

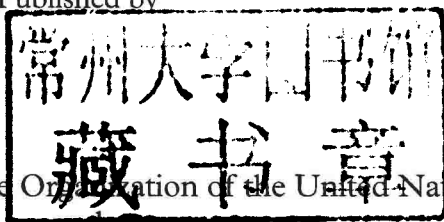
# Plant Genetic Resources and Food Security

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Stakeholder Perspectives on the  
International Treaty on Plant Genetic  
Resources for Food and Agriculture

*Edited by Christine Frison, Francisco López  
and José T. Esquinas-Alcázar*

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*To our children, Clara and Théodore,  
who represent our Future*

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This project came together during the International Year for Biodiversity in 2010. A major objective of this volume is to raise further public awareness on the importance of agricultural biological diversity to human food security. We hope that this book makes a contribution to that effort.

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# Foreword

*Shakeel Bhatti and Olivier De Schutter*

The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA or the Treaty) is all about building bridges and connecting countries and people; it is about pooling collaborative, cooperative and common action. The Treaty provides a framework to allow the global community to work together for food security, adaptation to climate change and the sound management of agrobiodiversity – always keeping in focus the needs of farming communities, the poor and the hungry, and their right to food. States interacting with other states, people interacting with other people, with institutions (whether public or private), with civil society organizations, with research institutes and with commercial entities create multilateralism through their interactions. People are at the core of multilateralism. And it is this kind of collective and cooperative action, oriented towards the attainment of common goals, that the global crises facing the 21st century requires.

This book intends to shed light on the institutional set up that took place during the negotiation process between contracting parties and people who made this Treaty possible. By aggregating their interests, these states have established a multilateral instrument aimed at alleviating hunger and poverty in the world. They embrace farming communities, plant breeders, civil society organizations, seed industry or state's representatives.

In 2009, this book was merely an embryonic project held in the hands of a young and enthusiastic woman, driven by her will to eagerly understand how this collective action came about, and led to the birth of the Treaty. At that moment in time, the United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon and the European Commission President, José Manuel Barroso both called for 'a new multilateralism which is centred around the delivery of global public goods' to address the interrelated crises of food, energy and climate. As the Secretary General articulated at the Summit of the Americas:

*We need a new vision, a new paradigm, a new multilateralism. A multilateralism that is organized around delivering a set of global goods. A*