



INVITATION TO A SIDE EVENT

to be held at the First Session of the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA), Madrid, 12–16 June 2006

REALISING FARMERS' RIGHTS UNDER THE ITPGRFA

Salón Lyon, Hotel Auditorium, Madrid, Tuesday 13 June 13:15-14:45

The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture recognises the enormous contributions – past, present, future – of the world's farmers in conserving, improving and making available plant genetic resources for food and agriculture as the basis of Farmers' Rights. It explicitly states that the responsibility for implementing its provisions on Farmers' Rights rests with the national governments, which are free to choose the measures they deem appropriate, according to their needs and priorities. Certain measures to protect and promote Farmers' Rights are suggested. The preamble of the ITPGRFA highlights the necessity of promoting Farmers' Rights at the national as well as international levels. There is, however, as yet no common understanding of how this can be done. Such an understanding is crucial for making progress in the realisation of Farmers' Rights.

The Farmers' Rights Project is an international project set up at the Fridtjof Nansen Institute in Norway with support from the Norwegian Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the German GTZ, with affiliated experts in Peru, India and Ethiopia, to facilitate such a common understanding and develop a basis for proposals to the Governing Body of the Treaty on concrete measures to be taken. The aim is to move beyond earlier controversies, and – based on the consensus formulations in the Treaty – build bridges to a joint perception of needed action, while respecting the freedom of countries to choose measures according to their needs and priorities. The findings from the first phase of the project will be presented at the side event. Our intention is to:

- Contribute to the understanding of what Farmers' Rights are about and how they are important for continued maintenance of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture in the world, and not least for the fight against poverty in the South.
- Inform delegations about opportunities to propose concrete measures to the Governing Body to promote the realisation Farmers' Rights while respecting the freedom of countries to choose ways and means according to their needs and priorities.
- Inspire and encourage participants to take action in their own countries to implement the provisions of the ITPGRFA on Farmers' Rights.

Organizers:

Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Norway, and the Fridtjof Nansen Institute, Norway

SIDE EVENT: REALISING FARMERS' RIGHTS UNDER THE ITPGRFA

PROGRAM

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Welcome Address

Grethe Helene Evjen, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Norway; Alternate Head of the Norwegian Delegation to the First Session, and Chair of the side event

Potentials for the Realisation of Farmers' Rights: Findings from the Farmers' Rights Project

Regine Andersen, Research Fellow, the Fridtjof Nansen Institute, Norway; Project Leader, the Farmers' Rights Project

Farmers' Rights in Practice: Examples from Southeast Asia

Wilhelmina R. Pelegrina, Executive Director of Southeast Asia Regional Initiatives for Community Empowerment (SEARICE), the Philippines

Statement on the importance of development co-operation for the realisation of Farmers' Rights

Annette von Lossau, Project Manager, Sector Project 'People, Food & Biodiversity', Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ)

Panel Discussion: What can the Governing Body do?

- *Prof. Carlos Correa*, Director, Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies of Industrial Property, University of Buenos Aires, Argentina
- *Dr. S. Bala Ravi*, Advisor (Biodiversity and Farmers' Rights), the MS Swaminathan Research Foundation, India
- *Godfrey P. Mwila*, Principal Agricultural Research Officer, SADC Plant Genetic Resources Centre, Zambia
- *Wilhelmina R. Pelegrina*, Executive Director, Southeast Asia Regional Initiatives for Community Empowerment (SEARICE), the Philippines
- *Regine Andersen*, Research Fellow, the Fridtjof Nansen Institute, Norway; Project Leader, the Farmers' Rights Project

Closing Address

Grethe Helene Evjen, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Norway; Alternate Head of the Norwegian Delegation to the First Session, and Chair of the side event

A LIGHT LUNCH WILL BE SERVED



More information on the Farmers Rights Project is available at
www.fni.no/farmers/main.html