



The International Treaty

ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE



<http://www.planttreaty.org>

# Experiences and lessons learned from implementation of the International Treaty

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# Contents

1. Background information on the International Treaty
  - The rationale of the Treaty
  - The Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing
  - Farmers' Rights
2. The Benefit-sharing Fund
  - structure, objectives and targets
  - the call for proposals 2010
  - farmers and farming communities as beneficiaries of the Fund
3. Participation by farmers in GB sessions and inter-sessional processes
  - Farmers' Rights
  - Sustainable use of plant genetic resources
4. Summary of experiences



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## Background information on the International Treaty

## What are the Treaty's objectives?



<http://www.planttreaty.org>

- The conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture
- The fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from their use, **in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity**, for sustainable agriculture and food security

# The scope of the Treaty is all plant genetic resources for food and agriculture



# The Treaty

- The governance structure created by countries to secure food crops
  - focus on 64 of the most important crops for global food security
  - Crops that together account for 80% of the food we derive from plants.
- Addresses food security at a time when more than 75% of all crop diversity has been permanently lost and the world's population is moving rapidly toward 9 billion.
- Established two core systems:
  - Multilateral system of access and benefit sharing
  - Benefit-sharing Fund

# The Multilateral System (MLS)

The MLS places 64 of the most important crops into an easily accessible global pool of genetic resources that is available for research, breeding and training for food and agriculture.

All material within the Multilateral System is transferred from Providers to Recipients all over the world under Standard Material Transfer Agreements.

The MLS has more than 1.3 million documented accessions of plant genetic material.

Some indigenous farming communities have expressly notified their inclusion of genetic material in the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing

# The Multilateral System (MLS)

It sees more than 600 documented transfers of plant genetic material, daily.

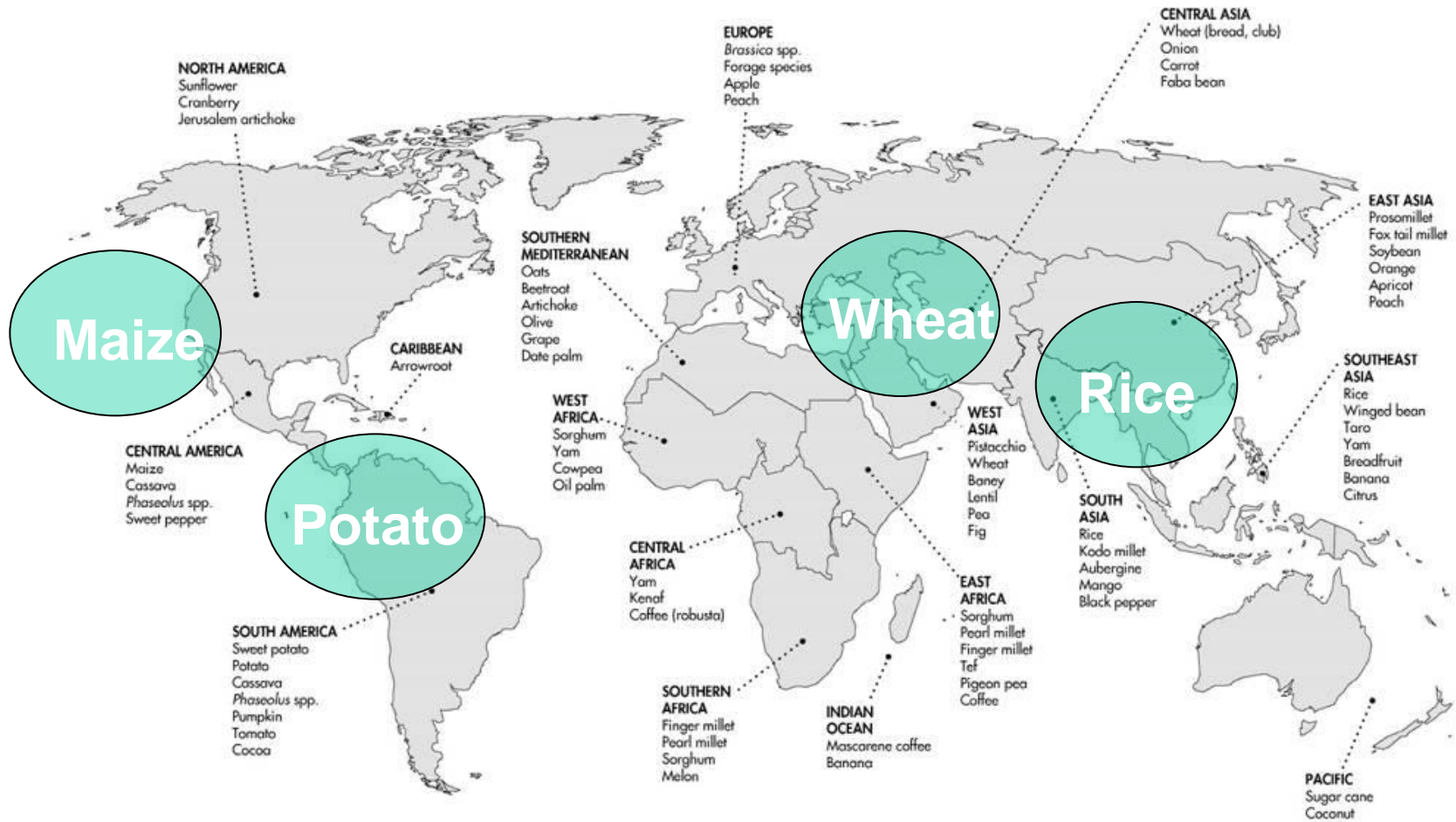
The Treaty requires Contracting Parties to provide facilitated access to the crop varieties contained in the Multilateral System in exchange for a commitment to share the monetary and non-monetary benefits arising from the use of that material.

# Why do we have the Treaty?

In short:

To meet the challenges of food security  
and the interdependence on food crops

# In illustration – a longer answer



# The foresight of the CBD and FAO

1992 - Nairobi Final Act, Resolution 3:

- *Recognizing* the **basic and continuing needs for sufficient food**, shelter, clothing, fuel, ornamental plants and medicinal products for peoples of the world,
- *Recognizing* the benefits from the care and improvement by the peoples of the world of **animal, plant and microbial genetic resources** to supply those basic needs and from the institutional research on and development of those genetic resources,

[www.cbd.int/doc/handbook/cbd-hb-09-en.pdf](http://www.cbd.int/doc/handbook/cbd-hb-09-en.pdf)

# The farsight of the CBD and FAO

⇒ Development and adoption of the

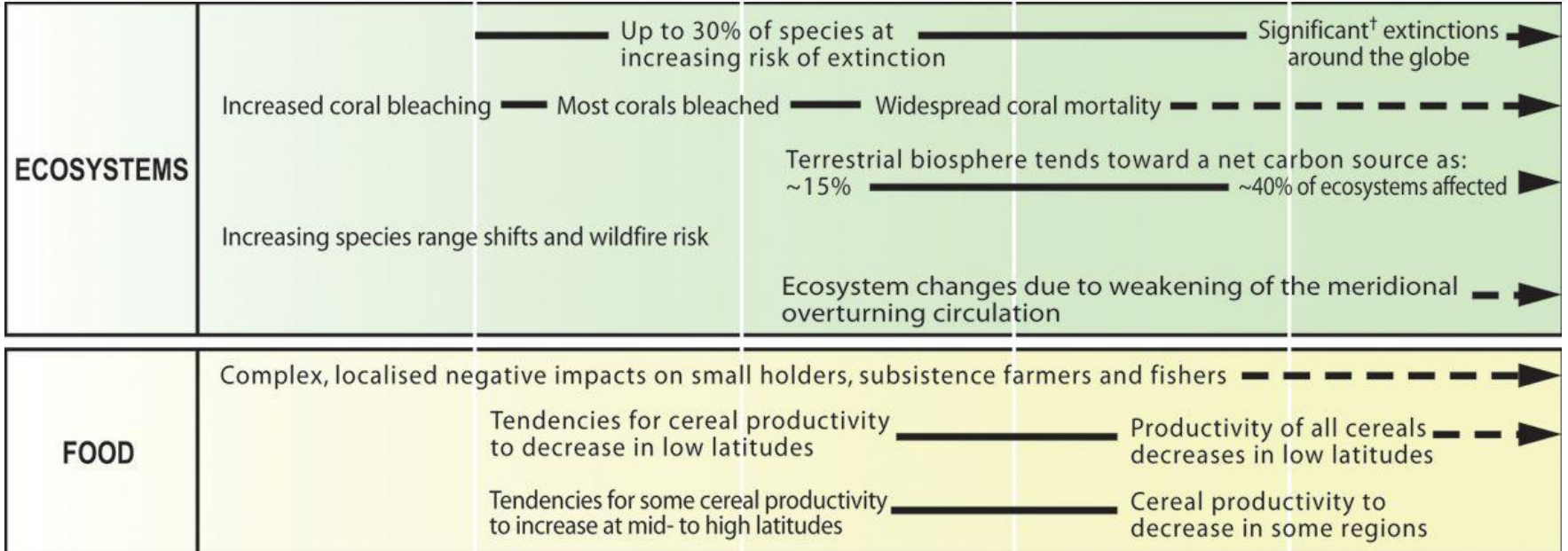
International Treaty on  
Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, in  
harmony with the CBD

An Instrument for the 21st Century

# In future: Increased inter-dependence

Global average annual temperature change relative to 1980-1999 (°C)

0 1 2 3 4 5 °C



## In future: increased inter-dependence (2)

- We need action now since interdependence will be even greater
- Repetition of history now: environment and agriculture to work hand in hand

PGRFA: vital contribution to answer the challenges of climate change

# Key role of farmers in achieving sustainable food production

- farmers created crops
- farmers conserve PGRFA
- farmers improve PGRFA
- farmers make available PGRFA for research and breeding

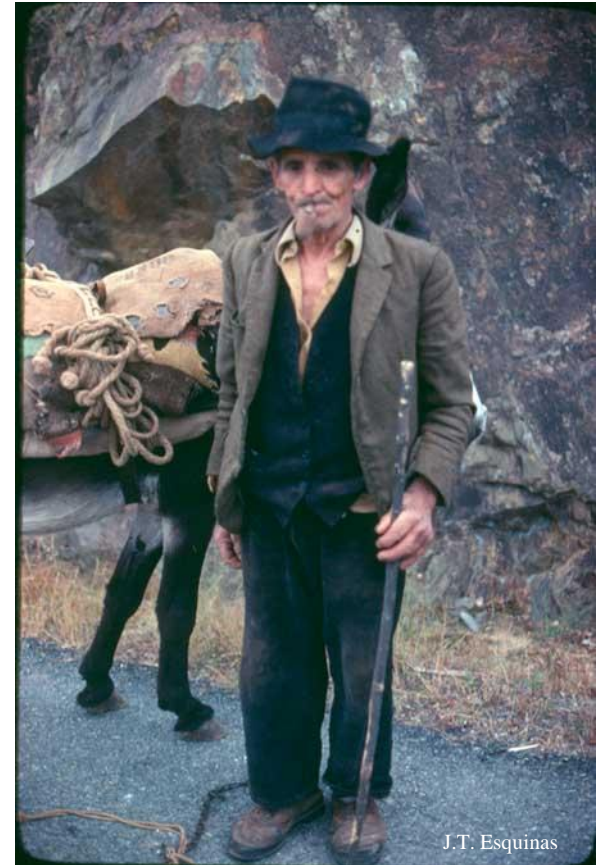
Farmers' Rights: one of the cornerstones of the International Treaty

# Article 9: Farmers' Rights

Recognition of the enormous contribution that farmers and their communities have made and continue to make to the conservation and development of plant genetic resources.

Farmers' Rights include the protection of traditional knowledge and the right to participate equitably in benefit-sharing and in national decision-making about plant genetic resources.

Governments are responsible for realizing these rights.



# How do farming communities participate in Treaty processes?

- By having their voice heard in sessions of the Governing Body of the International Treaty and by taking an active role in intersessional processes;
- Through Capacity Building;
- By receiving financial assistance under the Benefit-sharing Fund.



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# The Benefit-sharing Fund of the International Treaty

# The Benefit-sharing Fund

Established

- to invest in high impact projects;
- to supports smallholder farmers in developing countries;
- to promote crop improvement, e.g. to keep farmers ahead of the climate change curve.

The Benefit-sharing Fund's current focus is on:

- Food security
- Adaptation of crops to the effects of climate change

The Benefit-sharing Fund prioritizes:

- Managing and conserving plant genetic resources on farm
- The sustainable use of plant genetic resources
- Information exchange, technology transfer & capacity building

# The Benefit-sharing Fund (3)

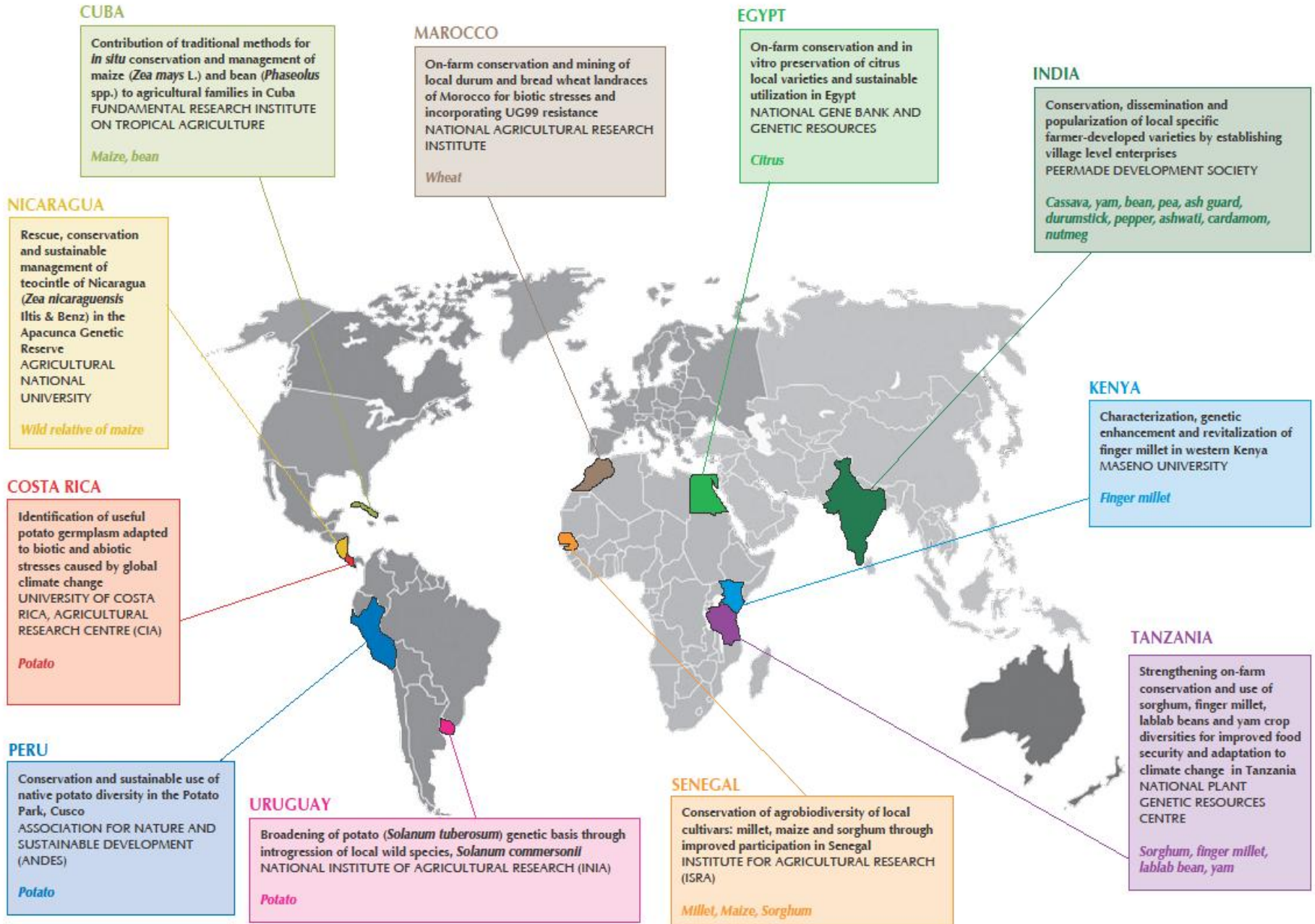
## 1<sup>st</sup> Benefit-sharing Cycle

The Fund became fully operational in June 2009. The financial support of Spain, Italy, Norway and Switzerland allowed for the approval of 11 projects.

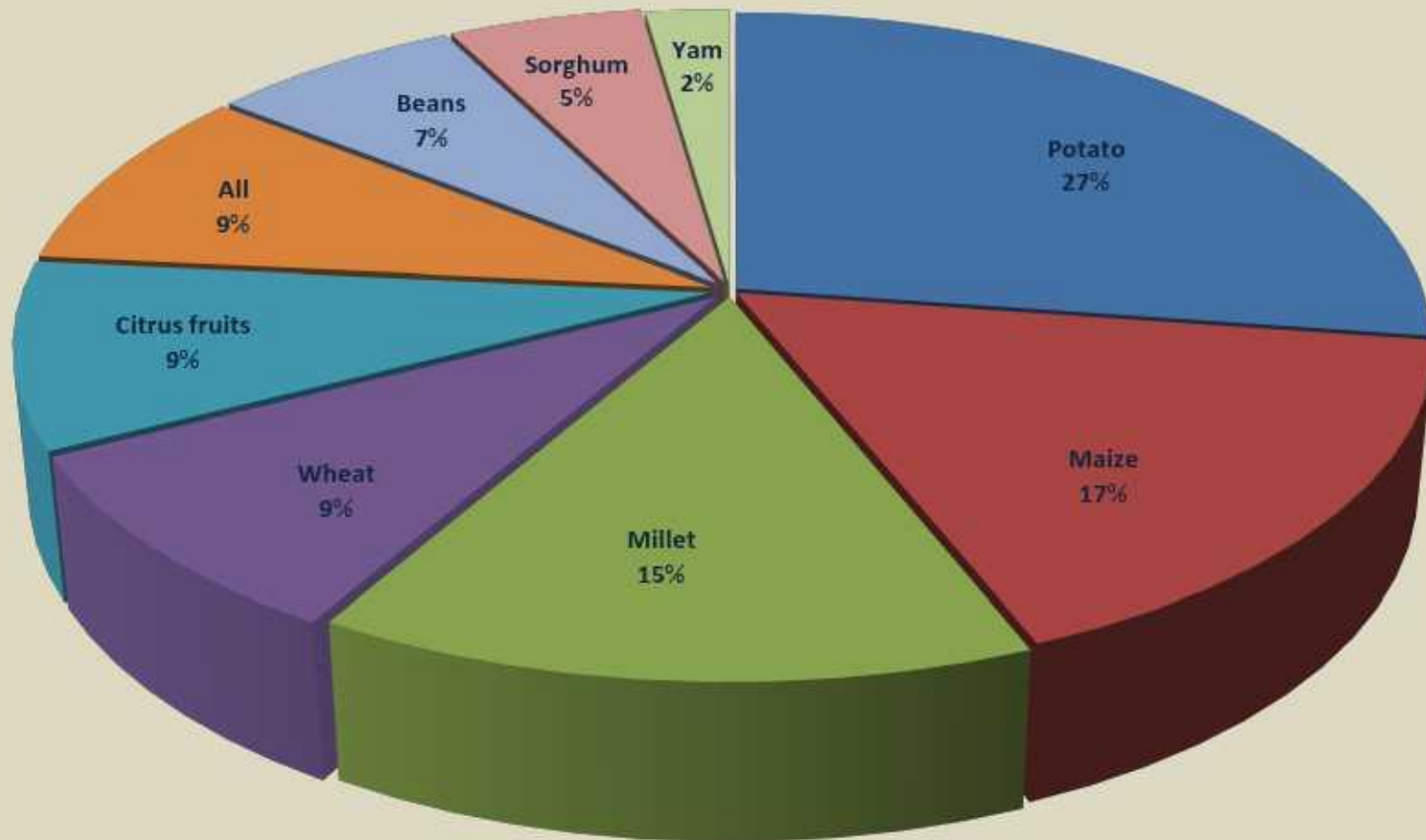
11 small scale pilot projects each upto US\$50,000.

<http://www.planttreaty.org/content/projects-2009-2011>

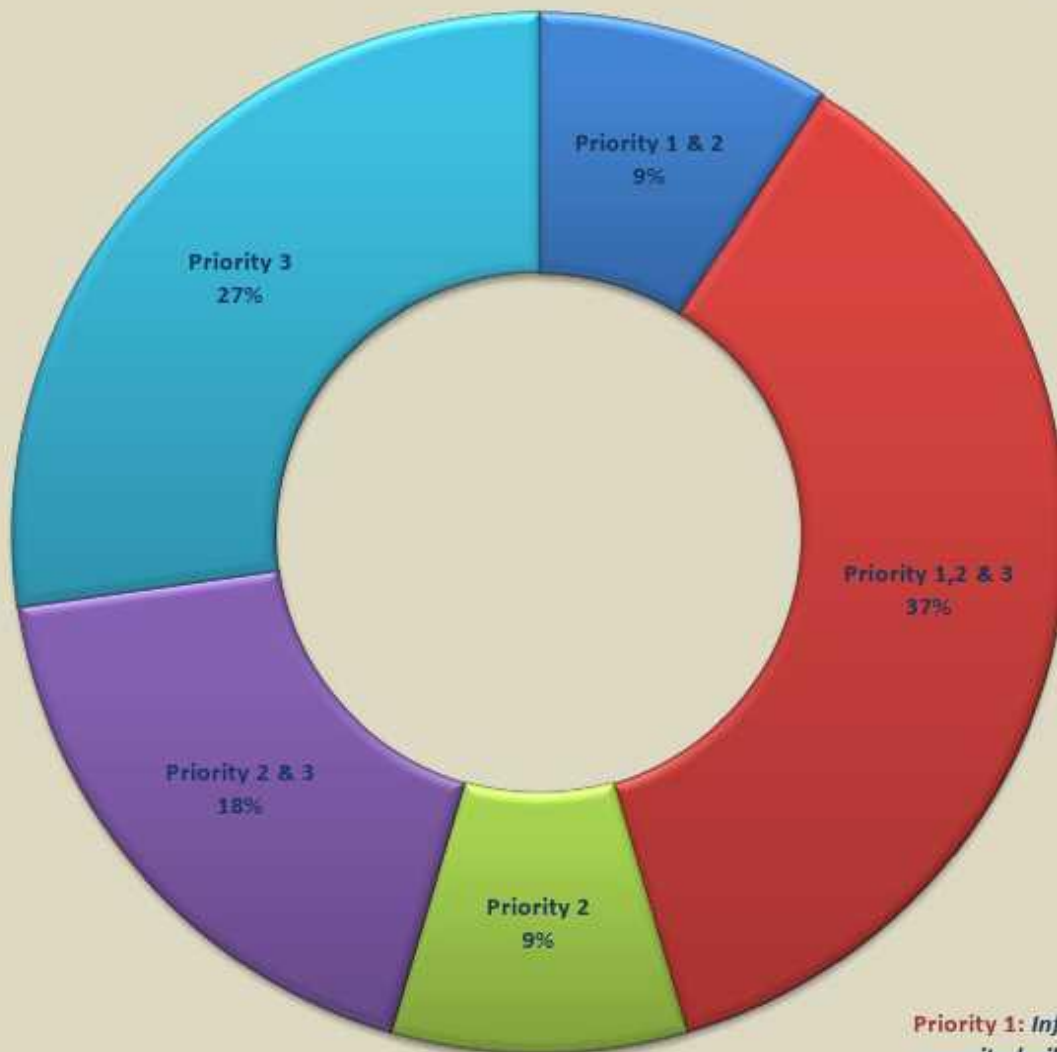
# Projects 2009-2011 under the Benefit-sharing Fund



## Crops addressed by approved 1st Cycle Projects



## Priorities addressed in approved 1st cycle projects



- Priority 1:** *Information exchange, technology transfer and capacity-building*
- Priority 2:** *Managing and conserving plant genetic resources on farm*
- Priority 3:** *The sustainable use of plant genetic resources*

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Benefit-sharing Cycle

## Objective and windows

**Objective:** assisting farmers to adapt to climate change through a targeted set of high impact projects on the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture

**Window 1** – Strategic Action Plans at a regional, sub-regional, eco-regional or crop regional level. These grants have a ceiling level of \$400,000 each and a duration of 12 months.

(Subsequent calls for proposals will seek strategy implementation projects)

**Window 2** – Immediate Action Projects, those delivering impact by adapting crops where there is a direct and urgent need of farmers for adaptation to climate change. The ceiling level of each is \$300,000 and a duration of 24 months.

# Type of projects funded: examples

Strategy to develop rice adapted varieties through participatory plant breeding in Asia

– *through a group of NGO's*

Strengthening regional capacities for modelling climate change impact to improve management of plant genetic resources

– *from a set of national Government institutions*

Characterisation of crop wild relatives to indentify useful germplasm adapted to biotic and abiotic stresses

– *proposed by a University research programme*

# The Benefit-sharing Fund (2)

The priorities of the Fund are aligned with those of the Global Plan of Action on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (GPA).

The second GPA was approved this year. The GPA sets forth 18 Priority Activity Areas for:

- In Situ Conservation and Management; Ex Situ Conservation; Sustainable Use; Building Sustainable Institutional and Human Capacities.

The extent to which developing countries will effectively implement the GPA depends on the effective implementation of the International Treaty and its funding strategy, of which the Benefit-sharing Fund is an essential component.

# Window 2

## Immediate Impact Projects



# Window 2

## Strategic Action Plans

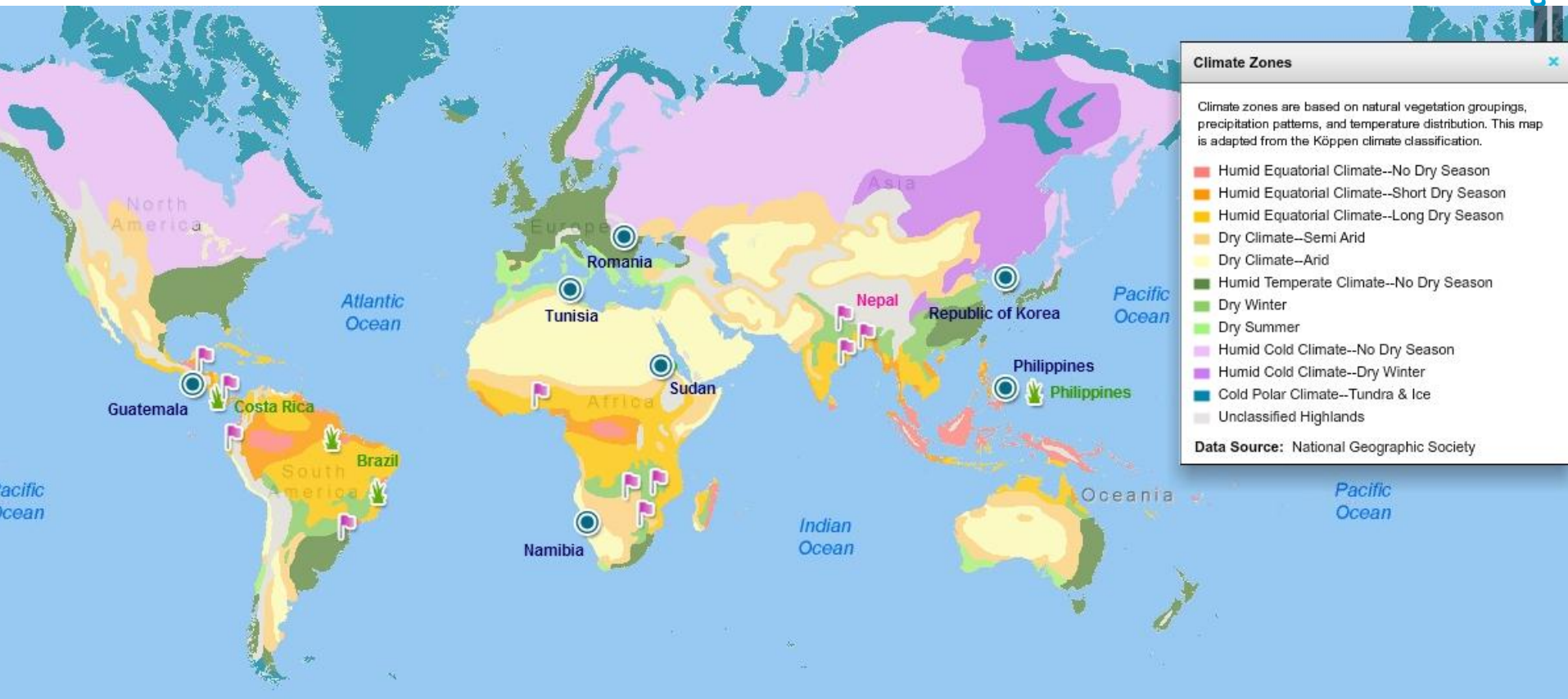


In blue – Projects implemented in one country

In green – Multi-country projects - headquarters of implementation agency

In red – Multiregional project managed from Nepal

# Window 1 – Climate Zones



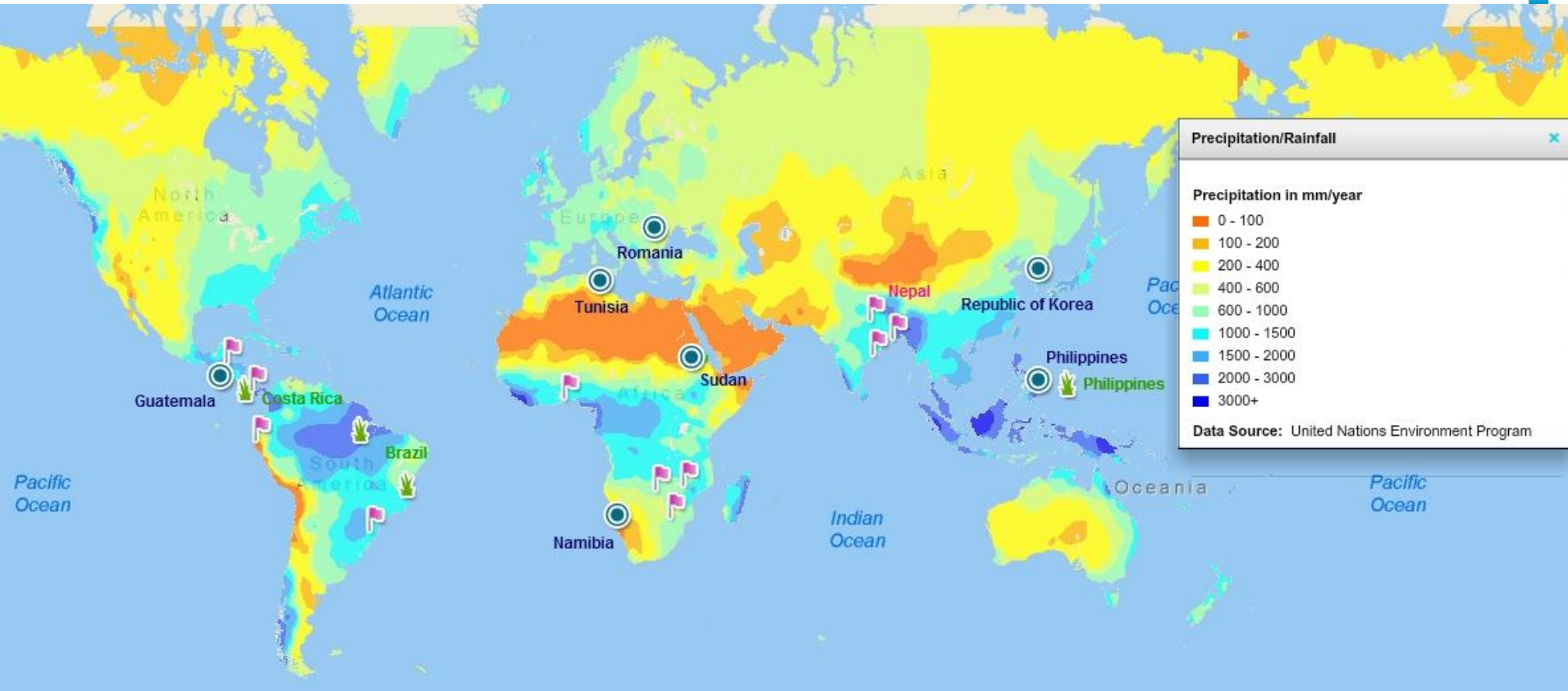
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In blue – Projects implemented in one country

In green – Multi-country projects - headquarters of implementation agency

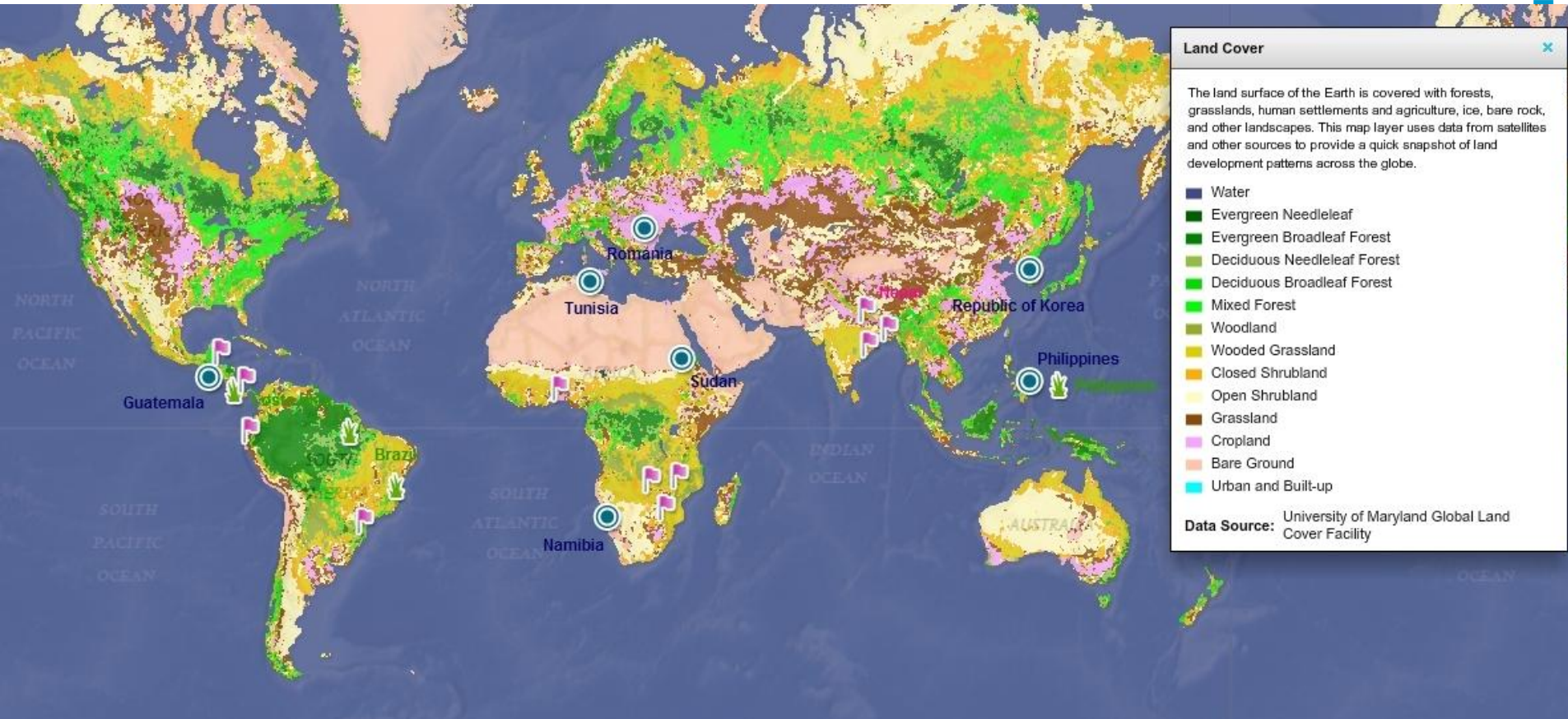
In red – Multiregional project managed from Nepal

# Window 1– Precipitations



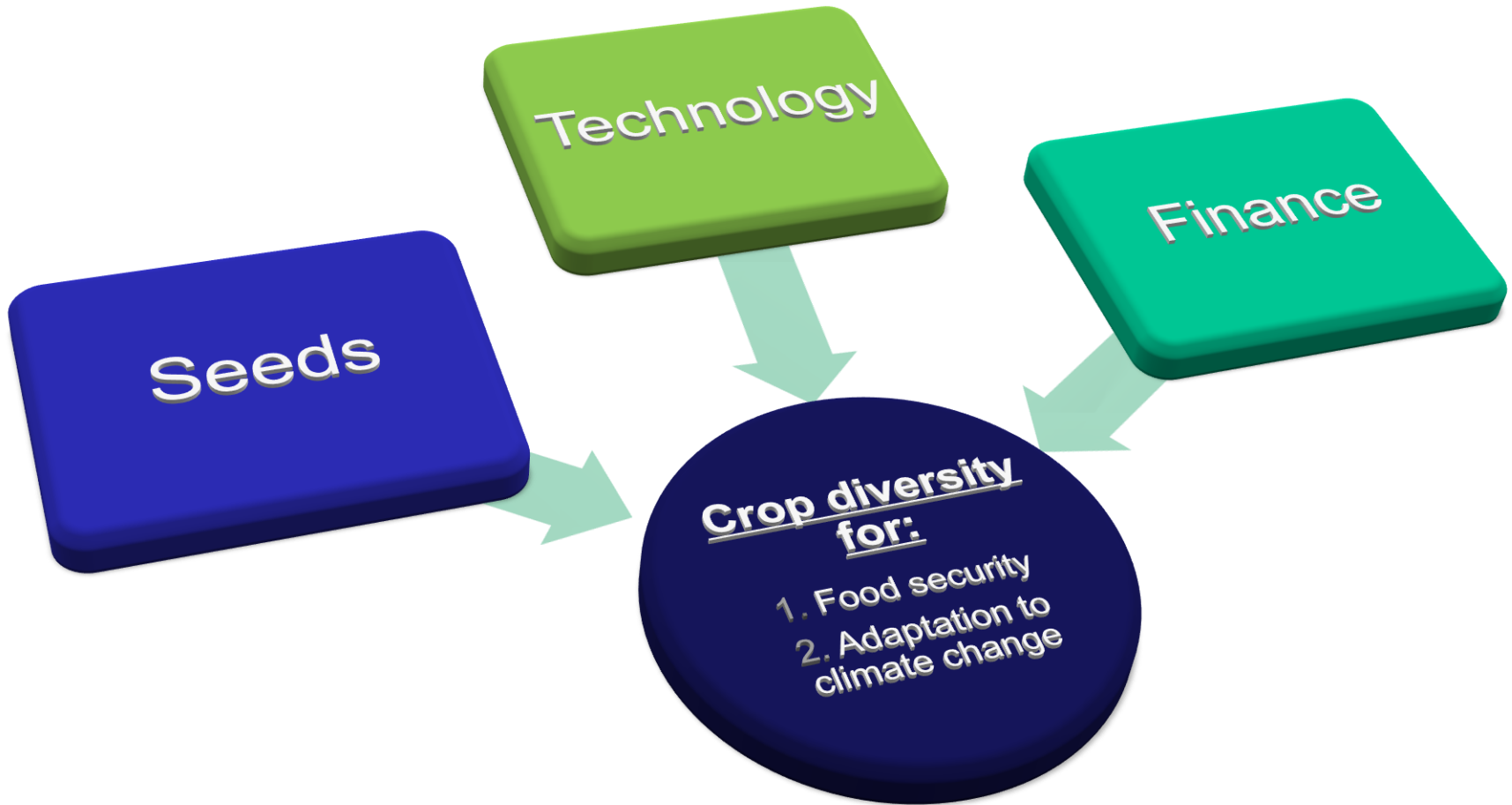
In blue – Projects implemented in one country  
In green – Multi-country projects - headquarters of implementation agency  
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# Window 1– Land cover



In blue – Projects implemented in one country  
In green – Multi-country projects - headquarters of implementation agency  
In red – Multiregional project managed from Nepal

# The Treaty – a fully operational global Instrument for ABS and food security



# Farmers are involved in all stages:

- They contributed to the designing of the programmatic approach.
- They can apply: **any governmental or non-governmental organization, including farmers and farmers' organizations, genebanks and research institutions, based in countries that are Contracting Parties to the International Treaty, may apply for grants under the Benefit-sharing Fund.**
- They benefit from a help desk service to structure their proposals (e.g. regional workshops)
- They receive funds and implement the projects
- They report on project implementation to the Governing Body of the International Treaty through the Secretariat
- They obtain additional resources from other funds and mechanisms to continue on-farm conservation and management of PGRFAs



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## **Farmers' participation in Sessions and inter-sessional processes of the Governing Body**

# At GB sessions the active participation by farmers' NGOs is facilitated



# At GB sessions the active participation by farmers' NGOs is facilitated (2)

The Governing Body

“Appreciated the involvement of farmers’ organization in its sessions and affirmed its commitment to continue involving farmers’ organizations in its further work”;

Rules of Procedures establish that organizations qualified in fields related to the Treaty can participate in GB sessions without the right to vote;

NGOs statements are included int the official report of the session, if supported by at least one Contracting Party



# At GB sessions the active participation by farmers' organizations is facilitated (3)

Farmers have space for NGO coordination meetings, preparatory events and side-events



# NGOs play a pivotal role in two intersessional processes

- Farmers' Rights
- Sustainable use of plant genetic resources

# Farmers' Rights

Global Consultation in 2010

Resolution 6/2011 of the Governing Body:

- invites each Contracting Party to review and adjust national implementing measures as well as to run national and local consultations;
- encourages Contracting Parties and other organizations to submit views, experiences and best practices;
- requests the Secretary to convene regional workshops involving farmers' organizations and other stakeholders and to disseminate relevant information;
- mandates the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Sustainable Use to consider the submissions and the workshop results.

# Sustainable Use of PGRs

Resolution 7/2011 of the Governing Body:

- calls for a stakeholders' consultation to devise a multi-year work programme in a participatory manner
- calls for submissions from Contracting Parties and relevant organizations
- establishes the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Sustainable Use to:
  - develop a toolbox to assist Contracting Parties
  - elaborate a draft work programme
  - cooperate with CBD, CGRFA and other processes and institutions

The Committee comprises two members per FAO region and up to ten technical experts representing all stakeholders' groups.

# Summary of experiences

- Farmers are a cornerstone of the Treaty's underpinning logic and operational systems (e.g. Farmers' Rights)
- It is an imperative that this element be adequately reflected in the *modus operandi* of the Treaty (e.g. Benefit-sharing Fund, capacity-building, tech transfer, etc.)
- Progressively, the recognition of farmers' role is translated from Treaty text into international implementing processes (e.g. sustainable use of PGRs)
- An active inter-sessional process with the participation of farmers' organizations facilitates this translation (e.g. *Ad Hoc* Committee)

**Thank you! / Gracias! / Merci !**

For any further information:

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