



# ABP: Agro-biodiversity Project

Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Lao PDR's Agricultural and Land Management Policies, Plans and Programmes



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Lao People's Democratic Republic



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
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The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) are working for the sustainable management and conservation of agro-biodiversity in Lao PDR. The ABP project assists Lao farmers to be able to continue benefiting from the rich variety of species of their farming systems with the appropriate incentives, capabilities and institutional supports.

## Recognizing the value of Agro-biodiversity across levels

Working strategically with the government, agribusiness, farmers, donors and the general public, the Agro-biodiversity Project aims at making biodiversity a key consideration in day-to-day decision making, from the national to the community level. For this, the project is:

### Target area:

National level, with two pilot areas (Phoukhout District of Xieng Khouang Province and Phonexay District of Luang Prabang Province)

### Implementing partner:

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

**Executing Agency:** UNDP

**Technical Agency:** FAO

### Other partners:

The Agro-Biodiversity Initiative (TABI), The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, among other ministries.

### Financing:

Global Environmental Facility (GEF): USD 2,265,000  
UNDP TRAC: USD 213,000

### Project period:

April 2011 - April 2016



Supporting national policy institutions to create policies that protect the biodiversity in agriculture, land use and related sectors, and promote its use within production systems.

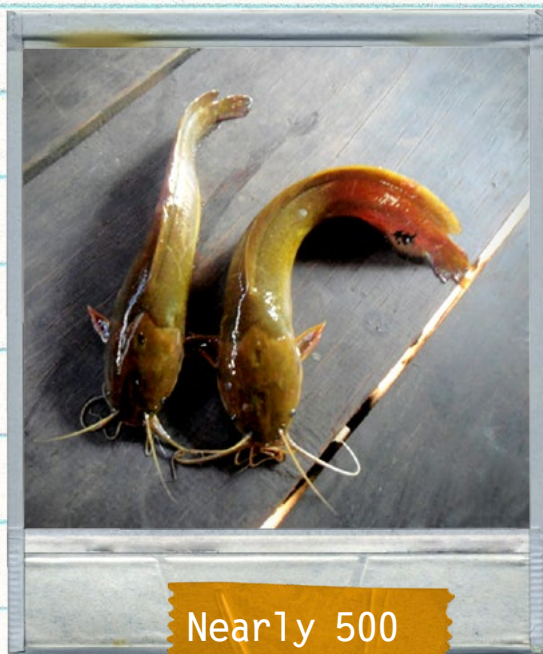
Collaborating with Provincial, District and Community levels to: strengthen their capacities to conserve agro-biodiversity using the Farmer Field Schools educational methods, enhance their productivity and promote agro-biodiversity friendly produces at local and international markets.



# The Rich Biodiversity of Lao PDR

comes from the convergence of three centers of mega-diversity: India, China and Southeast Asia. This area hosts globally and regionally significant biodiversity landscapes derived from the evergreen forests of the Annamite Mountains and their foothills, the limestone karst of central Indochina, the wetlands of the Mekong Plain, and the Mekong River and its tributaries.

Although only a fraction of Lao PDR's species have been recorded, estimates show the rich variety of animal, fungal and plant species:



Nearly 500 fish species



More than 10,000 larger fungal species



A vast number of insect species



8,000-11,000 plant species

## Agro-biodiversity for Lao people

The people of Lao PDR make use of agro-biodiversity on a daily basis. It is particularly important for rural families because it is a source of food, medicine, nutrition and income.



Agriculture makes up about 40% of the GDP of Lao PDR, whilst the overall contribution of biological resources to GDP is estimated to be over 66%.

### Lao PDR's Agro-biodiversity is Threatened

The rich gene pool in the agricultural landscape of Lao PDR is now under stress because of:

- **Changing of agricultural practices:** Farmers are replacing their traditionally diverse agriculture with high-yielding varieties, mono-cropping and high levels of chemical fertilizer and pesticide use.
- **Land use changes:** Traditional agriculture and forest land is being converted to "contract farming" of cash crops and other uses.
- **Over-exploitation:** Increased population pressure and use of unsustainable harvesting practices are negatively influencing the agro-biodiversity and its supporting resources.





# Key Achievements

## Capacity development

- Training in formulation of biodiversity interventions.
- Training of Government officers in agro-bio diversity legislation.
- Skills development of central and local staff.

## Field activities

- Conservation and sustainable production of local rice variety (Khao kai noi).
- Domestication of mushrooms.
- Conservation and sustainable use of medicinal plants.
- Improvement of aquatic resources in Kham River.
- Training of Trainers on Vegetable/Rice/Agro-biodiversity.
- In-situ-conservation and domestication of wild tea.
- Assessment of edible organisms in upland paddy rice aquatic ecosystem.

## Legislative Framework

- Development of National Agro-biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan,
- Inputs to the Upland Development Strategy, Land Use Decree and Action Plan for Disaster and Risk Reduction and Management.
- Development of Provincial Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (PBSAP).

## Agro-biodiversity Coordination

- Support to Agro-biodiversity Subsector Working Group.
- Collaboration with national and international agencies and programmes, including: the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, IUCN, FAO Regional Rice Initiative (RRI) and FAO IPM programmes, and Darwin Initiative.

## Awareness

- Booklet on biodiversity-related laws.
- Use of aquatic resources in rice based ecosystems - survey report.
- Survey report on the use of wild mushrooms.
- Priorities and follow-up under the Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

For more information visit:

FAO in Laos:  
fao.org/laos

FAO Asian Regional IPM/Pesticide Reduction Programme:  
vegetableipmasia.org

UNDP in Laos:  
la.undp.org

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