

Mutual interests as a basis for European genebank collaboration

Chris Kik, Noortje Bas & Bert Visser

Centre for Genetic Resources, the Netherlands

Outline presentation

■ Introduction

- Fresh-up: CGN contribution Alnarp AEGIS meeting
- A coordinated EU genebank system
 - motives, challenges, incentives, prerequisites
 - two step implementation process

■ Inputs for discussion

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CGN contribution: Alnarp meeting 2004

Requirements for safe long-term
conservation and easy access of genetic
resources in AEGIS

Marco van Veller & Noortje Bas

Centre for Genetic Resources, the Netherlands

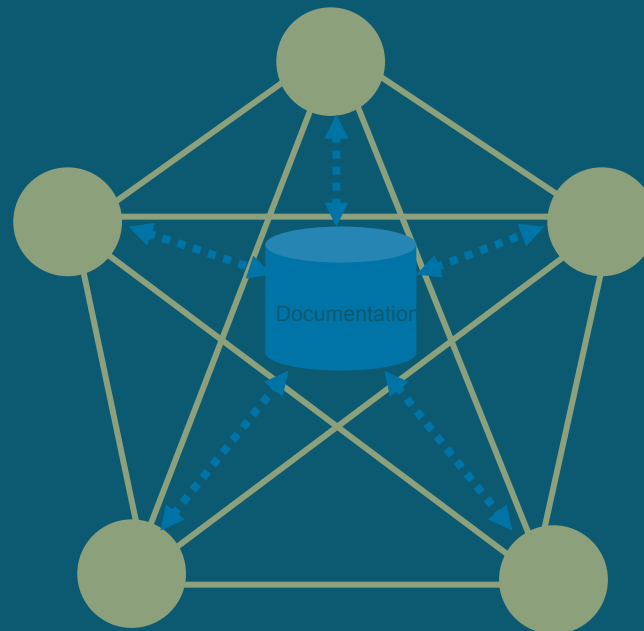
CGN contribution: Alnarp meeting 2004

Coordinated network of quality collections

Quality
Management
System

Standards

Continuity



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Motives for a coordinated genebank system

- Relative inefficient way of maintaining accessions at the European level
 - national collections; often suboptimal economies of scale
 - substantial duplication between the various European collections (> 50%)
- This money cannot be spent on other genebank priorities

The challenge

- How to develop an efficient European genebank system with the same (or more) budget as currently available ?
 - Can we create incentives?
 - Can we abolish disincentives?
 - Can it be fair and equitable?
 - Can it be based on consensus?
 - Can we convince our politicians?

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Incentives

■ Negative:

- Politicians will not forever back-up a genetic resources system in Europe that is not optimally efficient

■ Positive:

- EU FP7 framework: maintenance and improvement of EU research infrastructure (incl. genetic resources)

- Joint and innovative approach a prerequisite
→ unique opportunity to shape EU genebank future

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Prerequisites for a coordinated EU genebank

system A two step process

- Activity I: Mutual trust building
 - Technical: quality management system
 - Equity: a role for everybody
 - Political: access/availability; legal status collections

- Activity II: Implementation

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Activity I: Mutual trust building; technical

- Implementation of a quality management system (QMS) for each participating genebank
 - participating genebanks need to implement a QMS with agreed minimum standards
 - QMS to be formally certified (e.g. CGN → ISO 9001 standard) or be audited by independent experts (IPGRI staff?)
- Germplasm readily available
 - Not: waiting for regeneration; only in base collection; diseased, etc.

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Activity I: Mutual trust building; equity

- One genebank coordinates, based on consensus
- Each genebank fulfils different task(s) per crop:
 - collection
 - storage
 - regeneration & quality control (germination)
 - characterization & evaluation
 - documentation & access
 - distribution
- Process is aiming at coordination, not on centralisation (centralised control)

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Activity I: Mutual trust building; equity

(cont'd)

- Based on capacity and strength of each partner
- Adapted to missions and mandates of partners
- At the system level fair and equitable
 - tasks at the crop level may be interchanged

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Activity I: Mutual trust building; equity

(Dis)trust between partners based on their options

- Types of genebanks
 - large with stable funds
 - small with stable funds
 - large with poor funding
 - small with poor funding
- In centres of diversity or not
- In favourable agro-ecosystems or not

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Activity I: Mutual trust building; political

- Access; legal status collection
 - All GR in coordinated genebank system should be freely available
 - Legal status across participating EU genebanks should function as a guarantee
 - National politicians should support coordinated EU genebank system
 - Genebanks need mandate for implementation
 - No *a priori* conditions for storage site, distribution and other roles in crop collection management

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Activity II: Implementation

After accomplishment of activity I (mutual trust building) or in parallel with activity I:

- Rationalization of collections
 - deletion of duplicates within and among collections, or prioritization between accessions; based on (amongst others): molecular markers & AMOVA
- Collaboration on storage and documentation
- Collaboration on evaluation and promoting use
- No political or legal objections
- Concrete proposals to receive extra funds

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Concrete steps

- Identify
 - Next technical steps
 - Next policy-related steps
 - Possible consequences for different roles

- Use the four model crops

Inputs for discussion

→ Is this the way forward?

Towards a coordinated EU genebank system:

- Activity I: Mutual trust building
 - Technical: quality control management system
 - Equity: a role for everybody
 - Political: access/availability; juridical status collections
- Activity II: Implementation

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Thanks for your attention !



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