

Discussion group 2

1st set of topics

1. Policies and regulation

- CBD & IT hinder access to PGR, especially for the private sector
- No uniformity of MTAs, especially for non-Annexe 1 spp and non-signatories
- One suggestion was that genebanks could be intermediaries to avoid MTA problems, but this was not legally clean.
- Policy issues were not widely understood, and some role for genebanks to educate national government officers
- Bioversity does have e-training modules available
- Problems more acute for developing countries; but in Italy, authority has been devolved to regional governments, complicating things further
- Overall, regulations were felt to impede access to PGR; it's unclear what the Nagoya protocol would lead to, but there is a need for an international framework. Both the PGR and the research community need to make representations to the regulators to influence future regulations, and EUCARPIA could act maybe as a corporate body on behalf of the community

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2. Nature of services

- Is pre-breeding the job of a genebank? The consensus was “no”, especially where the private sector was active (eg in NL). But less clear where breeding was still carried out in the public sector.
- Pre-breeding is important, especially in the context of CWR's. It happens in the public sector in potato in the UK
- Interaction of the genebanks with the research community: genebanks need to ensure that high quality material (eg single seed derived accessions) are provided, but research topics such as seed physiology are more the job of the research community.
- Funding will always be limiting, genebanks should search for PPP arrangements
- An important priority is the quality of C&E data (which should be migrated away from bits of paper asap!) But some breeders felt that these data were secondary – more important was provenance and info re diversity

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3. Material on offer

- The major focus should be on landraces, old cvs and CWR's. The curation of specialised genetic stocks is largely up to the producers of these stocks, unless they are simple to maintain and genetically unique (eg mutants or NILs; but not mapping populations or aneuploids)
- Phytosanitation issues can be a barrier for genebanks accepting accessions if the amount of incoming seed is very small.
- A greater understanding of seed physiology would allow gene banks to improve their efficiency (by eg lengthening the time needed between successive rounds of regeneration)

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4. Service through collaboration

- More involvement from farmers would be desirable
- The organic and hobby farmer sector could provide interesting material (particularly in E and C Europe) and TK
- Landrace material still quite common in E and C Europe, but gradually dying out, so there's an opportunity for genebanks to initiate *in situ* conservation
- Mass media should be exploited to spread the message that PGR are important