



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

COMMISSION ON
GENETIC RESOURCES
FOR FOOD AND
AGRICULTURE

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (2023–2031)





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Vision

Valuing and conserving biodiversity for food and agriculture and promoting its use in support of global food security and sustainable development, for present and future generations.

Mission

Cognizant that genetic resources for food and agriculture and other components of biodiversity of relevance to food and agriculture are a common concern of all countries, in that all countries depend on genetic resources for food and agriculture that originated elsewhere, the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Commission) strives to halt the loss of genetic resources for food and agriculture and other components of biodiversity of relevance to food and agriculture, and to ensure world food security and sustainable development by promoting their conservation and sustainable use, including exchange, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their use.

Goals

In line with its mission, the Commission's Goals are cross-sectoral and in support of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The cross-sector goals build on the global assessments prepared under its guidance, the strategic priority areas, long-term goals and targets of the Commission's sectoral Global Plans of Action, the Framework for Action on Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture and other Commission activities taken in response to the global assessments.

Goal 1: Sustainable use: Promote the sustainable use and development of genetic resources for food and agriculture and, more generally, all biodiversity relevant to food and agriculture, to increase production for world food security and sustainable development.¹

Goal 2: Conservation: Maintain the diversity of genetic resources for food and agriculture and other components of biodiversity of relevance to food and agriculture.²

Goal 3: Access and benefit-sharing: Promote appropriate access to genetic resources for food and agriculture and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization.³

Goal 4: Participation: Facilitate the participation of relevant stakeholders in decision-making.⁴

Operative principles

Principle 1: The Commission has a coordinating role and deals with policy, sectoral and cross-sectoral matters related to the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources of relevance to food and agriculture.

- The Commission guides and monitors FAO's policies, programmes and activities related to genetic resources for food and agriculture within the framework of FAO's strategic objectives.

¹ Goal 1 supports SGD 2.4: By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality; SDG Target 14.4: By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics; and SDG Target 15.2: By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally.

² Goal 2 supports SDG 2.5: By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed.

³ Goal 3 supports SDG 2.5 and SDG 15.6: Promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and promote appropriate access to such resources, as internationally agreed.

⁴ Goal 4 supports SDG 16.7: Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

- The Commission keeps under continuous review relevant matters in other forums, including policy developments, relating to the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources for food and agriculture, access to these resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from their use.

Principle 2: The Commission monitors the state of the world's biodiversity, including genetic resources, for food and agriculture.

- The Commission oversees the periodic preparation of global assessments on genetic resources and biodiversity for food and agriculture, and, as appropriate, the development of a comprehensive global information system or systems for relevant genetic resources in support of this role.

Principle 3: The Commission strives to reach international consensus on policies and action programmes to ensure the conservation and sustainable utilization of biodiversity, including genetic resources, for food and agriculture, as well as the fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from their use.

- The Commission provides an intergovernmental forum for negotiation of international policies on genetic resources for food and agriculture.
- The Commission oversees the implementation of, and updates, global action plans and other instruments addressing the conservation and sustainable utilization of biodiversity, including genetic resources, for food and agriculture, as well as access to these resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from their use.
- The Commission responds to developments in other forums, where appropriate.

Principle 4: The Commission contributes to the strengthening of national and regional policies on biodiversity for food and agriculture and promotes cooperation in capacity-building.

- The Commission supports the development or strengthening of national and regional policies and programmes on genetic resources and biodiversity for food and agriculture, in particular by facilitating the implementation of Global Plans of Actions for genetic resources, and establishes coordination mechanisms to promote national and regional cooperation across relevant sectors and among actors.
- The Commission identifies and facilitates the availability of financial, human, scientific, technical and technological resources to enable Commission Members to contribute actively to the achievement of the outputs and milestones of the Commission's Strategic Plan and to implement policies and recommendations developed by the Commission.
- The Commission supports its Members in the development and implementation of strategies and activities that raise public awareness and facilitate education that creates a better understanding of the relevance of biodiversity for food and agriculture and thereby promotes broader participation of stakeholders in the conservation and use of genetic resources for food and agriculture.

Principle 5: The Commission continues and strengthens cooperation and partnerships on biodiversity for food and agriculture.

- The Commission facilitates and oversees cooperation between FAO and other relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental bodies.
- In addition to its activities on plant, animal, forest, aquatic genetic resources, microorganisms and invertebrates, the Commission brings together international partners addressing biodiversity for food and agriculture, to facilitate exchange of experiences and to create new partnerships.
- The Commission's cooperation with other relevant international bodies strives to ensure that negotiations in other forums take into account the special needs of the

agricultural sector with regard to all components of biological diversity relevant for food and agriculture.

- The Commission will strengthen the involvement of all stakeholders, such as civil society and producer organizations, including organizations representing women and small-scale producers, breeding institutions and industries, and public- and private-sector organizations involved with genetic resources for food and agriculture.

I. Rationale for the strategic plan (2023–2031)

1. Biodiversity for food and agriculture is among the Earth's most important resources. Crops, livestock, aquatic organisms, forest trees, microorganisms and invertebrates – thousands of species and their genetic variability – make up the web of biodiversity upon which the world's food production depends. Biodiversity for food and agriculture contributes to food security and nutrition and sustainable livelihoods and, through the provision of regulating and supporting ecosystem services, underpins the natural potential for adaptation to ever-changing socio-economic and environmental dynamics, such as population growth, dietary preferences, nutritional needs and climate change.
2. Aware of the importance of each component of biodiversity for food and agriculture to global food security and nutrition, the Commission aims to ensure the conservation, sustainable use and development of genetic resources for food and agriculture, access to these resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from their use, for present and future generations.
3. Since 2007, the Commission has been operating under a Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPow).⁵ The Strategic Plan for the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture 2023–2031 embraces the MYPow and contains the Commission's vision, mission and goals. The goals of the Strategic Plan for the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture 2023–2031 build on the "State of the World" global assessment reports, and the strategic priority areas, long-term goals and targets of the Commission's global action plans and the Framework for Action on Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture as well as other policy instruments, including the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and other policy responses to these assessments, as well as the established indicators and monitoring procedures for assessing the global action plans' and the implementation of other instruments agreed, including within the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors.
4. This Strategic Plan supersedes and replaces all previous versions of the Multi-Year Programme of Work and of strategic plans. It includes in Annex 1 the MYPow's major outputs and milestone for the forthcoming five regular sessions of the Commission.

II. Implementing, monitoring and reviewing

5. The Strategic Plan guides the Commission in the implementation of its mandate. The Strategic Plan is a rolling, and therefore flexible, set of outputs and milestones, which the Commission keeps under review. Reviewing this Strategic Plan at each second Session will enable the Commission to assess the progress of its work towards its goals, to address and include new and emerging issues in the field of biodiversity, including genetic resources, for food and agriculture, and to take into account new developments and processes in other relevant forums. The MYPow with major outputs and milestones and the Session Planning are reviewed at each Session.
6. For the implementation of this Strategic Plan, the Commission continues to rely on technical support from its subsidiary bodies, including the intergovernmental technical working groups that advise the Commission on issues in the areas under their respective competences. They provide advice and make recommendations to the Commission on these matters and consider the progress made in implementing this Strategic Plan.

⁵ CGRFA-11/07/Report, Appendix E.

7. Through this Strategic Plan, the Commission foresees the continued preparation and presentation of its global assessments of the state of the world's biodiversity for food and agriculture, including animal, plant, aquatic and forest genetic resources.
8. The success of the implementation of this Strategic Plan and its MYPOW will depend on the support provided through FAO's Programme of Work and Budget, and on the mobilization of extra-budgetary resources, as well as on partnerships with, and the contributions of, other international organizations.

III. Partnerships

9. To achieve its goals and targets and support the implementation of this Strategic Plan, the Commission will continue to seek synergies and strengthen partnerships with the relevant specialized agencies and conventions of the United Nations as well as other intergovernmental organizations, including the Convention of Biological Diversity and the International Treaty



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Annex 1: Multi-Year Programme of Work: major outputs and milestones (2023–2031)

	19th Session (2023)	20th Session (2025)	21st Session (2026/2027)	22nd Session (2028/2029)	23rd Session (2030/2031)
Animal genetic resources			Presentation of SoW AnGR-3 Review of GPA AnGR		
Aquatic genetic resources			Review of implementation of the GPA AqGR	Presentation of SoW AqGR 2	Review of GPA AqGR
Forest genetic resources	Presentation of SoW FGR-2	Review of GPA FGR		Review of implementation of GPA FGR	
Microorganism and invertebrate genetic resources		Dietary components of food/feed; food processing and agro-industrial processes		Review of work on MIGR	
Plant genetic resources	Presentation of SoW PGR-3	Review of Second GPA PGR	Review of WIEWS reporting tool		Review of implementation (Second) GPA PGR
Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture	Follow-up to the SoW BFA	Review and consider the work on BFA	Review of the FA BFA	Presentation of SoW BFA-2	Follow-up to the SoW BFA-2
Access and benefit-sharing		Effects of ABS measures on utilization and conservation of GRFA	Update of compilation of ABS country measures		Review of work on ABS
Biotechnologies				Review of the work on biotechnologies for conservation and sustainable use of GRFA	
Digital sequence information	Consider the use of DSIs on GRFA and the potential implications for conservation, sustainable use and ABS of GRFA	Recent developments on DSIs and their potential implications for conservation, sustainable use and ABS of GRFA	Recent developments on DSIs and their potential implications for conservation, sustainable use and ABS of GRFA		Review of the work on DSIs and the potential implications for conservation, sustainable use and ABS of GRFA
Climate change	Review of draft questions on climate change and GRFA	Summary of questionnaire responses	Review of revised Voluntary Guidelines	Review of work on climate change and GRFA	
Nutrition and health	Review of work on GRFA and nutrition and health		Review of work on GRFA and nutrition and health		
New and emerging issues*)					
Management	Progress report/review of the Strategic Plan		Progress report on implementation of the Strategic Plan; SDGs		Progress report/review of the Strategic Plan

*A procedure for the ad hoc identification of new and emerging issues will be proposed for consideration by the intergovernmental technical working groups at their next sessions and by the Commission at its Twentieth Regular Session.

