

UK PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES GROUP

Final Minutes of Meeting on Wednesday 3 October 2012 Room 210, Ergon House

Nigel Maxted (NM) Chair – Uni of B'ham	Matt Ordidge (MO) – Uni of Reading
Mike Ambrose (MA) – JIC	Lydia Smith (LS) - NIAB
Charlotte Allender (CA) – Uni of Warwick	Penny Maplestone (PM) - BSPD
Nial Green (NG) - SASA	Milika Buurman (MB)–BSPB/Limagrain
Ruth Eastwood (RE) – RBG Kew	
Bob Sherman (BS) - GO	
Simon Linington (SN) – RGB Kew	Julian Jackson (JJ) - Defra
Sean May (SM) –Uni of Nottingham	Louisa Bagshaw (LB) - Defra
	Bill Lyons (BL) - Defra

12/15 Apologies (NM)

Abi Johnson (AJ)	Feli Fernandez (FF) - EMR
Gavin Ramsay (GR)	Mercy Morris
Joan Cottrell	Ianto Thomas (IT) – IBERS
Brian Ford-Lloyd (BFL) – Uni of B'ham	Peter Botherton

12/16 Minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2012 (NM)

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

Actions:

BL/SM to finalise and arrange publishing.

12/17 Matters arising (NM)

Matters arising included a discussion on the use of Google Groups for the group to hold online discussions, MO reminded UK PGR of amendments that are required to the Portal (12/04); AM confirmed that DFID have a commitment to attend UK PGR for the time being and it was confirmed that the Vicleae collection had moved from Reading to MSB Kew.

Action(s):

Secretariat to arrange Portal references to Reading to be updated before the next UK PGR meeting

SM to email all UK PGR with a suggested way forward on Group discussions

12/18 UK Landrace Conservation and Use Concept Note (NM)

NM said that the proposal had been discussed with Defra and that the proposal is being further developed with input from the partners. He said that some elements of the proposals were being offered 'in kind' and a minor point had been excluded. The budget for the proposal is now at £400k and the application will be submitted before the next UK PGR in March 2013. JJ said Defra have a new Chief Scientific Advisor in post and he may need to have the proposal presented to him.

Action(s):

MA to send to UK PGR suggestions of events and campaigns that can be linked to the proposal

12/19 Implementation of the Nagoya Protocol (JJ)

JJ said he was seeking Ministerial agreement to publish a study considering the affected sectors and possible approaches for the UK to implement the Nagoya Protocol. Also of note was a soon-to-be-published draft proposal for an EU regulation on Access and Benefit Sharing from the European Commission. Comments on the latter would be particular welcome going forwards and Defra will organise additional stakeholder meetings to consider EU Commission proposals.

The Defra report is now available here:

<http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Default.aspx?Menu=Menu&Module=More&Location=None&ProjectID=17827&FromSearch=Y&Publisher=1&SearchText=wc1016&SortString=ProjectCode&SortOrder=Asc&Paging=10#Description>

The EC proposal and impact assessment available here:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/biodiversity/international/abs/index_en.htm

Action(s):

UK PGR members to provide input into meetings as requested by Secretariat

12/20 Updating the UK National Inventory and EURISCO

UK PGR debated what should or should not be included in the National Inventory and EURISCO and the frequency of updating the systems and decided that an

update should be provided. It was noted that some of the discussion was linked to indicators but it was agreed this was a separate issue.

Action:

NM to request, and IT to prepare a paper to update the next UK PGR meeting about the National Inventory and EURISCO (scope and history of National Inventory and EURISCO)

Secretariat to ensure 'Content of National Inventory and EURISCO' on next UK PGR agenda

12/21 ECPGR Update

JJ will commission views from the group on the review of ECPGR ahead of the ECPGR Steering Committee in December. JJ said an exercise to tender for a hosting institute for ECPGR and EURISCO had commenced – the deadline for applications is 20 Nov and there is the possibility to split ECPGR and EURISCO. Some members had heard that EURISCO may become part of GENESYS and so the longer term future is unclear. The Group discussed ECPGR proposals to rationalise its work and structures and identified advantages and disadvantages to the proposal (for example splitting the in-situ and on-farm would lose synergies, attending many groups is difficult and many groups can lead to repetition and duplication. On the other hand fewer and larger groups are not as efficient and do not promote inclusivity).

Action:

NM to invite a Manager of EURISCO to attend the next UK PGR to give an update on EURISCO

12/22 Review of UK PGR Group composition and structure (NM)

NM said the structure of UK PGR is already agreed as follows

Spring meeting – links with environment

Autumn meeting – links with technical matters

PM said it will be difficult to engage the plant breeders and possible ways to encourage engagement would be to offer them some benefit, align the UK PGR meeting with either an event in their calendar or hold it at a time more convenient to them (winter?) to make attendance more manageable. MB said the plant breeders are very busy, they already have access to scientists, they have links with genebanks and so they have links into PGR – they do not see the benefit in

attending UK PGR. Other engagement possibilities suggested included use of Genetic Improvement Networks (GINs) and UK PGR attendance at plant breeding events/conferences.

Actions:

MA to provide a report on GINs for Autumn meeting

CA to circulate to UK PGR links to GINs

NM and Secretariat to look for links via GINs to get engagement from plant breeders

12/23 PGR applications/project news (NM)

CA reported progress in links with Embrapa. She and a colleague from Warwick Crop Centre are visiting Brazil in December to meet with researchers and visit Cenargen, Embrapa's genetic resources and biotechnology centre.

NG said SASA had been approached about storing landraces of Scottish origin (barley and wheat). He also said the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy have promised that they will visit SASA and record the resources held in the final publication.

MA thanked Defra for further funding of the Pea Collection until 2017.

SM said Nottingham University had been awarded a 5 year grant from BSRC, for the continuation of the University of Nottingham Arabidopsis Seedbank until 2017.

LS said NIAB had acquired a grant from a charitable foundation, to work with a Ghanian organisation to scope the development of agriculture in Africa.

SL said Kew are in discussions with the Forestry Commission to become the UK seed bank for forest species (including native ones). As part of these discussions, Kew and the Forestry Commission are considering forest germplasm from abroad that could be of particular use in the UK (e.g. for disease resistance). In total Kew have 150 worldwide PGR related projects.

PM said there are 2 EU Commission 'non papers' (embedded below) indicating what to expect in the EU Commission's new more consolidated draft EU Seeds Marketing Regulations – the progress suggest some relaxation of measures and conservation varieties are included. The first drafts of the legislation are expected in spring 2013.



PH Regulation,
non-paper July 2012.



PRM Regulation,
non-paper July 2012.

A similar review on Plant Variety Rights has been shelved until 2014.

PM said BSPB are preparing a Newsletter and would like to include a feature on biodiversity – Penny would welcome any help, contributions or ideas.

RE said Global Crop Diversity Trust, University of Birmingham and Kew CWR project was reaching the end of the research phase of the project and they were beginning to negotiate agreements and use of SMTAs.

BS said the Garden Organic vegetable collection is one of the best characterised and diverse heritage collections; they are considering ways of generating income from the collection. BS said Garden Organic has funded a project called ‘Sowing New Seeds’ and is looking specifically at multi ethnic seeds.

MO said Reading Uni are working with Defra and are in the process of securing future funding for the NFC.

NM said that Syngenta have provided funding of 5m American dollars over 5 years towards the conservation of socio economic plants (CWR, medicinal plants and timber trees).

NM said the FAOs CGRFA will be holding a workshop on in situ conservation ahead of the Sixth Session of the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on PGRFA mid-November 2012 – to formulate the practical basis of establishing Global Networks of sites for CWR and LR in situ conservation.

NM confirmed the finalisation of the FAO toolkit for “Conservation and Sustainable Use of PGRFA: a Toolkit for National Strategy Development” that is targeted for developing countries.

NM said there is NE project looking at the importance of genetic diversity of CWR on the Lizard compared to elsewhere in the UK.

NM said the PGR Secure mid-term evaluation is in a few weeks time in Cyprus and the closing event will be in April 2014 perhaps at NIAB Innovation Farm.

NM said an FAO Task Force is developing a 2nd draft of agricultural indicators to assess global changes in agrobiodiversity.

12/24 WCMC Indicators Workshop Feedback

JJ said the WCMC Workshop explored a first round of indicators

Further refinement and development of these ideas is expected before they can be finalised in April 2013.

Action(s): JJ to circulate draft indicators along with an Annex showing UKPGR views on the indicators

12/25 Summer Technical Visit

MA said he is exploring the possibility of a visit combining 2 nearby sites (the pea breeding work at Limagrain and Flora Nova for the ornamental species) but the logistics are yet to be finalised. It was agreed the visit would be better for an afternoon and then the morning of the following day – involving an overnight stay somewhere. The visit is provisionally targeted for the 2nd week of December.

Action(s): MA to progress and update appropriately

12/26 AOB

BS said that a collection of Sárpo potatoes that are blight resistant are at risk of being lost as the funding for them has recently ended. Alternative funding is being sought (but is not secured). NG said that if an application was made to SASA they would be considered for inclusion in the SASA collection.

NG announced to UKPGR that this would be his last meeting. NM, on behalf of UK PGR, thanked NG for his engagement in UK PGR.

12/27 Date of next meeting

To be organised via email.

Action(s): BL to organise

The UKPGR group then listened to two presentations; from Francisco Lopez (FAO's ITPGRFA) about the easy-SMTA and reporting system and from Alessandro Moscuza (DFID) about DFID views on PGR. Copies of the presentations are available on request.