

who have developed them and to analyze their cultural traditions. This will apply, for example, to the Hopi of Arizona, the Guaymí of Panama, the Tainos of Cuba and the Ayoreo in the Paraguayan Chaco. In the same context, it is relevant to promote some horticultural cropping systems linked to a subsistence agriculture still present in the New World, such as the milpa or conucos (Maquet and Baudoin, 1987), in the frame of an on-farm *in situ* conservation program.

In each site of collecting missions, maximum ecological data should be gathered. In most Latin American countries, the relief and the influence of oceanic streams have generated numerous micro-climates and some high rainfall gradients on short distances, which also explain the presence of a very much diversified flora and vegetation types. The actual information in these sites is too fragmentary and concern only main climatic zones in Latin America. It is therefore important to complete such data through in-depth ecogeographical studies.

In order to take benefit of the large gene pools of Lima bean, it is also essential to undertake, from the base germplasm collections, a complete screening of the materials so gathered for various agronomical traits (such as earliness, growth habit, resistance to biotic and abiotic constraints, etc.) and, on this basis, identify the most promising parental genotypes to develop improved cultivars in *P. lunatus*.

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