

suggested was to start focusing on those accessions that were selected in the past for GenRes projects and now for the AKER project. These accessions are rich in data and have already been selected through some criteria. Moreover, full sets of characterization data are not required to select accessions that need to be preserved as a priority. For example, accessions belonging to the taxa included in the IUCN Red List (*B. nana*, *B. patula* and *B. webbiana*) would all need to be conserved in the European Collection. The taxa related to the proposed *in situ* conservation sites were also suggested as appropriate. This type of choice would also establish a link between *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation, thereby bringing their complementarity into effect.

Regarding the possibility of sorting out accessions on the basis of their taxonomy, it was pointed out that the taxonomy currently used by the N.I. Vavilov Research Institute for Plant Industry (VIR, St Petersburg) does not match other taxonomies such as GRIN; a parallel between the two should be established.

Recommendation

- The first group of accessions to be proposed for inclusion in the European Collection should be selected from the *Beta* Core Collection and the AKER collection. Accessions of threatened species should also be included.

Workplan

- Under the guidance of the IDBB Managers, a list of candidate accessions to be included in the European Collection will be compiled **by end 2012**, using the *Beta* Core Collection, AKER collection and accessions of threatened species. All concerned country representatives and/or curators will support the IDBB Managers' activity. The WG Chair will then submit the agreed list to all the concerned National Coordinators, suggesting inclusion of the respective accessions into AEGIS.
- Lothar Frese, with the assistance of Maria Cristina Duarte, will compare the VIR and GRIN taxonomies for *Beta* and provide a list of matching relationships for all relevant taxa **by end 2013**.

Discussion on generic genebank standards and on the need to agree on crop-specific standards

(introduced by A. Tan)

Following a request of the FAO Commission to update existing standards for orthodox and non-orthodox seeds, and for clonally propagated plants, the FAO drafted the "Revised Genebank Standards for the Conservation of Orthodox Seeds". This document (www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/022/MB179E.pdf) was discussed by the FAO Commission during its meeting in July 2011; it will be finalized and discussed again at the Sixth Session of the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in November 2012. In this document, standards are defined for acquisition, drying and storage, seed viability monitoring, regeneration, characterization, documentation, distribution, safety-duplication and security/personnel.

Ayfer Tan suggested that the FAO Genebank Standards could be adopted as they are, and that the genebanks should attempt to follow them. The WG on *Beta* had already developed a crop-specific "Seed increase protocol" and collected the available regeneration guidelines in the form of country protocols, all available on the *Beta* WG's Web site (http://www.ecpgr.cgiar.org/networks/sugar_starch_fibre_crops/beta/other_wg_documents.html).

The existing protocols are judged to be sufficiently developed and, when followed, ensure quality of conservation of *Beta* germplasm. Guidelines for the multiplication of *B. nana* are, however, missing and should be developed.

Recommendation

- The FAO “Genebank Standards for the Conservation of Orthodox Seeds” combined with the *Beta* WG “Seed increase protocol” should be checked by the WG curators to confirm whether they can be adopted by the WG and proposed for approval as part of the AEGIS Quality System (AQUAS). The only missing element is a regeneration protocol for *B. nana*, which should be developed by the WG.

Workplan

- Lothar Frese will request Barbara Hellier (USDA-ARS) to provide information or possibly a protocol for the regeneration of *B. nana* **by end 2012**.
- Under the coordination of the WG Chair, all *Beta* WG curators will check the validity of the seed increase protocol for *Beta* and inform the WG Chair of their analysis, **by end 2012**.

Final discussion

L. Frese summarized the recommendations and workplan items that emerged from the discussions at the meeting. The agreed workplan items are compiled in Appendix I (pp. 25-26).

Workplan

- The scientific proceedings of this meeting, including the contributions of all the authors, will be published by JKI. Papers for inclusion in the proceedings will be submitted to L. Frese **by 3 September 2012**.

Conclusion

Election of new Chair and Vice-Chair for the Working Group

Lothar Frese was reconfirmed as the Chair of the Working Group on *Beta*. He agreed to act as the Chair until the end of 2013 and suggested the new Chairperson be elected via electronic media.

Yasmina El-Bahloul was elected as the new Chair of the World *Beta* Network.

Closing remarks

The participants visited the laboratories of Florimond Desprez. On behalf of the participants, the new Chair warmly thanked Bruno Desprez for the excellent organization, financial support of some participants and the splendid hospitality that contributed to a pleasant and productive meeting. All participants concurred that the Working Group gained momentum as the meeting facilitated the exchange of some very new and exciting research results. Special thanks were addressed to Valérie Fortin and all the staff of Florimond Desprez involved in the organization of the meeting. Special thanks were also addressed to Lorenzo Maggioni (representing the ECPGR) for the financial and logistic support, and his contributions to the meeting. He was asked to convey special thanks to Lidwina Koop and Elinor Lipman for their excellent help. The last meeting took place in 2006; given the many