



SPAIN

INNOVATIONS IN AGROECOLOGY

# CONNECT-e SHARING TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

International treaties and conventions encourage national governments to recognize, protect, and promote traditional knowledge, including traditional agroecological knowledge. Following this mandate, a multidisciplinary team of Spanish scientists from 7 universities and research centers have worked together with the Spanish seed network 'Red de Semillas: Resembrando e Intercambiando' to develop CONNECT-e.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE INNOVATION

CONNECT-e ([www.conecte.es](http://www.conecte.es)) is a citizen-science platform which aims to facilitate that citizens record and share traditional ecological knowledge with other citizens and with scientists. CONNECT-e has a section specifically dedicated to landraces, whose goal is to create a dynamic inventory of landraces and associated traditional knowledge. CONNECT-e users can enter information on landraces' local names, description, management practices, food preparation, etc. Users can also upload pictures and information



on the seed banks that keep the landraces. CONNECT-e is creating a community of users that can interact with one another through

the platform, and beyond, thus promoting the live sharing and transmission of traditional agroecological knowledge.

## DESIGN AND SHARING OF THE INNOVATION

CONNECT-e contributes to the sharing and documentation of traditional agroecological knowledge in two innovative ways. First, CONNECT-e helps complementing the information recorded in national databases at the same time that promotes

exchanges of landrace information among an extended community of potential users that are not necessarily physically linked. Second, CONNECT-e protects from misappropriation traditional agroecological knowledge posted in the platform through a copyleft

license which guarantees that knowledge can be freely reproduced and exchanged provided that sharing is done without excluding other users (i.e., by patenting or registering the content).

## BENEFIT FOR FAMILY FARMERS AND FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

CONNECT-e benefits small-scale farmers by protecting landrace names and associated knowledge from misappropriation. For example, by creating a dynamic inventory of landrace names, CONNECT-e prevents the registration of improved varieties with landrace names. Moreover, CONNECT-e contributes to disseminate culturally and environmentally landrace-based adapted foods, and thus to autonomy and food sovereignty.

## SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

In less than one year, more than 400 landraces have been registered in CONNECT-e by more than 450 users. The platform is becoming a tool for community seed banks, organic farmers, and artisanal producers of seeds and seedlings. Therefore, the platform can be used to assess the impact of landraces in small scale agriculture. At the environmental level, the platform halts biocultural erosion by promoting the exchange of knowledge and seeds.

## LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONNECT-e constitutes an exceptional example of ways to document, protect and promote the use of traditional agroecological knowledge based in distributed efforts and public engagement.



'Mongeta del ganxet' (catalan bean landrace) cultivation sites map likewise the recovery of native seeds and traditional foods.