



**Indigenous Partnership for
Agrobiodiversity
and Food Sovereignty**

SCOPING REPORT

**Pisac, Cusco, Peru
3 – 5 May 2010**



*“ Earth provides enough to satisfy every man’s need,
but not every man’s greed. ”*

- Mahatma Gandhi





Welcome to the Indigenous Partnership



I COME FROM THE LAND of enset and barley growers – Gamo in Ethiopia – and my people maintain many varieties of enset, barley and wheat. We also grow roots, many types of bamboo, and trees, the foliage of which serves as fertiliser and whose dry leaves we use for animal bedding and manure. Our mountain range lands and other sacred sites feed our animals and are the schools where boys and girls learn skills for caring for our animals and the mountain. Our mountains are the source of several rivers and streams that flow to the lowlands around us. The mountains provide us with life, by giving us water, grass and manure and helping our children to grow.

Times are changing and our knowledge of crops, animals and plants is now not viewed as beneficial. This is sad, but we still steadfastly believe in what we have learnt from our ancestors and proudly maintain our landscape. We are the stewards of knowledge for growing many varieties of crops and of the soil and the landscape. We are the stewards of knowledge of what is needed to harmonise humans, our surroundings and our crops to perpetuate humans and the environment.

The Partnership has honoured us by inviting Elders like me to participate and share our knowledge in the Cusco meeting. The changing global situation has brought us all to these beautiful and sacred mountains of Peru, where people who speak different languages but are faced with similar issues have gathered under the same roof. In my land we never sold and bought food in the past; now we do, and this changing view towards food may be causing us problems that do not seem to have easy solutions. I have shared my many stories with all the participants, and I have learnt a lot about people like me, people who grow food with their own hands, and I am now hearing what the future holds for them.

Regarding the future, beware of the hyena that wiped out the five oxen of different colours because they failed to be as clever and smart as the hyena. Unlike the oxen, we must work together in this Partnership, and I am sure it will help all of us to find ways of maintaining what is best for us, for our crops, for our pastures and for our existence.

Malebo Mancha Maze

Malebo Mancha Maze

Ezo Elder and Farmer

Gamo Highlands Indigenous Community/Ethiopia

THE CHRISTENSEN FUND'S INTEREST in the stewardship and ongoing creation of biocultural diversity inevitably brings us into partnership with the world's indigenous farmers: the descendents of the original domesticators of food crops, the ones still most active in moving genes between wild and domesticated varieties, and those selecting seeds for all kinds of delicious purposes. Food sovereignty is central to their struggles to achieve well-being and pursue a development path in tune with their values, cultures and territories. Facilitating ways in which indigenous farmers can engage on their own terms in the crucial international scientific and policy debates about the future of agrobiodiversity and foodways is an important way to safeguard the capacity for genetic, cultural and culinary adaptation in the Anthropocene.

The Indigenous Partnership for Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty is thus an effort to create a space for stewards from around the world to know one another and set their own agenda as indigenous peoples on how to address the range of threats and opportunities facing them today.

On this basis, they may find common ground with each other and with others who care passionately about the issues of agrobiodiversity and food, so that effective strategies can be devised for global changes that will be meaningful at the community level.

Ken Wilson

Ken Wilson, Ph.D.

Executive Director

The Christensen Fund/USA





I BELIEVE THAT A DAY WILL COME very soon when policy makers acknowledge that indigenous peoples are the stewards of the biological and cultural diversity around us. It is high time that indigenous peoples revitalise their local food and agrobiodiversity systems. It is already happening in a quiet way in many indigenous areas. I am very pleased to have been associated with the Indigenous Partnership and I am sorry to have missed participating in the Cusco meeting. I very much agree with the recommendations and the core principles taken from the workshop and recorded in this report. Like the participants of the Scoping Workshop, I feel strongly that the Indigenous Partnership must start its work at the grassroots level with local indigenous organisations. This will not be easy, and it will take time. I therefore hope that The Christensen Fund and other future donors see the value of this work.

I wish you all the best,

Victoria Tauli-Corpuz

Victoria Tauli-Corpuz

Executive Director

The Tebtebba Foundation/Philippines

Former Chair of the UN Permanent
Forum on Indigenous Issues



Acronyms

AERF – Applied Environmental Research Foundation

AGRUCO – Agroecología Universidad Cochabamba (Agroecological University of Cochabamba)

ANDES, Asociación ANDES – Asociación para la Naturaleza y el Desarrollo Sostenible (Association for Nature and Sustainable Development)

CGIAR – Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research

CONTEC – Consultoría Técnica (Technical Consultation)

CIAT – International Center for Tropical Agriculture

CIP – Centro Internacional de la Papa (International Potato Center)

FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization

GFAR – Global Forum on Agricultural Research

GMO – genetically modified organism

IAASTD – International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development

IIED – International Institute for Environment and Development

Indigenous Partnership – Indigenous Partnership for Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty

NACA – Nuclei of Andean Cultural Affirmation

PAR – Platform for Agrobiodiversity Research

PRATEC – El Proyecto Andino de Tecnologías Campesinas (The Andean Project of Peasant Technologies)

TCF – The Christensen Fund

UN – United Nations

WFP – United Nations World Food Programme



Supporting a Global Food Transformation

The regeneration of local food systems and agrobiodiversity has been a major funding priority of The Christensen Fund (TCF). It has been a success from the diversity of initiatives supported by its regional and global programmes and from the perspective of indigenous peoples and local communities involved in these initiatives. However there has also been an evolving awareness that something must be done to converge many independent and diverse strategies into a much wider transformative movement for the articulation of local knowledge, challenges and policies at the international level. Fortunately, unique opportunities exist today for international partnerships as social movements interested in reforming the current unsustainable global food system are increasingly emerging around the world as part of a “blessed unrest”.

Eager to empower many more indigenous organisations to revitalise local food systems and define their own food and agriculture practices to sustain agrobiodiversity, TCF supported the idea of creating an Indigenous Partnership for Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty under a hosting arrangement with Bioversity International. Such an arrangement is expected to generate a purposeful collaboration between indigenous communities, scientists and policy researchers, leading to the emergence of a “new science of complexity based on modern and traditional knowledge for the design of resilient food and agricultural systems that would have lower carbon and ecological footprints.”

The Indigenous Partnership for Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty (the Indigenous Partnership) is coordinated by Phrang Roy, an indigenous professional and former staff member of TCF. The partnership also includes:

- § Three indigenous organisations (Tebtebba Foundation of the Philippines, Asociación ANDES of Peru, and Vanuatu Cultural Centre of Vanuatu);
- § An international agricultural research body (Platform for Agrobiodiversity Research [PAR] hosted by Bioversity International, Rome);
- § An international policy research group (Sustainable Agriculture, Biodiversity and Livelihoods Programme of the International Institute for Environment and Development [IIED], London); and
- § A social movement organisation with interest in good, clean and fair food and biodiversity (Slow Food International, Bra, Italy).

These organisations agreed to support the formulation of the Indigenous Partnership and to participate in the meetings and exchange visits organised by the Coordinator. Once established, the Indigenous Partnership is expected to gradually broaden its network of indigenous organisations and others, thereby becoming a useful bridge between indigenous peoples, local communities and strategic local, national and international organisations that are promoting research, practice and policy for sustaining agrobiocultural diversity.

The First Step

As the first step of the Indigenous Partnership, a scoping workshop was organised to generate ideas of how the perspectives of indigenous peoples and local communities on agrobiodiversity and food sovereignty could be promoted at both national and international platforms. The workshop was also intended to help the Coordinator of the Indigenous Partnership develop a future work agenda, including planning in the areas of advocacy, governance and mobilisation of support from social movements and funding agencies. The planners wanted the Scoping Workshop to be hosted by an indigenous organisation so that the meeting could take place in an indigenous setting. Asociación ANDES of Cusco, Peru willingly offered to host and organise the event. The Scoping Workshop was held at the Royal Inka Hotel, Písaq, Cusco, Peru from 3 – 5 May, 2010.

Planting the Seeds

The three-day workshop allowed partners to meet, share best practices and discuss the desired guiding and operational principles of the Indigenous Partnership. As the first international meeting of the Indigenous Partnership, the workshop brought together indigenous elders, researchers and practitioners from diverse biocultural regions of Bolivia, Canada, England, Ethiopia, India, Iran, Italy, Malaysia, Tajikistan, Peru, Vanuatu and the United States (see Annex for the List of Participants). The workshop was held in the Potato Park, an Indigenous Biocultural Heritage Conservation Area and a model that seeks to protect the vast knowledge, culture, resources, and rights of people and the lands they inhabit.

The 31 participants were welcomed by the President of the Association of Communities of the Potato Park, and by Dr. Alejandro Argumedo, Executive Director of Asociación ANDES, after

which each participant gave a short introduction of his or her personal background and his or her expectations of what should be the guiding principles of the Indigenous Partnership. The Coordinator gave a brief presentation of its evolving aims. This was followed by a session of presentations of best practices.

DAY ONE Experiences From the Field

The six case studies of best practices presented during the first day of the Scoping Workshop served as a guide for the subsequent discussions on the future work of the Indigenous Partnership.

1. India: Archana Godbole, Director of the Applied Environmental Research Foundation (AERF), Pune, India, presented the first case study on the Western Ghats, the mountain ecosystem of Western India that is a biodiversity hotspot and has been severely degraded in recent years. This sacred landscape, which has traditionally been well-managed bioculturally by rural communities through agroforestry and rice paddy cultivation, is today being threatened by mining projects. Godbole suggested that there is a need to support and develop the capabilities of such local communities.

2. Iran: Taghi Farvar, Secretary General of the World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous Peoples, discussed Iran's nomadic peoples and the importance of customary institutions and practices of elders. As an example, he explained that traditional systems of information gathering for natural phenomena and animal migration have helped nomadic people protect themselves through many changes in the climate. This rich knowledge and capacity for traditional self-organisation is important for the defence of rights, culture, and species diversity. Farvar suggested that such knowledge should be defended

Partnership Experiences in Central Asia

by Frederik van Oudenhoven
(Bioversity International)

From 2005 to 2009, Bioversity International implemented a project in the Tajik Pamirs and Kyrgyzstan to strengthen the socio-economic and cultural basis of community agrobiodiversity management of indigenous fruit tree varieties. The project faced very different challenges in the two locations, which carry big implications for any work related to agrobiodiversity and food sovereignty in the region. Kyrgyz people have traditionally been nomadic, while Pamiri culture is rooted in a long history of sedentary agriculture. Agrobiodiversity of particularly fruit crops and grains in the Pamirs is intentional and the result of centuries of selection and adaptation; in Kyrgyzstan such ‘intentional agrobiodiversity’ is present in livestock, but much less in fruit crops. The diversity of fruits here is high, but incidental, and has less cultural relevance than in the Pamirs.

Soviet legacy in both countries is profound and diverse. In Kyrgyzstan it has led to a shift away from nomadic traditions towards sedentary agriculture, with a concurrent erosion of nomadic culture and livestock diversity, and an increase in the interest and cultural relevance of (fruit crop) cultivation. In the areas of Tajikistan deemed suitable for large-scale agricultural production, agrobiodiversity, traditional knowledge and food sovereignty have declined dramatically, whereas in the difficult environment of the Pamirs this effect has been much less pronounced.

As the Partnership depends critically on collaboration and collective action as means to give voice to farmers and communities, it is important to remember that the Soviet interpretation of these values has left people in both countries with an apprehension towards anything that carries the label ‘collective’, and such organisation is mostly absent in Central Asia. Communities are often vulnerable to outside interventions, have no voice to challenge dominant practices (perhaps the greatest current threat to food sovereignty and agrobiodiversity is the market-oriented development strategy implemented by international development agencies), and a key role of the Partnership could be to engender collective action amongst communities. Without such a level of farmer organisation, any work or research carried out in support of the aims of the Indigenous Partnership will be of limited impact.





Indigenous Agriculture and Development in India

by Archana Godbole (Applied Environmental Research Foundation)

In the Western Ghats of India, local farming communities have been using the fertile and diverse landscape for a multitude of agriculture practices like *nachani sheti* (shifting agriculture), *wayangani* (summer paddy cultivation), and monsoon paddy farming. Orchards of cashew, mango, areca nut and coconut are scattered throughout the forests. The indigenous practices of optimum land use and maintenance of forest species diversity occur in harmony with agriculture, and have developed over many generations. This has led to a locally managed system of self-sufficient and sustainable food production.

In the Sindhudurg district of Maharashtra state, such indigenous cultural landscapes cover vast expanses due to the participation of numerous villages. The perennial surface water streams in the area are seen as blessings and are maintained cautiously through well-developed indigenous water distribution systems. The landscape not only provides for local livelihoods but is also very important culturally as evidenced by many sacred sites including groves and waterfalls. The indigenous agriculture being practiced here is strongly linked to a culture that respects nature and its elements.

These life-giving mountains are also rich in iron ore deposits, and indigenous agricultural practices are under tremendous threat from proposed mining in the area. Within recent decades, iron ore mining has destroyed similar agroecosystems in the neighbouring state of Goa, and the harmful impacts on the environment and local livelihoods are clearly evident. The destruction of these cultural landscapes must be stopped, but in many cases the documentation of these practices is still limited or absent. It is crucial that local communities of the Western Ghats be supported through people-centred research, lobbying, advocacy and policy implementation in order to safeguard agrobiocultural diversity and food sovereignty.

and reported globally, and this is an area in which the Indigenous Partnership could play a helpful role.

3. Tajikistan: Mukhabbatkhon Mama-daliev, Director of Zan va Zamin, related the second case study to come from Central Asia. She spoke of the issues of land rights for women and explained how women are keepers of traditional knowledge of local fruit varieties and regularly practise grafting to maintain local fruit trees. She explained the significance of seasonal festivals and the traditional retreat of elders and children and emphasised the importance of supporting women's rights to the land. Doing so not only promotes women's stewardship of the landscape, but also the resilience of these landscapes and the traditional knowledge of local communities.

4. Ethiopia: Wolde Tadesse, Program Officer at The Christensen Fund, shared an example from southwestern Ethiopia. He described the experience of a TCF grant programme that brought together different ethnic groups to showcase their respective cultures through music, traditional costumes and dance. The grant programme gradually led to the emergence of a national festival and ultimately brought together 56 ethnic groups for the Festival of 1000 Stars. This festival has become an important event for communities to self-represent and highlights the diversity of cultures and practices in Ethiopia. Due to the misunderstanding of some government officials, the gatherings were seen as anti-development protests against fertilisers and high-yield seeds, and sadly festival organisers and the local organisations associated with the festival were ultimately banned from planning future events.

5. Vanuatu: Ralph Regenvanu, Director of the Vanuatu National Cultural Council, presented a case study from the South Pacific. He said that in Vanuatu, where people are closely tied to the land, festivals are held to showcase local culture, including traditional recipes and food preparation techniques. The documentation of these aspects of agricultural heritage, along with the recording of sounds and landscapes, has been an important step the Vanuatu Cultural Centre has taken to revitalise local culture. He further explained that the traditional barter economy is still the main economy in the country. However, even as local indigenous communities enjoy these practices and prefer to be relatively autonomous, the Vanuatu Government has other development goals. As such, people face threats of neoliberal politics, development aid, and the accompanying corruption. The threat of land loss is ever present as the government moves increasingly toward neoliberal policies, following the example of Australia and New Zealand. He expressed his concern about the colonisation of the minds of young people through a school curriculum that has very little input from traditional knowledge.

6. Peru: Alejandro Argumedo shared the experience of the rights-based and biocultural approach of the Potato Park, in Písaq, Peru. Highlighting the importance of reinforcing local and traditional agroecosystems, such as the *ayllu* (community) in the Andes, Argumedo, like Farvar, presented customary institutions as a strategic best practice for nurturing and sustaining agrobiodiversity and its associated knowledge systems. He also spoke about the other successful initiatives carried out in the park, such as seed sharing, seed repatriation, the strengthening of farmer networks for genetic resource sharing, the establishment of culinary sanctuaries and the rejection of gene pollution and transgenic plants.



During the presentations of case studies and best practices, challenges to conserving agrobiodiversity and advocating for food sovereignty were also touched upon. The three major challenges facing the partnership were identified as:

- (1) The time and resources required to build any form of trusting partnership, understanding that indigenous communities tenaciously guard their community's right to self-determination;
- (2) External aid and the potential it has to hinder food sovereignty by affecting communities' abilities to self-determine agricultural practices and by disturbing land ownership and access; and
- (3) Mining and the threat that it poses to agrobiodiversity and food sovereignty initiatives. These obstacles will be important to keep in mind when constructing a road map and work plan for future actions of the Indigenous Partnership.

DAY TWO

In the Potato Park

Climbing to heights of 4,100 m (13,451 ft), participants spent the second day of the workshop in the Potato Park, witnessing examples of agrobiodiversity conservation in situ. The interconnection between the people, land, traditions, and agriculture were brought to life for the participants through ceremonies, food, and presentations given by community members. This gave them a context through which they could understand the importance of indigenous peoples' knowledge of genetic resources generally and of food and agriculture in particular. The field visit served to enrich subsequent conversations on best practices and ideas for partnership activities.

Replanting Our Culture, Reclaiming Our Rights

Participants had an opportunity to view the characteristics and harvesting of native potatoes bred for resistance to climate stress. This highlighted the epistemological bridge building work being done by the communities of the park, in collaboration with participatory plant breeding initiatives and the International Potato Center (CIP). Seed repatriation was suggested as an example of in situ conservation that could be used by the Indigenous Partnership. Participants felt that the incorporation of genetic diversity into agricultural practices through repatriation can ensure the connectivity of culture, spiritual values, and genetic and agriculture resources.

In addressing questions of the applicability and universality of repatriation, Argumedo affirmed, based on the experience of the Potato Park, that repatriation is an innovative tactic that strengthens local food systems and agrobiodiversity. He said that repatriation is an issue of restitution of the rights of farming communities over plant genetic materials that were taken from them. He further added that it is also restitution of the rights of *Pachamama* (Mother Earth) to diversity and of the rights of the communities to restore this diversity through access to genetic materials.

Repatriation can be seen as a novel way to reverse the paradigm of access. Communities who are losing diversity can go to research institutions, companies, and private seed banks to reclaim access to plant genetic materials. Furthermore, repatriation is an activity that promotes capacity building in the communities, which in turn strengthens knowledge and culture and supports agrobiodiversity conservation and food sovereignty. Repatriation is one of many possible paths for recovering lost genetic diversity. In the work of The Andean Project of Peasant Technologies (PRATEC), Julio Valladolid Rivera said communities carried out seed exchanges and recovered seeds from food corridors.

Collective, Healthy, Local and Free

Founded on an intercommunity agreement for access and benefit sharing, members of the six partner communities of the Potato Park explained their efforts to generate diverse livelihood opportunities and a unified economy through formal collectives. These include the *Sipas Warmi* (the medicinal plants collective), *Naupa Away* (the natural handicrafts collective), and *Q'achun Waqachi* (the culinary arts collective). This sparked a discussion on collective trademarks, sui generis certification systems and organic labelling, providing participants with ideas of how communities can have the freedom to set up their own guidelines, work locally, and keep control of the marketing process. Q'achun Waqachi shared Novo-Andean traditional foods as a part of the initiatives of the recently established Culinary Sanctuary. The Sanctuary showcased the agrobiodiversity of the park in a creative and innovative way and, in doing so, also strengthened the local economy and its food sovereignty.

Buen Vivir

The visit to the Park concluded with an explanation of indigenous knowledge and concepts, including *sumaq kausay*, or *buen vivir*, meaning good or holistic living. Park leaders discussed how this theme, and other indigenous concepts guide the work and research within the park, shaping the methodologies and practices employed. Like other discussions that would follow, this emphasised the importance of strengthening and using local, customary structures and methods in the conservation of agrobiocultural diversity.

DAY THREE Moving Forward Together

Returning the Culture to Agriculture

Hans Herren, the President of the Millennium Institute, who co-chaired the International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD), briefed the participants on the main findings of this World Bank and United Nations Development Programme-supported initiative. The IAASTD Global Report was the result of a multistakeholder and multidisciplinary consultation in which about 400 authors from 52 countries were involved. Herren said that agricultural production is facing unprecedented challenges because of the disconnect between agriculture and the environment, between consumers and farmers and between policies and unintended consequences. He said that the main finding of the IAASTD is that there must be a fundamental shift in agricultural knowledge in science and technology and in agri-food system policies, institutions, capacity development and investments. The Global Report, according to Herren, concluded that there must be a renewed appreciation of agriculture as a multifunctional system, accompanied by an urgent transition to a more sustainable, ecological and resilient agriculture that will address the social, environmental and economic aspects of small-scale and family farms. The Global Report recommends a more holistic rather than linear approach where science and traditional knowledge are blended in a mutually respectful way. Unfortunately these recommendations are meeting with resistance from the corporate sector and some major multilateral development agencies. The findings of the IAASTD harmonise with the approach of the Indigenous Partnership for the revitalisation of local food systems. Herren suggested possibilities for collaboration between the two organisations including practical ideas for promoting a green and ecological evolution of agriculture.

Food Sovereignty with, by and for Indigenous Peoples

Michel Pimbert, Team Leader of the Food and Agriculture Natural Resources Group of IIED, followed Herren's presentation by sharing the work of IIED in strengthening local organisations and working for indigenous rights and food sovereignty. Expanding on areas touched on by Herren, especially the need for a holistic approach to agriculture, Pimbert stressed that agrobiodiversity not only refers to seeds, but to "a whole continuum of wild to domesticated diversity that is important for peoples' livelihoods." While Herren identified a direction that the Indigenous Partnership may take in working toward revitalising local food systems, Pimbert discussed specific actions and activities taken up by IIED that may be useful for the Indigenous Partnership to consider.

In a presentation made after the field visit, Pimbert said, "...the kinds of things you saw [in the Potato Park] are part of an emergent process that builds on very simple yet very important elements." For Pimbert, these elements include:

- § Long-term participatory action research;
- § A code of ethics to ensure two-way accountability between partners;
- § Learning groups and capacity building;
- § Shifting from a top-down to a bottom-up or community driven process; and
- § Interweaving of global and local knowledge into complexity science.

He said these could be important components of the vision for the Indigenous Partnership's work in agrobiodiversity and local food systems, adding that the challenge is to promote indige-

nous, innovative, and cooperative activities that provide viable alternatives to the dominant paradigm of industrial agriculture and research. He provided the following specific suggestions for setting up the future agenda of the Indigenous Partnership:

- § Strengthen local organisations and indigenous federations by working with alliances among local organisations and provincial governments;
- § Facilitate a reframing of food and agriculture policies by indigenous peoples and local communities;
- § Strengthen autonomous media amongst indigenous peoples and local communities;
- § Strengthen indigenous peoples' and local communities' rights over territory and gender equitable property rights;
- § Work for agroecology, ecoliteracy and resilience; and
- § Shift thinking from economics to buen vivir.

Indigenous control of knowledge is increasingly important in the ability of a community to control its land and territory in a time of “massive land grabbing.” In the economic system as it stands now, Pimbert stated that “there is an overemphasis on market-based solutions to meet food and other human needs.” He added, “The focus on money-based markets overlooks the importance of more plural forms of economic exchange – traditional economic exchange based on the gift, reciprocity, solidarity, [and] barter.” Overall, the democratisation of the economy, public research, learning, and communication is necessary for indigenous peoples and local communities to exercise more control over food and agriculture.





The Emerging Vision

The Seeds of Our Ancestors

The participants endorsed the aforementioned suggestions and unanimously agreed that indigenous peoples, possessing valuable knowledge and practices, must be able to provide recommendations and solutions to pressing global issues. During the workshop, Jeffrey Campbell, Director of Grantmaking at TCF, affirmed this notion when he stated that, “In my childhood, I was taught that the village elders were the ones with the knowledge.” He said that elders are embodiments of the wealth of information held by indigenous peoples and local communities, which should guide research, advocacy, and policy making related to agrobiodiversity and food systems. Speaking on seed repatriation, Toby Hodgkin, Coordinator of the Platform for Agrobiodiversity Research (PAR), said organisations such as the Indigenous Partnership and PAR can play an important role in identifying appropriate mechanisms to maintain an open exchange of planting materials under the control of indigenous communities, while taking into account the safeguards built by international conventions such as the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity. The Indigenous Partnership, therefore, must provide opportunities to share and promote indigenous innovations and to strengthen food sovereignty.

Pimbert reminded participants of the vital role of indigenous leadership. He said that it was important to listen to indigenous colleagues, especially in the ways that they want to move forward and what that means for non-indigenous institutions, such as IIED. Participants agreed that contact and experience with indigenous peoples should define the focus, issues and mission of the Indigenous Partnership, and their epistemologies, methodologies and cosmovisions must be incorporated in its guiding principles. A vision of this nature will not only

contribute to an indigenous-led reframing of development, food and agriculture policies, but it will also be vital for the empowerment of indigenous peoples and small-scale farmers to articulate their needs and communicate their message, using their own tools. Ethiopian Elder Malebo Mancha Maze succinctly summarised the need for an indigenous-led partnership with the following words, “We know our land; we know our crops...we know how they grow. We have the banana tree that is the basis of our life. We have inherited lots of seeds from our ancestors. We have to protect the seeds of our ancestors.”

Finding Common Ground

The importance of making sure indigenous peoples are supported by other knowledge systems in the strengthening of their own traditions, knowledge and practices was highlighted by Frederik van Oudenhoven, Associate Scientist in Community Management of Agricultural Biodiversity at Bioversity International, when he said, “We live in a very mixed world, in the sense that traditional practices are practised, and modern practices are practised. But often, it is a mixture between the two. We cannot simply say that traditional approaches are best...there has to be a middle ground.”

The Indigenous Partnership places importance on the collaboration between modern science and traditional knowledge. Modern science can complement local knowledge when communities believe it to be necessary and welcome. Indigenous knowledge systems and innovation in agrobiodiversity management can be strengthened through this epistemological bridge building. The contributions of modern science can help to open paths for safeguarding local food systems and food sovereignty in the face of global crises. However, this collaboration must

be monitored to ensure that it also strengthens ecosystem diversity in cost-effective, participatory and sustainable ways.

The Indigenous Partnership will therefore be seeking ways to tap into the expertise of agrobiodiversity researchers, advocacy groups and indigenous elders, indigenous women knowledge bearers and motivated young people, as evidenced by the participation of many diverse members in the Scoping Workshop. Hodgkin noted that he, as a researcher, hopes to “sit, listen and learn to begin to gain a better understanding that might help us identify the kind of research agendas we should be persuading our scientists to engage in to represent those involved here.”

The acknowledgement that indigenous peoples and local communities will be setting the agenda for collaboration is an important way to recognise the leadership of indigenous peoples and to create a context in which to do shared work. Herren echoed this view when he said that a dialogue between different knowledge systems can eventually challenge the dominant food and agriculture paradigm and create equivalencies between indigenous knowledge and Western science, thus making the work of the Indigenous Partnership more relevant across scales in research, policy making, and advocacy. This desire to bridge epistemologies and scales emerged as guiding principle during the workshop.

“Respect for the Rights of Others is Peace”*

A rights-based approach, founded on the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, specifically articles 20, 26, 29, 31, and 32, as well as the ILO-169, will be another key principle of the Indigenous Partnership. Jannie Lasimbang, Director of PACOS Trust, said, “Now with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, I feel this type of partnership is a good means to communicate and advocate.” She suggested that the Declaration be adopted as a “shared common goal” because it something that indigenous people can “look forward to, a rallying point, a reconciliation and an aspiration.” She also said that it should be used as a redress and enforcement mechanism, alongside forums such as the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, in the monitoring of states and research organisations. Building on indigenous cosmovisions, the Indigenous Partnership must also recognise the rights of Mother Earth.

The constitution of Ecuador summarises these rights clearly when it proclaimed that nature “has the right to exist, persist, maintain and regenerate its vital cycles, structure, functions and its processes in evolution.”

*

“El respeto al derecho ajeno es la paz”

- **Benito Juárez**, Indigenous Zapotec
President of Mexico, 1858 – 1872

In Our Voices, With Our Words

Pimbert emphasised that the work of IIED, and hopefully of the Indigenous Partnership, in democratising food and agriculture requires that people have greater access to information and resources. Participants agreed that the possible communication strategy of the Indigenous Partnership should be guided by two principles: 1) that communities document their experience through their eyes, words, and knowledge systems; and 2) that communities are able to communicate and share through their independent networks. The flow of information between the local and global communities must also be improved by making local communities aware of regional and international meetings and by inviting communities to attend these meetings.

Laying the Groundwork for the Indigenous Partnership

A Solid Foundation

It was unanimously recommended that the Indigenous Partnership initially focus its support at the grassroots level in order to assist indigenous peoples and local communities in finding better ways of linking groups interested in self-determined development and the reclamation of food rights.

All communities have the right to define their own food systems and the Indigenous Partnership will work consistently to democratise local food systems by strengthening organisations and their collective action to create “safe spaces” for vulnerable and marginalised communities.

Mention was made about the adverse impact of aid on many indigenous communities, and how

some community members feel that they have become poorer by listening to extension workers. The Indigenous Partnership must also help “to protect the seeds of our ancestors” and work on living seeds and community-based gene banks as an important part of its guiding principles. The maintenance of traditional structures and agricultural practices is crucial to the success of food sovereignty initiatives.

The Indigenous Partnership will develop a system to share experiences and, in time, to develop an action plan for the revitalisation of local food systems that expands beyond smaller programmes. Experience sharing must consider local-global issues, and the Indigenous Partnership could, for example, facilitate processes through which indigenous peoples play a more proactive role in the next stage of the IAASTD.

Participants stated that young indigenous peoples, especially those who are still connected with their worldview, must be important target groups of the Indigenous Partnership. There was also an expectation that the Indigenous Partnership and PAR be platforms for reflection on new concepts and emerging experiences in the concept of *buen vivir* and for processes that are promoting re-indigenisation of local communities, or becoming “native to the place”. In this respect, there must be a continuing dialogue between those who acknowledge the cosmivision of indigenous peoples and those who are working under the dominant Western paradigm. The Indigenous Partnership can encourage such dialogue by supporting studies that promote a fuller understanding of the concepts and cosmivisions of indigenous peoples.

Despite the clear challenges indigenous peoples face, and the potential opportunities offered through the advancement of traditional knowledge, the international community has not really supported indigenous agricultural research programmes. The reframing of agricultural research paradigms requires quick thinking to make them more inclusive of those whose worldview is currently ignored. Public research needs to be more attentive to the sustainable approaches of indigenous communities, such as those taking [report continues on page 22 ...](#)



A Comparison of Agrobiodiversity Initiatives in Peru and Bolivia

Climate Change and Andean Peasant Agriculture

by Julio Valladolid (Andean Project of Peasant Technologies, PRATEC)

In parts of the Peruvian Andes, we are witnessing alarming signs of climate change: the retreat of Qori Kalis glacier, floods, mudslides and avalanches, to name a few. The Andes hold a cultural reservoir of wisdom; today there are 7,000 Andean Peasant and Native Communities legally recognised by the Peruvian State. Climate change is not unknown to Andean indigenous peoples, and in particular, to today's Peruvian Andean indigenous peoples.

The millenarian Andean cultures that flourished in the region held dynamic place-based sophisticated *saberes* (holistic wisdom) in order to cope with climate change within their communities and agriculture. Today these *saberes* are held by the descendants of the ancient Andean agrocentric cultures. Andean indigenous peoples continue to develop a fine-tuned, sustained conversation with life as a whole, both the visible and invisible world, including the universe and its microcosms, glaciations, and climatic cycles. The fundamental premise for this dialogue has been, and still is, the Andean-Amazonian cosmovision of “ever”. This pre-colonial cosmovision is what supports past and present, and the nurturing of diversity. The Andean cosmovision and cultures have not disappeared because of modernisation and development. Andean indigenous peoples continue living in ayllu, community.

Working in close association with the Nuclei of Andean Cultural Affirmation (NACA), the goal of PRATEC is to strengthen the Andean-Amazonian cosmovision, the nurturer of diversity. This takes shape in four ways: (1) by nurturing local *pacha* (crop fields, mountains, and natural pastures) through community work; (2) by nurturing the ayllu through traditional governance; (3) by recovering respect and love for deities and nature through rituals and festivities; and 4) by strengthening regional spaces where seed diversity and *saberes* regenerate through visits among indigenous peasants at the local, regional and national levels. In the Andes, without the strengthening of respect and affection for the diversity of *Kawsay Mama* (Mother-Seed) there will not be *Sumaq Kawsay* (good living in community).





Revalorisation of the Indigenous and Peasant Peoples' *Sabiduria*

by Jaime Delgadillo (Agroecological University of Cochabamba, AGRUCO)

In Bolivia, there are 36 recognised indigenous groups, and 62 percent of the population aged 15 or older is of indigenous origin. More than 11 million hectares of land is consolidated as collective indigenous property under the legal concept of *Tierras Comunitarias de Origen* (native community lands).

Biodiversity in Bolivia is found in three main geographic regions: *Altiplano* (highlands); *Valles* (valleys); and *Trópico* (tropics), with the departments of La Paz and Cochabamba containing the highest levels of diversity.

AGRUCO is active in training, research and social interaction aimed to reappraise indigenous and peasant *saberes*. These *saberes* are documented through the use of participatory research with local communities and are eventually disseminated to a wider audience through the publication and distribution of booklets and CDs.

AGRUCO believes:

- § Agroecological production must be supported;
- § Use of harmful agrochemicals must be stopped; and
- § Ecological livestock, agriculture and non-timber forestry production should be promoted.

This is based on the principle that the fight against global hunger needs to both produce more food and improve food quality and production, in ways that do not harm human health or biodiversity, and are accessible and available to all people. The newly ratified Bolivian Constitution opens up significant possibilities to strengthen indigenous social organization and sustainable agroecological agriculture systems.

place in the Potato Park, and more supportive of platforms like PAR that can promote such activities. The meaningful engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities in the development, deliberations and process of international research and advocacy will only take place when organisations such as the Indigenous Partnership and PAR are able to create spaces for stewards of biocultural diversity and their partners to experiment and promote methodological, technical and institutional innovations for the regeneration of local food systems.

National and global discussions on food security are largely influenced by people who are promoting simple solutions. The issues of food and agriculture, the mainstay of the majority of rural populations, are instead very complex, and traditional systems around the world have diverse and in-depth knowledge on how to find sustainable solutions to current problems. The UN conventions, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, are important platforms for indigenous peoples, and the Indigenous Partnership must keep in close touch with such bodies. The partnership can use the talents of indigenous staff working for the member organisations to advocate for the interests of indigenous peoples and local communities and ensure that their voices are heard. It became clear during the Scoping Workshop that the mission driving all of the suggested guiding principles was that the Indigenous Partnership eventually become one of many possible forums to give voice to the hitherto voiceless.

The Tasks Ahead – Sowing Seeds of Change

1. Code of ethics: The principles of respect and reciprocity will be the hallmarks of the Indigenous Partnership. Using the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a guide, the partnership will develop its own code of ethics based on shared goals with a common mission. The code of ethics will be refined as the Indigenous Partnership gains experience, and partners offer suggestions for improvement.

2. Capacity building: The Coordinator of the Indigenous Partnership met Dr. Grimaldo Rengifo of PRATEC in Lima, Peru prior to the Cusco meeting. When asked to discuss operational best practices, Dr. Rengifo said that the strength of their work lies in the training of local indigenous technicians who return to communities and share their knowledge to invigorate local culture and biocultural diversity. Similarly Pedro Turuseachi Sevorachi, Agronomist with Consultoria Técnica (CONTEC), said that livelihood opportunities amongst the indigenous Tarahumara people of Chihuahua, Mexico are strengthened through capacity building workshops on community mapping, global positioning system (GPS) devices, the water table, and new technologies. These types of initiatives are useful in allowing indigenous peoples to define boundaries and land use.

Mancha Maze likened the partnership to rivers flowing towards the sea, and the sea to the communities where change is needed. When combined, the rivers are powerful, just as the partners are when they share their talents with one another and the communities. The work of the Indigenous Partnership is to reach these communities in need, connect with them, train them and provide them with active and open streams of communication.

3. In situ seed banks: Dr. Rengifo further said that the promotion of in situ seed conservation helped to rebuild social structures and to reawaken wonder in seed diversity. In the coming years, in situ and community-led seed and gene banks must be proactively supported by the Indigenous Partnership and PAR, including the repatriation of seeds through an open movement of materials under the control and supervision of local communities. It was stated, however, that for such a process to work, there must be safeguards in place, and intergenerational exchange will need to be reinvigorated. There are new methods for moving biological

materials between nations, so it will be useful to keep in contact with representatives of the Convention on Biological Diversity, although ultimately the focus of the Indigenous Partnership is on people and not just crops.

4. Local solidarity: Participants felt that a preliminary focus on grassroots initiatives, followed in time by advocacy, is a wise operational model for the Indigenous Partnership. ANDES narrated how the six communities of the Potato Park were initially working on their own. It took time for them to see the advantage of working together. However when they finally developed trust in each other and started to collaborate, they were amazed at what they managed to achieve collectively. Indeed, the declaration of 2009 as the International Year of the Potato was the result of the advocacy work undertaken by these communities.

Malebo Mancha Maze illustrated the importance of solidarity with a tale of five oxen threatened by hyenas. Although the oxen, like elders, were powerful and wise, they split up and each took their own course, and in this way the hyenas were able to defeat them.

5. International forums: The challenge to promote agrobiodiversity at the global level is enormous and the Indigenous Partnership will eventually have to move into the area of international advocacy. It is unfortunate that the recent UN State of the World Indigenous Peoples Report does not make any mention of the significant stewardship role that indigenous peoples play in agrobiodiversity. Operationally the Indigenous Partnership must therefore make its presence felt at international forums like the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

Comparing the Aims and Objectives of PRATEC and AGRUCO

by Tirso Gonzales (Indigenous Studies - The University of British Columbia Okanagan)

AGRUCO and PRATEC are deeply committed to revitalise and regenerate Andean-Amazonian indigenous peoples' cultures and agricultures. They work with diverse community clusters located in the most important geographic regions and indigenous populations in their respective countries. Both institutions have interacted with each other in the past through materials exchange, workshops, and visits, and they share similar research methodologies and goals. As a result of at least 20 years experience each, both have produced an impressive number of community-based videos, books, brochures and theses. However there are key differences.

AGRUCO is an important component of the University of San Simon, Cochabamba. As such it brings the science of agroecology into its research, training and social interactions. AGRUCO generates and disseminates concepts, methodologies, techniques and strategies for sustainable agroecological development throughout Bolivian and Latin American universities.

Except for three PRATEC core members, the 20 associated NACA members are deprofessionalised indigenous intellectuals who have decided to return to their communities, work the land and accompany the processes of cultural affirmation. PRATEC training events have helped to fill a gap in professional and technical training in agrobiodiversity and intercultural education in Peru. It has coordinated and conducted programs in Andean culture and agriculture in Peru and Bolivia, together with local universities, highlighting the intimate relationship between biodiversity and culture. PRATEC seeks to enhance the efforts of indigenous farmers to maintain and increase the diversity of cultivated plants while protecting their cultures.

Both endogenous experiences have drafted solid proposals for larger projects that support self-determined Andean-Amazonian indigenous agrobiodiversity, cultures, agricultures and development. AGRUCO has significant support from the Swiss and other sources. PRATEC and NACA are in a position to expand their scope, moving beyond a one to two year project cycle confined to specific communities and to embrace activities in watershed basin biocultural regions.



6. Exchange visits and festivals: The visit to the Potato Park was a highlight of the Scoping Workshop, and it was strongly recommended that the Indigenous Partnership explore such sites of indigenous innovation and action to organise future exchange visits and promote networking and cooperative learning. One entry point for exchange visits could be to support visits to regional fairs or festivals of seasonal holidays, ceremonies, and traditional crops or a retreat for elders and children.

Celebrations provide an excellent opportunity to promote the sacred practice of traditional agricultural biodiversity. Sevorachi said that the corn festivals of the Tarahumara serve to defend the corn seed and highlight the self-sufficiency of the communities; festivals, therefore, are an important aspect of indigenous food sovereignty. Indigenous peoples need a neutral space for joyful events to celebrate their stewardship of biocultural diversity with music, stories, laughter and dance. Expanding on the Terra Madre network of food communities coordinated by Slow Food, the Indigenous Partnership could co-organise an Indigenous Terra Madre event that provides a space for indigenous-led development and food reclamation.

7. Indigenous studies and knowledge networks: The formation of an indigenous studies programme by both indigenous and non-indigenous scholars that is able to look at conventional issues in a new light was considered a key operational tool for the Indigenous Partnership. This would include an in-depth review on the drivers of adverse processes affecting indigenous peoples and local communities. Many of these issues are connected with rights, land and the detrimental impact of extractive industries and industrial agriculture. Indigenous peoples should have a fuller understanding of how their cosmivision affects their outlook on

food, agrobiodiversity and food sovereignty. The Indigenous Partnership can begin by supporting well-defined studies of indigenous issues related to food and agrobiodiversity.

Participants felt that PAR can be an important supporter of the Indigenous Partnership by promoting knowledge that is generated by indigenous communities or highlighted by the indigenous movement, especially in the context of the global discussions on the Convention on Biological Diversity. PAR can also develop closer links with global indigenous networks through the recently signed International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

Indigenous organisations, governments and leading thinkers must try harder to change the formal curriculum of the educational systems in many indigenous territories, which often do not acknowledge indigenous knowledge systems. The Indigenous Partnership could do its part by promoting a more pro-indigenous curriculum that uses a balanced combination of traditional knowledge and modern approaches in developing learning materials.

8. Dissemination: The Indigenous Partnership must take concrete measures to disseminate global conclusions and results to local levels through a creative media network. It should eventually be the platform for highlighting the main issues of indigenous peoples in agrobiodiversity and food sovereignty. In this respect, it was suggested that a short video of the process of discussions at the workshop be prepared, with a voiceover in local languages. The video should present the common concepts of agrobiodiversity, food sovereignty, and harmful global trends, and possibly be accompanied by a facilitator manual to explain key concepts and gather experiences at the local level.



Including Indigenous Peoples in the Slow Food Movement

by Shayna Bailey, Director of International Development, Slow Food International

Slow Food International has been working with indigenous peoples and their foods since 2002 through the Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity and its Ark of Taste and Presidia projects — from the Manoomin wild rice of the Anishinaabeg (or Ojibwe) people in the United States, to the *somè* of the Dogon society in the Mopti region of Mali, to the taros and yams of the Kanak culture of Lifou, New Caledonia. With the birth in 2004 of Terra Madre, the global network of food communities, Slow Food broadened its reach to become more inclusive of indigenous peoples and their cultures as part of the wider Slow Food movement.

Since 2007 we have partnered with The Christensen Fund, and this has enabled Slow Food to build its capacity to focus on this outreach, and to learn more about the indigenous groups we were already working with. As a natural evolution of this collaboration, the participation of Slow Food in the Indigenous Partnership for Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty allows us to identify new groups we can involve and to bring indigenous voices to the forefront of global dialogue on food and agricultural issues that affect us all. The worldwide, biennial meeting of Terra Madre in 2010 included five indigenous speakers from five continents presenting in their native languages to an opening ceremony of over 7,000 people from 160 countries, as well as three workshops specifically on indigenous themes.

The Indigenous Partnership has an important role to play as we band together to make indigenous voices heard, and it will be an active partner in the inaugural Terra Madre Indigenous Peoples meeting to be held in June 2011 in Saami Land in Sweden.

9. GMOs: Concern was raised during the workshop over the aggressive promotion of genetically modified organism (GMO) foods by some states and commercial companies. Rather than using slogans such as “to solve hunger and climate change by applying genetic engineering” as promoted at the 2010 Agricultural Biotechnologies in Developing Countries Conference, participants felt that agrobiodiversity must be viewed differently. Instead, biodiversity should be seen as “part of our daily lives and livelihoods... constitut[ing] the resources upon which families, communities, nations and future generations depend”, as expressed by the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT). The Indigenous Partnership should encourage the exchange of ideas and research on this topic to share at the grass-roots level.

10. Mobile Indigenous Peoples: The Indigenous Partnership must build a link with nomadic pastoralists, hunter gatherers, sea nomads and others that are actively involved with the World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous Peoples, since these groups have long been marginalised and request help in taking control of their own food sovereignty.

11. Spokespeople: To increase public awareness of local food systems and the partnership's efforts, the Indigenous Partnership should seek the patronage of international figures that are passionate and knowledgeable in the fields of food and agrobiodiversity research and advocacy.

Nourishing the Roots

The many experiences and views shared during the Scoping Workshop contributed greatly to an emerging vision and future programme for the Indigenous Partnership. The identification of best practices, the field visit, the myriad presentations and the group and plenary discussions clearly indicated that the main action areas for the Indigenous Partnership are to build its contacts with grassroots entities and to bolster local indigenous organisations. This can be accomplished through exchange visits and the strengthening of indigenous peoples' rights over territory, including gender equitable property rights. The importance of revitalising local food systems, agroecology, and ecoliteracy through independent local and regional initiatives was also strongly encouraged. It was further recommended that an indigenous peoples-led reframing of food and agricultural policies using established platforms, such as the IAASTD, facilitate this revitalisation. The recognition of farmers' rights under the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the Right to Food campaign also became clear topics of the Indigenous Partnership's agenda.

Furthermore, the need to develop a code of ethics that aligns with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is another action area in need of immediate attention.

While these and many other issues, including epistemological bridge building, indigenous autonomous media and indigenous leadership, were highlighted by the participants, issues such as institutional arrangements of governance, monitoring and future funding did not attract much attention. It was obvious that the indigenous participants in particular were more interested in reaching agreement on the vision and the guiding principles of the Indigenous Partnership than delving into issues of governance. For most of the participants, it was a bit premature to have an in-depth discussion on institutional issues. The subject of membership did arise, and it was agreed that the structure of the Indigenous Partnership and its membership should be flexible and allowed to develop organically over time.

Next Steps

The scoping workshop provided the Indigenous Partnership with several action areas to follow up on, as summarised in the previous section. Several priority activities for the Indigenous Partnership have been distilled from these broader themes and include:

- § Contacting local indigenous organisations and their federations regarding collaboration with those who are using indigenous cosmologies, epistemologies and methodologies as guides;
- § Making continuing efforts to expand the network through the building of contact lists;
- § Drafting a code of ethics that incorporates the suggestions of the Scoping Workshop;
- § Preparing a list of possible exchange visits to agriculturally important indigenous heritage areas and sacred sites;
- § Drafting a concept note for an indigenous and autonomous media and communication programme;
- § Conducting studies and assessments in local communities and appropriate institutions to increase understanding of indigenous issues in order to contribute to the debate on reframing food and agriculture policies and how these policies are articulated at local, national and international levels;
- § Developing a programme of living seed banks for communities to begin the exchange and reintroduction of important and/or lost crops; and
- § Identifying international meetings in 2011 where the Indigenous Partnership and its networks can participate and present their findings.

Annex

Participants of the Indigenous Partnership for Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty Scoping Workshop

Alejandro Argumedo, Associate Director – *Asociación para la Naturaleza y el Desarrollo Sostenible/Peru*

Taghi Farvar, Secretary General – *World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous Peoples/Iran*

Jannie Lasimbang, Director – *PACOS Trust/Malaysia*

Erjen Khamaganova, Program Officer – *The Christensen Fund/Kyrgyzstan*

Tadesse Wolde, Program Officer – *The Christensen Fund/United Kingdom*

Catherine Sparks, Program Officer – *The Christensen Fund/Vanuatu*

Ralph Regenvanu, Director – *Vanuatu National Cultural Council, MP for Port Vila/Vanuatu*

Carl O. Rangad, Director of Horticulture – *Government of Meghalaya/India*

Malebo Mancha Maze, Ezo Community Elder and Farmer – *Gamo Highlands Indigenous Community/Ethiopia*

Metasebia Bekele, Executive Director – *Association for Research and Conservation of Culture, Indigenous Knowledge and Cultural Landscapes/Ethiopia*

Mukhabbatkhon Mamadalieva, Director – *Zan va Zamin/Tajikistan*

Jaime Delgadillo Pinto, *Agroecologia Universidad Cochabamba/Bolivia*

Julio Valladolid Rivera, *El Proyecto Andino de Tecnologías Campesinas/Peru*

Phrang Roy, Coordinator – *Indigenous Partnership for Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty, c/o Bioversity International/Italy*

Toby Hodgkin, Coordinator – *Platform for Agrobiodiversity Research, c/o Bioversity International/Italy*

Elizabeth Fox, Communication Specialist – *Indigenous Partnership for Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty, c/o Bioversity International/Italy*

Hans Herren, President – *Millennium Institute/USA*

Michel Pimbert, Team Leader of Food and Agriculture, Natural Resources Group – *International Institute for Environment and Development/United Kingdom*

Archana Godbole, Director – *Applied Environmental Research Foundation/India*

Jeffrey Campbell, Director of Grantmaking – *The Christensen Fund/USA*

Shayna Bailey, Director of International Development – *Slow Food International/Italy*

Laura Monti, Program Officer – *The Christensen Fund/USA*

Maria Teresa Guerrero Olivares, Director – *Consultoria Técnica/Mexico*

Pedro Turuseachi Sevorachi, Agronomist – *Consultoria Técnica/Mexico*

Suzanne Nelson, Director of Conservation – *Native Seeds-SEARCH/USA*

Frederik J.W. van Oudenhoven, Community Management of Agricultural Biodiversity – *Bioversity International/Italy*

Tirso Gonzales, Assistant Professor of Indigenous Studies – *University of British Columbia, Okanagan Community, Culture and Global Studies IKB School of Arts and Science/Canada*



Platform for Agrobiodiversity Research

The Platform for Agrobiodiversity Research (PAR) aims to enhance the sustainable management and use of agrobiodiversity by improving knowledge of all its different aspects. PAR seeks to promote research and new research partnerships and to synthesise, mobilise and share research findings on the use and management of agrobiodiversity. Its Secretariat is provided and hosted by Bioversity International.

The first Stakeholder Meeting, which took place in Rome, Italy in May 2006, identified agrobiodiversity and climate change as one of the priority areas the Platform should be working on. With support from Bioversity International and The Christensen Fund, the Platform was able to start its new project on Agrobiodiversity and Climate Change in April 2008: “The use of Agrobiodiversity to manage Climate Change: Charting experiences from rural communities and Indigenous Peoples”.

Learn more about the Platform for Agrobiodiversity Research at <http://agrobiodiversityplatform.org>

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Bioversity International

Bioversity International is the world's leading organisation dedicated to researching agricultural biodiversity to improve people's lives.

Bioversity's research, carried out with partners around the world, seeks sustainable solutions to meet three important challenges:

- § Malnutrition and hidden hunger of missing micronutrients;
- § Sustainability and resilience in food supplies and farming systems; and
- § Conservation and use, ensuring that agricultural biodiversity remains accessible to all.

Bioversity also provides policy information and analysis to improve the legal framework – global, regional and national – needed to ensure that agricultural biodiversity can be put to work to deliver sustainable solutions for economic development.

Funding for Bioversity comes from statutory donors and foundations, who support us directly and through their contributions to the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). Bioversity is also supported by a registered charity in the United Kingdom, and in the United States by a Foundation that has 501(c)(3) status.

Bioversity's headquarters are in Maccaresse, Italy, just outside Rome, where they work closely with UN Agencies such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP). However, the vast majority of Bioversity staff work from 20 offices that cover the regions of the world.

Find out more about Bioversity at
<http://www.bioversityinternational.org>



Vanuatu Cultural Centre

The Vanuatu Cultural Centre is an organisation that works to record and promote the diverse cultures of the Pacific archipelago of Vanuatu. The VCC runs an extensive network of volunteer workers around the country who record information and participate in projects run by the Centre.

Find out more about the Vanuatu Cultural Centre at
<http://www.vanuatuculture.org>



Asociación ANDES

The Association for Nature and Sustainable Development (ANDES) works in the areas of poverty alleviation, biodiversity management, recognition and strengthening of traditional community rights systems for local biocultural resources, and the promotion of institutional and policy changes relevant to conservation and development.

Using participatory processes, efforts focus on issues of gender, conservation, and sustainable use. To this end, ANDES works cooperatively with indigenous organisations at the community level in developing adaptive management models for indigenous biocultural heritage that affirm the rights and responsibilities of communities, and strengthen food sovereignty, health and local livelihoods. Community development strategies are based on the outlook and traditional values of the Andean culture, ensuring that its interventions are holistic, democratic, participatory and locally effective.

Learn more about ANDES at
<http://www.andes.org.pe>



Tebtebba

Tebtebba (Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education) is an indigenous peoples' organisation born out of the need for heightened advocacy to have the rights of indigenous peoples recognised, respected and protected worldwide.

Established in 1996, it is a research, education, policy advocacy and resource centre working with indigenous peoples at all levels and arenas.

We seek the recognition, promotion and protection of indigenous peoples' rights and aspirations while building unities to uphold social and environmental justice and sustainability.

We shall achieve this by reinforcing the capacities of indigenous peoples for advocacy, campaigns and networking; research, education, training, and institutional development; and by actively articulating and projecting indigenous peoples' views and perspectives.

Learn more about Tebtebba at

<http://www.tebtebba.org>



Slow Food

Slow Food is a non-profit, eco-gastronomic member-supported organisation that was founded in 1989 to counteract fast food and fast life, the disappearance of local food traditions and people's dwindling interest in the food they eat, where it comes from, how it tastes and how our food choices affect the rest of the world.

To do that, Slow Food brings together pleasure and responsibility, and makes them inseparable. Today, Slow Food has over 100,000 members in 132 countries.

Find out more about Slow Food at

<http://www.slowfood.com>



International Institute for Environmental Development

The International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) is a global leader in sustainable development. IIED's mission is to build a fairer, more sustainable world, using evidence, action and influence in partnership with others.

As an independent international research organisation, IIED is a specialist in linking local to global. In Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Central and South America, the Middle East and the Pacific, IIED works with some of the world's most vulnerable people to ensure they have a say in the policy arenas that most closely affect them — from village councils to international conventions.

Through close collaboration with partners at the grassroots, IIED makes their research and advocacy relevant to needs and alive to realities.

Learn more about IIED at <http://www.iied.org>

The Indigenous Partnership for Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty is supported by The Christensen Fund and hosted by the Platform for Agrobiodiversity Research in Rome, Italy. Its mission is to improve ways of linking indigenous peoples and local communities interested in pursuing self-determined development and to facilitate such communities in taking a leadership role in agrobiodiversity dialogues.

For further information about the evolving formulation of this Partnership please contact:

Phrang Roy, Coordinator
p.roy@cgiar.org
phrangroy@gmail.com

- or -

Elizabeth Fox, Communications Specialist
e.fox@cgiar.org

**Indigenous Partnership for
Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty
Bioversity International
Via dei Tre Denari 472/a
00057 Maccarese (Fiumicino) - Rome, Italy
tel.: +39 06 6118 272
fax.: +39 06 61979661**

<http://www.agrobiodiversityplatform.org>

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