

Discussion group 2

2nd set of topics

1. Specialization

- What is the true meaning of genebanks “working together”?
- Can be at a level of creating a combined database (eg potato)
- So how many individual potato collections are there in Europe? Probably 4 or 5, but many more in non-specialized collections
- Centralizing these would be an efficient use of resources, and also be needed to attract supra-national funding
- *Allium* already has such a structure (3 centres in PL, CZ and DE)
- The idea of EU-wide funding is a very political issue! In the end, this could only be achieved if genebanks trust one another. Who decides what accessions are maintained in a centralised collection?
- Can only work if the whole community is prepared to be governed by ECPGR.

Discussion group 2

2. Central Authority

- It would be a good move to have a single authority, but the current situation is far from this
- Can only work if it's understood that national governments still retain a funding commitment, and see supra-national funding as an *extra* not as a replacement.
- The single authority needs to have a professional attitude – small full time staff, who can interact with the users (gene banks) and the funders.
- It's timely to consider this, as food security and biodiversity are topical issues

Discussion group 2

3. Redundancy

- The issue is how to insure that accessions with the same name are really the same thing
- While EURISCO could give the framework for such a single nomenclature, the system is not fully mature at the moment
- But GRIN Global is close to this point, so why not adopt it as an international standard?
- The formation of core collections suggested as a good way to avoid redundancy, but some concern expressed re loss of local flexibility

Discussion group 2

4. Requirements

- The main issue is trust, without this no authority can be exercised
- Decision processes at the moment are weak because there is no body with authority
- If ECPGR became this authority, they would have to recognize that there was a responsibility to support genebanks throughout Europe. This means helping to bring weaker members up to speed by providing training etc
- International organizations (Bioversity and FAO) provide the critical link with the rest of the world (where many of our crops' WRs are to be found).
- The present physical hosting of ECPGR with Bioversity may not last, but this shouldn't be a problem