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OIV and FAO join forces to safeguard vine biodiversity

John Barker and Kent Nnadozie finalize agreement at OIV General Assembly in Dijon

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The International Organization of Vine and Wine (OIV) and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to promote cooperation in the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources, with a focus on vine biodiversity. The agreement was finalized on October 18 in Dijon during

the 22nd General Assembly of the OIV by John Barker, OIV Director General, and Kent Nnadozie, Secretary of the FAO treaty. This partnership formalizes a year of productive exchanges between the two organizations.

The agreement focuses on key areas addressing biodiversity loss and the impacts of climate change on the wine sector. Primary goals include protecting vine genetic resources from climate-related threats, advancing scientific and technical knowledge to develop sustainable viticulture policies, and identifying best practices and technical guidelines applicable to the industry.

To achieve these goals, the institutions will collaborate on several joint initiatives. These include fostering scientific exchanges and leveraging technical tools such as the ITPGRFA's Global Information System and Digital Object Identifiers, in conjunction with the OIV's databases on grape varieties, ampelographic descriptors, and ampelographic collections. Both organizations will also discuss strategies and recommendations for conserving vine genetic diversity. Additionally, they plan to enhance training programs through scientific and technical seminars.

John Barker emphasized the OIV's enthusiasm for this collaboration, highlighting its relevance in addressing the sector's current challenges. Kent Nnadozie noted that the agreement tackles issues such as climate change, diseases, pests, and biodiversity loss. According to Nnadozie, partnering with the OIV creates opportunities for innovation and the protection of vine genetic diversity.

The agreement is seen as a significant step toward strengthening the resilience and sustainability of the global wine sector, ensuring the preservation of vine genetic diversity for future generations.