

Position

Brussels, June 2025

On the necessity to expand the scope of Annex I of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in the work to Enhance the Functioning of the MLS (EFMLS)

Since the beginning, Euroseeds has been involved in the works that led to the adoption of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) as the specialized instrument to address the needs of the seed sector for accessing Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA) and to share the benefits obtained from their use. Speaking on behalf of the European seed companies, including major seed companies using non-Annex 1 PGRFA, Euroseeds emphasizes the importance of expanding the scope of Annex I to encompass all PGRFA. This extension would enhance the added value of the Multilateral System (MLS) and has the potential to increase funding obtained in exchange for the use of these PGRFA.

The aim is to facilitate access to all PGRFA so that breeders from both private and public sectors can develop a variety of seeds that fulfil farmers' needs and expectations worldwide. There should also be consideration of the diversity of food cultures and therefore access for all to sufficient, high-quality food that aligns with their preferences should be promoted. We also take into account the need to respect the sovereignty of the Parties and their communities over their PGRFA. In the light of this, we consider that the current proposal to extend the scope of Annex I to all PGRFA, with the possibility for Parties to define a list of crops to exempt from the MLS (negative list) would best meet expectations from all parties and stakeholders. However, we call on the parties to exercise restraint in employing this negative list. At stake is global food security, as well as the full effectiveness of the Treaty.

We also call on the Parties to avoid making hasty conclusions if there is an insufficient number of ratifications at the end of the transition phase. The Governing Body should inform its decisions by undertaking a comprehensive survey of the reasons for the lack of ratifications by a majority of Parties.



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