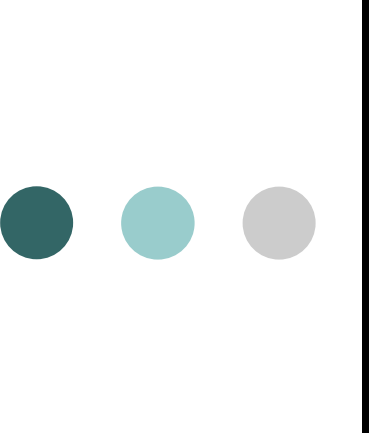# Agenda item no. 5

Position of executive director/executive secretary

MY TALK

- **Why to address this topic?**

- **ECPGR management, governance and resposibilities of coordinating secretariat - current situation**

- **The rationale for assigning new position of Executive Director / Executive Secretary**

- **Benefits for the ECPGR brought by new position of Executive Director / Executive Secretary**

- **Which is more appropriate term for our Programme?**

- **Terms of reference**

Why to address this topic?

The Review Panel Team has made the following recommendation, relevant to the ECPGR *Modus Operandi* and governance:

"an Executive Director should be appointed to represent ECPGR, to empower ECPGR as a self standing institution, to pursue the institutional establishment, to mobilize national commitment and resources, as well as to secure additional funding from entities such as the EC, the Global Crop Diversity Trust, and the International Treaty Secretariat".

Why to address this topic?

ECPGR SC at its twelfth meeting, last year in Bratislava, proposed two alternative titles for this position:

"Executive Secretary" and "Executive Director".

○ *The decision to assign this position should be budget-neutral and could simply involve a formalization of the position of the Secretary.*

○ *The Secretary should be empowered, in a way to be spelled out in the "Rules of Procedure".*

○ *This position should be "external", support good visibility of ECPGR and include the responsibility of raising funds and providing strategic inputs to the SC.*

○ *The Secretary should report only to the SC/Executive Committee*

ECPGR management, governance and responsibilities of coordinating secretariat – current situation

1. **Steering Committee –** top-level governance body, consisting of National Coordinators nominated by participating countries.

2. **Executive Committee –** of 5 members, including a chair, elected by SC in order to cover the whole European regions; its main tasks are to prepare de SC meetings, to offer guidance to the Secretariat, and to identify strategic issues relevant for ECPGR.

3. **Coordinating Secretariat** consisting of:

    ECPGR Coordinator (Lorenzo Maggioni – 100%) - has the overall responsibility for the implementation of the Secretariat's tasks. He reports to the Bioversity Regional Director for Europe and operates under the oversight of the ECPGR Steering Committee

    Programme Assistant (Lidwina Koop - 75%) - provides full administrative support to the Programme and reports to the ECPGR Coordinator.

    AEGIS Coordinator (Jan Engels - 50%) - is responsible for implementing the AEGIS related tasks, and reports to ECPGR Coordinator.

    Scientific Assistant (Elinor Lipman -50%) - takes care of the ECPGR publications, reports and other documents and provides support to the ECPGR Networks and Working Groups. She reports to the ECPGR Coordinator.

    EURISCO Coordinator (Sónia Dias) - funded through Bioversity's core resources. She reports to the Bioversity Information Management specialist and is co-supervised by the ECPGR Coordinator and under the general oversight of the Documentation and   Information Network Coordinating Group.

4. **Network Coordinated Groups (NCGs) -** of 5 – 10 people for each Network, chaired by a Network Coordinator

5. **Working Group Chairs and Vice-Chairs**

ECPGR management, governance and responsibilities of coordinating secretariat – current situation (ctd.)

1. To ensure the implementation of the Programme in accordance with the mandate given by the SC;

2. To coordinate the activities carried out in the framework of the Programme;

3. To be responsible for the financial management of the Programme;

4. To provide progress reports on a regular basis;

5. To provide technical and financial reports to the SC for approval;

ECPGR management, governance and responsibilities of coordinating secretariat – current situation (ctd.)

6. To provide support to WGs and ensure that the agreed workplans are carried out;

7. To provide support to NCGs and, where necessary, to assist in preparing evaluation on Network activities and the formulation of workplans and priorities;

8. To initiate ad hoc activities in accordance with guidance provided by the SC;

9. To gather and distribute information;

10. To assist in the formulation of project proposals for joint activities and to implement projects, as agreed by the SC;

ECPGR management, governance and responsibilities of coordinating secretariat – current situation (ctd.)

11. To search for donors to support particular elements of workplans and ad hoc activities;

12. To provide a link with other regions;

13. To contribute to raising public awareness about the Programme and its activities;

14. To undertake any further activity as agreed mutually with the SC.

ECPGR management, governance and responsibilities of coordinating secretariat – current situation (ctd.)

At the outset of a new Phase, the Coordinating Secretariat will:

1. Provide the SC with a calendar of the meetings foreseen for the entire Phase, in order to allow the member countries to plan their participation in WG meetings.

Before the *Mid-term Steering Committee meeting* (one month prior to the meeting), the Coordinating Secretariat will:

1. Provide the SC with a compilation of the NCG reports on progress made by each Network during the first half Phase;

2. Provide the SC with a compilation of all the proposals received from the NCGs related to the subsequent Phase;

3. Prepare a document for the SC on new policy developments in international fora that might impact on ECPGR activities;

4. Provide information on the current status of the ECPGR finances.

ECPGR management, governance and responsibilities of coordinating secretariat – current situation (ctd.)

Before the *End-of-Phase Steering Committee meeting* (one month prior to the meeting), the Coordinating Secretariat will:

1. Provide the SC with a compilation of the NCG reports on progress made by each Network in the current Phase;

2. Provide the SC with a compilation of all the revised and detailed proposals received from the NCGs related to the subsequent Phase;

3. Update the document containing information on new policy developments and make it available to the SC in a revised form, with the purpose of verifying the choice of priorities made in the previous Mid-term meeting;

4. Provide information on the ECPGR finances at the end of the current Phase;

5. Provide a draft budget for the subsequent Phase

The rationale for assigning new position of Executive Director / Executive Secretary

ECPGR should move forward, and to play an enhanced role on PGRFA arena

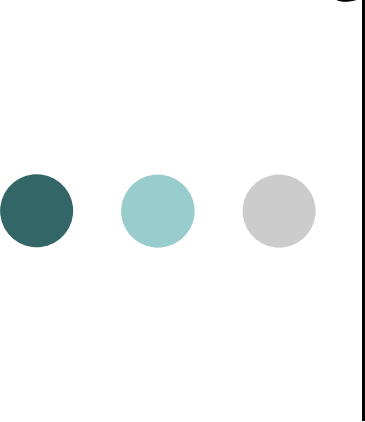## To achieve this strategic objective:

- more authority and
- resources are needed
- management and governance bodies to be adapted

Benefits for the ECPGR brought by new position of Executive Director / Executive Secretary

- New position brings a higher recognition necessary to credibly approach donors;

- ED/ES can make commitments on behalf of the ECPGR, with the consent of the SC;

- New position can positively influence the Programme's external perception, and can improve the public image and visibility of the organization.

Which is more appropriate term for our Programme?

Both terms, either executive director or executive secretary, indicate top executives positions, maybe with a strong authority connotation in case of the firstly mentioned.

○ **Executive director / Managing director / Chief executive officer / Executive secretary** are terms widely used for non-profit organizations, and, typically act as top operational and management authority in the organisation.

Which is more appropriate term for our Programme?

Typically, executive director is a member of the Board (SC), and this brings:

Advantages

- provides the ED with a vote to support recommendations;

- empower him/her with same SC members' responsibilities;

- could provide more leadership credibility for director;

Disadvantages

- difficult for SC to evaluate one of its own members and ED should have regular evaluations;

- if position is paid there could be some animosity among members of SC who carry out their tasks on the basis of inputs-in-kind.

Which is more appropriate term for our Programme?

SC favoured "executive secretary" term

Rationale:

- **to ensures a distinction between management body – provided by executive secretary and governance structure which stays with SC;**

- **this allows for clear lines of authority.**

Which is more appropriate term for our Programme?

SC favoured "executive secretary" term

Rationale:

- **Closer to ECPGR current structure:**

  - **Coordinating Secretariat** ➡ **Office of the Secretary**

  - **ECPGR Coordinator** ➡ **Executive Secretary**

    or

  - **AEGIS Coordinator** ➡ **Executive Secretary**

    or

  - **EURISCO Coordinator** ➡ **Executive Secretary**

    or
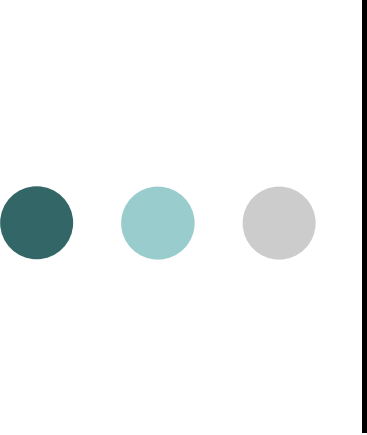   **???????**

Terms of reference

Executive secretary acts as:

- **decision maker** - contributing to high level decision on policy and strategy;

- **advisor** on policy matters to the ExCo/SC;

- administrative **manager** - presides over organization's day to day operations;

- **leader** - for fund-raising activities, and proper management of the financial resources of the Programme;

- **communicator** - building strategic collaboration and relations with external Partners including governmental / non-governamental organisms at global / regional /national levels, and representing ECPGR in top-level international fora and other relevant meetings.

In essence, the SC grants the executive secretary the authority to run the organization.

Terms of reference – executive secretary

- The responsibilities of the Executive Secretary are set by SC/ExCo

- The term of the Executive Secretary shall be 3 - 4 years

- The Executive Secretary may not serve for more than 2 consecutive terms

- The Executive Secretary shall report to SC/ExCo on aregular basis

Open discussions!