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## A Global Initiative to Conserve Crop Wild Relatives *in situ* through Enhanced Information Management

SABINE ROSCHER

*German Centre for Documentation and Information in Agriculture (ZADI), Information Centre for Biological Diversity (IBV), Germany*

### Abstract

The natural populations of many crop wild relatives are increasingly at risk and they are presently poorly conserved. A major limitation is in the capacity to manage and use information that does exist. Therefore a project was developed to address national and global needs to improve conservation of crop wild relatives, focusing on enhanced management and use of information on these species. It brings together five countries – Armenia, Bolivia, Madagascar, Sri Lanka and Uzbekistan – and five international conservation agencies – the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI), the United Nations Environment Programme’s World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and the German Information Centre Biological Diversity (IBV). The project is coordinated by the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI).

Up to now 64 crop genera comprising about 12,000 species have been identified as the focus of the project. The number is likely to increase with inclusion of a great number of crops listed in Annex 1 of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

The above mentioned national partners will implement and monitor conservation strategies that are needed to conserve priority crop wild relatives in their countries. They will undertake ecogeographic survey and analysis on three to five taxa and use this information to refine procedures for using spatial information as a tool in conservation management and monitoring.

The information portal will bring together information from available data sources on the identity, status, distribution and potential use of crop wild relatives. The five participating countries will provide information from their own systems as the projects develops and it is hoped that other countries will also provide their information in due course. The portal will act as a gateway for access for the global community allowing users to search for information on the global level but also allow for access information on the national level.

**Keywords:** Biodiversity, crop wild relatives, information management