Re.: Nordic Public – Private Partnership for Prebreeding

The Nordic Council of Ministers for fishery, agriculture, food and forestry (NMR, EK-FJLS) decided at the meeting 11 February 2011 to strengthen pre-breeding activities in the Nordic countries by establishing a Public-Private Partnership for pre-breeding of crop plants, PPP (abstract of EK-FJLS proposal and decision attached). This decision is based on the recommendations from the report “Measures to promote Nordic Plant Breeding” (attached). NordGen will be carrying out the role of secretariat for the partnership and Nordic Council of Ministers has provided funds for this task.

The partnership is open for all Nordic plant breeding entities, private companies and public institutions carrying out plant breeding and variety production for the benefit of agriculture and horticulture in the Nordic region on one side and for the Nordic agricultural universities engaged in plant breeding research on the other side.

To establish, administer and promote the purpose of PPP a steering committee must be appointed, representing the Nordic countries, the Nordic Breeding entities and the Nordic agricultural universities. The countries are in process of appointing their 5 national representatives; the plant breeding entities are in process of appointing their 4 representatives, and finally 1 representative from the universities is to be appointed. For further details on the role, tasks and obligations of the steering committee please see the attached document “Framework for PPP”.

In order to appoint a representative from the Nordic agricultural universities and research centres engaged in pre-breeding activities, it has been proposed to contact the NOVA university network and request your assistance. The recently established Nordic Plant Improvement Network under NOVA, working on education and research in the same field of interest, may be an entrance point to engage the Nordic agricultural universities? We would be very thank full if the NOVA secretariat would be able to help with a proposal for a representative to the steering committee, in order to get this established before summer.

As soon as the steering committee is up and running, decisions on specific pre-breeding collaboration projects can be taken. During the process of establishing the PPP, several topics of relevance to pre-breeding activities were identified. Of these topics, 2 had major interest from all counties; pre-breeding for emerging diseases in Barley, and adaptation of Ryegrass to northern conditions. It is, however, the ambition and expectation that the PPP can expand into any other crop of importance for the Nordic region.
NordGen welcomes this new development and is eager to get the work started. We wish as many relevant pre-breeding stakeholders as possible will join the partnership and help developing it into a strong and important platform for collaboration and development of new crop varieties for our region.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Morten Rasmussen
Head of Plant Section
NordGen - Nordic Genetic Resource Center

Attached documents:

Decision from EK-FJLS to establish PPP
Proposal presented to EK-FJLS
Report: Measures to promote Nordic Plant Breeding Framework for PPP

The Nordic Genetic Resource Centre (NordGen) is the joint Nordic institution for conservation and sustainable utilization of genetic resources. Biodiversity and the underlying genetic diversity are the base for all human existence and the base for constant adaptation to changes. Access to genetic resources is a prerequisite for adaptation to new growth conditions, to climate change, providing resistance to new diseases on plants and domestic animals, to increased food production, to low environment impact or to meet new requirement from our consumers. NordGen contributes to safeguarding the livelihood in our region today and for our future.