

18 years of development – 5 minutes to copy

2007 I had the opportunity to visit the Tea Research Institute of Vietnam north of Hanoi. At that time Vietnam planned to join the UPOV-convention and developed their legislation regarding Plant Variety Protection.

The tea breeder informed us that it took on average 16 to 18 years to develop a new tea-variety from the initial crossing to the final evaluation of the marked potential of a new tea variety.



The tea bush is a vegetative propagated species and it takes 5 minutes to collect a leaf, root it and produce a new plant maintaining the original properties of the variety. From one single bush lots of leafs can be collected and either fermented and end up in nice cups of tea or develop into new tea bushes.

Vietnamese breeders of especially vegetatively propagated species are doubtful on the positive effect of PVP as their plants are “easy to copy” and are doubtful if multipliers will respect PVP. Applicants are very doubtful of the correct/honest information given by multipliers as this will have financial consequences for the professional multipliers – Vietnamese breeders are questioned how to enforce their rights.

Vietnamese breeders acknowledge the fact that their governmental funding will reduce in the future and they will have to use PVP as an additional source of income. The effective use of PVP will from the applicants’ side require a professional handling and probably the generation of specialized staff taking care of enforcing their legitimate rights.

In the end the added value of PVP has to be generated by the breeding society – plant breeders are in the beginning of the food chain and only through their work new varieties with better characteristics can be identified.

My name is Gerhard Deneken, I am working at the Danish Plant Directorate where I am in charge of the variety testing regarding national listing and Danish Plant Breeders Rights. I look forward to the

next hours of discussion. The quality of our seminar/workshop will depend on your contributions by sharing your experience on this difficult subject of enforcing Plant Breeders Rights. Denmark has ratified the UPOV'91 convention and I take this convention and the CPVO's basic regulation as a common frame of today's discussion.

After our workshop I will summarize the important points mentioned and the following plenary session.

And with this I give the floor to our first speaker: Edgar Krieger, Secretary General of CIOPORA