



Rendiconti
Accademia Nazionale delle Scienze detta dei XL
Memorie di Scienze Fisiche e Naturali
122° (2004), Vol. XXVIII, p. 245

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Concluding Remarks

First of all, I want to thank the Italian National Academy of Sciences, Prof. Scarascia Mugnozza, FAO, and the Italian Government for organizing this very important meeting. It is a very good start for the International Year of Rice. I just want to pick up two very important ideas. The first is the proposal for establishing an International Centre for Agrobiodiversity, maybe at Maccaresse. Prof. Enrico Porceddu gave a very detailed description of what the centre could do and also proposed a very innovative method of organizing it with fairly limited resources, mobilizing all available sources, be it IPGRI, or FAO, or the Italian Government. So I hope this centre will become a reality in 2004 and that you will first start with rice agrobiodiversity.

The second important point is that during this year we hope the International Treaty will be ratified. It is good news that the Italian Government will ratify it soon and hope other countries will join. In fact, I think we should go more and more to multilateral systems of collaboration, the world needs them badly. I wish to recall that IPGRI also developed a multilateral system of exchange of material.

A very good foundation has been laid today not merely in presenting facts and figures but also in making concrete additions on the way ahead. I want to once again thank you and hope that these two initiatives, the International Centred for Agrobiodiversity, and the International Treaty will both be a reality before the end of 2004.

Thank you very much for your attention.

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