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
    - Keep the working groups, dissolve the networks
    - 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 Secr
  - 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