

INOFO POSITION PAPER

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Biodiversity in agroecosystems

Biodiversity or biological diversity is defined in the Convention on Biological Diversity as the "variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems".

INOFO recognises the full intrinsic value that Biodiversity has per se. Also, as farmers, we want to emphasise the essential role that it plays for human existence on Earth, being directly linked to people's health and well-being and a basic asset for social and economic development.

The correct and respectful management of the ecosystems, ensuring their maintenance and restoration, when needed, and the conservation of biodiversity are equally relevant to mitigate global warming and for humanity's resilience to climate change.

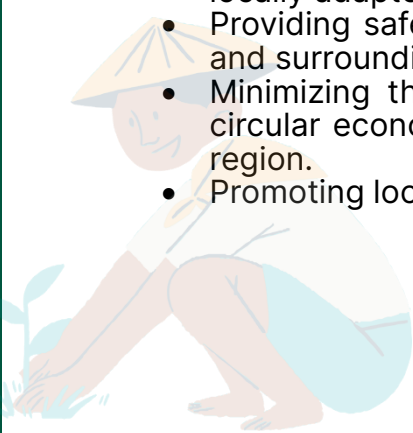
The conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity is therefore a collective challenge that must be addressed from a global perspective and with an integrative approach, considering all social actors and economic sectors.

The organic farmers' contribution to biodiversity

Organic farming combines best environmental practices to ensure high levels of on-farm biodiversity and the preservation of natural biodiversity and resources.

The enhancement of biodiversity is being addressed by organic farmers through:

- Minimizing the use of biocides and avoiding completely the persistent ones and/or those that have further impact in the food chain.
- Reducing the risk of soil, air and water pollution.
- Avoiding all forms of soil erosion, protecting soil fertility and the populations of the various life forms that it would host in a natural state.
- Sustaining pollination services.
- Supporting high levels of agro-biodiversity, through the diversification of species grown or managed as well as the use of genetically diversified and locally adapted varieties and breeds.
- Providing safe and adequate environments for wild species found on farms and surroundings, thus increasing their number and variety.
- Minimizing the impact on all natural resources and the Climate, applying circular economy models and closing cycles on the farm or, at least, in the region.
- Promoting local sales and cooperative systems of consumer-farmer relations.





INOFO also believes that diversified farming plays an important role in increasing agricultural biodiversity and that food systems based on small family farms contribute to the creation of mosaic landscapes in which biodiversity is favoured.

To conserve biodiversity we need heterogeneous landscapes, agricultural areas where different crops are planted in small fields in a mosaic distribution. Crops that are interspersed with patches of natural habitats or combinations of different land uses that allow different wild organisms to live there.

More heterogeneous agricultural landscapes are also more productive. This positive effect is especially relevant in the case of crops whose fruiting depends on animal pollination. These crops include, among others, many fruit trees and vegetables. Most species of great economic value. In addition, they contain the highest amounts of essential vitamins. This is because a greater diversity of beneficial insects, such as pollinating bees, impacts on crop productivity.

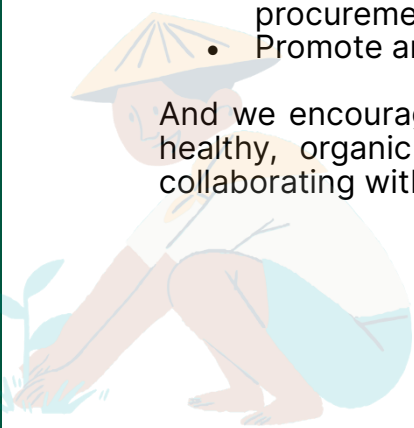
Society and public administrations must support farmers that contribute to biodiversity.

Farmers need bio diversified farms, but also, as all of the society benefits from the environmental and social services provided by food systems based on organic diversified family farms, these ecosystem services should be compensated to farmers with public support.

For this reason, INOFO asks policymakers to:

- Stop subsidizing unsustainable and unfair farming practices that contribute to climate change, pollution, soil and biodiversity erosion and hinder sustainable development
- Ensure a sustainable use of pesticides banning the use of persistent substances
- Spread the knowledge of organic regenerative farming practices providing farmers with adequate trainings
- Ensure that precautionary measures to avoid cross contamination are taken by those who use conventional treatments and/or genetically modified crops
- Ensure access to land and farming resources to small and medium organic farmers
- Compensate the ecosystem services delivered by organic family farms with tax diminishment and compensation funds
- Ensure the prioritisation of organic food coming from family farms in public procurement
- Promote and accompany the creation of Organic Districts

And we encourage the whole of the society to support the transition towards healthy, organic and fair food systems by buying local organic products, collaborating with farmers and other local actors in the supply chain.





Climate Change and Global Warming are a threat to all forms of life, therefore, to biodiversity. So, reducing the emissions and the concentrations of Greenhouse Gases, also reduces negative impacts on biodiversity. Finally, citizens can also contribute by avoiding the use of possible contaminating substances due to drift, such as pesticides and fertilizers used at home, in gardening and/or in the production of food for personal consumption.

Life needs biodiversity, humanity needs biodiversity. Organic farmers protect and enhance biodiversity, but this requires an overexertion that needs to be compensated by both administrations and the society in general.

