



International Seed Testing Association

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Draft ISTA Strategy 2010-2013

This document was prepared by the Secretariat of the Association and endorsed by the ISTA Executive Committee to be submitted to the ISTA Ordinary Meeting 2010 for voting by the nominated ISTA Designated Members voting on behalf of their respective Government.

It is submitted to all ISTA Designated Authorities, ISTA Members and ISTA Observer Organisations for information two months prior to the ISTA Ordinary Meeting 2010.

It will be discussed and voted on at the Ordinary Meeting 2010 to be held on Tuesday, June 22, 2010 in Cologne, Germany, under Agenda point 7. ISTA Strategy 2010-2013.

Draft Strategic Plan for the International Seed Testing Association 2010 – 2013

1. Introduction

Since its beginning in 1924, ISTA has grown to have 73 member countries and 195 member laboratories, 114 of which are accredited. This membership is drawn from analytical and/or research laboratories in the public sector, from the seed industry, and from private businesses. This places ISTA at the interface between research, industry and regulation, which greatly facilitates the identification of needs for new seed testing methods or changes in existing methods.

The seed industry requires analytical testing methods to meet trade requirements and to control risks related to quality. ISTA, with its validated seed testing methods, its accredited member laboratories, and its international seed analysis certificates, provides these requirements at a global level.

Since the early 1990s, the seed world has been changing. Increasingly the support of governments for their seed industries and seed quality assurance is decreasing and the private sector is taking greater responsibility for the long-term future of the seed industry. This reduction of capabilities and resources from the public sector and in large government-funded seed testing laboratories is having an impact on the voluntary work which can be conducted by ISTA's technical committees. Yet the evolution of seed testing methods has not reached its conclusion; continuing improvements and research are necessary to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of seed testing to provide the tests needed to meet the changing needs of the market. ISTA must continue to work with governments, FAO, ISF, OECD, UPOV and other international organisations to ensure the continuation of its vital role in the seed industry, thereby contributing to food security.

ISTA is an Association of members. ISTA is not just the Secretariat, the Executive Committee, or the Technical Committees. We, as ISTA members, achieve our aims by working together to implement our Strategic Plan.

ISTA Strategic Plan 2010-2013

ISTA is the International Seed Testing Association.

Vision:

Uniformity in seed quality evaluation worldwide

Mission:

We as ISTA members, work together to achieve our vision. Our Association produces internationally agreed rules for seed sampling and testing, accredits laboratories, promotes research, provides international seed analysis certificates and training, and disseminates knowledge in seed science and technology. This facilitates seed trading nationally and internationally, and also contributes to food security.

The aim of this Strategic Plan is to further strengthen the relevance of ISTA and its value to our members and stakeholders.

At The 2010 Ordinary Meeting the membership agreed on the following seven key areas for ISTA in 2010 – 2013:

- Membership and participation in ISTA
- ISTA Rules, Method Development and Validation
- Accreditation
- Facilitation of the Movement of Seed
- Disseminating Knowledge in Seed Science and Technology
- Communication
- Management of ISTA's Affairs

The following section presents the aim and methods for achieving the aim for each of the seven key areas.

1. MEMBERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION IN ISTA

1.1 Aim

To increase membership in all categories and thus encourage greater participation in ISTA's work.

1.2 Methods

- Give priority to promoting the benefits of ISTA membership.
- Explore systems for increasing membership in all existing, and possibly new, categories.
- Encourage active participation by members in ISTA's activities.

2. ISTA RULES, METHOD DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION

2.1 Aim

To continue to improve the ISTA Rules to meet the needs of the international seed sector.

2.2 Methods

- Give priority to developing and validating methods according to stakeholder needs.
- Increase the number of species in the ISTA Rules, particularly for subtropical/tropical species.
- Increase statistical assistance for method validation studies.
- Continue to increase efficiency in ISTA's method validation system.

3. ACCREDITATION

3.1 Aim

To continue to provide ISTA's internationally recognised accreditation system ensuring that it meets stakeholder requirements.

3.2 Methods

- Increase the scope of proficiency testing according to member's needs.
- Continue to meet resource needs for proficiency testing.
- Explore possibilities for increasing efficiency in the accreditation system.

4. FACILITATION OF THE MOVEMENT OF SEED

4.1 Aim

To continue to support the trouble-free movement of seed at national and international levels.

4.2 Methods

- Examine enhancing the usefulness of ISTA certificates, including electronic issuing.
- Continue to encourage harmonisation of seed testing methods across all areas of the world.
- Demonstrate the value of ISTA, its Rules and its Seed Analysis Certificates at governmental, seed industry and farmer levels internationally.

5. DISSEMINATING KNOWLEDGE IN SEED SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

5.1 Aim

To enhance the seed testing/technology/science skills and knowledge of ISTA's members.

5.2 Methods

- Implement priority recommendations from the 2009 Seed Analyst Training Workshop.
- Continue to encourage the provision of high quality workshops and scientific fora.
- Continue to publish Handbooks as required.
- Encourage scientific research and publication.
- Encourage collaboration and exchange of information with other organisations working in seed science.

6. COMMUNICATION

6.1 Aim

To improve communication among members and within the seed sector, thereby ensuring that ISTA's publications and products meet expectations.

6.2 Methods

- Develop web to supply better information about ISTA and its products and services, and to allow electronic exchange of information among members and non-members.
- Develop electronic publishing as the primary method, but continue to produce hard copy versions as required.
- Enhance the marketing of ISTA's products and services.
- Improve reciprocal communication from ECOM to membership.
- Enhance international recognition of ISTA.

7. MANAGEMENT OF ISTA'S AFFAIRS

7.1 Aim

To continue to provide effective and efficient management of ISTA's essential functions.

7.2 Methods

- Enhance efficiency and effectiveness to achieve results as quickly as possible.
- Manage finances to accumulate reserves and secure the future development of ISTA.
- Make decision making transparent to the membership.
- Clearly delineate ISTA's "membership" and "service" provision roles.