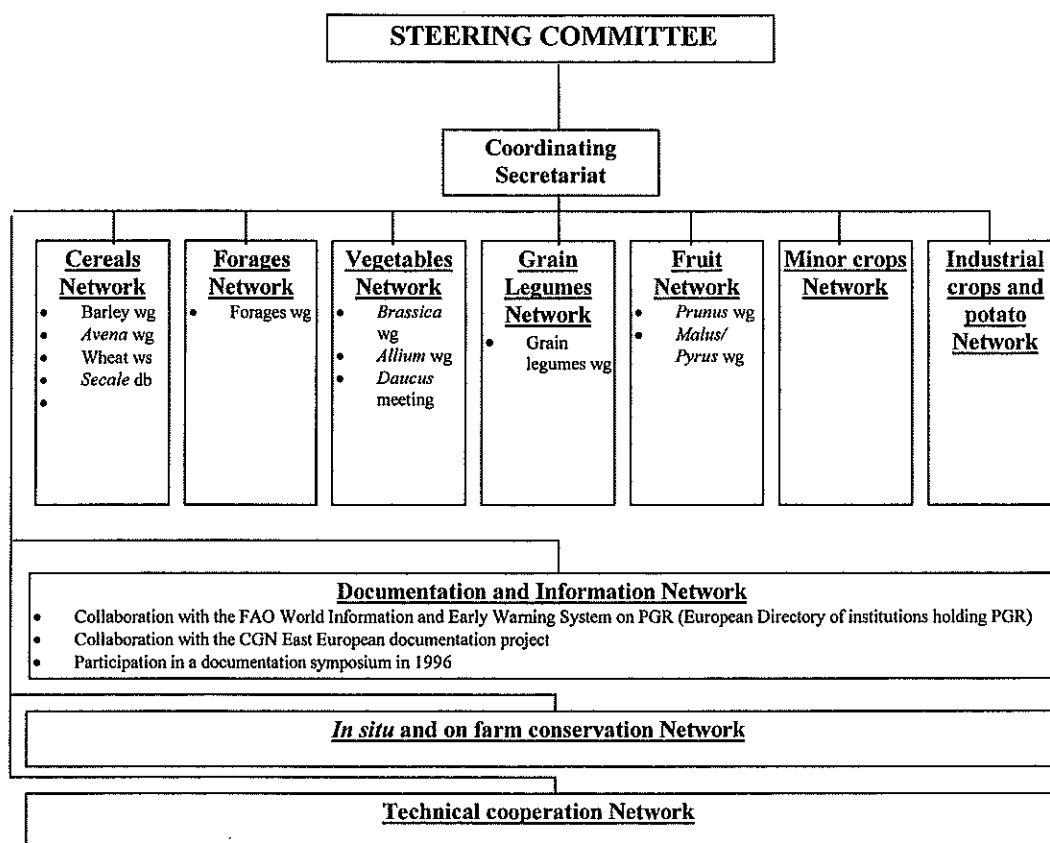
In Phase V, a budget up to USD 96,000 can be used for *ad hoc* actions.

**Figure 1: Operational structure of EC/GR**



*Activities currently foreseen within the organizational structure of ECP/GR*

**Figure 2. Organizational structure of ECP/GR with current activities**



*Programme for working group meetings and ad hoc actions during Phase V*

	1994 2nd sem.	1995 1st sem.	1995 2nd sem.	1996 1st sem.	1996 2nd sem.	1997 1st sem.	1997 2nd sem.	1998 1st sem.	1998 2nd sem.
<b>Steering Committee</b>			X						X
<b>Cereals Network</b>									
Barley wg <sup>1)</sup>								X	
<i>Avena</i> wg									X
Wheat ws <sup>2)</sup>				X					
<b>Forages Network</b>									
Forages wg		X				X			
<b>Vegetables Network</b>									
Brassica wg	X				X				
Allium wg		X					X		
<b>Grain legumes Network</b>									
Grain legumes wg			X				X		
<b>Fruit Network</b>									
<i>Prunus</i> wg				X				X	
<i>Malus/Pyrus</i> wg						X			
<b>Minor crops Network</b>									
<b>Industrial crops &amp; potato Network</b>									
<b><i>In situ</i> and on-farm conservation Network</b>									
<b>Technical cooperation Network</b>									
<b>Documentation and information Network</b>									

1) wg: Working groups

2) ws: Workshop

**Ad hoc actions**

Cereals Network:

*Ad hoc* actions on wheat, rye and triticale

Documentation Network:

Collaboration in organizing a Documentation Symposium in 2nd semester 1996

Vegetable Network:

A *Daucus ad hoc* meeting in 2nd semester 1996

The TCC recommends that:

- the proposed framework does not imply a commitment by countries to fund activities which could be included in the framework;
- in addition to existing bilateral and subregional activities, subregional activities be encouraged;
- in addition to existing links with NGOs and breeders, a closer collaboration at a regional level be encouraged, and
- priorities for funding proposals by other bodies such as the EU be encouraged to complement and add value to the activities of ECP/GR.

## Representation of countries within activities

In the past, participation in working groups depended on the country's interests and the level of activity in the country on the crop concerned. During Phase IV, most working group meetings had between 10 and 14 countries participating.

During the first year of Phase V, several new countries have joined the Programme, bringing the number of ECP/GR countries to 30. In recent years, plant genetic resources have been given more attention and several countries have expressed an interest in being involved in the activities of working groups in which they were not previously represented. In addition, IPGRI has received requests directly from scientists who wished to attend particular working group meetings.

The resources available for Phase V would allow the participation of about 15-16 participants in each working group meeting but not more. This group size is generally about the maximum to allow effective interaction during meetings, which is essential for the development and successful implementation of the group's workplan.

In March 1995, a fax sent by IPGRI to the National Coordinators addressed individual countries' participation in the ECP/GR working groups. It suggested that participation in the working groups would occur as an **Attending Member** whose participation in the meetings will be fully funded as before, or as **Corresponding Member** who would keep a high level of interaction with the group without, however, attending the meeting.

This arrangement offers the following advantages:

- it helps maintain the costs of meetings within the budget frame;
- it promotes the crop specific coordination within each country as the **Attending** or **Corresponding Member** has a representative role for the particular crop and is charged with 'taking home' the recommendations and the workplan agreed upon during the meeting, and
- it contributes towards maintaining groups at a size which is conducive to a dynamic discussion and the elaboration of practical workplans.

The TCC recognized that it was necessary to agree on a mechanism to determine the number of participants attending working group meetings in order to ensure the efficiency of these meetings. It was suggested that, whenever possible, some flexibility should be applied to allow the attendance of some specialists who would otherwise not be invited.

Considering the fact that activities in Phase V have been agreed upon for an additional working group on *Malus* and *Pyrus* and to hold a workshop on wheat, it was agreed that the following guideline should be used:

Yearly contribution	Number of working groups to which <b>Attending Members</b> can be nominated
2,000	3
5,000	4
10,000	5
30,000	7

In the case of the Nordic countries it has been agreed that the Nordic Gene Bank will nominate two **Attending Members** to each working group to represent all the Nordic countries.

It is understood that these guidelines would have to be modified if additional groups were established or existing ones reorganized.

## **Collaboration with NGOs and with the Private Sector**

In recent years, NGOs and the private sector are playing an increasingly important role in conservation and prebreeding activities of plant genetic resources. This is why the TCC recommends that:

- members of the working group address relevant organizations within the country and be informed about their recent activities to be able to present this information to the working group;
- a representative of the private sector be nominated as a member of the working group when relevant, and
- invitation of observers to working group meetings be considered if the number of attending members is not too high. This will only be possible after consulting with the chairmen of the working group and the National Coordinator.

## **Interaction with International and Regional Initiatives**

The TCC recognizes the need for complementarity with other bodies, programmes or collaborative projects addressing plant genetic resources, such as EUCARPIA, ESCORENA, the Italian-funded project of Conservation and Use of Underutilized Mediterranean Species (UMS), the EU programme (EC) 1467/94, ICPPGR and the World Information and Early Warning System on Plant Genetic Resources of FAO.

In order to strengthen the collaboration with such bodies the TCC recommends the participation of representatives of these organizations in ECP/GR working group meetings and *ad hoc* actions when relevant.

The TCC recommends that within the EU programme (EC) 1467/94, the participation of scientists from non-EU members countries.

## **Crop-specific coordination at national level**

The TCC emphasized the importance of promoting, within countries, the interaction of persons concerned with genetic resources of each crop (including breeders, researchers and others) and of coordinating all relevant activities. The TCC recognized that different structures of national programmes exist in Europe. Each structure has advantages and disadvantages. The TCC noted that IPGRI is currently carrying out a study of the coordination structures in Europe, based on the country reports. The TCC recommends that IPGRI produce an overview of these different models of national coordination structures.

## **Communication between IPGRI and the National Coordinators**

The TCC noted with satisfaction the increase in activities and potential of ECP/GR following the nomination of a full-time coordinator for the Programme. The improvement of the close contacts between the Secretariat and the National Coordinators has increased the involvement of national institutes and relevant ministries in most countries.

The TCC congratulates IPGRI for the good quality of the Newsletter for Europe, launched in March 1994. All the five issues were found to be very informative and succeeded in serving the need for exchange of information and views within the plant genetic resources community in Europe.

Additional possibilities for exchange of information were discussed. To further increase the efficiency of communication within the programme and to provide a rapid access to information related to funding possibilities and international negotiations concerning plant genetic resources, the TCC strongly recommends that all national coordinators take the necessary steps to have access to electronic mail facilities, if possible.

The TCC recommends that IPGRI inform national coordinators about requests that were forwarded to different institutes or organizations within their country.

In addition to the very useful Quarterly Report to the National Coordinators, the TCC requests an annual report covering also financial aspects.

## **Promoting Public awareness at national and regional levels**

Promoting the public awareness of the importance of crop genetic resources is one of the objectives of ECP/GR for its Phase V. This topic was presented by Ruth Raymond, IPGRI's public awareness officer. In her presentation, she mentioned different methodological aspects of promoting public awareness and the importance of adapting the strategies to different situations. A few examples were given of experiences within national programmes. The success of IPGRI's new poster series was also noted.

## **European Commitment to conserving plant genetic resources**

The topic was introduced by Dr Gass who mentioned that the participation of 30 countries in ECP/GR illustrates the formal commitment to plant genetic resources within the region. European collaboration has yielded positive examples of regional solidarity such as the quick response to the emergency situation faced by the field genebank in Olomouc (financial aid

from Overseas Development Agency, ODA), the Dutch-funded documentation project in eastern Europe, the Nordic Baltic cooperation and the numerous agreements for safety duplication of collections. Dr Gass also mentioned the less positive example of the Vavilov Institute, where needs for assistance in reorganization, regeneration and duplication of collections still exist.

The TCC noted that a true commitment to the long-term conservation of PGR is still lacking in many countries and that an effort has to be made in order to achieve this.

## **Input of ECP/GR to the Fourth International Technical Conference on Plant Genetic Resources**

The TCC agreed that the most significant input it could make to the Regional Meeting on Plant Genetic Resources was to adapt ECP/GR to enable it to serve as the platform for cooperation on crop genetic resources in Europe.

A recommendation was prepared by the TCC for the Regional Meeting on Plant Genetic Resources and later revised during an extraordinary meeting of the Committee on 25/9/95. (The revised version of the recommendation is included in Appendix VI).

## **Revision and approval of the report**

After revision by the TCC, the report of the meeting was adopted.

## *Appendix I            Agenda*

Sixth Meeting of the Technical Consultative Committee of the European Cooperative Programme for Crop Genetic Resources Networks (ECP/GR)

1. Opening of the meeting  
Introductory statements by representatives of the host country and IPGRI  
Election of the Chair  
Adoption of the Agenda
2. ECP/GR Mid-Phase report  
Presentation of the report by the ECP/GR Coordinator  
Discussion and adoption of the report
3. Review of the objectives of ECP/GR
4. Structure of the Programme, new initiatives and role of the Steering Committee
5. Representation of countries within activities
6. Collaboration with NGOs and with the private sector
7. Interaction with international and regional initiatives
8. Crop-specific coordination at national level
9. Communication between IPGRI and the National Coordinators
10. Promoting public awareness at national and regional levels
11. European commitment to conserving plant genetic resources
12. Input of ECP/GR to the Fourth International Technical Conference on Plant Genetic Resources
13. Review and approval of the report.



## Appendix II      Report of the ECP/GR Coordinator

Following the recommendation of the TCC to implement Phase V of ECP/GR the two tasks that IPGRI had to carry out as a priority were to ensure countries participation in Phase V of the Programme and to recruit a full-time coordinator. In close collaboration with National Coordinators, the participation of 30 countries was secured. While a large majority of countries have asserted their participation in the Programme through signing a Letter of Agreement (LOA) with IPGRI, in a few countries the signing of the LOA is still pending. Those countries have, however, started contributing to the Programme in accordance with the indications in Appendix XII of the Report of the fifth TCC Meeting, Bulgaria 1993. Thomas Gass, a Swiss national, was appointed as ECP/GR Coordinator on 1 July 1994.

Since the appointment of the new ECP/GR Coordinator, the following working groups have met:

*Brassica* Working Group meeting in Lisbon, Portugal in November 1994;  
Forages Working Group meeting in Hissar, Bulgaria in March 1995;  
*Allium* Working Group meeting in Skierniewice, Poland in May 1995;  
Grain Legumes Working Group meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark in July 1995.

The Coordinator presented the most important results of these working groups to the Committee. More detailed information has been published in the respective working group reports.

In addition to the above-mentioned working group meetings, the ECP/GR Coordinator closely collaborated in *ad hoc* meetings of a group on documentation in Bonn, Germany in September 1994 and a group on *Malus* genetic resources in Wye, UK in June 1995. Both of these groups have recommended that activities related to their activity be initiated within the framework of ECP/GR.

With the publication of the Commission Regulation (EC) 1467/94 of 20 June 1994 on the conservation, characterization, collection and utilization of genetic resources in agriculture, the European Union has established an action programme on genetic resources. During the first part of Phase V, ECP/GR has served as a forum for many groups preparing projects for this programme. The ECP/GR Coordinator has maintained close contacts with these groups, has given advice on formulation and scope of proposals and has provided drafting groups with information about the programme. In doing this, he suggested ways in which institutions from non-EU countries could be included in the projects. Projects for submission to the EU programme (EC) 1467/94 were prepared within all the working groups existing within ECP/GR at the time of the call for proposals.

The close collaboration of FAO and IPGRI in the preparatory process to the Fourth International Technical Conference on Plant Genetic Resources to be held in Leipzig in June 1996 has provided an opportunity for ECP/GR to play a significant role in the part of this process dealing with Europe. IPGRI's Europe Group has been involved in facilitating communication and information flows relating to this process and has been a resource to countries during the drafting of the Country Reports. IPGRI and ECP/GR are closely associated in the organization of the Regional Meeting on Plant Genetic Resources, held in Nitra following the Mid-Phase TCC meeting.

## Financial Report for Phase IV of ECP/GR - Including 1993

Table 1. ECP/GR Contributions received

Country	Contributions received ('90-'92)	Contributions received ('93) <sup>1</sup>	Contributions for '93 still due
Austria	20,000		5,000
Belgium	20,000	5,000	
Bulgaria	10,000	2,500 <sup>2</sup>	
Cyprus	5,000	1,250	
Czechoslovakia	10,000	n/a	
Czech Republic	n/a	1,250	
Denmark	20,000	5,000	
Finland	10,000	2,500	
France	50,000	12,500	
Germany	50,000	12,500	
Greece	10,000	2,500	
Hungary	10,000	2,500	
Ireland	n/a	2,500	
Israel	10,000	2,500	
Italy	50,000	12,500	
Netherlands	20,000	5,000	
Norway	10,000	2,500	
Poland	10,000	2,500	
Portugal	10,000	2,500	
Slovakia	n/a	1,250	
Spain	20,000	5,000	
Sweden	20,000	5,000	
Switzerland	20,000	5,000	
Turkey	10,000		2,500
UK	50,000	12,500	
Yugoslavia	10,000	2,500	
<b>Total</b>	<b>455,000</b>	<b>108,750</b>	<b>7,500</b>

<b>Total contributions Phase IV (received and expected)</b>	<b>US\$ 571,250</b>
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<sup>1</sup> A reduced contribution was requested for 1993 equal to 25% of the total contribution for Phase IV.

<sup>2</sup> Contribution in kind (excess cost of TCC).

**Table 2. Expenditures during Phase IV of ECP/GR**

	<b>Total US\$</b>	<b>1990 US\$</b>	<b>1991 US\$</b>	<b>1992 US\$</b>	<b>1993 US\$</b>
1/4 Time IBPGR Crop Network Coordinator	77,435	18,345	19,785	21,731	17,574
Direct administration support 1/4 time IBPGR secretary	18,055	6,296	6,225	5,534	0
Official travel	25,626	86	7,555	4,795	13,190
Crop meetings/Consultations <sup>3</sup>	99,441	1,322	57,678	15,875	24,566
Technical Consultative Committee <sup>4</sup>	28,772	0	0	0	28,772
Publications and distribution	68,503	6,356	22,080	15,672	24,395
Contingencies (including communications)	0	0	0	0	0
Overhead (indirect support) 13% <sup>5</sup>	39,044	4,213	14,732	8,269	11,830
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>356,875</b>	<b>36,618</b>	<b>128,055</b>	<b>71,876</b>	<b>120,327</b>

<b>Total contributions received and expected</b>	<b>571,250</b>
<b>Total expenditures 1990-1993</b>	<b>356,875</b>
<b>Secretarial support and contingencies to be recovered during Phase V</b>	<b>30,000</b>
<b>Emergency Fund<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>25,000</b>
<b>Support to institutions from non EU countries to participate in EC funded projects<sup>7</sup></b>	<b>159,375</b>
<b>Balance</b>	<b>0</b>

<sup>3</sup> One meeting each of working groups on *Allium*, Forages, *Prunus*, Sunflower and *Brassica* and preparation meeting on Barley Core Collections. The figures for 1991 and 1993 include \$10,000 and \$5,000 respectively, as inputs from Hungary and the Czech Republic in covering local expenses of working group meetings.

<sup>4</sup> Includes a contribution equivalent to \$12,500 from Bulgaria in hosting the TCC meeting and covering local expenses.

<sup>5</sup> This includes provision of space in IBPGR Headquarters, the overhead of 5% which IBPGR has to pay to FAO, the input and time of IBPGR, Professional staff, etc. Note the overhead is not taken on inputs in kind.

<sup>6</sup> As decided by the last meeting of the TCC in Bulgaria

<sup>7</sup> As decided by the last meeting of the TCC in Bulgaria and pending the results of the first call for proposals of the EC 1467/94 Programme.

*Appendix III      Proposal for a Malus/Pyrus working group*

**See next two pages**

**Letter addressed to the Committee Members  
from**

**Ms Helen Case**

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**National Fruit Collections**

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16 August 1995

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Dear Committee Members,

**Proposal to the ECP/GR Technical Consultative Committee for the Establishment  
of an ECP/GR *Malus* and *Pyrus* Working Group**

Wye College, University of London hosted a European *Malus* Germplasm Workshop, from 21 - 25 June 1995. The meeting was convened in response to a need to promote the exchange of information and methodologies, and facilitate the common European objectives of *Malus* germplasm conservation and sustainable utilisation. Seventeen countries were represented by fourteen delegates at the Workshop, and a further five countries, delegates of whom were unable to attend, expressed the wish to be part of this group for future collaboration (Appendix 1). Delegates for each country were nominated by National PGR Co-ordinators. We hope that taking the initiative to host what was in effect, the first informal meeting of a *Malus* Group, and the excellent response of other countries, all of whom had to seek their own funds to attend the Workshop, demonstrates our need and commitment to establish a WG under the ECP/GR.

The Workshop consisted of six sessions:

- 1 Review of Country Collections: Problems, Policies and Opportunities
- 2 Networks and Database Management
- 3 Alternative Conservation Strategies
- 4 Breeding Aims and Objectives
- 5 Characterisation, Evaluation and Identification
- 6 Future Requirements

The above programme was drawn up to enable identification of needs, capabilities and opportunities of national *Malus* programmes, with a view to highlighting the collaborative requirements of the *Malus* Group. These may be summarised as follows:

- \* To provide a forum for the continued exchange of information and methodologies relating to the conservation and sustainable utilisation of germplasm from the European *Malus* cultivars and species, both *ex-situ* and *in-situ*. This is essential to facilitate collaboration within Europe, and ensure Eastern and Central European countries, who maintain important *Malus* collections, are given equal opportunities to participate in and benefit from EC projects
- \* Database developments and networks
- \* Revision of the 1982 IBPGR (now IPGRI) *Malus* descriptor list, essential to the harmonisation and rationalisation of the European collections
- \* Development of harmonised methodologies and descriptors for the evaluation of cultivars, with particular regard to pest and disease resistance and susceptibility



- \* Development and implementation of a strategy to increase the genetic diversity available to breeding programmes, which are currently subject to a narrow genetic base, most new cultivars being derived from a few commercial cultivars
- \* Development of a European strategy for collecting of germplasm, in particular from regions within Europe where there are known to be unevaluated wild *Malus* populations.

During the final session, delegates were requested to nominate which of three potential options for a Working Group (WG) they felt would optimally fulfil the above stated requirements. The options and number of delegates voting for each are shown below:

1 A *Malus* WG

(2)

2 A *Malus* and *Pyrus* WG

(9)

3 A Fruit Tree WG (incorporating the existing ECP/GR *Prunus* WG)

(2)

The establishment of a *Malus* and *Pyrus* WG was favoured for the following reasons:

4 No preference stated

(1)

It was generally accepted that those responsible for *Malus* germplasm collections, are also responsible for *Pyrus* germplasm, also a pome fruit, but not always for *Prunus*, which is a stone fruit. In addition, this situation may be further complicated when the collections of respective pome and stone fruit are held at different institutions, such as is the case for France. Delegates from such countries expressed the concern that their country would be at risk of having either stone or pome fruits poorly represented should the Attending member of a Fruit Tree WG be a specialist in one and not the other tree fruit type. Whilst this risk could to some extent be avoided by ensuring good national collaboration prior to WG meetings, it was noted that it would be difficult to prepare in advance for topics arising from discussion at the meetings, which may require executive on-the-spot decisions.

Furthermore, some delegates who would be nominated the Attending members for all genera, also felt it would be preferable to separate the pome and stone fruits. This was due to the specialist nature of some of the topics which were highlighted for further collaborative action. An example is the development of descriptors, both for morphology and evaluation. Combining the pome fruits would be acceptable, as far more characters are shared than between pome and stone fruits.

It was acknowledged by the *Malus* Workshop delegates however, that there are limitations upon the number of ECP/GR WGs. Should the TCC feel the only available option would be to merge a *Malus* and *Pyrus* WG with the existing *Prunus* WG, this would be preferable to not having *Malus* and *Pyrus* represented at all. Should a Fruit Tree WG prove to be the only option available to us, we would request that the feasibility of dealing separately with issues of a specialist nature to respective fruit types, or genera, within the WG, be given serious investigation.

We hope that you accept our proposal for the establishment of a *Malus* and *Pyrus* WG, and look forward to hearing your response in the near future.

Yours most sincerely

Ms. Helen Case

European *Malus* Germplasm Workshop Organiser





*Appendix IV      Proposal for a Daucus working group*

**See next pages document prepared**

**by**

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**Proposal to further genetic resources work for carrot and wild *Daucus* in all countries in the ECP through the development of a Crop Working Group**

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**Background**

There has been no coordinated effort in Europe, or indeed elsewhere, to collect, conserve, document and make available to users the genetic resources of carrot and related wild taxa.

Carotene carrot originated in Europe (likely in the Netherlands) in the 17th Century as selections from yellow-rooted forms. Purple- and yellow-rooted carrot were well established throughout Europe in the 14th Century having been introduced during the expansion of the Arabian Empire via Syria and Turkey (11th & 12th Centuries) in the eastern Mediterranean, and to the Iberian Peninsula (12th Century) in the west. Also in the 17th Century, white-rooted carrot forms were selected in various regions. There are still remnant populations of white and yellow carrots in surviving traditional agricultural systems where these forms were developed for animal feed.

Carrot is an important vegetable crop in European countries in terms of horticultural economy and for nutrition and health. It is a rich source of sugars, vitamins A and C, and fibre. Riggs (1995) reports the world production of carotene carrot as 14 Mt, with the annual European production about 4Mt. The major crop producers in Europe are Poland (0.7Mt), the UK (0.6Mt) and France (0.5Mt), these production totals not including smallscale horticulture and garden production. In EU countries > 2.5 Mt of carrots per annum are grown on > 0.75 million ha.

The development in European agriculture and marketing with associated legislation, such as variety testing, has led to changes in the cultivars grown with attendant loss of traditional landraces and Open Pollinated varieties. Wild *Daucus* taxa, 12 species including *D. carota* with 13 subspecies, are centred on the Mediterranean countries. Some taxa are spread widely through Europe, while others are very localised. In all taxa populations are threatened with erosion of their habitat potentially reducing the ecogeographic range and therefore genetic variation.

Institutes, individual research workers and seed companies have developed working collections, generally for very specific purposes, such as pest and disease resistance (Smim & Crowther 1991; Ellis 1991), and male sterility (Nothnagel & Steinbohm 1991; Nieuwhof 1993). These genetic resources and working collections are being utilized by public and private sectors. However, data relating to passport, characterization, evaluation and utilization are held by collection curators and researchers in their own formats, and to date are not readily available.

An *ad hoc* group of workers interested in carrot/*Daucus* correspond within Europe and with others in USDA and Japan. The EU correspondents in this group have developed a carrot/*Daucus* project proposal for the EU Genetic Resources Programme. The objectives of this EU proposal were listed as:

- \* to draw up a list of minimal descriptors for carrot and wild taxa based on existing formats, e.g. IPGRI/UPOV, and agree a common format for data exchange,
- \* to design and build a database for *Daucus*,
- \* coordinate the Genetic Resources Centres for *Daucus* in the EU,
- \* to collate data from these centres to establish the European *Daucus* Database (EDDB),

- \* to characterize germplasm collections for agreed minimal descriptors and incorporate data in EDDB,
- \* develop a preliminary core collection using passport and characterization data,
- \* evaluate collections for characters important to growers, processors and consumers, such as pest and disease resistance and chemical composition,
- \* use characterization data to rationalize collections to increase the efficiency of conservation and utilization,
- \* to identify gaps in existing genetic resources collections using the EDDB and organize the collection of cultivated and wild material to expand the available genepool.

### **Current Status**

Institutions in 17 ECP countries (see attached) have responded positively to the suggestion of the development of a *Daucus* Working Group. In addition, carrot collections exist in other ECP countries including Italy, Spain and the major collection in the Vavilov Institute in Russia. There has been no attempt to compare the contents of collections or coordinate their management. A proportion of these seed accessions may well be duplicates, while other unique material will require regeneration in order to be available for continued conservation, and characterization and utilization. In addition, there are other collections, such as those used in conjunction with official cultivar testing regimes, and material maintained by Non-Governmental Organisations. There has been no discussion of descriptors for carrot/*Daucus* in any international genetic resources forum.

### **Future**

With or without funds from the EU, it is important to initiate the work above on a European-wide scale incorporating all countries in the ECP with an interest in carrot and wild taxa, in association with other interested groups e.g. USDA.. This can be achieved by the development of a new crop working group or through the expansion of an existing group, such as the *Allium* WG. The latter suggestion assumes that the same people work with onion, garlic, leek etc. as with carrot. Although this may be true for some of the genetic resources personnel, it is less likely for individuals in the larger gene banks and other scientific disciplines. To ask Attending or Corresponding members of one crop specialisation to represent the views and work of a different crop and taxonomic Family would make the structure of such a group a compromise at best.

The ad hoc group wish to propose:

- 1) a meeting of carrot/*Daucus* specialists in ECP countries to agree a standard list of descriptors for a European database and to assess the current status of collections, research projects and overall knowledge base for this group in order to develop a coordinated work programme;
- 2) that an European database be established to evaluate how well current collections represent the *Daucus* genepool and use this information to direct the collection, conservation, characterisation and utilisation of carrot and associated wild taxa.

**Corresponding Institutes in the *ad hoc* group:**

- Horticulture Research International, Wellesbourne, United Kingdom
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- Institut für Züchtungsmethodik bei Gemüse, Bundesanstalt für Züchtungsforschung an Kulturpflanzen, Quedlinburg, Germany
- Greek Gene Bank, Thessaloniki, Greece
- Nordic Genebank, (Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland & Iceland)
- Scottish Agricultural Science Agency, East Craigs, Edinburgh, United Kingdom
- Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique, Montfavet, France
- AKVO-DE HAAFF, Centre for Plant Breeding & Reproduction Research, Netherlands
- Research Centre for Agrobotany, Taposzele, Hungary
- Aegean Agricultural Research Institute, Menemen, Izmir, Turkey
- Institute of Plant Genetic Resources, Sadovo, Plovdiv, Bulgaria
- Research Institute of Crop Production, Prague & Olomouc, Czech Republic
- Research Institute of Biological Husbandry, Oberwil/BL, Switzerland
- Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Rehovot, Israel
- Research Institute of Vegetable Crops, Skierniewice, Poland

\* carrot work will cease in INRA, but several commercial companies in France have active carrot programmes and maintain reference collections.

**References:**

- Ellis, P.R. (1991). Sources of resistance to carrot fly, *Psila rosae*, in carrots and wild umbelliferae. *Umbelliferae Improvement Newsletter* 1, 14-15.
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- Nothnagel, T. & Steinborn, R. (1991). New source of male sterility in the genus *Daucus*. Eucarpia Carrot 91, Proceedings of the IVth meeting on Breeding Carrots. Avignon -Montfavet.
- Smith, B.M. & Crowther, T.C. (1991). Carrot breeding work at HRI Wellesbourne. *Umbelliferae Improvement Newsletter* 1, p7.

*Appendix V            Proposal for activities on documentation*

**See next pages document prepared**

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## **Establishment of an ECP/GR PGR Documentation activity**

### **Introduction**

It is generally recognized that documentation is vital for making germplasm collections more accessible, and thus also for improving the coordination between PGR programmes. For this reason all ECP/GR working groups include, or are even centered around, a database containing passport data of the accessions held in the collaborating institutes. It can be argued that a bottle-neck in the collaboration within ECP/GR is currently the low quality and bad accessibility of these central crop databases, but also the local databases of the national programmes.

At the same time international computer networks are becoming increasingly available (Internet, World-Wide-Web). Within Europe there is no platform available to use these new possibilities in an efficient way, following the USA example. There are several options for ECP/GR to improve this situation.

#### **Option 1: ECP/GR Documentation Working Group**

An ECP/GR working group could be established concentrating on documentation. This group could increase the knowledge in the European PGR community by exchanging ideas and experiences. It could also set standards, arrange the availability of information on Internet, etc. A problem might be the number of members of this group. All institutions collaborating in the ECP/GR can be expected to be interested in joining this working group since documentation is an activity in all these institutions. A very large working group would not be efficient. Selecting member would have the danger of making it elite, which is not desirable.

#### **Option 2: Regular ECP/GR symposia on documentation**

A task force could be established to organize bi- or triennial conferences on PGR documentation. Such symposia would increase the knowledge in the European PGR community by presenting state of the art knowledge on documentation. A disadvantage might be that besides increasing the knowledge, little direct action would come out of these symposia.

On the basis of a project submitted to the European Union, ECP/GR could support this project to include all of Europe. The project would:

### **Option 3: An ECP/GR funded project on documentation**

and the creation of central crop databases, thereby facilitating the establishment and increasing the quality and level of standardisation of these databases

- support, when asked, the PGR institutions in the documentation of their collections,  
  
created within ECP/GR and the current Programme, on request of the local database administrators, available in a standardized format
- make the databases of the PGR institutions, including the central crop databases
  
- create points of entry for users looking for PGR information via regular mail, Email or Internet and establish ways for electronic data transfer
- establish links to other databases that are of relevance to the plant breeding industry, i.e., database holding information on DNA-sequences, genomes, taxonomy, utilization aspects of crops and potential crops.

Dr. Theo J.L. van Hintum

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**Appendix VI Recommendation made by the TCC to the European Meeting on Plant Genetic Resources (Nitra, 24-27 September 1995)**

(Revised version as agreed in an extraordinary meeting of the Committee on 25/9/95)

**Recognizing:**

- the role played by ECP/GR for the last 15 years in developing a pan-European collaboration on plant genetic resources;
- the experience gained in coordinating collaborative efforts in a cost-effective way;
- the significant results obtained by the Programme;
- the entry into force of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the adoption by many countries of Agenda 21;
- the existence of various national, bilateral and regional activities in the European region;
- the importance of international, regional and bilateral cooperation in the area of plant genetic resources;
- the potential role of ECP/GR in implementing the Global Plan of Action in the European region as part of the FAO Global System on Plant Genetic Resources;

**And considering that the objectives of ECP/GR are :**

- first and foremost to ensure the long-term conservation and to facilitate and encourage the increased utilization of plant genetic resources in Europe;
- to increase the planning of joint activities;
- to strengthen links between east and west European plant genetic resources programmes;
- to develop joint project proposals to be submitted to funding agencies;
- to contribute to monitoring the safety of plant genetic resources collections and take appropriate action when required;
- to increase public awareness at all levels of the importance of plant genetic resources activities,

And also considering that the operational structure of ECP/GR is as described in Figures 1 and 2,

**The Committee recommends** that the European Cooperative Programme for Crop Genetic Resources Networks, the basis of which is active national programmes, be used as the platform to facilitate the implementation of the Global Plan of Action in the European region as part of the FAO Global System on Plant Genetic Resources.



Figure (I): Operational structure of EC/GR

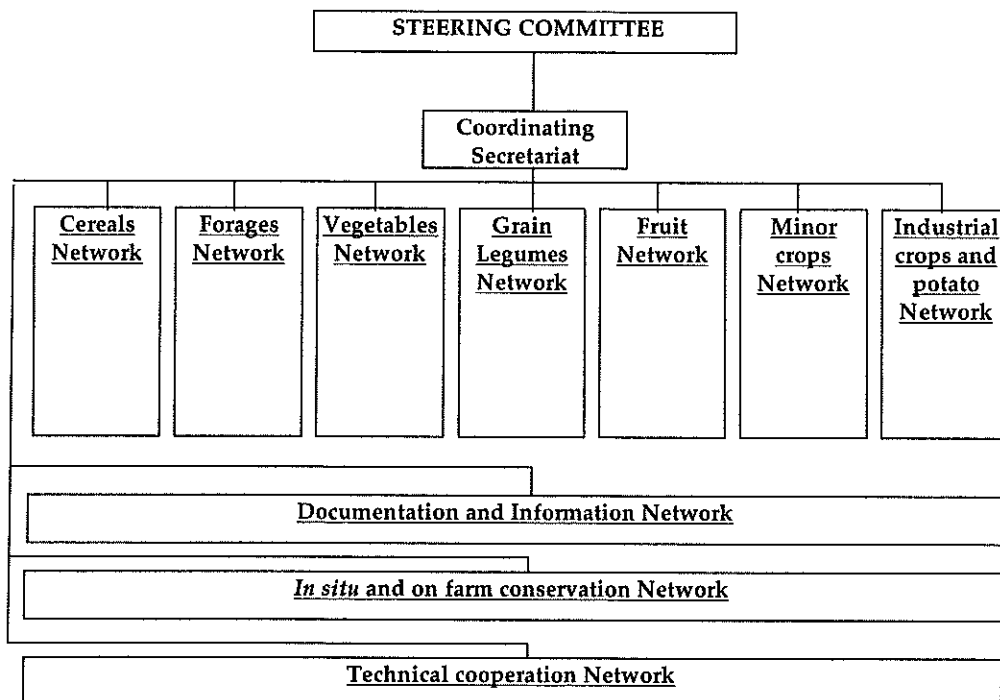
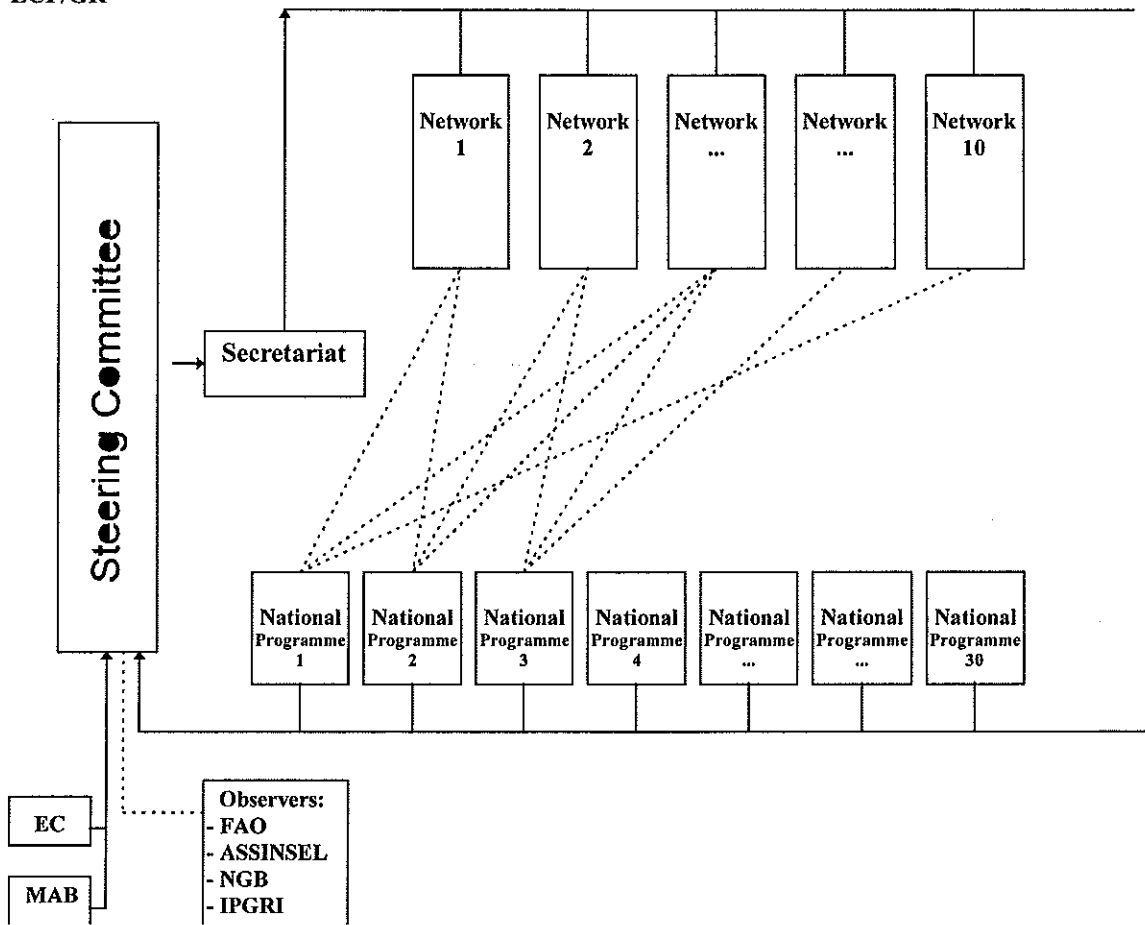


Figure (ii): Interaction of National Programmes with the networks and the Steering Committee of ECP/GR



## **Appendix VII**      *List of delegates*

Note: (\*) after a name stands for 'unable to attend'

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