



Updates on Plant Variety Protection

Issue #16, 4 July 2015

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1. Editorial

This newsletter features a newly released Study commissioned by the German government, which finds the UPOV Convention inappropriate for developing countries and inconsistent with Farmers' rights, recommending that developing countries that have not yet joined UPOV should consider opting for an alternative sui generis system of PVP. This newsletter also includes press release and news reports released in the past week on the highly controversial Draft ARIPO Protocol on the Protection of New Varieties of Plants. Deliberation on this Draft Protocol is currently on-going in Arusha, Tanzania. A diplomatic conference set to take place on Monday (6th July) will determine whether or not to adopt the heavily contested Draft Protocol.

2. New GIZ publication: The UPOV Convention, Farmers' Rights and Human Rights - An integrated assessment of potentially conflicting legal frameworks

This study commissioned by the German government explores the relations between the International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV Convention), Farmers' Rights as enshrined in the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA), and human rights, particularly the right to adequate food. **The study recommends *inter alia* that developing countries that have not yet joined UPOV should consider opting for an alternative sui generis system of PVP that allows for more flexibility to meet the obligations of different treaties.**

The Study can be [downloaded here](#)

3. Press Release: AFSA Calls on African Governments at Arusha Meeting to Shun Protocol that Undermines Sovereignty and Farmers' Rights to Seed

AFSA strongly urges member states and the Ministers who will attend the Diplomatic Conference on Monday, not to adopt the Protocol. The lack of involvement of smallholder farmer groups and civil society in the development of the legal framework, the current compromised deliberations as well as the Diplomatic Conference is a huge global concern. AFSA further strongly urges member states and the Ministers who will attend the Diplomatic Conference on Monday (6th July) to reconsider and overhaul the Protocol in its entirety. A credible process must be initiated to undertake evidence-based discussions with all relevant stakeholders in particular with smallholder farmers with regard to appropriate legal systems for breeders' and farmers' rights as well as the upholding of national sovereignty and interests.

[Read more](#)

4. The Herald: Zimbabwe Should Reject ARIPO Plans on Seed Control

Zimbabwe should reject new plans by the African Regional Intellectual Property Organisation (ARIPO) on seed production and control because of the potential dangerous impacts on food security, particularly at a time of climate change, experts say.

[Read more](#)

5. The Ecologist: Seed Freedom! A last chance to thwart the great African seed grab

Ali-Masmadi Jehu-Appiah, the Chairperson of Food Sovereignty Ghana, highlights in his article the “murky, unaccountable process” which has led to the draft ARIPO Protocol and concludes with specific demands.

[Read more](#)

Calendar of Events

Autumn session of UPOV bodies, 26 to 29 October 2015

- Monday, 26 and Tuesday, 27 October [Administrative and Legal Committee](#)
- 5 to 9 October, Governing Body of the FAO Plant treaty in Rome.
- Wednesday, 28 October Consultative Committee (closed to observers)
- Thursday 29 October 2015 [Council](#)

See also the [Upcoming Events](#) on our website

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