



## Concept Note

<b>Event title</b>	International Expert Seminar on 'Cultural Diversity, Food Systems and Traditional Livelihoods'
<b>Participating countries / regions</b>	South and Central America and the Caribbean; North America; Asia Pacific; Africa; Arctic and Eastern Europe; Russia, Central Asia and Transcaucasia
<b>Venue</b>	Cusco, Peru
<b>Dates</b>	4 – 6 November 2014

### Background

The year 2014 marks a major milestone in the process of achieving visibility and recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples of the world, upon completion of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples<sup>1</sup> (2005-2014). In September this year, the United Nations will host the first World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (WCIP)<sup>2</sup> in the scope of a High-Level Session of the General Assembly.

On the other hand, the 66th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations declared 2014 as the "International Year of Family Farming", entrusting the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, FAO, to facilitate its implementation in collaboration with the United Nations System, governments, international development agencies, family farmers' organizations and non-governmental organizations<sup>3</sup>.

The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), in turn, approved at its twelfth session, Recommendation No. 111 which states<sup>4</sup>:

*The Permanent Forum recommends that FAO, in 2014, the International Year of Family Farming, organize and host an expert seminar on culture, food sovereignty and traditional livelihoods to feed into the post-2015 process. The seminar should include the participation of an elder, an adult and a young person from each of the seven sociocultural regions of the Forum.*

### Introduction

Growing concerns about food and nutrition insecurity in much of the world's population has determined the inclusion of this one among the most relevant issues of the current international political agenda, as well as in the debate on new Sustainable Development Goals<sup>5</sup> and the *Good Life*, seeking to establish commitments and goals that ensure the sustainability of the results of the international community efforts in this regard.

<sup>1</sup> Resolution A/RES/59/174

<sup>2</sup> Resolution A/RES/65/198

<sup>3</sup> Resolution A/RES/66/222

<sup>4</sup> E/2013/43; E/C.19/2013/25

<sup>5</sup> Post 2015 Development Agenda



Nowadays, humankind is living in a paradoxical world. Instead of maximizing the diversity of existing options to provide nutritious and sufficient food for all; the stock market of commodities, expansion of monoculture farming, the indiscriminate use of transgenic seeds and food speculation, all contribute to putting at risk the food and nutrition security of one third of the world's population. Furthermore, this trend prevents countries from directing independent public policies that could mobilize their capacities and efforts in order to guarantee the human right to food. Moreover, traditional production systems of indigenous peoples, their associated knowledge systems related to the preservation of genetic diversity and territorial management, and family farmers who provide food to 80% of the world's population, are facing the most brutal menace ever known.

In this context, FAO's *Policy on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples* (2010), recognizes that the situation of most of the indigenous population worldwide in daily life shows quality of life standards that are well below those of the non-indigenous population. These differences are expressed, among others, in poverty indexes, inequality and vulnerability that impact the food and nutrition security of the indigenous peoples, and those conditions that enable their material, spiritual and cultural reproduction as communities which are distinct but entitled to equal dignity and rights.

Despite these difficulties, FAO recognizes the important contributions that indigenous peoples and cultures have made to the welfare and progress of humankind. Domestication of most of the plants, animals and minerals that today make up the repertoire of universal gastronomy, the holistic and resilient management of their territories, the sustainable use of their resources through low environmental impact processes and their associated knowledge systems, constitute elements that have made possible the survival of lifestyles whose wealth is based on their diversity and austerity but, above all, in their ethical dimension.

On the other hand, the *Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security*, adopted by the Committee on World Food Security (2012), establish a regulatory and policy framework to grant legal certainty and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples over their lands and resources, allowing for the preservation of their production systems and their unique livelihoods.

In this context, FAO and a growing number of institutions from a wide range of activities have asserted the need to preserve genetic and intellectual assets related to agrobiodiversity and its interface with culture. They are working in sensitizing public opinion and decision makers, promoting studies, recovering good practices, forgotten crops and production systems, through various programs and initiatives such as the *Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS)*, the *Indigenous Partnership for Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty*, among others.

GIAHS<sup>6</sup> is an international partnership initiative that aims to identify, support and safeguard Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems and their livelihoods, agriculture and associated biodiversity, landscapes, knowledge systems and cultures around the world. The GIAHS Partnership recognizes the crucial importance of the well-being of family farming and indigenous communities in an integrated approach while directing activities towards sustainable agriculture and rural development.

<sup>6</sup> For more information, [www.giahs.org](http://www.giahs.org)



On the other hand, the protection of biological diversity, the related cultural landscapes, and knowledge systems associated with its preservation, as well as the right of peoples and communities who are entitled to equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge, innovations and practices; have been subject to multiple developments in various areas of the international system: the Convention on Biological Diversity, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, among others.

This year, the world celebrates the International Year of Family Farming, which aims to raise the profile of family farming and smallholder farming communities by focusing world attention on its significant role in eradicating hunger and poverty, providing food security and nutrition, improving livelihoods, managing natural resources, protecting the environment, and achieving sustainable development, in particular in rural areas. The goal of the IYFF is to reposition family farming at the centre of agricultural, environmental and social policies in the national agendas by identifying gaps and opportunities to promote a shift towards a more equal and balanced development.

The recommendation of the Permanent Forum provides a unique scenario to highlight the crucial link of *Family Farming* with the preservation of traditional food systems and products with an intercultural approach for safeguarding the world's biodiversity and sustainable management of natural resources, from the specificity of the holistic community economies, as part of humankind's common heritage. It will contribute to recognizing and bringing back the pride and identity of indigenous peoples and rural communities, their important contribution to local and world food security, their food sovereignty, their value systems and culture, and their experience in conserving biodiversity and genetic resources for food and agriculture.

For their part, the governments of Latin America and the Caribbean, gathered at the most recent Summit of the Community of States of Latin America and the Caribbean (CELAC) in Havana (January, 2014), adopted a Declaration which, among other commitments, expressed:

*"We recognize that indigenous peoples and local communities play an important role in the economic, social and environmental development, as well as, the importance of traditional sustainable agricultural practices, associated with biodiversity and the use of its resources, their right of access to water... communal systems of land tenure, the traditional seed supply, and access to finance and markets.*

*We decide to strengthen, in a comprehensive way, the productive base with emphasis on sustainable local and cultural practices of indigenous peoples and local communities for an integrated management that optimizes the usage and access to water for irrigation,... the recovery of soils fertility,... the conservation and increase of biodiversity, through the recovery and breeding of native seeds, and the production of improved seeds.*

Finally, the interest shown by the Government of Peru in promoting the theme of this proposal in the cradle of the Inca Civilization, in the heart of the Andes, is a powerful incentive to expect a successful concretion of this initiative.



## Proposal

The aim of this proposal is to organize an International Expert Seminar on **"Cultural diversity, food systems and traditional livelihoods"** which will be held in Cusco, Peru, from 4 to 6 November 2014.

### ❖ Objectives of the International Seminar

- To bring together international, national and local partners, representatives of indigenous peoples and other traditional farming communities, governments, civil society, scientists, research institutions, intergovernmental development cooperation agencies, and policy makers to exchange knowledge, experiences and best practices on evolving traditional production systems, cultural landscapes, livelihoods and related biodiversity;
- To present GIAHS from different regions of the world, gather innovative ideas and new proposals for GIAHS recognition;
- To issue policy recommendations on protection and strengthening traditional dynamic agriculture, livelihoods and their related knowledge systems;
- To promote synergies/links, networking and partnerships with relevant organizations, institutions and related initiatives both at global and regional levels; and
- To contribute to the continuity of the "Social Dialogues" held in different regions among FAO and indigenous peoples.

The results and recommendations of the Seminar will feed into the Plan of Action of the Third International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples (2015-2024), already requested in the draft outcome document of WCIP, and will contribute to the definition of the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) through the 'Post 2015 Development Agenda'.

### ❖ Structure of the Workshop and Provisional Agenda

The International Seminar will take place during three full days, and will combine plenary presentations, session discussions on different topics related to the theme, case studies and successful programmes, GIAHS lessons learned and best practices, and field visits. (See provisional program in Annex 1)

## Participants and stakeholders

The Seminar will include the participation of representatives of the seven geographical regions represented in the UNPFII, as well as:

- Members of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
- Indigenous organizations and researchers with experience in the subject
- National Governments
- Countries with existing GIAHS sites
- Academia and specialized research centers
- International organizations
- Agencies of the United Nations System
- Other interested groups/organizations



## Institutional partnerships

### ❖ International

- Global Environmental Facility (GEF)
- International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) (Antonella Cordone)
- United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization (UNESCO) (Serena Heckler)
- International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) (Lola García)
- Centre of Indigenous Peoples' Nutrition and Environment (CINE) (Harriet Kuhnlein/B. Erasmus)
- Indigenous Peoples Partnership for Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty (Phrang Roy)
  - § Tebtebba Foundation of the Philippines (Victoria Tauli Corpuz)
  - § Asociación ANDES of Peru
  - § Platform for Agrobiodiversity Research (PAR), Biodiversity International, Rome
  - § Sustainable Agriculture, Biodiversity and Livelihoods Programme of the IIED, London
  - § Slow Food International, Bra, Italy
- Fondo para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas de América Latina y el Caribe (FI)
- International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) (Andrea Carmen)
- International Land Coalition (ILC) (Annalisa Mauro)
- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) (Gonzalo Oviedo)
- Theme on Indigenous and Local Communities, Equity and Protected Areas (TILCEPA)
- Territories and Areas Conserved by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (ICCA)
- Working Group on Cultural and Spiritual Values of Protected Areas (CSVPA)
- GRAIN (Henk Hobbelink)
- Centro por la Autonomía y el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas (CADPI) (Dennis Mairena)
- Chair of Studies in Hunger and Poverty (CEHAP), Universidad de Córdoba (José Esquinas)

### ❖ Internal FAO initiatives and programs

- Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems, GIAHS
- Myrna Cunningham, Special Ambassador for *International Year of Family Farming*

### ❖ Government of host country

### ❖ Other Governments and partners

## Organization

The organization of the Seminar will be under the responsibility of:

Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, FAO RLC

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