

UK Plant Genetic Resources Group

Minutes of meeting on 25 March 2015
Floor 0, Room C, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London

Nigel Maxted, University of Birmingham (Chair; NM)
Penny Maplestone, BSPB (PM)
Frances Gawthrop, A.L. Tozer Ltd (FG)
Neil Munro, Heritage Seed Library (NMu)
Charlotte Allender, University of Warwick (CA)
Adrian Turner, JIC (AT)
Mike Ambrose, JIC (MA)
Julian Hosking, Natural England (JH)

Milika Buurman, Limagrain (MB)
Gerry Hoppe, Agri-Food & Biosciences Institute, NI (GH)
Marcos Castellanos, University of Nottingham (MC)
Tom Christie, SASA (TC)
Ianto Thomas, Aberystwyth University (IT)
Julian Jackson, DEFRA (JJ)
Sarah Cunningham, DEFRA (SC)

15/01 Apologies (NM)

Feli Fernandez, EMR
Abi Johnson, EMR
Matt Ordidge, University of Reading
Glenn Bryan, JHI
Mercy Morris, Plant Heritage

Lydia Smith, NIAB TAG
Ruth Eastwood, Kew
Sean May, University of Nottingham
Gaynor McKenzie, JHI

15/02 Minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2014 (NM)

One amendment was suggested by NM and then the minutes were agreed

15/03 Matters arising (NM)

JH: JJ & JH will be meeting a trustee of the Heritage Lottery Fund to identify how to approach discussions with them to get GR on their agenda

ACTIONS

JJ: Arrange meeting with HLF Trustee

JH/NM/MA: Draft a proposal document on developing an approach to summarising the total state of in situ and ex situ conservation in UK (including identifying gaps, 'at risk' criteria and indicative location maps).

15/04 UK Landrace Conservation and use Concept Note (NM/JJ)

Since 2003 NM has been trying to obtain funding for a landrace inventory project, with little success thus far. JJ & NM attended a positive meeting with Michael Whitehead (MW) from the Prince's Trust, but no further communication has been received since this meeting. Although the Trust would not fund the whole project, MW indicated that they would be able offer political support and some financial support. CA suggested JH & JJ should mention this to the lottery when they meet them.

ACTIONS

JJ & NM: Contact MW re. Princes Trust funding

JJ: Set up and chair a working group to progress the funding bid for this project (NM, JH, JJ, NMu, & CA agreed to attend)

15/05 Implementation of the Nagoya Protocol (JJ)

JJ updated the group on progress since the last meeting. A cross governmental approach has been agreed for implementation in the UK. Governmental response to the consultation has been finalised and published (<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/biodiversity-implementing-the-nagoya-protocol-in-the-uk>) Statutory Instrument (SI) has been laid: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/821/contents/made>

Key messages:

Guidance is required and DEFRA is working with European colleagues on this. It is hoped that it will be in place by October when the EU regulation comes in to force.

The SI has both civil and criminal sanctions within it. Civil sanctions are first recourse (unlimited fine). In the case of clear cut offences (e.g. obstructing an inspector/not keeping documentation) the National Measurement and Regulation Office (NMRO) would have the ability to use criminal sanctions, although they would also have the option to use civil sanctions. Criminal sanctions approach has been removed for instances where there is uncertainty.

The EU regulation includes the following offences:

- Failing to undertake due diligence;
- Failing to seek permission for the transfer of material to subsequent users;
- Failing to make a declaration of due diligence.

NMRO have been appointed as competent authority and have the powers to act on behalf of the Secretary of State. They will be working up a system of raising awareness and they will want to engage with different sectors. NMRO will be contacting stakeholders between now and October.

Implementing Acts address 3 areas of regulation:

- Registered collections (NMRO will need to know nature of collections)
- Declarations of due diligence
- Best Practices

There will be meetings in April & June finalising the Implementing Acts and JJ will seek confirmation on what can be shared publically.

ACTIONS

DEFRA: Circulate SI and consultation response to the group

ALL: let JJ know about any upcoming meetings/events that the NMRO could attend

15/06 Updating the UK National Inventory and EURISCO (IT)

Eurisco moved from Rome to IPK, and they are accepting data. IT has only been sent an update from CA, and other institutions were encouraged to submit updates

MA brought up the UKs genetic resource biodiversity indicator (<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-6573>) and suggested that our annual EURISCO update should be in-line with the indicator updating process. Data will initially be requested in July, and the deadline will be October 2015 for this year's update. The indicator was not updated in 2014.

The group agreed that a voluntary field should be added to the UKNI to indicate accession availability, and that the UK should request this addition to EURISCO

The inclusion of ornamentals was discussed, but in the absence of MM & RHS the group did not make a decision.

ACTIONS

MC, TC, NMu, MO, RE: send update to IT by mid-April. Ensure that date of accession is included, so that pre & post Oct 14 accessions can be separated and the biodiversity indicator can be updated for 2014 & 2015

IT: contact MO & RE regarding the above action

IT: Circulate EURISCO draft to the group

DEFRA: Contact Stephan Weise (IPK) to request addition of accession availability field in EURISCO

DEFRA: Contact MM & RHS re. inclusion of ornamentals in UKNI/EURISCO, and add this to the Agenda for the next UKPGR considered appropriate

15/07 Dialogue between *Ex Situ* collections / Defra over germplasm export in England / Wales (MA)

MA had a positive meeting with Nicola Spence (Chief Plant Health Officer) where they discussed the phytosanitary material certification request. He also attended the 2nd APHA export task force meeting where the following points were agreed to be actioned:

- APHA to explore the option for extending the period of the test certificate to the life of the sample for specialist scientific facilities
- Review of concessionary charges (this is already planned for summer/autumn 2015)
- APHA to share more of their operational knowledge base and make it accessible for stakeholders to check. This should save significant time on undertaking certain checks.

The actions will be reported on at the next meeting in May.

15/08 Future of the Genetic Resources Portal (NM)

The value of this portal was discussed by the group, and members suggested that if this information can be found elsewhere then there is no need to retain it. One possibility might be to move it to lanto's website and make it accessible via the UKPGRG website.

ACTIONS

ALL: Await JH/NM/MA in situ & ex situ summary document (action 15/03), and then make a final decision

DEFRA: Contact GRFA portal provider to find out why UKNI data provided by IT was not added

DEFRA: Check the importance (or otherwise) of this portal for FAnGR

15/09 ECPGR Update (JJ)

In situ concept has been accepted by the steering committee. The on farm concept is progressing, and NM and Frank Begemann will be visiting Brussels shortly to try and obtain funding to get the concepts enacted.

NM raised concerns with the lack of communication from the ECPGR Chairs

15/10 Feedback on Plant Treaty (JJ)

The Benefit Sharing Fund (intended to support conservation activities in developing countries) fell short of its previous funding targets, and the current model is being reconsidered. Suggestions to increase user based payments include:

Expand Annex 1

Amend 6.11 (annual payments) to make it more attractive

Adjust 6.7 & 6.8 as alternatives to 6.11

Two meetings have taken place since the last GB and a third meeting will take place in April.

PM stated that the commercial sector is strongly backing the Treaty and would like complete expansion of Annex 1. The sector would like the system to be fair and inclusive, and it is keen that there is differentiation between in-kind and patent. The ESA will be making a voluntary contribution to the scheme in the autumn.

15/11 PGR applications/project news (NM)

AT: JIC are part of a H2020 bid (the wheat project for healthy food today and tomorrow) that has been submitted. The project will involve genotyping and phenotyping wild relatives, and creating wheat/CWR hybrids

MC: Nottingham have been approached to store a research population of transgenic tomato
MA: new agreement has been set up with BSPB with regard to cereal material received from breeding communities;
JIC formally applied to be a partner in the DivSEEK initiative;
New information management system (SEEDSTOR) went live in mid-December;
JIC and Rothamsted (tetraploid wheat – world distribution centre for these lines).
JH: working to ensure that CWR and traditional orchard varieties are supported through the new agri-environment scheme (Countryside Stewardship);
CWR hotspot mapping exercise has been undertaken to identify the overlap of CWR with existing designations;
4 -6 papers currently in press recommending in situ conservation methodologies and quality standards;
A lottery project enquiry form has been submitted for the Lizard CWR project, and an internal NE LIFE bid is being considered.
CA: VEGin has been approved;
Working with JIC to see if the SEEDSTOR template could be used by Warwick as a data management system;
Warwick is part of a consortium that has submitted a H2020 bid.
NM: Involved with a number H2020 bids, including a successful participatory plant breeding project (DIVERSIFOOD), a project linking ex/in -situ conservation with use (PGR Gold), and an agri-diversity project that aims to link up animal, forestry and plant genetic resources.
Developing a Marie Curie research project to make closer links between conservation and use, and trying to facilitate the need of breeders

15/12 Harvesting Diversity II (NM)

Bringing the animal microbial and plant genetic communities together would be beneficial. NM didn't get an invite to the last Farm Animal Genetic Resource (FAnGR) meeting in London.

ACTIONS

SC: Ensure NM is invited to the next FAnGR meeting

15/13 Summer Technical Visit (NM)

Discussed earlier in the agenda.

NM suggested that the format for this visit would be a formal meeting followed by a tour of site/facility with a focus on a specific topic, e.g. Nagoya. MA suggested that it would be helpful to get Kew (CW) to share their ideas re. best practice as the current gap in knowledge relates to implementation (rather than legislation).

NM confirmed that LS had agreed to host the next Summer Technical Visit at innovation Farm, NIAB, Cambridge.

ACTIONS

MA: coordinate with LS

15/14 AOB (NM)

15/15 Date of next meeting (NM)

Wednesday 14th October 2015