Collaboration -
« The beginning of a beautiful friendship »

ECPGR Steering Committee meeting
Višegrad, Bosnia and Herzegovina, June 1, 2016

Szonja Csörgő
Director IP & Legal Affairs, ESA
Agenda

- About ESA
- ESA members and biodiversity
- How can ESA benefit from ECPGR?
- What does ESA have to offer to ECPGR?
- Conclusions
About ESA – main purpose

- SINGLE voice of the European seed industry

Main objective: Represent the European seed industry towards relevant decision makers, in particular European institutions

- European Commission
- European Parliament
- Council of Ministers
- Community Plant Variety Office
About ESA – how do we work towards?

Regional & International involvement and observer status

- In a number of relevant organizations such as CPVO, UPOV, OECD, ISTA, IPPC, CBD, FAO, ECPGR, WIPO etc.
- Direct engagement in a number of fora under European Commission and EP

Continuous contact with other players:

- related to agriculture & biotechnology
- NGOs
- the international and Brussels-based press
- the wider interested public (social media)
About ESA - membership

ESA's Membership today:

- 38 national seed associations (Associations Members)
- 40 direct company members (Individual Members)
- 29 members in seed-related businesses (Associate Members)
About ESA – core activities and topics

**Inform**

- ESA members about any relevant policy/legislative development in the field of plant breeding and seeds

**Represent**

- Views/positions/interests of ESA members towards relevant third parties (decision makers, advisory bodies, etc.)

**Lobby**

- At several levels:
  - National – via national association members
  - EU: Commission; EP; Council – ESA Secretariat

**How:**

- Contacts (letters, mails, calls, meetings)
- Documentation (promotional material, position papers, sector fact sheets)
- Organizing specific events
- Inviting people for field visits
About ESA – How do we work?

Dual structure:
- 7 Crop sections
- 2 horizontal committees & many WGs

Who does the work?
- Secretariat
  - 8 people with specific responsibilities
- ESA Bodies
  - Consist of members
  - Support by Secretariat
ESA members & biodiversity

How are we engaged in the topic?

- Horizontal WG on biodiversity – priorities; positions; comments on legislation etc.
- As ESA secretariat: represent those views via active involvement in discussions on European and international level
- ESA members: active in-kind support for biodiversity in various manners
  - Via their day-to-day work – plant breeding = sustainable use & active conservation of PGRs;
  - Involvement in PPPs in pre-breeding and other projects;
  - Work with and support to national genebanks in various ways – regeneration, evaluation work, providing material, financial support
  - Technology transfer & capacity building projects
ESA members & biodiversity

New field of activity (also related to biodiversity): research & innovation

- New WG set up in 2012
- Looking mainly at opportunities for project proposals – received many requests for involvement
- Contribution of the sector may take various forms such as field work, training, take-up of material in breeding, dissemination of project results etc.
- Several ways of involvement: as ESA (consortium member or advisory board member) or on level of ESA members
- So far we worked on 4 projects – none successful...
- In future might consider initiating projects outselves
How can ESA benefit from ECPGR?

- access to the genebank community/network
- bring breeders’ needs to the attention of collections
- benefit from tools developed by ECPGR & assist in making them more effective
- in many issues identify common interests & strengthen each other
What does ESA have to offer to ECPGR?

- More active involvement in ECPGR
- Direct channel to raise awareness towards & interact with users of GRs (get feedback)
- Experience in outreach
- Collaboration in projects
- Joint efforts in lobbying
Conclusion

Time to start mining our opportunities for collaboration!