

Knowledge base for best practices of genebank management Why and how it was developed

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Why collect information on best genebank practices?

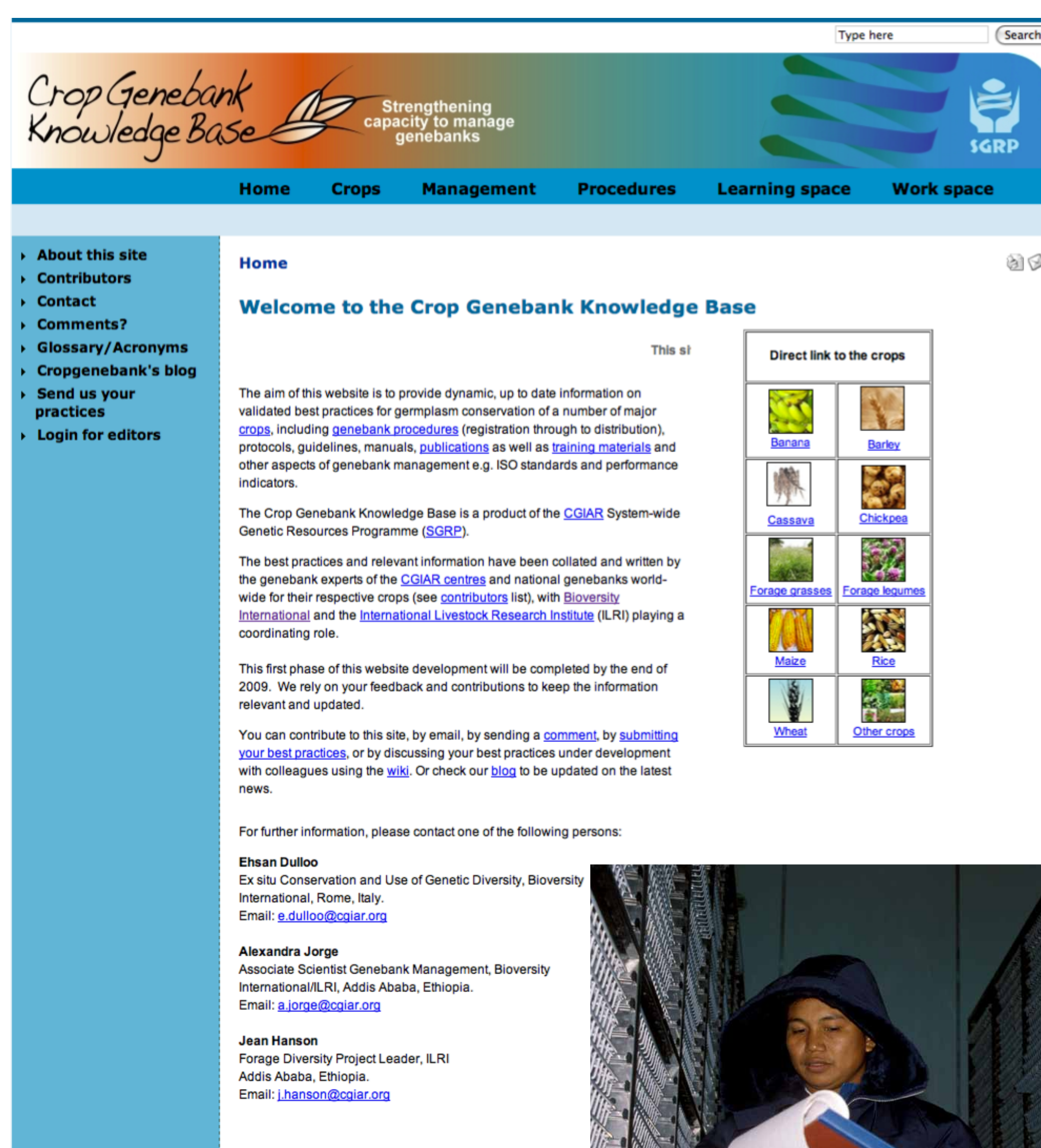
Our goal is to help ensure that seeds and plants are effectively and efficiently conserved and made available for future use. To achieve this, genebank managers and genebank staff need to have guidelines which help them managing a genebank.

From scattered information to a website

Until now guidelines on genebank management for different crops were hard to find. Genebank managers of different research institutes were contacted and asked to share their published and unpublished knowledge. Information on crop specific genebank activities (steps and processes) for 9 crops (banana, barley, cassava, chickpea, forage grasses, forage legumes, maize, rice and wheat) were collected, standardized and edited into clear and well structured webpages.

Turning a website into a useful tool

Multimedia (photos and video) were added to enhance the content and potential for learning. The knowledge base website also contains many interactive items such as flipbooks (series of clickable pictures), presentations, tutorials, a forum, a blog, a wiki, e-learning materials and many links, and can also be used as a training tool.



A CMS for easy maintenance and updates

This website is built using the free Joomla content management system (CMS). This CMS allows users of this website to register and participate in developing or updating content or making comments. This important feature makes it easy to add information on new genebank

management practices and new crops. Tutorials that explain how to do this are included on the website.

Key success factors

- Collaboration amongst key crop experts is vital.
- Champions helped to motivate others to contribute.
- The use of visual content makes it more user friendly.



What's next?

- Establish collaboration mechanisms with curators of national and international genebanks for regular updates of information including addition of best practices for other crops.
- Establish feedback mechanisms from users to improve the usefulness and use of shared platforms.
- Expand the site linking other practices and guidelines for genebank management such as quality assurance standards.
- Translate best practices and key publications to other languages to encourage broader use.

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