

Working Group on *Beta*

Progress report for the period June 2006 – June 2008

I. RESULTS			
a. Comparison of workplan (milestones) versus results obtained			
Workplan (milestones)	Which results have been obtained?	Which aims/goals have not been (fully) reached?	Completeness ratio (%)
<p>Milestone 1</p> <p>Identification of target populations for in situ conservation. Partners in Greece, Spain, Morocco and the Caucasus countries should explore the feasibility of creating genetic reserves as soon as possible.</p>	<p>Milestones 1, 2, 3, and 6 are part of the work package 06 “Beta” of the EU project AGRI GENRES 057, AEGRO which was submitted by the chair. The project is funded by the European Commission, DG AGRI within the framework of council regulation 870/2004 and started on 01 Oct 2007.</p>	<p>Target populations for in situ conservation within EU countries will be identified by September 2008 systematically. According to the AEGRO work plan suitable sites will be selected based on a species and populations distribution list which is currently compiled in WP10 of AEGRO.</p>	50%
<p>Milestone 2</p> <p>Develop a data model and module for In Situ Management (ISM). Develop and agree on descriptor list for ISM.</p>	<p>A generic data model has been developed and was first discussed during the start-up meeting of the AEGRO project early November 2007. Based on the GEF /UNEP/BMZ project “<i>In situ</i> conservation of crop wild relatives through enhanced information management and field application” a descriptor list was adopted forming the basis of the aforementioned data model.</p>	<p>During the start-up meeting of AEGRO the freeware CyberTracker was introduced. Within AEGRO the software was evaluated, an application for recording georeferenced population data in the habitat developed and successfully tested under real working conditions. The test version needs to be further developed according to the requirements for demographic and genetic monitoring (see milestone 6) and introduced to the ECPGR <i>Beta</i> working group.</p>	80

<p>Milestone 3</p> <p>Organize a technical meeting aiming at the development of a descriptor list and a data model.</p>	<p>A meeting was organised by the chair back-to-back to the IIRB congress in Marrakech, April 2007. The data model will be developed by AEGRO, see milestone 2.</p>	<p>The meeting had to be cancelled on short notice.</p>	<p>100</p>
<p>Milestone 4</p> <p>Solve some taxonomic problems.</p>	<p>None.</p>	<p>The chair has not initiated the required communication process.</p>	<p>0</p>
<p>Milestone 5</p> <p>Inclusion of additional C&E data into the IDBB. IDBB manager will not request data. It is the task of the institutions producing data to submit them to the IDBB.</p>	<p>The IDBB manager received no data.</p>	<p>No data entered.</p>	<p>100</p>
<p>Milestone 6</p> <p>Establishment of a baseline of genetic diversity data for monitoring.</p>	<p>On the initiative of the University of Birmingham leaf probes of individual plants of a set of populations were sampled on the Canary Islands (by ICIA, Tenerife), Madeira (by the Uni. Funchal), Denmark (by Uni. Aarhus), Germany (by JKI). The objective of this limited, input in kind project consists in the establishment and testing of a methodology and work flow.</p>	<p>About 1000 plants were sampled and will be analysed in the JKI laboratory starting in July 2008.</p> <p>Accessions of <i>Beta nana</i> collected by a USDA/ARS, GGB and JKI (the former BAZ is part) plant exploration team in Greece in 2005 are currently analysed in a similar way and will provide new insights in the within and between population variation of this endemic and rare species.</p>	<p>80</p>

Milestone 7			
Providing USDA/ARS, Pullmann with the duplicate samples (Greece, Germany, UK) of F.Dale 1980/1981 <i>Beta nana</i> collecting mission.	Contacts were mediated between these partners by the chair.	Seed exchange did not take place.	5
b. Contribution to the four ECPGR priorities for Phase VII			
1. Characterization/evaluation (including modern technologies) SSR marker technology will be applied in projects described under milestone 6. Knowledge on the patterns of genetic diversity within <i>Beta</i> species will be improved.			
2. Task sharing None. The working group set these activities on hold until publication of the AEGIS report and will discuss the issue at the next meeting.			
3. <i>In situ</i> /on-farm conservation and development A work flow for genetic and demographic monitoring is being developed for <i>Beta</i> obligatory outbreeding as well as self-compatible <i>Beta</i> species and for very different habitats. Populations are dispersed in Europe, species specific laboratory expertise such as SSR marker technology is available at few institutions in Europe, only, i.e. centralized. Genetic monitoring will never be a routine procedure of species conservation programmes. Hence, managers of protected areas should be enabled to collect leaf samples in a structured way, should be enabled to georeference the population / individuals, conserve the leaf probes with simple methods so that they can be sent over long distances to a laboratory for analysis. The required work flow is being developed by WP06 of AEGRO, and if successfully tested, the procedure could serve other working groups within the ECPGR interested in <i>in situ</i> management.			
4. Documentation and information Without the Czech - Germany -Slovak project proposal "Development of a reference implementation for access to and management of a Central Crop Database (<i>Linum</i> spp.) based on open source internet technology" rejected by the steering committee no contribution.			
c. Relevance (regional / international)			
Did your work and/or outputs have inter-regional dimension? (if it did, give precisions) The group maintains since 1989 international contacts of which those to the US, China, Iran and Morocco are the more intensive and productive ones. The chair of ECPGR working group on Beta also chairs the World Beta Network (WBN). The latter has unfortunately lost size and impact.			
d. Lessons learnt (recommendations)			
Which lessons learnt are also relevant for other Working Groups? A close cooperation with the thematic network in situ and on farm conservation proved to be very beneficial. Major progress was achieved by the <i>Beta</i> working by facilitating the participation of experts in the AEGRO project start-up meeting which are not formal members of the working group.			

II. ANALYSIS	
a. Bottlenecks	
What were the experienced bottlenecks?	How do you plan to solve the bottlenecks?
<p>Insufficient communication within the <i>Beta</i> working group. Wish list too long compared to the available capacities which in turn are correlated with funds.</p>	<p>Communication starts in general if funds for projects are available. Acquisition of funds is the solution.</p>
b. Internal support needed (Secretariat, Steering Committee, other Working Groups, etc.)	
<p>The working group always very much appreciated the support of the secretariat (organisation of meetings, preparation of the agenda, drafting of reports during meetings, editing and printing of meeting reports) and provision of information on literature and any other documents relevant to the group.</p>	
c. External resources needed (collaboration, external funding)	
<p>Yes, needed, such as the AGRI GENRES project funding mechanism.</p>	