

Consultative Committee**CC/98/10 Add.****Ninety-Eighth Session
Geneva, October 28, 2021****Original:** English
Date: October 21, 2021**ADDENDUM TO NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN MEMBERS OF THE UNION***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 provide a report on the seminar on strategies that address policies involving plant breeding and plant variety protection (Seminar), held by electronic means on October 20, 2021.
2. The Consultative Committee is invited to:
 - (a) note the report on the seminar;
 - (b) note that the proceedings and video recording of the seminar on strategies that address policies involving plant breeding and plant variety protection will be published on the UPOV website; and
 - (c) consider the proposal of the President of the Council to organize a seminar in 2022 to explore the role of plant breeding and plant variety protection in enabling agriculture to adapt to, and mitigate, climate change.

REPORT ON THE SEMINAR ON STRATEGIES THAT ADDRESS POLICIES INVOLVING PLANT BREEDING AND PLANT VARIETY PROTECTION (SEMINAR)

3. The Seminar was held by electronic means on Wednesday, October 20, 2021, from 12.00 p.m. to 3 p.m. (Geneva time). The Seminar was attended by 132 participants from 99 members of the Union and 13 observers. The revised draft program of the Seminar is reproduced as Annex I of this document and available at https://www.upov.int/meetings/en/details.jsp?meeting_id=64550.
4. The proceedings of the Seminar will be published on the UPOV Website in all UPOV languages, with the aim of publishing the English version by December 2021.
5. As agreed by correspondence (Circular E-21/140, sent on September 24, 2021), a video recording of the Seminar will be made available on the UPOV website, in the 5 languages available during the Seminar: English, French, German, Spanish and Russian.
6. Mr. Daren Tang, Secretary-General, provided the welcome and opening remarks, a copy of which are reproduced in Annex II of this document.
7. Mr. Marien Valstar, President of the Council, provided concluding remarks as reproduced in Annex III of this document. In his concluding remarks, the President observed a need for a further opportunity to explore the role of plant breeding and plant variety protection in relation to the need for agriculture to adapt to, and mitigate, climate change and proposed that consideration be given to organizing a seminar in 2022, dedicated to this theme.

8. *The Consultative Committee is invited to:*

(a) note the report on the seminar;

(b) note that the proceedings and video recording of the seminar on strategies that address policies involving plant breeding and plant variety protection will be published on the UPOV website; and

(c) consider the proposal of the President of the Council to organize a seminar in 2022 to explore the role of plant breeding and plant variety protection in enabling agriculture to adapt to, and mitigate, climate change.

[Annexes follow]

ANNEX I

SEMINAR ON STRATEGIES THAT ADDRESS POLICIES
INVOLVING PLANT BREEDING AND PLANT VARIETY PROTECTION

Geneva, October 20, 2021 (by electronic means)

REVISED DRAFT PROGRAM

prepared by the Office of the Union

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The purpose of the seminar is to exchange information and experiences of members of the Union on strategies involving plant breeding and plant variety protection that address broad policy issues.

- 12.00 **Welcome and opening remarks**
Mr. Daren Tang, Secretary-General, UPOV
- 12.10 **Program and organization of the Seminar**
Moderator of the Seminar: Mr. Peter Button, Vice Secretary-General, UPOV
- 12.15 **CANADA**
The role of plant variety protection in supporting public breeding institutions, and partnerships with producers and industry
Mr. Anthony Parker, Commissioner, Plant Breeders' Rights Office, Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)
- 12.25 **CHINA**
Seed Policies Promoting China's Plant Breeding Innovation
Mr. Yehan Cui, Principal Consultant, Development Center of Science and Technology (DCST), Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MARA)
- 12.35 **EUROPEAN UNION**
EU strategies involving plant breeding and plant variety protection – European Green Deal (Farm to Fork Strategy)
Ms. Päivi Mannerkorpi, Team Leader - Plant Reproductive Material, Unit G1, Plant Health, Directorate General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE), European Commission
- 12.45 **Break**
- 13.00 **JAPAN**
Japan's Intellectual Property Strategy in the field of PVP
Mr. Teruhisa Miyamoto, Deputy Director of Plant Variety Office, Intellectual Property Division, Export and International Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF)
- 13.10 **KENYA**
The role of plant variety protection in promoting food security, employment creation and improving farmers' livelihoods
Mr. Simon Mucheru Maina, Head, Seed Certification and Plant Variety Protection, Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS)

- 13.20 **MEXICO**
Public policies to promote innovations in plant varieties
Mr. Leobigildo Córdova Téllez, Head, National Service for Seed Inspection and Certification (SNICS), Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRICULTURA)
- 13.30 **NORWAY**
The importance of plant breeding for food security. Recent policy development in Norway
Ms. Svanhild-Isabelle Batta Torheim, Senior Advisor, Department of Forest and Natural Resource Policy, Ministry of Agriculture and Food
- 13.40 **Break**
- 14.00 **PERU**
Strategies for promoting Peru’s Plant Breeding Protection
Mr. Manuel Castro Calderón, Director, Directorate of Patents and New Technologies, National Institute for Defense of Competition and Protection of Intellectual Property (INDECOP)
- 14.10 **SWEDEN**
The need to sustain “small” breeders
Mr. Magnus Franzén, Deputy Head, Plant and Control Department, Swedish Board of Agriculture
- 14.20 **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**
Initiatives from the 2018 Farm Bill Supporting Farm Production, Conservation, and Plant Variety Protection in the United States
Mr. Jeffery Haynes, Commissioner, Plant Variety Protection Office, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- 14.30 **Questions**
- 14.50 –15.00 **Concluding remarks and Closing**
Mr. Marien Valstar, President of the Council, UPOV

[Annex II follows]

ANNEX II

SEMINAR ON STRATEGIES THAT ADDRESS POLICIES
INVOLVING PLANT BREEDING AND PLANT VARIETY PROTECTION

Geneva, October 20, 2021 (by electronic means)

Opening Remarks, Mr. Daren Tang, Secretary General, UPOV

Mr. Marien Valstar, President of the UPOV Council,

Dear Participants, Dear Colleagues, Dear Friends,

It is a pleasure to be with you today and to open this seminar.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of UPOV's foundation. Back in 1961, UPOV was created to recognize the importance of the protection of new plant varieties and to uphold the interests of plant breeders around the world.

Six decades on, I would like to highlight three policy pillars which capture the impact of UPOV's work:

- First, transforming food production in a time of climate change.
- Second, spurring economic development through plant breeding and UPOV's system of plant protection.
- And, third, bringing innovation and technology transfer to farmers.

It is important to remember that at the time UPOV was formed the only way to produce more food was to use more land. However, this link has now been superseded thanks to innovation. Since the 1960s, food production has increased nearly four-fold, while land use has expanded by only around 10 percent. This means we can feed more by using less.

It has been estimated that plant breeding and new plant varieties are currently responsible for around 90 per cent of cereal land productivity gains in Europe. And if plant breeding has delivered in the past, then it will be even more important to ensuring food security in the future. This is well understood by the agricultural sector. A recent survey from the World Farmers Organization found that over 70 per cent of farmers are utilizing improved plant varieties. Moreover, eight in ten farmers who use new plant varieties identified them as important factors in ensuring the sustainability of food systems and in combatting climate change.

This aligns with UPOV's broader desire to accelerate progress towards the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. UPOV has identified six SDGs to which plant breeding and the UPOV system directly contributes towards. From ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition, to protecting terrestrial ecosystems and halting biodiversity loss – transforming food production is helping to deliver a fairer, greener and more sustainable world.

This brings me to the second pillar: economic development.

In my address to the UPOV Council following my appointment as Secretary-General last year, I referenced the impressive economic benefits of plant breeding and UPOV's system of plant variety protection. Today, I want to discuss another important aspect of UPOV's work – the support we provide to people and communities around the world.

I have three examples that I would like to share.

First, in Kenya, UPOV membership has ensured access to much sought after varieties of cut flower roses. Thanks to their growing popularity, Kenya has developed a \$500 million cut-flower industry which, in turn, brings secure employment to around half a million Kenyans.

Second, in Viet Nam, thanks to plant breeding activities, the annual income of farmers has increased by over 24% since it joined UPOV in 2006. It is estimated that plant breeding has resulted in significant annual productivity increases for Viet Nam's main staple crops such as rice and maize, with the increased productivity associated with plant breeding being equivalent to more than 2.5 per cent of Viet Nam's GDP.

And finally, this year marks the tenth anniversary of Peru's membership of UPOV. In that time, more than eighty new varieties of grapes and more than sixty new varieties of blueberries have been protected.

This has helped to turbo-charge Peru's exports. For example, trade in fresh grapes is up almost ten-fold over the last decade, with blueberry exports up by a multiple of thirteen in the last five years alone.

This is how UPOV's helps to lift up people and communities around the world – supporting job creation, business investment and economic growth. And in the context of a pandemic that continues to take a terrible toll – including on many livelihoods around the world – this work is as important today as ever.

The third pillar concerns innovation and technology transfer to farmers.

Through an effective Plant Variety Protection (PVP) system, UPOV stimulates the development of new plant varieties. And these new varieties represent one of the most effective ways of delivering new technology to farmers. It is a symbiotic relationship: UPOV enables plant breeders to protect their varieties and to obtain a return on their investment; with this income predicated on farmers choosing to grow more suitable varieties that match local and export needs.

Equally, the UPOV system continues to support the delivery of public goods. Take the UC Davis Public Strawberry Breeding Program. Over six decades, the program has developed more than 30 protected varieties, made strawberries a year-round crop in California, and boosted strawberry yield from just 6 tons per acre in the 1950s to 30 tons per acre today.

Thanks to the UC Davis program, Californian growers pay lower rates than others for their strawberries and get access to new varieties before growers elsewhere.

Not only do UC Davis varieties benefit domestic growers but they have been instrumental in the development of the strawberry industry in several UPOV members– for instance 70-90% of strawberries in Spain have been bred by UC Davis, which transferred the varieties and knowledge as a part of the PBR license process.

Dear Participants, Dear Colleagues, Dear Friends,

As you can see, the legal framework of protection offered by the UPOV system is as important today as it was 60 years ago. But while protection remains the cornerstone of UPOV's work, its broader impact continues to be felt around the world.

From progressing sustainable solutions at a time when humanity faces a code red from climate change.

- To providing jobs and economic growth in developing and the least developed countries.
- To supporting agricultural innovation and technology transfer.
- Plant breeding and plant variety protection is making a real difference to people and communities on the ground.

Today, you will hear from speakers representing countries right around the world. While their experiences differ, in all cases UPOV's work has an important role to play in realizing their future ambitions. On behalf of UPOV, I would like to thank all our speakers for their time today and I would like to thank everyone in the audience for your participation.

Please accept my best wishes for a lively, engaging and thought provoking seminar.

Thank you.

[Annex III follows]

ANNEX III

SEMINAR ON STRATEGIES THAT ADDRESS POLICIES
INVOLVING PLANT BREEDING AND PLANT VARIETY PROTECTION

Geneva, October 20, 2021 (by electronic means)

Concluding Remarks, Mr. Marien Valstar, President of the UPOV Council

Dear Participants,

We have heard today the following key messages:

Canada: PBR creates level playing field where private, public and or Public Private Partnerships (PPS) can operate in the marketplace.

China: showed the successful development of PVP in China, including a roadmap to implement UPOV91.

The EU: showed the many challenges we face globally (SDG's) and the strategies that are being implemented to face these challenges, showing that plant breeding is a key element in reaching the goals.

Japan: highlighted improvements in its PVP and Seed Act and showed the initiative to establish e-PVP Asia, leading to more collaboration in the region.

Kenya: gave an overview of PVP in Kenya and showed the positive impact on food security, employment and farmers livelihood.

Mexico: gave insight into their plans to enhance agricultural productivity by promoting plant breeding and quality seeds, thereby including subsistence farmers in the process.

Norway: highlighted the importance of plant breeding for sustainable food systems, indicating that we need to consider farmers rights and plant breeders rights.

Peru: gave an overview of its national system, showing the result of a study that PVP contributed 6% to its Gross Domestic Product, and showed a program to encourage more development and research in Peru through PVP.

Sweden: indicated that plant breeding is a part of the solution to the global challenges we face, and asked how the UPOV community could assist in making plant breeding more accessible for 'small breeders'.

The USA: gave an overview of recent improvements in the Farm Bill, initiatives that foster urban agriculture and an initiative to invest more in agricultural research and development.

All contributors highlighted that plant breeding and improved varieties are an important part of the solution to key policy challenges. A solution that can help us to achieve important goals in food security, sustainable agriculture, economic development and improving livelihood of farmers, including smallholder farmers.

All contributors also gave insight in developments and initiatives in their countries or regions, indicating that a lot of work is done at national and regional levels to improve their systems and to promote plant breeding.

However, that does not mean that we now can rest. The speakers also indicated that there are improvements needed at the international level, including the need to ensure that improved varieties are reaching those farmers that have the most to gain from improved varieties.

Like all farmers, smallholder farmers worldwide need access to better varieties. There are different strategies to work towards that goal. I sincerely hope that our efforts to develop guidance concerning smallholder farmers in relation to private and non-commercial use will be helpful in clarifying that the UPOV system can bring benefits to smallholder farmers. Next week during we will discuss the way forward.

Another topic, that was mentioned frequently, was the impact of climate change and the need for agriculture to adapt and to mitigate climate change. It is clear that plant breeding and, therefore, UPOV has an important role to play here. We have had many presentations today that referred to this theme but there has been very limited time to learn about this in any depth. It seems to me that we need a further opportunity to explore this crucial topic and I would like to propose that consideration be given by UPOV to organizing a seminar next year, dedicated to this theme.

[End of Annex III and of document]