



## Concept Note for Programme of Trainings and Conference on the “Acquisition, Conservation, Exchange and Safety Duplication of Plant Genetic Resources in OIC Member Countries

To be jointly organized by COMSTECH, IOFS and BCI-PARC

### ❖ *Introduction*

Considering the importance of biodiversity of genetic resources and the possible loss of genetic materials from gene banks due to environmental changes or political conflicts, it is crucial to build the capacity of OIC Member countries in conserving and sustainable use of genetic resources in their respective countries.

It is worth mentioning that developing strong human resources in this field in OIC Member Countries has become an urgent demand. While a few of our Member States do possess advanced know how and well developed Genebank facilities many of our Member States do not possess sufficient human and technical resources in this vital domain. To address this issue, IOFS and COMSTECH have agreed to conduct a series of related trainings for OIC Member countries. These trainings may be considered as a follow up to the online Workshop on National Gene banks organized by IOFS and COMSTECH, July 5-6, 2020.

Due to the constraints on travel and gatherings imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic the trainings will be held online. Bio-resources Conservation Institute (BCI) of Pakistan Agricultural Research Centre (PARC) have kindly agreed to provide technical support to the training programme in a series of regional training workshops. Experts from other countries and regions will be included as per the demands of the technical program.

### ❖ *Objectives*

- To raise awareness of OIC Member countries in establishing gene bank requirements;
- To build the capacity of OIC Member countries in maintenance and operations of gene banks (collection of genetic materials, conservation, germplasm exchange policies);
- To familiarize with international and national laws and policies;
- To discuss and exchange the international practices in the conservation of genetic resources and effective collaboration in this field of various stakeholders on the national and international level.

### ❖ *Implementation of activities*

In order to achieve the above-mentioned objectives, the organizing parties aim to implement activities during the period of June-November 2021 in the areas of common interests that would include:

1. **Online training on PGR (Region-I) Asia group**
2. **Online training on PGR (Region-II) Africa group**
3. **Online training on PGR (Region-III) Arab group**

Events will be conducted online. Training will include video demonstrations and other interactive features to involve active participation.

Sub-activities of the training will include:

- *identifying and evaluating the common grounds, priority issues, lack of experiences and requirements of the key stakeholders in the specific region;*
- *to identify experts as trainers/lecturers/speakers; and*
- *to involve OIC MC experts and international organizations (FAO, ICBA, ICARDA, etc.) as resource persons/speakers and participants to share the best international practices.*

#### ❖ **International conference**

These series of Workshops would be followed at a suitable time (November 2021) by an International Conference dedicated to reviewing the lessons learned and results of three training, the discussion of the creation of Conservation/Safety duplication center(s) of genetic resources in the OIC region (such as Svalbard Global Seed Vault in Norway). Establishment of regional training centers in OIC MC for HRD.

Participation of international experts and research organizations from OIC Member countries is expected at the event, plus the participants of previous 3 events. The Conference is proposed to be of one day and of 3-hours duration. Details of the Conference will be filled in on the basis of the input received from the three regional Workshops and the identified needs of the participants.

#### ❖ **Outline of online Training Workshops:**

- a. Three such webinars will be conducted, one in each time zones. However, in the final One-day session, all the stakeholders and participants of 3 webinars will meet online for the way forward and recommendations.
- b. There should be more involvement of OIC MS local national resource persons and international organizations are to be involved where local OIC MS professional are not available. The aim is to develop HR and capacity of OIC, independent of International Organizations to take charge of Member States' affairs.
- c. A questionnaire will be developed to address the sub-activities of the trainings. The replies will broadly outline the foundation matrix.

- d. Based on our experience of participant interest in video conferencing, it is planned that each Workshop of 2-days duration, with 5 & 4 working hours, respectively, would be more realistic, practical, and appealing for the participants.

❖ **Suggested Topics for the Training Workshops**

- Importance of conserving plant genetic resources for efficient utilization;
- Plant Introduction and Quarantine;
- Intellectual property rights and PGR;
- ITPGRFA, MLS & ABS\* and Nagoya Protocol;
- Discussion and exploring collaboration opportunities among OIC member countries for conservation and use of PGR;
- Establishment of a new Genebank;
- Challenges in Gene bank and Plant Genetic Resources Management;
- Germplasm Exploration and Collection;
- Conservation of Recalcitrant PGR & In vitro techniques for conservation of plant genetic resources;
- Germplasm characterization and evaluation to address stressed environments;
- Molecular techniques for study of Genetic Diversity in PGR;
- Pre-breeding for utilization of Plant Genetic Resources in Crop Improvement;
- Information Management in Genebanks;
- Funding opportunities for establishment of national and regional Genebanks;
- Questionnaire\* to participant via link share;
- Overview of Questionnaire & Discussion.