

**UK Plant Genetic Resources Group Meeting  
16 April 2009**

**Minutes**

**Present:**

Mike Ambrose	JIC	Gavin Ramsey	SCRI
Neil Munro	Garden Organic	Charlotte	
Mike Camlin	AFBNI	Allender	WHRI
Dave Astley	Warwick HRI	George	
Natsha Ali	RGB Kew	Campbell	SASA
Nigel Maxted	Birmingham	Matthew	
Brian Ford-		Ordidge	Reading
Lloyd	Birmingham	Frances Radcliffe	Defra
Shelagh Kell	Birmingham	Kath Bainbridge	Defra
Ianto Thomas	BBSRC	Julian Jackson	Defra
Amanda Read	BBSRC		

**Apologies:**

Penny Maplestone	BSBP	Abi Johnson	EMR
Joan Cottrell	Forest Research	Felicidad Fernández	EMR
Simon Linnington	RGB Kew	Niall Green	SASA
Jack Edgley	FERA		

**09/02** Minutes of the previous meeting held 9 December 2008  
The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed once a number of corrections were pointed out.

**09/03** Matters arising from previous minutes

**09/04** Outcome of the Consultation on the implementation of the Seeds directive 98/95/EC on Conservation Varieties (George Campbell)  
George gave the group an update on the consultation. Comments from SASA had not been included in the compiled UKPGRG submission. Mike Ambrose apologized and said he would forward on the additional points to Jack Edgley.

**09/05** Preparation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> UK Country Report for the State of the World Conference (Julian Jackson)

Julian said that there had been insufficient resource to start this exercise, but that this would be started soon.

**09/06** International Treaty for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Julian Jackson)

Julian gave the group an update on work by the ITPGRFA secretariat using a presentation given at the 7<sup>th</sup> Working Group on Access and Benefit Sharing. The presentation focused on the multi lateral system and the use of the gene-IT in processing requests for material, and producing and monitoring Standard Material Transfer Agreements (SMTA). A useful statistic cited was that 100,000 SMTA's were issued in 2007. Another point of interest was the fact that IRRI posts the full accession content of SMTA issued on their external website.

**09/07** ECPGR External Review (Julian Jackson/Mike Ambrose)

Mike told the group that the review had been delayed in order to allow the independent reviewer the opportunity to observe ECPGR working meetings. The group had a chance to provide input to the terms of reference of the review.

**09/08** Update on the UKGRFA Portal (Nigel Maxted)

Nigel stated that he had no requests for updates to the Portal and requested the rest of the group to provide him with suggestions by the autumn in time to prepare plans and costings for the next financial year.

**09/09** UK National Inventory of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Ianto Thomas)

Ianto stated he would have additional staff help over the summer and asked members to provide details of accessions for updating the UK National Plant Inventory for uploading data to EURISCO. Simon Linington had been in contact to say that agreements from the majority of their Donors had been received and that contributions from the Millenium Seed Bank for uploading into the Inventory would be available shortly.

**09/10** UK National Inventory of landrace (Nigel Maxted)

Nigel reminded the group that in 2003/4 the University of Birmingham lead a scoping exercise that revealed a significant risk to landrace material within the UK. UK landrace maintainers were generally elderly and there was a significant risk that in 20 years time most of this agrobiodiversity resource will be irrevocably lost. In the interim, further short-term funding had been made available by Defra for the University of Birmingham and WHRI to commence building an inventory of vegetable landraces of England and Wales.

As a result data on landrace diversity were collated from a wide range of sources. The study identified various groups responsible for maintaining vegetable landraces including: Vegetable 'B' List maintainers; UK gene banks; Small-scale commercial companies; NGOs; and individual growers.

Nigel said that the report further highlighted the significant wealth of UK landrace diversity but that it was highly localised and increasingly threatened with extinction with little ex situ duplication. The report emphasised the need to establish and maintain a comprehensive inventory of UK vegetable (and fruit) landraces. It also suggested other activities aimed at engaging groups and individuals involved with maintaining landraces and to carry out further research into landrace diversity in the context of climate change.

Nigel said that Sheila would be giving a presentation to the group and thanked her for her hard work and others for their help in completing the project. Mike Ambrose underlined the importance of this work to the Group and thanked Defra for finding short term funds to help move this project forward.

**09/11** Update on National Fruit Collections (Matt Ordidge)  
Matt reported to the group that things were progressing well, maintenance was ongoing, molecular work on both the apple and pear collections was underway and that they had registered a new website ([www.nationalfruitcollection.org.uk](http://www.nationalfruitcollection.org.uk)) and launched the new Malus database on it. He also mentioned that they had been through an initial round of cryopreservation trialing and addressed the accession issues associated with the EMR Prunus material which Kath was due to report on under item 09/12. Mike Ambrose had kept in contact with all parties associated with this issue over the past year and thanked all involved for their efforts in dealing with the varied issues that had emerged which he felt had been carefully considered and dealt with in an appropriate manner and had resulted in clear and effective communication between all parties.

**09/12** Update on EMR Cherry resources (Kath Bainbridge)  
This was covered under 9/11

**09/13** Agrobiodiversity / Biodiversity Joint Meeting (Nigel Maxted)  
Nigel had arranged a meeting with biodiversity representatives from Natural England, the group agreed which members would attend the meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> May in London. Mike Ambrose welcomed this development and expressed the hope that a good number of UKPGRG members would be able to attend.

**09/14** Summer Technical Visit (Mike Ambrose)  
Mike announced that Simon and Matt were to host the Technical visit at the Millennium Seed Bank and National Fruit Collection at Brogdale on the 30 September and 1 October.

**09/15** AOB

**09/16** Date of next meeting was agreed for the 29<sup>th</sup> October.

The meeting was followed by a presentation on the Defra funded Vegetable Landrace Inventory for England and Wales by Shelagh Kell.