



# INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE AT FAO

**T**he FAO Priority Area for Interdisciplinary Action (PAIA) on the “Integrated Management of Biological Diversity for Food and Agriculture” brings together multidisciplinary expertise to address biodiversity issues globally and at the ecosystems levels. Through this, a holistic approach is pursued and a coordinated position on biological diversity for food and agriculture is established. The PAIA is a mechanism to assist countries including in the implementation of several biological diversity related instruments of relevance to food and agriculture, and cross-cutting issues covering the range of FAO’s departments and their related activities.

The culture through which the inter-departmental working group was developed welcomes sharing, is open to outside alliances, and promotes ties to allies within FAO to move new ideas forward<sup>1</sup> and better respond to emerging issues. The work of the PAIA includes not only areas related to crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries and natural resource management, but also cross-cutting issues such as gender and biodiversity, using the ecosystem approach, and invasive alien species, to name a few. Legal and other technical aspects such as communications and media are also involved. At the local level, the application of the farmer field school approach is an example of how the PAIA brings together different disciplines.



<sup>1</sup> Report of the Independent External Evaluation of FAO, September 2007



The FAO PAIA on the “Integrated Management of Biological Diversity for Food and Agriculture” is responsible for providing, among other things:

- Support to relevant international instruments and policy fora, such as the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the International Plant Protection Convention, and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture hosted at FAO, as well as the Convention on Biological Diversity, in order to ensure an enhanced profile of agriculture and positive relationship with biodiversity and the ecosystem;
- Methodologies and guidelines on participatory technology development and adaptive management of agricultural biodiversity for sustainable food production and rural livelihoods;

- Support to national programmes of community-based learning, including in situ conservation of biodiversity, access and exchange of genetic resources and strengthened indigenous knowledge systems;
- Case studies on management of biodiversity for food and agriculture (including plants, forests, domestic animals, inland and marine fisheries, pollinators and soil biodiversity) using ecosystem approaches and with special reference to pastures, watersheds, natural forests and woodlands, buffer zones in protected areas, and organic agriculture systems; and
- Multi-media products and training materials for both field practitioners and policy-makers on the sustainable management of biodiversity for food and agriculture.

The FAO PAIA on the Integrated Management of Biological Diversity for Food and Agriculture is responsible for bringing together all FAO Departments to work on cross-cutting issues related to biodiversity for food and agriculture. It also acts as a coordination mechanism. For example, the PAIA prepared for the Convention on Biological Diversity’s Thirteenth Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), which was hosted at FAO from 18-22 February 2008. SBSTTA-13 addressed issues of key importance to FAO, and for which FAO plays a lead role in implementing – including the Programmes of Work on Forest and Agricultural Biodiversity but also other cross-cutting issues such as Invasive Alien Species.



Further information about the work of FAO on biodiversity is available at: [www.fao.org/biodiversity](http://www.fao.org/biodiversity)

A G R I C U L T U R E  
F O R B I O D I V E R S I T Y F O R  
A G R I C U L T U R E