

Institutionalization of ECPGR

Summary of parallel sessions

Bratislava, 14 – 16 December, 2010

Decision making in ECPGR

- Role of the Steering Committee
- Role of the ECPGR Secretariat
- Relationship with the hosting institution

Role of the SC

- *Strengths*
 - Continuity
 - All member countries represented
 - Ultimate decision-making body
 - High technical and diverse competence
 - Vision and oversight on ECPGR

Role of the SC

- *Weaknesses*
 - Lack of leadership, lack of debate
 - Difficulties in decision-making, different perspectives
 - No Rules of Procedure
 - Lack of analytical and strategic discussions
 - Lack of clear and specific priorities
 - Lack of proper indicators and milestones to measure success
 - Uncertainty about mandates individual members
 - Limited options for inter-sessional decision making
 - Costly SC meetings
 - Routine operation
 - Limited interaction with FAO CGRFA and IT

Role of the Secretariat

- *Strengths*
 - Handling of admin and finance
 - Organization of meetings
 - Expertise on PGRFA
 - Support for EU project preparation
 - Quality of (WG) reports
 - Ability to respond to ad hoc issues

Role of the Secretariat

- *Weaknesses*
 - Lack of authority
 - Limited interaction with SC between sessions
 - Lack of guidance by SC
 - Poor prioritization of issues by SC
 - Lack of outreach
 - Internal role/low visibility
 - Lack of initiatives/focus on routine operations
 - Lack of capacity
 - understaffed
 - More info needed on
 - Funding opportunities, PGRFA meetings, major publications

Relation to hosting organization

- *Strengths*
 - Good scientific environment
 - Good back-up services
 - Science, policy/legal, logistics
 - International, recognized status of Bioversity
 - Continuity/proof of effectiveness
 - Location in Rome (IT/FAO)
 - No cash-flow problems in ECPGR operations

Relation to hosting organization

- *Weaknesses*
 - Staffing expensive on full cost recovery basis
 - No clear contract spelling out services provided and conditions
 - Dual loyalty of Secretariat
 - To SC and to hosting institution
 - Visibility of ECPGR vis-à-vis Bioversity
 - (potential) Divergent mandates/interests
 - But: benefits of hosting both for ECPGR and Bioversity

Recommendations

- *President and Vice-Presidents*
 - Comes at very limited costs
 - Only travel and lodging costs for team consisting of SC members
 - May consist of 5 persons on rotational basis
 - Titles may be: Bureau & Chair and Co-chairs
 - Mandate to address
 - All SC decisions/resolutions, preparation SC meetings, guidance for secretariat, strategic issues, AOB, but no financial issues above five thousand euros

Recommendations

- *Executive Director*
 - Alternative title: Executive Secretary
 - Decision should be budget-neutral
 - Formalization of position Secretary needed
 - Secretary should be “empowered”
 - To be spelled out in Rules of Procedure
 - External position
 - Visibility of ECPGR; fund raising, strategic inputs
 - Secretary should only report to SC/Exec. Comm.

Recommendations

- *Rules of Procedure*
- Minimum set on
 - roles/mandates of Executive Committee and Executive Secretary
 - monitoring expenses and decisions regarding budget
 - non-contributing members

Recommendations

- *Relationships*
 - with EU: relation to GENRES; managing GENRES? Funding by EU (EP, EC)
 - With EU: all members should remain equal within ECPGR
 - With IT: letter to GB in consultation with NFPs
 - With EUCARPIA and ESA: ??

An additional issue

- ECPGR structure
 - Simplify structure; options:
 - Keep the networks, dissolve working groups
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 - Replace by three networks only: *ex situ*, *in situ*, information/documentation
 - Establish *ad hoc* working groups/task forces
 - Combine meetings in time and venue
 - Consider self-organization and (partial) self-funding

Conclusions

- Urgent decision needed on establishment of Executive Committee
 - Title: Chair and four vice-chairs-members; chair directly elected by SC; presiding next meeting of the SC
 - Size: 5 members
 - Rotation: 5 years, each year one member to be replaced by a newly elected member
 - Common decision of entire SC, striving to sub-regional representation
- Final responsibility rests with Steering Committee

Conclusions

- Executive Committee asked to prepare option paper addressing pros and cons of
 - elaboration of the objectives based on Bratislava agreement
 - legal status
 - establishing position of Executive Director/Executive Secretary
 - defining Terms of Reference for the Exec Sec
 - Rules of Procedure (may be delegated to a Task Force)
 - internal ECPGR working structure
 - hosting arrangements
 - any cost implications
- Exec Committee established by this SC meeting might be supported at its request by Task Forces addressing specific elements