Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

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ENHANCING BIODIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND NUTRITION IN BRAZIL, KENYA, SRI LANKA AND TURKEY

Brazil, Kenya, Sri Lanka and Turkey represent some of the world's most mega-diverse countries thanks to the extraordinary diversity of ecosystems and species existing within their borders. They each contain unique biological diversity and have associated traditional ecological knowledge that supports a large proportion of the world's food supply in a range of ecosystems that are global priorities for conservation. Due to the fact that the biodiversity in these four participating countries is so vast, the use of these indigenous, largely plant, genetic resources is still scarcely explored, appreciated or conserved.

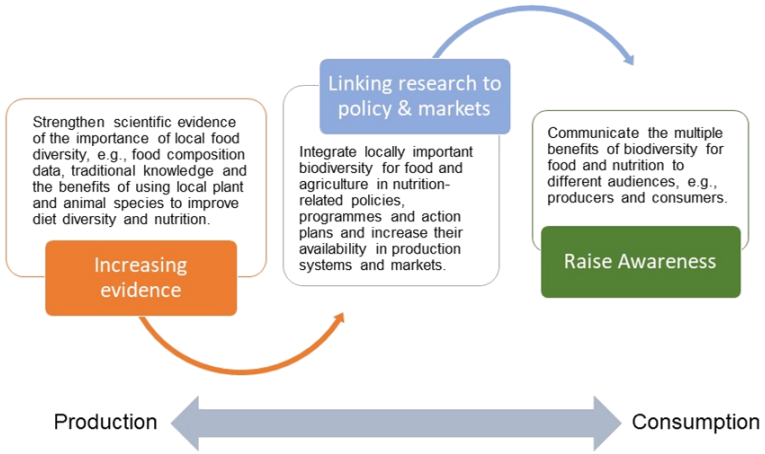
The project sought to address the issue of diminishing the use of local agrobiodiversity by contributing to the improvement of global knowledge of biodiversity for food and nutrition and, in so doing, enhancing the well-being, livelihoods and food security of target beneficiaries in the four countries through the conservation and sustainable use of this biodiversity and the identification of best practices for up-scaling.

WHAT DID THE PROJECT DO?

As a contribution to the generation of new scientific evidence, the national food composition databases were complemented with data on local edible biodiversity and associated traditional knowledge in Brazil, Sri Lanka and Turkey, while Kenya used the information generated to update its national Food Composition Tables.

As part of the policy and regulatory framework, the target countries were successful in influencing national strategies in support of conservation of biodiversity for food and nutrition, chiefly the revision of their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and other important policy documents.

A number of knowledge tools and a range of events were organized to promote biodiversity for food and nutrition. A range of peer-review papers and books were also published.



KEY FACTS

Contribution
USD 2 639 077 to FAO
USD 2 878 541 to UNEP

Duration
March 2013 – June 2019

Resource Partner
Global Environment Facility (GEF)

Partners
United Nations Environment Programme, Bioversity International, Ministry of the Environment (Brazil), Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment (Sri Lanka), General Directorate of Agricultural Research and Policies (Turkey), Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization

Beneficiaries
Smallholder farmers, local communities and local authorities

IMPACT

All countries have strengthened farmer/producer capacity to use and benefit from biodiversity for food and nutrition.

The project has led to the development of a set of best practices and methodologies that put the conservation and sustainable use of nutritious biodiversity on a much stronger footing. The documenting of best practices continues at country and global levels, with countries developing training manuals and guidelines for the collection and sustainable use of targeted biodiversity and documenting recipes and information based on traditional knowledge. The project is creating opportunities for institutions and individuals at national level to bring about change. Indeed, change in behaviour and attitude is evident among stakeholders and several initiatives/examples existing within the project are good contenders for replication and scaling-out. The project is recognized internationally as the only comprehensive example of how to make better use of the diversity of species used for nutrition and healthy diets, by promoting biodiversity mainstreaming across policies and markets and, simultaneously, by supporting the conservation of local and underutilized species by their continued or increased use, including through value chain development. The project has been showcased in numerous international fora and venues such as the 2019 regular session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and within the State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture. It is currently being used as an example for reframing sections of the new post-2020 framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

ACTIVITIES

- Collaboration with over 50 national universities and agencies established for data collection across the four countries, leading to the generation of new food composition data and the update of national food composition tables and databases.
- Four communities in Kenya, 121 villages in Turkey, quilombola communities in the Centre-West region of Brazil and communities at the three pilot sites in Sri Lanka provided information used to document traditional knowledge associated with the target species.
- In Brazil, conservation of biodiversity for food and nutrition included as an indicator of biodiversity health in the national revisions to the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, while a socio-biodiversity Ordinance approved by the Federal Government of Brazil, defines and supports measures for the production and sale of native "neglected and underutilized" species with nutritional value.
- In Kenya, the Busia County Biodiversity Policy, which highlights the importance of nutrient-rich local biodiversity, was endorsed by the County Assembly, while two interministerial meetings were held to discuss options of promoting biodiversity through policy using the integrated knowledge base.
- Substantial contributions made to Sri Lanka's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2022.
- Project activities well integrated into Turkey's Strategy on Agriculture 2013-2017, as well as the Agricultural Research Master Plan 2016-2020, which encourages research activities on agricultural biological diversity related to traditional knowledge having value for nutrition, food security and safety, as well as agricultural production.
- Recommendations made to a number of cross-sectoral programmes and action plans in Brazil, such as the National Plan for Agro-ecology and Organic Production, the National Food and Nutrition Security Plan and the School Feeding Programme.
- Eight Kenyan farmer groups secured 14 tenders with institutional market for the supply of African leafy vegetables in Busia county. The farm-to-school network, meanwhile, has provided healthy school meals to at least 5 500 students and has had positive repercussions on farmers' livelihoods.
- In Sri Lanka, the Hela Bojun campaign successfully mobilized traditional foods, while awareness-raising activities were organized in schools.
- Food festivals and diversity fairs celebrating local biodiversity for food and nutrition organized in Kenya (June 2018) and Turkey (each year in April).

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Project Code
FAO: GCP/GLO/805/GFF
GEF ID: 3808

Project Title
Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use for Improved Human Nutrition and Well-being

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