



ECPGR/GRACE - SYNERGIES

**A European Programme for Plant
Genetic Resources**

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ECPGR Secretariat

Pro-Grace workshop
08/10/2025 Chania, Greece

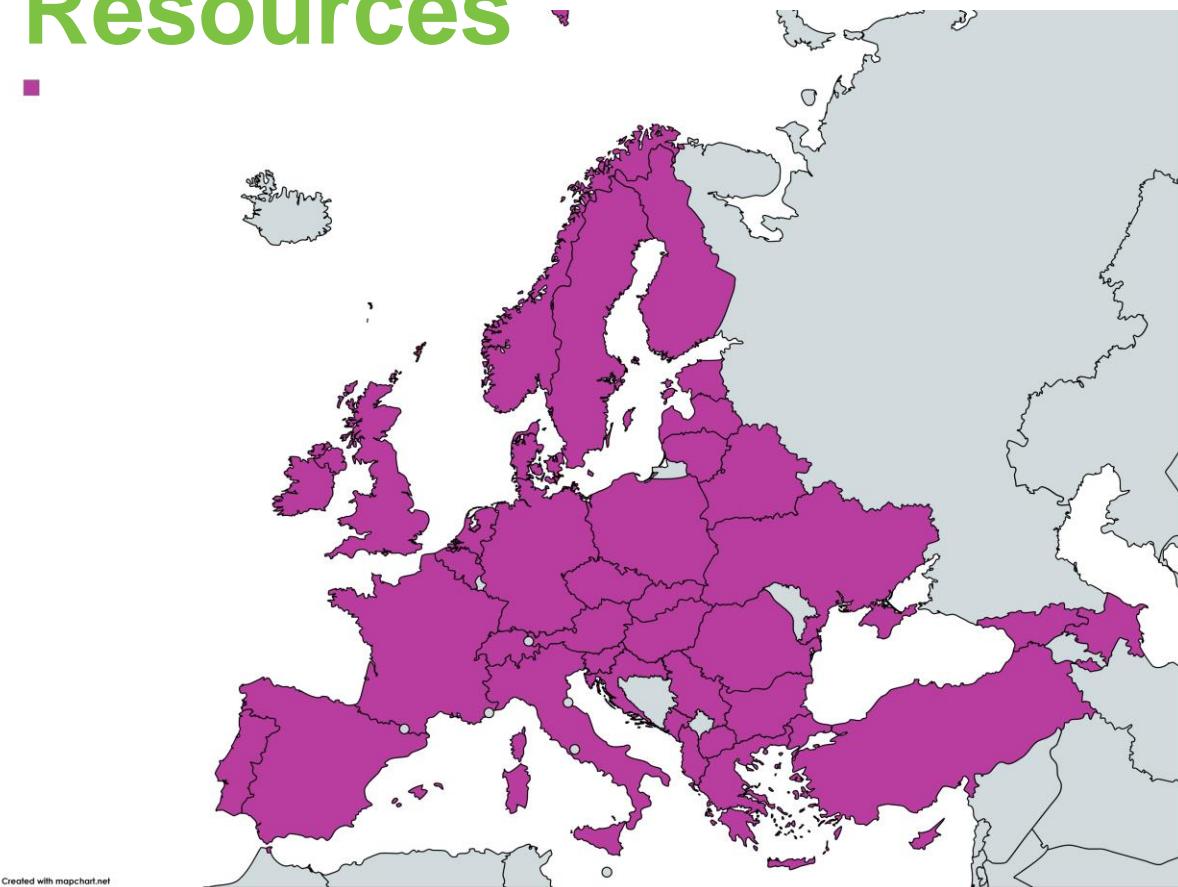




since 1980

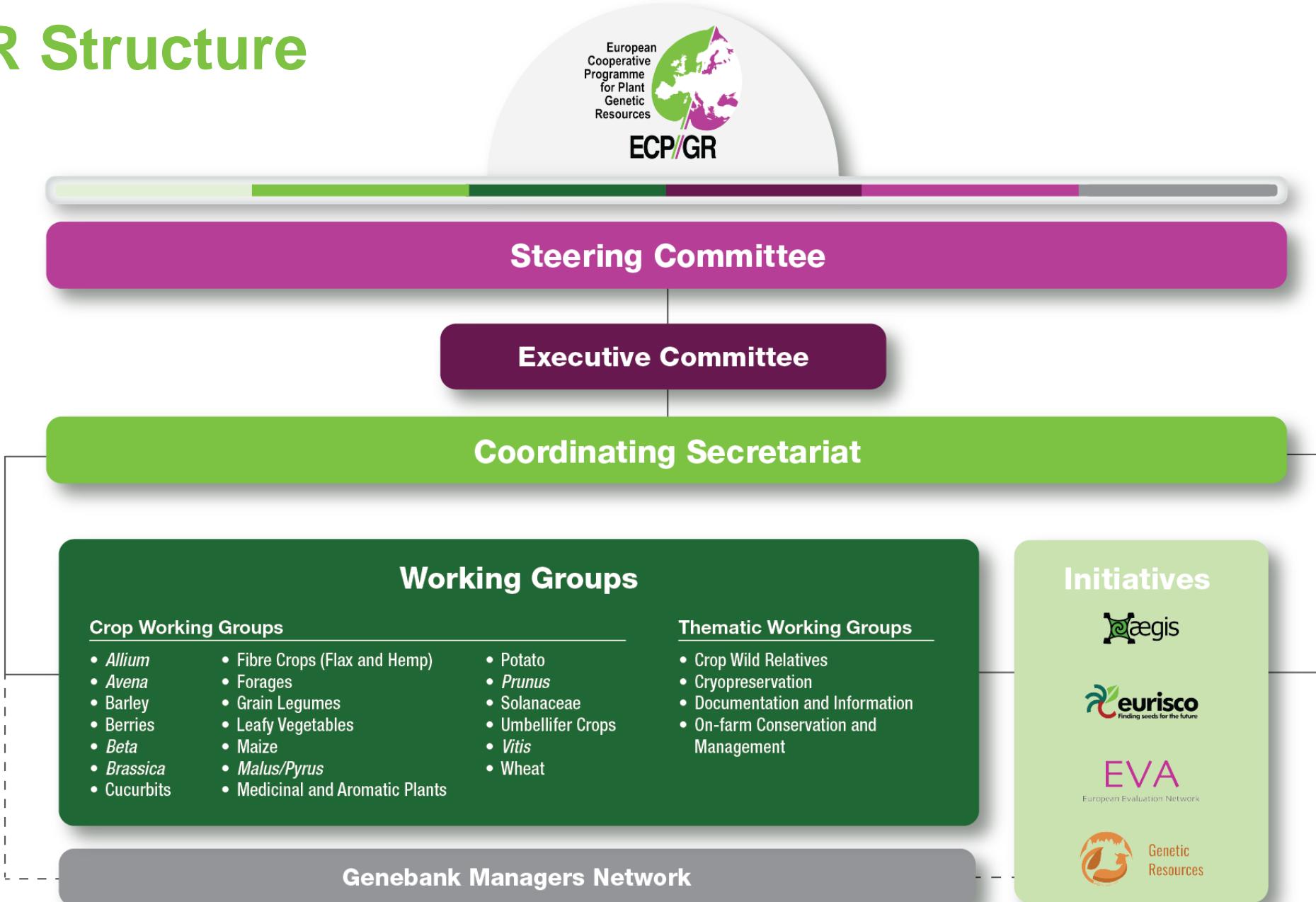
European Cooperative Programme for Plant Genetic Resources

Stakeholders in Europe
collaboratively, rationally and
effectively **conserve *ex situ* and
in situ PGRFA**, provide **access**
and increase sustainable **use**



Self-funded programme belonging to the participating countries
Member countries also contribute *in-kind* into the programme,
through collaborative PGR conservation activities

ECPGR Structure



ECPGR Initiatives serving the community

Documentation



European Search Catalogue
for Plant Genetic Resources



Ex situ Genebank operations
and Quality management



A European Genebank
Integrated System



PGR access and use



European Evaluation
Network for PGRFA



Dissemination



Genetic
Resources

Open Access Journal
www.genresj.org



ECPGR has been a central and reliable coordinating hub for PGR conservation, use and research for > 40 years



36

Member countries and National Coordinators



43

Eurisco National Focal Points, providing info on > **2M** accessions



24

Working Groups and **842** members collaborating on PGR conservation and research



35

AEGIS member countries, with **63** institutes conserving unique accessions with agreed quality standards



Annual Budget: ~800k €



>130

EVA partner organizations evaluating crop diversity of European collections



400

Ex situ holding institutes conserving **43** national collections



48

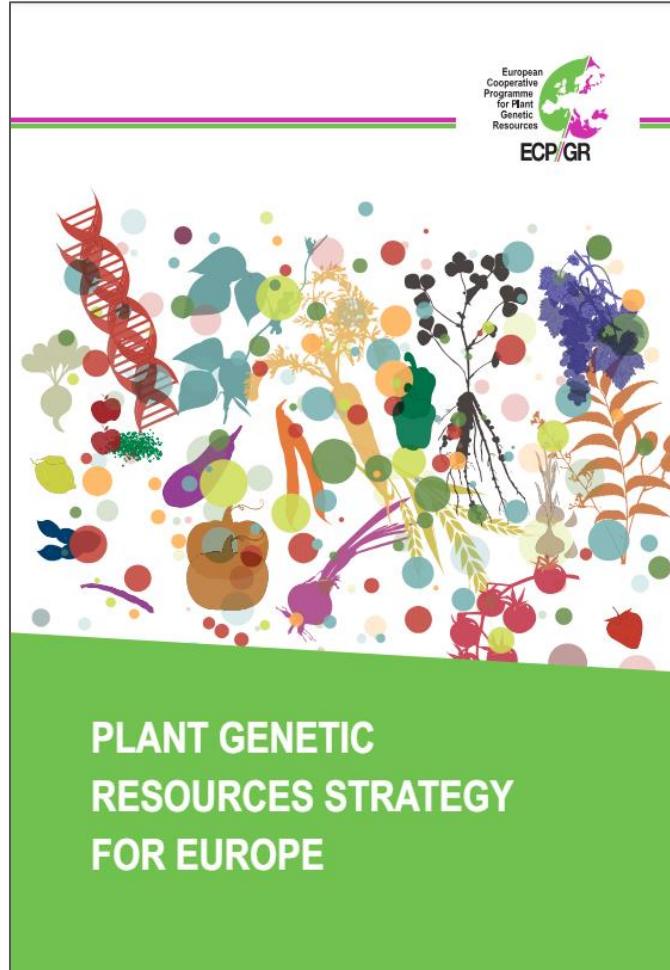
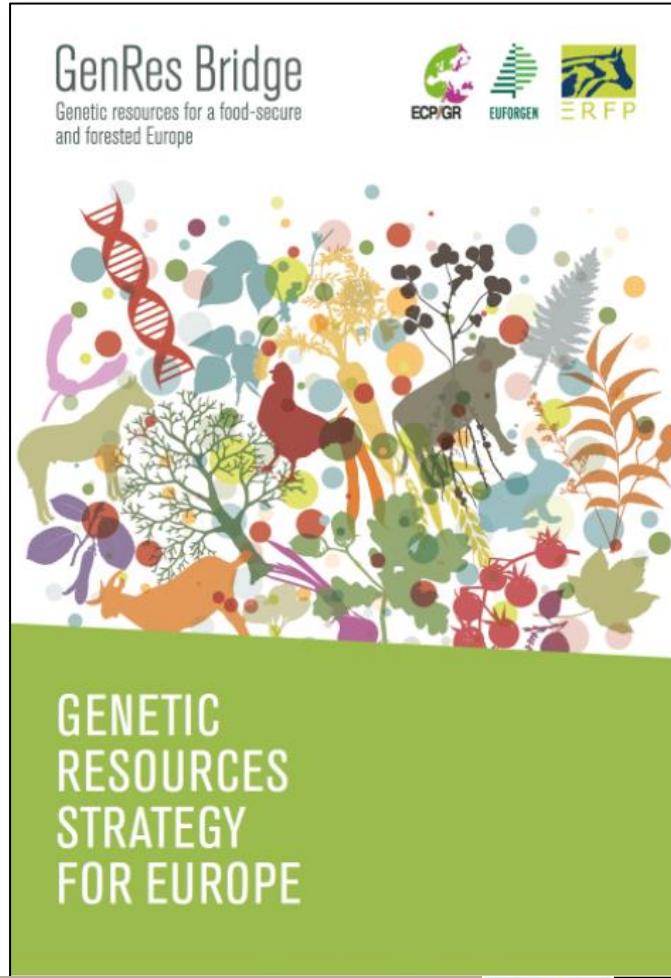
Grant scheme activities since 2014, ~**200** publications by Working Groups



MoUs with FAO (ITPGRFA), Crop Trust, Euroseeds

Genetic Resources Strategy for Europe

Launched in Bruxelles, 30 November 2021



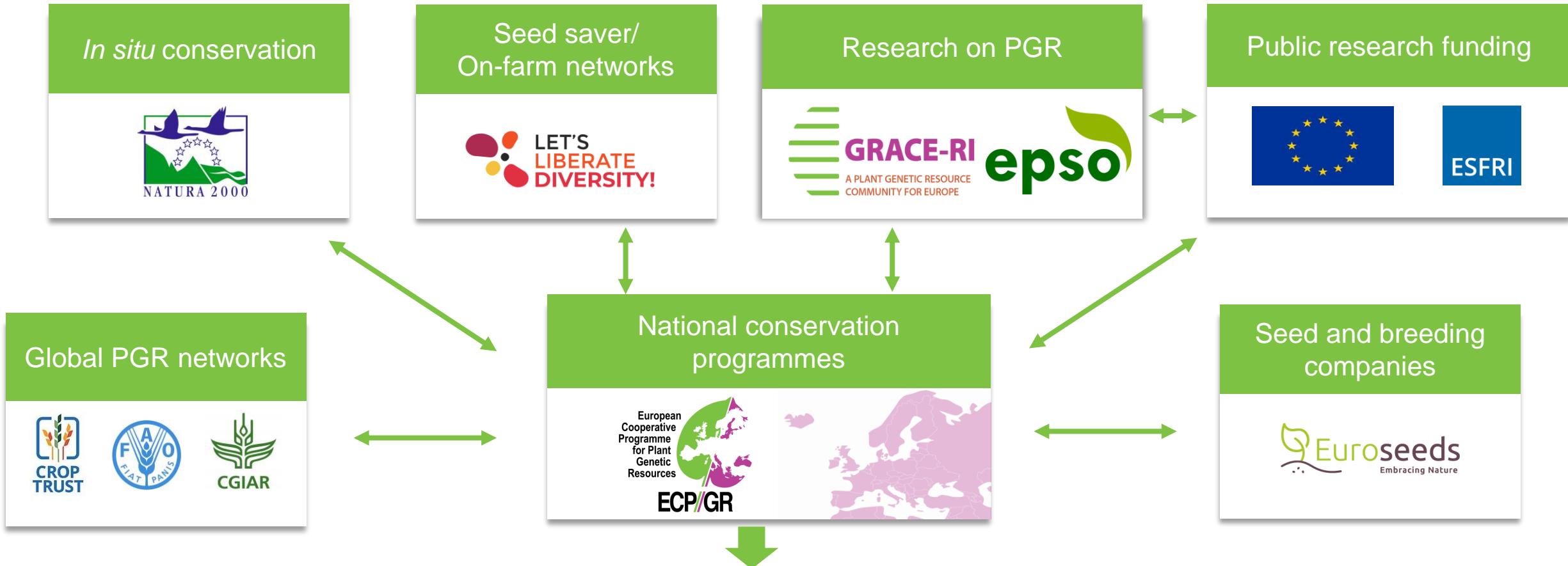
Developed via extensive consultations with experts and stakeholders

Implementation is subject to firm political will

Pathway to implementation via Horizon project



ECPGR: Connecting PGR initiatives



- Improving the conservation and documentation of PGR conserved *ex situ*, *in situ* and on-farm
- Improving access to PGR for breeding and research
- Improving biodiversity across Europe, in nature, in fields, on people's plates

GRACE-RI SERVICES

I. SERVICES FOR <i>EX SITU</i> CONSERVATION	II. SERVICES FOR <i>IN SITU</i> CONSERVATION	III. DATA AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT	IV. CHARACTERIZATION AND (PRE)BREEDING SERVICES	V. SERVICES FOR PGR ACCESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality management system State-of-the-art conservation protocols Routine use of (cyto) genomics and phenomics in PGR management Well-characterized core collections Safety duplication of collections  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>In situ</i> PGR inventories and conservation strategies On-farm/ in-garden conservation of landraces Genomic-phenomic monitoring of <i>in situ</i> populations Safety <i>ex situ</i> duplication of threatened populations  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced EURISCO Standardized data formats Integrated solutions for PGR project data management Integrated systems for <i>in situ</i> and <i>ex situ</i> data AI-powered data curation Predictive Modeling  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Genotyping/ sequencing/ eDNA barcoding Cytogenomic, metabolomic, phenomic, introgressomic services Data analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulatory support services for PGR users Phytosanitary infrastructure Scientific expertise for policymakers Regulatory support for conservation strategies   

CAPACITY BUILDING AND OUTREACH



Genetic
Resources

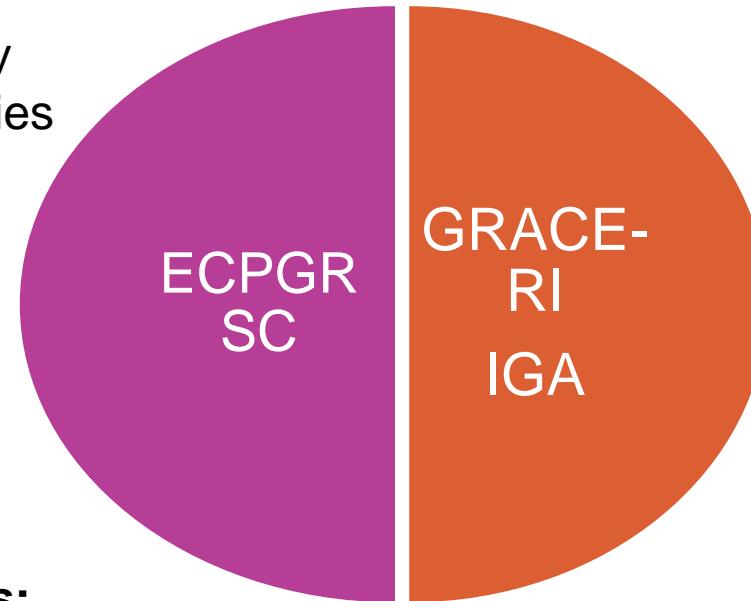


Proposal for role of ECPGR in Governance of a GRACE-RI during the preparation phase:

National Coordinators normally nominated by Agriculture Ministries
Country representatives

Roles and responsibilities in ECPGR:

- Budget
- Technical & policy guidance
- Work programme
- Strategic developments



Members presumably nominated by Research ministries
Country representatives (based on Lol)

Possible Roles and Responsibilities:

- Scope, timeline and cost coverage scheme of implementation
- User strategy and service portfolio
- The legal form and governance
- Statutory seat country
- Cost book and funding framework

Issues:

- ECPGR Legal status
- Not completely overlapping membership
- How to establish voting rights for decision making?
- Different competencies of ministries at country level

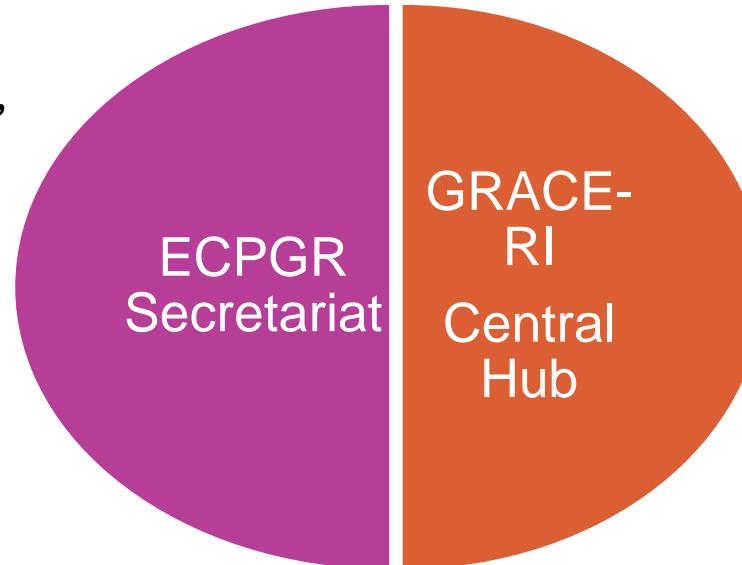
Possible solution:

MoU/Joint agreement to set up a committee/task force mandated to elaborate the respective responsibilities?

Proposed Role of the ECPGR Secretariat in a GRACE-RI during preparation phase

Tasks:

Maintain oversight over EURISCO, the AEGIS system and genebank network, the EVAluation network, the Genetic Resources Journal, but also the Working Groups as well as concepts and frameworks adopted by the SC.



Tasks:

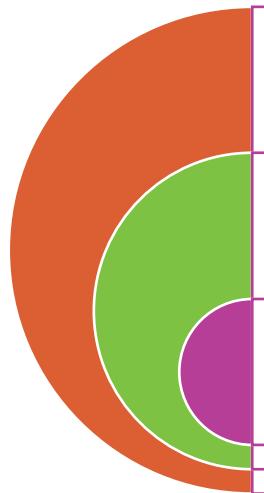
- Design and develop GRACE Work Programme
- Coordinating the construction of the operative level
- Develop common services that may integrate ECPGR tasks in the long term
- Expand the GRACE membership

Issues:

- IPGRI/Bioversity cannot lead/coordinate an ESFRI proposal
- Separate locations for ECPGR and GRACE-RI Secretariat?

A long-term aim could be to eventually merge the two secretariats into a single one, where the role of the ECIC – as described in the Genetic Resources Strategy for Europe – is maintained.

ECPGR at the core of a GRACE-RI



Community

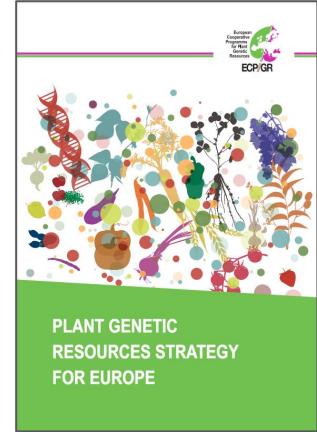
- Use
- Education

GRACE-RI

- Research and support

ECPGR

- Conservation network



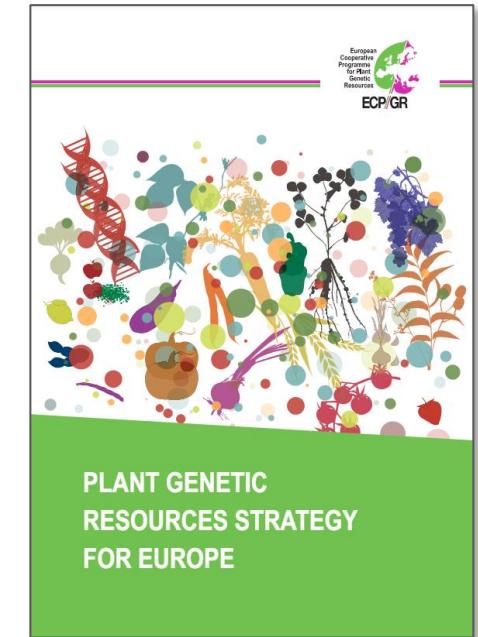
Without conservation, there will be no use of PGR!

- How can GRACE-RI add value to existing ECPGR network?
- How can a GRACE-RI help Europe implement the PGR Strategy?

The role of ECPGR within a GRACE-RI was **never** clarified.

ECPGR aims to enable the PGR Strategy

- 40 years of experience in networking activities
- Build on pro-GRACE outputs to strengthen implementation of ECPGR initiatives and the PGR strategy
- Engage in collaborative actions and projects to better connect conservation, research and breeding of PGR
- Enhance outreach to policymakers and public to lobby for increased and stable funding for PGR



Ambition to extend present activities and partnerships for a more dynamic cooperation with stakeholders

Current ECPGR projects/initiatives

- **NEW AEGIS (funded by Germany)**
 - *ex situ* QM,
 - Capacity building
- **AEGIS Plus (funded by Germany) NEW**
 - *ex situ* QM
 - Capacity building
 - Monitoring
- **EVA Boost (funded by Germany)**
 - Implementation of PPP for evaluations
 - Creation of new EVA network on Perennial plants
- **EURISCO/Genesys collaboration (funded by ECPGR)**
 - Integration/extension of IT capabilities
- **Grant Scheme activities (funded by ECPGR)**
 - Cryo-Connect: Hub in Balkans
 - ABC Mediterranean Landraces: catalog and monitoring
 - EuroPepLand: Pepper landraces genotyping and core collection
 - Malanirs: Maize landraces genotyping and phenomic prediction based on NIRS
- **Collaborations with other organizations/projects** (including GRACE-RI) to foster PGR conservation and use (Partially building on Pro-GRACE)



Recommendations from the PGR Strategy

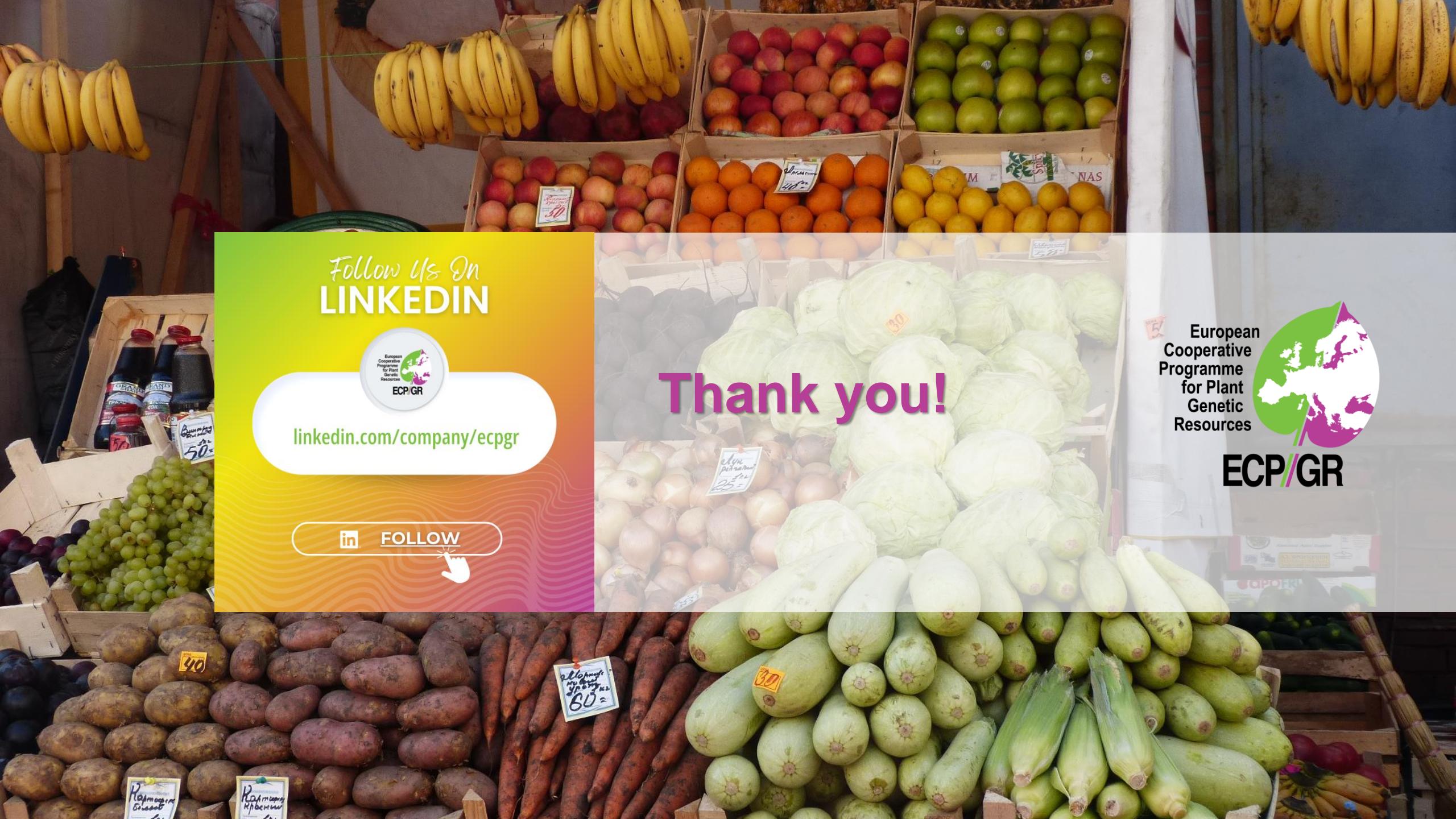
- ☛ PGR are essential for our food security
- ☛ Europe's PGR require:
 - ☛ Long-term investments and a sustained financial basis for collaborative European and national programmes
 - ☛ A coherent European policy framework
 - ☛ An efficient long-term infrastructure for conservation, documentation and sustainable use
 - ☛ Dedicated education and professional programs

We should continue the momentum to strengthen cooperation of European PGR networks.

GRACE-RI needs a critical mass to be sustainable.

Together we are stronger!





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Thank you!

European
Cooperative
Programme
for Plant
Genetic
Resources



ECP/GR