

Minutes Agreed by UKPGR at meeting on 21 March 2012

UK PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES GROUP

**Minutes of meeting on Thursday 6th October 2011,
Room 401, Ergon House**

Nigel Maxted (NM) Chair –B’ham Uni
Mike Ambrose (MA),– JIC
Charlotte Allender (CA) – Warwick Uni
Dave Astley (DA) – Warwick Uni
George Campbell (GC) – SASA
Milika Buurman (MB)–BSPB/Limagrain
Shelagh Kell - B’ham Uni

Mike Camlin (MC) – AFBINI
Matt Ordidge (MO) – Reading Uni
Ianto Thomas (IT) – IBERS
Farhana Amin (FA) – Defra
Louisa Bagshaw (LB) Defra
Julian Jackson (JJ) – Defra

11/17 Apologies (NM)

Brian Ford-Lloyd
Abi Johnson
Bob Sherman
Neil Munro
Simon Linington

Sean May
Feli Fernandez
Penny Maplestone
Gavin Ramsay

11/18 Minutes of the meeting held on 14 April 2011 (NM)

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed subject to a few minor changes.

11/19 Matters arising (NM)

All matters arising were already covered under other agenda items.

After introductions for the benefit of new members LB explained the staff changes for responsibility for Genetic Resource for Food and Agriculture Policy within Defra.

11/20 UK Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (NM)

The group agreed that there remained a need for the distinct UKPGR website (as well as the UKGRFA Portal), as this provided an institutional focus rather than a focus on the material. Additionally the pages could be updated quickly and easily, the group agreed to check all links and provide updates where links were out of date. JJ informed the group that the current maintenance contract for the UKGRFA Portal was not renewed by the supplier. Defra is in the process of securing a short-term solution in order to allow fuller consideration for a more sustainable contract for the hosting of the GRFA Portal. MO pointed out that there were a few links on the Portal

that were out-of-date and needed updating, the group agreed to consider prioritising the list of amendments to the GRFA Portal so that simple updates could be updated in the immediate short term

Action: UKPGR members to check and provide updates on UKPGR web pages to NM: <http://ukpgrg.org/>

Action: Defra to convene meeting to consider requirements for GRFA Portal.

Action: UKPGR members to consider quick fix updates required for the GRFA Portal: <http://www.grfa.org.uk/index.html>

11/21 UK Landrace Conservation and use Concept Note (JJ)

JJ reported that a meeting attended by NM, MA and representatives of both Defra agriculture and biodiversity had considered the concept rather than the detail. JJ agreed to provide a strategy for vegetable and fruit landrace conservation at the following UKPGR meeting. A note of the meeting and separate amalgamation of supporting international policy commitments would be circulated to the group.

Action: JJ to circulate note of meeting.

Action: Defra to prepare VLFR strategy.

11/22 Updating the UK National Inventory and EURISCO (IT)

IT informed the group that he had uploaded some details onto Google Fusion tables but he had yet to upload details to EURISCO, he was still awaiting details from some institutions but this could be done using Google Fusion tables. Whilst more clunky than the current website the table allowed easy identification of errors. The group agreed to limit access to the Google tables to the immediate group to prevent any confusion with other users and to review the use of the tables in the meantime.

Action: IT to circulate instructions to groups on use of Google Fusions Tables, members to provide information and review the use of the tables.

11/23 AEGIS – Associate Membership Agreements (JJ)

JJ noted that there was one outstanding institution and offered to provide written clarification to relevant contract divisions.

Action: MA to follow up with JIC contract managers.

11/24 Implementation of the MLS

JJ informed the group that Defra had sent out initial emails encouraging various collections not under public control to consider including material into the Plant Treaty's multilateral system (MLS). He also encouraged institutions to use the Plant Treaty's Standard Material Transfer Agreement (SMTA) for non-annex 1 material where appropriate. Defra would be following up requests once a new staff member was in post. JJ also asked if industry group would consider putting old material that was not already in the national collection into the MLS. The group agreed that they would be interested in hearing from Treaty Secretariat staff at the next meeting about any technological solutions that would enable slicker reporting of the use of the SMTA.

Action: JJ to investigate with NM possibility of presentation by ITPGRFA Secretariat to UKPGR of reporting mechanisms.

11/25 Review of UK PGR Group composition and structure (NM)

NM noted that he had circulated a note regarding the composition of the group, the group discussed ways of encouraging further participation from different sectors such as biotech companies, habitat restoration, those with a wider environmental interest, funders and breeders. NM noted that the ToR of the group (http://ukpgrg.org/ukpgrg_terms_of_reference.pdf) allowed for the group to invite others to the meetings on an ad-hoc basis. NM summarised that the group had agreed to have one meeting with an emphasis on environmental issues and one with an emphasis on breeding. Technical meetings need not be limited to the "summer". NM suggested that he compile a list of other potential stakeholders to the group for consideration. He would also ask Sean May if it was possible to use the UKPGR as a forum for discussion of topics in between meetings.

Action: NM to circulate list of potential members and liaise with Sean May on potential of discussion forum.

11/25 Global and European PGR news (NM)

NM informed the group that the Global Trust Diversity Trust would be moving from Rome to Bonn.

JJ explained that the ECPGR has appointed an Executive Committee (chaired by Geert Kleijer) which would take forward initial work of the ECPGR steering committee that had met to respond to the external review. Any decisions would be

confirmed by the Steering Committee at its next meeting apart from limited financial delegation. (Further info: <http://ecpgr.bioversity.asia/EXCO/ExCo.htm>)

JJ informed the group that Defra had commissioned research on the implementation of the Nagaya Protocol within the UK and asked the members to take part in a survey which would inform implementation options.

11/26 Member applications/project news (NM)

SL said that the Kew were taking on forest genetic resources and they were also starting a project on “less usual” seeds that were difficult to reproduce in large volumes.

NM noted a \$50M Norwegian-funded project on crop wild relatives had started in the previous 6 months. The project has four partners, Global Trust Diversity Trust, CIAT, MSB and the University of Birmingham. The University of Birmingham had produced a web-enabled global list of priority CWR taxa and where with CIAT and the MSB collating ecogeographic data for these taxa. The MSB with national partners would be carrying out targeted collection and duplicates would also be held at the MSB.

MA said that there was an extension of the BBSRC initiative, [Rev-Gen UK?] to include more species such as barley, *brachypodium* (model grass), and wheat from JIC and Rothamstead.

MO told the group that he was involved in the EUROGENE bank proposal, which was now called [PLANTGENEACCESS?]

GC said that there was an ongoing characterisation exercise [of?] in which he hoped to involve CA. There has also been some Parliamentary Questions on various Scottish landraces which enabled a reply to highlight work of the Scottish Landrace Protection Scheme. Slow Food UK were also interested in registering the Shetland Cabbage within their Ark of Taste (<http://www.slowfood.org.uk/shetland-cabbage>)

IT noted that a sub group within the ECPGR forage group have an AEGIS grant of 10K euro.

CA was involved in an AEGIS project looking at Portuguese and Spanish *Brassicas*. She also noted that the Defra funded project, Vegetable Genetic Improvement Network (VeGIN) included some material based on the collections. They had a successful afternoon the previous Monday where the results were shown to breeders.

NM said that UoB had led a workshop on the creation and use of national CWR and LR inventories / strategies, associated with work packages 3 and 4 of the PGRSECURE FP7 Project. The recent workshop held in Palanga, Lithuania was attended by NM, MA and Steve Wilkinson from the JNCC on the data management

side. The project includes some money to pilot CWR inventories / strategies within the UK, and the UoB would work with NE and devolved administrations. UoB also have a European Research Area grant to work on plant conservation in Jordan, (UoB, RBG Kew and BG Jordan.)

NM was also in the process of submitting a proposal to the Darwin initiative to work on CWR conservation in West Africa.

SK noted that UoB was half-way through a three-year Defra and China-co-funded crop wild relative strategy for China, which was trying to identify climate change resistant traits in rice and soya bean.

11/27 Summer Technical Visit (NM)

Action: MB to investigate possibility of Limagrain hosting a visit to the breeding centre.

11/28 AOB (NM)

CA noted that UoW has a wider group working on food security including life sciences. Geoff Tansy is coming to speak as a visiting fellow.

Action: CA to forward details of event to the group

The group then listened to a presentation by SK on PGR Secure project.

http://ukpgrg.org/PGR_Secure_Kell_UKPGRG_Meeting_Oct_11.pdf

11/29 Date of next meeting

21 March 2012