

Contemporary approaches to genetic resources Conservation and use

The Netherlands, 12 – 30 April 2010

Focus of the training program

Biodiversity in agricultural systems is under pressure worldwide. The loss of plant and animal genetic resources due to their declining use in modern agriculture has resulted in major concerns about the future vulnerability of agricultural production and related pest and disease risks, food security and environmental stability. This has moved the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources issue to the top of the international development and policy agendas.

Aims and objectives

The overall objective of the training program is to enhance participants' capabilities to more effectively manage genetic resources conservation programs and use various strategies to support the sustainable use of genetic resources. Relevant policies and participatory and multi-stakeholder processes regarding genetic resources receive special attention. With the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources having come into force in 2007, a new element in the annual program is the focus on the conservation of these resources, in addition to elements specifically addressing plant genetic resources.

Training methods

The training program provides the opportunity to learn from the broad range of international experience that is represented not only by our trainers, but also by fellow participants. Working in a job-oriented, interactive and experience-based setting, we facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experience through a variety of formats: lectures, case studies, group discussions and assignments and field study. The programme concludes with the development of proposals and action plans which integrate all course topics and relate them to the reality of the participants' working situations.

Who can participate?

The training program is designed for mid-career professionals who aim to promote the conservation and use of genetic resources for agriculture from policy, research, education or development perspectives. They are employed in the field of plant and/or animal genetic resources management, policies or related areas. Participants are employed by ministries, research institutes, universities, companies, NGOs or other organisations with an agricultural development orientation. Applicants should have at least an MSc or the equivalent in training and experience. They should have at least three years of professional experience in a relevant field and be proficient in English.

Program

The program consists of two three-week course offered in two parallel tracks: (1) Genetic resource policies and conservation strategies for plant and animal genetic resources, and (2) Integrated and participatory approaches in agrobiodiversity management. Additionally, workshops on special topics are organised in which the participants of both courses will join.

*Based on professional interests and institutional needs, participants have to make a choice in which course to participate. Preference for the course needs to be indicated on the online application form under **"What is the practical use of this course for your work?"** After the selection of participants in March 2010, Wageningen International will announce the final program.*

Genetic resource policies and conservation strategies of plant and animal genetic resources

The first part of this course focuses on the international policy framework, i.e. on the history and

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contents of international agreements, in particular the CBD, the IT-PGRFA, the WTO-TRIPS Agreement and UPOV, and their impact on genetic resources management at the national and institutional level. The programme will address: gene flows, economic interests, international agreements, access and benefit-sharing, farmers' rights, and intellectual property rights. The second part addresses current perspectives, concepts and strategies regarding the conservation and use of genetic resources. The programme will address: conservation strategies, the complementarity of *in situ* and *ex situ* approaches, management of genetic variation within animal populations, the promotion of use, participatory plant breeding methods, the role of documentation, and the opportunities of biotechnology. The third part of the training addresses application of conservation and management practices. Topics addressed include: good practices for collecting, regeneration, storage, and genebank economics. Where appropriate, subgroups on plant and animal genetic resources will convene in parallel. A self-assignment addressing domestic challenges will form part of the course.

Integrated and participatory approaches in agrobiodiversity management

How can integrated and participatory approaches strengthen the management of agrobiodiversity through interventions in conservation, crop improvement and seed sector development, at the genetic resources as well as the ecosystems level? This course will help participants to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of genetic resource management programs, while actively involving stakeholders at all levels.

Topics addressed are:

- Formal and informal genetic resources systems
- Methodologies and tools for participatory learning and action
- Participatory approaches to agrobiodiversity management
- Community biodiversity management
- Participatory crop improvement
- Supporting local seed supply
- Adaptive management

The first part of the programme will focus on theory and concepts; in the second part these will be applied in a field study in the Netherlands; and the third part they will be translated to the participants' own working environment through proposals and action plans.

Special topics

The training includes three afternoon workshops in which the participants of both courses elaborate specific topics related to the management of genetic resources. Topics addressed may

include climate change, biotechnology, Intellectual Property Rights or market and chain development.

The organising committee reserves the right to change the program where necessary.

Partners

The training programs are organised by Wageningen International and the Centre for Genetic Resources, the Netherlands (CGN, www.cgn.wur.nl) in collaboration with other partners of Wageningen UR (www.wur.nl) and Bioversity International (www.bioversityinternational.org).

Certificate

Participants are granted a Certificate of Attendance.

Fees and accommodation

The fee for this course is **€ 3500**. This amount excludes board and lodging and travel expenses. Participants will be accommodated at the Hof van Wageningen (formerly Wageningen International Conference Centre) with full board and lodging. Prices are available on request.

Fellowships

Fellowships are available from the Netherlands Fellowship Program (NFP) for nationals of certain countries. NFP-candidates must FIRST apply to Wageningen International for admission to the training. The deadline for application with NFP is **1 November 2009**. Acceptable candidates will receive a PROVISIONAL LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE from Wageningen International. Candidates can then apply for a NFP fellowship through the Netherlands Embassy or Consulate in their own country. More information: www.cdic.wur.nl/UK/Courses , www.nuffic.nl . Please note that in all correspondence reference to the name of the training program will be made. In February 2010 the definite selection for NFP will be made known.

Application

The admission deadline for application directly to Wageningen International, with funding other than a NFP fellowship, is **12 March 2010**. Early application is recommended. For online application and additional information on this course, please go to www.cdic.wur.nl/UK/newsagenda/ and click on the course of your interest.



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