



NEWS RELEASE

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SCF ADDRESSES INTERNATIONAL BIODIVERSITY CONFERENCE

The Scottish Crofting Foundation (SCF), the only member-led organisation dedicated to promoting crofting took part this week in the International Conference "La Settimana della Biodiversità" held in Rome. The event saw farmers from across Europe come together to exchange their experiences with agricultural biodiversity

Organised by **Bioversity International** the conference was designed to remind the public and the world's decision makers how significant agricultural biodiversity is to people's health and nutrition.

Addressing the Conference, on the International Day for Biodiversity, Saturday 22 May, Maria Scholten Advisory Researcher for SCF said:

"The International Treaty offers a legal framework for supporting local varieties, such as small oat and bere, and High Nature Value farming and should be implemented. This way, local maintainers will be acknowledged and local initiatives will be complimented by a national policy."

In addition to contributing to the "La Settimana della Biodiversità" SCF is also participating in a three year EU funded project to raise awareness about the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) .

The project, **Good practices in sustainable agriculture and Food Sovereignty**, is designed to develop the capacity of crofters and small farmers to participate as key stakeholders in the Treaty (ITPGRFA).

Eleanor Arthur SCF Director said: "Crofters and small farmers across Europe play a key role in biodiversity protection. It is important to our members that the EU has coherent policies dealing with agriculture, trade, and education and crofters play a part in influencing these policies. Through this programme we will have the opportunity to work with other organisations dealing with rural development, research and training across the EU and Africa to increase the commitment of the Member States to the implementation of this Treaty"

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Notes to editors

- The Scottish Crofting Foundation is the largest association of small-scale food producers in the UK.
- The United Nations has designated 2010 as the International Year of Biodiversity.
- Bioversity International is the world's largest international research organisation dedicated solely to the conservation and use of agricultural biodiversity. It is non-profit and independently operated.
- Good practices in sustainable agriculture and Food is co-ordinated and managed by the following organisations
- SCF (Scottish Crofting Federation) UK
- ACRA (Associazione di Cooperazione Rurale in Africa e America Latina) and CIC (Centro Internazionale Crocevia) Italy,
- BEDE (Biodiversity: Exchange and diffusion of Experiences) France
- CET (Clubul Ecologic Transilvania) Romania
- PtF (Protect the Future) Hungary
- ADD (Association pour le Développement Durable) Tunisia
- KDES (Kalounayes pour le Développement Economique et Social) Senegal.
- Pictures are available from SCF