



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**



The International Treaty
ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES
FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Item 14 of the Provisional Agenda

NINTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY

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Indicators under the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

Executive Summary

Following the recommendation by the Compliance Committee, this document illustrates how the International Treaty facilitates the provision and aggregation of information for the monitoring of progress made by Contracting Parties towards these various international monitoring processes in collaboration with Contracting Parties and other organizations, without imposing additional reporting burdens on Contracting Parties. This document also presents the relevance of these indicators for the draft monitoring framework for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Seventh Session of the Governing Body reaffirmed the important role of the International Treaty in providing an effective governance framework for the management and exchange of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. It also emphasised that the effective implementation of the International Treaty contributes to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to achieving its goals.
2. At its fourth meeting in 2021, the Compliance Committee welcomed the documentation on the global indicators relevant to the implementation of the International Treaty, and noted how the existing datasets contributed by Contracting Parties under Section V of the Compliance Procedures, and through other mechanisms, had been re-used for the production of progress reports on key global indicators.
3. In reviewing the indicators contained in the document prepared for the meeting, the Committee noted that some of them focused on access and benefit-sharing related to PGRFA. The Committee was of the view that a balanced set of indicators should be diversified and cover a wider spectrum of existing activities, dimensions and datasets.
4. The Committee recalled that the work of the International Treaty is not only related to SDG 2 and SDG 15, but also to other SDGs, including SDG 17 (“revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development”), and that this should continue to be referenced in future work.
5. The Committee further noted that showing the use and value of the data collected through the Compliance Procedures was a powerful mechanism of encouragement to Contracting Parties and invited the Secretary to further update the document for the continuing information of Contracting Parties.¹
6. This document illustrates, in section II, how the International Treaty facilitates the collection of information for the monitoring of progress made by Contracting Parties towards these global goals, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and other units of FAO. It furthermore provides, in Section III, information on the draft monitoring framework for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.
7. In Section IV, the document provides details on the information generated and shared so far with international monitoring processes and on the options for future reporting tracks using existing datasets. Neither the existing monitoring processes nor possible future reporting tracks impose any additional reporting obligation or burden on Contracting Parties. Rather, they contribute to showing the International Treaty's value as an instrument that contributes to sustainable development and global policy frameworks.

II. INDICATORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE MONITORING OF THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

8. The Governing Body, at its Seventh Session, adopted Resolution 1/2017, “Contribution of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”. The Resolution emphasised that the effective implementation of the International Treaty contributed to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular, Targets 2.5 and 15.6, relating to conservation, and access and benefit-sharing of genetic resources, while also contributing indirectly to SDGs 1, 12, 13 and 17.
9. In adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, member governments of the United Nations set out a "supremely ambitious and transformational vision," which envisages a world free of poverty and hunger by 2030 and one in

¹ IT/GB-9/CC-4/21/Record, paras. 14-17.

which all life can thrive. The vision and goals require countries to develop sustainable food systems and new ways of managing natural resources, including plant genetic diversity, in order to build a viable future for people and the planet.

10. Agricultural biodiversity is instrumental in addressing these challenges in the coming decades. The sustainable management of agricultural biodiversity contributes to the diversification of agricultural systems and to make food systems and the agriculture sectors more sustainable through economic growth, environmental protection, and improved rural livelihoods.

11. The conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources are essential for achieving sustainable agriculture and food security for present and future generations. It is indispensable for crop genetic improvement to adapt to unpredictable environmental changes and human needs.

A. The Sustainable Development Goals

1. By Resolution 1/2017, the Governing Body highlighted the contribution of the International Treaty towards achieving Goals 2 and 15, in particular to Targets 2.5 and 15.6.

2. The overall goal of the International Treaty is the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture for sustainable agriculture and food security. Plant genetic resources are the raw materials that farmers and plant breeders use to improve biodiversity and agricultural productivity to allow the feeding of a growing population. The International Treaty facilitates access to a gene pool of crops and forages for research, training, and breeding, as well as the sharing of benefits arising from their use.

SDG Target 2.5.

3. The objectives and the work of the International Treaty also include facilitating the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

4. The Multilateral System of the International Treaty has facilitated access to over 6.4 million samples for farmers, plant breeders, and other stakeholders worldwide. The System distributes on average 1000 PGRFA per day. Through its Benefit-sharing Fund (BSF), the International Treaty shares monetary benefits primarily with farmers in developing countries who promote the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA. More than 500 institutions in 67 countries have already benefited from the BSF of the International Treaty. In total, more than one million people have been supported through the Fund.

SDG Target 15.6.

5. Through the same resolution, the Governing Body also highlighted the contribution of the International Treaty towards achieving SDGs 1, 12, 13, and 17.

6. The International Treaty supports vulnerable and small-scale farmers in their efforts to increase resilience and secure livelihoods through the improved management and sustainable development of plant genetic diversity in the fields. The work of the International Treaty has benefited more than one million people since 2008 and the call for proposals for the 5th cycle was launched in 2022. Through these interventions, the International Treaty helps to increasing the diversity of crops grown in the farmers' fields for improved yields and income.

7. For a more responsible food production, the International Treaty has supported training activities, including community-based approaches for the management of plant genetic resources and the generation and sharing of new knowledge. It has helped to establish 170 community seed banks around the world and involved more than 30 000 women in the conservation and use of plant genetic resources.

8. The International Treaty helps to build resilience in the face of climate change and food insecurity. It directly supports actions to increase the availability and distribution of disease-free, clean

planting material as a result of the identification and incorporation of preferred candidate genes in the breeding of climate-smart varieties. More than 5 300 varieties of target crops have been evaluated for adaptability to biotic and abiotic stresses, and almost 1 000 accessions resistant to pests, diseases, and climate-induced shocks have resulted from projects of the International Treaty.

9. The International Treaty provides an enabling framework and incentives for stakeholders to collaborate in the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA. It calls for international cooperation and collaboration and continued development of partnerships among Contracting Parties and stakeholders for monetary and non-monetary benefit sharing. The areas of collaboration include information sharing, technology transfer and dissemination, and capacity building, which are essential to achieve the SDGs. More than 500 institutions have collaborated with the International Treaty so far in the field operations.

B. Monitoring Progress and Relevant Indicators

10. The variation in the "number of nations that have adopted legislative, administrative, and policy frameworks to ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits" arising out of the use of biodiversity is an indicator used to track the progress made in adopting such frameworks at the national level (Indicator 15.6.1). In practice, it refers to the efforts made by countries to implement two major international instruments regarding access to and the sharing of benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources: the Nagoya Protocol to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the International Treaty. The monitoring of frameworks under other legal instruments may also become relevant in the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, when adopted.²

11. The CBD is the custodian agency for this indicator, and the International Treaty, through FAO, acts as a contributing agency. Since 2016, the International Treaty has been making available the information and data provided by Contracting Parties related to the Treaty's implementation to facilitate the international monitoring and reporting on this indicator.

12. The reports submitted by Contracting Parties under Section V of the Compliance Procedures is the relevant source of information. Each report specifies the measures the Government has taken to implement its obligations under the International Treaty, including its access and benefit-sharing provisions. In addition, information on the number of Standard Material Transfer Agreements (SMTAs) is also available.

13. The International Treaty also contributes to the narrative of the annual SDG progress reports, feeding into the High-Level Political Forum's follow-up and review processes.

14. The work of the International Treaty is also relevant for SDG Target 2.5 for which FAO is the custodian agency. It states that: *"By 2020 maintain genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants, farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at national, regional and international levels, and ensure access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge as internationally agreed"*.

15. Additional information can be found in Section II below and in document IT/GB-9/22/6.3, *Review of Progress Made on the Achievement of Sustainable Development Goals related to Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*.

III. THE POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

16. The Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), when adopted, is expected to support and be aligned with the 2030 Development Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this context, there

² [CBD/WG2020/3/INF/5](#), *Access and Benefit-sharing Indicators Proposed in the Monitoring Framework for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework*; and [CBD/WG2020/3/INF/2](#), *Proposed Monitoring Approach and Headline, Component and Complementary Indicators for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework*.

are expectations that the biodiversity-related instruments and conventions, like the International Treaty, will contribute with other relevant datasets and indicators to assist governments in the monitoring and tracking of progress.

17. In February 2020, the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework invited the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice of the CBD (SBSTTA) at its twenty-fourth meeting to, among other things, carry out a scientific and technical review of the updated goals and targets – and related indicators and baselines – of the draft GBF.

18. In the draft of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework issued on 5 July 2021,³ the 2030 Action Target 13, 2. Placed under the group of targets to meet people's needs through sustainable use and benefit-sharing, reads as follows:

Implement measures at global level and in all countries to facilitate access to genetic resources and to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources, and as relevant, of associated traditional knowledge, including through mutually agreed terms and prior and informed consent.

19. The placeholder for the indicator presented at the meeting reads, “*Indicators of operational legislative, administrative or policy frameworks which ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits, including those based on PIC and MAT.*”⁴ The document on proposed headlined indicators also observes, regarding the methodological basis, that the indicator would need to be developed to capture all ABS mechanisms in a coherent way. Finally, the report of the twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice lists as the first complementary indicator, “*Total number of transfers of crop material from the Multilateral System of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) received in a country.*”⁵

20. At the second part of the twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-24), Parties and observers considered the proposed list of headline indicators in the draft monitoring framework for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and its outcomes are reflected in recommendation SBSTTA-24/2. Appendix 1 of the recommendation contains a summary from the co-leads of the contact group on the proposed list of indicators for consideration in developing the monitoring framework for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. The co-leads' summary was based on the views of Parties and observers on:

- a) Whether the indicators were of relevance to the corresponding draft goals or target of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework;
- b) The feasibility that the indicators can be measured at national or global scales; and
- c) Whether the indicator is ready for use.

21. At the expert workshop on the monitoring framework for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework organized in Bonn from 29 to 1 July 2022, the CBD Secretariat and provided an analysis

³ CBD/WG2020/3/3, *First Draft of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework*.

⁴ CBD/WG2020/3/3/Add.1, *Proposed Headline Indicators of the Monitoring Framework for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework*, page 10. Available at www.cbd.int/doc/c/d716/da69/5e81c8e0faca1db1dd145a59/wg2020-03-03-add1-en.pdf

⁵ CBD/SBSTTA/24/12, *Report of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice on its Twenty-Fourth Meeting*, Appendix 1, available at www.cbd.int/doc/c/403d/780c/318cb218f16e939fddf1076b/sbstta-24-12-en.pdf

undertaken in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) on Appendix 2 of Document SBSTTA-24/2.⁶

22. The Secretary has provided information related to these indicators to the Ninth Session of the Governing Body, including on the state of the negotiations regarding the GBF, through the documents, IT/GB-9/22/7, *Celebrating the Guardians of Crop Diversity: Towards an Inclusive Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework*, IT/GB-9/22/16.3, *Cooperation with the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Nagoya Protocol*, and IT/GB-9/22/16.3/Inf.1, *Report from the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity on Cooperation with the International Treaty*.

IV. RELEVANT INDICATORS IN USE UNDER THE 2030 AGENDA

23. The CBD is the custodian of Indicator 15.6.1, to which the International Treaty contributes data through FAO. This indicator measures progress made by countries in establishing legislative, administrative, or policy frameworks on access and benefit-sharing (ABS). By developing their ABS frameworks, countries are contributing to the achievement of Target 15.6 and to the conservation and sustainable use of biological and genetic diversity.

24. Indicator 15.6.1 is composed of several indicators. The CBD provides information on “Countries that have reported legislative, administrative and policy framework or measures reported to the ABS Clearing-House” and “Countries that are Parties to the Nagoya Protocol”.

25. The relevant data contributed from the International Treaty are:

- *Countries that have reported legislative, administrative and policy frameworks or measures through the Online Reporting System on Compliance of the International Treaty;*
- *Countries that are Contracting Parties to the International Treaty;*
- *Total reported number of Standard Material Transfer Agreements (SMTAs) signed by users in the country as a recipient of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.*

26. The information available on the FAO's website,⁷ and allows Contracting Parties and users to check the most recent figures and trends at the global and regional levels.⁸

27. Through the same website, it is possible to access a map showing the trends in reporting. The map is interactive and allows users to navigate across the annual reporting intervals. These indicators are also referred to on the website of the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership (BIP).⁹ The BIP is a global initiative that has been in operation since 2007 to promote and coordinate the development of indicators of biodiversity change, in support of the CBD and other treaties and conventions. The above indicators are displayed in their catalogue in relation to the SDG targets 15 and 2 and also the Aichi target 13.¹⁰

Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals

28. The Report of the Secretary-General on Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals issued in 2022 was accompanied by supplementation with the data compiled through this indicators in relation to Target 15.6.1, as reproduced in the Appendix.¹¹

⁶CBD/ID/OM/2022/1/INF/3, Technical analysis of indicators proposed for the monitoring Framework for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, available at

www.cbd.int/doc/c/8e2a/1c14/e7fb68393294a9ff59b8c815/id-om-2022-01-inf-03-en.pdf

⁷The information is usually updated in February.

⁸<http://www.fao.org/sustainable-development-goals/indicators/1561/en/>

⁹www.bipindicators.net/

¹⁰www.bipindicators.net/indicators/number-of-countries-that-have-reported-legislative-administrative-and-policy-frameworks-for-measures-to-implement-the-international-treaty

¹¹ Document E/2022/55, at unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/report/2022/E_2022_55_Statistical_Annex_I_and_II.pdf

29. The document also notes that Countries continue to make progress in ratifying and implementing access and benefit-sharing (ABS) instruments aiming to ensure that benefits from the use of genetic resources are shared fairly and equitably with the countries and communities providing them. Progress has been steady despite the challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. ABS mechanisms continue to enhance the contribution of genetic resources to achieving sustainable development around the world.

30. At the end of 2021, 68 countries had at least one legislative, administrative or policy measure in place to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge. Progress has been steady despite the challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic in accordance with the Nagoya Protocol. Furthermore, 79 countries reported measures in place to implement the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

Appendix

*Report of the Secretary-General on Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (2022)***(b) Number of countries that have legislative, administrative and policy framework or measures reported through the Online Reporting System on Compliance of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA)**

(Number)

<i>Regions</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>
World	12	23	45	56	57	79	79
Sub-Saharan Africa	1	4	10	11	12	18	18
Northern Africa and Western Asia	1	3	4	6	6	10	10
Northern Africa	1	2	3	4	4	5	5
Western Asia	0	1	1	2	2	5	5
Central and Southern Asia	0	1	3	4	4	6	6
Central Asia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Southern Asia	0	1	3	4	4	6	6
Eastern and South-Eastern Asia	0	2	3	4	4	5	5
Eastern Asia	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
South-Eastern Asia	0	1	2	3	3	4	4
Latin America and the Caribbean	2	2	10	14	14	14	14
Oceania	0	0	1	2	2	4	4
Australia and New Zealand	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
Oceania (exc. Australia and New Zealand)	0	0	0	1	1	3	3
Europe and Northern America	8	11	14	15	15	22	22
Europe	8	10	12	13	13	20	20
Northern America	0	1	2	2	2	2	2
Landlocked developing countries	0	2	6	8	9	15	15
Least Developed Countries	0	4	10	11	12	16	16
Small island developing States	1	1	2	3	3	7	7

Source: International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA) Secretariat.

(b) Number of countries that have legislative, administrative and policy framework or measures reported through the Online Reporting System on Compliance of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA)

(Number)

<i>Regions</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>
World	12	23	45	56	57	79	79
Sub-Saharan Africa	1	4	10	11	12	18	18
Northern Africa and Western Asia	1	3	4	6	6	10	10
Northern Africa	1	2	3	4	4	5	5
Western Asia	0	1	1	2	2	5	5
Central and Southern Asia	0	1	3	4	4	6	6
Central Asia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Southern Asia	0	1	3	4	4	6	6
Eastern and South-Eastern Asia	0	2	3	4	4	5	5
Eastern Asia	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
South-Eastern Asia	0	1	2	3	3	4	4
Latin America and the Caribbean	2	2	10	14	14	14	14
Oceania	0	0	1	2	2	4	4
Australia and New Zealand	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
Oceania (exc. Australia and New Zealand)	0	0	0	1	1	3	3
Europe and Northern America	8	11	14	15	15	22	22
Europe	8	10	12	13	13	20	20
Northern America	0	1	2	2	2	2	2
Landlocked developing countries	0	2	6	8	9	15	15
Least Developed Countries	0	4	10	11	12	16	16
Small island developing States	1	1	2	3	3	7	7

Source: International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA) Secretariat.

(e) Total reported number of Standard Material Transfer Agreements (SMTAs) transferring plant genetic resources for food and agriculture¹

(Number)

<i>Regions</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>
World	62,692	68,492	73,758	78,806	82,129	85,853	85,934
Sub-Saharan Africa	6,207	7,168	8,061	8,783	9,435	9,644	9,674
Northern Africa and Western Asia	8,501	8,893	9,238	9,598	9,859	9,896	9,896
Northern Africa	3,841	3,978	4,089	4,209	4,300	4,319	4,319
Western Asia	4,660	4,915	5,149	5,389	5,559	5,577	5,577
Central and Southern Asia	13,684	15,035	16,176	17,448	18,026	18,079	18,081
Central Asia	1,315	1,376	1,429	1,484	1,508	1,508	1,508
Southern Asia	12,369	13,659	14,747	15,964	16,518	16,571	16,573
Eastern and South-Eastern Asia	5,286	5,832	6,284	6,626	6,859	7,059	7,061
Eastern Asia	2,796	3,071	3,303	3,525	3,688	3,851	3,852
South-Eastern Asia	2,490	2,761	2,981	3,101	3,171	3,208	3,209
Latin America and the Caribbean	7,645	8,195	8,808	9,388	9,742	9,841	9,842
Oceania	622	701	777	821	840	842	842
Australia and New Zealand	543	622	698	740	759	760	760
Oceania (exc. Australia and New Zealand)	79	79	79	81	81	82	82
Europe and Northern America	20,747	22,668	24,414	26,142	27,368	30,492	30,538
Europe	17,209	18,825	20,245	21,690	22,753	25,827	25,871
Northern America	3,538	3,843	4,169	4,452	4,615	4,665	4,667
Landlocked developing countries	10,779	11,723	12,640	13,328	13,832	13,924	13,948
Least Developed Countries	5,748	6,273	6,801	7,223	7,512	7,571	7,587
Small island developing States	424	448	471	483	486	494	494

¹Cumulative values.

Source: International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA) Secretariat.