

Mainstreaming Agro-Biodiversity

Engaging Farming Communities to Conserve Wild Crop Relatives and Landraces



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

Results highlights

The intervention has helped Ethiopia create an enabling policy and institutional framework, particularly, but not limited to garnering support for in situ conservation.

So far seven sectoral policies have been reviewed (biodiversity, agriculture, environment, forest, trade, industry and investment), with overlaps and gaps among institutions identified. Based on the recommendation of the review the lack of a comprehensive biodiversity structure from the federal to the community level was addressed through the establishment of eight biodiversity centres across the country.

Four target communities in Amhara, Oromia, and SNNP were helped to introduce bylaws that focused on managing natural resources in an integrated manner. Through the implementation of these bylaws, previously lost flora and fauna started being rehabilitated.

A new marketing strategy is providing an incentive for farmers to keep producing farmers variety crops and get better prices for the farmers variety crops for Teff, Durum Wheat, Forest Coffee and Enset (including its fiber).

Overview

Ethiopia is recognized as a centre of agro-biodiversity and harbours important gene pools of cultivated crops and wild crop relatives.

The government of Ethiopia believes that agricultural-led development can co-exist and complement biodiversity if policies and programmes supporting agro-biodiversity conservation are locally informed, properly designed and implemented.

The country is continuing to step up its efforts to conserve biodiversity and integrate it along with ecosystem objectives into multiple sectors. More sustainable production practices that maintain land and water ecosystem services are also being widely promoted.

Ethiopia considers itself as a global source of agro-biodiversity and hosts one of the leading gene banks in the region, now housed at the Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute (EBI).



Part of forest coffee field gene bank

UNDP's strategy

UNDP's mainstreaming agro-biodiversity project, funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), focuses on ensuring that Ethiopian public authorities' can start taking clear steps towards tackling climate change and food insecurity by strengthening their institutional capacity, helping them improve coordination, clarify mandates of the various institutions working on agro-biodiversity, and elaborate on the linkage between food security and agro-biodiversity.

The establishment of in situ conservation of agro-biodiversity resources has been encouraged in order to ensure food security and sustain the livelihoods of the community. The approach provides a unique opportunity for smallholder farmers to become fully engaged and participate in conserving wild crop relatives and landraces. The project addressed local circumstances, ensuring that interventions are interlinked to improve governance of farming systems; and biodiversity management needs are factored in market and non-market based approaches.



Traditional labour intensive enset processing tools are replaced by new user friendly tools

Intervention results

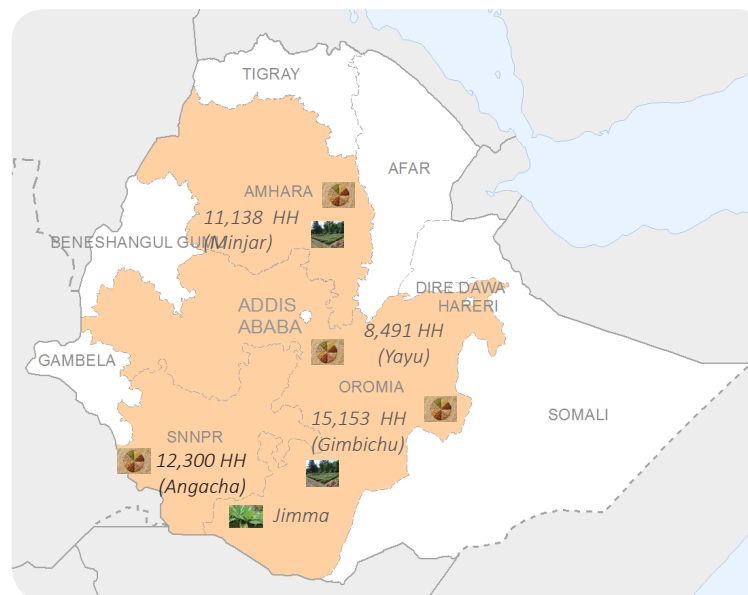
Farmers are getting better prices for their coffee after certification and teff, specifically Minjar-shenkora tef, following the branding around this crop and linkages to global market access.

Four in situ gene banks covering a total of 500,000 hectares were successfully created to protect the wild gene pools for coffee, enset, teff and durum wheat in four pilot sites.




The introduction of four extension packages (Teff, Enset, Durum wheat and forest coffee) has revealed that farmers varieties have unlocked potential even more than improved varieties.

Eight farmers' cooperatives have been established and strengthened in the project sites. These cooperatives are unique in their approach, focusing on empowering poor female headed households, by waving away the membership fees (members join by providing seeds). Improved processing machines are also provided to women involved in inset fiber processing, a task that is labour intensive and traditionally done by women only. Women were also supported to access additional income through selling the fiber to local sack manufactures.

UNDP's agro-biodiversity project interventions



Total no of households supported by the project: 47,082

-  Presence of gene banks for teff and durum wheat
-  Presence of field gene banks for coffee and enset
-  Presence of botanical gardens

Implementing partner



Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Email: communication.et@undp.org
www.et.undp.org



@UNDPethiopia



UNDPinEthiopia

Funding partner



GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
 INVESTING IN OUR PLANET