

The State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture

Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture



Biodiversity, the variety of life on earth, is vital to social and economic development and fundamental to human survival. Biodiversity for food and agriculture includes the biological diversity present in or of importance to agricultural, pastoral, forest and aquatic production systems. It encompasses the variety and variability of animals, plants and micro-organisms at the genetic, species and ecosystem levels that sustain the structure, functions and processes of production systems. This diversity has been managed or influenced by farmers, pastoralists, forest dwellers and fisherfolk for hundreds of generations and reflects the diversity of both human activities and natural processes.

The first report on *The State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture*

Conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity for food and agriculture requires a comprehensive understanding of the state and use of all components of biodiversity for food and agriculture. With a view to improve this understanding, the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture requested FAO to prepare the first report on *The State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture* (Report) for its Sixteenth Regular Session (2017). The Report will focus on the interactions between the different sectors (plant, animal, aquatic and forest) and on cross-sectoral matters and will use an ecosystem approach. It will specifically look at the contribution that biodiversity for food and agriculture as a whole makes to food security, livelihoods and environmental health as well as to the sustainability, resilience and adaptability of production systems.

Prepared under the guidance of the Commission, the Report will provide an integrated description of the state of plant, animal, forest and aquatic genetic resources and will also reflect available baseline information on the state of diversity of micro-organisms, invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, birds, plants and mammals that are found in and around production systems and often provide important ecosystem services supporting food and agricultural production. The Report will be a milestone in the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity.

The Report will take full advantage of existing information sources, including sectoral assessments, and information provided by countries through the submission of national reports. Reports from international organizations, inputs from other relevant stakeholders and thematic studies will also contribute to the Report.

Expected outcomes

Enhanced knowledge of biodiversity for food and agriculture

The Report will:

- Document the state and trends of the world's biodiversity for food and agriculture and of its conservation and use in an integrated way;
- Identify major drivers and their impacts on biodiversity in and around production systems;
- Document the links that are known between biodiversity for food and agriculture and the delivery of ecosystem services and functions;
- Assess the contribution made by biodiversity to sustainable production, resilience and adaptability, and the livelihoods and incomes of small scale producers;



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- Document the state of institutional settings and of the provisions/measures in place in favour of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity for food and agriculture, including lessons learnt; and
- Identify options to enhance, through improved conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity for food and agriculture, food security and nutrition, ecosystem functioning, productivity, sustainability and the livelihoods of farmers, pastoralists, forest dwellers and fisher folk.

A guide to informed decision-making

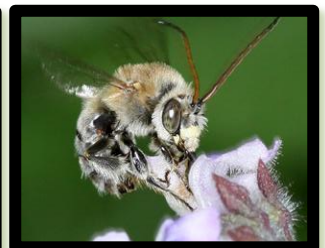
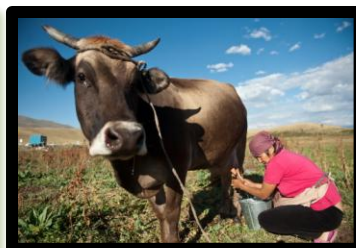
The Report will provide:

- Ways of mainstreaming biodiversity for food and agriculture into food security, rural development, climate change, and biodiversity conservation policy development;
- The basis for the development of an integrated framework to upscale the maintenance and sustainable use of biodiversity for food and agriculture;
- Information on strategies, actions and practices that can enhance the multiple benefits that diversity provides to production through, for example, sustainable intensification;
- Improved access to information needed to support resource allocation decisions based on integrated analysis of all aspects of biodiversity for food and agriculture;
- Information on ways of supporting the continuing role of farmers, pastoralists, forest dwellers and fisherfolk around the world in the maintenance of biodiversity for food and agriculture, and of improving the contribution that it makes to their livelihoods; and
- Information on activities that aim to contribute to the achievement of the Aichi Targets (particularly Targets 7 and 13).

Working together

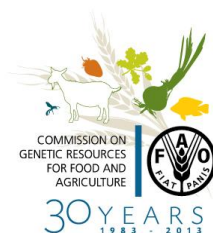


The Report will be prepared through a participatory, country-driven process. For this purpose, the Commission invited relevant stakeholders from national, regional and international organizations to take part in the preparatory process of the Report. FAO and the Commission Secretariat are therefore actively pursuing partnerships with various organizations and stakeholders to bring together all the information and provide a compelling account of the state of the world's biodiversity for food and agriculture. An account that can make a real difference in improving the understanding about the contribution of biodiversity to human well-being and a healthy planet.



Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

The FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture with its 177 member countries is an intergovernmental forum where global consensus can be reached on sectoral and cross-sectoral policies relevant to biodiversity for food and agriculture. The Commission's mandate covers all components of biodiversity for food and agriculture. Its main objectives are to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources for food and agriculture, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from their use, for present and future generations. The Commission oversees and guides the preparation of periodic global assessments as well as negotiates global action plans, codes of conduct and other instruments (e.g. the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture) relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources for food and agriculture. The sectoral and cross-sectoral assessments of genetic resources for food and agriculture are prepared by FAO through a participatory, country-driven approach. The reports on the state of the world's genetic resources are assessments of the state of the resources, their use, the drivers of genetic erosion and the challenges and opportunities to conserve and use these resources in a sustainable manner to contribute to food security and nutrition. Existing assessments cover plant, animal and forest genetic resources, while reports on the state of aquatic genetic resources and on the world's biodiversity for food and agriculture are under preparation.



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