



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
Programme and Concept Note



Concept Note

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

Amman, Jordan, 3 - 5 November 2019

Pictures in the cover page from left to right

- ©M,Abdulkhaliq & A, Alghabri / FAO

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

- ©K, Mazraawi /FAO

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.

- ©J, Van Acker / FAO

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.

- ©S, Villar /FAO

Tunisia

- ©M, Srivastava / FAO

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.

1. Introduction

Biodiversity is the foundation of ecosystem services to which human well-being is intimately linked. Biological resources are the pillars that support agriculture and mankind's capacity to feed itself. The conservation and the sustainable use of biological diversity in agriculture are key to the long term sustainability of our food systems, and are therefore a global responsibility. At the 13th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP13) held in December 2016 in Cancun, Mexico, the Parties called for the mainstreaming of biodiversity across all agricultural sectors and adopted the Cancun Declaration on Mainstreaming the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity for Well-Being. Concurrently, in late 2016, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) offered to host the Biodiversity Mainstreaming Platform (the Platform). The Platform aims at facilitating the dialogue and exchange of information between governments and other stakeholders regarding the conservation, sustainable use, management, and restoration of biodiversity across the agricultural sectors, including fisheries, forestry, livestock and crop.

The FAO Biodiversity Mainstreaming Platform adopts a systemic and holistic approach to biodiversity mainstreaming, fostering and highlighting the synergies between FAO's work on biodiversity and connected areas, including agroecology, indigenous peoples, incentives for ecosystem services, agrobiodiversity, low carbon agriculture, nutrition, sustainable rice production, and pollination, among other relevant subjects.

The goals of the FAO Biodiversity Mainstreaming Strategy include a) sustainable use of biodiversity through landscape and ecosystem approaches, b) conserve, enhance and restore biodiversity and ensure the continued provision of ecosystem services, c) promote sustainable food and agriculture systems that integrate biodiversity considerations throughout value chains and d) enhance the contribution of biodiversity, and associated indigenous and local knowledge, to food security and nutrition, ending poverty, and safeguarding resilient livelihoods. Regional consultations are being organized during the second semester of 2019 as part of the preparation of the Biodiversity Mainstreaming Strategy. The Regional Consultative Meeting on Biodiversity Mainstreaming across Agricultural Sectors in the Near East and North Africa Region (NENA) is part of this process, and is being organized by FAO in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment of Jordan.

2. The Regional Dialogue in Near East and North Africa

The Region of the Near East and North Africa has diverse ecosystems, including aquatic, terrestrial and wetlands, with different climate patterns. The major drivers of biodiversity decline in the region include urban expansion, the spread of intensive agricultural systems and cultivation of marginal land resulting from considerable population growth. In addition, the region has been identified as one of the most vulnerable to climate change and will be impacted by sea level rise, increase in temperature, and change in the amount and frequency of precipitation leading to increasing water scarcity, ground water salinity, and desertification with adverse impact on biodiversity in the region. One of the main challenges is limitation of the available information on biodiversity and ecosystem service for the region; in addition, the unstable political situation and the recent conflicts in parts of the region have delayed conservation work and made it difficult for the countries to achieve their biodiversity programs and plans. The region has three globally recognized biodiversity hotspots: (i) the Irano-Anatolian region, (ii) the Mediterranean forest region and (iii) the Horn of Africa region. According to 2015 IUCN Red List, approximately 2476 species in NENA are under threat comprising of mammals, fishes, and other species with around 28% of threatened species comprises of fishes, 18% plants, 12% birds, 9% mammals and the rest is from other species. The Fertile Crescent and Mediterranean of the NENA region has been rich in its biodiversity resources, where

most agricultural species originated and were first planted as commercial crops. However, over time, valuable plant genetic resources of the region are being eroded through degradation of natural habitats, intensification of the cultivation of arable lands, expansion of cultivation into marginal areas, replacement of diverse and widely adapted landraces by new cultivars based on a narrow genetic base, and over-exploitation of natural pastures and grazing lands. It has been reported that the region's ecological footprint is growing sharply and now exceeds the global average.

Although some countries from the region have reported in their National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plans (NBSAPs) on their efforts for mainstreaming biodiversity in the agriculture sectors, yet there is a need for developing well identified strategies for taking tangible actions across different sectors at the regional and country level with full engagement of all relevant stakeholders to implement these plans.

3. Objectives of the Regional Dialogue

The primary objective of the Consultation will be to review the draft FAO Strategy on Biodiversity Mainstreaming across Agricultural Sectors, and provide FAO with regional perspective about the proposed strategy. In addition, the meeting will be 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 of knowledge, experiences, and lessons learned (including gaps and challenges) on biodiversity mainstreaming among countries within the Region;
- Identify areas for actions across sectors and priorities at the regional and country level, including resource mobilizations and stakeholder's engagements, in preparation for the adoption of the CBD Post-2020 global biodiversity framework that will be adopted in Kunming, China in 2020;
- The FAO draft report on "the state of the biodiversity for food and agriculture in the Near East and North Africa Region" will be presented and discussed at the meeting.

4. Expected Outcomes

- Dialogue and engagement among stakeholders, including Ministries of agriculture, livestock, rural development, fisheries, environment, land , and rural development; development partners, CBD, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), research institutions, and the private sector;
- An overview of possible initiatives from the region that can support the interplay between the agricultural and environmental, sectors;
- Inputs and recommendations feeding the ongoing discussion on FAO's Biodiversity Strategy;
- Development of resource mobilization strategy and partnership to support biodiversity-mainstreaming agenda in the Near East and North Africa Region leading to and in support of the Post-2020 global biodiversity framework;
- Elements for a program of work to be carried out by FAO in support to biodiversity mainstreaming in agriculture sectors across the region over the biennium 2020-21.



©L, Chocholata / FAO - A woman irrigates the plants from a FFS programme in Jordan.



©S, Villar / FAO - Woman at work, Tunisia.



©V, Crespi / FAO- Integrated agri-aquaculture farms: Aquaponics farm producing tilapia fish and strawberries in Oman.



©P, Costa Gomes / FAO - Fayoum, Egypt- Farmer during the visit of Jose Graziano da Silva, Director-General of FAO in plantation tomatoes

5. Participants

The following actors have been identified as participants and contributors to the Regional Workshop:

- Senior Officials (Secretary General or biodiversity focal point) from the Ministries of Agriculture and Environment in the countries of the region
- Key academics and research institutions
- Regional civil society organizations (e.g. NGOs, IUCN etc.)
- Key private sector partners for sustainable food systems and value chains
- Development partners

A high-level segment (at the first day) will include:

- H.E. The Minister of Agriculture and Environment in Jordan
- H.R.H. Princess Basma Bint Ali, Head of the National Committee of Biodiversity, Jordan
- H.E. Chairperson of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment CAMRE
- H.E. Chairperson of the Arab Organization of Agriculture Development (AOAD)
- Assistant Director General and FAO Regional Representative for the Near East and North Africa

6. Dates and venue

The Regional Dialogue in Near East and North Africa Region will be held in Amman, Jordan, at *Kempinski Hotel* 3-5 November 2019.

7. Contact

FAO Biodiversity Mainstreaming Platform:
Biodiversity-Platform@fao.org

8. FAO Focal Points for organizing the workshop

Focal points for the organization of the Regional Consultative Meeting are:

- Mr. Paulo Lourenço Dias Nunes, Global Coordinator, FAO Biodiversity Mainstreaming Platform, at the Office of the Assistant Director-General and Director of the Climate, Biodiversity, Land and Water Department (Paulo.LourencoDiasNunes@fao)
- Mr. Mohamed AbdelMonem, Senior Advisor at the FAO Near East and North Africa Region Office (mohamed.abdelmonem@fao.org)
- Mr. Alexis Bonte, FAO Representative in Jordan (Alexis.Bonte@fao.org)

Task Force at the FAO Regional office for the Near East and North Africa

- JeanMarc Faurès, Regional Program Leader
- AbdelHamied Hamid, Senior Forestry Officer
- Mohamed AbdelMonem, Senior Advisor
- Faten Adada, Agriculture Specialist
- Fatma Ahmed, Natural Resources Consultant Hebatallah Fahmy, Technical Program Assistant

Detailed Agenda day 1.

Day 3 November - Sunday

08:30–09:00

Registration

09:00–09:30

Welcoming Remarks

- H.E. Nizar Haddad
General Director of National Agriculture Research Center (NARC), Jordan
- David Cooper
Deputy Executive Secretary CBD (Video-message)
- H.E. René Castro Salazar
Assistant-Director General, Climate, Biodiversity, Land and Water Department, FAO
- H.E. Ibrahim Alshahahdeh
Minister of Agriculture and Environment, Jordan

09:30–10:00

Coffee Break

10:00–12:30

Session I: Integrating biodiversity conservation into agro-ecosystem management

Presentation:

- Jean-Marc Faurès
Regional Programme Leader, FAO-RNE; Findings from the FAO Report: “The State of the World’s Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture”

Keynote addresses:

- H.R.H. Princess Basma Bint Ali
Head of the National Committee of Biodiversity, Jordan

Panel Discussion:

Facilitator:

- Paulo Lourenço Dias Nunes
Global Coordinator, Biodiversity Mainstreaming Platform, FAO
- René Castro Salazar
Assistant-Director General, Climate, Biodiversity, Land and Water Department, FAO
- Adil Omer Salih Abdelrahim
President of Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East and North Africa (AARINENA)
- Hany El Shaer
Regional Director, IUCN-ROWA
- Fidaa Al Rawabdeh
Director at the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD)

DISCUSSION / DIALOGUE

Introduction of the participants

12:30–14:00

Lunch

14:00–15:30

**Session II:
Introduction to FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity Across Agriculture Sectors**

Facilitator: Sally Berman, FAO Jordan

- Paulo Lourenço Dias Nunes
FAO: Presentation of the draft FAO Biodiversity Mainstreaming Strategy
- Fatma Elzahraa,
FAO-RNE: Agroecology as a tool for mainstreaming biodiversity
- Khaled Abulaila
Director of Plant Biodiversity and Genetic Resources, NARC, Jordan: Role of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in mainstreaming biodiversity

DISCUSSION / DIALOGUE

15:30–16:00

Coffee Break

16:00–17:30

**Session III:
Mainstreaming biodiversity across agricultural sectors - country experience – Group 1**

Facilitator/Chair: Mohamed AbdelMonem, Senior advisor, FAO-RNE

Countries:

- Iraq
- Jordan
- Lebanon
- State of Palestine*
- Syrian Arab Republic

DISCUSSION / DIALOGUE

18:00–20:00

Reception offered by FAO Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa

Detailed Agenda day 2.

Day 4 November - Monday

09:00–10:30

Session IV:

The role of finance, private sector and innovative partnerships in promoting mainstreaming of biodiversity

Facilitator/Chair: Jean-Marc Faurès, Regional Programme Leader, FAO-RNE

- Maude VeyretPicot
FAO: Biodiversity mainstreaming opportunities with the GEF for the Region
- Arwa Almagableh
Jordan Moringa, startup incubated by NARC (private sector)
- Adil Omer Salih Abdelrahim
President of AARINENA
- Devra I. Jarvis
Biodiversity International

DISCUSSION / DIALOGUE

10:30–11:00

Coffee Break

11:00–12:30

Session V:

Mainstreaming biodiversity across agricultural sectors - country experience – Group 2

Facilitator: Mohamed AbdelMonem, Senior advisor at the FAO-RNE

Countries:

- Bahrain
- Kuwait
- Oman
- Saudi Arabia
- Yemen

12:30–14:00

Lunch

14:00–15:30

Session VI:

Traditional knowledge, gender, youth and innovation for biodiversity conservation in agriculture in the Near East and North Africa

Facilitator: Paulo Lourenço Dias Nunes, FAO

- H.E. Nizar Haddad
National Agriculture Research Center (NARC)

15:30–16:00

- Haifaa Abedalhaleem

World Heritage for All

- Ahmad Mayyas

Massafat without borders Agricultural Association

- Fidaa Al Rawabdeh

Director at the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD)

DISCUSSION / DIALOGUE

15:30–16:00

Coffee Break

16:00–17:30

**Session VII:
Mainstreaming biodiversity across agricultural sectors - country experience
– Group 3**

Facilitator: **Alexis Bonte**, FAO Representative *ad interim*, Jordan

Countries:

- Egypt
- Libya
- Mauritania
- Morocco
- Tunisia
- Sudan

17:30–18:30

Reports from country groups and discussion

- Presentation Group 1
- Presentation Group 2
- Presentation Group 3
- Discussions: Opportunities for support biodiversity mainstreaming in agriculture sectors across the region

18:30–19:00

Closing Remarks

Jean-Marc Faurès, Regional Programme Leader, FAO-RNE

Detailed Agenda day 3.

Day 5 November - Tuesday

09:30–11:30

Visit to the National Agriculture Research Center (NARC), Jordan

- H.E. Nizar Haddad

Director General, National Agricultural Research Center (NARC): Introduction and Presentation on activities in agro biodiversity

- Visit to the NARC labs and facilities

Coffee Breack

11:30–12:30

Visit the Jordanian Beekeeping Association

12:30–14:30

Visit the Royal Botanic Garden, H.R.H. Princess Basma Bint Ali

14:30–15:30

Back to Hotel

A large flock of birds, possibly terns, is seen flying over a field of green crops. The birds are scattered across the sky, with some in the foreground and others in the distance. The field is filled with rows of green plants, and the background shows a hazy landscape with some buildings and hills.

**Regional Dialogue on Biodiversity Mainstreaming Across Agricultural Sectors
In the Near East and North Africa Region, November 3-5, 2019**

Kempinski Hotel, Amman, Jordan

Organized by:

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Mainstreaming Platform

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