

“NISM-GPA¹ – A system to monitor national PGR activities”
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Abstract

The objective of this session will be to introduce the NISM-GPA software that FAO and its partners have developed to monitor national activities related to the Global Plan of Action.

Introduction

The FAO and PGRFA - The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is the main intergovernmental organization that oversees global activities related conservation of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. In this work FAO is guided by the intergovernmental Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. After a global, participatory process, the Global Plan of Action (GPA)³ was developed and formally adopted by representatives of 150 countries during the Forth International Technical Conference held in Leipzig Germany in 1996.

The Global Plan of Action – The GPA is a road map for the conservation of PGRFA. Please see the components of the GPA in Appendix 1. The Global Plan of Action aims to implement a major component of the Agenda 21 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The Global Plan of Action has been incorporated into the International Treaty for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA).

The Global Plan of Action is a comprehensive approach to the PGRFA covering in-situ and ex-situ conservation, use of PGR and institution and capacity building. In order to monitor the GPA a special mechanism has been developed that many countries (over 60) are using – this mechanism is called the National Information Sharing Mechanism of the Global Plan of Action (NISM-GPA).

¹ National Information Sharing Mechanism – Global Plan of Action

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³ Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

NISM-GPA. This mechanism to monitor the GPA is software that can readily be converted into national languages. It is currently translated into 18 languages. The software guides users through the 4 sections of the GPA [(a)in-situ, (b)ex-situ conservation, (c) use of PGR and (d) institution and capacity building] that consists of 20 areas. Each area has a series of indicators and questions related to the indicators. As an example:

Section - Ex-situ conservation

Area - Sustaining existing ex situ conservation

Indicator – Species and number of accessions preserved ex situ: medium term and long term

Question – Enter (update) in the table below for each ex-situ collection, held by your organization, and for each taxon or crop, the number of accessions stored under specified storage conditions.

In a step by step process the overall status of in-country activities related to all aspects of the GPA can be assess and regularly updated.

The NISM-GPA is not a genebank information system that covers many aspects of ex-situ conservation documentation. But NISM-GPA complements other PGR information systems. In particular NISM-GPA highlights all the main aspects of PGRFA and this comprehensive approach permits countries to understand where they are making progress and where they need to improve.

NISM-GPA participants. The NISM-GPA system is coordinated by a National Focal Point and he/her PGR database administrator. They work with stakeholders (i.e. people across the country that are involved in different aspects of PGRFA activities) to build up the database.

Resources related to NISM-GPA on the internet. You are encouraged to explore the internet sites below to get a better idea of what is happening globally related to PGRFA. Currently a second State of the Worlds Plant Genetic Resources is being written and can be found at the website (World Early Warning) below.

Overview of FAO and PGRFA -

http://www.fao.org/ag/AGP/AGPS/Pgrfa/pdf/overvi_e.pdf

Global Plan of Action

<http://www.fao.org/ag/AGP/AGPS/GpaEN/gpatoc.htm>

World Early Warning Information System of PGRFA

<http://apps3.fao.org/wiews/wiews.jsp>

NISM-GPA web site

<http://www.pgrfa.org/gpa/selectcountry.jsp>

Appendix 1.

Global Plan of Action for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
(Summary document)