

# Agrobiodiversity and climate change

Charting experiences from rural communities and indigenous peoples





**A new project launched by the Platform for Agrobiodiversity Research is focusing attention on how agrobiodiversity can help rural communities cope with climate change.**

## **The Platform for Agrobiodiversity Research**

The Platform for Agrobiodiversity Research brings together researchers and others to share knowledge and experiences that can improve the maintenance and use of agrobiodiversity. Hosted by Bioversity International, the Platform's objectives are:

- To collate, synthesize and make available information on the maintenance and use of agrobiodiversity
- To identify ways in which the use of agrobiodiversity can contribute to addressing major global challenges
- To identify and facilitate relevant new and innovative research partnerships that strengthen cross component, multidisciplinary and participatory research.

The Platform focuses on research of potential global significance; work that complements existing research efforts and addresses more than one component or level of agrobiodiversity. The Platform is committed to working with farmers and local communities on agendas of relevance to their needs; and to working in ways that link custodians, managers and beneficiaries of biodiversity.

[www.agrobiodiversityplatform.org](http://www.agrobiodiversityplatform.org)





**The Agrobiodiversity and Climate Change project, supported by Bioversity International and the Christensen Fund, aims to gather and make known information on the use of agrobiodiversity by communities facing climate change. Building on this it will identify gaps in our current knowledge and highlight areas that need further research. It will also build new partnerships between researchers and farmers, communities and indigenous peoples to provide a strong context for future efforts aimed at mitigating the effects of climate change through use of agrobiodiversity.**





Agrobiodiversity is the basis of humankind's ability to feed, cloth and heal itself. Farmers, rural communities and indigenous peoples around the world maintain agrobiodiversity—the diversity of crops, forages, livestock, tree products and fish, and the many other plant, animal and microbial species found in and around their production areas—and depend on it for their livelihoods to provide food, fuel, medicine and many other products.

Now climate change has been added to the challenges facing these people. Temperatures and rainfall are changing and climatic variability is increasing. Coping with these new realities will involve using agrobiodiversity to provide adaptability and resilience in the face of changing and variable environments.

However, the fact that agrobiodiversity is an important part of the climate change management strategies being developed by indigenous peoples and rural communities is not adequately recognized and knowledge of how, when and what agrobiodiversity has been used to cope with climate change is scattered and not well documented. What experiences exist? What research is needed to develop more effective adaptation and mitigation strategies? How can we best maintain and use agrobiodiversity as part of our efforts to cope with climate change? These are some of the issues the Agrobiodiversity and Climate Change project will address.



## **Starting in April 2008, the Platform will work with partners throughout the world to:**



- © **Bring together information from rural communities, indigenous peoples and research workers on how they use agrobiodiversity to cope with climate change.**

The Platform has established a website to support this process and will collate and make available information and experiences from around the world. In-depth analyses of specific examples are planned.

- © **Stimulate communication between agrobiodiversity researchers, users and maintainers.**

Contacts are being established with research workers, community and farmer organizations, indigenous peoples groups and with other interested organizations. Through meetings, face-to-face and web-based discussions and workshops the Platform will create a lively and stimulating environment to share experiences and to identify needs and opportunities.

- © **Identify tools and practices relevant to using agrobiodiversity for coping with climate change and making these widely available.**

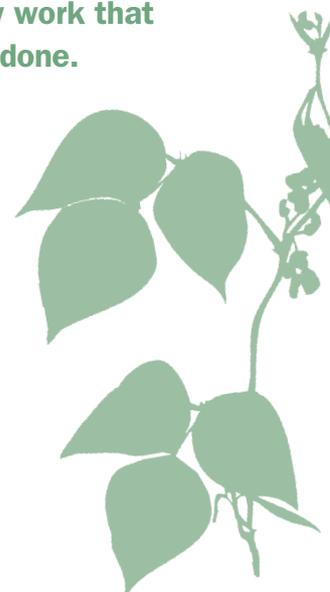
Much relevant knowledge and many practices exist and have been tested in different situations. These can be developed into a set of tools and practices based on shared and tested experiences and made more widely available.

- © **Provide a synthesis of available information, assess major knowledge gaps and identify research that will respond to the needs of farmers, communities and indigenous peoples.**

- © **Promote awareness of the vital role of agrobiodiversity in adapting to climate change among key audiences, including donors, development agents and the global biodiversity community.**

**Using the outputs of the project the Platform will work with others to mobilize new partnerships to fill knowledge gaps, provide tools and practices that support maintenance and use of agrobiodiversity under climate change, and improve the potential of obtaining support for indigenous communities' use of agrobiodiversity.**

**We invite you to play a part in this project, share your information and experiences, take part in the discussions, make contact with others working in this area and suggest new work that needs to be done.**



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Secretariat provided and hosted by Bioversity International