



AGRICULTURE - A LIVING TRADITION



20th CONGRÈS INTERNATIONAL DES MUSÉES D'AGRICULTURE (CIMA)

**International Association of Agricultural Museums
20th Congress (CIMA 2023)**

**13 - 18 OCTOBER 2023
SOLAN, HP & LUDHIANA, PUNJAB
INDIA**



Agricultural knowledge and associated livelihoods are living traditions in the global South. AIMA is holding its congress for the first time in India.



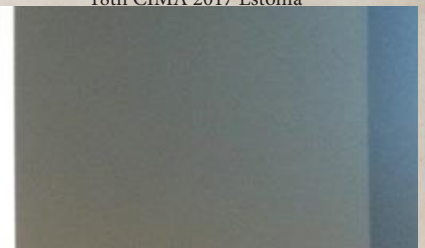
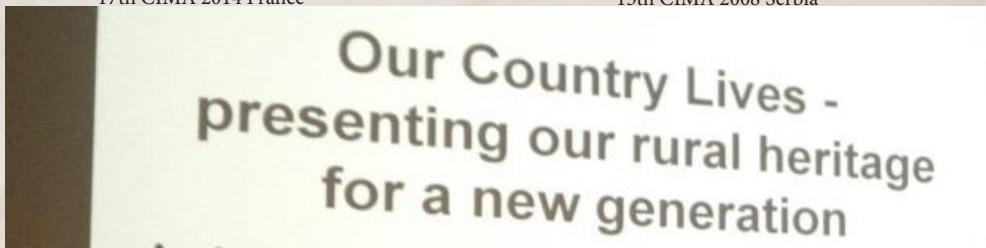
17th CIMA 2014 France



15th CIMA 2008 Serbia



18th CIMA 2017 Estonia



15th CIMA 2011 Romania



16th CIMA 2008 Romania



17th CIMA 2014 France

20th Triennial

Congress of International Association of Agricultural Museums (AIMA)

The purpose of the International Association of Agricultural Museums AIMA is to educate the public through Agriculture Museums about the significance of agriculture to human society, to explain the many ways that agriculture has evolved through time, and facilitate dialogue between museums across the globe about agricultural topics and discoveries.

Today, despite an urbanising world, agriculture is an important focus for lives and livelihoods for a majority of populations in the global South. Here, museums face the task of keeping track of and describing a living practice engaged in adaptation of tradition in diverse ways, even as the environmental context of agriculture changes in an unforeseen manner.

At AIMA's XXth triennial congress CIMA 2023, being held in Asia and in India for the first time, will focus on how Agriculture maintains itself as a living tradition. Looking at how this maintains its relevance by adapting past traditions with current observations and experience, to create changes for sustainable futures. Further, we will discuss how agricultural museums can play an important educational role in alignment with research institutes and universities.

Background

CIMA 2023 in India

The AIMA congress travels to different countries every three years in order to discover new environmental and museographic realities, new ideas, new experiences and projects that can be spread to other countries.

The South Asian region has a long history of agriculture traditions. Agriculture remains central to the Indic civilisation and its many achievements. Much remains to be done to document and communicate the rich tradition in Agriculture in India. Despite a decrease in the number of farmers over the past forty years, there are still a significant number of farms and farm working families, and the rural still forms almost fifty percent of the Indian population. The knowledge, heritage, techniques and expertise of farming practitioners, their current and transmitted observations from the past, at the core of agricultural adaptation, needs to be documented for posterity.



In the third decade of the twenty-first century, a series of events have given an even deeper cause for a new effort at evaluation and reflection. Agriculture today has multiple stresses, from economics and commerce to ecological and climate change and their disastrous effects. The solutions to this do not have a one-size-fits-all solution.

Reexamining agricultural traditions - specially the current living adaptations of tradition, helps understand unique requirements of farming, and describe search for alternatives to address local problems.

What types of museums must one then create to promote forms of economic development that are more respectful of local ecosystems, social organization and values? How does one interpret agriculture in an ever changing environment? Constituents, visitors and non-visitors alike, have their own interests, which complicate the task of interpretation by agricultural museums today.



Finding evidence and collecting stories needs to involve partners. This not only makes the task less overwhelming, but also increases the diversity of perspectives, makes the information more relevant and helps convey it better. Expanding agricultural processes to discuss causes and effects will yield useful connections with other aspects of human life - from nutrition and health on one hand to land and the environment on the other.

Collections of tangible objects and associated intangible knowledge form the basis of knowledge collections. It is worthwhile collecting tools and utensils that constitute a great pool of technical variability not only because of the scientific usefulness of the comparative history of techniques but also to stimulate the progressive adaptation of these techniques. Such adaptation alone is compatible, especially in the global south, with the emergence of non-destructive agro-ecosystems. It is important for these objects to be documented with evidence collected from their users but also relocated in their cultural and social context, in order to better conserve, display and pass on the knowledge heritage to future generations.



The effort of CIMA 23 is to scale up the documentation and communication of the rich tradition and living adaptations of Agriculture in India, and facilitate this process by seeking synergies with organisations and institutions that share a common mandate.

In such a milieu, the significance of agriculture to society needs to be represented to the public. From universities to museums, farm organisations to collectives, to institutions connected with farming and agriculture from the non-profit to the commercial sector, we hope to facilitate an eco-system of information sharing about agricultural topics, heritage, tradition, adaptation and discoveries.



Objectives of CIMA 23

1. Present an awareness of multiple **dimensions of agricultural practice**.
2. Present some of the characteristics of the South Asian agricultural region, from history and tradition, to present day use and adaptation.
3. Knowledge of sustainable agriculture and food production including **Millet as Sustainable Grain** that celebrates 2023 as International Year of Millets.
4. Recognize the importance of the rural way of life and small-holder and family farms in reducing poverty and improving global food security.
5. Draw attention to **Farmer-held knowledge**, its continuing importance and validity - from an ecosystem perspective, pest and disease perspective and nutrition security.
6. Identify and address multiple audiences, including farmers and rural audiences, enrich lives of the urban population by reconnecting through experiences of rural cultural heritage so that they understand our relevance in today's world.
7. **New approaches in museum engagement** by using object collections, creating engaging hands-on approaches and use of digital media for digital databases of collections, digital exhibitions, and so on.
8. To work with farmer organisations and research institutions to facilitate strong bonds between scientists and farmers.
9. Facilitate the creation of an **agricultural museum and knowledge network** across South Asia and internationally.



Outcomes of CIMA23

1. Facilitate upgradation of agricultural museums and heritage centres across the country, by connecting museum and digital technology professionals with interested agricultural institutions and museums.
2. To connect social scientists and museum professionals to agricultural institutions and universities at a time when the agriculture sector is largely staffed by scientists.
3. To create a network of agricultural institution partners to undertake a countrywide farmer-based oral history research and documentation project on transformation in land development, water practices, fertilisers, helpful seeds and other key transformative events in individual farmer's histories from memory and experience.
4. Facilitate development of an digital Agriculture Communication Network for a wider public; comprising farmers' organisations, agricultural universities, museums, heritage centres, agriculture NGOs, academics and interested members of the public.

Who attends CIMA

Faculty of agricultural universities, professionals of museum and heritage centres, social scientists, policy makers, students, members of agriculture and rural development NGOs, Farmers' organisations, and interested members of the public.



CIMA 2023 - Session Themes and Connected Topics

चुनौती / CHALLENGES

How do museums explain current farming challenges and their causes, the concerns of the past decades of the twentieth century, their attempts at resolution and emerging consequences. How can agriculture and farming heritage be used to ensure global food safety?

How do agricultural museums incorporate and communicate the 'transformations' in the food systems for a modern world. How do current issues affect research, exhibition, and public programming goals?



Topics

- Green revolution and after—practices in post-chemical intensive agriculture
- Social History of the farm and the effect of technology and mechanisation
- Soil health and its impacts
- Climate Stress - and dealing with it
- Tools, implements and techniques - transformation, 'appropriate mechanisation' and sustainability.

विरासत / HERITAGE

How can museums communicate learnings from tried and trusted farming practices and farmer-held knowledge of ecologies, specially in marginal and critical ecosystems. How does research into from-the-field cases provide innovative solutions and methods for the museum. How best can presenting case studies from the global South show practices agriculture remains a living adaptation of tradition.

Topics

- What makes Millet a sustainable worldwide crop in a warming world
- Managing Water and Irrigation
- Animal welfare and wellbeing — insects as indicators
- Food collection, storage, processing and managing nutrition - traditional and historical practice
- Agriculture, Food and nutrition
- Intangible knowledge of Agriculture - sources , methods and documentation
- Safeguarding traditional varieties and breeds (seed banks / rare breeds / collections and collectors)
- Sayings and mnemonics eg folk sayings connecting weather and farming calender (correlation with contemporary irregular weather)
- Agriculture as performative heritage- festivals, ritual, song, performance.



विकल्प / ALTERNATES



Bringing out the 'living' Culture in Agriculture. How can agricultural and rural museums communicate history of farming practice, resilience, traditional knowledge and embedded cultural expression and values? What modern museological approaches and practices are agricultural museums using to collect, preserve, and interpret changes that have influenced/ are influencing agriculture and rural life?

Topics

- Food and nutritional security
- Pest Management and Crop Protection
- Biographies of seeds, tools and implements - an oral history of agricultural practice
- Collecting living agricultural heritage (ICH)
- Diversity of farming practice – between ecology and commerce
- Foraged foods – eg Keerai project
- Native Seeds and local ecology
- Organic and sustainable farming – its multiple aspects.

कृषक नामा / FARM TALES AND TELLERS



How do museum collections, exhibitions and activities connect to historical memory and practice. Agriculture and farming history from region to village. Using Oral histories of farming practice at the museum.

Collections and Exhibitions, practices and outcomes. Using Art, Farming Practice and Folklore to communicate while going beyond the twentieth century agriculture museum experience.

Topics

- Communicating with youth audiences using hands-on activities to digital technologies
- Developing experiences that use new digital technologies – Augmented Reality / Visual Reality, Artificial Intelligence, the Internet of Things and its potential in agricultural museums
- Creating agricultural museums online - networking multiple institutions for an overarching story of farming and change
- Web and Phone Apps that communicate farming history and practice - and aid in collection of local voices and stories
- Multi lingual communication of rural and agricultural stories - case studies and possibilities.

CIMA 2023 - Programme Schedule

**Shoolini University, Kasauli Hills,
Solan, Himachal Pradesh**

12th October 2023

Arrival at New Delhi / Chandigarh
Transfer to Solan, H.P.

13 October 2023 (Shoolini University, Solan)

Inaugural Session
Opening Keynote Session
Lunch
Parallel breakout sessions

14 October 2023 (Shoolini University, Solan)

Keynote Session
Parallel Breakout Sessions
Lunch
Parallel Breakout Sessions

15 October 2023 (Shoolini University, Solan)

Parallel Breakout Field visits – Orchards, plantations and traditional hill agriculture
Lunch
Closing Session 2-3 pm
Travel to PAU Ludhiana (4 hours by Road)



Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, Punjab

16 October 2023

World Food Day
Opening Session
World Food Day Keynote Speech
Lunch
Visit to the PAU Museum/s

17 October 2023 (PAU Ludhiana)

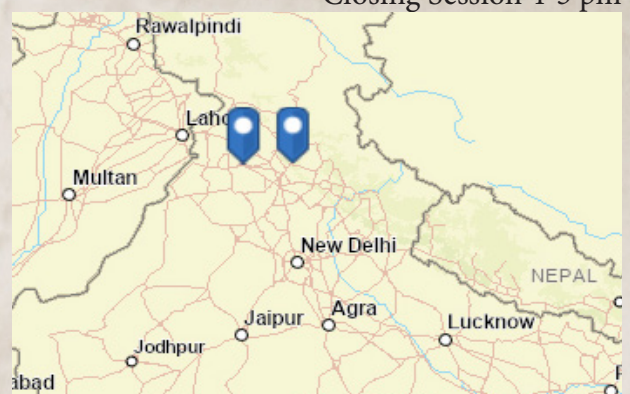
Keynote Session
Parallel Breakout Sessions
Lunch (parallel AIMA General Meeting)
Parallel Breakout Sessions

18 October 2023 (PAU Ludhiana)

Field visit in break out groups
Closing Session 4-5 pm

Map showing Location

Solan, Himachal Pradesh (R) and Ludhiana, Punjab (L)



The Organisers

CIMA 2023 Steering Committee

- 1) Prof P K Khosla, Chancellor, Shoolini University, Solan (Chairperson)
- 2) Prof Surajit Sarkar, Vice President, International Association of Agricultural Museums (Vice-Chair)
- 3) Prof Atul Khosla, Vice Chancellor, Shoolini University, Solan
- 4) Prof S S Gosal, VC, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana
- 5) Mr Vijay Pratap Singh Aditya, CEO, The Heritage Foundation/Ekgaon Group
- 6) Ms Nerupama Y Modwel, Principal Director, ICH Division, INTACH
- 7) Dr Kesari Singh, Professor and Dean Undergraduate Studies, Shoolini University, Solan
- 8) Dr Ritu Singh, Director, Natural Heritage Division, INTACH
- 9) Dr M I S Gill, Registrar, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana
- 10) Dr Vishal Bector, Associate Professor, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana
- 11) Mr Muthunivas M, Technical Incharge, Ekgaon Group, Madurai
- 12) Conference Coordinator (TBD)

Partners

Co-Organisers

The Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), Ludhiana, Punjab was established in 1962 and is the nation's third-oldest agricultural university. PAU played a pioneering role in the Green Revolution in India in the 1960s. The Farmers Fair, which have been organised by the PAU since 1967, see a footfall of at least one hundred thousand farmers (one lakh) in two days on PAU campus in Ludhiana. It is also home to six museums on different aspects of agriculture and rural life.

Shoolini University of Biotechnology and Manangement Sciences (SU) Bajhol, Solan, Himachal Pradesh, is a not-for-profit, multi-disciplinary private university established in 2009. This innovation-led institution has consistently been ranked among India's top 100 universities (NIRF), is one of India's highest generators of patents and innovation. Its students and researchers work closely with the local community on critical issues like health, water, food and technology.

The Heritage Foundation (THF) is a non-profit, non-government, heritage research, outreach and conservation organization. Registered as a national society, it works for research, documentation, curation and conservation of tangible and intangible Indic heritage, with an aim to foster awareness and appreciation of India's history and cultural heritage.

Knowledge Partners

The Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage INTACH is a premier non-profit, non-government, heritage conservation organization. It is a volunteer membership organization set up to protect unprotected monuments and sites not under the purview of the ASI and State Departments of Archaeology, to preserve and conserve the environment, to conserve art and material heritage, to revitalize India's intangible heritage, and to foster awareness and appreciation of its vast multi-faceted cultural heritage.

The South Asia Network of Grassroots Agricultural Museums (SANGAM) is a collective of institutions and individuals who have come together to tell the story of agriculture and agriculturists of the Indian subcontinent, not limited to history, practice and techniques. Using the best museology and exhibition practice with multiple technologies and materials, from digital and online to physical artifacts, the collective works through a network of academic and cultural institutions and organisations across the region.



AIMA Executive members at INTACH New Delhi for the annual meeting, November 2018.