

Consultative Committee

CC/98/6

**Ninety-Eighth Session
Geneva, October 28, 2021**

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TRAINING AND ASSISTANCE STRATEGY

Document prepared by the Office of the Union

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this document is to report on activities and present proposals for consideration by the Consultative Committee concerning the implementation of the UPOV training and assistance strategy.
2. The Consultative Committee will be invited to:
 - (a) note the developments reported in paragraphs 8 to 11 of this document;
 - (b) note that the Addendum to this document will provide information on the training and assistance activities held by virtual means from October 2020 to August 2021, as set out in paragraph 12 of this document;
 - (c) agree that the updating of distance learning materials to include information on the benefits of UPOV membership be done together with recent developments in PLUTO; and
 - (d) consider the proposals for the development of an international program on plant variety protection with the aim to obtain an International Certificate on Plant Variety Protection recognized by UPOV, as set out in paragraph 13 of this document.

3. The structure of this document is as follows:

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BACKGROUND

4. The Consultative Committee, at its eighty-ninth session, held in Geneva on March 27, 2015, approved the “UPOV training and assistance strategy” (see document [CC/89/12](#) “Report”, paragraph 44). The “UPOV training and assistance strategy”, approved by the Consultative Committee is reproduced in the Annex to document [CC/90/7](#) “UPOV training and Assistance Strategy” and in the Annex to this document.

5. The Consultative Committee, at its ninety-sixth session, held in Geneva on October 31, 2019, “agreed that the UPOV Communication Strategy, UPOV Training and Assistance Strategy, UPOV policy for financing speakers and participants and the Strategic Business Plan, be made available under a standing section for ‘Reference documents’ of the annual sessions for the Consultative Committee and via a new section ‘Reference documents’ on the UPOV website for matters concerning the Consultative Committee, as set out in paragraph 26 of document CC/96/9” (see document CC/96/14 “Report”, paragraph 86). The document UPOV Training and Assistance Strategy is available on the CC/98 webpage under the section reference documents: https://www.upov.int/restrict/meetings/en/details.jsp?meeting_id=60599.

6. The Consultative Committee, at its ninety-seventh session held via electronic means on October 29, 2020, agreed to modify decision paragraph 19(b) of document CC/97/14, as follows:

“19. The Consultative Committee is invited to:

“(b) endorse the updating of training materials, to reflect recent developments (e.g. UPOV PRISMA and latest information on benefits of UPOV membership) and, in relation to the UPOV distance learning courses, the updating to be implemented for the 2021 sessions, reflecting both the 1978 Act and 1991 Act of the UPOV Convention,”

7. The Consultative Committee also “recalled the importance of making UPOV session documents available according to the agreed timetable and agreed that document CC/97/14 with the revised decision paragraph be circulated to the Consultative Committee for approval by correspondence within 30 days” (see document CC/97/17 “Report”, paragraphs 46 and 47).

DEVELOPMENTS

8. On January 11, 2021, the Office of the Union circulated document CC/97/14 Rev. “Training and assistance strategy” to the Consultative Committee for approval by correspondence (Circular E-21/006). No objections were received and the following decisions, presented in document CC/97/14 Rev., are considered to have been taken by correspondence:

- (a) The Consultative Committee endorsed the updating of training materials, to reflect recent developments (e.g. UPOV PRISMA and latest information on benefits of UPOV membership) and, in relation to the UPOV distance learning courses, the updating to be implemented for the 2021 sessions reflecting both the 1978 Act and 1991 Act of the UPOV Convention.
- (b) The Consultative Committee agreed that a report be made at the ninety-eighth session of the Consultative Committee in 2021 on developments concerning:
 - (i) progress on a distance learning course on licensing varieties, as set out in paragraph 12 of document CC/97/14 Rev.; and
 - (ii) advances in machine translation technology relevant for training purposes;
- (c) The Consultative Committee invited the Office of the Union to present a proposal for a training program for the examination of applications, explaining the justification, the proposed solution, methodology, content outline based on the DL 305 distance learning course, and the resourcing, as set out in paragraph 14 of document CC/97/14 Rev..
- (d) The Consultative Committee invited the Office of the Union to increase the use of virtual means for training activities and to explore synergies with members of the Union and other partners, as set out in paragraphs 15 to 18 of document CC/97/14 Rev..

Updating of training materials

9. In relation to the endorsement by the Consultative Committee for the updating of training materials, to reflect recent developments (e.g. UPOV PRISMA and latest information on benefits of UPOV membership) (see paragraph 8(a) above), the Office of the Union has updated the UPOV Distance Learning (DL) materials to reflect developments concerning UPOV PRISMA for the second sessions of the 2021 courses. It is proposed that the updating of distance learning materials to include information on the benefits of UPOV membership be done together with developments in PLUTO.

Distance learning course on licensing varieties

10. In relation to progress on a distance learning course on licensing varieties developed in the framework of the IP Key Latin America (IP Key LA) program, in cooperation with the Community Plant Variety Office of the European Union (CPVO), the European Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) and UPOV (see paragraph 8(b)(i) above), the contents of the course has been completed. The contents of the course in Spanish are available at https://ipkey.eu/sites/default/files/ipkey-docs/2021/IP%20Key%20LA-PVP_DLC_modulos%20consolidados_clean_ES_2020_V5.pdf. The exploration of synergies with the above partners for the inclusion of the resulting distance-learning course on licensing varieties in the UPOV platform of distance learning courses will take place in 2022. Any developments will be reported to the Consultative Committee in 2022.

Machine translation

11. Developments on machine translation that might be relevant for training purposes (see paragraph 8(b)(ii) above) are reported in document CC/98/9 "Policy on Translation".

Use of virtual means for training activities

12. In relation to the invitation of the Consultative Committee to increase the use of virtual means for training activities and to explore synergies with members of the Union and other partners (see paragraph 8(d) above), the Addendum to this document will provide information on the training and assistance activities held by virtual means from October 2020 to August 2021 in the following categories:

Activities organized by UPOV:

- UPOV distance learning courses
- TWP Preparatory Workshops
- EDV information session
- PLUTO Webinars
- UPOV Workshop on drafting legislation in accordance with the UPOV Convention (Workshop for Laws)
- UPOV Seminar on Harvested Material
- Consultation meetings with States and organizations
- Videos and presentations made available on the UPOV website

Activities organized with members of the Union and other partners to which UPOV substantially contributed:

- Provision of UPOV distance learning courses as pre-training or post-training support for relevant virtual activities
- Academic institutions that include in their virtual programs information on the UPOV system and which invite UPOV to contribute
- UPOV material made available virtually.

PROPOSAL FOR A TRAINING PROGRAM FOR THE EXAMINATION OF APPLICATIONS

13. The following is a proposal for a training program for the examination of applications, explaining the justification, the proposed solution, methodology, content outline based on the DL 305 distance learning course, and the resourcing, as set out in paragraph 14 of document CC/97/14 Rev. (see paragraph 8(c) above).

Title

It is proposed the following title for the program "International certificate on plant variety protection" (the program).

As the program develops and more training courses become available, it would be possible to indicate in the certificate "Specialization in PVP Office administration" and/or "Specialization in DUS examination".

Justification

Training in the operation of a PVP Office and the examination of applications, including DUS examination, has been identified as a priority by existing and potential future members of the Union.

Proposed solution

It is proposed to develop an international program on plant variety protection, provided by UPOV and members of the Union "Learning Partners" with the aim to obtain an International Certificate on Plant Variety Protection recognized by UPOV.

The International Certificate would be awarded for learners that acquired the necessary number of credits from studying UPOV-endorsed courses. The number of credits awarded for a course would be linked to the number of hours of study involved and would be agreed with the Learning Partners involved.

Resourcing

It is envisaged that the program would not require significant new resources from members of the Union because it would recognize existing initiatives endorsed by the Office of the Union.

A modest level of resourcing from the Office of the Union would be needed for overseeing the program, coordination with members of the Union and administering the award of certificates.

Methodology and specific requirements

As the program would be based on existing initiatives, the role of the Office of the Union would be to coordinate with each Learning Partner on the learning methodology and specific requirements, including dates, languages, eligibility, how to apply, assessment for the satisfactory completion of the specific training, and financial aspects, if applicable.

There would be a fee for the enrollment of private sector learners in the program.

Target audience

The main target audience would be PVP officials, DUS examiners and breeding enterprise employees responsible for submitting PBR applications, providing DUS data or organizing DUS trials.

Content outline

The Office of the Union would engage with those members of the Union which already provide for national, regional, or international PVP training courses or activities in order to identify suitable programs.

The International Certificate would be issued once the learner has successfully completed training courses or activities part of the program equivalent to 50 credits.

It is proposed that credits would be based on the contents and learning hours typically with 1 credit corresponding to 10 hours of learning time.

It is proposed that the specific credits for the training courses or activities be allocated once potential Learning Partners have confirmed their wish to contribute to the program.

The following list provides an illustration of current courses or activities that could be part of the program:

- UPOV DL-205 Course "Introduction to the UPOV System of Plant Variety Protection Under the UPOV Convention";
- UPOV DL-305 Course "Examination of applications for plant breeders' rights";
- UPOV Workshop on drafting legislation in accordance with the UPOV Convention (Workshop for Laws) in cooperation with the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO);
- UPOV Technical Working Party Preparatory Workshops;
- UPOV Webinars on UPOV PRISMA, PLUTO database, GENIE database and TG Template;
- International PVP Training Courses, e.g.
 - o Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) "Training Course on the Protection of Plant Breeders' Rights";
 - o Korean Seed & Variety Service (KSVS) / Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) "Training Course on Plant Variety Protection";
 - o Naktuinbouw (Netherlands) "Course on Plant breeders' rights for food security and economic development";
- National and regional training courses provided by members of the Union;
- Study visits to PVP Offices of members of the Union.

14. The Consultative Committee is invited to:

(a) note the developments reported in paragraphs 8 to 11 of this document;

(b) note that the Addendum to this document will provide information on the training and assistance activities held by virtual means from October 2020 to August 2021, as set out in paragraph 12 of this document;

(c) agree that the updating of distance learning materials to include information on the benefits of UPOV membership be done together with recent developments in PLUTO; and

(d) consider the proposals for the development of an international program on plant variety protection with the aim to obtain an International Certificate on Plant Variety Protection recognized by UPOV, as set out in paragraph 13 of this document.

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