Agreement between the Nordic Council of Ministers and Nordic plant breeding companies/ Nordic public plant breeding entities concerning continuation of the Nordic Public-Private Partnership for Pre-Breeding in Plants for 2015-2017

Background

The Nordic Public-Private Partnership for Pre-Breeding in Plants (PPP) was established in 2011 by the decisions in the Nordic agreement (“AVTAL”, appendix 1), taking the initial recommendation of the Nordic survey (“Measures to promote…”, appendix 2) into account, and have today participation from 12 out of 13 Nordic private and public plant breeding entities. The PPP is established through the first pilot phase from 2011-2013, where 3 collaborative pre-breeding projects have been initiated. An evaluation of the collaboration was carried out during the spring of 2013 (Evaluation Report, appendix 3) as well as a mid-term audit (Audit report, appendix 4). The agreement was prolonged to include 2014. Taking the recommendations and conclusions of these reports into account as well as the recommendations from the PPP Steering Committee (PPP-SC) (“PPP-SC recommendations…”, appendix 5, and “Plant breeding on political agendas, appendix 6), and with considerations of the EK-FJLS discussions concerning the development of the partnership, the partners have made the following agreement:

AGREEMENT:

Purpose

This agreement concerns collaboration through a Partnership between the Nordic Council of Ministers for Fishery, Agriculture, Food and Forestry, EK-FJLS (the Nordic Council of Ministers) on one side and the private plant breeding companies in the Nordic countries and the public institutes and universities, carrying out plant breeding for variety production (the plant breeding entities) on the other side.

The purpose of the Partnership is to promote development of Nordic plant breeding by supporting long term breeding goals for Nordic agriculture and horticulture through collaborative pre-breeding projects. The long term breeding goals foremost concern adaptation to climate change, reducing environmental impacts and meeting new consumer and market demands, as described in a concept note (Appendix 7), developed on the basis of a Nordic-Baltic seminar. The activities of the Partnership sustains Nordic policies in the areas of green growth and bio-economy, sustainable intensification of food production, sustainable rural development and maintaining competitiveness of the plant breeding sector, Nordic agriculture and food production. The Partnership encourages Nordic collaboration and welcomes association of partners from especially the Baltic states.

Frame

- The PPP is well established, and the Partners recognize that collaboration in pre-breeding requires a long term commitment from all stakeholders.
- This Agreement is limited to the period of 1st of January 2015 to 31st of December 2017. The further development of the Partnership for the years 2018-2020 will be assessed in 2017.
• The countries represented in the Nordic Council of Ministers and the plant breeding entities will jointly fund the activities of the PPP.

• The funding from the countries represented in the Nordic Council of Ministers for the PPP collaboration will be divided between the countries represented in the Nordic Council of Ministers according to the annual standard key of the Nordic Council of Ministers. The funding from the countries will come in two parts, Part A for the presently established projects, new projects that all countries participate in and secretarial activities for the PPP at NordGen and Part B for new projects.

• The funding from the plant breeding entities for the PPP collaboration will be distributed between the plant breeding entities, participating in the respective projects, according to the budgets of each individual project.

• The funding from the countries represented in the Nordic Council of Ministers for the PPP collaboration has been agreed for 2014.

• The funding from the countries represented in the Nordic Council of Ministers for Part A will during 2015-2017 have a budget frame of minimum 4 million DKK per year in which all the five Nordic countries will participate, of which 3.5 million DKK per year will be allocated to funding of presently established projects. The funding of Part B will be determined by the countries. The budget frames for Part B for 2015, 2016 and 2017 are anticipated and dependent on annual budgetary processes and must be communicated to the secretariat of the PPP annually at the latest October 15th before a new budgetary year. Funding for further phases will be developed as the collaboration progresses.

• The funding from the countries represented at the Nordic Council of Ministers for Part A and Part B and from the plant breeding entities, excluding contributions in kind, will be channeled through NordGen. The funds from Finland will be paid from Finland to the secretariat of the Nordic Council of Ministers that will transfer the funds to NordGen. The PPP Secretariat at NordGen will allocate the project funding to the individual PPP project coordinators according to the accepted project budgets for distribution among the project partners.

• Plant breeding entities from the Baltic countries can participate in the project collaboration as associated partners in all projects from either the Part A budget or the Part B budget. *(Plant breeding entities from non-funding Nordic countries can participate in the project collaboration under part B as associated partners). Associated partners will share equal rights and obligations in the project work and to the project results according to accepted project plan, budgets and consortium agreements. Funding of associated partners project activities must be funded from other sources than the Nordic PPP project funding.

• External evaluation of the PPP collaboration will be carried out every five years or when called for by the Nordic Council of Ministers. The terms of reference shall be developed by the PPP-SC and accepted by the Nordic Council of Ministers (EK-FJLS (Eksekutiv)) and the evaluation organized by the PPP Secretariat.

• The funding of the individual projects will be on a 50/50-basis between the funding from the countries represented in the Nordic Council of Ministers and the funding from the participating plant breeding entities. In kind contribution from plant breeding entities is possible.

• In total plant breeding entities participating in the PPP are expected to contribute to project funding, in cash or in kind, with more than 22,5 million DKK during 2015-2017.
During 2014 the Nordic Council of Ministers will fund secretarial activities at NordGen. From 2015 and onwards 0.5 million DKK of the Part A funding from the countries will be set aside for administration, horizontal activities promoting the PPP, and support to projects or activities of Nordic interest without matching funding from plant breeding entities.

The success of the Partnership will depend on collaboration with and within Nordic plant breeding research including development of competences, as well as long term collaboration between the funding structures.

All countries participating in the PPP shall, if possible, establish supplementary funding of the PPP from EU instruments such as the European Innovation Partnership (EIP Agri) and likewise.

Project funding shall be based on open calls for proposals. Only plant breeding entities from countries participating in Part B are eligible to propose projects to be funded in Part B. The PPP-SC can consider varying scopes for the calls in order to meet gaps and needs of Nordic crop production.

Project applicants should provide reasonable estimates of the added value from different perspectives of the proposed project.

Proposals shall be evaluated for scientific quality and Nordic relevance.

Organization

PPP Steering Committee:

The PPP is governed by the PPP Steering Committee. The PPP-SC shall work for the fulfillment of the purpose for the PPP.

- The PPP-SC is responsible for the steering and developing of the Partnership, and operates according to its Rules of Procedures, accepted by the EK-FJLS (Appendix 7).
- The PP-SC consists of 10 members: - 5 appointed by the Nordic Council of Ministers after recommendation from each national ministry; 1 appointed by the Nordic Agricultural University NOVA board after recommendation from the Nordic agricultural universities; and 4 appointed by Nordic plant breeding entities, participating in the Partnership. The appointments are done for a period of 3 years. The chair of the PPP-SC is appointed by the Nordic Council of Ministers. A balanced composition in gender, etc. is sought in line with Nordic policies.
- The PPP-SC can include an observer representing the Baltic states. The observer is appointed jointly by the ministries of countries, in which collaborative partners are associated to PPP projects.
- The PPP-SC members shall actively secure coordination and synergy to other relevant national and Nordic activities within the field of plant breeding.
- The PPP-SC members shall actively secure good and sufficient communication about the function and activities of the Partnership at national and Nordic levels.
- The PPP-SC shall develop strategies for the long term development of Nordic collaboration in pre-breeding to be accepted by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

PPP Secretariat

The PPP-Secretariat is held at NordGen.
• NordGen has the administrative responsibility and the secretarial functions for the Partnership.
• The PPP-SC chair, the secretariat of the Nordic Council of Ministers and NordGen shall jointly appoint a coordinator to prepare and coordinate the meetings of the PPP-SC in collaboration with the PPP-SC chair.
• NordGen shall be contracting part on behalf of the Nordic Council of Ministers in the projects carried out by the Partnership. Contracts shall follow Nordic standard terms and conditions with the amendments proposed by NordGen and to be decided by the PPP-SC.
• NordGen shall be responsible for financial reporting and reporting of the activities of the Partnership. Administrative procedures for the administration of the PPP projects proposed by NordGen shall be accepted by the PPP-SC, taking into account the need for simplicity, transparency and differences in preconditions for project partners.
• NordGen reports to the partners of the Partnership on issues related to the development of the Partnership.
• The secretariat reports to the PPP-SC on administrative issues.
• The Secretariat shall propose decisions on development of horizontal activities to the PPP-SC. Such activities can include general and specific information of the Partnership and of the projects carried out by the Partnership. Horizontal activities regarding international organizations are carried out separately by NordGen.
• The rules of institutions under the Nordic Council of Ministers shall apply for the Partnership.

*(Technical adjustment proposed by the PPP-Steering Committee)*