



Memorandum of Understanding for an enhanced cooperation between ECPGR and ESA

- *Prepared by the ECPGR and ESA Secretariats*
- *Submitted for approval at the Fifteenth Steering Committee meeting, May 2018*



Memorandum of Understanding for an enhanced cooperation between

ECPGR,

the **European Cooperative Programme for Plant Genetic Resources** which is a collaborative programme among most European countries aimed at ensuring the long-term conservation and facilitating the increased utilization of plant genetic resources in Europe;

and

ESA,

the **European Seed Association** which is a non-profit International Association, registered according to Belgian law; representing the interests of the European seed industry and in particular those active in research, breeding, production and marketing of seeds of agricultural, horticultural and ornamental plant species.

WHEREAS ECPGR and ESA wish to collaborate more closely and to find more ways to make mutually beneficial use of their networks, thereby supporting the objectives and the work of the European Evaluation Network (EVN) established by the ECPGR Steering Committee; whereas the overall aim of collaboration is to facilitate further evaluation projects of PGR through synergies and harmonized approaches at the European level;

ECPGR and ESA, hereinafter referred to as “the Parties” agree as follows:

1. Enhanced Cooperation

The Parties hereby decide to strengthen their working relations and to collaborate in the future in a more enhanced manner, in particular, within the framework of the EVN.

All members of ECPGR and ESA should be given the possibility to engage in any activities carried out within the framework of the present enhanced cooperation.

2. Goals, objectives and possible benefits of the enhanced cooperation

The main goals of the enhanced cooperation will be to work more closely together, in particular in the EVN, and within that framework to (i) incentivize evaluation partnerships; (ii) and to create synergies and harmonized approaches at the European level with the aim of improving efficiency of evaluation efforts in Europe.

The Parties will seek to achieve these goals through:

- promoting the EVN through a dedicated webpage as well as through other communication channels;
- exchanging information about possible crop or crop group specific partnerships and projects aimed at targeted evaluation of PGRFA;
- facilitating for their members to connect with each other with the aim of collaborating in PGRFA evaluation partnerships;
- promoting collaborative efforts for the evaluation of PGRFA among their members.

Through the enhanced cooperation, the Parties will seek to achieve the following benefits:

- Better and more efficient collaboration and work on evaluation of PGRFA all over Europe;
- Increased knowledge on PGRFA available in genebanks;
- Increased access to genetic material and related information from all over Europe;
- The provision of a mechanism for pooling resources for the evaluation of PGRFA;
- The transfer of knowledge and ideas among genebank, crop and breeding communities.

3. Principles of cooperation

The Parties agree to cooperate under the principles of the EVN as outlined under section 04 of the ECPGR Steering Committee decision establishing the EVN.¹

The Parties agree that the present enhanced cooperation does not involve any financial engagement from either of the Parties.

The Parties also agree that the present enhanced cooperation does not entail any obligation for either of the Parties to develop any concrete projects, but agree to continue discussions regarding possible forms of cooperation.

¹ The ECPGR Steering Committee decision is annexed to the present Memorandum of Understanding.



4. Governance

Any matter related to the present enhanced cooperation and its implementation should be addressed jointly by the Secretariats of ECPGR and ESA.

5. Entry into force of this Memorandum of Understanding

This Memorandum of Understanding will enter into force on the day of its signature by ECPGR and ESA, and will remain in force until terminated in accordance with the procedure set out in point 6 below.

6. Amendment, Withdrawal from and Termination of this Memorandum of Understanding

This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended by mutual consent of the Parties.

Either Party may withdraw from this Memorandum of Understanding on twelve months written notice to the other Party. Withdrawal by any of the Parties entails termination of any and all commitments agreed to in this Memorandum of Understanding. Withdrawal from this Memorandum of Understanding will however not affect projects already established under the umbrella of the Platform.

Eva Thörn

Chair of the ECPGR Executive Committee

ECPGR

Garlich von Essen

Secretary General

European Seed Association

Signature and Date

Signature and Date