

Standing Committee on Intellectual Property Rights & Biodiversity
Summary Notes & Action Points from Meeting on 03 February 2017

A Meeting of the APSA Standing Committee on Intellectual Property Rights & Biodiversity (SC – IPR & BD) was organized on 3 February 2017. Dr. Arvind Kapur (SC Chair), Mr. Casper van Kempen (SC Co-Chair), Mr. Tahir Saleemi (APSA VP), Ms. Heidi Gallant (ED, APSA), Mr. Steven Layne (Communications Officer, APSA) and Dr. Narendra Dadlani (Director Technical Affairs & SC Secretary) joined the meeting. Following is the summary of the discussions and the action points that emerged:

- a. Meetings of the Standing Committee will be convened every two months. The next meetings of the group will thus be convened in April, June and September, besides the last meeting during Asian Seed Congress (November). Dr. Dadlani will communicate suggested dates for confirmation of the Committee Chair / Co-Chair. The meeting dates will then be posted on the APSA website. The minutes from SC meetings will also be posted on the website and shared with other SCs / SIGs.
- b. Depending on the agenda for a particular meeting, we may invite experts like Mr. Francois Burgaud, Ms. Anke van den Hurk, Dr. N. Anand, etc. to join the meeting to benefit from their vast knowledge.
- c. APSA would initiate a ‘Survey’ among its members to understand the IP situation in different countries in the region and the benefits that the members are deriving from it. The following was decided in this regard:
 - i. The survey will focus on the level of understanding / awareness of existing IP laws and the perceived benefits (or disadvantages) among the different stakeholders, i.e. the government officials, seed companies, farmers, etc. and will not detail any enforcement aspects.
 - ii. Mr. Steven will initiate this survey with a questionnaire which has short, non-intimidating and open ended or multiple choice questions aimed at drawing out information. Dr. Kapur and Mr. Casper will guide in the preparation of the questionnaire.
 - iii. The survey will be started by end March 2017.
- d. As requested by Seed Association of Pakistan (SAP) APSA will organize an ‘*IPR Workshop*’ in Pakistan to educate the members as well as the officials about the IP situation in the region. The meeting was informed that the Pakistan Govt. has recently framed the IP Act. And is in the process of framing the rules for its implementation. The following was decided in this regard:
 - i. It was suggested that APSA’s association and support at this stage for the industry (Seed Association of Pakistan – SAP) will help design a law which is effective and implementable.

- ii. The '*Workshop*' will be organized by SAP and APSA will provide the resource (IP expertise & logistics) support.
 - iii. The '*Workshop*' may be convened in July / August 2017.
 - iv. Mr. Tahir Saleemi will share with the Committee a copy of the latest Act and the suggestions made by SAP members for its development / implementation.
 - v. Further details about the '*Workshop*' will be discussed at the next meeting in April and Mr. Casper and Mr. Saleemi will prepare the budget and other details for this to be discussed by the APSA Executive Committee in its next meeting in May 2017.
- e. The Committee discussed the possible subjects for discussion at the Asian Seed Congress 2017. The following was suggested:
- i. The subject of farmers' rights and privileges should be a subject for discussion at the next congress. The Chair / Co Chair agreed to look for a suitable expert to make a presentation about the subject which is not understood by many. The name of Dr. P.L. Gautam, Former Chairperson, Protection of Plant Varieties & Farmers' Rights Authority (PPV&FR) and National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) in India, who was associated with development of these acts in India as well as represented India at various international for a, including for Nagoya Protocol, was suggested in this regard.
 - ii. It was suggested that we may enlighten our members about the details of the Vegetable Seed Production Good Practices, jointly developed by APSA and ISF (available on the APSA website). We may invite Mr. David Malan (ISF), who was associated with the drafting of these guidelines to make a presentation.
 - iii. Mr. Casper mentioned that the subject of starting Anti Infringement Bureau (AIB) in Asia is just a suggestion at the moment and will be discussed with prospective partners during ISF Congress in May. He will get back to the Committee with suggestion about its inclusion as a subject for discussion at the Asian Seed Congress.
 - iv. It was suggested that we may look for a speaker to highlight the possible synergy between the African and Asian IP regimes, considering the increasing mutual seed trade in the region.
 - v. The Committee suggested that the focus of the subject for Pre Congress Workshop during the Asian Seed Congress 2017 related to climate change should be on plant breeding.
