

UK PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES GROUP

Minutes of meeting on Wednesday 19 March 2014 Room 101 Nobel House

Attendees:	Adrian Turner, John Innes
Nigel Maxted, University of Birmingham (Chair)	Sean May, University of Nottingham
Charlotte Allender, University of Warwick	Sophie Leguil, Plant Heritage
Tom Christie, SASA	Gerry Hoppe, Northern Ireland
Matt Ordidge, University of Reading	
Mike Ambrose, John Innes	Julian Jackson, Defra
Milika Buurman, Limagrain UK	Bill Lyons, Defra
Julian Hosking, FAnGR	Chris Barker, Defra
Apologies: (14/01)	Ruth Eastwood, Kew
Peter Brotherton, Natural England	Neil Munro, Heritage Seed Library
Sue Goligher, Defra	Abi Johnson, East Malling Research
Lydia Smith, NIAB	Simon Linnington, Kew
Mercy Morris, Plant Heritage	John David, RHS
Penny Maplestone, British Society of Plant Breeders	Ianto Thomas, IBERS
Felicidad Fernandez, EMR	Robin Wood, Elsom Seeds
Dr Frances Gawthrop, Tozer Seeds	

14/02 Minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2013 (NM)

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

Actions:

BL/SM: Arrange publishing.

14/03 Matters arising (NM)

Various matters were briefly discussed.

Actions:

NM: Contact Garden Organic to try and secure Neil Munro's attendance at UK PGR

14/04 UK Landrace Conservation and use Concept Note (NM)

JJ said there had been contact with Clarence House and the Prince of Wales Charitable Foundation and there was some interest in the proposal towards an inventory and the conservation of landraces in the UK. Defra have committed £150k over 2 years towards the project but the total project costs are anticipated to be more and this to be made up by engaging with and securing contributions from supermarkets and charities.

Actions:

JJ: Continue work with charities and try to secure contributions

NM: Follow up earlier contact with Waitrose about possibilities for funding

14/05 Implementation of the Nagoya Protocol (JJ)

JJ said the EU Regulation that will implement the Nagoya Protocol was recently agreed by the European Parliament and the Regulation will next go to the European Council. There are impacts for UK PGR and a national consultation has been launched and there will be a national forum through which stakeholders can input their views. The proposals include sanctions, an enforcement body and checkpoints. Addressing one of the checkpoints is an important issue and MA will review best practice for this matter.

Actions:

MA: Review best practice guidance and any examples and report these back to UK PGR

JJ: Consider ways of communicating the actions, timeline and developments on implementation of the Protocol (on GOV.UK for example)

14/06 Updating the UK National Inventory and EURISCO (IT)

TC was concerned that information about material from SASA (that is not publicly available) was not captured in EURISCO and was considering how the information might be loaded in the future. MA said there had been a fault in transferring JI data from EURISCO to GENESYS and that to prevent this in the future there needed to be a process to check that the data had been transferred accurately. IT was not in attendance and so these issues will be explored further at the next UK PGR meeting.

Actions:

BL: Ensure this agenda item and issues are rolled forward to the next UK PGR meeting

JJ: Confirm when the biodiversity indicator calculation is done and what data needs to be in the inventory

14/07 Future of the UK Genetic Resources Portal (IT/All)

The group discussed the pros and cons of the Portal – including the reputational impacts of being without a Portal or maintaining the Portal which has a lot of data that is out of date or maintaining a scaled-down Portal (without the PGR database) and linking visitors to more up-to-date PGR databases such as EURISCO or the Google Fusion Table that IT maintains. IT was not in attendance and so these issues will be explored further at the next UK PGR meeting.

Actions:

BL: Ensure this agenda item and issues are rolled forward to the next UK PGR meeting

14/08 ECPGR Update (JJ)

JJ said The ECPGR Steering Committee agreed that the ECPGR Secretariat will continue to be hosted by Bioversity International, €283,000 has been allocated towards ECPGR Working Groups and he may need views from the Group on a paper about record keeping under AEGIS.

NM said he remained concerned about the future of the ECPGR Working Groups. He has submitted a paper to ECPGR about the value of retaining the 'In situ' Working Group but his submission of a similarly supportive paper about retaining the 'On-farm' Conservation Working Group has been delayed for the time being.

14/09 Feedback on the Plant Treaty (JJ)

JJ said the key activities for the Plant Treaty in the next years includes improving the functioning and coverage of the multilateral system (UK PGR views will be sought), best practice on greater utilisation, access and benefit sharing, and the easy SMTA.

Actions:

BL: Provide information/final results reported on the SMTA survey

All UK PGR: Copy SMTA's to third part beneficiary (FAO)

JJ: Confirm whether SMTA's stay confidential

JJ/BL: Circulate to UK PGR the obligations/rules on the SMTA

14/10 PGR applications/project news (NM)

- MO said University of Reading are involved in two Horizon 2020 projects (one about genetic characterisation of collections and the other with Global Crop Trust about valuations on genebanks)
- TC said SASA remain committed to collaborating on the vegetable and fruit landrace project
- SM said Uni of Nottingham's application to BBSRC to cover work for a germplasm module (propose several hubs for better distribution – and not one central point) has been successful
- JH said NE/FAnGR activity had covered:
 - Mapping of CWR's important to food and forage
 - Proper recognition of PGR in ecosystems
 - Ensuring genetic resources are covered in biodiversity
- CA said Uni of Warwick has/is:
 - Restarted the VEGin work and this work will continue up to September
 - A partner on a Horizon 2020 project looking at Brassica
- SL said Plant Heritage are looking for funding to help on a project about threatened ornamental plants
- MA said John Innes has/is:
 - Three months into a one year project to look at databases
 - Looking at Horizon 2020 and has some initial thoughts about possible projects
- NM said:
 - There will be a joint PGR Secure/European Association for Research on Plant Breeding (EUCARPIA) conference on utilization and conservation of CWR and landrace diversity for crop improvement. The conference is being held at NIAB Innovation Farm, Cambridge, UK, 17-20 June 2014
 - University of Birmingham has submitted a Stage 1 application to Horizon 2020 for SFS7A 2014 using the acronym On-farm Diversity concerned with systematic landrace and on-farm diversity across Europe
 - The University is also involved in developing a Horizon 2020 for SFS7B 2015 application focused on improving PGR networking in Europe
 - The University is involved in a CWR project in Peru led by Conservation International
 - The University is involved in the national strategies for CWR in Mexico and Portugal
 - NM attended an FAO meeting (lead by CGRFA) about promoting a methodology for the development of national PGR strategies and reporting to the FAO GPA
 - NM attended a one day meeting with FAO about a Global Network for the *in situ* Conservation

14/11 New Contracts for the National Fruit Collections and the Vegetable Gene Bank (BL)

BL said two tender exercises to put in place new Defra contracts for the NFC and the VGB had been underway for approx 9 months. There have been a number of challenges to address and this has made the process and the negotiations difficult for all those involved. Defra has been able to award the contract for the NFC to the University of Reading but the negotiations for the VGB were still underway.

14/12 Harvesting Diversity II (NM)

NM said there could be benefits to PGR, FAnGR and other communities working more closely together. He explained that Harvesting Diversity I was a one day meeting in 2001 about working more closely together and he asked the Group whether this would be a worthwhile exercise to run again. The Group had mixed views; some thinking that such an event would need to be linked with another event of interest to encourage attendance, and others thinking that the combination of interests would be too wide and so would in-fact discourage attendance. A possible solution was a

combined communities morning and an afternoon where the communities separated into sector specific technical meetings.

Actions:

BL: Ensure this agenda item and issues are rolled forward to the next UK PGR meeting

14/13 BBSRC Update (NM, MA, SM)

MA said that BBSRC has been reviewing the Collections, its funding and its resources, and looking forward is considering how these might be better managed in conjunction with 'Best Practice' and long term sustainability. There is a two day meeting 22-23 May to continue this work.

14/14 Summer Technical Visit (NM)

Lack of time has prevented any recent visit.

Actions:

NM: Contact IT about the possibility of taking forward a visit

14/15 AOB (NM)

MA thanked the Group for their assistance on the response to 'Plant Breeders Rights'.

CA reported her attendance at the European Innovation Partnership AGRI Focus Group looking at ways to improve utilisation – she is waiting for outputs from the meeting and there will be a follow up meeting in May/June.

NM asked whether we could try again to get DFID attendance at UK PGR – even via skype or tele conf.

MO said the proposal/legislation on Plant Reproagation Material had been rejected by the European Parliament. Defra are running update meetings.

NM said he had contacted the PhD student who (via MO) had expressed interest in attending a UK PGR meeting. He had received no response.

Action:

JJ: To contact DFID and try to secure their future attendance at UK PGR

14/16 Date of next meeting (NM)

The date of the next UK PGR meeting is Weds 22 October 2014.

14/17 Horizon 2020 Update (CB)

CB gave the following update on key dates and events of Horizon 2020

- 24 Dec 2013 via email I alerted the FAnGR Committee of this opportunity
- 23 Jan 2014 UK launch event to promote Horizon 2020 Challenges 2 and 5 and their calls. Speaker presentations are available:
<http://www.betaeurope.co.uk/2014H2020launch.htm>.
Video footage from the live webcast of the event available at:
http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLddRfvph7URQ6yzAFCzXwXZ_MFOiHEvIv.
- Going forward we want to encourage UK genetic resource related researchers, universities and businesses to take advantage of the Horizon 2020 Challenges 2 and

5 opportunities by encouraging them to submit to the European Commission their proposals for innovative projects addressing the Challenges. Key dates are:

Societal Challenge 2 “Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine, maritime and inland water research and the bioeconomy” - 2014 Work Programme Call

- 26 June 2014 for proposals submitted under the Single Stage submission process. Information on the outcome of the evaluation should be a maximum 5 months from the submission date.
Two Stage submission process
- 12 March 2014 - First Stage proposals. Information on the outcome of the evaluation should be a maximum 2 months from the submission date.
- 26 June 2014 - Second Stage proposals Information on the outcome of the evaluation should be a maximum 5 months from the final submission date.

Societal Challenge 5 “Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials”- 2014 Work Programme Call

- 8 April 2014 for proposals submitted under the Single Stage submission process. Information on the outcome of the evaluation should be a maximum 5 months from the submission date.

Two Stage submission process

- 8 April 2014 - First Stage proposals. Information on the outcome of the evaluation should be a maximum 3 months from the submission date.
- 16 September 2014 - Second Stage proposals. Information on the outcome of the evaluation should be a maximum 5 months from the final submission date.

However, it is important to check the Work Programme topics for the submission dates. Work Programmes can be accessed from the EC’s Horizon 2020 Participant Portal at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/home.html>

The Technology Strategy Board has set in place a dedicated team of UK National Contact Points (NCPs) to provide guidance and assistance in the application process. Details of the NCPs for Challenges 2 and 5 (and for other areas of Horizon 2020) can be found at:

<https://www.h2020uk.org/>