Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems

a legacy for the future

The Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) programme aims to identify, support and safeguard agricultural systems that sustain and conserve our biodiversity and genetic resources for food and agriculture, rural livelihoods, knowledge systems, cultures and remarkable landscapes.

They are the quintessence of what sustainable development should be. FAO, together with its national and local partners, works towards their recognition and dynamic conservation.

In practice this means...

- Leverage global and national recognition of the importance of agricultural heritage systems and institutional support for their safeguard;
- Build capacity of local farming communities and local and national institutions to conserve and manage GIAHS, generate income and add economic value to goods and services of such systems in a sustainable fashion;
- Promote enabling policy, regulatory and incentive environments to support their conservation, evolutionary adaptation and viability.

Worldwide GIAHS sites

Algeria
- Oases of Maghreb - Ghout System

Chile
- Chiloé Agriculture

China
- Aohan dryland farming system
- Dong's Rice Fish Duck System
- Rice-fish Agriculture
- Wannian Traditional Rice Culture
- Pu'er Traditional Tea agrosystem
- Jiaxian Traditional Chinese Date Gardens, China
- Hani Rice Terraces
- Kuajishan Ancient Chinese Torreya
- Urban agricultural heritage – Xuanhua grape garden
- Xinghua Duotian Agrosystem

India
- Traditional Agriculture System, Koraput
- Saffron Heritage of Kashmir
- Kuttanad below sea level farming system

Islamic Republic of Iran
- Qanat Irrigated Agricultural Heritage Systems, Kashan

Japan
- Noto's Satoyama and Satoumi
- Sado's satoyama in harmony with Japanese crested ibis
- Managing Aso grasslands for sustainable agriculture
- Traditional tea-grass integrated system in Shizuoka
- Kunisaki Peninsula Usa integrated forestry, agriculture and fisheries system

Republic of Korea
- Traditional Gudeuljang Irrigated Rice system
- Jeju Batdam Agricultural System

Kenya
- Maasai Pastoral System - Oldonyonokie/Olkeri Pastoralist Heritage

Morocco
- Oases System in the Atlas Mountains of Morocco

Peru
- Andean Agriculture

Philippines
- Ifugao Rice Terraces

Tanzania
- Maasai Pastoral System - Engaresero
- Shimbwe Juu Kihamba Agro-forestry Heritage

Tunisia
- Gafsa Oases

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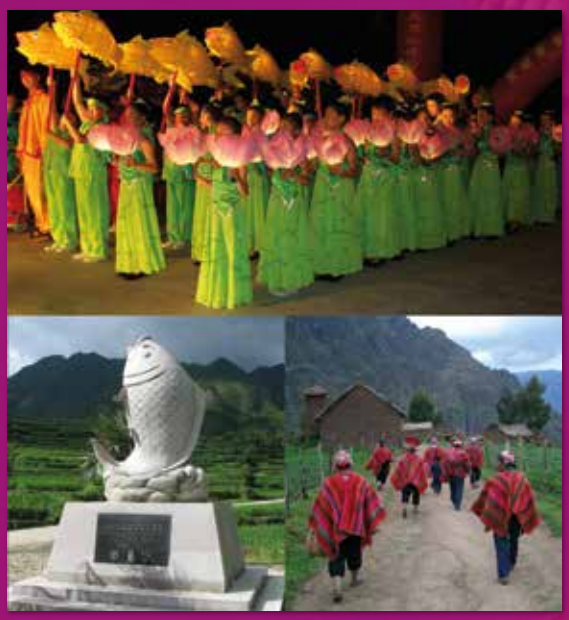
Contributes to FAO's Strategic Objective 2

Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable



How it works

1) At **Global level** by identification, selection and recognition of GIAHS

2) At **National level** by capacity building in policy, regulatory and incentive mechanisms to safeguard these outstanding systems and use them as sustainability bench mark systems

3) At **Local Level** by empowerment of local communities and technical assistance for sustainable resource management, promoting traditional knowledge and enhancing viability of these systems through economic incentives

Background

Worldwide, specific agricultural systems and landscapes have been created, shaped and maintained by generations of farmers and herders based on diverse natural resources, using locally adapted management practices. Building on local knowledge and experience, these ingenious agri-cultural systems reflect the evolution of humankind, the diversity of its knowledge and its profound relationship with nature.

These systems have resulted in the maintenance and adaptation of globally significant agricultural biodiversity, outstanding landscapes, indigenous knowledge systems and resilient ecosystems, but above all, in the sustained provision of multiple goods and services, food and livelihood security for millions of indigenous local communities, poor and small scale farmers. The GIAHS Initiative recognizes the crucial importance of the well-being of family farming communities in an integrated approach while directing activities towards sustainable agriculture and rural development. It further seeks to support the present-day resilience of these traditional agricultural systems and thus provide a sustainable legacy for the benefit of future generations.

Partners

GEF, IFAD, China SCC, National Governments, BMELV, Bioversity International, UNESCO, ISESCO, CBD, WAFH, APU, MSSRF, RIHN, IUFRO, UNU, etc

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CONTACT US

FAO - Land and Water Division (NRL)
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome, Italy
Tel: (+39) 06 570 53843
E-mail: NRL-Director@fao.org

MORE INFORMATION

http://www.fao.org/giahs