



**Conserving plant diversity
for future generations**

www.farmerspride.eu
@PGRInSitu | #EUfarmerspride



Funded by the Horizon 2020
Framework Programme
of the European Union

Farmer's Pride

Networking, partnerships and tools to enhance *in situ* conservation of European plant genetic resources

Advocacy plans

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Policy briefs and dialogue	3
3. Advocacy aim and objectives.....	4
4. Nominations for the inclusion of PGR populations in the network	4
5. Target stakeholders.....	4
6. Monitoring and evaluation	5
Annex A: Advocacy plan for policymakers	6
National advocacy	6
European advocacy with policymakers	7
Global advocacy with policymakers	8
Annex B: Advocacy plan for the plant breeding and seed sectors	10
Annex C: Advocacy plan for farmers and other landrace maintainers	12
Annex D: Advocacy plan for environmental and nature conservation organizations	14

1. Introduction

The advocacy plans set out in this document are for implementation by the Farmer's Pride partners, with support from the other project collaborators: Farmer's Pride Ambassadors, members of the External Advisory Board (EAB) and the wider stakeholder community.¹

The plans aim to ensure that the project's outputs are taken up effectively by the identified stakeholders, which is key to achieving the project's goal of creating a European network for *in situ* conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources (PGR) (see Network Proposal document on the project website). Advocacy at all levels for the establishment of the network has been ongoing since the project's inception. The plans set out in this document reflect progress made to date and incorporate the actions proposed at the Farmer's Pride second stakeholder workshop held in October 2019.

These plans provide a framework for project collaborators to identify opportunities for advocacy with stakeholders within the scope of their influence, whether at national, European or global level, to the end of the project in October 2020 and beyond.

The policy context and network proposals for these advocacy plans has been set out in detail in existing documents available on the project website, including:

- '[White paper](#)' prepared for discussion at the second project workshop;
- [Introductory policy brief](#), available on the project website in several languages;
- Network Proposal, available on the project website in several languages.

2. Policy briefs and dialogue

Our advocacy plans are intricately linked to the project's work to create a policy-enabling environment that will encourage uptake of the project's outputs. To achieve this, project activities include developing several policy briefs and engaging in a policy dialogue to create awareness and share policy recommendations among policymakers and other stakeholders:

- An introductory policy brief was published in August 2019 (available in several languages on the project website www.farmerspride.eu) which briefly describes the context and potential solutions to be put in place through collaborative working;
- A second policy brief is to be prepared by the end of the project to present non-technical summaries of the project's outputs and to create an awareness of the multi-actor network for landraces (LR) and crop wild relatives (CWR) in Europe;
- Dialogues with policymakers at national government level as well as the European Commission are underway to ensure that the right policies are created and supported to promote the *in situ* conservation and use of PGR. This includes key meetings with policy makers at EU level as well as in individual countries and a policy dialogue workshop during the final dissemination conference in October 2020, which is a key milestone in our advocacy plans.

¹ Details of the Farmer's Pride Ambassadors and EAB members is available at www.farmerspride.eu

3. Advocacy aim and objectives

The over-arching aim of the advocacy plans set out below is to secure active support from external stakeholders (see section 5) to establish a European network for *in situ* conservation and sustainable use of PGR, as outlined in the network proposal. This must include securing a direct long-term commitment from European institutions to provide the necessary governance and funding for the network to be sustainable.

The advocacy plans provide a framework for the Farmer's Pride project collaborators to identify opportunities within their scope of influence to engage stakeholders and increase the project's overall impact.

More specifically, **the objectives** of the advocacy plans are to:

- Build a coalition of support for the European network, with a 'critical mass' of sites and stakeholders identified before the network is launched;
- Secure expressions of interest for the inclusion of PGR populations from across Europe in the network (see below);
- Embed the network within European policy and long-term funding streams;
- Build bridges between *in situ* conservation stakeholders, *ex situ* collection holders and plant breeders / farmers / landrace maintainers to enhance sustainable use of *in situ* conserved PGR.

Each of these objectives will be relevant to the target stakeholders in different ways, as described below.

4. Nominations for the inclusion of PGR populations in the network

A key objective of our advocacy is to have a significant number of localities (e.g., farms, informally managed sites and protected areas) nominated for inclusion in the network before the Farmer's Pride conference and end of the project.

A new page on the project website will provide further information and a link to an online survey to register expressions of interest from custodians of LR and CWR. The information gathered will be used to promote the establishment of the network and, if we are successful in establishing the network (even beyond the end of the Farmer's Pride project), the respondents will be contacted for more detailed information and about next steps. This will be done in liaison with the relevant ECPGR National Coordinators or other relevant national authority.

5. Target stakeholders

Our target stakeholders fall into four main groups and the Annexes set out tailored advocacy plans for each of these groups:

- A. Policymakers in the agriculture and environment sectors;
- B. The plant breeding and seed sector;
- C. Farmers and other landrace maintainers, and their associations;
- D. Organizations responsible for protection of the environment and nature conservation, including protected area managers.

According to their capacity and the context in which they are working, all project collaborators are requested to support the delivery of these advocacy plans with relevant stakeholders, either nationally or internationally, as appropriate. They should identify the most relevant stakeholders and take the opportunities for securing their support for network establishment in the remainder of the project.

Several partners and FPAs are coordinating our policy and advocacy activities as part of the policy taskforce:

- **Partners:** Bioversity (Chair), ARCHE-NOAH, Euroseeds, Eurosite, Plantlife, Pro Specie Rara, University of Birmingham, University of Perugia;
- **Ambassadors:** Susanne Barth (Agriculture and Food Development Authority, Ireland), Paul Olson (KWS SAAT SE, Germany) and Nihan Yenilmez-Arpa (Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs, Turkey).

A number of channels can be used for advocacy and in some cases these overlap with our communications and dissemination activities. Below is a suggested **menu of options** for project collaborators to choose from according to their capacity and the context in which they are working:

- Dissemination and promotion of the Farmer's Pride policy briefs, network proposal, survey of expressions of interest in joining the network and other outputs available on the project website;
- Blogs and articles in stakeholders' own websites and newsletters;
- National workshops for key stakeholders to consider the network proposal and nominate localities for inclusion;
- Attendance and presentations at conferences, workshops and other sector/industry meetings;
- Face-to-face meetings with key policymakers and other individuals;
- Promotion and advocacy on Twitter and other social media.

6. Monitoring and evaluation

The project collaborators are asked to report any activities completed to help deliver these advocacy plans in a short email to Karen Inwood at Plantlife International (email: Karen.Inwood@plantlife.org.uk). For each stakeholder group, specific indicators have been developed to monitor the progress in the implementation of prescribed activities.

Annex A: Advocacy plan for policymakers

National advocacy

At the national level, Farmer's Pride partners and FPAs will be the main drivers for advocacy aimed towards national level policymakers.

Target stakeholders

Each project partner or FPA will be able to identify relevant policymakers for their country and many of these may have already been involved in Farmer's Pride. They could include:

- ECPGR National Coordinators;
- Chairs of national PGR committees (where relevant);
- CBD and International Treaty national focal points;
- Heads of agriculture policy and nature conservation/biodiversity policy within the relevant ministries.

Key messages

- The European network for *in situ* conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources is vital to the success of national actions for biodiversity conservation, resilient agriculture, and food, nutrition, livelihood and economic security;
- The support of national governments is needed to secure EU leadership in the establishment, governance and long-term sustainability of the network;
- National policymakers are asked to:
 - promote the establishment of the network to the European Commission and other relevant European governments and agencies;
 - encourage expressions of interest in joining the network from stakeholders in their country, through the survey on the project website.

Recommended activities

According to their capacity and the context in which they are working, project partners and FPAs are asked to write to these policymakers and share the introductory policy brief and network proposal, outlining our key messages and requesting an (online) meeting as soon as possible with them.

Endorsement from the other stakeholder groups could also be used to provide evidence for policymakers of wider support for the network (see advocacy plans with other stakeholder groups). This could be demonstrated, for example, in the form of a letter signed by national organizations and networks from the agricultural, plant breeding and nature conservation sectors.

Menu of suggested actions for Farmer's Pride partners and FPAs		
Action	Indicator	Responsible
Identification of policymakers	List of policy makers by country	National partners and FPAs
Dissemination of the project publications	Number of policymakers to which policy brief and network proposal is sent	All partners and FPAs

Online meetings or email discussions with policymakers	Number of meetings documented with a brief report of outcome	All partners and FPAs
Endorsement by other stakeholders	Number of organizations publicly supporting the network	All partners and FPAs
Request stakeholders to propose localities for CWR / LR conservation to join the new network	Number of localities from across Europe proposed for inclusion in the network	All partners and FPAs

European advocacy with policymakers

At European level, our primary targets are DG Environment, DG Agriculture and DG Sante (Health and Food Safety) at the European Commission. Advocacy with representatives of these DGs to date has provoked positive reactions. For example, a meeting was held with DG Environment in December 2018, a representative from DG Environment participated and made a presentation at the second Farmer's Pride workshop in October 2019 and the University of Birmingham and Universidad Rey Juan Carlos have been following up to promote the conservation of CWR within the Natura 2000 network. A representative of DG Agriculture and Rural Development also participated in the workshop via teleconference. Key partners in this advocacy are University of Birmingham, Bioversity, Euroseeds, and Eurosite.

The policy taskforce is planning meetings with the three DGs in Brussels in order to:

- Present the proposal for the establishment of the European network for *in situ* conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources;
- Solicit feedback on the proposal from the meeting participants with a view to establishing a concrete way forward for its validation , and to commitments regarding network governance;
- Discuss the participation of DG representatives at the policy round table session during the Farmer's Pride final conference.

Other partners will be invited to attend the Brussels meeting to show that the project has support from key stakeholder groups at the EU and global levels.

We will also build support and demonstrate the need for the network to European institutions via other channels of influence, including:

- ECPGR coordination structures including the Executive Committee:
 - Active support from ECPGR is very important to the success of the European network and, in turn, this support will help to demonstrate a joined-up approach to *in situ* conservation of PGR;
 - Advocacy will be undertaken by the project partners who play influential roles in ECPGR, including the Chair of the On-Farm Working Group (Valeria Negri, UNIPG) and Chair of the Wild Species Conservation in Genetic Reserves Working Group (Nigel Maxted, UoB);
 - All relevant partners are asked to complement this through advocacy with National Coordinators and other contacts;

- European Environment Agency (capacity permitting);
- Members of the European Parliament (capacity permitting);
- European Association for Research on Plant Breeding (EUCARPIA);

Where possible given travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 virus, European advocacy will also be carried out at meetings, workshops and conferences attended by Farmer's Pride partners, FPA and EAB members, such as the 21st [EUCARPIA General Congress](#), Rotterdam, the Netherlands, 23-28 August 2020.

Global advocacy with policymakers

Our primary targets for global advocacy are the secretariats of the following:

- FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
- International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
- Convention on Biological Diversity
- Global Crop Diversity Trust

Representatives of the FAO (Dr Chike Mba) and International Treaty (Ms Mary Jane Ramos de la Cruz) participated in the second Farmer's Pride workshop and will further advocate the objectives of the Farmer's Pride project within their respective global institutions. Dr Mba is a member of the Farmer's Pride EAB and provides an ongoing link with other regional and global initiatives to establish networks for *in situ* conservation.

There are several key opportunities where advocacy of the project can be made at the global level. Where possible given travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 virus, we will also seek to have a visible Farmer's Pride presence at the events listed below. Dates are tentative.

Month	Dates	Event	Farmer's Pride attendance
June 2020	15-16	First International Multi-stakeholder Symposium on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture - Technical Consultation on on-farm management and <i>in situ</i> conservation	Chike Mba (EAB member) Others to be confirmed
June 2020	17-19	Tenth Session of the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture	Chike Mba (EAB member) Others to be confirmed
October 2020	5-9	Final Farmer's Pride conference, workshop and policy roundtable in Troia, Portugal	All Partners, FPAs and EAB
January 2021	7-15	IUCN World Conservation Congress, Marseille, France	To be confirmed
<i>Delayed – date to be confirmed</i>		FAO CGRFA meeting Group of National Focal Points for Biodiversity for food and agriculture, Rome, Italy	Bioversity, EAB member
<i>Postponed to Sept 2021</i>		20 th Organic World Congress, Rennes Conference Center, France	

Policy roundtable

The policy roundtable session at the Farmer's Pride international conference in October 2020 will be the culmination of the advocacy work of the project. It will provide the conference participants with a clear view of prospects for the proposed network in terms of its long-term recognition in policy and legislation, from local to global levels.

It is envisaged to invite a maximum of eight panellists representing key policymakers in Europe but also representatives of major stakeholders (e.g. NGOs, Euroseeds, Europarc) and global institutions (e.g., FAO) to express their views on the establishment of the European network. The roundtable will be moderated by an expert in the field of PGR conservation and sustainable use.

Annex B: Advocacy plan for the plant breeding and seed sectors

Target stakeholders

These will vary between countries and sub-regions, but could include the following organizations and their members:

- National and sub-national seed and plant breeders' associations
- Members of Euroseeds (FP partner)
- Agricultural research institutions and relevant universities
- European Association for Research on Plant Breeding (EUCARPIA)
- European Consortium for Organic plant breeding (ECO-PB)

Many stakeholders in this sector have not invested in the *in situ* conservation of PGR; they do perceive a short and long-term benefit to them of using *in situ* diversity but (a) the means of accessing the *in situ* conservation resource is unclear, (b) the issue of access and benefit sharing associated with the use of *in situ* conservation PGR remains unclear. The longer-term benefits and societal value of *in situ* conservation, the significantly greater breadth of genetic diversity potentially held *in situ* and the benefits of the network in providing improved access for sustainable use should be emphasised.

Key messages

- Active *in situ* conservation, management and sustainable use of plant genetic resources could more than double the genetic diversity available to plant breeders by providing:
 - access to a much wider gene pool;
 - increased ability to respond to our changing environment and to respond to changes in EU/government policies;
 - long-term 'insurance policy' for the plant breeding sector;
- The European network will facilitate collaboration and knowledge exchange between *in situ* PGR custodians and plant breeders, providing:
 - direct links with a wide group of *in situ* PGR custodians (e.g. farmers and protected area managers);
 - greater opportunities for collaborating with *in situ* PGR custodians in research, testing and reintroduction of PGR to the field;
- Organizations in the plant breeding sector are asked to support national and European advocacy for the network establishment, for example by endorsing a joint letter;
- Individuals and organizations are asked to:
 - promote the European network through their own networks and contacts;
 - nominate localities of CWR / LR diversity for inclusion in the network;
 - subscribe to the Farmer's Pride email list and join the network;
 - attend the Farmer's Pride conference.

Recommended activities for project partners and FPAs

According to available capacity, project partners and FPAs are asked to seek public support for the network proposal from the target plant breeding and seed sector stakeholders in their countries or through European/global networks and contacts, as appropriate. This could use

one or more of the advocacy channels suggested in section 5 of this document, or could be in the form of support on social media, a letter of support to national/EU authorities, endorsement of a joint statement, or otherwise.

Menu of suggested actions for Farmer's Pride partners and FPAs		
Action	Indicator	Responsible
Identification of target plant breeding and seed sector stakeholders	List of plant breeding and seed sector stakeholders by country	Euroseeds
Dissemination of the project publications	Number of plant breeding and seed sector stakeholders to which policy brief and network proposal is sent	All FP partners and FPAs
Online meetings or email discussions	Number of meetings documented with a brief report of outcome	All FP partners and FPAs
Endorsement by other stakeholders	Number of organizations publicly supporting the network and greater access to <i>in situ</i> PGR	All FP partners and FPAs

Annex C: Advocacy plan for farmers and other landrace maintainers

Target stakeholders

- Associations of farmers or other landrace maintainers, particularly those focused on organic, agro-ecological, permaculture or nature-friendly cultivation
- Farmers' unions, cooperatives or associations, including for tenant farmers or smallholders
- Associations for professional and amateur growers, orchard managers and gardeners
- Community-based agriculture initiatives and associations, including community seed banks and seed saving organizations

Advocacy with relevant associations and organizations in this sector is likely to be more effective than direct engagement with individuals, not least because it will enable us to reach a much wider range of individuals. Public support for the network from these organizations will help to build trust among their individual members and increase their willingness to join as custodian members.

Key messages

- Farmers and other landrace maintainers play a vital role in conserving plant genetic resources for food, nutrition, livelihood and economic security. An overall goal of the European network is to empower its stakeholders to maintain and manage their PGR themselves. This could be achieved by:
 - greater recognition for landrace varieties and those who grow them in sustaining food and nutritional security;
 - providing monitoring tools to manage their PGR in their diversity management networks;
 - providing reporting schemes (interfaces) to the members on how to report about the status of their PGR to the governing body of the European network;
 - increasing opportunities for landrace product marketing through a conservation-related certification scheme;
 - supporting efforts to maintain heritage varieties and to document their history and traditional practices for use and processing;
 - supporting seed propagation programmes to improve access to seeds and exchange of knowledge between all members of the European network (private and public sector);
 - promoting cross-cutting working groups and developing programmes to connect the nature conservation sector and others involved in conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources to foster greater collaboration, understanding and mutual appreciation;
 - ensuring that *in situ* plant genetic resources populations are securely backed up in a gene bank and provide an emergency repatriation service when a population is under threat. Material would be deposited according to terms agreed between the provider and the gene bank;
 - providing evidence-based exemplars of good management practices and product adding value potential to improve income generation for LR maintainers;

- providing technical support, training and guidance in seeking funds for new initiatives;
- providing access to a platform for knowledge sharing, collaboration and access to reliable information;
- Organizations in the sector are asked to make a public statement of support for the European network to support national and European advocacy for its establishment;
- Individuals and organizations are asked to:
 - nominate landrace populations or localities for inclusion in the network;
 - promote the network through their own networks and contacts;
 - subscribe to the Farmer's Pride email list and join the Network;
 - attend the Farmer's Pride conference.

Recommended activities for project partners and FPAs

According to their capacity and the context in which they are working, project partners and FPAs are asked to seek support for the network proposal and landrace population/locality nominations from the target stakeholders in their countries or through European/global networks and contacts, as appropriate. This can use one or more of the advocacy channels set out in section 5 of this document and/or could be in the form of support on social media, a letter of support to national/EU authorities, endorsement of a joint statement, or otherwise.

Menu of suggested actions for Farmer's Pride partners and FPAs		
Action	Indicator	Responsible
Identification of target custodians and associations	List of target custodians and association by country	National partners and FPAs
Dissemination of the project publications	Number of target stakeholders to which policy brief and proposal is sent	All partners and FPAs
Online meetings or email discussions with custodians and associations	Number of meetings or discussions documented with a brief report of outcome	All partners and FPAs
Endorsement by other stakeholders	Number of organizations publicly supporting the Network	All partners and FPAs
Request stakeholder to propose localities rich in LR diversity to join the network	Number of populations/localities from across Europe proposed for inclusion in the network	All partners and FPAs

Annex D: Advocacy plan for environmental and nature conservation organizations

Target stakeholders

- European, national and local NGOs concerned with biodiversity conservation and wider environmental issues
- Coalitions or alliances of environmental and conservation NGOs
- Associations of ecologists, botanists, conservationists and environmental scientists
- Authorities or agencies managing national parks, protected areas and other sites managed for conservation purposes

Crop wild relatives are the most relevant aspect of *in situ* conserved PGR for this sector, but awareness and understanding of CWR and wider PGR issues are often very low. Awareness-raising should be the starting point for advocacy, ideally based on CWR information for the country/region in question.

Key messages

- Explanation of the meaning and importance of CWR. Provide any scientific data for the country's CWR, including location, abundance and potential value, particularly in the region of concern for the stakeholder;
- The importance of their role as custodians of unique plant genetic resources as a contribution to food, nutrition and economic security;
- Support for *in situ* PGR conservation and the European network offers many benefits, including:
 - demonstration of the additional value of their work to society, by contributing to food and economic security, particularly in providing resilience in agriculture in response to climate change;
 - a marketing advantage, enabling them to attract more tourists and provide opportunities for wider community engagement, leading to greater public awareness of their site and its importance;
 - opportunities for additional funding for conservation work;
 - technical support and best practice guidelines for CWR management;
 - opportunities for wider role in sustainable tourism and education;
 - potential for a CWR quality mark and use of the network logo;
- Organizations in the sector are asked to make a public statement of support for the network, to help in national and European advocacy for the network establishment;
- Individuals and organizations are asked to:
 - nominate CWR sites for inclusion in the network;
 - promote the network through their own networks and contacts;
 - subscribe to the Farmer's Pride email list and join the network;
 - attend the Farmer's Pride conference.

Recommended activities for project partners and FPAs

Using the advocacy channels set out in section 5, project partners and FPAs are asked to seek support for the network proposal and CWR site nominations from the target stakeholders in their countries or through European/global networks and contacts, as appropriate. This could be in the form of support on social media, a letter of support to national/EU authorities, endorsement of a joint statement, or otherwise.

Menu of suggested actions for Farmer's Pride partners and FPAs		
Action	Indicator	Responsible
Identification of target stakeholders	List of target stakeholders by country	National partners and FPAs
Dissemination of the project publications	Number of stakeholders to which policy brief and network proposal is sent	All partners and FPAs
Online meetings or email discussions with stakeholders	Number of meetings documented with a brief report of outcome	All partners and FPAs
Endorsement by other stakeholders	Number of organizations publicly supporting the Network	All partners and FPAs
Request stakeholder to propose sites rich in CWR diversity to join the proposed network	Number of CWR sites from across Europe proposed for inclusion in the network	All partners and FPAs