

EURISCO Newsletter, No. 9

December 2019

The EURISCO Newsletter is a series of electronic bulletins that provide feedback to National Focal Points (NFPs) and serve as a dissemination vehicle for NFPs and other partners to put forward their contributions regarding plant genetic resources issues/themes. The new EURISCO Newsletter is the successor of the previous EURISCO e-bulletin. In order to ensure that the EURISCO Catalogue is sustainable and meets the NFPs' and other users' needs, everyone is invited to contribute to this newsletter. Thematic papers, ideas, comments, suggestions and questions are all welcome.

Coverage of EURISCO

Since January 2019, the number of accessions documented in EURISCO increased by 36,028. By 19 December 2019, a total of 2,019,404 accessions from 43 National Inventories and 398 individual holding institutions were documented. These accessions represent 6,392 genera and 43,223 species, respectively. The number of AEGIS accessions labelled in EURISCO rose by 9,769, reaching 56,818 in total. Details can be found on the EURISCO website.

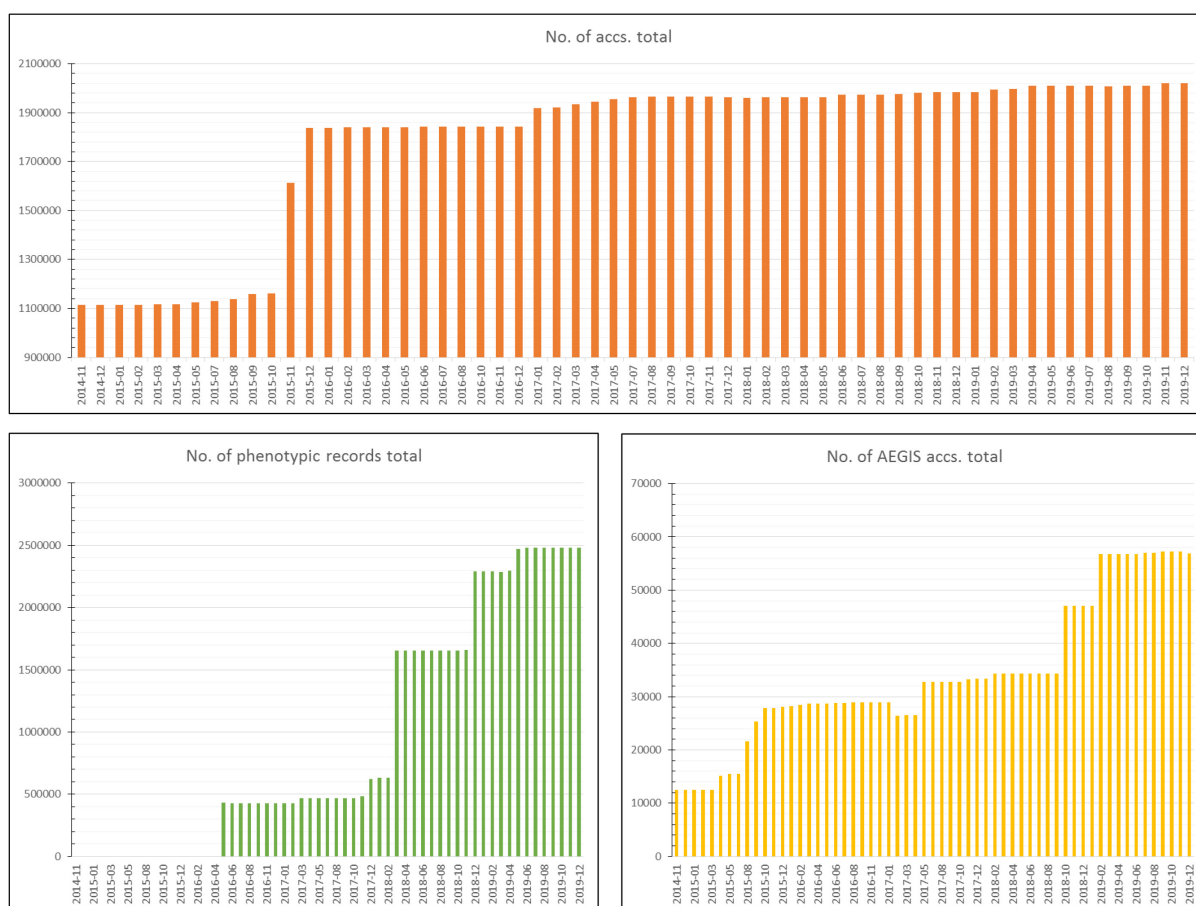


Figure 1: Overview of the EURISCO dataset.

In 2019, the number of phenotypic data records rose by 189,133, reaching a total of 2,482,274 provided by eight countries so far. More data will be welcome anytime.

The use of Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) was further promoted, thus facilitating the unique identification of accessions. In the frame of the Global Information System (GLIS), the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) provides the infrastructure for registering genebank accessions for DOIs free-of-charge. In close collaboration with ITPGRFA, a EURISCO service was implemented to support the DOI registration. Thereby, EURISCO acts as a mediator in the registration process and hands over the issued DOIs to the respective National Inventory Focal Point. This service was first used by the National Inventory Focal Point of Azerbaijan. 8,387 accessions of the Azerbaijan National Inventory were registered for a DOI with the GLIS.

New features

The taxonomy search in EURISCO was further improved as already reported in the last newsletter. These extensions to EURISCO have now been published in a short communication article in Plant Genetic Resources (Advancement of taxonomic searches in the European search catalogue for plant genetic resources. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1479262119000339>).

Since 2016, EURISCO has also enabled the management of phenotypic data in addition to passport data. The EURISCO web interface allows browsing and filtering of phenotypic data. In this connection, users have repeatedly expressed the wish to be offered the possibility to download the data of complete experiments. This was recently implemented and it is now possible to browse through all available experiments and download all associated data in a single MS Excel file. Several data sheets provide the experiment description, the definition of the traits and methods used, as well as all associated score values.

Project activities

The EURISCO coordination participated in three project proposals, which were submitted to the H2020 call “Adding value to plant Genetic Resources” (SFS-28-2019 B). One of them, Activated GENEbank NeTwork (AGENT), was recently approved for funding. The AGENT project is a concerted effort to activate genebanks. It focuses primarily on wheat and barley and aims to facilitate access to genetic resources for breeders and farmers through standardised protocols for data generation, documentation and provision to users. The EURISCO coordination will be mainly involved in two work packages aiming at the development of guidelines and formats for data production, exchange and representation, and at the development of the infrastructure for managing and analysing genotypic and phenotypic data about genetic resources, respectively.

The EURISCO coordination continues to participate in the ongoing Horizon 2020 projects “EUCLEG”, “Farmer’s Pride” and “GenRes Bridge”.

We will continue to actively participate in the preparation of further project proposals aiming at acquiring additional funding for developing certain aspects of EURISCO.

Dissemination

A presentation on EURISCO was given at the workshop *Breathing New Life into the Global Crop Conservation Strategies: Providing an Evidence Base for the Global System of Ex Situ Conservation of Crop Diversity*, Global Crop Diversity Trust, Bonn, Germany, 14–15 October 2019.

Another talk was given at the First Meeting of the ECPGR Maize Working Group, Belgrade, Serbia, 2–3 December 2019.

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