



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

# BIODIVERSITY MAINSTREAMING AGRICULTURAL SECTORS

## Regional Dialogue on Biodiversity Mainstreaming Across Agricultural Sectors in the Near East and North Africa Region

3–5 November 2019, Amman, Jordan

**Main recommendation**



**Cover photographs (from left to right)**

- ©FAO/M. Abdulkhaliq & A. Alghabri

*Abdulmalik (Farmer) holding locust in his hands and trying to make them leave his farm*

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*Family farmers harvesting onions in a field in Dear Alla, 50 kilometers west of Amman, part of FAO's work to build the capacities of farmers and achieve sustainable intensification of crop production by enhancing agro-biodiversity and maintaining pesticides related risks*

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*Irrigation using cuvette to retain water by the small dike as part of the technical solutions to intensify agricultural production by improving agricultural practices, increasing water for irrigation and intensifying inputs*

- ©FAO/S. Villar

*Tunisia*

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*A farmer in Bahrain is proud to harvest Papaya in desert climate using drip irrigation with treated water urban water and underground water. The farmers received support from the Government for establishing green houses*

# **Regional Dialogue on Biodiversity Mainstreaming Across Agricultural Sectors in the Near East and North Africa Region**

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# Overview

The Regional Multi-stakeholder Dialogue on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors (Regional Dialogue) calls for the adoption of “biodiversity-friendly” practices in agriculture.

This document reports on the recommendations raised by the multi-stakeholder participants at the Regional Dialogue that took place in Amman, Jordan, on 3–5 November 2019.

The meeting gathered about 80 participants from 15 out of the 18 countries of the region, with a balanced mix between Ministries of Agriculture and Ministries of Environment, regional and international research institutions, UN Organizations, NGOs, private sector, and civil society.

The meeting was hosted and opened by the Minister of Agriculture and Environment of Jordan, while keynote speeches were addressed by Assistant Director-General and Director of Climate, Biodiversity, Land and Water Department Mr Castro-Salazar, H.R.H. Princess Basma Bint Ali, Head of the National Committee of Biodiversity, Jordan, and the Director General of the Jordanian Agricultural Research Center, H.E. Nizar Haddad.

The primary objective of the Dialogue was to review the draft FAO Strategy on Biodiversity Mainstreaming across Agricultural Sectors, and provide FAO with a regional perspective on the proposed strategy. In addition, the meeting was an opportunity to make progress in the following areas:

- Increase awareness about the importance of biodiversity mainstreaming across the agricultural sectors within the Region;
- Exchange knowledge, experiences, and lessons learned (including gaps and challenges) on biodiversity mainstreaming among countries within the Region;
- Identify areas for action across sectors and priorities at the regional and country level.

# Recommendations

The following are the main recommendations emanating from the discussions at the Regional Dialogue, reflecting the views of the countries and stakeholders participating:

- **Knowledge sharing:** Develop a Community of practices, for professionals of the region dealing with biodiversity, bringing together the environment and agricultural communities and taking advantage of existing networks, including the FAO Biodiversity Mainstreaming Platform, Technical Network of biodiversity and ecosystem services, and other regional networks.
- **Data and Information:** FAO's Regional Report on the State of Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture in the Near East and North African Region shows the lack of data on the subject. The FAO Biodiversity Mainstreaming Platform should facilitate the exchange of information and data on biodiversity and biodiversity-friendly agricultural practices and policies among stakeholders, since more and better information is needed in order to establish a baseline, agree on targets and monitor progress. Example of methodologies to measure progress towards SDG 2.4 are the tools used by FAO, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and *Délégation interministérielle à l'Aménagement du Territoire et à l'Attractivité Régionale* (DATAR) to assess biodiversity in relation with agriculture.
- **Coordination:** One of the main purposes of the Dialogue was to bring together agriculture and environment communities. The FAO Biodiversity Mainstreaming Platform responds to this need, as it works to identify the synergies and align the goals between these sectors, and develop integrated approaches to mainstreaming biodiversity into agriculture, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture. This work should be strengthened through the development and facilitation of platforms for cross-sectoral dialogue at regional and country levels.
- **Awareness raising, capacity building and education:** Decision-makers, including consumers, need to understand the value of biodiversity while farmers need to learn about and adopt biodiversity-friendly practices. Education, capacity building and awareness-raising campaigns are needed at all levels to scale up efforts, building on existing capacities and programmes.
- **Stock taking exercise:** Document good practices, traditional practices, and bring the evidence-including economic- that is needed to scale up these good practices. The Stocktaking Exercise Report can be facilitated by the FAO Biodiversity Mainstreaming Platform, as previously done in other Regions, enriched to include the contributions cited by the participants during the Regional Consultative Meeting.
- **Innovation:** Provide opportunities to innovate, in the space of Biodiversity Mainstreaming. This could be promoted through the replication of good practices like incubators associated with research institutions at national and regional levels, and through exchanges of information coordinated by innovation platforms and the FAO Biodiversity Mainstreaming Platform.

## Next steps

According to the participants, special focus should be given to the following issues:

- *Invasive species*: more work needs to be done on this question, which has major implications for the region. We need to link with on-going research activities and network.
- Estimation of the *economic value* of the ecosystem services provided by biodiversity elements.
- A focus on *pollinators* and in particular *bees*, in coordination with *beekeepers* community.
- A Regional study should focus on *climate change*, as it has been considered one of the major threats to biodiversity. This will require action at regional, sub-regional and country level, and constructive interactions between them.

# Means of implementation

*Partnership*: this is the starting point. There is a need to develop a strong regional partnership, using the skills, resources and knowledge of all stakeholders in a coordinated manner.

*Finance and resource mobilization*: Funds need to be mobilized at scale, using available existing financial resources to leverage much broader efforts that involve government entities and programmes and the private sector. GEF can play an important role as catalyst for this.

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In the Near East and North Africa Region, 3–5 November 2019**

**Kempinski Hotel, Amman, Jordan**

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