

Governance and management of the Genebank Platform

September 2017

Partnership between the CGIAR and the Crop Trust

The Genebank Platform is managed through a partnership between the CGIAR and a non-CGIAR organization, the Global Crop Diversity Trust (Crop Trust), which leads and administers the Platform.

The largest part of the Platform activities (more than 80% of the budget) relate to routine operations to maintain and make available seed, tissue culture and field materials from the *in trust* collections under the management of the CGIAR genebanks. These activities are implemented and managed by the individual CGIAR genebank managers under the leadership of the Center senior management. Each genebank is allocated funding for such core operations following an in-depth costing exercise, the last one of which was published in 2011 (the next is planned for 2018-2020). A relatively small proportion of the Platform budget (approx. 15%) relates to collective activities or projects. Thus, management decisions at a Platform level are limited to a relatively small proportion of the budget.

The implementation of the Platform comes under the governance of the Crop Trust Executive Board and is coordinated by a Crop Trust staff member under the responsibility of the Crop Trust Executive Director. All Platform technical and financial management decisions are made by a Management Team composed of seven CGIAR and Crop Trust members: the Platform Coordinator and Crop Trust Science Team Leader, three elected representatives of the A15 Group of CGIAR Genebank managers (one of whom takes the role of Chair), the Policy Module Coordinator and the Coordinator of the Germplasm Health Units (GHUs).

Exceptionally, CGIAR policy positions and representation are determined and approved by the CGIAR System Management Board and the Center DGs. The Crop Trust is specifically exonerated from this responsibility.

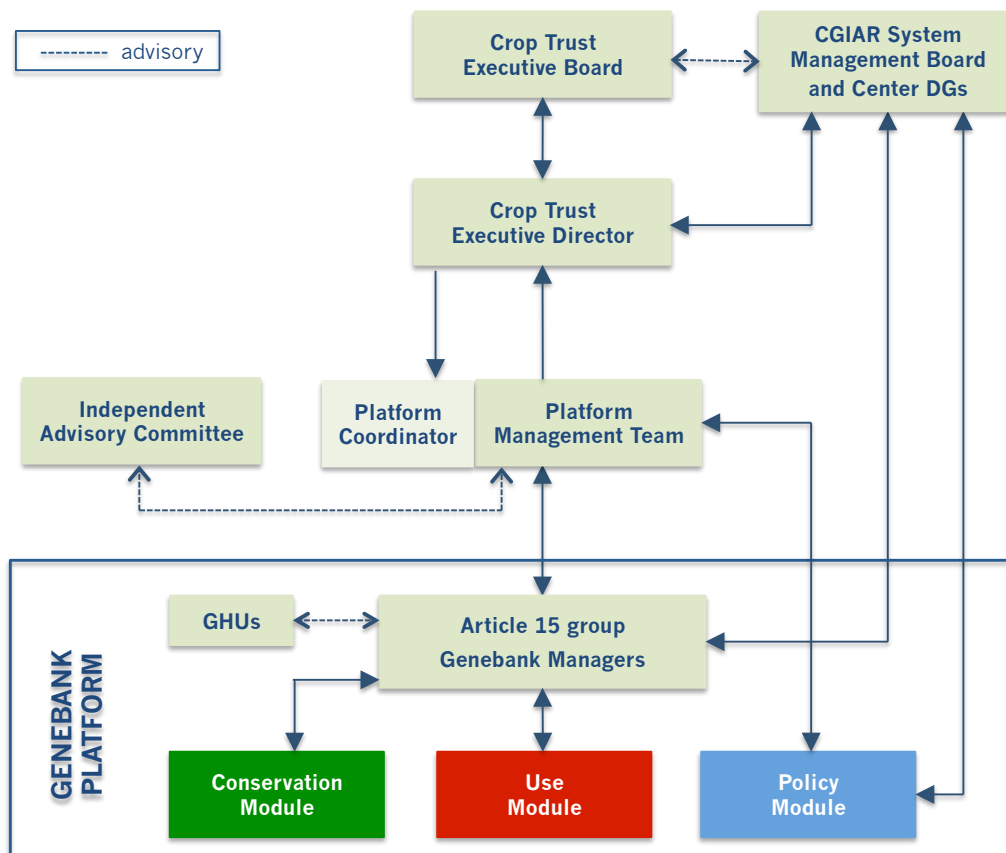
Formal agreements between the CGIAR and the Crop Trust

The roles and responsibilities of the CGIAR and the Crop Trust are described in the following formal agreements:

1. A *Memorandum of Understanding* (MoU) between the CGIAR System Organization and the Crop Trust is an umbrella agreement that describes the shared responsibility of both parties in ensuring that the genebanks are appropriately financed. It also defines the specific responsibilities of the Crop Trust, CGIAR System and individual Centers in managing risks relating to the genebanks. *This document is currently under negotiation;*
2. The *Financial Framework Agreement* (FFA) is a six-year agreement between the CGIAR and the Crop Trust that designates the Crop Trust as the lead organization of the Genebank Platform and provides details of the responsibilities of this function;

3. *Project Partnership Agreements (PPA)* are six-year agreements between the Crop Trust and each of 11 Centres under the framework of the FFA, through which the activities of the Genebank Platform are implemented.
4. *Long-term Grant Agreements (LTG)* between the Crop Trust and individual Centers provide the framework by which each of nine genebanks (AfricaRice and ICRAF currently do not receive LTGs) receive annual funding from the endowment managed by the Crop Trust in perpetuity. These agreements will be replaced by Long-term Partnership Agreements once the genebank has reached performance targets;
5. *Long-term Partnership Agreements (LTPA)* between the Crop Trust and individual Centres take over from the LTGs once the genebank has reached a high level of operation (i.e. able to achieve and maintain the four performance targets of availability, safety duplication, documentation and QMS). This agreement is based on an agreed business plan and provides the framework by which a genebank will receive funding from the endowment in the long term. *This document is currently under negotiation.*

Figure 1. Governance structure of the Genebank Platform



Decision-making bodies responsible for implementation of the Platform

The Platform is governed, managed, advised and administered by the following bodies:

1. *Crop Trust Executive Board (EB)* takes the ultimate responsibility for the Platform's governance.
2. *Crop Trust Executive Director (ED)* takes the responsibility for the effective management of the Crop Trust.
3. *Platform Coordinator (PC)* manages the technical and financial implementation of the Platform on a day-to-day basis, and coordinates the activities of the Conservation Module under the guidance of the MT.
4. *Management Team (MT)* makes management decisions concerning the technical and financial implementation of the Platform, and takes direct responsibility for the coordination of the three Modules.
5. *Article 15 Group of Genebanks (A15)* coordinates the feedback from each of the CGIAR genebank managers on specific management decisions.
6. *Independent Advisory Committee (IAC)* provides general advice to the MT on the implementation of the Platform (pending appointment of members).
7. *CGIAR System Management Board (SMB)* and *A15 Center_Directors General* approve CGIAR policy positions and instruments relevant to plant genetic resources.
8. *CGIAR Genetic Resources Policy Working Group* enables the Policy Module to communicate with and obtain feedback from legal and policy experts within the CGIAR System.
9. *Multi-stakeholder Plant Genetic Resources Policy Group* identifies important issues for CGIAR to consider and options for addressing them (pending appointment of members).
10. *Finance and Administration Committee (FAC)* administers all contracts and carries out financial monitoring and reporting relating to the Platform implementation.

Terms of reference for decision-making bodies

1. Crop Trust Executive Board

Role:

The EB ensures that the Crop Trust is effectively managed and that its policies and activities are in line with its mission and its roles in support of the ITPGRFA and the Global Plan of Action. The CGIAR representative on the EB is responsible for ensuring that the opinions of the System Management Board and Office are fully represented.

Composition:

- 4 members appointed by the ITPGRFA Governing Body
- 4 members appointed by the Crop Trust Donor Council
- 1 non-voting member appointed by the DG of the FAO
- 1 non-voting member appointed by the Chair of the CGIAR
- 2 members appointed by the EB
- Crop Trust Executive Director ex officio

TOR relating to the Genebank Platform:

- Approve the appointment of the Executive Director
- Review and approve the annual programmatic work and budget of the Crop Trust, including the Genebank Platform
- Review and approve the annual Crop Trust report
- Review and approve the policies and regulations to ensure fiscal and operational efficiency, accountability and integrity of Crop Trust activities
- Adjudicate or seek resolution of any conflicts that arise in the implementation of the Platform.

Meets:

- Twice a year
-

2. Crop Trust Executive Director

Role:

The ED is responsible for the representation and effective management of the Crop Trust.

TOR relating to the Genebank Platform:

- Represent the Crop Trust and Genebank Platform in relevant CGIAR meetings, and provides the annual report to the SMB and Centers' General Assembly
 - Take responsibility for the Crop Trust's overall program of work including the Genebank Platform
-

3. Platform Coordinator

Role:

The Crop Trust Head of Programs is responsible for implementing the Genebank Platform and the Crop Trust's long-term grants and partnership agreements.

TOR relating to the Genebank Platform:

- Manage the implementation of the Platform, including all reporting responsibilities;
- Manage and oversee the monitoring of the Platform annual budget;
- Oversee the secretariat function for Platform management and governance bodies (MT and IAC);
- Oversee the meeting, and implementation of actions, of the FAC;
- Oversee the planning, implementation and monitoring of technical outputs of Platform activities;
- Provide the main point of contact for CGIAR genebank managers, CGIAR System bodies, System Council, System Management Board and Office and partners with respect to the Platform work program;
- Represent the Platform in CGIAR meetings, Crop Trust Executive Board meetings, and other relevant fora;

- Supervise staff working on the Platform, including the Genebank Program Scientist, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist and QMS Specialist, and relevant parts of the performance agreements of the Scientific Advisor, Information Systems Manager, Science Communications Specialist and Administrative Assistant;
- Coordinate and facilitate monthly meetings of the MT in conjunction with the chair of the A15 Executive Committee.

4. Management Team

Role:

The MT is the decision making body that determines the allocation of funds to planned activities and the implementation of Platform activities.

Composition:

- Executive committee of the A15 (3 elected genebank managers)
- Coordinator of Germplasm Health Units (GHUs)
- Coordinator of Policy Module
- Crop Trust Science Team leader
- Platform coordinator

TOR:

- Review annual budget and approve any subsequent modifications
- Decide funding allocations to collective activities
- Approve and monitor collective workplans, including Policy Module and GHU activities
- Develop indicators and targets and review Centres progress towards reaching them
- Develop agenda and plans for AGM
- Oversee the development of the genebank QMS
- Oversee the implementation of genebank evaluations
- Approve the POWB and Annual report submitted to the SMO
- Respond to Platform audits or evaluations
- Respond to any arising issues from genebank managers or from the CGIAR System Organization
- Represent the Genebank Platform in meetings and events

Meets:

- Monthly and at least twice annually face-to-face

5. Article 15 Group of Genebanks

Role:

Convenes the managers of the 11 CGIAR genebanks and coordinates decision-making and feedback when collective decisions are required. The group of

Article 15¹ Genebank Managers (A15GBM) contributes to improving the management of PGRFA and associated collections by sharing experiences, knowledge and innovations on technical matters and reviewing the current and future genetic resource activities, including on matters outside the scope of the Genebank Platform. It is a successor organization to the Inter-Center Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources, established by the CGIAR in 1987.

Composition:

- Genebank managers of the 11 CGIAR genebanks

TOR:

- Consider in depth and make recommendations, if requested to do so, to the Systems Office, the Center Directors, the Independent Science and Partnership Council, the Genebank Platform and the Global Crop Diversity Trust on issues relevant to genebanks
- Elect one new member per year to compose the three-member A15 executive committee which serve as representatives to the MT
- A15 Executive Committee may represent the Platform in relevant CGIAR or other meetings
- Provide feedback and opinion from the entire group of genebanks on specific issues and decisions as required

Meets:

- Once a year at the AGM and virtually on a quarterly basis.

6. Independent Advisory Committee

Role:

The IAC has an advisory function to the MT and a role in facilitating the collaboration of the genebanks with partners and genebank users outside the CGIAR. May include some members in common with the Genesys Advisory Committee.

Composition:

- 3-4 PGRFA experts (including a representative of the private sector)
- 1 or 2 representatives of AFS CRPs
- 1 or 2 representatives of Big Data and Excellence in Breeding Platforms;
- Management Team representative ex officio

TOR:

- Provide external input and guidance on major Platform issues;
- Advocate within the CGIAR and other bodies for support or awareness of issues in line with specific and general Genebank Platform interests;

¹ International Treaty of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, "Article 15 - Ex Situ Collections of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture held by the International Agricultural Research Centers of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research and other International Institutions"

- Facilitate collaboration between genebanks and AFS CRPs, as well as other key external partners;
- Advise on specific issues of technical implementation as needed.

Meets:

- Once a year at the AGM

7. CGIAR System Management Board & A15 Center DGs

Role:

The SMB and the A15 DGs both have wide ranging roles and responsibilities concerning the implementation of all CGIAR Research Programs and Platforms. They also have a specific role to review and comment on the annual report of the Genebank Platform and to approve new policy positions advanced by the Policy Module in intergovernmental fora. A15 Center DGs have direct oversight and accountability for the operations, management, personnel, infrastructure, individual genebank policies, legal compliance and implementation of international and national obligations and long-term sustainability of their specific Center genebank

SMB Composition:

- 4 CGIAR Center Directors General
- 3 Center Board members
- 2 Independent members
- Executive Director of CGIAR System Office ex officio

A15 DGs Composition:

- Directors General of the 11 CGIAR Centers that management genebanks

TOR relating to the Genebank Platform:

- Receive and comments as applicable on an annual report of the Genebank Platform activities
- Review and approves new CGIAR policy positions and instruments developed by the Policy Module.
- Art 15 DGs have opportunity to review, revise written submissions to intergovernmental fora. They must formally approve those submissions only if they contain new policy positions.

Meets:

- SMB meets quarterly or as required
- A15 DGs meet at the annual Centers' General Assembly. They meet/consult virtually when necessary.

8. CGIAR Genetic Resources Working Group

Role:

The CGRWG provides a coordinating function whereby genetic resources policy issues may be shared and discussed by scientists, research managers, and legal and policy experts throughout the System.

Composition:

Representatives from: Center genebanks, Center Intellectual Property Focal Points/CLIPNet, System Management Office, Science Leaders Group, Excellence in Breeding and Big Data Platforms, virtual social scientists network, Agroforestry GR specialist. Other specialists from within the CGIAR to be invited to join meetings on as needs basis, depending on issues under consideration.

TOR:

- Provide functional means of pushing and pulling information through the CGIAR Communities of Practice represented by Working Group members
- Identify needs and opportunities for:
 - capacity strengthening for Centers' compliance with GR policies
 - CGIAR engagement in international policy development processes
- Ground-truth recommendations from the Policy Module to the Article 15 Centers' Directors General and the SMB.

Meets:

Once a year face-to-face and at least once a year virtually or more if necessary.

9. Multi-stakeholder Plant Genetic Resources Policy Group

Role:

The Multi-stakeholder PGR Policy Group provides perspectives and feedback on relevant policy issues.

Composition:

Includes up to eight experts in PGRFA policy drawn from outside the CGIAR, including from private sector organizations, agricultural research organizations from developed and developing countries, civil society and/or farmers organizations, the Secretariats of the ITPGRFA and CBD/Nagoya Protocol, universities, Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR), additional experts, as needed, depending on issues under consideration.

TOR:

- Share experiences and perspectives on PGR policy developments and trends;
- Identify common concerns and opportunities to coordinate positions/strategies with other stakeholders
- Consider options for the CGIAR concerning best compliance practices, and engagement in PGR policy development processes;

Meets:

- Once a year, and a second time virtually, as necessary.

10. Finance and Administration Committee

Role:

The FAC oversees the management of and administers contracts and agreements between the Crop Trust and the CGIAR.

Composition:

Crop Trust staff:

- Finance Director
- Platform Finance Officer
- Contracts Officer
- Platform Coordinator
- Scientific staff when required

TOR:

- Monitor and ensure financial reporting and budgeting by all grantees to the Platform complies with CGIAR Financial Guidelines and Crop Trust financial policies
- Develop and implement clear guidelines for use of funds in line with CGIAR financial guidelines
- Develop and carry out financial reviews of individual genebanks
- Develop and manage all contracts and agreements related to the Platform
- Develop mechanisms for ensuring fair allocation of funds and contribute to costing analyses relating to operations covered by the long term agreements
- Participate in CGIAR CSE group

Meets:

- Weekly or less frequently depending on reporting requirements and project cycles.