

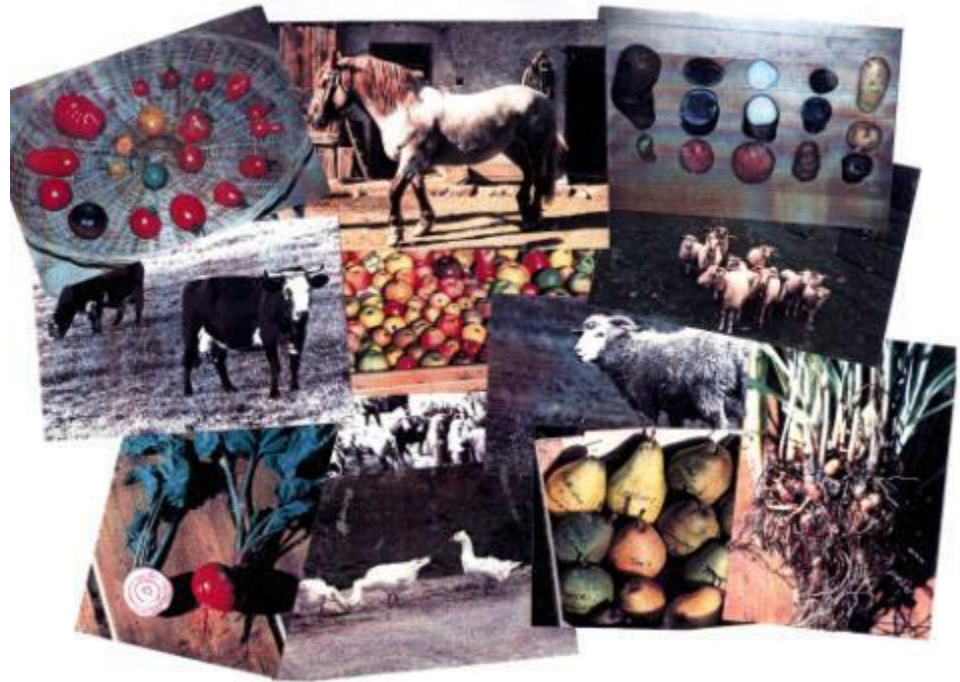


SAVE foundation

Safeguard for Agricultural Varieties in Europe
Sicherung der landwirtschaftlichen ArtenVielfalt in Europa
Sauvegarde pour l'Agriculture des Variétés d'Europe

2016

SAVE Foundation Activity Report



Activity Report for the period September 2015 – September 2016

Foreword

The conservation of biodiversity is a highly important issue of our time. Due to several international obligations, binding rules and regulations are necessary. The Nagoya Protocol, ratified by EU in 2011 and set into force in 2014, is a basis for such rules which are important for national laws especially in context with access and benefit sharing (ABS) of genetic resources for food and agriculture.

Furthermore EU launched a consultation process on genetic resources in agriculture. SAVE Foundation could participate in this process as an International NGO. After several workshops, case studies and a final conference the draft final report is ready. Especially four points of importance have been worked out:

- *The importance of genetic resources has increased and will continue to increase even more.*
- *There is much opportunity for improved conservation methods and access to genetic resources both on the technical and organisational level.*
- *Other areas of research relevant to genetic resources like conservation biology and socioeconomics are clearly in the shadow of genomics and should be supported more.*
- *For small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) and non governmental organisations (NGOs) it will be increasingly difficult to continue to play a role in the genetic resources arena as it becomes more and more dominated by molecular approaches. These companies and associations need to be supported in terms of capacity building and technology application.*

Additionally, SAVE Foundaton was invited to participate to develop a guidance for ABS in

animal genetic resources. The main point in this context is a better definition and understanding of “research & development”, which underlies the Nagoya ABS rules also in the relevant EU regulation in this context. For conservation breeding it is important that the exchange of genetic material does not fall under the ABS regulation, because it is not research and development and – therefore – no special agreements or additional costs within Europe will be generated for the small farmers who work for the conservation of rare breeds.

There is a general trend towards a high-tech approach to genetic resources and thus to the exclusion of NGOs and smaller companies which carry out conservation breeding. SAVE will keep its members informed about the developments.

Besides these more political actions, SAVE Foundation went on to collect the traditional knowledge in the Alps within the project “Fundus Agri-Cultura Alpina”, could become a partner within the Horizon 2020 scientific project IMAGE for a better management of animal genetic resources in genebanks and continued working on the rules and possibilities of the European Heritaste® label that shall make products from rare breeds and plants more visible to the public and consumers everywhere in Europe. Besides this, both the SAVE Project office and the SAVE Network office are looking forward to strengthening the SAVE Network as a whole.

Martin Arnold, SAVE Project office

Network Office 2015 - 2016

As a result of the SAVE annual meeting September 2015 in Kerkini Greece the SAVE Network team main objective is to draft a management plan for the Network Office based on the advisory report 'Towards a stronger and broader SAVE network', an inventory that has been carried out by a group of students of

Network Office team prefers this strategy over trying to find resources to activate the network in its present status. There are chances for the execution of the management plan, may be in a somewhat smaller steps than intended. This will be a subject for the annual meeting in Slovenia. For the reactivation of the Network active



Wageningen University, the ACT (Academic Consultancy Training) group under supervision of the SAVE network team in March 2015 and has been discussed in the annual meeting in Greece.

The members of the Network office team are Albert Meijering member of the SZH board (animals), Obe Bootsma chair of De Oerakker` (plants and seeds), Nonja Remijn manager of the SZH project office and Geert Boink chair of SZH and SAVE foundation. Albert in particular has put a lot of effort in composing a good management plan. The results of the workshop in Kerkini about the important key issues of the SAVE network were used as input for the management plan. In the beginning of February the draft has been send to all members of the Board of Directors. It contains both actions to clarify and "repair" the SAVE organisation as it is, and proposals to involve partners and candidate-partners in reactivation and customization of the Network, building e.g. on the ELBARN experience. The

members are needed in the first place. By the setup of 'regional network groups' we will try to share knowledge, experiences and problems in a more approachable way.

Two new potential partners have shown interest in a SAVE Network partnership, from Austria and from Malta. We hope that they can present themselves on the meeting in Slovenia.

In Europe there are several groups with almost the same content 'maintenance of old breeds and crops'. We are looking for more collaboration with these networks.

In good co-operation with Drago Kompan, University of Ljubljana, and with the Project Office, the Network Office team made the preparations of the Annual Meeting 2016 in Metlika Sovenia.

Geert Boink, Chairman SAVE Foundation

Pan-European Actions

Preparatory Action on EU plant and animal genetic resources



The evaluation of the second Community programme on genetic resources in agriculture underlined the need for further action to enhance conservation of genetic diversity within agriculture and to promote the sustainable use of traditional varieties and breeds so as to make conservation economically viable.

Under the title “**Better integration of ex situ and in situ approaches towards conservation and sustainable use of Genetic Resources at national and EU level: from complementarity to synergy**” the EU Commission, Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development, launched a preparatory action in July 2014 for a period of 2 years. The action covered plant, animal, forest genetic resources as well as microbial and invertebrate genetic resources.

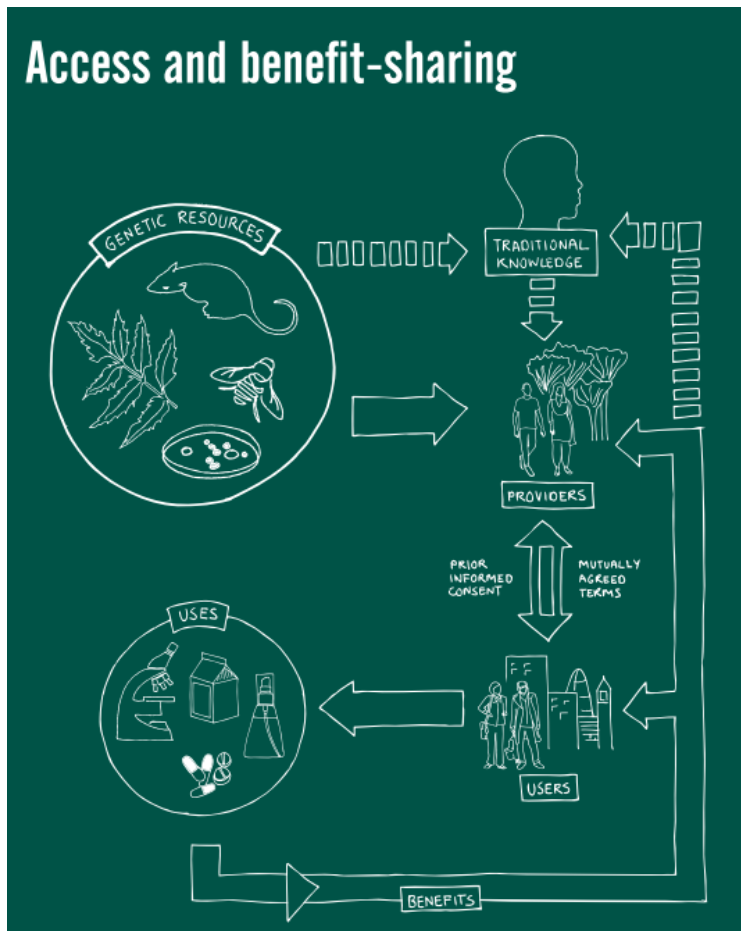
The aim of this preparatory action was to deliver inputs on how to improve communication, knowledge exchange and networking among all the actors potentially interested in activities related to the conservation of genetic resources in agriculture. Finally, the preparatory action aimed to find ways towards a sustainable and economically viable use of these resources. The preparatory action should support the EU in recognizing the potentials for added value in the field of the conservation and sustainable use of agricultural genetic resources. The website with details on project developments and results can be accessed at: www.geneticresources.eu.

SAVE Foundation – as a European I-NGO – has been involved in that action through the participation in several workshops, the final conference and a case study, which is published in the final report of the project.

The draft version of the final report works out four implications for the conservation and use of genetic resources in the EU and globally:

- The importance of genetic resources has increased and will continue to increase even more.
- There is much opportunity for improved conservation methods and access to genetic resources, both on the technical and organisational level.
- Other areas of research relevant to genetic resources like conservation biology and socioeconomics are clearly in the shadow of genomics and should be supported more.
- For small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) and non governmental organisations (NGOs) it will be increasingly difficult to continue to play a role in the genetic resources arena as it becomes more and more dominated by molecular approaches. These companies and associations need to be supported in terms of capacity building and technology application.

Preparation of guidance documents on the implementation of the EU ABS Regulation (Regulation (EU) No 511/2014)



Source: <https://www.cbd.int/abs/information-kit-en>

511/2014 implements the international rules of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to genetic Resources and Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization in the European Union. The guidance document will explain what users of genetic resources have to do in order to comply with the domestic/national rules on access and benefit-sharing (ABS) and how this will be overseen by the competent national authorities.

For plant genetic resources the guidance document was published beginning of September in the Official Journal of the European Union. (C313): <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:C:2016:313:TOC>. For example out of scope of the ABS regulation are plant genetic resources which are covered by a specialized international ABS instrument, as commodities, and/or not subject to “research & development”. For the conservation of livestock it is important, that conservation breeding does not belong to the ABS relevant “research & development” activities. The exchange of material for conservation breeding does not run under a special contract or additional costs for the international ABS fund.

The process of development includes several consultations, meetings and workshops and is still not at the final end. SAVE Foundation will inform their audience about the results of that action and possible implications to the in-situ / on-farm conservation of animal genetic resources.

SAVE Foundation was invited to collaborate within the preparation of a guidance document for the animal breeding sector, under the EU Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) Regulation implementing the Nagoya Protocol as a part of the project *Preparation of guidance documents on the implementation of the EU ABS Regulation (Regulation (EU) No 511/2014)*. This project assists the commission in developing a common understanding among stakeholders of the term “utilisation” under the EU ABS Regulation, with a view to ensuring harmonized application of the Regulation across the EU. To achieve this objective, the project prepared guidance documents for seven sectors, including animal breeding. It is of practical importance to divide and understand the terms “utilisation” and “research

& development” in relation to animal breeding. The EU ABS Regulation

Pre-consultation on Farmers' Rights at the Quaker United Nations Office Geneva



Article 9 of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) recognizes the enormous contribution of local farmers and communities for conservation and development of plant genetic resources. The “Farmers Rights” include the saving, using, exchanging and selling of farm-saved seed/propagating material and also the protection of traditional knowledge and the sharing of benefits. The International Treaty is the only operational international agreement, multi-lateral binding instrument recognizing Farmers’ Rights. But legally it is difficult to determine the term “Farmers Rights” and there is still an open question how this rights can be converted into national laws. Therefore a global consultation takes place from End of September 2016 on.

Several pre-consultations already took place in 2016. SAVE Foundation was invited to a discussion on article 9 of the ITPGRFA at the Quaker United Nations Office in Geneva, Switzerland to an international exchange of knowledge, views and experiences to promote the realization of Farmers’ Rights. On the first view one can ask what it has to do with the European situation, where good rules are in place. But - as a lot of plant conservation experts know, there are still a lot of questions open within Europe about the “Farmers’ Rights”, the right on their own seeds, the breeding, cultivation and the protection of traditional knowledge, which should emphasize the dynamic concept of conservation. Current knowledge of landrace diversity and on-farm management in Europe is limited: Knowledge is missing about diversity within and between landraces and of successful on-farm management within environmentally and economically sustainable farming and seed production systems including the traditional knowledge in Europe.

Open questions were discussed like:

- Since the implementation of the International Treaty in 2001, to what extent Article 9 has been implemented?
- What are the current views, perceptions and understanding about “Farmers’ Rights”?
- What are the measures and means to realize “Farmers’ Rights”? How is this concept implemented into practice?

The outcome of the Stakeholders’ Consultation has been consolidated as a report to be presented to the Global Consultation on Farmers’ Rights in September 2016, in Bali, Indonesia. More information about this issue can be found on: <http://www.planttreaty.org/>.

Basic Action: Heritaste®



Enjoy Diversity
www.heritaste.com

During the last year many activities took place to bring the Heritaste Label into force. An intensive phase of search, discussions and the development of a convenient self-declaration for the certification to use the Heritaste® label, including general principles, took place. Heritaste is more than just a new label. Behind Heritaste stands a comprehensive concept of marketing with strategies, actions, evaluation and discussions. Depending on the participating party, the country and the up to date sales channels, different strategies for the promotion of the label shall take place. All SAVE partners, the Arca-Net community and the Variety Savers network could make their comments on the self declaration sheet, the product sheet and the process of certification as a whole.

After this preparation phase, the SAVE project office looked for partners who would be ready to run as pilot producers in a certain region. Within the Ark Region "Flusslandschaft Elbe" (riverside Elbe river), a winner of the Arca-Deli Award 2012, the SAVE project office could find a group of ark farmers and keepers of single breeds who are ready to participate in a first pilot phase of the Heritaste® initiative. In parallel a website (www.heritaste.com) has been prepared and awaits its content. An entry in the Heritaste website will be an integrated part of the certification.

The already agreed conditions are now an integrated part of the self declaration process:

- The breeds and varieties must be documented as endangered (herd book/ approved / recognized lists). The authorized organizations perform and update the lists for Heritaste®.
- Conservation / cultivation is local, extensive and not industrial.
- Animal breeding complies in accordance with documented traditional methods as long as they meet the modern animal welfare legislation.
- Products are made in a handicraft manner. The quality is guaranteed (Seasonal fluctuations are accepted for natural products).
- Ecosystem services (for example, grazing) provide a proven benefit for the local ecosystem.
- Other services have a proven benefit for the living conservation (in situ / on-farm).
- Production and distribution respect the rules of fair trade and support local economic structures.
- No use of GMO (Genetically Modified Organisms).
- Products and services using the Heritaste® label can only be sold using the label as long as the contract is in place. Sale of the same product without the Heritaste® label whilst under contract is not allowed.

For the products it is binding that:

- Additionally to the Heritaste® self - declaration the producer fills in the required product sheet for each product applied for.
- The product has the highest possible amount of component(s) of rare breeds / varieties possible within the production process. The specification in % is mandatory

After the pilot group has the Heritaste label in use a serious evaluation will take place and with the respective corrections and adjustments, the label will be available for our European partners.

Topic Network: Fundus Agri-Cultura Alpina



The Fundus Agri-Cultura Alpina is on track! The online encyclopedia for the traditional agricultural knowledge in the Alps launched in summer 2015 is under way: About 300 posts are online, from [Sommertricolore](#) on [Jochberger Hummeln](#) to cultural technique of [Schneitelns](#) and the „[Öberefahre](#)“ in Appenzell. The encyclopedia is divided into the four categories plants, animals, culture techniques and customs. Some 100 registered users are responsible for the posts. That is, when one considers the enormous thematic abundance, still only the beginning of the four-year project, which then will be led by volunteers and largely be self-supporting. Besides a continuous

enhancement of the database, we are looking for interested voluntary authors with expertise in all categories. Newly available on the website is an online guide for writing contributions for each category. The mask for contributions is now available in all Alpine languages! Do you know also facts, traditions and techniques around the traditional Alpine agriculture? Sign up today under www.fundus-agricultura.wiki For questions, please contact: office@save-foundation.net. We look forward to seeing you!

Networking: IMAGE: Genebanks and Livestock Farming

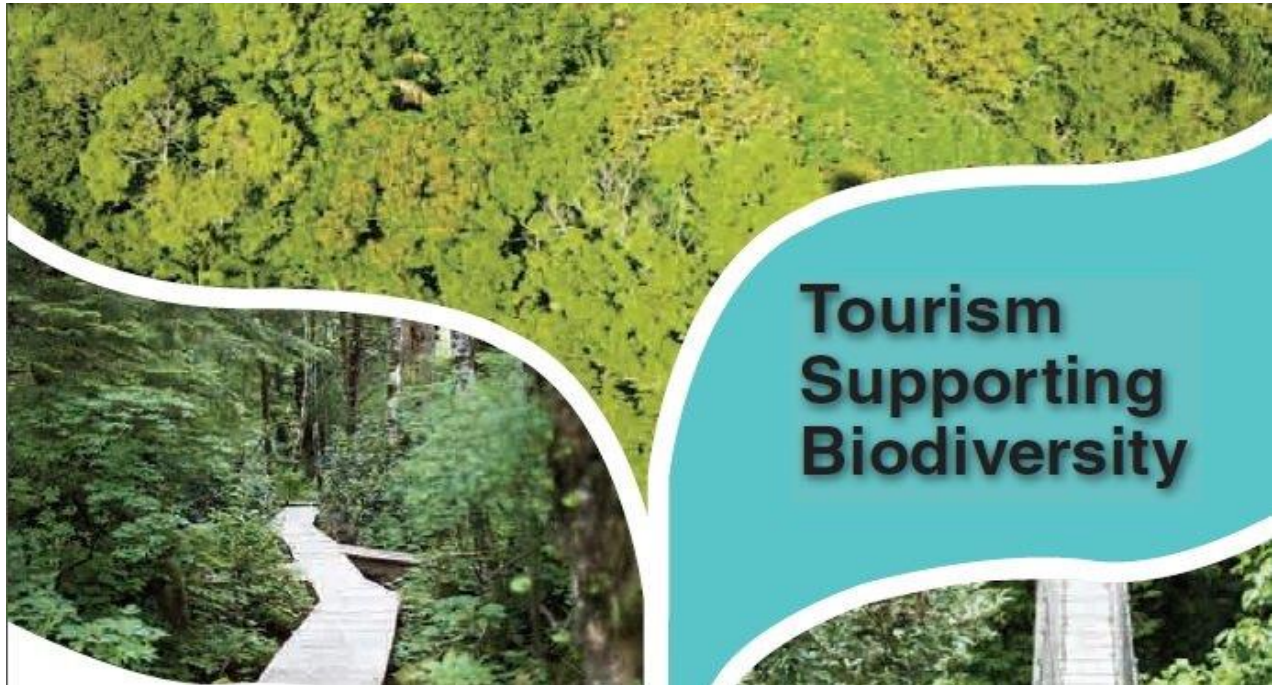


IMAGE stands for Innovative Management of Animal Genetic Resources. It started on March 1, 2016, and gathers 28 partners, including 3 SMEs, 3 NGOs, FAO, 9 research institutions, 11 higher education and research, and INRA Transfert, a subsidiary from INRA, the coordinating partner. Thirteen EU countries are involved, together with Switzerland and four non-European countries: Argentina, Columbia, Egypt, Morocco. The SAVE Project Office is one of the NGO partners within this project.

IMAGE aims at enhancing the use of genetic collections and upgrading animal gene bank management. IMAGE will further develop genomic methodologies, biotechnologies, and bioinformatics for a better knowledge and exploitation of animal genetic resources. The ultimate goal of the project is to demonstrate the benefits brought by gene banks to the development of more sustainable livestock farming systems.

Raising awareness about the value of animal gene banks will contribute to popularize them in the society as a whole, since they represent both a heritage and a resource for the future.

2017: International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development



The United Nations 70th General Assembly has designated 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development.

In the context of the universal 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the International Year aims to support a change in policies, business practices and consumer behavior towards a more sustainable tourism sector than can contribute to the SDGs. Recently the CBD published a manual applying the CBD Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development „Tourism Supporting Biodiversity“, in which a lot of possibilities and tools are mentioned to force a biodiversity friendly tourism (www.cbd.int/tourism/doc/tourism-manual-2015-en.pdf).

The World Tourism Organization UNWTO (<http://tourism4development2017.org/>) claims five key areas which will be promoted:

- Inclusive and sustainable economic growth
- Social inclusiveness, employment and poverty reduction
- Resource efficiency, environmental protection and climate change
- Cultural values, diversity and heritage
- Mutual understanding, peace and security.

SAVE has, for many years, promoted tourism for rural development e.g. through the Arca-Net platform www.arca-net.info. Let's use the UN year for more promotion of rural tourism within Europe!

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References

Collaboration with international organisations:

- Animal Genetic Resources, UN-FAO, Rome
- Bioersity International, Maccarese-Rome
- GEF (Global Environment Facility) United Nations Development Programme
- IUCN (the International Union for Conservation of Nature), Gland
- ERFP (European Regional Focal Point), Bonn
- Rare Breeds International, Thessaloniki
- EuroNatur, Radolfzell
- EU – DG Agriculture, Brussels

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