



# ECPGR/GRACE - SYNERGIES

A European Programme for Plant  
Genetic Resources

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Pro-Grace workshop

08/10/2025

Chania, Greece

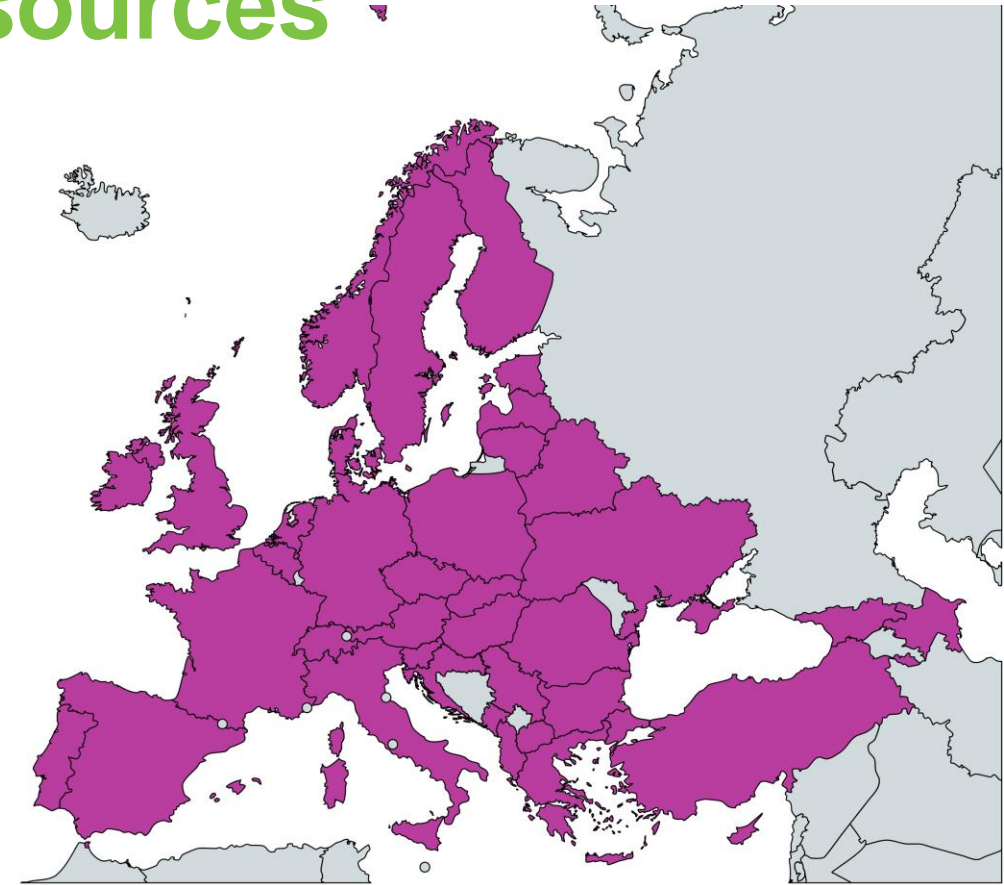




# European Cooperative Programme for Plant Genetic Resources

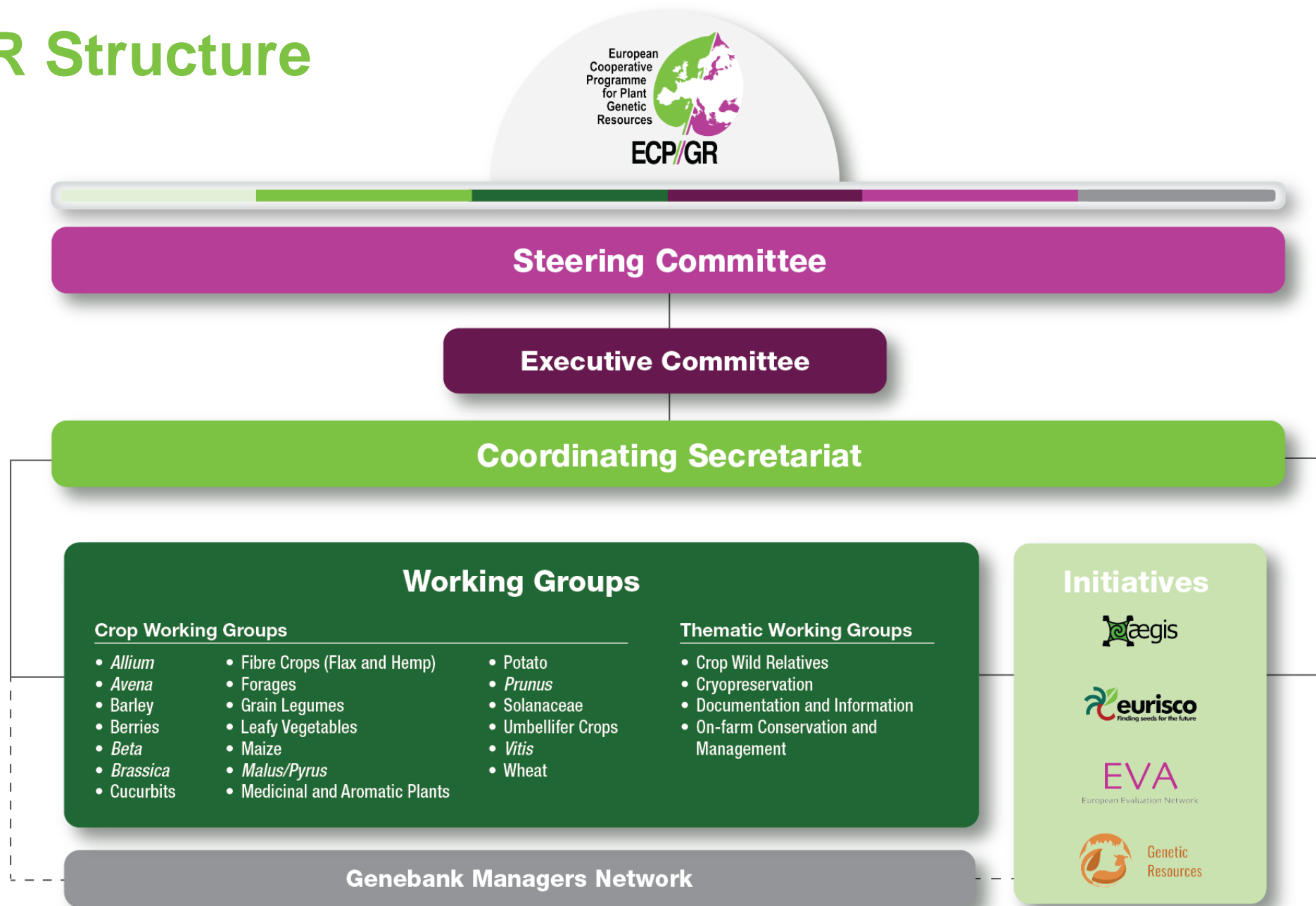
Stakeholders in Europe  
collaboratively, rationally and  
effectively **conserve *ex situ* and  
*in situ*** PGRFA, provide **access**  
and increase sustainable **use**

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



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# 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



Open Access Journal  
[www.genresj.org](http://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

**Since 1980**



**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

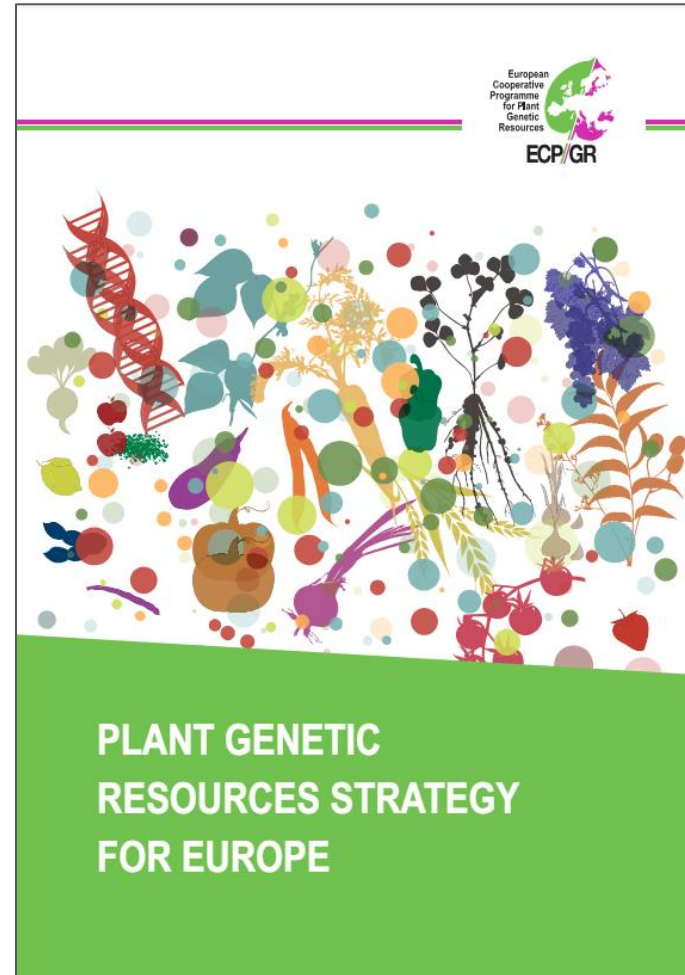
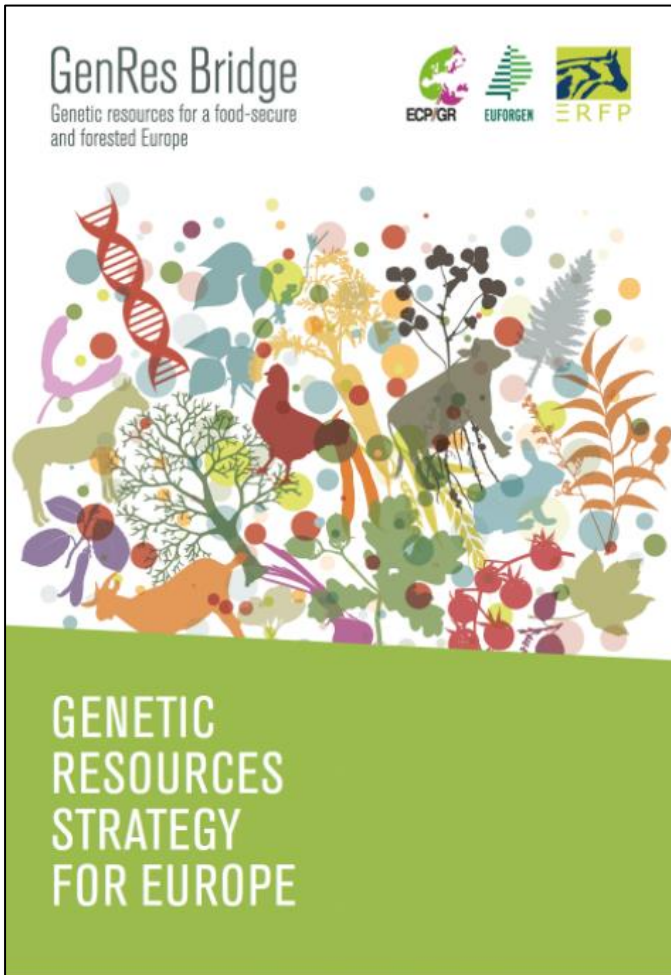


MoUs with FAO (ITPGRFA), Crop Trust, Euroseeds



# 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

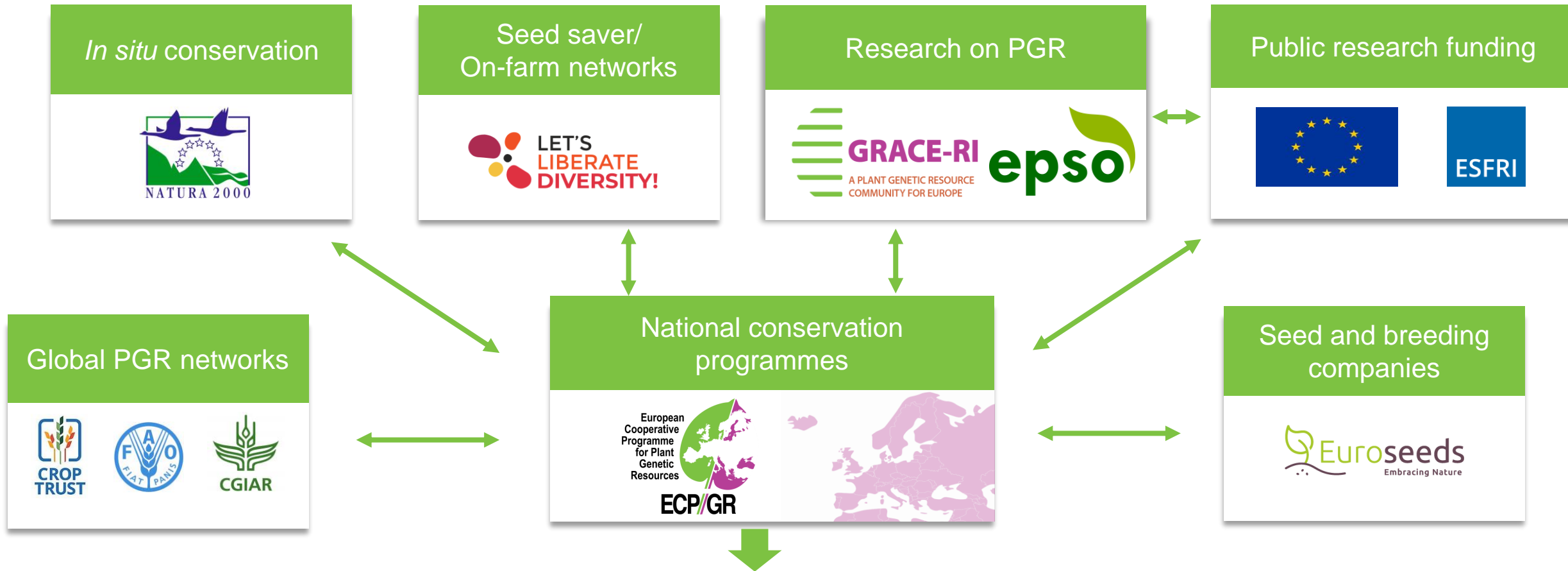
Pathway to implementation via Horizon project



ECP/GR



# 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 *EX SITU* CONSERVATION

- 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



## II. SERVICES FOR *IN SITU* CONSERVATION

- *In situ* PGR inventories and conservation strategies
- On-farm/ in-garden conservation of landraces
- Genomic-phenomic monitoring of *in situ* populations
- Safety *ex situ* duplication of threatened populations



## III. DATA AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

- Enhanced EURISCO
- Standardized data formats
- Integrated solutions for PGR project data management
- Integrated systems for *in situ* and *ex situ* data
- AI-powered data curation
- Predictive Modeling



## IV. CHARACTERIZATION AND (PRE)BREEDING SERVICES

- Genotyping/ sequencing/ eDNA barcoding
- Cytogenomic, metabolomic, phenomic, introgressiomic services
- Data analysis



## V. SERVICES FOR PGR ACCESS

- 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:

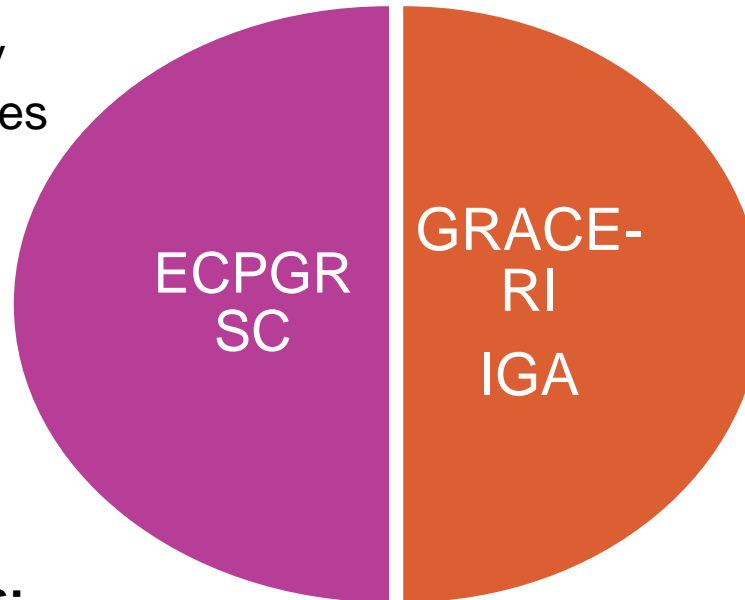
- Budget
- Technical & policy guidance
- Work programme
- Strategic developments

## 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?



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

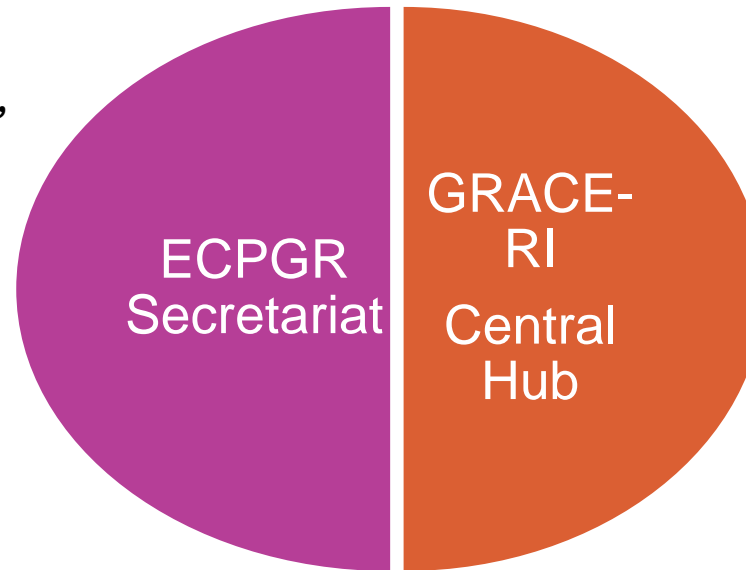
## Possible Roles and Responsibilities:

- 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

# 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

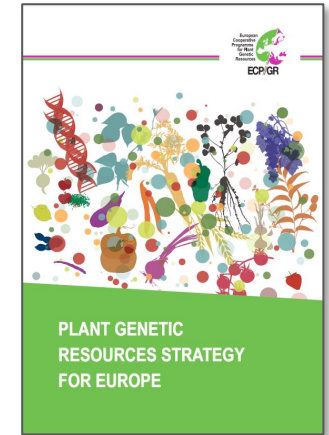
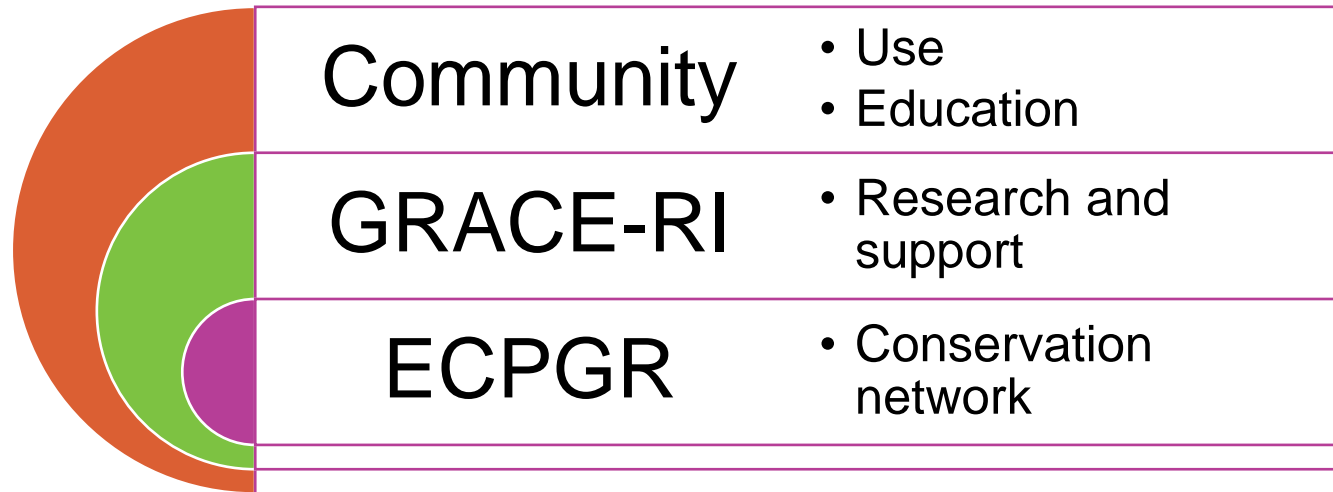
## **Issues:**

- 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



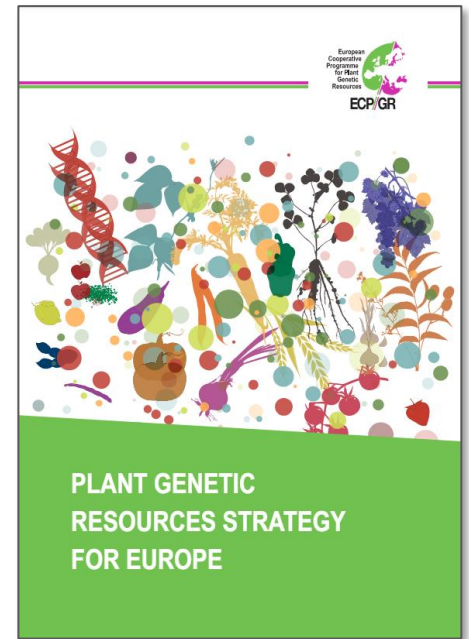
Without conservation, there will be no use of PGR!

- 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

(Partially building on Pro-GRACE)

- **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





# 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**