Proposed next steps for the implementation of the AEGIS Quality System (AQUAS)

Lorenzo Maggioni and Jan Engels
ECPGR / AEGIS Coordinators

Eighth Meeting of the Working Group on Prunus
7-9 September 2010, Forli’, Italy
Establishing the AEGIS Quality System (AQUAS)

Introductory note:

• Steering Committee agreed with approach (see Quality System for AEGIS discussion paper on AEGIS Web site)

• Paper also includes agreed principles, operational framework, technical elements, capacity building and oversight mechanism
AQUAS - Principles

Quality system to be based on the principles:

1. Quality assurance
   - **Plan**: Say what you do
   - **Do**: Do what you say
   - **Check**: Let an independent body check that you do what you say
   - **Act**: Correct and improve what you say you do

2. Decisions by consensus

3. Agreed minimum standards – involve partners; get “buy-in”

4. Capacity building plays a key role

5. Avoid unnecessary bureaucracy (pragmatic; not doctrinaire)

6. Effective guidance and advisory approach as monitoring

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Technical elements

Elements to be established:

1. **Operational genebank manual** – all AEGIS Associate Members; based on genebank template (advanced draft available, version 8)

2. **Generic operational standards** – Secretariat (based on manuals and suggestions by WGs; cooperation with FAO)

3. Agreed **minimum crop specific technical standards** – all WGs (complementing generic standards)

4. **Quality management system procedures** – Secretariat; all WGs; Associate Members:
   a. record keeping
   b. reporting
   c. monitoring (not policing, but guiding and advisory approach)

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Capacity building and oversight

Capacity building:
1. If standards are not met -> capacity building (in agreement and possible support from National Coordinator)
2. In case funds are not available locally, or through projects -> AEGIS Advisory Committee to assist
3. Where applicable, training courses and/or on-the-job training to be organized at Network or Programme level

Oversight:
1. First level monitoring of implementation of AQUAS by WGs
2. Second level monitoring across WGs by AEGIS AC
3. AEGIS AC to oversee implementation of AQUAS

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Operational framework - 1

Partners and their major roles/outputs:

1. ECPGR Secretariat:
   1. Prepare draft template for genebank manual
   2. Draft generic operational standards

2. Working Groups or NCGs:
   1. Draft minimum standards by crop
   2. Organize reporting system
   3. Organize/implement the monitoring system

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3. AEGIS Advisory Committee
   1. Comment on draft generic standards
   2. Approve template
   3. Comment on minimum standards (ensure “equal treatment” between crops)

4. ECPGR Steering Committee:
   1. Approve generic and technical standards
   2. Approve reports
   3. Decide on issues / capacity building recommendations

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5. Associate Members:

1. Adopt standards,
2. prepare genebank manual,
3. keep records,
4. write reports, and
5. adopt monitoring system
AQUAS – where are we?

- Discussion paper endorsed by SC; on the AEGIS website
- Ample discussions (at least for some crops)
- Agreed timeframe and process as well as responsibilities for its development
- Further “fine tuning” in EUROGENEBANK Project was planned; now to be done without additional support

- “New item” (part of EUROGENEBANK Project preparation): need for some sort of certification (of an accession or collection; a genebank; a genebank operation?) (ISO, AEGIS or what kind of certification?)
- A pre-condition to allow rationalization of collections to take place!?  

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The way forward - WGs

1. Testing the final template for a genebank manual: any *Prunus* specific genebank interested to test it out and prepare genebank manual *(September)*?

2. Comment on generic technical standards *(autumn 2010)*

3. Initiation of process to develop crop specific technical minimum standards *(from September onwards)*:
   a. Collecting / Acquisition
   b. Regeneration / Propagation
   c. Drying and other preparatory steps
   d. Storage/field genebank maintenance
   e. Seed quality and viability monitoring
   f. Dispatch and disposal
   g. Characterization

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Thank you for your attention!

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