

## Wheat Sequencing Consortium Announces New Appointment to Board of Directors



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The [International Wheat Genome Sequencing Consortium](#) (IWGSC), is pleased to announce the appointment of Sébastien Praud as a new Board member of the organization.

Sébastien Praud is Research Manager at [Biogemma](#), a European plant biotechnology company whose mission is to develop genomic tools and markers and to create new genetic variability to support the breeding programs of its shareholding companies – seed companies and field crop producers. Biogemma has sponsored the IWGSC since 2008, and Sébastien Praud has been representing the company in the IWGSC Coordinating Committee since.

Sébastien Praud leads the Genetics and Genomics in Cereals (GGC) team. He manages collaborative projects with institutes, universities and competitors, as well as in-house applied projects to deliver knowledge and tools that can be used by Biogemma shareholding companies in their genetic improvement programs. The team carries out studies on corn and wheat ranging from agronomy and phenotyping to genetic, genomics and 'omics analyses. They focus on deciphering complex traits and stress response mechanisms, such as drought tolerance and nitrogen.

Kellye Eversole, the IWGSC Executive Director, said “Biogemma has been one of the earliest supporter of the IWGSC and Sébastien has been a strong leader for the community and the consortium since 2008. We are extremely pleased to have his leadership and vision on the Board as we move into the next phase for the IWGSC.”

Now that the IWGSC has reached its goal of producing a high-quality genome sequence of bread wheat, the Consortium is moving into Phase II. Over the next years, it will focus its activities on three themes: community-based manual and functional annotation of the reference genome; development and maintenance of an integrated database for the wheat genome sequence; and *de novo* sequencing and assembly of multiple wheat genomes.

“Sequencing the bread wheat genome was a challenging and pioneering adventure completed with risks and uncertainties,” said Sébastien Praud. “Now that this step has been successfully completed, we have opened up new horizons towards a more comprehensive functional annotation and the establishment of a pan genome vision. Both will be important tools to improve breeding programs in the near future, but still require important investments from the public and private wheat community. That is why I am very excited and honored to join the Board and I will do my best to help the Consortium develop a global strategy oriented towards end user needs.”

## **About the IWGSC**

The IWGSC, with 1,800 members in 62 countries, is an international, collaborative consortium, established in 2005 by a group of wheat growers, plant scientists, and public and private breeders. The goal of the IWGSC is to make a high quality genome sequence of bread wheat publicly available, in order to lay a foundation for basic research that will enable breeders to develop improved varieties. The IWGSC is a U.S. 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. [www.wheatgenome.org](http://www.wheatgenome.org)

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