Databases
In cooperation with appropriate partners, the IBV provides national and international online-databases, *inter alia* the National Inventories on occurrences and collections of genetic resources in Germany (XGRDEU databases) in support of monitoring activities, the National Information System on Genetic Resources (BIG) and the Information System on Evaluation Data (EVA).

Sectorial National Programmes
In relation to the sectorial National Programmes on genetic resources the IBV supports the BMELV in handling coordination matters, for instance by providing secretariats for the advisory and expert committees or by compiling status reports on plant and animal genetic resources.

Advisory board of the BMELV
In 2003, the BMELV has established an advisory board for biodiversity and genetic resources in food, agriculture and forestry. Its Secretariat is located at the IBV and includes activities such as drafting support and organisational matters.

Cooperation in the framework of ECP/GR
The European Cooperative Programme for Crop Genetic Resources (ECP/GR) is an important platform for cooperation across Europe. As the technical National Focal Point, IBV support the work of ECP/GR through appropriate consultations of the German experts.

Serial on Agrobiodiversity
The publication of the Serial on Agrobiodiversity provides an information platform for the scientific community, policy makers, other experts and the general public.

Symposia on Agrobiodiversity
In cooperation with different partners, the IBV organises symposia and other events on a range of different topics.
**Agrobiodiversity as a part of biological diversity**

Biological diversity includes the diversity of ecosystems, species diversity as well as the variation within individual species.

Biodiversity in agriculture, or in short **agrobiodiversity**, comprises all components that are vital for food, agriculture, forestry and fisheries and also all components which contribute to maintaining the key functions of agricultural ecosystems. Thus, two areas of agrobiodiversity can be described:

- **Genetic resources for food, agriculture, forestry and fisheries.** They comprise all cultivated and domesticated species including their varieties, landraces, breeds and/or populations and their wild relatives as well as managed populations of wild animals and plants.

- **Components of agrobiodiversity with ecological functions.** They encompass, e.g. useful animals which control pests, soil organisms which process nutrients for crops, pollinators as well as plants which contribute to erosion control and/or which stabilise water supplies.

Genetic resources are managed as follows:

- **In situ** – in the natural habitat, e.g. in forestry or fisheries (use and conservation);

- **On farm** – on cultivated areas in agriculture (plants and animals) and in horticulture (use);

- **Ex situ** – outside of the natural habitat, e.g. in genebanks, zoos and botanical gardens (conservation).

**IBV objectives**

The objectives of the IBV relate to Biological Diversity and here in particular to Genetic Resources for Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. They include:

- Support of the development and execution of programmes for genetic resources for food, agriculture, forestry and fisheries;

- Secretarial support for the respective advisory and coordination bodies at the BMELV for genetic resources for food, agriculture, forestry and fisheries;

- Data collection and documentation as well as user-oriented central dissemination of information about occurrences, characteristics and performance of genetic resources for food, agriculture, forestry and fisheries;

- Monitoring and assessment of agrobiodiversity trends in Germany;

- Coordination of conservation activities and assistance to conservation networks;

- Facilitation of national and international support measures and programmes;

- Knowledge transfer and advisory services for political decision makers and other stakeholders;

- Public relations activities.

In 2000, the Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection (BMELV) published the “Conception for the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources for food, agriculture and forestry.” It forms the basis for specialised National Programmes in various sectors. These programmes include measures to support the efficient conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity which can only be implemented with the participation of a wide range of experts and institutions from practice, science, economy, administration and the interested public. This requires comprehensive information, consultation and coordination mechanisms.

Those are the tasks of the Information and Coordination Centre for Biological Diversity (IBV) at the Federal Agency for Agriculture and Food (BLE). As the central authority responsible for information and coordination, the IBV facilitates the use of synergies and improves the efficiency of interested parties.

**Selected Activities**

**GENRES Information system**

As the internet-based information platform on agricultural biological diversity, GENRES is the hub for information on the implementation of the sectorial National Programmes, for online-documents, publications, databases, programmes, projects and selected national and international web links. The information system will continue to be developed into an efficient tool to monitor national activities related to agrobiodiversity.

For further information please refer to: [www.genres.de](http://www.genres.de)