

## Report to the Ninth ECP/GR Steering Committee meeting (October 2003)

### Working Group on Forages

#### Progress made by the Group during Phase VI (1999 - 2003)

Specific objective	Achievements
<b>Meetings</b>	
Seventh meeting, 18-20 November 1999, Elvas, Portugal	Report published
Eighth meeting, 10-12 April 2003, Linz, Austria	Draft report prepared and workplan established
<b>Documentation</b>	
Improve access to forages data	Several new databases have been made available on the Internet. The most recent include the <i>Agropyron</i> , <i>Annual Medicago</i> , <i>Arrhenatherum</i> , <i>Trisetum</i> , <i>Trifolium subterraneum</i> and the Minor Forage Legumes. Several databases have been updated
<b>Characterization/Evaluation</b>	
Evaluate the genetic diversity of the European <i>Lolium</i> core collection	Preliminary AFLP analysis carried out at DvP, Belgium and overall statistical analysis was initiated at IGER, UK
<b>Ex situ conservation - Safety-duplication</b>	
Improve the level of safety-duplication	Genebanks offering their capacity to host safety-duplicates as "black boxes" identified
<b>Ex situ conservation - Regeneration</b>	
Increase the use of appropriate standards	Standards proposed within the group were tested. In order to increase transparency, collection of different procedures used was started. Recommendations for most preferred standards were made
<b>Sharing of responsibilities</b>	
Identify Most Original Samples (MOS) and define primary holders with responsibility for conservation	A mechanism to identify MOS was defined and tested. It was clarified that completely automated algorithms need to be complemented by human decisions and a new workplan was agreed, to define primary holders of accessions of the most important species
<b>Collecting</b>	
Fill gaps in collecting	Several international collecting missions undertaken: Germany in Bulgaria, France, Ireland and Spain; VIR/NGB in Karelia; UK in the Pyrenees mountains
<b>Collaboration</b>	
Submit project proposal on optimisation of regeneration protocols for perennial forage species	The project proposal ICONFORS was approved by the EC and the project started on January 2001, with partners from 6 European countries. The main objective is to acquire genetic and economic knowledge, to optimize seed multiplication methodologies
<b>On- farm conservation</b>	
Increase exchange of knowledge and experiences	Several experiences reported at the meetings and recorded in the reports

## Working Group on Forages

### Plan of action for Phase VII (2004 - 2008)

Specific objective	Action	Timeframe	Request of support from ECP/GR for specific actions	
			Funding requested	Type of support requested
<u>Meetings:</u>	Hold 2 meetings	2005 and 2008	YES	- Funds - Logistic support - Technical support from IPGRI during the meeting - Technical support from IPGRI after the meeting
<u>Publications:</u>	Reports of meetings with workplan	2005 and 2008	YES	- Funds - Logistic support
<u>Documentation:</u> Improve quality content and accessibility of the Forage databases	Fill gaps and check data for MCPD and compatibility with EURISCO with help of curators and DB-managers	Updates every two years	NO	Logistic support
<u>Ex situ cons. - Regeneration:</u>	Encourage use of most preferred standards with emphasis on MOS accessions	Ongoing	NO	Logistic support
<u>Ex situ cons. - Safety-duplication:</u> Improve level of safety-duplication	Promote exchange of safety duplicates as "black boxes" between several institutions/countries with MOU agreement	Check progress 2005 and 2008	NO	Logistic support
<u>Sharing of responsibilities:</u> Define the primary holder accepting responsibility for conservation of the accessions of the most important species	After definition of MOS, reach agreement on responsibility on primary conservation	2005	NO	Logistic support
<u>Collecting:</u> Focus on targeted collections	Fill gaps in geographic distribution and in expression of traits	Ongoing	NO	
<u>Collaboration:</u> Joint activities for enhanced utilization	Submit proposals to the new EC programme in order to have a better description and evaluation of forage collections. Start with <i>Lolium</i> Core Collection	First submission 2004	YES (from EU)	

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