



**GLOBAL CROP  
DIVERSITY TRUST**  
A FOUNDATION FOR FOOD SECURITY

104.02W.4-59.j.3.

17 March 2010

His Excellency  
Søren Pind  
Minister for Development Cooperation  
2, Asiatisk Plads  
DK-1448 Copenhagen K  
Denmark

→ HU inf (strategi-  
indspil)

CC: CNP, div 2, udvalget

MODTAGET

26 MAR. 2010

Udv.min.sek.

Re 8/4-10

Dear Minister,

I write, on behalf of the Global Crop Diversity Trust, to congratulate you on your recent appointment as Minister of Development Cooperation.

I know that you will be faced with a number of competing priorities in your new portfolio. I would like to bring to your attention one vital issue which may not have crossed your desk yet: crop diversity. Crop diversity as the biological foundation of agriculture, and therefore a prerequisite for tackling food security, climate change adaptation, and long-term economic development.

Crop diversity refers to the vast number of varieties of our crops. Individual varieties, such as the 200,000 varieties of wheat, have different traits for drought or heat tolerance, nutritional quality, disease resistance and every other possible characteristic. Crop diversity is the raw material for improving and adapting crops to meet all future challenges.

There is, therefore, no possible scenario in which we can continue to grow the food we require without crop diversity. This affects all of us, as no country in the world is self sufficient in the genetic diversity of the crops which feed its people. But this diversity has not been properly collected, screened or conserved. Worse still, it is disappearing, dying even in the seedbanks where it has been placed for safekeeping.

Fortunately, unlike most other development challenges, the conservation of crop diversity can be easily achieved – the science is understood, the institutions exist, and the political agreements are in place. All that is required is a reliable, effective funding, which the Trust is now starting to provide. The Trust is, in fact, the sole worldwide response to the underfunding crisis which threatens the conservation of the genetic diversity of our crops.

International agreements have often underlined the importance of crop diversity, most recently the Declaration from last November's World Summit on Food Security, whose preamble cites the importance of the "conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources for food and agriculture". This year, 2010, is the International Year of Biodiversity, and the work of the Trust is particularly relevant in drawing a direct link between biodiversity conservation and development.

We are proud of the strong relationship we have built with Nordic governments to date – both Norway and Sweden have been strong supporters of the Trust and strong advocates for the conservation of crop diversity and its close link with effective development. Many other countries, both developed and developing, have donated funds to the Trust, and we are hopeful that Denmark might consider joining this group. Over the past few years, we have also been in communication with Ministries in Denmark but would very much like to introduce our work more formally to the appropriate people in Copenhagen.

I understand that a new strategy for Denmark's development cooperation is being developed, and would welcome the opportunity to contribute the perspective of the Global Crop Diversity Trust to that process.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cary Fowler', written in a cursive style.

Cary Fowler  
Executive Director  
Global Crop Diversity Trust

Copy to:  
Mr. Søren Skafte  
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Royal Danish Embassy  
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