

**International Forum on Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems
Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan, 29-31 May 2013**

**Noto Communiqué on
Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems**

We, the participants, in the International Forum on GIAHS in Ishikawa, representing national governments and local authorities in Africa, Asia and Latin America, international organizations, civil society organizations and others:

- a) *Welcome* the opportunity to have an open exchange and discussion on the contribution of agricultural heritage towards a sustainable world.
- b) *Recognize* the importance of small holders, family farmers and traditional farming communities in providing food security, rural employment, conservation of natural resources, maintaining biological diversity and provision of ecosystem goods and services and strengthening adaptation to climate change.
- c) *Recognize* the importance of agricultural heritage systems as the bench marks of sustainability in a rapidly changing world and as indicators of commitment of rural communities to sustainable management of their assets.
- d) *Note* the efforts of FAO and its partners in promoting and supporting the dynamic conservation of agricultural heritage systems around the world since 2002, and identification, support, designation and safeguarding of the GIAHS sites.
- e) *Emphasise* the need to increase public and private partnership to promote policy support and investment in conservation of agricultural heritage.
- f) *Affirm* the intrinsic value of biological diversity harboured within GIAHS, as well as the ecological, social, economic, cultural, aesthetic values and their critical role in maintaining ecosystem and livelihoods.
- g) *Recognize* that the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities make an important contribution to sustainable development.
- h) *Note further* that this Forum held in Noto region, Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan, is the first GIAHS International Forum to take place at a GIAHS designated site in a developed country.
- i) *Acknowledge* that the GIAHS concept has been widely recognized in international fora, including, *inter alia*, the 67th Session¹ of the Second Committee, General Assembly of the United Nations in 2012.
- j) *Note* that GIAHS was recognized by COP10 of CBD as an innovative instrument for conservation and sustainable use of agro-biodiversity and referred to in Aichi Targets.
- k) *Recognize* the need to establish a robust institutional framework to further sustain the conservation and development efforts steered by FAO, governments and the international community.
- l) *Underscore* the importance of GIAHS to attain the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the broader post-2015 development agenda, as set by the Rio+20

¹ "Agriculture development and food security" Report of the Second Committee, Sixty-seventh session Agenda item 26, para.7: "Takes note of the report of the one hundred and forty-fourth session of the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, which stresses the importance of the Organization's support to Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems".

Conference, “The Future We Want”.

- m) *Acknowledge* the need to mainstream GIAHS at all levels, integrating economic, social and environmental aspects and recognizing their inter-linkages, so as to achieve sustainable development in all its dimensions; GIAHS is a result of an outstanding key element underpinning human basic welfare of family farmers, indigenous peoples and local communities, as well as opportunities for future development.
- n) *Recommend* to the FAO Conference, international organizations, the private sector and other actors, to support agricultural heritage and the GIAHS Initiative, for revitalizing rural areas and achieving the goals of sustainable development.
- o) *Commit* to mobilise human and political resources to further identify GIAHS sites, and scale-up their dynamic conservation as living models of sustainability.
- p) *Request* all governments and constituencies to support and safeguard their agricultural heritage systems.
- q) *Request* all governments to support the current GIAHS structure and allocate the resources needed in FAO Programme of Work and Budget.

Considering the aforementioned, the Forum recommends:

1. The GIAHS designated sites should be periodically monitored and their viability should be maintained;
2. The progressive designation of further GIAHS sites to promote the conservation of agricultural heritage and its contributions towards global food security and economic development;
3. The dynamic conservation of GIAHS through promotion of on-the-ground projects and activities, particularly in developing countries;
4. The existing GIAHS support the recognition of candidatures of GIAHS areas in less developed countries; and
5. Promote the twinning of GIAHS sites between developed and developing countries.