

## EURISCO moves forward

During 2007 EURISCO activities focused on improving data quality and quantity, namely taxonomy and GIS data; translation of the two fact sheets into ten languages; EURISCO database technology updating; Web site redesign and updating; and monitoring visitors/users.

To enhance the data quality and quantity in the EURISCO Catalogue, at the National Inventory (NI) and individual institutions level, two types of reports were made: taxonomic and GIS. For the taxonomic reports the Taxonomic Checker (GRIN taxonomy) (<http://pgrdoc.ipgri.cgiar.org/taxcheck/grin/>) was used.

The taxonomy was checked in the following order: all elements; genus, species, epithet and epithet author; genus, species and epithet; genus, species and species author; genus and species; genus.

The reports were of two types:

1) Partial match: whenever part of the latin name provided matches GRIN taxonomy and the remaining part of the name not matching (e.g. *Aegilops tauschii* Cosson (matches) var. meyerii (Griseb.) Tezvelev (not matching)). In this type of file a link to the respective GRIN entry was provided.

2) No match: none of the elements of the latin name provided matches the GRIN taxonomy (either because it does not exist in GRIN or it might be some type of misspelling).

As a result of this exercise reports on 31 NI were generated, representing a total of 220 institutions.

For the GIS reports, latitudes and longitudes available in the Catalogue were mapped (using Google earth) and the results checked against the declared country of origin, which resulted in reports on 16 NIs, regarding GIS data. These reports were composed of three types of files:

1) Missing country: latitude and longitude provided, but the country of origin was not identified;

2) Other country: latitude and longitude provided, but does not match the identified country of origin (falling in another country); and

3) No country: latitude and longitude provided, resulting point not on land.

The reports generated were sent to the National Focal Points (NFPs) for correction and update of the NIs and subsequent uploading of the data to EURISCO. This will ensure the improvement of data quality in the system and at the data providers' level. There is an intention to make this data quality monitoring exercise a routine activity.

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The English version of the EURISCO fact sheets were updated as of September 2007 and simultaneously translated into nine other languages. These were an input-in-kind from the NFPs, while Bioversity provided the layout and printing. The updated EURISCO fact sheets are now translated into the following languages: Azerbaijani, Croatian, Czech, Danish, German, Norwegian, Romanian, Slovak and Turkish, and will be available on the EURISCO Web site.

The Web site redesign and the database updating (technology wise), on the agenda for sometime, are in progress and well advanced. The estimated date of release is planned for the end of 2007.

A few facts:

The monitoring of visitors' log on assesses who is looking for EURISCO data, when, how often and from where. It provides useful feedback to data providers and the Catalogue management, contributing to adjusting the contents and aims of the Catalogue and to helping to better respond to the users' needs. This important exercise is finally bridging the gap that, for

too long, has separated the genebank community and the germplasm user community.



There has been a marked increase in the number of visitors to the Catalogue. This increase reflects the added impact of the Catalogue as a one stop shop for accession level information on the material maintained in European *ex situ* collections, as well as on the countries' National Inventories it makes available.

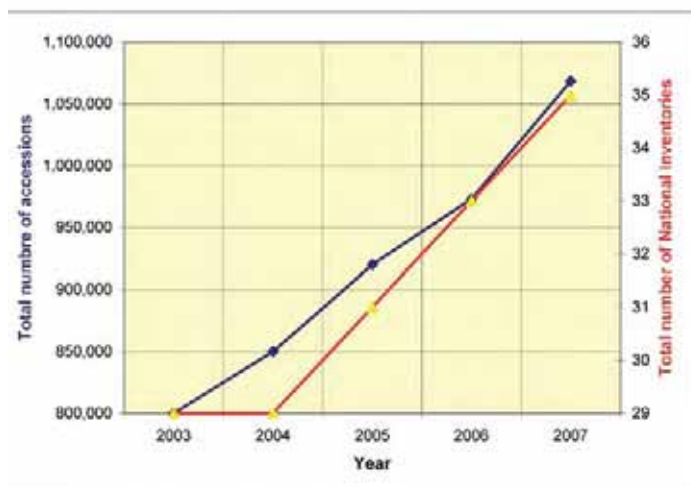
Year	# Hits	# Page Viewed	# Visitors	Size
2005	31,225	11,498	599	441.32 MB
2006	79,903	36,703	2,401	937.76 MB
2007	111,730	54,378	5,229	1.54 GB
<b>Total</b>	<b>222,858</b>	<b>102,579</b>	<b>8,229</b>	-

Since 2006, there has been a decrease in the "average time per session". A possible explanation could be that there has been an increase in the number of repeated users who have familiarized with the Catalogue and who are thus able to more rapidly access and view the information they are looking for.

	All days to Nov. 06	All days to Sept. 07
<b>Total accesses</b>	21,364	60,424
<b>Sessions by repeated users</b>	4,272	18,003
<b>Total sessions users</b>	1,617	6,612
one-time users	1,099	4,191
repeated users	518	2,421
Six+-time users	177	674
<b>Average accesses (time) per session</b>	3.98	2.72

The general interest in the Catalogue is also geographically expanding. It is now being accessed from a total of 125 countries, compared to 68 countries in 2006.

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## Going Global - info4seeds

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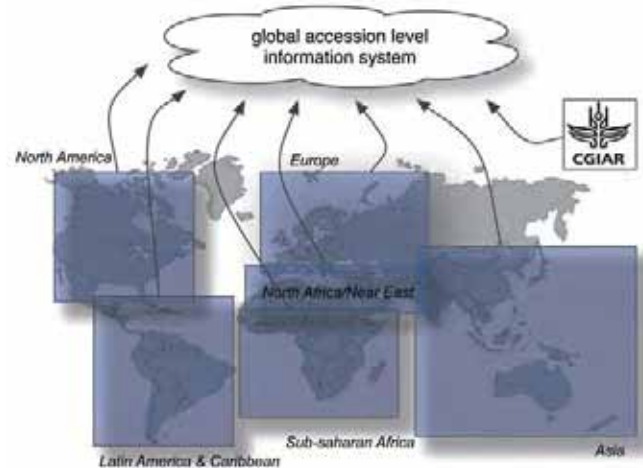
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Linking and integrating genebank information on a global scale is no longer a dream but rather a reality.

Today there are approximately 1500 genebanks or germplasm collections worldwide, housing some 6 million accessions. Only a fraction of this total can be easily accessible over the Internet through individual genebank Web sites or existing dedicated portals such as the CGIAR System-wide Information Network for Genetic Resources

– SINGER, the European Plant Genetic Resources Search Catalogue – EURISCO and the Germplasm Resources Information Network - GRIN, USDA. The challenge set for the international community of genebank information experts is to make accession level information data readily accessible to scientists. Such an information network should allow any genebank willing to share accession level information to easily join an international network of information providers in the simplest and most cost effective manner.

With the recent and rapid changes in information technology, the development of a Global Information System on Plant Genetic Resources, as called for by Article 17 of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources (ITPGRFA), could proceed more rapidly at the genebank community level by taking other successful



Graphic: Possible role of regional information networks in support of the global accession level information system.

information systems, such as the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF), as a source of inspiration. This provides the opportunity to establish a sustainable global communication and information access network linking dedicated portals and individual genebanks to information providers.

Since 2007, Bioversity International has embarked on such a challenge. It is developing such a global informatics platform or Accession Level Information System – ALIS. Based on existing Biodiversity Information Standards (TDWG) standards and tools, ALIS will take inspiration from the existing successful GBIF Portal implementation projecting it to a myriad of information

providers. With the recent financial support of the Global Crop Diversity trust, ALIS is expected to develop and grow faster than anticipated.

By the end of 2010, ALIS should provide a global entry point to information on more than 4 million accessions held in genebanks worldwide. This unique effort would be an essential tool to breeders and researchers seeking germplasm with valuable traits and characteristics. Finally, ALIS should be seen as a key contribution to the implementation of a coherent Global Information System in the framework of the ITPGRFA.

## EURISCO moves forward cont.

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The increase in the number of NIs in the Catalogue, currently holding data on 35 National Inventories, as well as the quantity and quality of accession level data made available through the Catalogue, is a reflection of the overall success of this regional network that is bridging the gap between data holders and users at the global level, representing more than half of the *ex situ* accessions maintained in Europe and roughly 18% of total worldwide holdings.

EURISCO, considered one of the most successful and sustainable examples from which to learn, will therefore be one of the elements for the global Accession Level Information System (ALIS) on Plant Genetic Resources, (see article “Going Global - Info4seeds” on page 15).

Starting in 2008 and for the following five years, EURISCO work will turn the page. It will focus on the future road map, i.e. development, deployment and sustainable support to the EURISCO network.