

What is ECPGR?

The European Cooperative Programme for Plant Genetic Resources (ECPGR) was founded in 1980 on the basis of the recommendations of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Genebank Committee of the European Association for Research on Plant Breeding (EUCARPIA). ECPGR is a collaborative programme among most European countries, aiming at ensuring the long-term conservation and facilitating the utilization of plant genetic resources in Europe.

The Programme, which is financed by the participating countries and is coordinated by a Secretariat, operates through Working Groups dealing with groups of crops or with general themes related to plant genetic resources. ECPGR is guided by a Steering Committee (SC), consisting of the National Coordinators of the member countries. The SC nominates an Executive Committee (ExCo) composed of five persons, to plan and execute the ECPGR activities, as decided upon by the SC.

Achievements

During its lifetime, ECPGR has involved 43 European countries in a spirit of cooperation regarding the conservation and use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA) in Europe:

► EURISCO

An online European Catalogue of *ex situ* PGRFA collections has been created. This catalogue gathers data from 43 national inventories. From a central point, it provides information related to more than one million accessions conserved in more than 300 institutions throughout Europe (<http://eurisco.ecpgr.org/>).



► AEGIS - A European Genebank Integrated System

The European Collection established under AEGIS is a virtual European Genebank maintaining genetically unique accessions that are important for Europe. These are conserved at an agreed quality standard and are made available in accordance with the terms and conditions set out in the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. This is a contribution from the European region towards the implementation of the International Treaty. (AEGIS website: <http://www.aegis.cgiar.org/>).



► Working Group activities

Working Groups have created opportunities for members to forge project partnerships, also enabling scientific and technical collaboration, training, sharing of responsibilities and capacity building.

► Collaborative projects

Through successful project proposals prepared within the framework of ECPGR, it has been possible to leverage nearly € 19m between 1996 and 2011. Most of the projects were funded by the European Commission through two GENRES Regulations (1467/94 and 870/2004).

Launching of Phase IX (2014-2018)

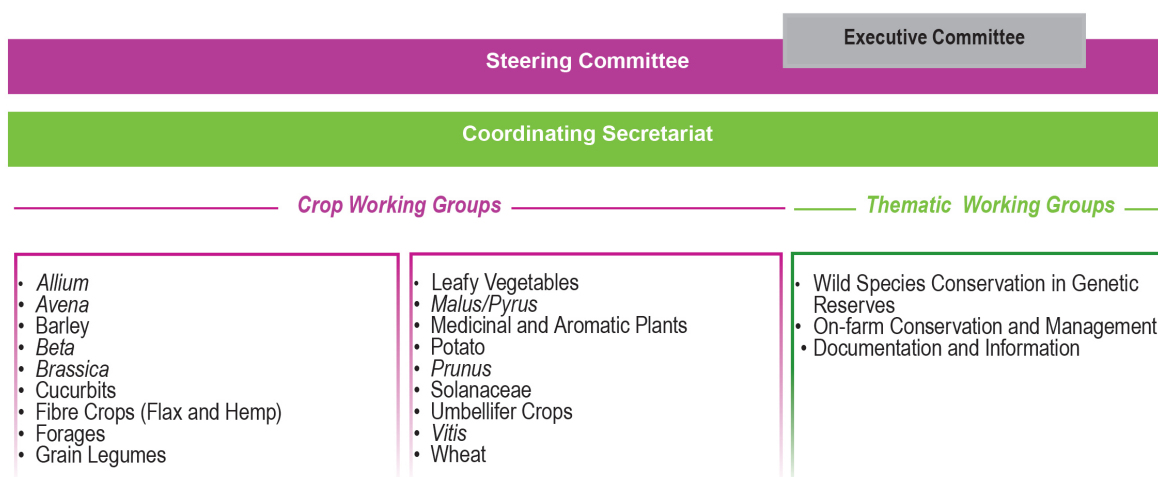
The SC unanimously decided to launch a new Phase of ECPGR (Phase IX), with a new output-oriented mode of operation, in order to build on past achievements and reach new targets.

Objectives

- ▶ AEGIS and the European Collection
 - AEGIS is fully operational
 - Accessions in the European Collection are characterized and evaluated
- ▶ EURISCO
 - Quantity and quality of data are increased, including *in situ* and on-farm data
 - The functionalities of EURISCO meet users' expectations
- ▶ *In situ* conservation and management concepts for crop wild relatives and landraces populations are agreed throughout Europe
- ▶ Relations between genebanks and users of germplasm are strengthened

Mode of operation

ECPGR will operate with a budget of € 2.8m, covering the cost of the Secretariat, the management and development of EURISCO and AEGIS as well as the activities of 21 Working Groups.



Working Group activities (meetings and other actions) will be carried out with a starting budget of €500,000. Activities will be approved by the ExCo on the basis of a competitive scheme. Participation in these activities of technical experts from all the member countries will be guaranteed by a country quota (number of travel quotas assigned to each country proportionally to each country's contribution to the programme).

For further details and information, please contact:

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