



**PROMOTING THE ADOPTION OF GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES TO STRENGTHEN A
SUSTAINABLE BANANA VALUE CHAIN**
Leveraging the establishment of pilot farms to develop and extend a sustainable production model

PROJECT CONCEPT NOTE

July 2013

1. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

Bananas are the world's most exported fresh fruit both in volume and value (over US\$7 billion/year). They are an essential source of income and employment for hundreds of thousands of rural households in developing countries. However, intensive banana production, particularly in large-scale monoculture plantations has given rise to a number of environmental and social challenges, which threaten the preservation of natural resources and harm the health of farmers, workers and local communities.

Addressing these challenges requires a collaborative effort and joint commitment between the sector's stakeholders. The open dialogue and cooperation between key players has been initiated through the **World Banana Forum (WBF)**, a global multi-stakeholder platform promoting sustainable banana production and trade.

The WBF has given the banana sector a tool for jointly designing and developing solutions to address these urgent problems and challenges. The Forum provides a permanent place of cooperation whereby all types of producers and actors along the supply chain are able to share relevant information and leverage the adoption of good practices. In addition, stakeholders promote capacity-building activities together with the use of appropriate technologies and responsible investments.

2. OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED RESULTS

The proposed project will contribute to streamlining environmental and social sustainability in banana production by promoting the adoption of good agricultural practices. Moreover, it will support the compliance with social and environmental standards to promote the socio-economic development of farmers and workers, safeguard natural resources and conserve biodiversity in exporting countries.

Specifically, the project will support several pilot farm operations of various scales (with particular focus on small and medium scale producers) to serve as sustainable business model for the banana sector in exporting countries. In those farms, good environmental and social practices will be implemented in key aspects such as water, climate change mitigation and adaptation, productivity, integrated pest management, biodiversity conservation and occupational health and safety.

The expected results from the implementation of this project will be the following:

- ✓ 500 producers trained in sustainable banana production;
- ✓ Best practices in integrated crop management and post-harvest operations adopted in 30 pilot banana farms;
- ✓ Improved water conservation and reduced greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions;



- ✓ Production complies with environmental and social standards such as Rainforest Alliance, Global Gap, SA-8000 and Fair Trade;
- ✓ Occupational Health and Safety practices improved;
- ✓ Adaptation plans to extreme weather events designed and implemented;
- ✓ Improved management of agrochemicals including pesticides and fungicides;
- ✓ Responsible banana producers are inserted into national and international Payment of Environmental Services (PES) schemes; and
- ✓ Public-private partnerships for sustainable banana production established.

3. APPROACH AND ACTIVITIES

The project will focus on piloting and disseminating best practices in three key banana exporting countries located in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The WBF Secretariat hosted by the Trade and Markets Division of FAO will coordinate and supervise the project implementation. It will liaise with key partners, players and beneficiaries ensuring that the project meets the proposed objectives and facilitating the achievement of expected deliverables. The Secretariat will also provide technical backstopping and communicate with stakeholders on the progress and results of this intervention.

The proposed project builds on various international, national and local initiatives. At the international level, it will be included in the work plan of the World Banana Forum. At national level, the activities will be integrated with the initiatives led by governments and aligned with the Country Programme Framework in order to mitigate the negative environmental and social impacts caused by unsustainable banana production. At local level, the participation in this project will add value to the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives undertaken by several companies and producers members of the WBF to streamline responsible environmental and social management actions in the production segment and along the supply chain.

The proposed activities are the following:

- Production of training materials and organization of training workshops;
- Establishment of farmer field schools and pilot farms;
- Implementation of carbon and water footprint studies;
- Facilitation on implementation of voluntary sustainability standards;
- Pilot projects on pesticide use and occupational health and safety aspects;
- Risk and vulnerability assessment and development of adaptation plans to extreme weather events;
- Literature review and technical assistance on improved agrochemical management;
- Development of a scheme for payments of environmental services in the banana sector;
- Development of alliances between public and private players.

4. PROJECT BENEFICIARIES

The direct beneficiaries will be producers, cooperatives and enterprises, members of the World Banana Forum. The number of producers is estimated at 500 amounting to 10,000 ha. The indirect beneficiaries will be the households and rural communities in the target areas of intervention amounting to several hundreds of families from three selected countries from Africa and Latin America.



The project will dedicate a particular attention to small and medium scale banana growers in order to strengthen the efficiency and competitiveness of their farm operations and add value to their products. Market operators and consumers will be thoroughly involved in order to support a sustainable trade in the supply chain.

5. EXPECTED IMPACTS

The key outcome of the project will be the development of a network of pilot farms that operates according to a sustainable production model aimed at improving rural livelihoods and conserving natural resources. Smallholders and medium scale producers will be particularly interested to adopt sustainable practices to take advantage of economic, environmental and social benefits.

In the chosen countries, the model will serve as reference for other producers and could be then replicated elsewhere. For the industry, the program will provide the incentive to raise the bar and create a level playing field that is embraced by the private sector and supported by national institutions. Also, the project builds on various synergies and complementarities at national level. For example, pilot activities will contribute to the national goals such as adaptation, emission reduction and integrated pest management.

Several long-term commitments are already agreed upon by the implementers and the allies of this project. For example, selected companies and no-profit organizations have already joined the WBF in order to address the core environmental and social concerns of banana production. They have also assumed financial commitments to contribute to the financial viability of the established actions. In this effort, governments and international organizations like the FAO play an active role too. Therefore, it is expected that this project will contribute to existing and future actions that will be strengthened, expanded and improved by the WBF participants in order to make a lasting difference for the entire banana sector.

6. PROJECT DURATION

The project will be implemented for a two-year period starting from September 2013.

7. ESTIMATED BUDGET

The estimated budget for this project is 800,000 USD, out of which 300,000 USD is provided by the WBF as source of co-financing whereas 500,000 USD is the requested contribution by the donor.