



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



The International Treaty
ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES
FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

**Views, Experiences and Best Practices as an example of possible options for
the national implementation of Article 9 of the International Treaty**

Note by the Secretary

At its [second meeting](#) of the Ad hoc Technical Expert Group on Farmers' Rights (AHTEG), the Expert Group agreed on a revised version of the [template](#) for collecting information on examples of national measures, best practices and lessons learned from the realization of Farmers' Rights

This document presents the updated information on best practices and measures of implementing Article 9 of the International Treaty submitted by Italy on 31 July 2019.

The submission is presented in the form and language in which it was received.



Measures, Best Practices and Lessons Learned from the Realization of Farmers' Rights as set out in Article 9 of the International Treaty

Creation of a micro value-chain for a local variety of rye, the "Iermana"

Basic information

- Title of measure/practice: **Creation of a micro value-chain for a local variety of rye, the "Iermana"**
- Date of submission: **July 2019**
- Name(s) of country/countries in which the measure/practice is taking place: **Italy**
- Responsible institution/organization (name, address, website (if applicable), e-mail address, telephone number(s) and contact person: **Regional Agency for Agricultural Development and Innovation (Agenzia Lucana di Sviluppo ed Innovazione in Agricoltura - ALSIA); via Annunziatella 85 - 75100 Matera, Italy - www.alsia.it; domenico.cerbino@alsia.it**
 - Type of institution/organization (categories): **Public body of Basilicata regional government whose mandate is research, extension services, knowledge transfer & dissemination and rural development**
 - Collaborating/supporting institutions/organizations/actors, if applicable (name, address, website (if applicable), e-mail address, telephone number(s)): **National Park: Ente Parco Nazionale del Pollino - Rotonda (PZ); Famers (custodian farmers doing on-farm conservation) (n=30); Miller: Mulino Arleo, Castronuovo Sant'Andrea (PZ); Baker: Forno Sorelle Palese, Potenza (PZ); On-farm tourism: Agriturismo "La Garavina", Teranova di Pollino (PZ).**

Description of the examples

Mandatory information:¹

- Short summary to be put in the inventory (max. 200 words) including:

This measure is about the role that local authorities can play for supporting local development through on farm conservation. This activity is not more considered as an open-air museum, but as way to support farming activities in marginal areas. During the period 2013-2014 ALSIA carried out a survey among farmers in the region, to identify rye growers. Four farmers cultivating a total of 2 ha with an old variety called "Iermana" or "Germana" were identified. Then in 2018 ALSIA has succeeded in registering the "Iermana" rye local variety on the Italian National seed catalogue (conservation varieties section). The value-chain creation allowed to increase the "Iermana" rye cultivated area from 2 to 15 ha, as well as the number of farmers from 4 to 30. This success demonstrates the importance of doing conservation through use of PGRFA.

- Brief history (including starting year), as appropriate

During the period 2013-2014 ALSIA carried out a survey among farmers in the region, to identify rye growers. Four farmers cultivating a total of 2 ha with an old variety called "Iermana" or "Germana" were identified. At the experimental and demonstrative farm "Pollino" belonging to ALSIA and located in Rotonda, Potenza, this variety was characterised through phenotyping. Subsequently, the seed of this variety was conserved both ex-situ and on-farm. For the in-situ conservation, the seed was taken in by the "Ancient Seed Seedban of Basilicata - Franco Sassone", hosted by the aforementioned experimental ALSIA farm in Rotonda, as well as in the Genebank of the Insitute for Bio-science and Bio-resources of the National

¹ This mandatory information is required in order for the measure/practice to be included in the Inventory.



Research Council of Bari (CNR IBBR). For on-farm conservation, in 2016 16 farmers were identified (custodian-farmers). Seed was distributed with the agreement that part of the harvest would be returned to ALSIA's the seed bank. In the years that followed, the number increased, reaching 30 in 2019. ALSIA also promoted a micro value-chain, involving three millers in the area, who buy the "Iermana" grain, as well as seven bakers and three on-farm touristic accommodation (agri-tourism)

- Core components of the measure/practice (max 200 words)

On-farm cultivation of ancient rye local variety "Iermana", seed certification, short value chain from grain to flour and bread.

- Description of the context and the history of the measure/practice is taking place (political, legal and economic framework conditions for the measure/practice) (max 200 words)

Local rye variety "Iermana" was documented as traditionally grown in the Pollino region already in the 1800's. With the advent of modern agriculture and high yielding DUS varieties, combined with the great exodus from rural areas towards the cities in the 1960's, its use almost disappeared. Thankfully, a few farmers maintained this local variety alive in their farms to this day. The recent appetite by society and consumers for local varieties of grains (the so-called "Grani Antichi" or ancient grains) has sparked a renewed interest by farmers and value-chain holders in growing, transforming and marketing these products. Thanks to EU directive on conservation varieties, these traditional crops can now also be registered on a special section of the National seed catalogue for production of certified seeds, allowing farmers to become seed producers. ALSIA has succeeded in registering the "Iermana" rye local variety on the Italian National seed catalogue (conservation varieties section) in 2018. On-farm and ex-situ conservation can therefore now be also supported by commercial production of this local variety, based on quality certified seed.

- To which provision(s) of Article 9 of the International Treaty does this measure relate

Art. 9.1

Art. 9.2a

Art. 9.2b

Art. 9.2c

Art. 9.3

Other information, if applicable

- Please indicate which category of the Inventory is most relevant for the proposed measure, and which other categories are also relevant (if any):



No.	Category	Most relevant ²	Also relevant ³
1	Recognition of local and indigenous communities', farmers' contributions to conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA, such as awards and recognition of custodian/guardian farmers		X
2	Financial contributions to support farmers conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA such as contributions to benefit-sharing funds		
3	Approaches to encourage income-generating activities to support farmers' conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA	X	
4	Catalogues, registries and other forms of documentation of PGRFA and protection of traditional knowledge		
5	In-situ/on-farm conservation and management of PGRFA, such as social and cultural measures, community biodiversity management and conservation sites		X
6	Facilitation of farmers' access to a diversity of PGRFA through community seed banks ⁴ , seed networks and other measures improving farmers' choices of a wider diversity of PGRFA.		
7	Participatory approaches to research on PGRFA, including characterization and evaluation, participatory plant breeding and variety selection		
8	Farmers' participation in decision-making at local, national and sub-regional, regional and international levels		
9	Training, capacity development and public awareness creation		
10	Legal measures for the implementation of Farmers' Rights, such as legislative measures related to PGRFA.		X
11	Other measures / practices		

- In case you selected 'other measures', would you like to suggest a description of this measure, e.g. as a possible new category? _____
- Objective(s)

Farmers conserving the "Iermana" rye genetic resource have been coached into creating their own value-chain.

² Please select only one category that is most relevant, under which the measure will be listed.

³ Please select one or several categories that may also be relevant (if applicable).

⁴ Including seed houses.



- Target group(s) and numbers of involved and affected farmers⁵

This practice was implemented through a multi-actor approach: a conservation and certification body (1), custodian farmers (30), small millers (3), bakers (7) and agri-tourism structures (3).

- Location(s) and geographical outreach

Italy, Pollino National Park, Basilicata region.

- Resources used for implementation of the measure/practice

Financial resources from ALSIA and Basilicata regional government were used to implement this practice, as well as private investments from value-chain actors.

- How has the measure/practice affected the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture?

The value-chain creation allowed to increase the "Iermana" rye cultivated area from 2 to 15 ha, as well as the number of farmers (from 4 to 30). The cultivation of this rye variety is possible in marginal fields above 700m a.s.l. adopting agricultural practices with a very low environmental impact. This also helps to prevent the abandonment of fields in mountainous areas.

- Please describe the achievements of the measure/ practice so far (including quantification) (max 200 words)

This measure increased the income of the farmers involved, allowing them to remain in their marginal areas. It also achieved to increase the interest of the actors of the value chain on the value of this local variety.

- Other national level instruments that are linked to the measure/practice

In other Italian regions, such as Tuscany and Trentino, similar value-chain exists, with other local varieties of rye.

- Are you aware of any other international agreements or programs that are relevant for this measure/practice?

No

- Other issues you wish to address, that have not yet been covered, to describe the measure/practice

It would be useful to genotype this variety and compare the results with other varieties in Italy.

Lessons learned

- Describe lessons learned which may be relevant for others who wish to do the same or similar measures/practices (max 250 words).

⁵ Any classification, e.g. of the types of farmer addressed, may be country-specific.



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The creation of short value-chain is essential to add value and market the produce of these local varieties. This applies for any local variety of any species.

- What challenges encountered along the way (if applicable) (max 200 words)

The greatest difficulty in the implementation of this practice, is convincing all the actor of the new value-chain, that everyone will gain from this experience. Often individualistic approaches, common among farmers and transformers represent an obstacle to cooperation.

- What would you consider conditions for success, if others should seek to carry out such a measure or organize such an activity? (max 100 words)

Getting all the potential actors of the future value-chain engaged through initial meetings.

Further information

- [Link\(s\) to further information about the measure/practice](#)

Articles published on ALSIA's magazine "Agrifoglio"; Oral presentation at the XII National Biodiversity Conference in Teramo, Italy (13-15 June 2018)