

**Press Information Bureau
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Ministry of Agriculture**

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Curtain raiser -First-ever International Agrobiodiversity Congress to be held in New Delhi from 6-9 November, 2016

The 1st International Agrobiodiversity Congress – IAC 2016 – will gather 900 delegates from 60 countries in New Delhi, India, from 6-9 November, 2016. This international Congress will initiate and encourage a dialogue among relevant stakeholders – including farmers – to better understand everyone’s role in agrobiodiversity management and the conservation of genetic resources.

Agricultural biodiversity – or agrobiodiversity – is the foundation of sustainable agricultural development and is an essential natural resource to ensure current and future food and nutrition security. As the world faces challenges, such as global malnutrition, climate change, increasing agricultural productivity, reducing risk and increasing shrinking food security, we need everyone’s attention and concern for the conservation and use of these precious resources because they provide essential raw materials for our agricultural systems and peoples’ livelihoods.

India is the perfect venue for the first-ever International Agrobiodiversity Congress as it is one of the most diverse countries in the world. It takes up only 2.4% of the world's land area, and yet it harbours 7-8% of all recorded species, including over 45,000 species of plants and 91,000 species of animals (CBD, 2014).

The Congress will provoke discussion and knowledge-sharing on issues for the effective and efficient management of genebanks; science-led innovations in the field of genetic resources; livelihood, food and nutrition security through crop diversification, including use of lesser known crops and the role of crop wild relatives in crop improvement; issues relating to quarantine, biosafety and biosecurity; and Intellectual Property Rights and Access and Benefit Sharing in the context of exchange of germplasm. To deliberate on the role of all the stakeholders in effective management and use of agrobiodiversity, a Public Forum has also been planned during the Congress.

Co-organized by the Indian Society of Plant Genetic Resources and Bioversity International, a CGIAR Research Center headquartered in Rome, Italy, International Agrobiodiversity Congress received support from many Indian and international organisations engaged in the conservation and use of genetic resources.

The Congress will be inaugurated by the Honourable Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, at Vigyan Bhawan on 6 November 2016.

The India Society of Plant Genetic Resources was founded in 1987 as a multidisciplinary scientific body to provide a forum to all those interested in plant genetic resources to express their views, publish their findings and interact with different stakeholders.

<http://ispgr.nbpg.ernet.in/>

Bioversity International is a global research-for-development organization. Bioversity International delivers scientific evidence, management practices and policy options to use and safeguard agricultural and tree biodiversity to attain sustainable global food and nutrition security.

www.bioversityinternational.org

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