

5

No.5-1/2011/SD-V
Government of India
Ministry of Agriculture
Department of Agriculture & Cooperation
Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi,
Dated the 12th January, 2012

The Competent Authority of the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation is pleased to constitute a National Technical Committee on SAARC Seed Bank. This National Technical Committee shall be responsible for overall coordination and for working out modalities, technicalities of participation in the SAARC Regional Seed Bank. The National Technical Committee on SAARC Regional Seed Bank shall consist of the following Members:-

- | | | |
|-----|---|------------------|
| 1. | Joint Secretary (Seeds)
Department of Agriculture & Cooperation
Ministry of Agriculture | Chairperson |
| 2. | Chairman-cum-Managing Director,
National Seeds Corporation Limited
Pusa Complex, New Delhi. | Member |
| 3. | Director, NBPGR, Pusa, New Delhi | Member |
| 4. | Joint Director Research, IARI, New Delhi | Member |
| 5. | Head of Division, Seed Science & Technology,
IARI, Pusa Complex, New Delhi | Member |
| 6. | Representative from PPVFRA | Member |
| 7. | ADG (Seeds), ICAR, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi | Member |
| 8. | Deputy Commissioner (Seeds), DAC | Member |
| 9. | Deputy Commissioner (QC) | Member |
| 10. | Director (Seeds) DAC- | Member Secretary |


(Smriti Sharan)
Member Secretary
National Technical Committee on
SAARC Seed Bank

Distribution:

All Members of National Technical Committee on SAARC Seed Bank.

①

No.5-1/2011/SD-V
Government of India
Ministry of Agriculture
Department of Agriculture & Cooperation
Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi,
Dated the 12th January, 2012

SUBJECT: Establishing of the SAARC Regional Seed Bank.

During November, 2011, the Cabinet approved a proposal, moved by Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, for India signing the Agreement on Establishing of a SAARC Regional Seed Bank. With the approval of Prime Minister of India the above mentioned agreement was signed by the Minister of External Affairs on behalf of India at the XVII SAARC Summit, held at Maldives last year.

2. Consequent to signing of Agreement, India by virtue being a SAARC member has become a participating member for establishment of SAARC Regional seed Bank.

3. The salient features of the Agreement are:-

- (i) **Objectives of the Seed Bank:** To provide regional support to national seed security efforts; address regional seed shortages through collective actions and foster inter-country partnerships; to promote increase of Seed Replacement Rate(SRR); and to act as a regional seed security reserve for the Member States.
- (ii) **Common Varieties:** Member States will collaborate with each other in the development of a list of common variety (ies) of major priority/identified crops while recognizing the need to preserve local/indigenous varieties as may be appropriate (Article IV).
- (iii) **Maintaining Seed Quality:** Member State will develop a Common Minimum Seed Quality Standard (CMQS) and Seed Testing Procedures for different quality attributes (of all the crops) e.g. genetic purity, germination capacity, physical purity, moisture content, seed health or others as specified by the Board, keeping conformity of the International Seed Testing Association (ISTA) procedures (Article V).
- (iv) **Seed Reserve:** The seed reserve to be maintained under the seed bank shall consist of quality seeds of the Common Variety (ies) of rice, wheat, maize, pulses and oilseeds earmarked by the Member States as forming part of the reserve for drawal by other Member States in the event of requirement of seeds. This reserve shall remain the property of the Member State which has earmarked it and shall be in addition to any national reserve that may be maintained by that Member State (Article VI).
- (v) **Procedure for the release of the seed from the reserve:** The Member State in need shall directly notify, through its designated Nodal Point(s), the other Member State(s) of the amount of seed required. The other Member State(s), on being so requested, shall take immediate steps to make necessary arrangements to ensure

(2)

immediate and speedy release of the required quality seed, subject to availability (Article IX).

- (vi) **Replenishment of the Reserve:** A Member State that has released all or part of the seed forming its share of the Reserve shall replace such quantity as soon as practicable and, in any event, not later than one calendar year following the date on which the release of the seed took place (Article X).
- (vii) **Determination of Price:** The prices, terms and conditions of payment, in kind or otherwise, in respect of the seed so released, shall be the subject of direct negotiations between the Member States concerned based on the guidelines to be approved by the Seed Bank Board for determination of price, which shall be reviewed periodically. In the case of emergency, humanitarian aspects would be given due importance while determining prices (Article XI).
- (viii) **Institutional Arrangements:** An institutional arrangement in the form of a **Seed Bank Board** consisting of one member from each Member State, one farmer representative on rotational basis from a Member State and two members from private sector to administer functioning of the Seed Bank and for its policy making has been provided for in the Agreement. The Board shall undertake activities to develop a list of common crop varieties, quality testing method, Common Seed Certification Standard and Procedures; facilitate harmonization of legislative measures; examine immediate short term and long term policy action, as may be considered necessary, to ensure adequate supplies of quality seeds in the region; review implementation of the provisions of the agreement and resolve any dispute or difference. The Board shall be assisted by the SAARC Secretariat which shall coordinate work of the Board, monitor all matters relating to the functions of the Seed Bank and convene and service meetings of the Board (Article XII, XIII and XV).
- (ix) **Framework for Material Transfer:** To operationalize the Regional Seed Bank, the Framework for Material Transfer shall be applicable with a view to facilitate easy movement of seeds and plant materials across the Member States. The framework shall be performed in accordance with the existing laws, regulations and guidelines of SAARC Member States and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. A Format for Material Transfer Agreement shall be used to exchange materials among the Member States as at Annex-A of the Annexure-I. (Annexure I is the full text of the draft Agreement)

4. Action to be taken for setting up of the SAARC Regional Seed Bank in India:

Approval of AM was sought for bringing in to effect the setting up of the Seed Bank and accordingly the following actions are warranted on part of the participating states /agencies.

- (i) All agencies/State governments participating in the scheme of the Government relating to Seed Bank are to apportion 1% of the total Seed stock towards Seed Bank reserve for the SAARC Seed Bank. The 1% of the seed would be for the open pollinated, common varieties of wheat, rice,

3

maize, pulses and oilseeds in each of the Seed Bank currently maintained by NSC, SFCL, 15 State Seeds Corporations and State Department of Agriculture of two states under the Central Sector Scheme viz. "Development and strengthening of Infrastructure facilities for Production and Distribution of Quality Seeds". Since the seed stock of common varieties (of grains and pulses mentioned above) in the 19 Seed Bank of the country is around 2.90 lakh quintals and hence 1% of the total seed stock works out to around 2900 qtls.

- (ii) It has also been decided that NSC would be the National Designated Agency (NDA) and will work as the National Focal Point.
- (iii) As per approval, a National Technical Committee (NTC) has been formed having representatives from DAC, ICAR, NBPGR, NSC and PPV&FRA. This NTC would be responsible for over all coordination and for working out modalities, technicalities of participation in the SAARC Regional Seed Bank.
- (iv) The NTC would have the following Members:-
 - Joint Secretary (Seeds)-Chairman
 - CMD, NSC
 - Director, NBPGR
 - Joint Director Research, IARI
 - Head of Division, Seed Science & Technology, IARI
 - Representative from PPVFRA
 - ADG (Seeds), ICAR
 - DC (Seeds)
 - DC (QC)
 - Director (Seeds) DAC- Member Secretary

5. A separate order notifying the constitution of this National Technical Committee (NTC) is being issued separately. The NTC shall convene meetings for short listing the common varieties of wheat, rice, maize, pulses and oilseeds required to be banked. However, only when the report of the SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) is received, the Committee would be giving clear directions on the varieties and the quantities to be placed in the Bank.

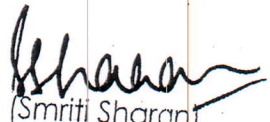
6. Immediately, for implementation of the Agreement and for setting up of the SAARC Regional Seed Bank, all the participating agencies are requested to apportion 1% of the total seed stock towards SAARC Seed Bank and to intimate the details to the National Designated Agency.

7. The National Designated Agency i.e. NSC may put in place a system of inventory, stock taking and an MIS to keep a track of seed movement into and out of the SAARC Seed Bank reserve.

4

Action as warranted on part of the each of the participating agencies, NDA, Technical Committee may kindly be taken up on priority and action taken report may be sent to this office positively **by 15th of February, 2012.**

This issues with the approval of Joint Secretary (Seeds).


(Smriti Sharan)
Director(Seeds)

Encl: Annexure-I (Agreement on Establishing the SAARC Seed Bank)

Distribution:

1. Chairperson, PPV&FR Authority, Pusa, New Delhi.
2. Chairman-cum-Managing Director, NSC, Pusa, New Delhi.
3. Director, NBPGR, Pusa Complex, New Delhi
4. Joint Director Research, IARI, Pusa, New Delhi.
5. Head of Division, Seed Science & Technology, IARI, Pusa, New Delhi.
6. ADG(Seeds), ICAR, New Delhi.
7. DC(Seeds), DAC, New Delhi.
8. DC(QC), DAC, New Delhi.
9. US(Seeds), DAC.
10. PS to JS(Seeds), DAC.

Copy forwarded to:-

1. The Agriculture Production Commissioner/Secretary Agriculture
All the State Governments/UTs
2. Commissioner Agriculture/Director Agriculture
All the State Governments/UTs
3. All participating States Seeds Corporations/State Department of
Agriculture/Institution in the Seed Bank.

Copy also forwarded to:

Shri Vikram K. Doraiswami, J. S. (SAARC), Ministry of External Affairs(SAARC Division)
for information.