



European Cooperative Programme for Plant Genetic Resources (ECPGR)

**Phase VIII (2009-2013)
2010 Progress Report**

AEGIS section extracted from:

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4. AEGIS INITIATIVE FOR “A EUROPEAN GENE BANK INTEGRATED SYSTEM”

The AEGIS development process continued during 2010 with a series of activities and the major milestones reached in the development of AEGIS during 2010 are summarized below:

- By the end of December 2010 the following 26 countries had returned the signed MoU to Bioversity International: Albania, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Lithuania, Montenegro, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Ukraine and the United Kingdom. In addition, in ten countries, nineteen AEGIS Associate Membership Agreements between institutions holding *ex situ* accessions and the respective National Coordinators were concluded.
- Three proposals out of 17 submitted under the first call for proposals for the Competitive Grant Scheme were granted. The following one-year projects started in early 2010:
 - Assessment of Unique Material in the European Collections of Umbellifer Crops, coordinated by the University of Warwick, United Kingdom;
 - Towards comprehensive pea germplasm management for future use, coordinated by Agritec Plant Research, Czech Republic;
 - Cryopreservation of young inflorescence bases in bolting garlic for germplasm storage, coordinated by the Leibniz Institute of Plant Genetics and Crop Plant Research (IPK), Germany.
- A second call was launched inviting ECPGR Networks, Network Coordinating Groups and Working Groups to submit proposals by the deadline of 31 December 2010. A total of 11 proposals were received for the second call.
- A project proposal (EUROGENEBANK in short), coordinated by the ECPGR Secretariat, which had been submitted in 2009 to a Call under the Seventh Framework Programme of the EU (Research Infrastructures – Support to existing research infrastructures – Integrating Activities), successfully passed the thresholds of eligibility, but was not funded due to a shortage of funds.
- The Secretariat developed a template for an operational genebank manual. This document was tested by NordGen, Sweden and IPK, Germany and it was presented in various WG meetings. It was finally approved by the AEGIS Advisory Committee and the final version is available on the AEGIS Web site (September 2010).
- The Secretariat has been actively involved in the process of revision of the FAO *Genebank Standards*, with the intention to ensure the participation of the ECPGR community in the revision process. The first draft of the revised standards has been circulated to the ECPGR Networks for comments in January 2011. The revised FAO Genebank Standards document could eventually be adopted for AEGIS.
- A “simplified” procedure for the selection of European Accessions has been prepared by the Secretariat (24 November 2010) and it has been proposed for adoption by the Working Groups.
- The Secretariat attended several WG and other meetings, presenting the concept and status of development of AEGIS. Presentations given are available on the AEGIS Web site.

Outlook for 2011: activities foreseen for 2011 include the conclusion of the first set of projects funded by the Grant Scheme and the assignment of new grants following the second call. All the Working Groups will be invited to compile draft lists of European Accessions and to make progress in the definition of crop-specific standards.

Considering that an FP7 call for a project on Plant Genetic Resources Centres (Research Infrastructures), is expected to be launched by the EC in July 2011, activities will be dedicated to set up and submit a new proposal.