



*“Working Together to Make Trade Work”*

**NAEGA MAP Trip Report – ISF World Congress and PBI Working Group - Budapest, Hungary**

**Name of Traveler:**

Katy Lee, IGTC Secretariat

**Dates of Travel:**

Saturday, May 20 – Monday, May 22, 2017

**Purpose of Travel:**

Consistent with advancing NAEGA UES objectives Katy Lee traveled to Budapest, Hungary from May 20-22 to attend the Plant Breeding Innovation Working Group meeting of the International Seed Federation (ISF) and the annual World Seed Congress, which included an “open session” of the Plant Breeders meeting. During the meetings, IGTC was able to make progress on its Plant Breeding Innovation file, one of its most important in 2017. Over the past year, the IGTC has been considering policy and information sharing plans with the ISF related to new plant breeding innovations (PBI). Over this period, the IGTC and the ISF have been working closely to find common ground and develop common communications plans toward securing international regulatory coherence and compatibility on PBIs.

**Summary of Findings/Conclusions/Accomplishment:**

Upon the invitation of the ISF, the IGTC attended the ISF’s Plant Breeding Innovation Working Group meeting on May 21 to discuss strategy and policy development. The meeting took place within the auspices of the World Seed Congress (WSC) event, held by the ISF annually. The IGTC also attended the WSC on May 22, which included the Open Plant Breeders Committee meeting.

ISF attendees included: the ISF Secretariat; Working Group Chair (American Seed Association); Asia Pacific Seed Association; Seed Association of the Americas; CropLife International Secretariat; CropLife International Membership (Bayer Crop Science, Monsanto, DuPont Pioneer); Dutch Seed Association; European Seed Association; German Seed Association; Japanese Seed Association; and the South African Seed Association.

*Update to the ISF on IGTC Activities*

The IGTC outlined the breadth of its global constituency, its aims and its Policy Teams/Working Groups. Like the ISF, IGTC is prioritizing the issue of plant breeding innovation in its current work program.

IGTC presented the work of its Policy Team on plant breeding innovation and highlighted three pillars:

1. Regulatory coherence
2. Transparency of information
3. Responsibility across the value chain

Emphasizing this, the IGTC referenced the current draft of its policy paper, as already circulated



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to the ISF, in order to support a high-level in-person meeting in London in June 2016. The IGTC underlined the importance of certainty, predictability and transparency for everyone in the supply chain, for innovators, as much as for the grain trade, food manufacturers, and consumers.

Questions and comments from the ISF WG in response to the IGTC presentation included:

- In which countries are grain trade leaders mainly interested in this file?
- Transparency by/for/to who(m)? regulators? governments? Technology providers?
- Is IGTC currently advocating on plant breeding innovation with global governments?
- What has driven the choice of speakers at the IGTC webinars so far?
- The IGTC’s language on stewardship in the paper was welcomed but wanted to know more e.g. is ETS relevant here?
- Responsibility versus accountability: what’s the difference?
- Strong interest in IGTC conversations with Chinese membership on this issue.
- The IGTC’s “life cycle” approach to transparency of regulatory status was noted, no objections.

*Update to the IGTC from ISF:*

The ISF communicated its current work program on the file to the IGTC, including:

- A review of country/regional level assessments, in terms of government regulatory conversations, and how producers and civil society groups are responding to the latest plant breeding methods.
- Continued work on new papers on case-by-case approaches and transparency. Neither paper is finished. The drafting has not yet begun on the paper on transparency but ISF wishes to discuss their transparency principles with the IGTC in order to feed into this process. One ISF member leading this effort said that the IGTC’s policy paper has helped to shape these.
- Consultation with special interest groups, most notably the International Federation for the Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM). Academia, CGIAR system and producers are also important.
- Upcoming Meetings:
  - Third ISF briefing session for core governments on September 6-7 in London, UK. ISF core countries will be invited plus Sweden, South Korea, Canada and Chile. Aside from ISF and governments, academics may be invited to provide expertise. The purpose of this meeting is to “maintain country-to-country discussions”.
  - IGTC is invited to next ISF WG on October 18, 2017 in Montreal.
  - OECD gene editing workshop 2018.
  - APEC meeting in Vietnam in August remains a priority for ISF. There will be a seminar on innovation, and “barriers” to innovation.
  - FAO regional workshops resulting from the 2016 Biotech Symposium. ISF is looking to hold ‘Side Events’ on biotech and food security and nutrition (FSN – a core theme for FAO). There will be a workshop in Malaysia in September. Dates are still to be decided for Ethiopia and Latin America.
  - In general, Latin America is felt to be an important region owing to the high level of public research efforts into plant breeding innovation. Not just in Brazil but also Peru



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and the wider Andean region.

- Communications Strategy:
  - Infographic, Powerpoint and FAQs are now “live” for the use of ISF members. ISF is going for a branded approach, consistent look and feel.
  - Training sessions with communications experts have taken place.
  - Discussion guide is also “live” but it may be revised.

**Recommendations for IGTC Plant Breeding Innovation Policy Team**

1. All engagement from now on should have a narrow focus and efforts should be concentrated on initiatives that can secure concrete outcomes for the grain trade;
2. One priority focus area is transparency. The ISF is still in the drafting stages of this paper and wishes to hear from the IGTC on this matter. IGTC could hold a conference call with the ISF leads on the PBI transparency paper;
3. IGTC should use the ISF relationship to share intelligence on national and regional situations. This means comparing notes on its country/product matrix;
4. The IGTC should not conduct joint outreach with governments before a common understanding on approaches to transparency is in place;
5. The IGTC should decide if and who from IGTC should attend the October 18 PBI meeting in Montreal. The IGTC is invited.

**Attached Documents**

- *ISF agenda 21 June, PBI Working Group*
- *ISF infographic on plant breeding, as launched at World Seed Congress on 22 June*
- *World Seed Congress agenda*
- *World Seed Congress delegate list*
- *ISF Consistent Criteria paper*