

**Consultative Committee**

**CC/97/6 Rev.**

**Ninety-Seventh Session  
Geneva, October 29, 2020**

**Original:** English  
**Date:** ~~June 26-September 25~~, 2020

*to be considered by correspondence*

## COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

*Document prepared by the Office of the Union*

*Disclaimer: this document does not represent UPOV policies or guidance*

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this document is to report on developments concerning the Communication Strategy and to present a draft FAQ “How the UPOV system supports sustainable development”, for consideration by the Consultative Committee.

2. The Consultative Committee is invited to

(a) recommend to the Council in 2020, to adopt the text of the FAQ “How the UPOV system supports sustainable development”, on the basis of the text in paragraph 11 of this document;

(b) note the developments reported in the document; and

(c) note the results of the Communication Strategy, as presented in document C/54/9 “Performance Report for the 2018-2019 Biennium”, documents C/54/2 “Annual report of the Secretary-General for 2019” and in Annexes III and IV to this document.

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## BACKGROUND

3. At its eighty-sixth session, held in Geneva on October 23 and 24, 2013, the Consultative Committee approved a communication strategy (Communication Strategy) as reproduced in the Annex to document CC/89/8, which contained a workplan (Workplan). This document reports on developments concerning the Workplan.

4. The Consultative Committee, at its ninety-sixth session, held in Geneva, October 31, 2019 considered document CC/96/6 (see document CC/96/14 "Report", paragraphs 69 to 75):

(a) recommended to the Council to revise the text of the FAQ "Benefits of new varieties of plants for society", on the basis of the text of Annex I to document CC/96/6;

(b) agreed that the draft text for an FAQ on "how the UPOV system supports sustainable development", as set out in paragraph 15 of document CC/96/6, be circulated for comments and, on the basis of the comments received, the Office of the Union to prepare an updated version of the draft FAQ for consideration by the Consultative Committee at its ninety-seventh session in 2020;

(c) recommended to the Council to approve the proposed text for updating of FAQs and the proposed amendments to the UPOV Distance Learning materials, as set out in Annex II of document CC/96/6, to reflect developments concerning UPOV PRISMA;

(d) noted the publication of the videos: "Overview of the benefits of the UPOV system (Interview: Peter Button, Vice Secretary-General, UPOV)"; "Impact of UPOV in Canada, Shift in Investments, PBR & Seed Sector Growth (Interview: Anthony Parker, Commissioner, Plant Breeders' Rights Office, CFIA)"; and "The importance of UPOV in Viet Nam (Interview: Director Nguyen Thanh Minh, Plant Variety Protection Office of Viet Nam)";

(e) approved the proposed redesign of the UPOV website as demonstrated at the session and noted the plans for the implementation of the redesigned UPOV website and a new content management system (CMS);

(f) noted the developments concerning UPOV's use of social media and that the @upovprisma Twitter account had been incorporated in the @UPOVint Twitter account;

(g) approved the following performance indicators for the communication strategy, as follows:

- (i) Visits to UPOV website;
- (ii) Number of followers, impressions and engagement rate in Twitter and number of followers and connections in LinkedIn; and
- (iii) Participation in workshops.

## DEVELOPMENTS AND MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

5. The following sections report on developments and matters for consideration according to the structure of the Workplan.

### Communication materials

#### *Stakeholder-focused features on UPOV website*

6. The Consultative Committee, at its ninety-sixth session, held in Geneva on October 31, 2019, considered document CC/96/6 "Communication Strategy" and approved the proposed redesign of the

UPOV website as demonstrated at the session and noted the plans for the implementation of the redesigned UPOV website and a new content management system (CMS) (see document CC/96/14 "Report", paragraph 74). Document CC/96/6, paragraph 26, explained that, after analysis of the level of use of the stakeholder features on the UPOV website and the launch of Twitter and LinkedIn accounts, it had been concluded that stakeholder features were not an essential feature of the main UPOV webpage and would not be included in the redesigned UPOV website.

#### *General information*

##### (a) Answers to frequently-asked questions about the UPOV system (FAQs)

##### *Benefits of new varieties of plants for society*

7. The Consultative Committee, at its ninety-sixth session, held in Geneva on October 31, 2019, recommended to the Council to revise the text of the FAQ "Benefits of new varieties of plants for society", on the basis of the text of Annex I to document CC/96/6 "Communication Strategy" (see document CC/96/14 "Report", paragraph 70).

8. The Council, at its fifty-third ordinary session, held in Geneva on November 1, 2019, decided to revise the text of the FAQ "What are the benefits of new varieties of plants for society?", on the basis of the text recommended by the Consultative Committee, as reproduced in Annex II to document C/53/15 "Report".

##### *How the UPOV system supports sustainable development*

9. The Consultative Committee, at its ninety-sixth session, agreed that the draft text for an FAQ on "how the UPOV system supports sustainable development", as set out in document CC/96/6, paragraph 15, be circulated for comments and, on the basis of the comments received, the Office of the Union to prepare an updated version of the draft FAQ for consideration by the Consultative Committee at its ninety-seventh session in 2020. A copy of the draft text for an FAQ on "how the UPOV system supports sustainable development", as set out in document CC/96/6, paragraph 15, is presented in Annex I to this document.

10. On November 27, 2019, the Office of the Union issued Circular E-19/226, inviting comments on the draft text for an FAQ on "How does the UPOV system support sustainable development?", as presented in document CC/96/6, paragraph 15. In response to Circular E-19/226, the Office of the Union received comments from Norway, which are reproduced in Annex II to this document.

11. On the basis of the comments received from Norway and subsequent elaboration of the points raised, the following text for an FAQ is proposed for consideration by the Consultative Committee:

##### *How does the UPOV system support sustainable development?*

*The vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (see <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>) includes a world where "food is sufficient, safe, affordable and nutritious", there is "sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development, environmental protection and the eradication of poverty and hunger" and one in "which development and the application of technology are climate-sensitive, respect biodiversity and are resilient".*

*World population is growing and urbanization increasing, which places greater demands on the quantity and quality of agricultural production. At the same time, conservation of biodiversity depends on sustainable agriculture and a halt or reversal to the expansion of agricultural land, while there are parallel demands on agricultural land for food and energy production. This means that there is a need to produce more from existing agricultural land, in a sustainable way.*

*The tremendous progress in agricultural productivity in various parts of the world is largely based on improved varieties, combined with improved farming practices. Breeding plant varieties with improved yield, more efficient use of nutrients, resistance to plant pests and diseases, salt and drought tolerance and better adaptation to ~~climatic stress~~ **climate change** <sup>a</sup> can sustainably increase productivity and product quality in agriculture, horticulture and forestry, whilst minimizing the pressure on the natural environment. At the same time, new varieties that*

*are adapted to the environment in which they are grown increase the choice of healthy, tasty and nutritious food while generating a viable income for farmers.*

*The UPOV system of plant variety protection supports long-term investment in breeding and provides a framework for investment in the delivery of seed and other propagating material of varieties suited to farmers' needs. UPOV was created in 1961 for the development of agriculture and, since that time, has proven to be an effective system for supporting various types of breeders: individuals, farmers, SMEs and larger breeding institutes/enterprises, in the private and public sectors.*

*From the outset, the UPOV system was conceived to deliver greatest progress in plant breeding and, therefore, to sustain greatest advances in agriculture for the benefit of farmers and society as a whole. This concept is enshrined in the "breeder's exemption", a key feature of the UPOV system since its creation. This exemption enables protected plant varieties to be available for further breeding by all types of breeders, thus recognizing that access to genetic resources is a prerequisite for any type of breeding.*

(b) Brief, illustrative explanation of the benefits of the UPOV system

(c) An update of the Impact Study

12. The Consultative Committee, at its ninety-second session, held in Geneva on October 27, 2016, agreed that it would not be feasible to prepare an updated version of the Impact Study in the current format and agreed that individual members of the Union should be encouraged to undertake their own studies and provide the resulting information to the Office of the Union. It also agreed that the Office of the Union should develop videos to illustrate various benefits of the UPOV system of plant variety protection (see document CC/92/21 "Report", paragraph 69).

13. Since the ninety-sixth session of the Consultative Committee, the following videos have been published on the UPOV website (see [http://www.upov.int/about/en/benefits\\_upov\\_system.html](http://www.upov.int/about/en/benefits_upov_system.html)):

- (i) Celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the accession of China to UPOV Convention (China);
- (ii) UPOV system bringing benefits for agriculture in Colombia (Colombia).

#### *Updating materials to reflect developments concerning UPOV PRISMA*

14. The Consultative Committee, at its ninety-sixth session, recommended to the Council to approve proposed amendments to the UPOV Distance Learning materials, as set out in Annex II of document CC/96/6, to reflect developments concerning UPOV PRISMA (see document CC/96/14 "Report", paragraph 72).

15. The Council, at its fifty-third ordinary session, held in Geneva on November 1, 2019, approved the proposed amendments to the UPOV Distance Learning materials, to reflect developments concerning UPOV PRISMA (see document C/53/15, paragraph 23(g)).

16. The amendments to the UPOV Distance Learning materials to reflect developments concerning UPOV PRISMA will be implemented in the 2021 sessions.

#### Communication methods

##### *UPOV website*

17. As explained in paragraphs 4 and 6 of this document, the Consultative Committee, at its ninety-sixth session, approved the proposed redesign of the UPOV website as demonstrated at the session and noted the plans for the implementation of the redesigned UPOV website and a new content management system (CMS) (see document CC/96/14 "Report", paragraph 74).

18. The selection of a new content management system (CMS) by WIPO has been delayed, as a result of which the implementation of the redesigned UPOV website has been postponed until 2021. However, the new design has been applied in the CMS for the UPOV PRISMA webpages.

## MEASURING RESULTS

19. The Consultative Committee, at its ninety-sixth session, approved the following performance indicators for the communication strategy (see document CC/96/14 "Report", paragraph 76):

- (a) Visits to UPOV website;
- (b) Social media:
  - (i) Number of followers, impressions and engagement rate in Twitter
  - (ii) Number of followers and connections in LinkedIn; and
- (c) Participation in workshops.

20. Results in the categories above are reported in the Performance Report for the 2018-2019 Biennium (document C/54/9) and in the Annual report of the Secretary-General for 2019 (document C/54/2). The following information is intended to highlight particular developments that will guide the future implementation of the Communication Strategy.

Visits to UPOV website

21. Document CC/96/6, paragraph 33, explained that one of the impacts that was anticipated from the use of social media was to increase the awareness and visits to the UPOV website. However, it was reported that experience had shown that social media information needed to be self-contained and there appeared to be no significant increase in traffic to the UPOV website. The level of outreach from social media appeared to be comparable to the UPOV website, when considering the number of impressions<sup>1</sup>, meaning that both means are useful and complementary.

22. The number of UPOV website visitors ("visits") and sessions, presented in Annex III provides some evidence of a positive impact since the launch of UPOV's social media accounts.

Social media

23. A summary of the development of the Twitter and LinkedIn accounts is provided in Annex IV, as follows:

- a) Current status
- b) Evolution of use
- c) Most popular tweets/posts
- d) Comparison to selected other organizations

24. *The Consultative Committee is invited to:*

*(a) recommend to the Council in 2020 to adopt the text of the FAQ "How does the UPOV system support sustainable development?", on the basis of the text in paragraph 11 of this document;*

*(b) note the developments reported in the document; and*

*(c) note the results of the Communication Strategy, as presented in document C/54/9 "Performance Report for the 2018-2019 Biennium", documents C/54/2 "Annual report of the Secretary-General for 2019" and in Annexes III and IV to this document.*

[Annexes follow]

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<sup>1</sup> "Impressions": times a user is served a Tweet in timeline or search results.

DRAFT TEXT AS PRESENTED IN DOCUMENT CC/96/6, PARAGRAPH 15

How does the UPOV system support sustainable development?

The vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (see <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>) includes a world where “food is sufficient, safe, affordable and nutritious”, there is “sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development, environmental protection and the eradication of poverty and hunger” and one in “which development and the application of technology are climate-sensitive, respect biodiversity and are resilient”.

World population is growing and urbanization increasing, which places greater demands on the quantity and quality of agricultural production. At the same time, conservation of biodiversity calls for a halt or reversal to the expansion of agricultural land, while there are parallel demands on agricultural land for food and energy production. This means that there is a need to produce more from existing agricultural land, in a sustainable way.

The tremendous progress in agricultural productivity in various parts of the world is largely based on improved varieties, combined with improved farming practices. Breeding plant varieties with improved yield, more efficient use of nutrients, resistance to plant pests and diseases, salt and drought tolerance and better adaptation to climatic stress can sustainably increase productivity and product quality in agriculture, horticulture and forestry, whilst minimizing the pressure on the natural environment. At the same time, new varieties that are adapted to the environment in which they are grown increase the choice of healthy, tasty and nutritious food while generating a viable income for farmers.

The UPOV system of plant variety protection supports long-term investment in breeding and provides a framework for investment in the delivery of seed and other propagating material of varieties suited to farmers' needs. UPOV was created in 1961 for the development of agriculture and, since that time, has proven to be an effective system for supporting all types of breeders: individuals, farmers, SMEs and larger breeding institutes/enterprises, in the private and public sectors.

From the outset, the UPOV system was conceived to deliver greatest progress in plant breeding and, therefore, to sustain greatest advances in agriculture for the benefit of farmers and society as a whole. This concept is enshrined in the “breeder’s exemption”, a feature unique to the UPOV system, which enables protected plant varieties to be available for further breeding by all breeders.

[Annex II follows]

## ANNEX II

COMMENTS BY NORWAY  
ON  
DRAFT TEXT AS PRESENTED IN DOCUMENT CC/96/6, PARAGRAPH 15

How does the UPOV system support sustainable development?

The vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (see <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>) includes a world where “food is sufficient, safe, affordable and nutritious”, there is “sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development, environmental protection and the eradication of poverty and hunger” and one in “which development and the application of technology are climate-sensitive, respect biodiversity and are resilient”.

World population is growing and urbanization increasing, which places greater demands on the quantity and quality of agricultural production. At the same time, conservation of biodiversity calls for a more sustainable agriculture, and a halt or reversal to the expansion of agricultural land, while there are parallel demands on agricultural land for food and energy production. This means that there is a need to produce more from existing agricultural land, in a sustainable way.

The tremendous progress in agricultural productivity in various parts of the world is largely based on improved varieties, combined with improved farming practices. Breeding plant varieties with improved yield, more efficient use of nutrients, resistance to plant pests and diseases, salt and drought tolerance and better adaptation to climatic stress can sustainably increase productivity and product quality in agriculture, horticulture and forestry, whilst minimizing the pressure on the natural environment. At the same time, new varieties that are adapted to the environment in which they are grown increase the choice of healthy, tasty and nutritious food while generating a viable income for farmers.

The UPOV system of plant variety protection supports long-term investment in breeding and provides a framework for investment in the delivery of seed and other propagating material of varieties suited to farmers' needs. UPOV was created in 1961 for the development of agriculture and, since that time, has proven to be an effective system for supporting all various types of breeders: individuals, farmers<sup>1)</sup>, SMEs and larger breeding institutes/enterprises, in the private and public sectors. Other types of variety protection also exists<sup>2)</sup>.

From the outset, the UPOV system was conceived to deliver greatest progress in plant breeding and, therefore, to sustain greatest advances in agriculture for the benefit of farmers and society as a whole. This concept is enshrined in the “breeder's exemption”, a feature unique to the UPOV system<sup>3)</sup>, which enables protected plant varieties to be available for further breeding by all breeders.

**Remarks:**

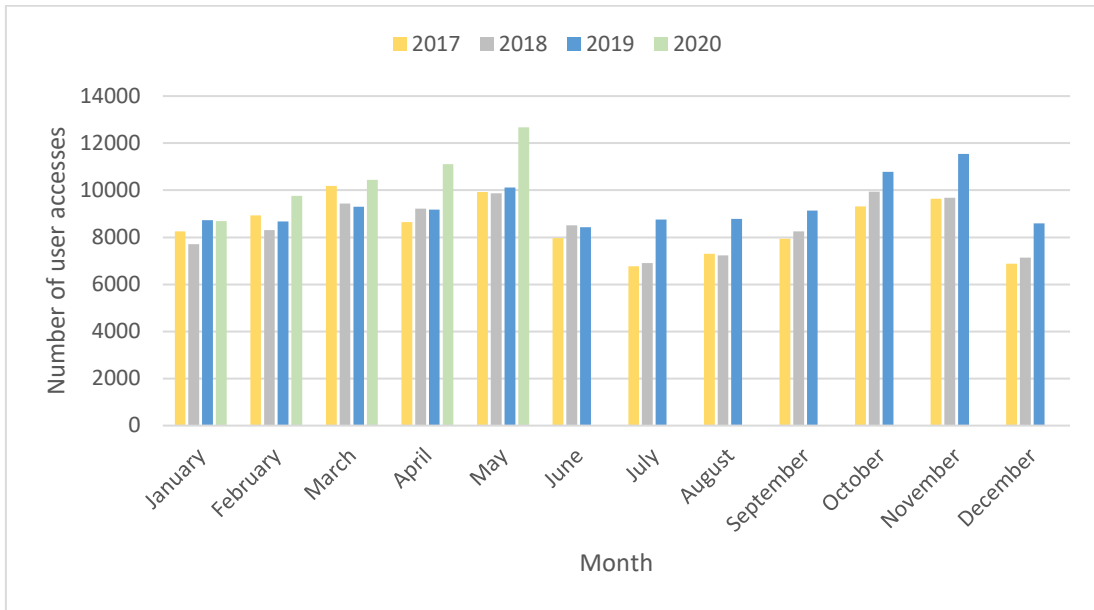
- 1) We suggest to delete *individuals and farmers* since we question if small scale farming in low income countries do benefit of the 91-convention restrictions related to *farmers right*??
- 2) UPOV is a global organization, but this does not mean that other system for protection in other countries exists, for instance *Sui Generis Protection for Plant Varieties in India and Nepal*
- 3) This statement is not correct. Other systems also provides "breeders exemption" as mentioned above.

[Annex III follows]

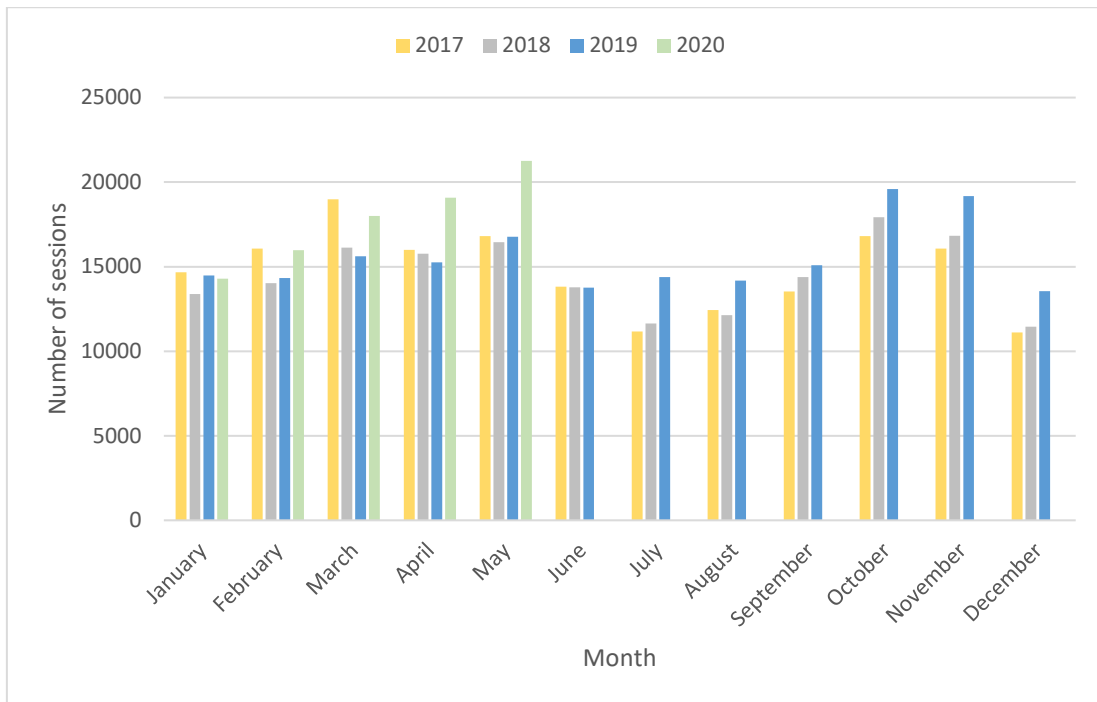
ANNEX III

UPOV WEBSITE

Number of visits<sup>1</sup> to the website



Number of sessions<sup>2</sup> on the website



<sup>1</sup> Number of devices used to visit the website in a month (A person may use more than one device).

<sup>2</sup> A "session" is a group of user interactions with your website that take place within a given time frame. For example a single session can contain multiple page views, events, social interactions, and ecommerce transactions. A single user can open multiple sessions. Those sessions can occur on the same day, or over several days, weeks, or months. As soon as one session ends, there is then an opportunity to start a new session. There are two methods by which a session ends:

- Time-based expiration:
  - After 30 minutes of inactivity
  - At midnight
- Campaign change:
  - If a user arrives via one campaign, leaves, and then comes back via a different campaign.



## ANNEX IV

## SOCIAL MEDIA: DEVELOPMENT OF UPOV TWITTER AND LINKEDIN ACCOUNTS

(a) Status at May 17, 2020

(Figures provided in brackets represent the figures as of June 12, 2019, see document CC/96/6)

*Ongoing total from the launch of the accounts (March 2019)*Twitter

	@UPOVint	@vsgupov
Total number of tweets	541 (207)	1,303 (429)
Total number of followers <sup>1</sup>	1,006 (327)	525 (184)

*Status as of May 17*Twitter

	@UPOVint	@vsgupov
Total number of impressions <sup>2</sup>	313,963 (104,550)	193,787 (107,736)
Total number of engagements <sup>3</sup>	7,171 (2,381)	4,510 (2,846)
Average engagement rate (rate given by Twitter)	2.14% (1.89%)	2.67% (3.15%)
Total number of likes	1463 (475)	1016 (577)
Total number of retweets	849 (213)	234 (183)

LinkedIn

	UPOV LinkedIn	Peter Button LinkedIn
Total number of posts	-	-
Total number of connections	-	539(260)
Total number of followers	916 (-)	547(262)

Note: The UPOV LinkedIn account was not used prior to July 2019.

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<sup>1</sup> "Followers": Followers are people who receive your Tweets.

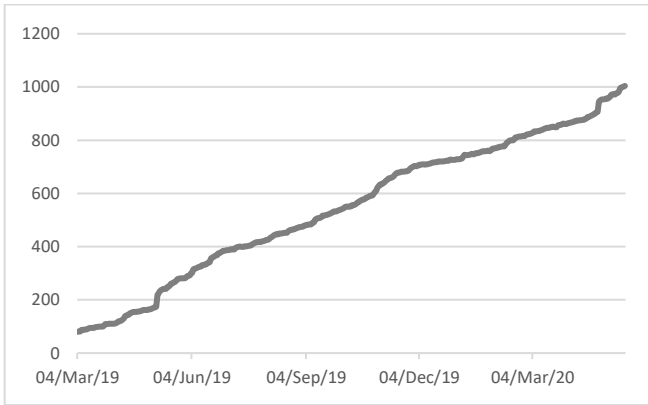
<sup>2</sup> "Impressions": Times a user is served a Tweet in timeline or search results.

<sup>3</sup> "Engagements": Total number of times a user interacted with a Tweet. Clicks anywhere on the Tweet, including Retweets, replies, follows, likes, links, cards, hashtags, embedded media, username, profile photo, or Tweet expansion.

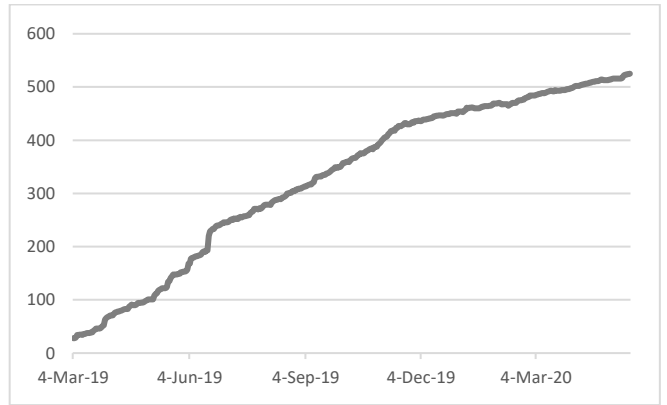
(b) Evolution of use

Followers

@UPOVint

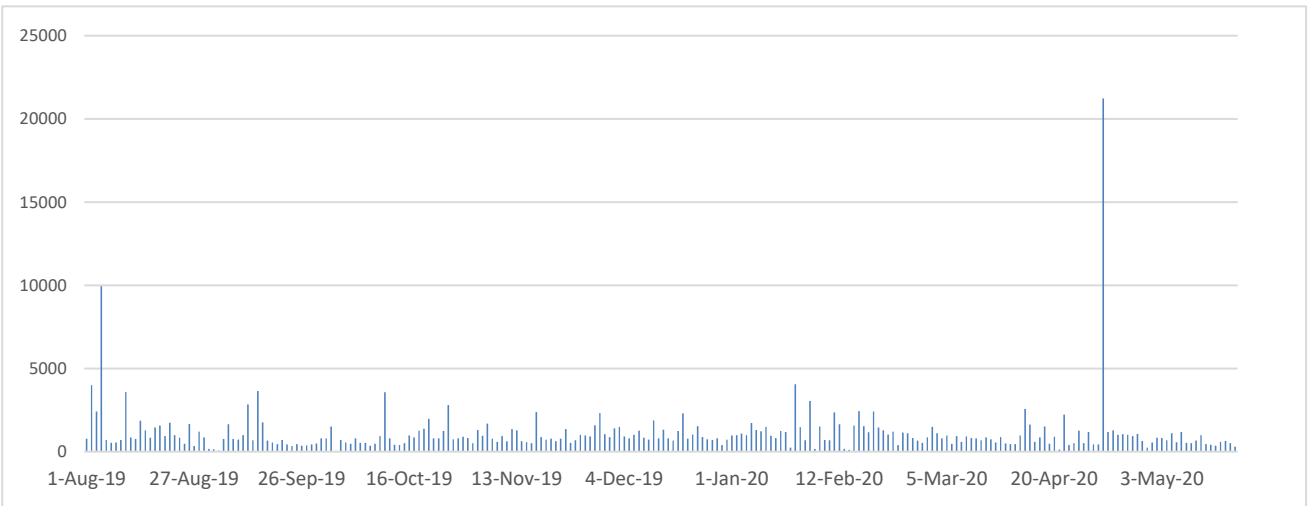


@vsgupov

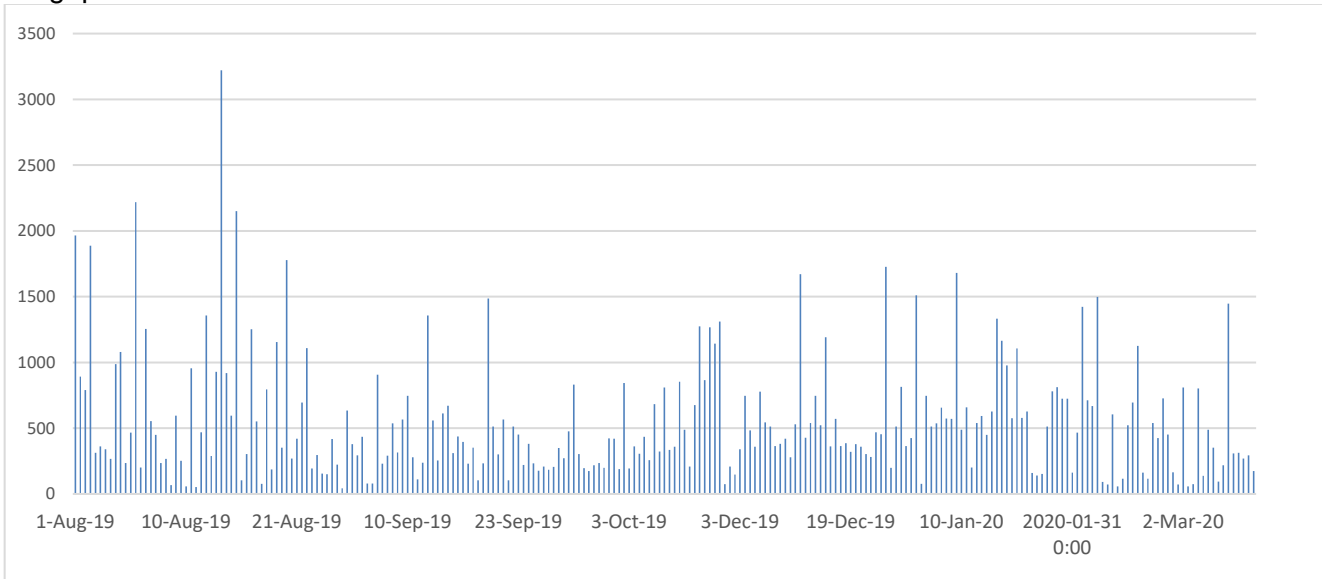


Impressions

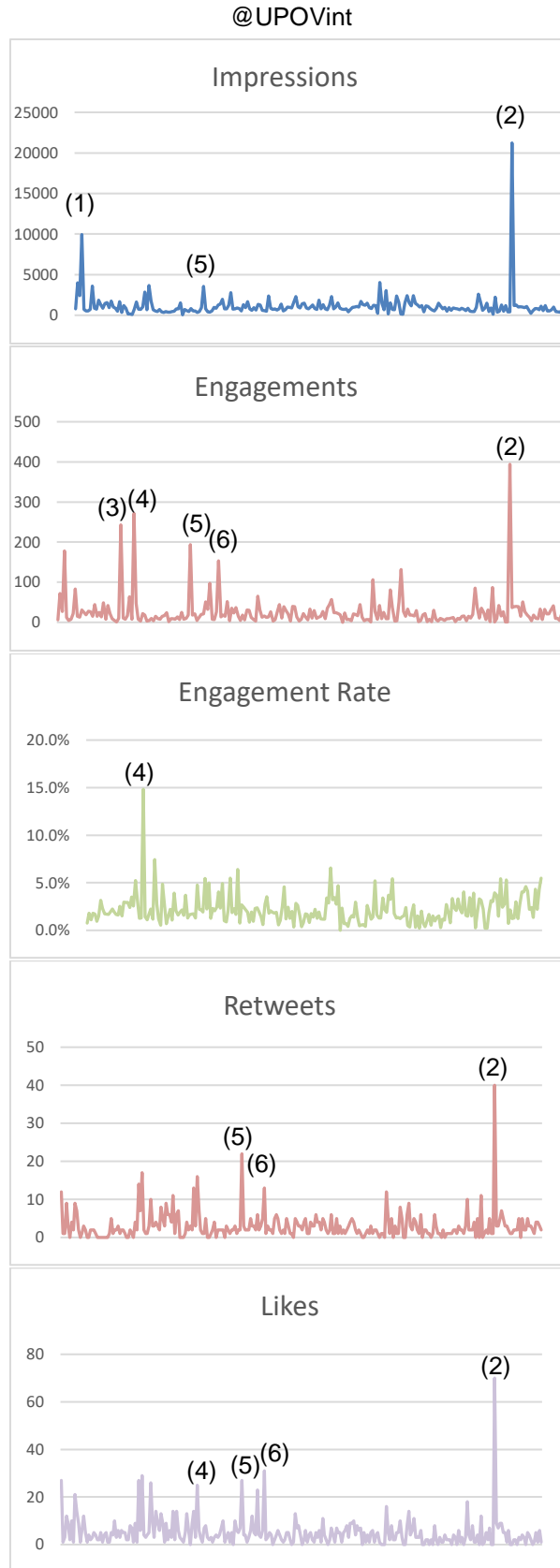
@UPOVint



@vsgupov



(c) Most popular tweets/posts<sup>4</sup> (August 1, 2019, to May 17, 2020)



<sup>4</sup> The most popular tweets/posts are available in the Appendix to Annex IV.

(d) Comparison to selected other organizations

	UPOV	CPVO @CPVOTweets	ISTA @ISTAseedtesting	ITPGRFA @planttreaty	WFO @worldfarmersorg	FAO @FAO	WIPO @WIPO
Date of creation of Twitter account	Mar 5, 2019*	Feb 2012	Aug 2018	May 2009	May 2012	Jan 2009	Dec 2011
Total number of followers	1,006	1,883	831	2,139	6,078	372,900	90,300
Total number of tweets	541	1377	688	931	6,535	35,400	10,000
Average number of tweets per month (including tweets and replies)	38	13	32	7	68	260	99

\*Date of first Tweet

	UPOV Vice Secretary-General @vsgupov		ISTA Secretary-General @andreas_wais	ITPGRFA Secretary @kentnnozie	WFO Secretary-General @arigiulio	FAO Director-General @grazianodasilva	
Date of creation of Twitter account	Mar 7, 2019*		Aug 2018	Mar 2011	Feb 2010	Nov 2010	
Total number of followers	525		147	303	1,027	296,000	
Total number of tweets	1303		328	485	1,290	16,200	
Average number of tweets per month (including tweets and replies)	93		15	4	11	142	

\*Date of first Tweet

[Appendix follows]

APPENDIX TO ANNEX IV

MOST POPULAR TWEETS/POSTS  
[in English only]

@UPOVint

(1)

**UPOV** @UPOVint  
Calling all #IP lawyers and agents – interested in learning more about #plantbreeding and the #UPOV System of #PlantVarietyProtection? Registration now open for UPOV distance learning course DL205: [ow.ly/qnCS50vgjVn](http://ow.ly/qnCS50vgjVn) – a great way to get started! Hosted at #WIPO Academy



(2)

**UPOV** @UPOVint  
#Newplantvarieties are innovations that can produce 🌱 food on less land 🌱 with less water 💧. Features such as disease resistance, drought, salt & flood tolerance, combined with high yields and good eating quality are the 🔑

UPOV celebrates #WorldIPDay  
upov.int



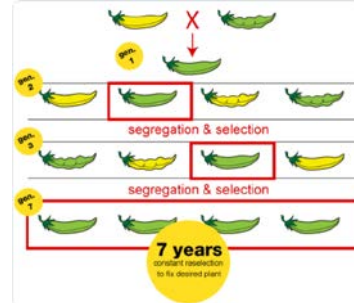
(3)

**UPOV** @UPOVint  
#UPOV supports diversity in #PlantBreeding: there are no restrictions under the UPOV system: a breeder might be an individual, a #farmer, a researcher, a public institute, a private company etc. [upov.int/overview/en/up...](http://upov.int/overview/en/up...)



(4)

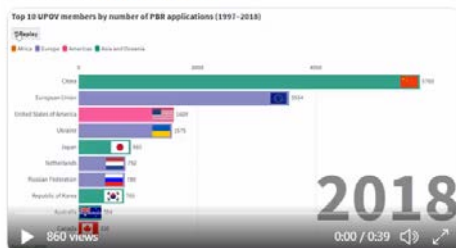
**UPOV** @UPOVint  
How long does #PlantBreeding take? Here's an illustration using Mendel's original #plant 🌱 PEA which only gets to the point of testing the new variety. From thousands of variations, only a handful may be suitable to be developed further [upov.int/overview/en/up...](http://upov.int/overview/en/up...)



(5)

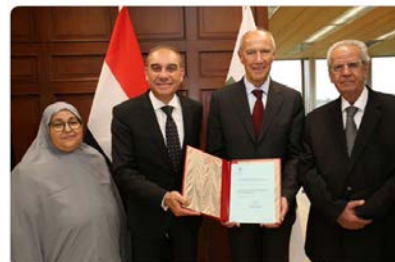
**UPOV** @UPOVint  
Latest UPOV #PlantVarietyProtection Statistics: See the evolution in Top 10 #UPOV members by number of PBR applications (1997–2018). #Euroseeds2019 #PlantBreeding [upov.int](http://upov.int)

Made with flourish.studio



(6)

**UPOV** @UPOVint  
Congratulations to #EGYPT on becoming the 76th member of #UPOV. UPOV membership provides benefits to #Farmers and society by increasing the development of #NewPlantVarieties. Photo: Ambassador H.E. Alaa Youssef and UPOV SG Francis Gurry. #PlantBreeding [upov.int/news/en/pressr...](http://upov.int/news/en/pressr...)



<sup>a</sup> Change proposed by Switzerland in response to UPOV Circular E-20/121: "to replace the term 'climatic stress' by 'climate change'. This language will bring the text in line with the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change".

[End of Appendix and of document]