

LEAFY VEGETABLES WG REPORT FOR PHASE X (2019-2023)

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1. CONTRIBUTION TO ECPGR OBJECTIVES

1.1. Achievements and success stories

- To efficiently conserve and provide access to unique germplasm in Europe through AEGIS and the European Collection

The main leafy vegetables (lettuce, spinach, chicory) are represented in the European Collection through AEGIS (genus *Lactuca*: 1,378 European Accessions, *Spinacia*: 281 and genus *Chicorium*: 247 European Accessions). There are also some European Accessions from minor leafy vegetables species/genera that are included in the European Collection (*Asparagus*: 16 accessions, *Diplotaxis*: 7 accessions, *Eruca*: 67 accessions, *Valerianella*: 7 accessions). The major contributing countries to European Collections are (as in the 2016 survey) Germany, the Netherlands, Nordic Countries and the UK. However, also other countries have assigned accessions as European Accessions (e.g. Italy - *Asparagus*, Bulgaria – *Valerianella*, Slovenia - *Lactuca*). Some countries (e.g. Czech Republic) intend to prepare a list of accessions to be included in AEGIS in the near future. These would probably be accessions of old landraces of lettuce originating from the territory of the current Czech Republic.

- To provide passport and phenotypic information of actively conserved European PGRFA diversity *ex situ* and *in situ* through the EURISCO catalogue

Individual countries periodically update information in the EURISCO catalogue. Whereas passport data are available for most leafy vegetables in all countries, the phenotypic data are still lacking. One success story is the availability of C&E data for *Lactuca sativa* accessions from the CGN genebank. There are also other countries providing phenotypic data for individual species of leafy vegetables (mostly *Lactuca sativa*) to EURISCO (e.g. Germany, Nordic Countries, UK, Czech Republic and particularly countries included in EVA lettuce).

- To improve *in situ* conservation and use of crop wild relatives

The information on *in situ* conservation and use of crop wild relatives of leafy vegetables in individual countries is lacking. Some countries (e.g. Czech Republic, Slovenia) report that they do not have *in situ* conservation established yet.

- To promote on-farm conservation and management of European PGRFA diversity

The use of on-farm conservation is promoted in many countries. Some success stories were also identified through the Farmer's pride project (e.g. for *Lactuca sativa* in Spain and Hungary, and *Cichorium intybus* in the Czech Republic). However, a thorough survey of on-farm conservation and management of European leafy vegetable diversity is still lacking.

- To promote use of PGRFA

The use of PGRFA of leafy vegetables is promoted in individual countries and the accessions are provided to users based on SMTA.

1.2. Gaps or constraints identified

Although the main leafy vegetables are already relatively well represented in the European Collection, this is not the case for minor leafy vegetables. Their inclusion should be increased as well as the number of contributing countries. The inclusion of unique germplasm of leafy vegetables through AEGIS and the European Collection should be stimulated also in the European countries that have not yet assigned AEGIS accessions. The phenotypic information for the leafy vegetable species included in the EURISCO catalogue should also be improved. A thorough survey of *in situ* conservation and use of crop wild relatives should be conducted as well as a survey of on-farm conservation of leafy vegetables in individual countries.

2. GRANT SCHEME ACTIVITIES, WG MEETINGS AND EVA ACTIVITIES

- **Grant Scheme proposals (submitted:0; approved:0)**
- **Total number of partners involved: n/a**
 - ECPGR-funded: n/a
 - Self-funded: n/a
- **Meetings held**
- European Evaluation Network (EVA) – Lettuce Network:
 - 1st Annual project meeting, 30 March 2020, online
 - 2nd Annual project meeting, 24-25 May 2022, Salsomaggiore, Italy
- **Reports and related data**
 - [Report of 1st EVA Lettuce Project meeting, 30 March 2020](#)
 - [Report of 2nd EVA Lettuce project meeting, 24-25 March 2022](#)
- **Funds mobilized**
 - ECPGR granted funds: n/a
 - Inputs in-kind declared in Grant activities: n/a

3. OTHER ACTIVITIES (CROSS-WORKING GROUP ACTIVITIES, LINKS WITH OTHER NETWORKS, INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES)

- **Cross-Working Group activities:**
 - The WG Chair participated in two meetings of the Working Group Chairs and the Executive Committee that were held online (5-6 April 2022, 8-9 March 2023).
 - The Chair and some WG members participated in the 'Workshop on Phytosanitary barriers for genetic resources' organized within the framework of the GenRes Bridge project that was held online on 24 February 2021.

- **Others:**
 - Presentation at the EUCARPIA Leafy Vegetables Conference, Olomouc, CZ, 24 – 28 June 2019: ECPGR Working Group on Leafy Vegetables: Prospects and Challenges for Phase X, presented by J. Šuštar-Vozlič in collaboration with R. van Treuren, U. Lohwasser and P. Coquin

4. WORKING GROUP DOCUMENTS AND PUBLICATIONS

None for Phase X

5. EXPECTED ADDITIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES THAT COULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PGR STRATEGY FOR EUROPE

The collaboration within the leafy vegetables WG should be strengthened in the future. At the beginning of the new ECPGR Phase XI, a meeting of the Leafy Vegetables WG should be organized in order to i) identify the current status of the leafy vegetable collections in all European countries and ii) define the strategy to contribute to the implementation of all major objectives of the PGR Strategy for Europe in individual countries (related to *in situ* conservation of CWR and WFP, on-farm conservation and management, *ex situ* conservation and sustainable use, information system and monitoring).