

DOCUMENTATION & INFORMATION WG REPORT (2024–2025)

In preparation for the 18th Steering Committee Meeting, Tbilisi, Georgia, 2-4 June 2026

Compiled by WG Chair: Stephan Weise, Külli Annamaa

Date of compilation: 2026-02-06

1. CONTRIBUTION TO ECPGR OBJECTIVES

The priorities of ECPGR Phase XI reflect the objectives of the Plant Genetic Resources Strategy for Europe (PGR Strategy). The contribution of the Documentation and Information Working Group (Doc&Info WG) during the reporting period is summarised below.

1.1. Achievements and success stories

- Expanding *in situ* conservation of crop wild relatives and wild food plants

As part of the pilot project funded by the German Government, the Crop Wild Relatives Working Group and the Documentation and Information Working Group participated in defining the principles for expanding EURISCO to include *in situ* CWR data, developing a data standard for the exchange of this data between *in situ* National Inventories, and initiating the technical enhancements to EURISCO (see the Doc&Info WG report on ECPGR Phase X). These activities were continued throughout the reporting period. A large number of *in situ* CWR data sets were uploaded to EURISCO, checked and integrated into the system. By the end of 2024, data on 4,684 *in situ* CWR populations from 18 collections had been integrated. By the end of 2025, this number had risen to 7,042 populations from 39 collections. Another very extensive dataset with 12,197 additional *in situ* CWR populations from Portugal is currently being curated and will be available shortly.

In 2024, at the Doc&Info WG meeting in Tallinn, Estonia, the course was set for a complete overhaul of the EURISCO infrastructure. Within this framework, the development of a dedicated module for searching and visualizing *in situ* CWR data was started in 2025 and has already been largely completed.

As part of the Horizon Europe project PRO-GRACE, a proposal for a consolidated list of descriptors to support *in situ* conservation of plant genetic resources was drawn up (Phillips et al., submitted). Members of the Doc&Info WG were also involved in this.

- On-farm PGR conservation and management

At the Doc&Info WG meeting (see above), it was decided that the idea of a European inventory of landraces should be further developed in collaboration with the On-farm Working Group. This inventory will establish links between the names of landraces and accessions in EURISCO on the basis of national data sets and a proposed list of descriptors. Together with the On-farm WG, funding for the activity ABC Mediterranean Landraces was successfully obtained under the ECPGR Grant Scheme (24 months since September 2025).

- Consolidating and sustaining *ex situ* conservation

The Doc&Info WG provides comprehensive support to the National Focal Points (NFPs). Among other things, it maintains the infrastructure for flagging/de-flagging accessions for AEGIS. This includes tracking changes and reporting them to the ECPGR Secretariat. Furthermore, the pipeline for assigning DOIs is operated. This enables interested genebanks to provide DOIs for *ex situ* accessions in close cooperation with the ITPGRFA. In future, this will also be possible for *in situ* CWR populations.

In the frame of the PRO-GRACE project, a proposal for genebank metrics to enhance collection management was developed (van Hintum et al. 2025). Members of the Doc&Info WG were involved.

- Strengthening a comprehensive information system for PGRFA

The Doc&Info WG continues to strive to provide the best possible support to the NFP network. In addition to a continuous helpdesk in the background, this also includes training activities. In 2024, a first online training workshop for providers of *in situ* CWR data was held. Another training workshop will be held in 2026. It has yet to be decided whether a joint workshop for providers of *ex situ*, *in situ* CWR and phenotypic data makes sense, or whether it would be better to divide them up.

The data standard has been revised to better support providers of phenotypic data. It is now easier to use and also allows additional metadata to be provided, which facilitates the interpretation of the data. Implementation in the EURISCO infrastructure has been underway since the end of 2025 and is scheduled for completion in 2026. Regardless of this, continuous support is provided with regard to the provision of phenotypic data.

One of the goals of the PGR Strategy is to increase the compatibility of EURISCO and associated IT infrastructure with the FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable). As part of the PRO-GRACE project, a study was conducted to systematically evaluate the extent to which the FAIR principles can be applied to PGR data and to what extent this is actually expedient. A publication on this topic was submitted in 2025 (Aguilar et al., submitted).

Furthermore, members of the Doc&Info WG submitted a DFG project proposal aimed at developing metrics for measuring data quality in European PGR collections. It is expected that the tools to be developed on this basis will lead to a significant improvement in the data in European collections in the long term.

- Promoting sustainable use of PGRFA

The Doc&Info WG continues to operate the infrastructure for the European Evaluation Network (EVA) of ECPGR. By 30 June 2025, the embargo period has expired for 185,279 phenotypic data points from 1,932 accessions. As soon as the new update mechanism for phenotypic data is completed, this first batch of data will then be transferred to EURISCO.

1.2. Gaps or constraints identified

User surveys to improve and further develop EURISCO are still not conducted regularly and systematically. Feedback is primarily obtained during training workshops and through the

EURISCO Advisory Committee. However, a structured user survey on the *in situ* CWR module in EURISCO is currently being prepared.

No phenotypic data from the EVA infrastructure has been transferred to EURISCO yet. This can only be done once the necessary adjustments to the EURISCO infrastructure have been completed in relation to the revised data standard for phenotypic data. This is scheduled to take place in the course of 2026.

Initial ideas for a centralized genebank ordering system via EURISCO have already been compiled but have not yet been pursued further due to time constraints.

2. GRANT SCHEME ACTIVITIES, WG MEETINGS AND EVA ACTIVITIES

- **Grant Scheme proposals (including ongoing from Phase X: submitted: 2; approved: 2)**
 - [GARLI-CCS](#) (Genotyping-by-sequencing of the European garlic collection to develop a sustainable ex situ conservation strategy), in collaboration with *Allium* and Cryopreservation WGs
 - [ABC Mediterranean Landraces](#) (Annual & Biennial Crop Landraces Catalogue of Mediterranean Countries)

- **Total number of partners involved in Grant Scheme: 28 from 20 countries**
 - ECPGR-funded: 22 from 19 countries
 - Self-funded: 6 from 4 countries

- **Meetings held**
 - **Documentation & Information Working Group**, Ad hoc Workshop, 18-19 September 2024, Tallinn, Estonia
 - **Garli-CCS:**
 - Garli-CCS Final meeting, 20-22 May 2025, IPK Gatersleben, Germany, in conjunction with the ECPGR Allium Working Group meeting
 - Garli-CCS-Cryopreservation workshop was held on 17-20 September 2024 in Prague, Czech Republic
 - Second virtual Garli-CCS meeting, 22 September 2023
 - First virtual Garli-CCS meeting, 10 March 2023

- **Total number of partners involved in WG Meeting: 14 from 9 countries**
 - ECPGR-funded: 12 from 9 countries; Self-funded: 2 from 1 country

- **Reports and related data**
 - [Garli-CCS final report](#)
 - [Working Group Ad hoc Workshop report](#)

- **Funds mobilized**
 - **ECPGR granted funds:** €34,409 (ABC Mediterranean Landraces: €14,410 (half of the total grant €28,820); Garli-CCS: €19,999 (one-third of the total grant €59,997))
 - **Inputs in-kind declared in Grant activities:** €26,207 (ABC Mediterranean Landraces: €0; Garli-CCS €26,207 (one-third of the total in-kind contribution for Garli-CCS, i.e. €78,620))

3. OTHER ACTIVITIES (CROSS-WORKING GROUP ACTIVITIES, LINKS WITH OTHER NETWORKS, PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES)

- **Cross-Working Group activities:**

The project 'Extension of EURISCO for Crop Wild Relatives (CWR) *in situ* data and preparation of pilot countries' data sets, coordinated by ECPGR Secretariat and funded by the German Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Food and Regional Identity (2021–2025), with involvement of the ECPGR Doc&Info WG and the EURISCO Advisory Committee. Total budget €317,316. Overall, the implementation of this project endowed the European region with a centralized, public and web-searchable inventory of *in situ* CWR priority populations' passport data and with a fine-tuned data flow mechanism utilizing an internationally agreed data exchange standard. Initial sets of data from pilot countries were also made available. The extension of EURISCO to *in situ* data created a link with the existing *ex situ* data and thus improved the *ex situ/in situ* conservation interface. The implementation of international commitments defined by the CBD, GPA and ITPGRFA, as well as by the Plant Genetic Resources Strategy for Europe, made a significant step forward.

Meetings held:

- [Third project Meeting - Sadovo, Bulgaria, 18-19 June 2024](#)

- **Others:**

- The EURISCO coordination, the ECPGR Secretariat, as well as members of the Doc&Info WG participated in the Horizon 2020 project AGENT (call H2020-SFS-2018-2020, Sustainable Food Security). The project began in May 2020 and was successfully completed at the end of April 2025.
- Another initiative with participation of the EURISCO coordination, the ECPGR Secretariat and members of the Doc&Info WG was the Horizon Europe project PRO-GRACE (call HORIZON-INFRA-2022-DEV-01, Developing the European research infrastructures landscape). The project ran from January 2023 until October 2025.
- Since January 2024, members of the Doc&Info WG are involved in the Horizon Europe Project COUSIN (call HORIZON-CL6-2023-BIODIV-01, Biodiversity and ecosystem services). The project will run until the end of 2028.
- The WG Chair participated in various platforms related to PGR documentation: EURISCO coordination, Genesys Advisory Committee, and expert to the Scientific Advisory Committee on the Global Information System of the ITPGRFA.

4. WORKING GROUP DOCUMENTS AND PUBLICATIONS

- T. van Hintum, B. Bartha, C. Niggli, A. Avagyan, S. Vogl, L. Achathaler, V. Holubec, L. Papuskova, F. Ferrari, G. Rossi, A. Simon, L. Horváth Jr., R. Kowalik, M. Boczkowka, S. Weise, M. Oppermann, M. van Zonneveld, M. Obreza, E. Wijnker, N. Chayut, F. Chairi, J. Axelsson, L.L. Steffensen and F. Guzzon (2025) **A proposal for genebank metrics to enhance collection management**. *Plant Genetic Resources: Characterization and Utilization*. First view. DOI: [10.1017/s147926212510021x](https://doi.org/10.1017/s147926212510021x)
- S. Goritschnig, S. Weise, F. Guzzon, L. Maggioni, T. van Hintum, L.L. Steffensen, N. Stein and G. Giuliano (2025) **Strengthening European research cooperation on plant genetic resources conservation and use**. *Genetic Resources*, S2:119–134. DOI: [10.46265/genresj.luzj7324](https://doi.org/10.46265/genresj.luzj7324)

- S. Weise, K. Annamaa and L. Maggioni (compilers) (2025) **Report of a Working Group on Documentation and Information**. *Ad hoc Workshop, 18–19 September 2024, Tallinn, Estonia*. European Cooperative Programme for Plant Genetic Resources, Rome, Italy, 27pp. [\[link\]](#)
- S. Kumar, F. Guzzon, S. Goritschnig and S. Weise (2024) **The EURISCO–EVA Information System, an innovative approach to the data management of multi-site crop evaluation data**. *Genetic Resources*, 5(10):117–125. DOI: [10.46265/genresj.ihxu5248](https://doi.org/10.46265/genresj.ihxu5248)

5. EXPECTED ADDITIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES

It is assumed that regional EURISCO training workshops will continue to be held in the future. This will require funding and a host to carry out the local organization.