

Concept Note
Council – side event –
Sheik Zayed Centre 15/06/2012

“Lo que la tierra nos da”.
A photobook on efforts for the conservation of Bolivia’s agrobiodiversity

An initiative of the Governments of Bolivia, Italy and FAO

Genetic resources for food and agriculture are vital for all humankind. After millions of years of successful evolution and millennia of laborious domestication, the diversity of plants and breeds has emerged as a unique resource for agriculture and food. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is assisting its member countries to conserve, use and transfer genetic resources to future generations. These efforts are particularly well-received by member countries and donors who are committed to promoting the sustainable conservation and use of the agrobiological diversity of the planet for food security.

This is the case of the Government of Bolivia and the Italian Development Cooperation who, assisted by FAO, have joined efforts through the project *“Fortalecimiento de los bancos de germoplasma vegetal del sistema nacional de recursos genéticos para la agricultura y la alimentación”*. The project has led to relevant results in the definition of more effective national policies – in line with the optimization of the public management system of genetic resources and the development of applied research in this sector. Important results have also been achieved through another FAO project funded by the Italian Government, *“Communication for Sustainable Development Initiative (CSDI)”*. The CSDI project is developing communication strategies and tools to promote community mobilization, access to information and dialogue for knowledge sharing between farming communities and technical institutions to preserve and promote Bolivia’s valuable agrobiodiversity and farming cultural heritage.

Jointly with the Government of Italy, FAO is proud to have helped improving the country’s capacities to conserve, value and use genetic resources and becoming an example in the region. The country’s future generations will benefit from greater access to, and knowledge of, the wide diversity of species and varieties that were used by their ancestors and, to a large extent, still emerge from the Bolivian landscapes.

The book **“Lo que la tierra nos da”** is another achievement of the collaboration between the Governments of Italy and Bolivia, and FAO to document and share the various facets of plant genetic resources, from cultivation in small farms and storage in households, to wild relatives collection and advanced characterization techniques. The images in the book show the enormous variety of genetic resources for food and agriculture in the country and their strong bond with rural people.

The launching of this book is an important step in the promotion of traditional agricultural crops and a significant activity in relation to the International Year of Quinoa to be celebrated in 2013. A key opportunity to promote the values of world’s agrobiodiversity.