

Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition Initiative

Harnessing agricultural biodiversity to reduce hunger and malnutrition



Agricultural biodiversity, health and nutrition are vitally connected. The biological variety that exists among crops, animals and other organisms used for food and agriculture plays an important role in providing the diversity of nutrients needed for healthy growth and living. It can also provide a local solution to diet-related nutrition and health conditions, such as nutrient deficiencies and obesity, which are becoming a growing burden on already stretched health budgets and economies. Yet much of this diversity and traditional knowledge associated with it is disappearing.

The Global Environment Facility (GEF), the world's largest public funder of international environmental projects, is supporting the *Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use for Improved Nutrition and Well-Being** initiative led by Brazil, Kenya, Sri Lanka and Turkey. Bioversity International is coordinating the project with implementation support from the United Nations Environment Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Working in the four partner countries the project addresses declining diversity by:

1. PROVIDING EVIDENCE

Demonstrating the nutritional value of agricultural biodiversity and the role it plays in promoting healthy diets and strengthening livelihoods.

2. INFLUENCING POLICIES

Using the evidence generated from the project to influence policies, programmes and markets that support the conservation and sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity with nutrition potential for improved human nutrition and wellbeing.

3. RAISING AWARENESS

Developing tools, knowledge and best practices for scaling up the use of biodiversity for food and nutrition in development programmes, value chains and local community initiatives.

Main beneficiaries

Individuals, households and communities, especially women and children, will benefit from:

- improved nutrition
- improved linkages to markets and the contribution this will make to their livelihoods
- increased resilience of their farming systems and the sustainable utilization of agricultural biodiversity

Turkey

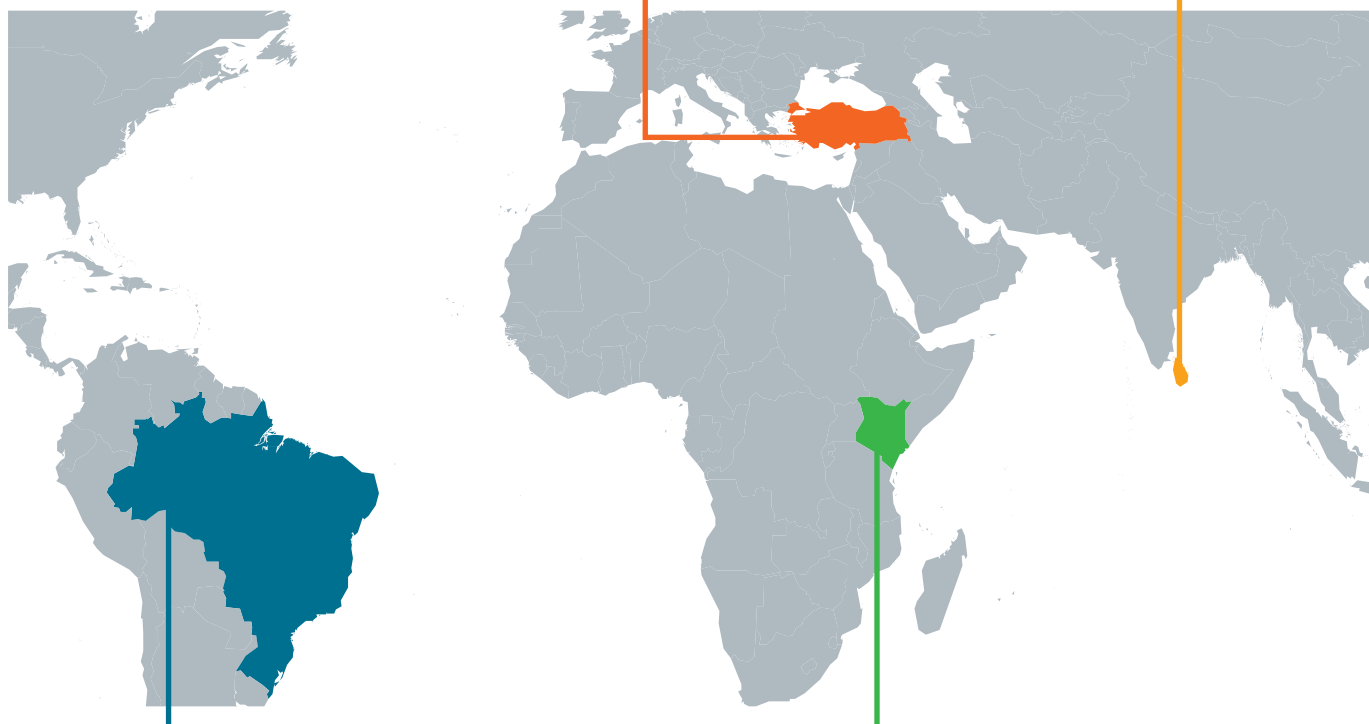
GATHERING EVIDENCE

- Nutrient composition of 40 wild edible greens from the Aegean, Black Sea and Mediterranean regions established.
- Extensive market surveys carried out in these areas confirm the consumption of wild edible plants, fruits and landraces still important in Turkish diets.
- Exploration of ways to scale out domestication and marketing of wild edibles.

Sri Lanka

RAISING AWARENESS OF TRADITIONAL VARIETIES:

- Food outlets opened in Kandy and Colombo promoting traditional foods
- First Traditional Food Fair held in Colombo in 2014.
- First International Symposium on Biodiversity, Food and Nutrition held in Colombo in 2014 to establish the links between agricultural biodiversity and dietary diversity.



Brazil

INFLUENCING POLICIES:

- Ministry of the Environment and Ministry of Planning engaged 32 government agencies and identified 23 priority actions to reverse biodiversity loss now embedded in the revision of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP).
- As a result, USD \$60 million pledged to protect biodiversity for food and nutrition in 2015.
- A target indicator on the 'number of species of Brazilian native biodiversity, included in food and nutritional security policies'.
- Scientific knowledge on the nutritional value of 70 native fruit species now informing public policies on nutrition, school feeding, family farming, food security and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Kenya

SCALING OUT BEST PRACTICES:

- Identification of best practices to promote biodiversity for food and nutrition. These include studying the effectiveness of home gardens, school gardens, school feeding programmes, food fairs and value addition as ways to promote traditional, nutrient-dense foods.
- Work carried out so far in Busia County, Western Kenya with potential to scale out identified best practices throughout the country.

Additional funds are being received from the four countries and from the international partners below to facilitate implementation and scaling up of activities.

For more information

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