Mechanism for sustainable PGR exchange and sharing among Caribbean states

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International issues in germplasm access, exchange and benefit-sharing

- Int’l exchanges of PGR has provided genetic diversity important for yield stability and resistance to biotic and abiotic stresses.

- Introduction of exotic plant pathogens and pests affect crop performance, cause severe economic losses and, reduce longevity of stored germplasm.

  → Quarantine and phytosanitary safeguards enforced via Nat´l & Int´l legislation.

- Int’l Commission on GRFA, CBD (incl. Nagoya Protocol), TRIPS, UPOV and, local quarantine regulations place binding conditions on PGR exchange and sharing.
CBD (1992) supported by ITPGRFA (2004) in recognising sovereign right of countries to regulate access to their genetic resources.

Article 15 of the CBD provides framework for national governments to implement ABS mechanism.
Supplementary agreement to CBD.

Transparent legal framework for effective implementation of CBD objective on fair and equitable benefit-sharing from GRs utilisation.

Requires:
- adequate legislative, regulatory, administrative or policy measures while respecting existing appropriate National and International laws and agreements.
- access to PGR and knowledge.
- global MLS for ABS.
- nat’l and regional programmes with focal points (NFPs) with strong HR and Institutional capacities (with NCs).
States can facilitate access under MLS for utilization, conservation, R&D, breeding, training, food security within provisions of ITPGRFA thru´ bilateral or multilateral Agreements and SMTAs with stakeholders.

MLS to include *ex situ* collections of CGIAR via SMTAs.

Access covered by IPR/patents must be consistent with Int´l Agreements and National laws.
ACTIONS to support MLS under ITPGRFA

- Specific ABS laws, regulations and policy framework for germplasm, capacity-building, technology transfer, exchange of information and, sharing of monetary benefits arising from commercialization.

- Regional Network (CAPGERNet) for coordination, linkages and, oversight of compliance with laws and regulations and with Int’l Agreements and Treaties.

- Global Information System and cooperation with FAO Commission on GRFA.

- Financial resources.

- Settlement of disputes by negotiation.
Need for PGR Mechanism for ABS in Caribbean States

At national, sub-regional and regional levels to facilitate and regulate access and exchange in line with CBD and ITPGRFA and to ensure fairness and equity of benefits from PGR use in all related bilateral and multilateral commitments.
SMTA for each transfer sets legally-binding terms and conditions depending on the proposed use of the material (e.g. research, commercial, etc.).

SMTA must comply with relevant national and international laws.

Mechanism should be supported by strong national and regional programmes with linkages to relevant Regional and Int’l Orgs.
Import/Export permits recognise regulatory measures and safeguards to complement quarantine guidelines for importation.

Testing procedures conducted by internationally-certified laboratories are prerequisite for phytosanitary certificates required for export permit.

Adequate post-entry practices for handling and use of germplasm must be stipulated in import permit.

*In situ* and *ex situ* collections in each country should have readily accessible information.
PGR exchange in Caribbean

Germplasm management

- Adequate facilities (genebanks, labs, trained staff).

- Collection, identification, characterization, evaluation, conservation and documentation for:
  - Regional crops of economic importance for which collections of germplasm exist.
  - Other PGRs of potential importance.
PGR exchange in Caribbean

Threats

- Floods, droughts, hurricanes, earthquakes, genetic contamination and climate change effects, population pressure, tourism and recreational use of environment.

- Early warning systems (monitoring and information systems).
PGR exchange in Caribbean

Governance & collaboration

- Governance of PGR among Governmental Institutions (issue not on political agenda).
- Membership of ITPGRFA and other Int’l Agreements.
- Collaboration among Institutions.
PGR exchange in Caribbean

Policy frameworks

- National policy frameworks for PGR supported by legal and institutional instruments for:
  - effectively managing, conserving and utilizing PGR.
  - farmers’ and plant breeders’ rights for access and exchange of protected germplasm.
  - ensuring production and distribution of quality germplasm of improved varieties to farmers.

- Enforcement of relevant legislation and harmonization across countries.
Financial support to coordinate and implement activities within national and regional programmes.

Institutional strengthening to provide benefits from International cooperation and improve ability to negotiate bilateral and multilateral agreements.
What do we do about it?

It is not **WHAT** we have to do but **HOW** and with what **RESOURCES** - physical - financial - human

Framework for Action
2-step Proposal for ACTION
Inter-Governmental Action Committee on Climate Change with reference to Agriculture

Development of policies, legislative and regulatory frameworks, plans and programmes
Each country establishes local network of stakeholders

PGR management/conservation/use
Germplasm & Information sharing.
Projects for actions at farmers’ level.

REGIONAL NETWORK

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
JAMAICA
BAHAMAS
BARBADOS
ANTIGUA
ST. KITTS/NEVIS
BELIZE
ST. LUCIA
DOMINICA
ST. VINCENT & the GRENADINES
GUYANA
GRENADA
MONTSERRAT

CUBA
PUERTO RICO
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

CAPGERNet
SECRETARIAT
Coordination

GUADELOUPE
MARTINIQUE
HAITI

CURACAO
SURINAME