

## International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

**Prelims** - Current events of national and international importance | General issues on Environmental ecology, Bio-diversity and Climate Change

**Mains** - GS-III (Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment)

### Why in news?

The 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group under the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture is discussing controversial amendments that could dilute benefit-sharing provisions.

- International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, also called as Plant Treaty.
- **Objective** - Conservation and sustainable use of all plant genetic resources for food and agriculture and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of their use.
- It is in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity, for sustainable agriculture and food security.
- It is signed by many countries including India.
- **Multilateral System (MLS)** - It is *administered by the ITPGRFA*.
- It is a global system facilitating access to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA) and ensuring fair and equitable benefit-sharing among countries.
- It is the International Treaty's truly innovative solution to access and benefit-sharing, which includes 64 of the world's most important crops.

### Proposed Amendments & Concerns

- The Proposed Change Allow all plant species to be included if they have traits useful for food/forage breeding.

### Implications on Developing Countries

- **Loss of Sovereignty** - Developing countries, rich in biodiversity, fear losing sovereign rights over their plants.
- The proposal could force them to share everything under a Standard Material Transfer Agreement, reducing their say.
- **Unfair Benefits** - The current system ensures benefits return to providers. Expanding access might dilute this, favouring richer nations or corporations.
- **Bio piracy Risk** - Free access could lead to exploitation, including "digital bio piracy,"

where genetic data is used without permission.

- **Food Security Threat** – Instead of protecting food crops for global hunger, this might weaken local farmers and seed systems.

## Reference

[Down to Earth | Plant Treaty](#)

