

SAVE-News 1/2002

This newsletter is issued four times a year by SAVE Foundation (Safeguard for Agricultural Varieties in Europe)

Study “Agricultural Genetic Resources in Italy”

"Of 38 Italian pig breeds, only 5 have up to date survived - but only with few individuals." The headlines of the study "Agricultural genetic resources in Italy - risk status, conservation initiatives and need for action", financed by the 'MAVA Foundation for Nature Protection', could be like this or similar. The study, conducted by the Monitoring Institute in St.Gallen (scientific branch of SAVE) during 2 years of intensive work, is now available. It describes the situation of genetic resources of livestock breeds and cultivated plants in Italy. It also deals with the risk status and conditions, portrays the governmental, private and university institutions and estimates the need for action. The report was deliberately designed as a reference publication. It comprises of 338 pages and is, for the time being, available in German (a translation into Italian is in process). The synthesis reports, comprising of approx. 20 pages, are already published in German and Italian. They are easy to copy and thus can be made available for a wider public. The synthesis reports may be downloaded from the web-side of the Monitoring Institute as PDF-File (<http://www.monitoring-inst.de>).

This first total view of the need for action necessary for the conservation of agrobiodiversity in Italy is of immense importance for purposeful action. The study shows aggravating gaps in several areas, e.g. no legislation at national level dealing with the conservation of the genetic resources of cultivated plants and livestock breeds exists up to date. Only the Latium, Tuscany and Umbria Regions enacted specific laws. Efforts undertaken by the government often remain unaccomplished at the administrative level. Efforts of universities and privates are not coordinated and do by far not cover the entire spectrum. For fruit varieties, e.g. an enormous need for action exists in Southern Italy. Hardly any conservation initiatives exist for figs, olives, pistachios and pines. With the present study, the diffuse situation in Italy now becomes clearer.

Petra Gansneder, new SAVE managing director

Thomas Schneider, SAVE Foundation managing director up to now, has moved to a position in the management of an office for the certification of biologically working farms. We thank him for his great commitment during his time with SAVE and wish him all the best for his further career.

Successor in office is Petra Gansneder. She was born in Munich in 1968, studied biology in Goettingen and passed her Master of Science in tropical and subtropical agriculture in 2001. She is fluent in English and French. Apart from her working as biologist and translator in Goettingen and Munich, she was honorary participant in the Green-

peace campaign for the protection of rare species, worked in public relations and actively took part in a project for the protection of Sea Turtles on Zakynthos (Greece). In her master thesis she studied "Child Malnutrition and Feeding Practices with Regard to Vegetable Consumption" in Cagayan de Oro (Philippines). Further projects lead Ms Gansneder to Southern France and Zimbabwe. We kindly welcome her.

Renewed EU-support program for genetic resources

The EU commission invited to an advisory workshop which took place on the 29th of January 2002 at short notice. The workshop dealt with a new support regulation for the conservation, characterisation, collection and utilisation of genetic resources in agriculture (former: regulation 1467/94). The SAVE Foundation was represented by Rüdiger Stegemann (VEN Germany). Despite all rumours, speculations and quite a few hindrances within the commission, a new regulation for a respective support program will come into force - in case the responsible political authorities will agree. Details of the support modalities are still subject to negotiations. Need for clarification exists for diverse questions, these reach from the division of funding shares (EU-Commission, contribution of the member states, contribution of project managers) up to the definition of the contents of in situ /on farm conservation and the competence when dealing with multinational projects. Further decision steps are planned for the next weeks. Despite the basic agreement to such a program is undisputed, the precise time table is unclear at present.

SAVE brochures for the model region Constance

As announced in the last SaveNews, the SAVE Foundation participates in practical projects for the conservation of biodiversity in the model region Constance. Particularly in the fields of PR work and product marketing, interesting experiences at the regional level can be gathered. Meanwhile, two brochures are available, which were financed by PLENUM (district of Constance) and the Margarethe and Rudolf Gsell Foundation, Basel:

- The brochure 'Old fruit varieties at the western Lake Constance' records the still existing diversity, describes it and provides reference sources in an address part for individual fruit breeds as well as for grafts and nursery material (34 pages).
- The consumer/tourist brochure 'Agricultural Diversity at Lake Constance' gives an overview on 58 pages on active farmers, gardeners, breeders, initiatives, projects and institutions dealing in a wide frame with agrobiodiversity in the international Lake Constance region (German, Austrian and Swiss area).

Both brochures are in German language and illustrated in coloured. They are mainly useful in the Lake Constance region, but may also serve as a model for other regions. They may be ordered from: SAVE Foundation, Paradiesstr. 13, D-78462 Konstanz. Please include a 5 Euro note for package and mailing.

Important dates (extract)

30 March - 6 April: "Restore the Earth". An international conference for the healing of our planet's ecosystems: Findhorn Found., Scotland, UK. Information: rdoudna@findhorn.org

4 -7 April 2002: EAAP-Symposium "Livestock farming systems: Product quality based on local resources and its potential contribution to improved sustainability" in Benevento, Italy. Information: fez2002.benevento@tin.it

8-26 April: "The Sixth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP6) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)" in Montreal, Canada. Information: secretariat@biodiv.org

12-16 May: "Seventh International Workshop on Seeds" in Salamanca, Spain. Information: http://www.geocities.com/workshop_on_seeds

15-17 May: "Towards a Biodiversity Vision for the Alps"; Workshop of the WWF European Alpine Programme in Gap-Charance (France) in collaboration with CIPRA, ISCAR and the Network of Alpine Protected Areas. Information: s.arduino@wwf.it

6-9 June: "Local breeds and their typical products". Meeting in Agerola, Italy (near Naples) organised by R.A.R.E.; Information: v.peretti@libero.it

25-30 August: "The Third European Congress on Restoration Ecology" in Budapest, Hungary. Information: <http://www.botanika.hu/restoration>

12-14 September: "The Role of Non-Governmental Organisations in Mountain Areas", Annual Symposium of CIPRA in Liechtenstein. Information: <http://www.lgu.li>

14-16 October: "Le patrimoine génétique: la diversité et la ressource", La Châtre, France. 4th national colloquium of the Bureau des Ressources Génétiques. Information: brg@inapg.inra.fr

24-28 October: "4th Salone del Gusto". exhibition center Lingotto, Torino, Italy. World congress of oenogastronomy. Info: salone@slowfood.it; Web: <http://www.slowfood.com>

28 Oct. -1 Nov.: "Bishkek Global Mountain Summit" in Bishkek, Kirgistan. Information: andrewvf@mail.ru

7-9 November: Conference on "Ecolabels and the Greening of the Food Market", Boston, Massachusetts (USA); Organizers: Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University. Contact: willie.lockeretz@tufts.edu; Web: <http://nutrition.tufts.edu/conted/ecolabels>

=> Further information is available from:

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