



International Seed Treaty

Why in News

The eighth session of the Governing Body of **International Treaty of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture** (ITPGRFA) is being held in **Rome, Italy from 11th to 16th November 2019.**

Key Points

- The Governing Body sessions are held **biennially.**
- India highlighted the need for conservation of plant genetic resources and the uniqueness of Indian legislation **Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights (PPV&FR) Act** to address the related issues.

International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

- It was **adopted** by the 31st session of the Conference of the [Food and Agriculture Organization \(FAO\) of the United Nations](#) on **3rd November 2001.**
- **Objective:**
 - **Farmers' Contribution:** To recognize the contribution of farmers to the diversity of crops,
 - **Access and Benefit Sharing:** Establish a global system to provide farmers, plant breeders and scientists with access to plant genetic materials,
 - **Sustainability:** To conserve and sustainably use plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, and **fair and equitable sharing** of the benefits arising out of their use, in harmony with the [Convention on Biological Diversity.](#)
- It is also known as **Seed Treaty** as it is a comprehensive international agreement for ensuring food security through the conservation, exchange and sustainable use of the world's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA).
- India **is a signatory** to the treaty.

Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights (PPV&FR) Act, 2001

- It aims to protect **Farmers' and breeder's rights.**
- According to the act, a farmer is entitled to **save, use, sow, resow, exchange, share or sell** his farm produce including seed of a variety protected under the [PPV&FR Act, 2001](#) except the brand name.
- The Act is compliant to **Article-9 of the Seed Treaty.**
- Under the provisions of this Act, 138 farmers/farming communities have been awarded with the **Plant Genome Saviour Awards** by the **Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority.**
 - The award is given annually to the farmers engaged in the conservation of genetic resources of landraces (dynamic populations of a cultivated plant) and wild relatives of economic plants and their improvement.
- A few months back in April 2019, [PepsiCo sued Gujarati farmers](#) by invoking the provisions of the act.

Source: PIB

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