

SEED SECTOR EXPRESSES DISAPPOINTMENT OVER STALLED NEGOTIATIONS ON EXCHANGE OF GENETIC RESOURCES

Rome, Italy -- On Saturday evening, the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) concluded its 8th session (GB8) with a rejection of a compromise package on enhancing the Multilateral System (MLS) of access and benefit sharing for plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

The GB8 was hoped to result in the approval of a package of measures that would enhance the Multilateral System by expanding the crop scope and adopting a revised Standard Material Transfer Agreement (SMTA) for the exchange of genetic resources. However, this was not the outcome despite the efforts within GB8 to find workable compromises on critical principles.

In its closing statement, the International Seed Federation expressed its disappointment that after 6 years of negotiations agreement could not be reached, but it renewed its commitment to the Plant Treaty as the preferred tool for access and benefit sharing of genetic resources for plant breeders:

"We thank the co-chairs for their hard work to find a workable compromise. We are disappointed with the outcome of the Governing Body meeting but we remain supportive of the Treaty and committed to keep collaborating to find workable means to enhance access and benefit sharing."

The Governing Body of the ITPGRFA also agreed to reconduct the Ad hoc Technical Expert Group on Farmers' Rights. ISF remains committed on this topic to propose ways toward a mutually supportive implementation of the ITPGRFA and UPOV Convention 1991 Act. Both international conventions lead to enhancing the development of crop varieties in order to meet food security goals.

Having access to a wide range of plant genetic resources is essential for plant breeders to develop improved varieties that boost farmers' crop productivity and address the impact of climate change, in order to attain sustainable food production. Crops that evolved in one part of the world have often become staple foods somewhere else. These exchanges have improved the quality of our diets, improved food security and helped feed the growing world population. The seed sector believes that good policies and their implementation are vital for continued conservation and exchange of genetic resources.

See also: [ISF Guide on Genetic Resources](#)

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About ISF

ISF is the voice of the global seed industry. It has represented the interests of its members since 1924, and represents 96% of the international seed trade today. With a global reach extending to members around the world and official observer status in intergovernmental and international organizations, ISF is uniquely positioned to assist in the development of government policy and business strategy.

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