

Existing Regional and International Agreements to Facilitate Seed Trade

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

***SEED ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT (SEMIS) SHORT COURSE ON:
NATIONAL PLANT PROTECTION ORGANIZATIONS (NPPOS) AND SEED QUALITY REGULATORS COURSE***

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Seed Enterprises Management Institute

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AFSTA

AFSTA

- Africa Seed Trade Association
- A not-for-profit organization established in 2000 to promote trade in quality seeds in Africa
- Hosted in Nairobi, Kenya with a regional office in Dakar, Senegal
- AFSTA role is to dialogue with seed stakeholders of public and private sectors at national, regional and global levels, on issues that contribute to the growth and development of the Africa seed industry

AFSTA in Africa

Mission: *Promoting Trade in Improved Quality Seeds in Africa*



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Background

- Studies show that the global food production will have to double to meet the food demand for a growing population projected to reach 9.3b by 2050
- Access to high quality seed by farmers is a prerequisite to increase food production.
- An effective seed sector involves various institutions, who play key roles in the production and distribution of quality seeds to farmers.

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Seed Trade

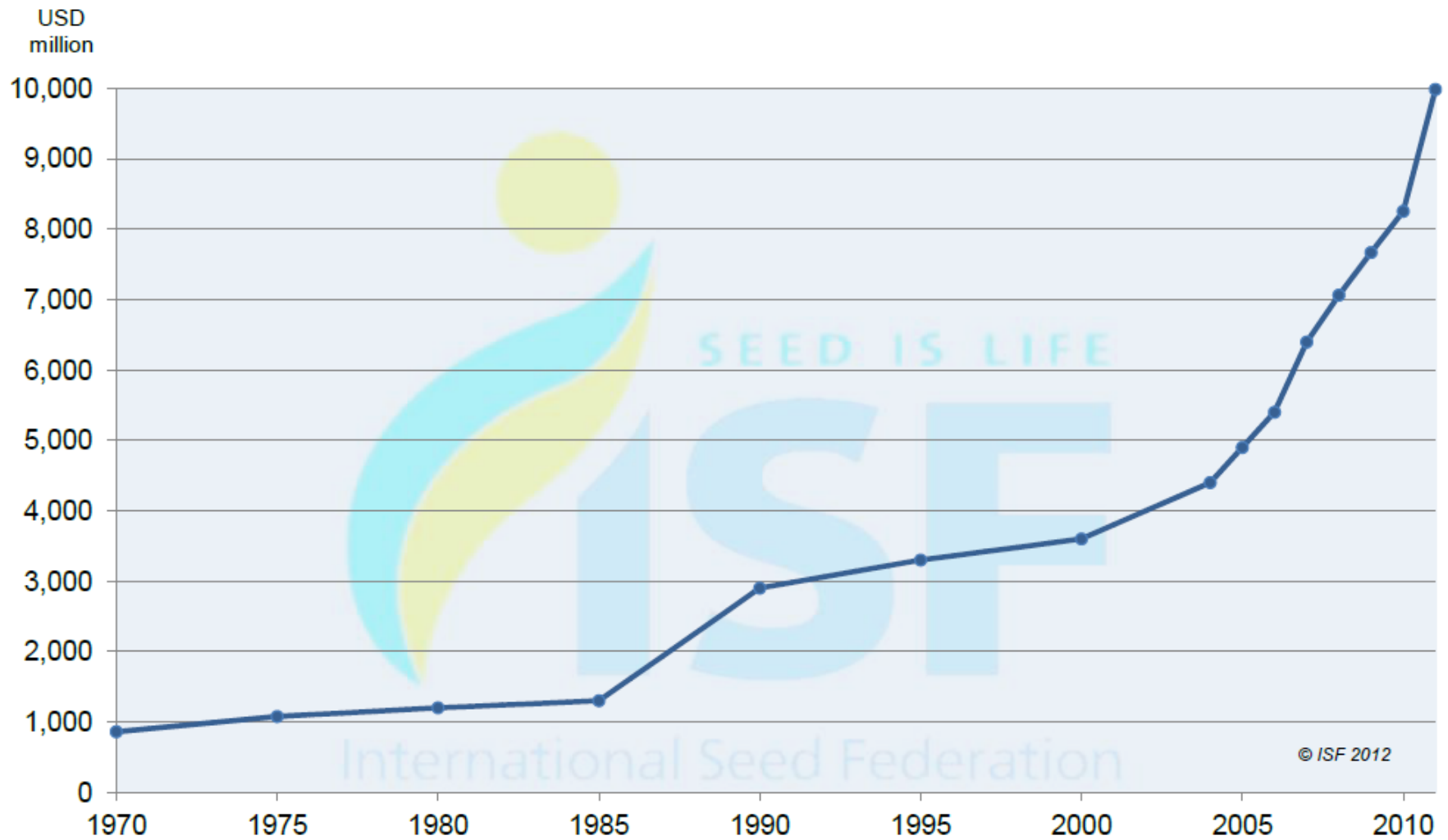
- Seed is a commodity for trade and thus subject to trade regulations
- Seed traders move seed from one point to the other facilitated by policies developed at national, regional or global levels
- Globally, there exists agreements/regulations that facilitate production and distribution of quality seeds to farmers
- It is the duty of seed traders to adhere trade agreements/regulations to guarantee movement of quality seed

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Trend of Global Seed Movement



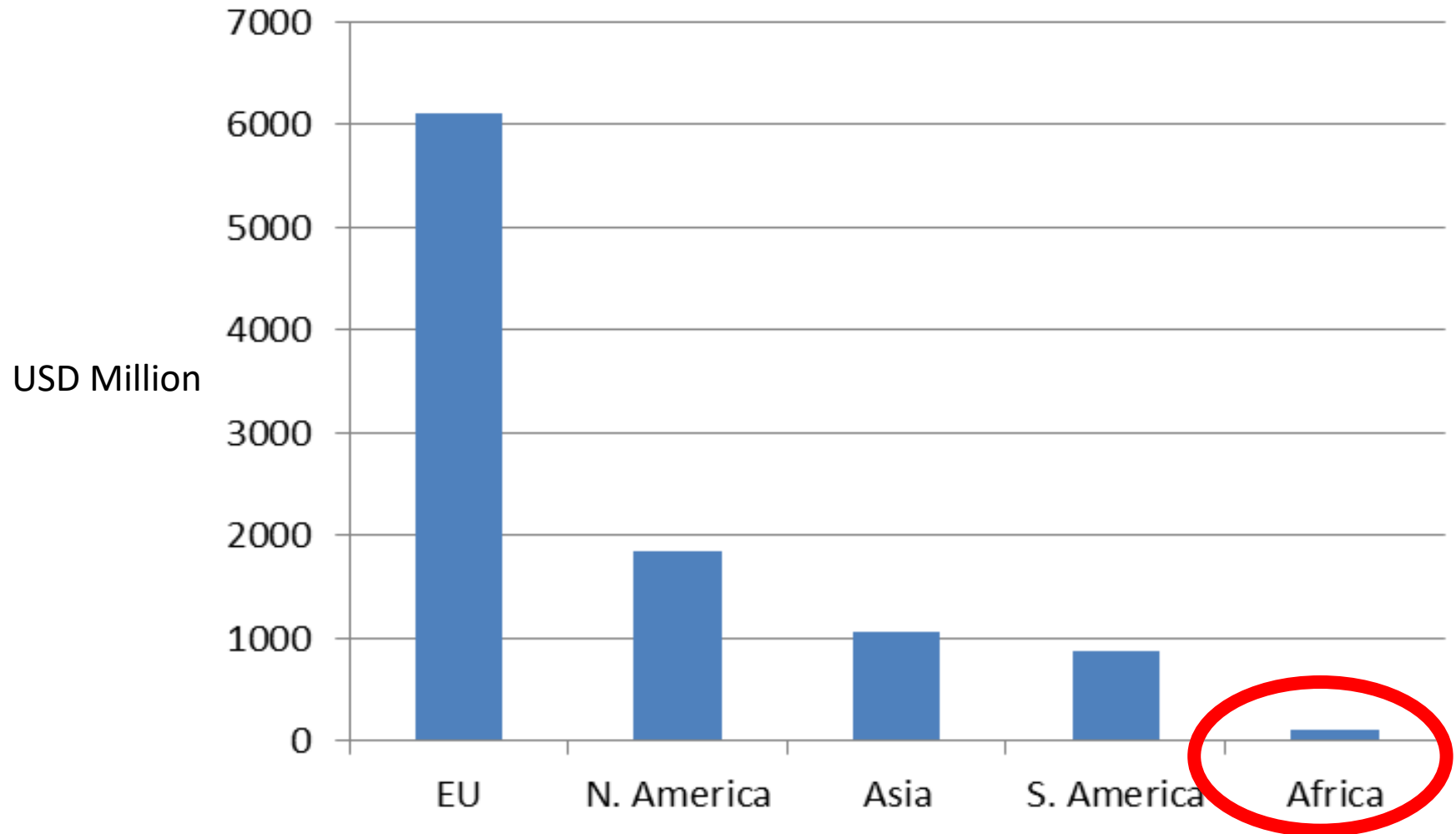
Global Seed Movement

On the rise due to;

- Higher speed of breeding
- Cheap & fast transportation
- Development of hybrid varieties
- Many other factors

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Seed export per continent



Seed Agreements

An Agreement

- A negotiated legally binding arrangement between parties as to a course of action

A Regulation

- A rule or directive made and maintained by an authority

Seed Agreements

- Negotiated agreements between the national, regional and global institutions developing policies that affects the seed sector

Global seed Agreements

- Seed Certification
- Seed Testing
- Phytosanitary Measures
- Plant Variety Protection

Global and Regional Seed Institutions

- **OECD**
 - Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development
- **UPOV**
 - International Union for Protection of New Varieties of Plants
- **ISTA**
 - International Seed Testing Association
- **IPPC**
 - International Plant Protection Convention
- **FAO**
 - Food and Agriculture Organisation
- **CBD**
 - Convention of Biological Diversity
- **WIPO**
 - World Intellectual Property Organisation
- **RECs**
 - Regional Economic Communities

Global Seed Agreements

Seed Certification

- A quality assurance process that regulate seed intended for domestic or international markets
- OECD provides internationally accepted rules and regulations for the certification of seed, the OECD seed schemes
- OECD seed schemes were set up in 1958
- OECD seed schemes authorizes the use of labels and certificates for seed produced and processed for trade
- For a country to participate in the OECD Seed Schemes, certain criteria have to be met e.g. a description of the national seed certification scheme; rules and procedures governing variety registration and seed certification e.t.c.
- Other seed certification schemes:
 - Association of official seed certifying agencies (AOSCA) in Us and Canada
 - Europe etc

Global Seed Agreements

Seed Testing

- Testing the physical purity, germination, moisture content and seed vigour of a seed lot
- ISTA develop internationally accepted procedures for sampling and testing a seed lot intended for trade
- ISTA accredits seed testing laboratory to strengthen testing standards and communication of results
- To be accredited, a lab must have an established quality assurance system, pass scheduled audits and obtain reliable results from the proficiency tests.
- ISTA accredited labs issue ISTA international certificates guaranteeing among others traceability of the analysis.
- Other seed testing organisations includes;
 - The association of official seed analysts (AOSA)
 - The society of commercial seed technologists

Global Seed Agreements

Phytosanitary Measures

- These are government legislations, regulations and procedures that regulate the import and marketing of plant species or plant products
- The WTO agreement (WTO-SPS Agreement) allows countries to set their own phytosanitary measures of sound scientific basis.
- IPPC is recognized by WTO-SPS Agreement as the international standard setting body for plant health

Global Seed Agreements

Plant Variety Protection

- WTO's agreement on trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPS) obliges its signatories to implement a system for the protection of plant varieties
- UPOV provides an effective system of plant variety protection of varieties of plants, by granting PBR.
- UPOV members encourage plant breeding of varieties that conform to DUS parameters
- UPOV 1991 Act is common in Africa and Europe

Global Seed Agreements

- The International Treaty(IT) is an international legally binding instrument governing access and benefit-sharing for plant genetic resources of food and agriculture (PGRFA)
- Contracting parties to IT have established a global gene pool whose access is made possible by SMTA which was adopted in 2006

Regional Seed Agreements

Africa RECs (COMESA, EAC, ECOWAS, SADC) have harmonized seed trade regulations focusing on 3 thematic areas of Variety release system, Seed certification and Phytosanitary measures.

Seed certification process is similar in all the RECS but differences are observed on the other areas as follows;

COMESA harmonized seed trade regulations

- 20 countries
- Initiated in 2008
- A variety require registration in at least two member countries before it can be entered in the regional catalogue
- Phytosanitary measures require one pest list for all seed traded in the region

Regional Seed Agreements

EAC harmonized seed trade regulations

- Initiated in 1999
- 11 countries within ASARECA coverage
- Any variety registered in a member country national catalogue require one year domestic testing in a new country before registration in the regional level

Existing Regional Agreements Facilitating Seed Trade

ECOWAS harmonized seed trade regulations

- 17 countries
- Harmonized seed trade regulations established in 2008
- Under the ECOWAS regulations, a new variety registered in one member country is eligible for entry in the regional catalog

Regional Seed Agreements

SADC harmonized seed trade regulations

- Initiated in 1987
- 15 countries
- SADC regulations provides for the registration of landraces on the basis of farmer experiences
- A variety require registration in at least two member countries before it be entered in the region's catalogue
- Phytosanitary measures require 2 sets of pest lists; one for seed traded in SADC and the other list for seed traded from outside the SADC region

Other Institutions in Seed Trade

- **Government / Ministries of Agriculture:** Development and implementation Seed policies/laws/regulations, education, training, extension services
- **Research Institutions:** Development of superior varieties
- **Seed traders:** Production and distribution of seeds
- **NGOs, CBOs and Donor Agencies:** Seed education, extension services and distribution
- **NSA:** Implementation of national seed laws and regulations
- **Seed Traders Associations** (ISF, AFSTA, ASTA, APSA, NSTAs etc): represent the interests of private seed sector
- **Seed growers:** Key to production of quality seeds
- **Agents, Sub-agents and Stockists:** distribution of quality seeds
- **Farmers:** Adoption of quality seeds

END

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