

# UPOV Meetings Report

October 2025 | Venue: UPOV office, Geneva



## GENERAL

Concluding a week of discussions at the 2025 International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV) sessions, Secretary-General Daren Tang underscored the plant variety protection (PVP) system’s essential role in fostering innovation and development in plant breeding.

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*“New varieties adapted to local environments not only support innovation, investments, strong value chains and rural employment, they also increase the choice of healthy, nutritious and affordable food. By supporting breeders worldwide, the PVP system helps farmers and growers to boost incomes, increase yields and drive productivity,”*

*said Mr Tang.*

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Speaking at the UPOV Council on Friday, 24 October, Mr Tang emphasised the importance of building a more accessible and digital PVP system capable of keeping pace with rapid technological change. He noted that advancing digitalisation will enable UPOV and its members to strengthen innovation, efficiency, and inclusivity across the global agricultural community.

This year, the Council adopted **UPOV’s Strategic Business Plan (SBP) for 2026-2029**, replacing the 2023-2027 SBP.

Key highlights in the latest UPOV SPB are

- a new Horizon Scanning Exercise
- proposals for a UPOV Risk Appetite Statement
- a UPOV resources strategy

These elements are crucial for UPOV's growth and resilience in the coming years.

Good to know is that thanks to AIPH's participation in the Horizon Scanning Exercise, the ornamental sector relevant issues, such as Climate Change, Sustainability and Biodiversity, are included in the major trends, the UPOV system needs to anticipate and respond to if it wants to remain relevant and impactful. **(Paragraph II, pag. 2 t/m 4 of the SBP 2026-2029).**

Nice to see that UPOV took over the principle of green cities in its SBP. The issues of *Climate Change, Sustainability, and Biodiversity* are further detailed in the SBP as follows:

- **Climate-Resilient Varieties:** growing demand for drought, heat, pest, and disease-resistant crops underscores the importance of PVP in incentivising adaptation to climatic challenges.
- **Sustainability Integration:** PVP needs to be positioned as part of broader sustainability agendas, leveraging plant variety protection for biodiversity conservation and supporting inclusive agriculture and diverse farming systems, such as organic farming.
- **Urban Agriculture and Ecosystem Restoration:** emerging areas such as **green cities** and ecosystem restoration require varieties adapted to new agricultural practices and enhanced environmental services.

Overall, the outcomes of the Horizon Scanning make clear that the UPOV plant variety protection system faces critical challenges and opportunities due to rapid technological advances, climate change, evolving global trade, and shifting stakeholder expectations. Its future relevance depends on adapting to innovation, enhancing sustainability, improving efficiency, and fostering inclusivity. This has led to the formulation of the SBP, *'The Major Trends and Calls for Action for the UPOV Plant Variety Protection System'*.

Besides the outcomes of the Horizon Scanning Exercise, the SBP includes the important chapter *'Strategy House'*, which provides insight into UPOV's mission, in its three strategic pillars and foundation, in its future direction and ensuring financial sustainability.

*Here is the link to UPOV's full Strategic Business Plan (SBP) for 2026-2029:*

[https://www.upov.int/meetings/en/details.jsp?meeting\\_id=85865](https://www.upov.int/meetings/en/details.jsp?meeting_id=85865) under **C/59/14**

The UPOV sessions 2025 brought together more than 200 delegates from UPOV's members and observers to review progress on the organisation's strategic priorities and developments over the past year.

Key highlights included the formal welcome of Nigeria as UPOV's newest member, in-depth discussions on the Strategic Business Plan 2026–2029, and exchanges on how new technologies are transforming plant variety protection and driving innovation in agriculture.



Addressing the UPOV Council, Mr Fatuhu Muhammed, Director General of the Nigerian Agricultural Seeds Council, reaffirmed Nigeria’s dedication to global collaboration in plant variety protection.

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*“The Government of Nigeria is fully committed to collaborating with all member countries and the UPOV Secretariat in a spirit of unity and partnership. We look forward to working together to create a future where agricultural innovation thrives, sustainable development is achieved, and our farmers and breeders are empowered. We are confident that this membership will benefit future generations for years to come,”*  
*Mr Fatuhu Muhammed stated.*

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On the sidelines of the sessions, on 22 October, UPOV held a **Seminar on Cooperation with Breeders in Plant Variety DUS (distinct, uniform and sustainable) Examinations**, where members shared experiences on collaborating with breeders to make plant variety examinations more cost-effective and efficient. These examinations concern the DUS tests of new bred varieties for which the breeder applied for plant breeders’ rights. The newness, distinctness, uniformity and sustainability of a variety are tested before the PBR application can be granted. Participants presented examples of cooperative testing approaches across national systems and discussed the benefits of collaboration in implementing the options provided under the UPOV Convention.

At the start of the CAJ, UPOV’s Vice-Secretary General, Yolanda Huerta, delivered an informative update on recent UPOV developments.

*Use the following link to listen to and see her presentation:*  
<https://multimedia.wipo.int/upov/en/2025-yolanda-huerta-recent-developments-upov-720p.mp4>

Throughout the five-day UPOV meetings, delegates exchanged views on promoting innovation in plant breeding, enhancing farmers’ access to improved varieties, and deepening collaboration among members to support sustainable agricultural development.

The sessions also saw the handover of UPOV leadership positions. Outgoing President of the Council, Mr Yehan Cui (China), passed the baton to Mr Anthony Parker (Canada). The Chair of the Administrative and Legal Committee, Ms María Laura Villamayor (Argentina), handed over to Ms Minori Hagiwara (Japan). At the same time, the Chair of the Technical Committee, Ms Beate Rücker (Germany), was succeeded by Ms Nuria Urquía Fernández (Spain).

In addition, members offered positive feedback on Malaysia's legislation, paving the way for the Southeast Asian nation to become a UPOV member once the laws are adopted.

Last year, more than 29,000 plant variety protection (PVP) filings were made—the ninth straight year of increase. With the recent accession of Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, UPOV now has 80 members across 99 states.

## **SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

### **EDV**

At the Administrative and Legal Council (CAJ, 22 October) meeting, an update of UPOV's Essentially Derived Variety (EDV) concept was presented by the seed industry, represented by the International Seed Federation (ISF). The EDV concept clarifies the scope of the protection of the original breeder's innovation during the term of protection of the initial variety from which the EDV was created.

ISF is supporting and furthering the improved UPOV's Explanatory Note on EDV (2023) by addressing the scope of EDV and its predictable implementation.

ISF does so by:

- 1) a revised ISF position paper on intellectual property, achieving an updated EDV concept compared to the previous ISF position and in line with the current EXN of UPOV.
- 2) an implanted Arbitration process feasible across the industry by aligning with the industry on practical examples,
- 3) by partnering with stakeholders to implement a predictable, transparent, flexible interpretation of the EDV concept.

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*To refresh the EDV concept: an EDV can be a true improvement over the existing variety, but a deliberate choice was made to use the initial variety predominantly. Therefore, the EDV concept serves to ensure a fair return on investment for the breeder of the initial variety. The EDV breeder contributes a portion of its revenue to the holder of the initial variety (as mutually agreed).*

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*For those who wish to see the ISF's PowerPoint for more detailed information, please use this link: [https://www.upov.int/edocs/mdocs/upov/en/caj\\_82/caj\\_82\\_3\\_ppt\\_isf.pdf](https://www.upov.int/edocs/mdocs/upov/en/caj_82/caj_82_3_ppt_isf.pdf)*

## **EXPERT GROUP ON HARVESTED MATERIAL**

The members of the **Expert Group on Harvested Material** held an in-person meeting in Geneva. Mr Huib Ghijsen is a member of the independent expert group and was nominated by AIPH. Additionally, he was appointed by the other experts as the group coordinator and presented their progress at the eighth meeting of the Working Group on Harvested Material (WG-HRV). The Group analyses the history of the 1978 and 1991 UPOV Conventions and the intentions of the drafters for the concepts of article 14(2) of UPOV 1991 (in particular the concepts in Article 14 of “unauthorized use”, “reasonable opportunity”, “exhaustion of the right”, “propagating material” and “harvested material”) by studying the preparatory papers and the records of the diplomatic conferences, together with the relevant jurisprudence.

*Here is a link to the progress report of the expert group:*

[https://www.upov.int/meetings/en/details.jsp?meeting\\_id=85866](https://www.upov.int/meetings/en/details.jsp?meeting_id=85866)

The final report of the expert group will be made available to the WG-HRV shortly, giving members time to consider the final version of the study before the ninth meeting of the WG-HRV, scheduled for March 2026.

## **TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**

In addition to discussions on the improvement of the PBR application procedures and DUS testing, the Technical Committee (TC) agreed to organise a webinar on practical experiences with delays in DUS testing due to phytosanitary requirements and considerations for using test reports from another UPOV member, to reduce delays in granting breeders' rights.

The TC received expressions of interest to deliver presentations from Australia, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom.

## **PVP STATISTICS PERIOD 2014-2024**

At the CAJ meeting, an interesting overview was given by the UPOV team about the PVP statistics for the period 2014-2024. Using animated graphics that provide insights into PVP applications, titles granted, by which PVP office, by which country, PVP in force worldwide, etc., etc.

*View the interesting overview on this link:*

<https://www.upov.int/en/plant-variety-protection/pvp-statistics>