PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

TWO UPCOMING EVENTS

GOVERNING BODY OF THE INTERNATIONAL TREATY ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES MEETS IN MUSCAT OMAN

THE ISSUE: A growing world population, progressively scarce natural resources and changing environmental conditions, such as drought, water scarcity, climate change, and outbreaks of pests and diseases are calling today for new and better adapted crop varieties. Plant genetic resources are the raw material used by plant breeders to create new crop varieties needed to respond to the challenges the global food system is facing. Ensuring that every country can access plant genetic resources to develop crops to feed their people is, thus, crucial for food security. It is essential for farmers to be able to access the plant genetic material in order to grow the right food crops in their fields.

The FAO International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture has established a global system to provide farmers, plant breeders and scientists with access to plant genetic materials, and to ensure the fair sharing of benefits deriving from their use.

WHAT: A one-day Regional Ministerial Conference will take place in Muscat, Oman (21 September), organized by the Omani Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, with the support of FAO. Agriculture Ministers from at least 12 countries of the Near East and North Africa Region (NENA) are expected to attend the Conference.


The Governing Body of the Treaty will meet from 24 to 28 September 2013 in Muscat, Oman to discuss the importance of plant genetic resources in light of climate change and the progressively shrinking land and water resources.

The meeting will also review the breadth of the global genepool of plant genetic resources most important for food security.

Fuad Bin Jaafar Al-Sajwani, Omani Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries will address the meeting and José Graziano da Silva, FAO Director-General, will deliver a statement via video link, in addition to Governing Body Chair, Professor Javad Mozafari, and Treaty Secretary, Dr Shakeel Bhatti, who will be personally present with Minister Al-Sajwani.

Ministers, delegates and global experts from some 160 countries are expected to attend the meeting.
NOTE TO EDITORS AND CORRESPONDENTS: A news briefing will take place on the 24th of September at the Al Bustan Palace hotel in Muscat at 13.00 hrs local time. A valid press card will be required for attendance. An official letter of designation on the letter-head of a recognized media organization signed by an editor will also be accepted.

**WHAT** Regional Ministerial Conference on “Water and Drought as Agricultural Challenges in the NENA Region and Beyond: The Contribution of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture”

**WHERE** Al-Bustan Palace Hotel - Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

**WHEN** 09.00 hrs local time, Saturday, 21 September 2013

**WHAT** Fifth Session of Governing Body of International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food & Agriculture

**WHERE** Al-Bustan Palace Hotel - Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

**WHEN** 10.00 hrs local time, Tuesday, 24-28 September 2013

More information:

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Daily Reports from the [Earth Negotiations Bulletin](http://www.earthnegotiations.org) will also be available on-line.