

## EDITORIAL



The countdown to Christchurch begins. At the time of writing it is expected that there will be around 900 delegates.

Christchurch not only presents the opportunity to the seed industry to meet and renew contacts, trade and sign contracts but also to discuss issues that affect the seed industry and the challenges it faces. The opening ceremony features a talk on renewable energy. There are claims that biofuels -- fuels made from plant materials -- could virtually eliminate the demand for gasoline in many countries by 2050 to the benefit of the economy and environment. But what are the implications for food production and agriculture in general?

From the big picture to specifics: four position papers on topics of great import to the seed industry will be discussed at the relevant Committee meetings before being presented to the General Assembly for adoption. The position paper on hybrids was withdrawn last year to allow more thought on a subject fundamental to the seed industry. Genetic resources are the building blocks for breeding and intellectual property rights are vital to the development of new varieties. The congress will be followed by a workshop on enforcement of intellectual property rights. Presentations by representatives of seed companies and national associations aim to provide insight into ways of preventing the illegal use of seed.

Haere Mai - Welcome to astonishing New Zealand!

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## ISF Appoints New Secretary General

On 10 Apr 2007 the appointment of Marcel Bruins as the new Secretary General Designate of ISF was announced. Making the announcement the President of ISF, Deon van Rooyen said, "Marcel joins the ISF with extensive and sound seed industry experience and in particular a good background and credentials in the fields of Plant Breeding as well as Intellectual Property Rights. IPR was identified by our members as a major and ongoing challenge for the ISF as well as the global seed industry during our recent strategic planning exercise and Marcel's extensive experience in this field will be of great value".

### A Change of Guard



Marcel Bruins will succeed the well-known incumbent, Bernard Le Buanec who will retire in May 2008. M Bruins will deputize from 1 Sept 2007 and officially take over as

Secretary General on 1 Jan 2008 with B Le Buanec staying on in a full-time advisory and management support capacity until May 2008.

M Bruins completed his studies in plant breeding and pathology at the University of Wageningen in the Netherlands in 1989. Based on research he did on Fusarium resistance in wheat at Plant Research International he was awarded a PhD in 1998. He was responsible for the patent portfolio of a large research institute for a number of years and then moved to Rotterdam to work at the Innovation Centre for Inventions where he was active in the commercial aspects of agricultural and biotech inventions. Since 1998 he has been involved in intellectual property and plant variety protection with Seminis Vegetable Seeds. Of recent he has held the position of Manager Plant Variety Protection at Seminis Vegetable Seeds Holland B.V.

M Bruins is a member of several international seed-related committees, such as the European Seed Association's Committee on Intellectual Property Rights, the PlantumNL Intellectual Property Committee and the ISF Sustainable Agriculture Committee. He also chairs the Intellectual Property Working Group on Genetics within the European Seed Association. Since 1999 he has represented the ISF at the UPOV Technical Working Party for Vegetables.

## INTERNAL MATTERS

The **Sustainable Agriculture Committee (SAC)** convened a telephone conference on 26 Jan 2007 to finalise a position paper on plant genetic resources. The paper reiterates the importance of plant genetic resources to the seed industry in the face of policy debates on regulating ownership, use, access and conservation of genetic resources. SAC also finalised a document informing ISF Members and their member companies about the recently adopted Standard Material Transfer Agreement that sets out the terms and conditions of access and benefit sharing under the International Treaty for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

The **Intellectual Property Committee (IPC)** met in Paris on 19 Jan 2007. High on the agenda were position papers that the IPC wished to present to the General Assembly for adoption in Christchurch.

The first paper dealt with the interpretation of an article of the UPOV Convention that extends rights of a protected variety to harvested material and the end product. However, the holder of rights to the protected variety can exercise his 'extended' rights only if his variety is used for propagation without authorization and if he has had no reasonable opportunity to exercise his right on the use of harvested material for propagation.

Interpretation of this provision in relation to *reasonable opportunity* is important for a breeder: must he protect his variety in all countries where a PBR system is available and where there is a risk that his variety could be propagated and exported to a country where it is protected? The IPC believes that this article relates only to an existing right and does not oblige a breeder to protect the variety in other countries where protection was possible and his variety could be illegally produced.

The IPC also finalised a second position paper on hybrids. Some protection offices consider hybrids not to be varieties, as they cannot self-reproduce without change. The position paper expressly states that for the purpose of intellectual property protection a hybrid is a variety and the criteria of distinctness, uniformity and stability can be assessed, either on the hybrid itself or on its parents and the formula that associate them. An accompanying note outlines the importance of protecting hybrids.

The IPC finalised the programme for the **Workshop on Enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights on Plant Varieties** that will be held on 24 May 2007. The objective of the workshop is to present examples of infringement of intellectual property rights on plant varieties and methods used in various countries to enforcement granted rights. A forum for discussion will follow the presentations so

participants can exchange views on enforcement of plant breeders' rights.

### ISF Workshop

#### Enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights on Plant Varieties

24 May 2007

Copthorne Durham Hotel, Christchurch, New Zealand

#### Programme

1. Rights provided by the UPOV Convention  
**Bernard Le Buanec**, ISF Secretariat
2. Does the UPOV Convention provide reasonable protection for 'harvested material' and 'end product'? **Huib Ghijzen**, Bayer CropScience
3. Brown bagging **Michael Roth**, Monsanto
4. Illegal reproduction of lettuce seed, an ongoing court case in Italy **Marian Suelmann**, Rijk Zwaan
5. Illegal production of hybrid seed in South Africa  
**Michael Yeadon**, Pannar Seed
6. Enforcement of Plant Breeders' Rights in Canada  
**Lorne Hadley**, CPTA
7. Enforcement of Plant Breeders' Rights in Argentina and Uruguay **Miguel Rapela**, Relmo
8. Enforcement of Plant Breeders' Rights in France  
**Antoine de la Soujeole**, SICASOV
9. Enforcement of Plant Breeders' Rights on illegal import of ornamentals under the EU anti-piracy regulation **Hidde Koenraad**, Steinhäuser Hoogenraad
10. General discussion

The **Trade and Arbitration Rules Committee (TARC)** held its meeting in Paris on 9 Feb 2007. Among other things, it discussed numerous proposed amendments to the rules for the arbitration of disputes concerning essential derivation (RED) adopted in 2005. Those amendments that were accepted will be presented to the General Assembly for adoption in Christchurch. It also finalised a model confidentiality agreement as an annexure to RED. Amendments to the ISF Trade and Dispute Settlement Rules were finalised and will also be presented to the General Assembly for adoption in Christchurch.

The Committee intensively debated issues related to the trade and dispute settlement rules, such as whether ISF arbitration that currently concerns disputes between seed companies should be extended to disputes between seed companies and farmers or consumers, whether experience in the seed industry was a prerequisite for arbitrators as opposed to experience gained in other "professional milieu", and if all the arbitration rules should be placed in one document instead of keeping dispute settlement separate from trade and IP issues?

As these questions had major implications for the rules themselves and the way an ISF arbitration would be undertaken, it was decided that an in-depth discussion on these issues would continue in the coming months and the Board of Directors

and ISF Members would be asked for their views.

The TARC also decided that the crop specific section of the ISF Rules and Usages for the Trade in Seeds for Sowing Purposes will be revised to reflect the current Crop Sections, viz. i. Maize and Sorghum ii. Forage and Turf Crops, and iii. Cereals and Pulse Crops. An Ad hoc Committee will be constituted to draft the crop specific sections taking into account changes that have taken place in the seed trade (e.g. GM crops, adventitious presence). The Crop Section Boards will nominate two persons each to represent the four section and the nominees should be persons familiar with trade related aspects of these crops, brokers and others with a legal background. A full-day meeting in Sept 2007 with all members of the Ad hoc Committee (approx 10-15 members) will take place followed by meetings broken down by crops.

#### ISF delegation meets Indian officials

An ISF delegation met with Sharad Pawar, Indian Minister of Agriculture and other officials, S Nagarajan, Chairperson PPV Authority, P S Chandurkar, Plant Protection (PP) Advisor, W R Reddy, Joint Secretary PP, and Sanjay Vikram Singh, Officer on Special Duties on 19 Feb 2007.

The President of ISF, D van Rooyen briefly introduced ISF and its activities. The Minister spoke of the growth the Indian seed industry has seen in recent years but emphasised there were numerous research and development issues facing the country, particularly for pulse, oilseed and cereal crops in rainfed areas. He spoke of the Green Revolution that had almost resolved the question of food security in the country and said a second green revolution was required so that India didn't need to import food. He added that the Government was very supportive of new technologies, including biotechnology, and spoke of the launching of the registration of plant varieties under the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Act established in 2005.

On behalf of the seed industry in India and worldwide, B Le Buanec spoke emphasised two points: the importance of being able to move breeding material and seed without unduly restrictive phytosanitary regulations, and intellectual property protection, in particular farm saved seed, security of the germplasm when parental lines were deposited with the PVP authority, and benefit sharing in relation to landraces.

The Minister of Agriculture proposed establishing a small pro-active working group comprising Ministry officials and seed industry representatives to address the issues raised and other opportunities for the Indian seed industry. ISF supported this proposal and agreed to participate in it along with representatives of the Indian seed industry.

The **Meeting of the Secretaries of ISF Member National Associations** took place in Aurangabad (IN) on 21 Feb 2007. B Le Buanec provided updates on preparations for the congress, the post congress workshop and draft position papers.

The Secretaries reviewed the rules for adopting position papers and amendments to previously adopted papers. After considering numerous alternative options they decided to stay with the current system, where the Secretariat sends drafts to all Members six weeks before the congress and Members respond in the three following weeks. They noted that it was only in exceptional cases that position papers in the past had not been presented to the General Assembly as planned.

They also debated ways of streamlining the process of screening all registrants to the congress to ensure only those companies eligible to participate in an ISF congress had registered. They provided input to the Strategic Plan for ISF that is currently under preparation.

They exchanged experiences on the issues facing the seed industry in their countries. While ISF has observer status in these international meetings where many decisions affecting the seed business are taken, such as FAO, OECD, and UPOV, it cannot vote. Therefore, each national association member of ISF plays an important role in communicating with its own government on issues of pressing importance to the seed industry as a whole.

The **Breeders Committee** met on 22 Feb 2007. After hearing reports from SAC and IPC, it reviewed the draft position papers before approving them for adoption in Christchurch.

It discussed the guidelines being drafted for companies on enforcing their intellectual property rights. Due to the self-propagating nature of plants the illegal reproduction and use of seed of protected varieties is common practice in many countries. The objective of the document is to inform companies of their rights and provide guidance on how to enforce them in case of illegal use of farm-saved seed and brown bagging. It will be presented in Christchurch.

The **Seed Treatment and Environment Committee** met in London on 2 Mar 2007. It discussed how a uniform active ingredient application rate for a crop being grown in similar environments would facilitate the international movement of treated seed. The situation in Europe was discussed where it is proposed to register seed treatment products by crop and by geographic location with the attendant risk of increasing the bureaucratic requirements rather than facilitating registration.

It proposed text for a motion encouraging seed treatment manufacturers to register a seed treatment product with a uniform active ingredient application rate for each crop. The motion makes a similar appeal to regulators, viz. register a uniform rate of application of a seed treatment for a crop. This text will be presented to the General Assembly in Christchurch for adoption. A new version of the Seed Treatment Brochure will be presented in Christchurch.

The Committee also decided to prepare a paper

on Standardization of Seed Applied Pesticide Recoveries as a reference for techniques and benchmarks utilized to determine the acceptability of pesticide loading, based on seed type and pesticide dosage.

## INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

### UPOV

The forty-third meeting of the **UPOV Technical Committee** (TC) took place in Geneva on 26-28 Mar 2007 and P Roger, M Bruins and B Le Buanec participated on behalf of ISF.

The TC heard reports from the UPOV Office, the Administrative and Legal Committee and the technical working parties including the Working Group on Biochemical and Molecular Techniques (BMT). Most of the work of the TC focussed on the revision of TGP documents and in particular TGP/4 *Constitution and Management of Variety Collections*, TGP/9 *Examining Distinctiveness*, TGP/10 *Examining Uniformity* and TGP/5 *Experience and Cooperation in DUS Testing*.

During the discussion on TGP/9, ISF re-emphasised its concerns on the use of photographs for choosing reference varieties in growing trials. The Committee agreed to add the following sentence to the text: However, the use of photographs for selecting varieties for the growing trial should take into account that, despite such guidance [guidance given by the authority to enhance the usefulness of the photograph] and the best endeavours of the breeder, photographs may not always accurately reflect the characteristics of the variety.

Regarding the exchange of plant material, particularly hybrid parental lines, between UPOV offices ISF once again emphasised that the interests of the breeder must be respected. It was agreed that a new section would be included in TGP/5 providing examples of contracts/agreements between the authorities and breeders. Either the authorities or the breeders can provide examples but they will be included in the document only with the consent of both parties. Reference was made to the agreement recently developed by the European Community Plant Variety Office.

During the discussion on the Model Form for the Application of Plant Breeders Rights, M Bruins presented a proposal for an electronic application form and technical questionnaire on behalf of ISF. The participants welcomed the ISF initiative and the Vice Secretary General of UPOV agreed to investigate ways in which the matter could be best pursued with the resources UPOV had. It was also proposed that the presentation be made to the Administrative and Legal Committee in Oct 2007.

The TC considered a proposal made by the delegate of Columbia asking for the examination of a single application for a plant breeder's right for a 'variety' consisting of a combination of different lines, up to more than 40, for coffee to be considered. The TC agreed that in relation to the relevant Test Guidelines, examples of specific cases should be raised with the relevant technical working parties. ISF, however, expressed its concern on this definition of a variety and requested that the topic be put on the agenda of the Administrative and Legal Committee for a wider discussion.

Test Guidelines for the following crops were adopted: Elatior and winter-flowering begonias, carrot, spinach, cucumber, gherkin, apricot, blueberry, pot azalea, pumpkin, clematis, common millet, butternut squash, cheese pumpkin, China squash, cushaw, golden cushaw, musky gourd, pumpkin, winter crookneck squash, Diascia, twinspur, husk tomato, St. John's wort, common St. John's wort, goat weed, klamath weed, Tipton weed, Balsma apple, Balsam pear, bitter cucumber, bitter gourd, bitter melon, Cassila gourd, Sutera, Jamesbrittenia, marigold.

It was noted that UPOV authorities now had practical experience examining 2010 genera and species for distinctness (D), uniformity (U) and stability (S).

Ms Françoise Blouet (France) and Mr Chris Barnaby (New Zealand) were proposed as Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the TC, respectively.

The fifty-fifth session of the **Administrative and Legal Committee** took place on 29 Mar 2007 and P Roger, M Bruins, H Ghijsen and B Le Buanec participated on behalf of ISF.

The Committee heard reports on the activities of the TC, the proposal to use molecular techniques for variety registration in relation to the enforcement of plant breeders' rights, on variety denomination and on UPOV's information databases.

A discussion took place on the development of information material concerning the UPOV Convention and in particular on the definition of "varieties of common knowledge" and the relationship between an initial variety and essentially derived ones.

*Varieties of common knowledge:* The general introduction of the UPOV TGP document states that in case of distinctness, a variety must be clearly distinguishable from any other variety whose existence is a matter of common knowledge. However, it does not provide any guidance on what is meant by "existence". Looking back, in an early draft the proposal was to refer to "living plant material" which was dropped in the final draft. Due to difficulty in finding agreement on text that explained that plant material needed to be in existence, the

Advisory Group of the Committee noted that the General Introduction already provided clear guidance with respect to the term "common knowledge" and therefore it was not necessary to further explain it. The Administrative and Legal Committee endorsed this view.

*Relationship between an initial variety and essentially derived ones:* The Committee confirmed that essential derivation was a technical aspect and that any variety, protected or not, could be an initial variety. On the other hand, dependency was a legal concept and could only result from a protected variety. This is in line with the ISF position.

The twenty-fourth **Extraordinary Session of the UPOV Council** took place on 30 Mar 2007 and M Bruins represented ISF. The council examined the Philippines Plant Variety Protection Act of 2002 and the Georgian law for the protection of new plant varieties. The Council advised the Government of Philippines of amendments that were required to the law for it to be compliant with the 1991 Act of the UPOV Convention. The Georgian law was found to be in conformity with the provisions of the 1991 Act. The few exceptions were to be remedied for the time being by a "constitutional clause".

[www.upov.int](http://www.upov.int)

### IPPC

The **Second Session of the Commission of Phytosanitary Measures** (CPM) took place in Rome from 26-30 March 2006 and R Ranganathan represented ISF.

The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) is an international treaty relating to plant health to which 161 governments (as of 08 March 2007) currently adhere. The Commission on Phytosanitary Measures serves as the agreement's governing body. The members of the Commission are the contracting parties to the Convention. The Convention addresses the movement of pests through trade and other pathways, and is recognised as the standard setting body for these specific issues by the WTO-SPS Agreement.

At the second meeting of the Commission, three new standards (*Recognition of pest free areas and areas of low pest prevalence*, *Establishment of areas of low pest prevalence for fruit flies (Tephritidae)*, *Phytosanitary treatments for regulated pests*) were approved. ISPM 2 (*Framework for pest risk analysis*) was revised and ISPM 5 (*Glossary of phytosanitary terms*) was amended.

Under discussion was a proposal to establish procedures for identifying topics and priorities for standards. Some contracting parties were not in favour of allowing even the Technical Panels (committees established by the CPM and operating under the guidance of the Standards

Committee (SC) to assist the SC in developing standards) to add topics to the work programme without the approval of the Commission.

Readers are here reminded that in 2005, in response to a call made by the Vice Chairman of the Commission to all stakeholders to collaborate in developing diagnostic protocols, ISF had proposed the submission of ISHI seed health methods to CPM for adoption as standards. Recognising the role bodies such as ISF could play in developing diagnostic protocols but keeping in view conflicting positions within the Commission on whether the industry could be 'co-opted' as a partner, the draft on procedures very broadly proposed that "other organisations" could also submit topics to the IPPC Secretariat for consideration.

Although many NPPOs have a good professional relationship with the seed industry in their respective countries, the deliberations indicate that it could be some time before the seed industry is 'accepted' by the Commission as a partner.

[www.ippc.int](http://www.ippc.int)

### OECD

The **Extended Advisory Group of OECD Seed Schemes** met in Paris on 22-23 January 2007. B Le Buanec represented ISF. The following report highlights issues that impact the seed industry.

*Experiment on maximum lot size for Gramineae seed:* The European Commission confirmed its approval of the experiment. The experiment can therefore begin and the lots produced as part of the experiment will be accepted in the European Union.

*Strategic Plan for the Seed Schemes:* While discussing the document *Developing a Strategic Plan for the OECD Seed Schemes* it emerged that the scope of the OECD Seed Schemes as indicated in the Rules was not consistent with its implementation. ISF drew attention to a paragraph that read, "The scope of the OECD Seed Schemes is to encourage the use of certified seed, [...]. The OECD certification is applied [...] to varieties [...] having an acceptable value for cultivation and use". Obviously, the objective of the Seed Schemes is not to encourage the use of certified seed and an acceptable value for cultivation and use is not a concept that can be applied internationally. Nevertheless, as the main user of the Seed Schemes, ISF expressed the view that it was happy with the system as it was and that there was no immediate need to amend it.

It was agreed that the questionnaire on the use and future of the OECD Seed Schemes would be shortened. In a first step, it will be circulated to ISF and the NDAs, two main users of the OECD Seed Schemes. The ISF Secretariat would be in charge of consolidating the opinion of seed companies.

ISF asked that the questionnaire include an introduction detailing the current scope of the OECD Seed Schemes followed by two groups of questions; the first asking for views on the current objectives and the second on recommended changes. It was also recommended that a professional in public relations or market research be asked to review the questionnaire before it was sent out to ensure it was user-friendly.

*International trade and use of synonyms in varietal denominations:* The ad hoc working group will prepare a new paper for submission to the 2007 Annual Meeting. Australia, Canada, Chile, France, USA, CPVO, ISF, UPOV and the Co-ordinating Centre constitute members of the WG.

*Inclusion of other species to herbage seed mixtures:* The national designated authority (NDA) of Portugal once again asked for the certification of forage seed mixtures that included cereals seed to be allowed.

Presenting the unanimous opinion of the Board of Forage and Turf Crop Section, ISF indicated that it was not in favour of adding cereal species to forage seed mixtures. There was little demand for such mixtures and more importantly because different seed sizes would tend to segregate in the lots making sowing difficult. The representative of ESA said this was also the view of the ESA Forage Section. The NDAs of USA, Canada and Denmark supported the proposal by Portugal.

*The introduction of hybrid alfalfa provisions in the Rules:* The US delegation was complimented on the quality of its proposal. ISF indicated that the changes should not be limited to alfalfa, as other species such as *Dactylis glomerata* were produced under the same "hybrid" scheme.

*Finalisation of the "Authorisation" Guidelines:* The analysis of this document led to an interesting discussion on how the Schemes were implemented in various countries and on the meaning of the words "surveillance body". Could only governments be NDAs or were other organisations such as SOC, SANSOR, NAK and NIAB also eligible? Should basic seed be produced only under the supervision of the NDA?

It was suggested that each country should describe how it implemented the Schemes for a better appreciation of the options, and that such an exercise would also be interesting in the framework of the ongoing strategic review.

*Multiplication abroad: varietal identity and information available to NDAs:* A meeting of the ad hoc working group will be held in July just before the Annual Meeting of the OECD Seed Schemes. ISF was added to the list of members of the WG comprising Argentina, Canada, Chile, France, Greece, New Zealand, USA and the Co-ordinating Centre.

*Revision of the isolation distances for hybrid-cotton seed production:* ISF as leader of the ad hoc WG

reported that the Working Group was still awaiting comments from the European Commission, Greece and Spain and hoped that a new draft would be available for the next Annual Meeting.

*Variety eligibility for OECD Certification and Listing:* Participants briefly discussed the paper circulated in Fortaleza with the comments from Canada regarding "acceptable value" for cultivation and use and "satisfactory results obtained by official tests in at least one country" (cf. supra discussion on Strategic Review).

*ISF work on Adventitious Presence of GM material in seed:* The ISF representative made a short presentation on the proposal to place the topic of adventitious presence before the OECD Working Group on Harmonization of Regulatory Oversight in Biotechnology. There was support for this proposal by other participants of the meeting.

The **OECD Working Group on Varietal Identity and Purity** met on 24 Jan 2007 in Paris.

*Varietal identity:* It was clarified that the definition agreed upon would be solely for the purposes of OECD varietal certification so as to avoid conflicts with other conventions and treaties such as UPOV.

Following a discussion on what the official description of the variety should be, the following definition was adopted for presentation to the Annual Meeting: "For the purposes of OECD varietal certification, the identity of the variety is defined by the description of its characteristics, resulting from a given genotype or combination of genotypes, when it was registered in the OECD List of Varieties eligible for seed certification."

*Varietal purity:* After a long discussion the following definition was adopted for presentation to the Annual Meeting: "Varietal purity is the proportion of plants or seeds within the population that conforms to the description of the variety, when it was registered in the OECD List of Varieties.

Plants or seeds are considered as varietal impurities (off-types) when they are obviously different from the variety."

It was agreed that a definition of off-types may be necessary and reference was made to the UPOV document TG/1/3. However, many participants felt the requirements for protection of intellectual property were not the same as those for seed certification.

*Harmonization of OECD post-control procedures and standards:* As there were currently two standards for varietal purity standards of F1 maize hybrid certified seed - 97% for simple hybrids and 95% for the other types - ISF was asked to provide an industry view on having just one.

At the request of ISF it was agreed that post-control tests could also be done under accreditation, contrary to the proposal made in the discussion paper.

[www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org)

## REGIONAL SEED ASSOCIATIONS

### AFSTA

His Excellency Mr. Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, S.C., President of the Republic of Zambia opened the **Seventh Annual Congress of the African Seed Trade Association (AFSTA)** held from 6 - 9 March 2007 in Livingstone, Zambia. The meeting also attracted 180 delegates from 33 countries, among them representatives from regional and international bodies. D van Rooyen and B Le Buanec represented ISF.

The main topic of the Congress was "Towards a Harmonized Seed Trade in Africa: Coordination Efforts between the Regional Economic Communities". Representatives of Western and Eastern Africa and the Southern Africa sub-regions presented their achievements in this field and their future programs to bring the harmonization process to an end.

Of keen interest to delegates was a half-day UPOV workshop on the protection of new plant varieties. Apart from the presentation made by the Vice Secretary General of UPOV, other speakers also presented the status of protection of new plant varieties in sub-regions such as the African Organization for Intellectual Property Rights (OAPI) (representing 16 countries in West Africa) and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). Discussions centred on practical aspects of protecting of new plant varieties and harmonization at the regional level.

Following the UPOV workshop, ISF facilitated a half-day workshop on seed treatment. Seed treatment experts from various companies and B Le Buanec spoke on various topics including application technology and chemical loading, operator and user safety, labelling and waste management of treated seeds, trends and new technology in seed treatment, and seed treatment: a tool for sustainable agriculture integration in the seed business.

[www.afsta.org](http://www.afsta.org)

for some of the world's major food crops. However, this valuable diversity is threatened by genetic erosion. The informal system, an indigenous, knowledge-based, farmer-managed crop production system, remains the main source of genetic resources and seeds for small-scale farmers.

Four two-week courses of the training programme address four areas in the conservation and use of plant genetic resources and seeds:

1. Market and chain development for genetic resources and seeds: 17 – 28 Sept 2007
2. Participatory approaches in genetic resource management and plant breeding: 17 – 28 Sept 2007
3. Conservation strategies and plant genetic resources policies: 1 – 12 Oct 2007
4. Design of plant breeding programmes addressing drought: 1 – 12 Oct 2007

For more information, see: [http://www.cdic.wur.nl/UK/newsagenda/agenda/Plant\\_genetic\\_resources\\_and\\_seeds.htm](http://www.cdic.wur.nl/UK/newsagenda/agenda/Plant_genetic_resources_and_seeds.htm)

## MISCELLANEOUS

### Regional Training Programme on Plant Genetic Resources and Seeds: Policies, Conservation and Use

Organized by Wageningen International and the Centre for Genetic Resources, the Netherlands, in cooperation with the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas, Bioversity International and the Ethiopian Institute for Agricultural Research, this training programme will take place in Ethiopia, from 17 Sept – 12 Oct 2007.

The Central and West Asia and North Africa (CWANA) region is the centre of genetic diversity

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2007-08

Date	Event	Place
May 5-11	ISTA: Congress	Iguassu Falls (BR)
May 21-23	<b>ISF Annual Congress</b>	Christchurch (NZ)
May 29-Jun 1	UPOV: Technical Working Party for Agricultural Crops	Budapest (HU)
Jun 11-15	FAO: Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture	Rome (IT)
Jun 11-15	UPOV: Technical Working Party for Vegetable Crops	Nairobi (KE)
Jul 11-12	OECD: Annual Meeting of the Seed Schemes	Paris (FR)
Jul 13	OECD: WG on Varietal Identity and Varietal Purity	Paris (FR)
Aug 25-27	ISF: Tree and Shrub Seed Group	Elsinor (DK)
Sept 4	ISF: Pathogen Codification Working Group	Nyon (CH)
Sept 5-7	ISF: ISHI-Veg Technical Coordination Group	Nyon (CH)
Sept 27-28	OECD: OECD Schemes for Forest Reproductive Material	Paris (FR)
Oct 15-16	ESA: Annual Meeting 2007	Brussels (BE)
Oct 22-23	UPOV: Administrative and Legal Committee	Geneva (CH)
Oct 24	UPOV: Consultative Committee	Geneva (CH)
Oct 26	UPOV: Administrative and Legal Committee Advisory Group	Geneva (CH)
Oct 29-Nov 2	FAO: Second Meeting of the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture	Rome (IT)
Oct 29	ISF: Intellectual Property Committee	Athens (GR)
Oct 30	ISF: Sustainable Agriculture Committee	Athens (GR)
Oct 31	ISF: Breeders Committee	Athens (GR)
Nov 1	ISF: Forage and Turf Crops Section Board	Athens (GR)
Nov 1	ISF: Industrial Crops Section Board	Athens (GR)
Nov 1	ISF: Maize and Sorghum Section Board	Athens (GR)
Nov 2	ISF: Vegetable and Ornamental Crops Section Board	Athens (GR)
Nov 2	ISF: Cereals and Pulse Crops Section Board	Athens (GR)
Nov 2	ISF: Executive Committee	Athens (GR)
Nov 3	ISF: Board of Directors	Athens (GR)
Nov 12-14	APSA: Annual Asian Seed Congress	Manila (PH)
Nov 18-20	EESNET: Seventh Annual Meeting	Novi Sad (YU)
Nov 19-21	CWANA: Second International Seed Trade Conference	Cairo (EG)
<b>2008</b>		
Feb 26-29	AFSTA: Eighth Annual Congress	Casablanca (MA)
May 26-28	<b>ISF Annual Congress</b>	Prague (CZ)
Jun 16-19	ISTA Annual Meeting	Bologna (IT)
Jun 29-Jul 3	OECD: Annual Meeting of the Seed Schemes	Chicago (US)

NOTE: The ISF Secretariat tries its best to confirm the date and location of meetings before listing them. Occasionally, however, dates and/or locations change due to unforeseen circumstances. For updates, visit the ISF website.