



PRESS RELEASE



UN Biodiversity Convention and International Treaty commit to enhanced cooperation on access and benefit-sharing of genetic resources

- *Cooperation to include capacity-building on access and benefit-sharing related to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture*
- *Collaborative efforts aimed at contributing to economic development, innovation and research.*

9 JULY 2018 – A Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) that will enhance cooperation between the Secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the FAO International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (the International Treaty) was signed today on the margins of the second meeting of the CBD's Subsidiary Body on Implementation, being held in Montreal, Canada. The MoC focuses on collaborative activities between the two organizations in the area of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

The CBD, its Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing and the International Treaty all form part of the international regime on access and benefit-sharing and share objectives related to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the sharing of the benefits arising out of the use of genetic resources. The three global agreements also all recognize the important role of communities in conserving and sustainably using biodiversity.

The Nagoya Protocol recognizes the special nature of genetic resources for food and agriculture and the International Treaty addresses the specific features of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. The Secretariats of the International Treaty and the CBD have been working together to ensure that mutually supportive implementation of these instruments supports enhanced access to genetic resources and the sharing of benefits arising from their use, which will in turn contribute to economic development, innovation and research. The MoC signed today renews and enhances collaborative efforts to this end.

Dr Cristiana Paşca Palmer, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, said: "I believe that the partnership between the International Treaty and the Convention on Biological Diversity is an outstanding model of cooperation for a common goal."



“The achievements under the Nagoya Protocol will strengthen the implementation of the Treaty, while the Treaty’s successes will support the CBD in the accomplishment of its mandate. I thus could not be more pleased with our cooperation to date and I look forward to many more opportunities for us to work together in the future.”

Dr Kent Nnadozie, Secretary of the International Treaty, said: “Building on the strong and long-standing partnership with the Convention, this agreement will further expand our collaborative efforts to provide better services and support to governments and other stakeholders towards the achievement of our common objectives.

“It will also help mainstream biodiversity into existing programs and policies, and further reinforce the continuing dialogue between environment and agriculture, based on the development of concrete interfaces between the two sectors.”

The MoC includes the development of synergies between the International Treaty’s Global Information System and the CBD’s Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House; a joint initiative for on-farm conservation; work on sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture and protected areas; and the promotion of the importance of biodiversity and plant genetic resources for food and agriculture for food security and nutrition under a changing climate.

As part of the MoC, the two secretariats will work together in undertaking and promoting workshops, seminars and other events; and, in the coordination of technical assistance at the international, regional, sub-regional and national levels.

Dr Nnadozie said: “I am particularly pleased with the success of our close collaboration to date, which should serve as a model for better coordination and collaboration between the stakeholders of the respective agreements at the national level.”

Dr Paşca Palmer said: “This partnership has already led to concrete activities and tangible results and in this new phase I would like to demonstrate how our collaboration creates new value and brings these results to governments in a practical way.”

NOTE TO EDITORS

International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

Adopted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Conference in 2001 and entering into force in June 2004, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture recognizes the enormous contribution of farmers to the diversity of crops that feed the world; establishes a global system to provide farmers, plant breeders and scientists access to over 2.3 million plant genetic materials; and provides support to farmers and researchers in developing countries through its Benefit-sharing Fund. To date, 144 Parties have joined the International Treaty. For more information: www.fao.org/plant-treaty/en/. For additional information, please contact: Afshaan Shafi at afshaan.shafi@fao.org.

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and entering into force in December 1993, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 196 Parties so far, the Convention has near universal participation among countries. The Convention seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and

ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing are supplementary agreements to the Convention. The Cartagena Protocol, which entered into force on 11 September 2003, seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 171 Parties have ratified the Cartagena Protocol. The Nagoya Protocol aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies. It entered into force on 12 October 2014 and to date has been ratified by 107 Parties. For more information visit: www.cbd.int . For additional information, please contact: David Ainsworth on +1 514 287 7025 or at david.ainsworth@cbd.int; or Johan Hedlund on +1 514 287 6670 or at johan.hedlund@cbd.int
