



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

FAO REGIONAL DIALOGUE ON
MAINSTREAMING BIODIVERSITY
ACROSS AGRICULTURAL SECTORS
IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

16-17 NOVEMBER 2021



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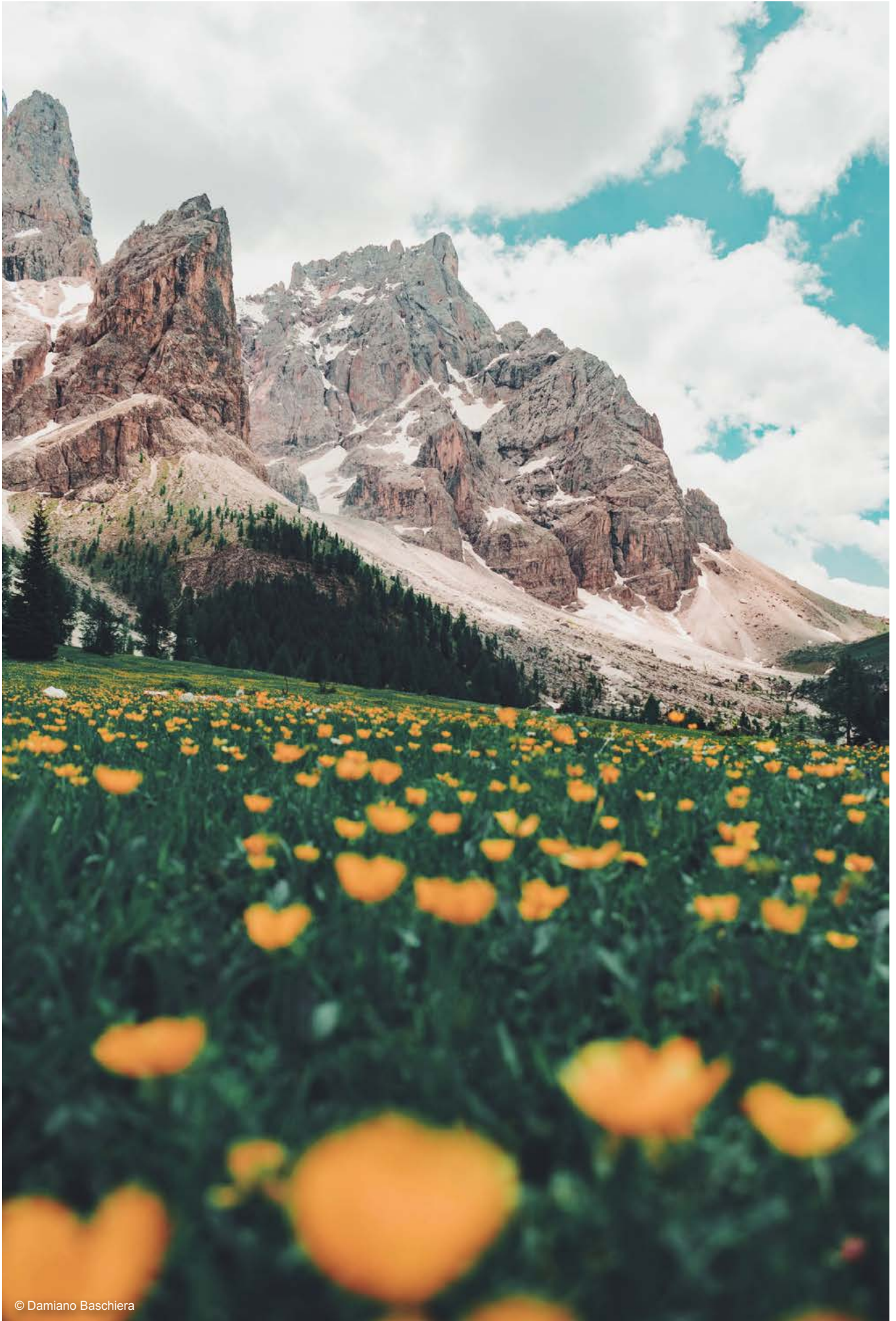
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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BFA	Biodiversity for food and agriculture
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
DG ENV	Directorate General Environment
ECA	Europe and Central Asia
ES	Ecosystem Services
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GBF	Global Biodiversity Framework
PES	Payments for Ecosystem Services



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INTRODUCTION

Biodiversity is essential for the protection and restoration of ecosystems and sustainability of our food systems: it provides a diverse and heterogenous biological basis for distinct and resilient production systems, for the pollination of cultures, for increased food security and nutrition, and adaptation to the impacts of the changing climate. It is strongly embedded in the knowledge and skill of smallholders and family farmers. Over the millennia, rural and indigenous communities accumulated a diversity of traditional knowledge that allowed them to transform a variety of wild species and landscapes.

Changes in land use and intensification of agriculture increased productivity but to the detriment of biodiversity. Climate change is another direct driver of biodiversity loss which also exacerbates other pressures. The erosion of biodiversity for food and agriculture (BFA) is intensifying. Diversity of plant varieties and animal breeds selected over millennia, diversity of traditional knowledge and practices passed down through the generations, are all disappearing.

Loss of biodiversity will lead to the collapse of ecosystem services resulting in irreversible environmental degradation, disruption of economic prosperity and wellbeing, for everyone. Food sovereignty, cultural identity and livelihood of indigenous and local communities, pastoralists, fishermen, small-scale producers and family farmers, the custodians of biodiversity, are under disproportional risk.

To respond to the biodiversity crisis, we need to transform our agrifood systems, adjust our consumption style, and enable farming communities. Urgent and joint action will preserve, enhance and maintain BFA for **better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life**, leaving no-one behind.

BIODIVERSITY IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA



The Europe and Central Asia region includes four biodiversity hotspots (the Caucasus, Irano-Anatolian, Mediterranean Basin, and Mountains of Central Asia) and hosts a great variety of climates, landscapes, aquatic environments, soil types, and cultures, and hence also biodiversity. Being part of the primary centres of origin of crop plants, the region is home to great number of wild relatives of cultivated plants and domesticated animals.

Despite the lack of monitoring systems and reliable data, the loss of biodiversity is a reality in the region (FAO, 2021; FAO, 2019; IPBES, 2018). Rich biodiversity and diverse ecosystems are threatened by changes in land use and intensification in agricultural sectors. In Central Asian countries, the combination of excessive water use and limited water resources puts considerable stress on the aquatic ecosystems and can jeopardise food production. Forest loss and climate change, along with the proliferation of invasive alien species, also represent a major global threat to regional biodiversity. The problem of genetic erosion caused by inter alia the steady trend for replacement of local varieties with modern ones is common in the region.

The majority of the people in the region, still live in rural areas. Agriculture plays an important role in people's livelihoods and, due to its importance, is a major user of the region's natural resources. At the same time, smallholders and family farmers, livestock keepers, forest dwellers, fishers, and fish farmers represent an important yet unexplored asset for the sustainable use, conservation, restoration and preservation of biodiversity for food and agriculture in the region. When managed by small-scale food producers, biodiversity can have a high level of heterogeneity embedded within it, thereby improving its adaptive capacity and increase the resilience of ecosystems (FAO, 2021).

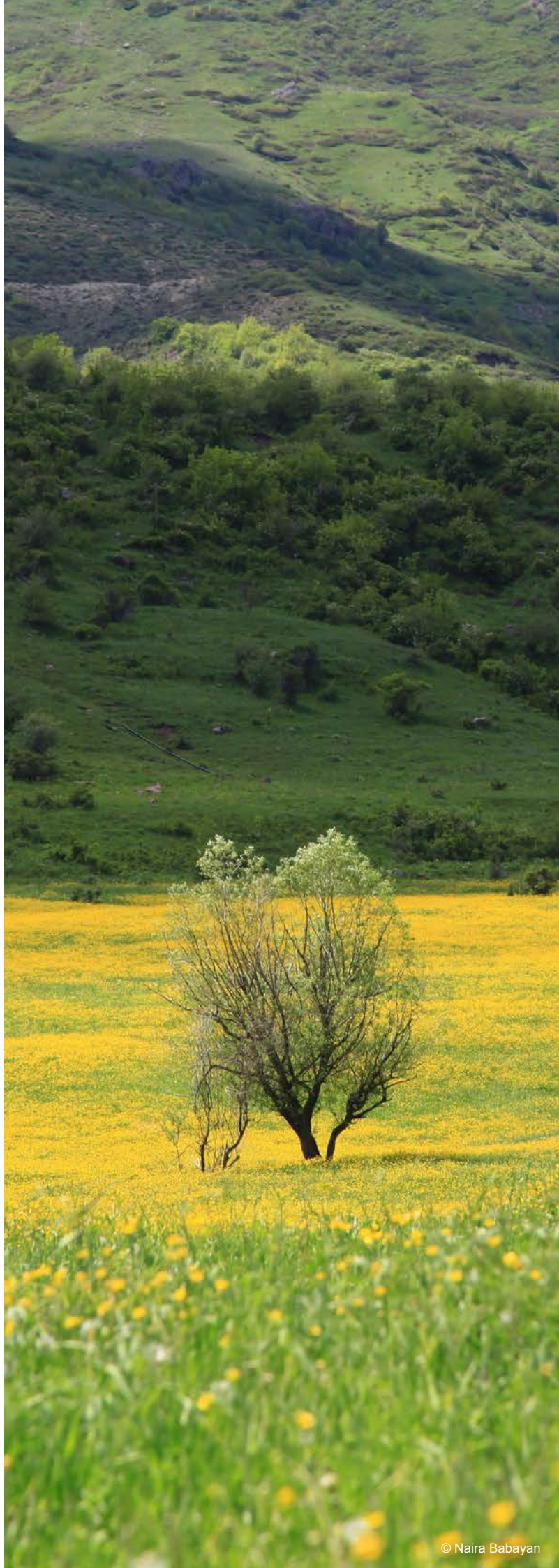
REGIONAL DIALOGUE

Considering the critical roles of biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services for the sustainability of food systems and achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, FAO facilitates, in collaboration with its partners, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and other UN organizations, the integration in a structured and coherent manner of actions for the conservation, sustainable use, management and restoration of biological diversity across agricultural sectors at national, regional and international levels.

Against this background, FAO has developed a series of instruments and tools related to biodiversity and that can contribute to the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors, Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030, and in alignment with the international agenda on Climate action.

The FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia is an important player in the region, providing support for countries, accelerating their capacities for the mainstreaming conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity across agricultural sectors. FAO Regional Initiative 3 on sustainable natural resource management under a changing climate is the programmatic umbrella for translating global instruments and specific regional challenges into policies and actions at the country level.

In line with its mandate to coordinate a collective effort to address challenges related to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, FAO organized the first Regional Dialogue on Biodiversity Mainstreaming across Agricultural Sectors in Europe and Central Asia.



Objective

The Regional Dialogue was organized to discuss challenges, exchange views and opportunities in addressing ways to mainstream biodiversity across agricultural sectors in Europe and Central Asia, promoting inclusive sustainable and resilient agrifood systems for improved food security and nutrition. It addressed the potential for collaborative actions among the different sectors and across countries and the role of the FAO guidance. Moreover, it engaged stakeholders in consultations on the regional Action Plan for the Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors in Eastern European and Central Asia countries.

The Regional Dialogue was held online during two days on November 16 and 17, 2021.

The first day provided an overview of international policy framework and global instruments for biodiversity mainstreaming, followed by the panel discussion, where the challenges and opportunities for this process in the region were discussed with the representatives of four countries. On the second day, the technical session highlighted the role of biodiversity as an adding value to the agricultural products while the consultations allowed to discuss the gaps and needs and to define the next steps and main priorities for the regional BFA mainstreaming action.

Almost 200 participants registered to take part in the event, among those were national government representatives, CBD focal points, regional experts, academia and researchers, farmers, small scale food producers, technical staff involved with biodiversity related projects, participants from the civil society, covering all targeted subregions – the Balkan countries, Eastern Europe, Caucasus, and Central Asia.





Highlights

DAY 1. 16 NOVEMBER 2021

The introductory FAO video [“The future of our food systems depends on biodiversity”](#) was followed by the **opening remarks presented by Raimund Jehle, Regional Programme Leader for Europe and Central Asia, FAO**. In his speech, he highlighted that, as more species are facing extinction than ever before, loss of biodiversity is closely interlinked with two other major existential threats — climate change and pandemics. Despite biodiversity providing ecosystem services that are essential for all forms of life, changes in sea and land use, expanding monocultural agriculture, pesticides and agrochemicals use, pollution, unsustainable consumption patterns and urbanisation exacerbate biodiversity loss. The ECA region, too, experiences a substantial decline in population size of terrestrial animal and plant species. Raimund emphasised the role of Indigenous Peoples as the gatekeepers to biodiversity protection and their vulnerability to the negative

consequences of climate change. Their participation should be properly acknowledged and factored into decision-making. He concluded by underlining the need to apply a more holistic, cross-sectoral approach for biodiversity mainstreaming across agricultural sectors and to shift the paradigm aiming at not only zero loss of nature, but at the net-positive impact on BFA.

In her introductory speech, **Tania Santivanez, Delivery manager, Regional Initiative “Managing natural resources sustainably and preserving biodiversity under a changing climate”, FAO**, revealed what is critical to biodiversity mainstreaming in the region: increased recognition of the value of BFA, understanding of the interconnection between biodiversity loss, climate change, food security and poverty, improved coordination across sectors and among agencies, availability of regional data, mechanisms, tools, national capacities and an enabling environment. She outlined the contribution of FAO, via generating required analytic evidence on the status of biodiversity, promoting nature-based solutions, and implementing sustainable agricultural practices for protecting BFA in the countries. In conclusion,

she underlined the 2-days approach of the dialogue, with presentations, panel discussion and consultations, was to equip the participants with knowledge, increase understanding of the BFA importance in the region and share practical instruments and tools on how to strengthen the biodiversity mainstreaming across the agricultural sectors.

SESSION: INTERNATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORK AND INSTRUMENTS TO MAINSTREAMING BIODIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

First speaker, **Markus Lehmann, Director of the Science, Society, and Sustainable Futures Division of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat** provided an overview of the [Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework](#) (GBF) and its key provisions for agriculture and food systems. He highlighted that the agricultural production in extremely climate varied ECA region was tasked to adapting to climate change impacts. Prevailed by smallholders and family farms, the agricultural systems are also dependent on social inclusion and poverty reduction. Agricultural production and farms' resilience are supported by biodiversity. FAO's efforts to enhance biodiversity in building capacity and scaling up environmentally sensitive practices such as agroecology, policy coherence, and improving access to climate finance are critical. Already in 2016, the [Cancun Declaration on Mainstreaming the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity for Well-Being](#) called for significant changes in policies and practices for the conservation sustainable use of biodiversity in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism sectors. The agriculture sectors' full engagement into implementation of post-2020 GBF will be critical in achieving a carbon-

neutral or carbon-negative economies environment and restoring our relationship with nature.

Andrzej Januszewski from the Bilateral and Regional Environmental Cooperation, DG ENV of the European Commission presented the European Union [Farm to Fork](#) and [Biodiversity](#) Strategies, adopted in 2020, to put Europe's biodiversity on the path to recovery, protect nature, and improve sustainability of food systems. Andrzej called on to reintroduce nature into our lives. As half of the GDP in Europe is linked to nature, biodiversity is critical to developing all types of human activity and tackling environmental concerns. This aligns with the [EU Green Deal](#), which likewise supports environmental preservation and the development of sustainable economies. It recognises and emphasises the connection between biodiversity, soil and land management, water and ecosystem services which become its building blocks. Biodiversity loss is a burning issue, as the extinction of species in Europe continues. Furthermore, the pandemic revealed the vulnerabilities of our agrifood systems and demonstrated the urge to proactively tackle current concerns. To restore nature, the EU Biodiversity Strategy establishes legally binding targets by 2030. Those are to be accomplished through increasing organic production to at least 25 percent, cutting the pesticide use in half, planting billions of trees, and better management of water resources. For ensuring the effectiveness of such efforts, education, multi stakeholder involvement and unlocking finance engaging business are required, as well as neighbourhood integration. The Farm to Fork Strategy attempts to accelerate the transition to a sustainable food system with neutral or positive environmental impact, to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change, reverse biodiversity loss, and provide access to nutritious and affordable meals.



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Global FAO Strategy and Action Plan on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors was presented by **Frederic Castell, Senior Natural Resources Officer from the Office of Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environment at FAO**. He started by defining the BFA as the variety of life at genetic, species and ecosystem levels that contributes to agriculture and food production, which also includes associated biodiversity. FAO recognizes the role of biodiversity in enhancing agricultural and livelihood sustainability across the globe. More than 800 FAO projects, investing more than USD 2 billion, have biodiversity as the principal objective or as a significant objective. [FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural sectors](#) has four outcomes that seek to support and mainstream biodiversity conservation in policing and other operational activities. FAO and the CBD recognise the need to reduce consumption, support sustainable production, lead climate action and scale conservation/restoration approaches. The post-2020 GBF cannot succeed without the active participation of the agrifood sectors. Concerted efforts are needed to fast-track the implementation of the Post-2020 GBF once it is adopted in May.

Finally, **Didier Bazile, Senior Researcher and Biodiversity Advisor at the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD)**, presented the potential of on-farm biodiversity conservation for building resilience. Understanding biodiversity through its ecological, economic, historical and social dimensions is important in advancing environmental conservation approaches. Agriculture is consuming a large portion of terrestrial space. Cultivated diversity and diversity of crop wild relatives support adaptation to climate change, particularly in agricultural-dependent communities. The diversity of agro-ecosystems relates to both, ecosystemic and social dynamics. Increased recognition of multidimensional diversity will better support the adaptation of family farms to the global changes. Biodiversity governance at different scales must respect farmers' rights. The multiple dimensions of biodiversity make it a biological, social and political issue at the same time, which requires facilitating a dialogue between the different parties with multiple interests.



SESSION: INTERNATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORK AND INSTRUMENTS TO MAINSTREAMING BIODIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

To lay the foundation for the discussion, **Carolina Rizzi Starr, Agricultural Officer, FAO**, presented the findings of the [Report on monitoring schemes and data collection on biodiversity for food and agriculture in Eastern Europe and Central Asia](#). The study examined the existence of data collection, monitoring systems and conservation initiatives as well as legislation and policies related to BFA divided by the sub-groups of (1) Western Balkan countries and the Republic of Moldova, (2) the South Caucasus countries, Türkiye, Belarus and Ukraine and (3) Central Asia. Monitoring systems and data collection gaps reflect a region-wide lack of institutional capacities for monitoring the trends of BFA. The involvement of farmers in BFA monitoring and conservation remains inexistent or very low. The legislative framework and supporting policies for BFA are still not adequately established. To improve the BFA monitoring systems, a shift in the governance, adopting a producer centred approach, encompassing complexity

of BFA and targeting local species, varieties and breeds, is recommended. Better BFA protection requires a systemic approach to governance that, among others, integrates ecological, climate, livelihoods and food production objectives, respects international instruments, and promotes cross-sectorial legislative frameworks.

After the presentation of the panel, the **countries' experience in mainstreaming BFA** and **the ways for its improving** were discussed by the participants.

ALBANIA

Prof. Pellumb Abeshi from Agricultural University of Tirana emphasised the importance of supporting measures for the conservation and sustainable use of farmer varieties in Albania. Those can be: to establish a national network of farmers who conserve on-farm genetic resources, to create a national system for the testing and certification of seeds and planting materials for farmer varieties, and fix it in legislation and policies, as well as to formalise the farmers' seed markets for on-farm varieties. Another important issue needed is a system of training and capacity building, involving all actors, especially farmers, businesses, and relevant institutions. Agritourism can play role in presenting the value of local varieties for consumption, and for this collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism and Environment is important.

Klodiana Marika from the Ministry of Tourism and Environment presented the national policy framework on biodiversity and the state of the art in agricultural sectors, also in terms of climate change adaptation. She emphasised the interlinkages among the biodiversity and agriculture sectors in policy formulation and the need for FAO guidance to properly formulate such policies. The opportunities for improvement can be seen in targeting of agricultural public expenditure, including investments in extension services and infrastructure, strengthening farmer associations and cooperatives, including linking smallholders to finance, making direct payments conditional on good agricultural and environmental practices and not linked to intensification, pursuing land reform to address problems caused by the weak ownership rights and land markets, strengthening institutional and local capacity and supporting the incorporation of sustainability into sector policies, strategies, and regulations as well as promoting environmental education in school and training by civil society organizations.

AZERBAIJAN

Rashad Allahverdiyev from the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources mentioned that the harm of military





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conflicts on biodiversity should be considered as a driver. In the case of Azerbaijan, after the Second World War people migrated from an agricultural area, and the land was abandoned. After 30 years, this caused the conflict with local people and governmental agencies to gain these areas back for agricultural activity. Another specific of Azerbaijan is its downstream location, which makes it dependent on how other countries are managing the water resources and biodiversity. Capacity building, involving farmers, investors, researchers is needed. The national project on ecosystem services assessment with a focus on pastures has been recently implemented. For biodiversity protection, along with nature protected areas the UNESCO natural heritage site instrument may be used. Transboundary cooperation is important as species do not respect the national borders, especially what regards water resources and coastal areas.

TAJIKISTAN

Ubaydullo Akramov from the Center for Biodiversity and Biosafety, Committee for Environmental Protection shared the experience of Tajikistan that since 1995 undertook

measures to restore degraded ecosystems and biodiversity in the mountainous and arid zones by planting up to 15 million different plants each year. The national Sustainable development strategy, international funded projects and government programs helped increase the scope of activities to revive the agroecosystems. A draft Biodiversity Protection strategy up to 2030 is being developed and includes the section on BFA. The drivers and factors influencing biodiversity loss in ecosystems should be further researched, including the aspects of climate change. The establishment of the BFA restoring centres can be beneficial.

Khizrav Shermatov from the National Action Center for Environmental Protection of the Committee for Environmental Protection added that BFA mainstreaming is being given attention in many sectors of the economy, and BFA preservation is being included in development plans. Implemented projects include the preservation of wild relatives of cultivated varieties, innovative methods of adaptation, and modelling of the selected crops' productivity in various conditions of changing climate. Regional cooperation on biosafety, reduction of pesticide risks,

and within particular river basins is contributing to BFA mainstreaming objectives.

TÜRKIYE

Prof. Alptekin Karagöz from Aksaray University reminded us that land-use change and agricultural intensification are among the most significant drivers of biodiversity loss. Pastures are the main sources of biodiversity, but these are easily sacrificed. The government encouraged heavy use of agricultural inputs, which are the major causes of soil degradation and environmental pollution. Smallholders are neglected, plant diversity is decreased: between 1930 and 2010 botanical variety loss in wheat landraces constituted 76 percent including the extinction of two wheat species. After the green revolution, people began to leave rural areas, so their dependence on biodiversity weakened. Urbanisation caused the diminishing of traditional knowledge. Awareness-raising studies concerning the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, such as proper farming techniques, soil conservation methods, organic farming, clean energy, conservation and use of local varieties are carried out mainly by NGOs. Organic farming made rapid progress, although it is following a stagnant course today. Altogether 53 000 farmers are practising it on 280 000 hectares of land, which is not too much. GMO production is prohibited by law. Conservation agriculture is getting more popular especially in dry areas of Türkiye. FAO's projects and

support play important role in the expansion of the method. Biopiracy is a problem and related awareness-raising activities are organized.

On improving the biodiversity mainstreaming, Prof. Karagöz emphasised it to be a political choice. Benefits generated for the continued use of land and other services provided by biodiversity should be included in the economic valuation. The development plans, programs and investments need to be more integrated with biodiversity. Biodiversity conservation should be included in the education curricula of all levels, and the ways of integrating NGOs vast experience in training and awareness-raising should be explored. Traditional knowledge should be collected and registered. FAO is doing very important work by publishing series on this issue and should continue doing so as well as playing a guiding role by issuing codes, guidelines and implementing projects on the collection and use of traditional knowledge. Promotion of organic farming, conservation agriculture techniques and application of proper agronomic practices through subsidies and other means will also be beneficial.

The concluding remarks summarizing the key messages of the day marked the end of the first day of the Regional Dialogue.

The recording of the first part held on 16 November can be found [here](#).



DAY 2. 17 NOVEMBER 2021

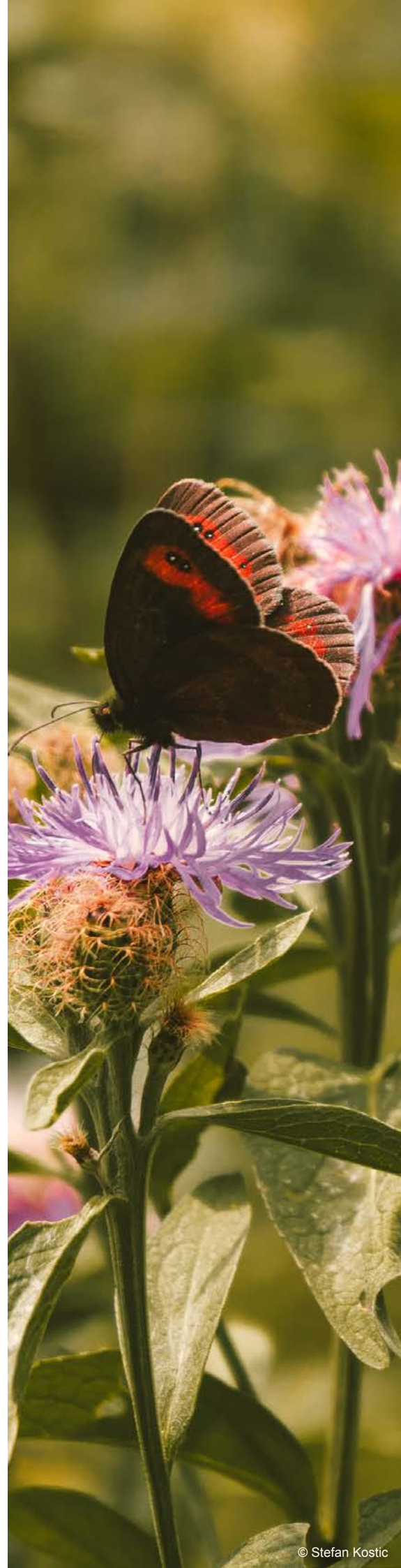
SESSION: BIODIVERSITY AS AN ADDING VALUE TO THE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS

To start, **Mariana Seremet from the NGO Gradina Moldovei** (Republic of Moldova) shared the experience of her own farm and the NGO she leads, emphasising the crucial importance of seed diversity in supporting food production, especially small-scale agriculture. In the Republic of Moldova, outmigration of people from rural areas leaves fertile soil uncultivated and causes loss of traditional knowledge. The tradition of saving own seeds is disappearing even among those who choose to stay. Moldova does not have a seed bank available for farmer uptake, only for scientific research. Most seeds come from abroad and can be of bad quality or not suitable for the local climate. Mariana started collecting and testing seeds in the family garden, later an NGO “Gradina Moldovei” (Garden on Moldova) was established to maintain a seed bank open to every citizen. It is working on a number of projects that shine a light on the importance of agroecology. The farm is running an experimental garden offering training, workshops and events sharing the practices of agroecology and showcasing the on-farm potential of closed ecological and economic cycles.

Secondly, **Marta Arnes Garcia from FAO** presented the Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) and how this approach can contribute to the conservation of BFA. Biodiversity and natural resources support the generation of ecosystem services (ESs) through providing fresh water and air, plant pollination, soil fertility, etc. Unsustainable practices and policies undermine ES affecting agricultural production and its sustainability. Environmental benefits provided by ESs are usually gained by society for free, as unintended effects, so-called positive externalities. And

PES can help in making ES “tangible” by capturing its economic value. Advantages of PES include the generation of revenues to ES providers and finance for nature protection, based on the “beneficiary pays” principle, as well as incentives to behaviour change. Even though there is no standard PES that can fit all sites and meet all demands, PES for small scale agriculture requires the consolidation of all three perspectives of sustainability to become an environmentally effective, economically efficient and socially equitable tool to complement other approaches to halting ecosystem degradation and preserving ESs.

Finally, **Enrico Ruzzier from the NGO World Biodiversity Association** presented the [Biodiversity Friend certification](#), a tool used for assessing the impact of agriculture on biodiversity. Farmers and producers are the custodians of a territory, and their role is crucial for the sustainable development of any agricultural activity. Without background knowledge, there is no biodiversity conservation. It is important to communicate how the food is grown and produced and what is the biodiversity that characterises this specific agricultural land. Thus, in 2010, a Biodiversity Friend standard that certifies the sustainability of an agricultural activity by assessing the impact of the production process on the biodiversity (through the soil, water, air etc. biodiversity indices) was developed. A voluntary standard aims at vegetable-growing agricultural businesses of any kind and size who believe in sustainable agriculture both integrated into the landscape and with low environmental impact. It guarantees biodiversity protection in agricultural activities by identifying critical issues in biodiversity conservation and suggesting compensatory or improvement actions and allows to adequately communicate the importance of protecting biodiversity. Also, it improves the confidence of consumers in the sustainability of the product.



CONSULTATIONS: ACTION PLAN FOR THE MAINSTREAMING BIODIVERSITY ACROSS AGRICULTURAL SECTORS

To introduce the topic for the consultations, **Anna Kanshieva from FAO** presented the priorities and key actions for the mainstreaming biodiversity across agricultural sectors in Eastern Europe and Central Asia proposed as an Action plan for 2022-2023. Based on the [Report on monitoring schemes and data collection on biodiversity for food and agriculture in Eastern Europe and Central Asia](#), challenges and gaps were identified in mainstreaming biodiversity in the region with three being priority ones. To address these challenges and bridge the gaps, the FAO developed the Regional Action plan for biodiversity mainstreaming across agricultural sectors in 17 countries in the Balkans, Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia. Aligned with the international policy framework on biodiversity, it acknowledges the need for appropriate recognition of gender equality, women's empowerment, youth, gender-responsive approaches, and the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in its implementation. The Action Plan has four outcomes — two targeting countries and two concerning the operation of the Regional office — and two types of activities, of regular programme and of relevant projects, grouped into core areas and actions.

The subsequent consultations with the dialogue participants were focused on the activities within two Action Plan's outcomes targeting the countries. The task of the working groups was to

prioritise between the activities for the most relevant for the participant's country / region. The results of the consultations are present in the next section.

In conclusion, **Irene Hoffmann from the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture** highlighted the main take-away messages of the Regional Dialogue. She reminded how the region is diverse in terms of ecosystems, production systems, regulatory frameworks, and yet the problems are common — rural outmigration and land abandonment. The two-day discussion showed that that BFA mainstreaming is important to not only the agricultural sectors, but also to other economic sectors. Many topics connect to the biodiversity, among those are land and soil management, forest, water and ecosystem services. It has to combine the social and economic and environmental goals and we cannot keep it in our silos, we have to really reach out to each other. Society, business and other stakeholders need to be brought on board to better understand the value of biodiversity in ecosystem services. Irene emphasised that reduction of the negative impacts of agricultural practices on biodiversity to improve use of fertiliser and pesticides, reduce pollution, address invasive alien species is no less important goals of the strategy on BFA mainstreaming. The action for BFA mainstreaming should be based on country needs and requests, thus it is important for the regional office to engage countries in the dialogue to take relevant action and provide support whenever local conditions require.

The recording of the second part held on November 17th can be found [here](#).



CONCLUSIONS

Regional priorities

As a result of the panel discussion and the consultations, the priority regional needs and programme activities in the regional Action Plan for the Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors in Eastern European and Central Asia countries were identified.

Four priority activities under the **Outcome 1: Support provided to Members, at their request, to enhance their capacity to mainstream biodiversity:**

1 Prepare / review policy proposals for the optimization of relevant national policy and legal frameworks, regulations or related instruments, to support countries in the harmonisation of the legal and policy basis of agricultural sectors with a systemic approach to BFA conservation and sustainable use.

2 Provide supporting activities for countries' implementation of global plans of action on animal genetic resources (AnGR), aquatic genetic resources (AqGR), forest genetic resources (FGR), and plant genetic resources (PGR), as requested by countries.

3 Prepare baseline studies, with data available, on (a) wild biodiversity loss caused by food systems and the existing causes of BFA and wild biodiversity degradation in food systems, including the impacts of climate change, and (b) BFA conserved and maintained on-farm, including the diversity of honeybees, to support countries in the generation, collection, analysis and dissemination of BFA data and knowledge.

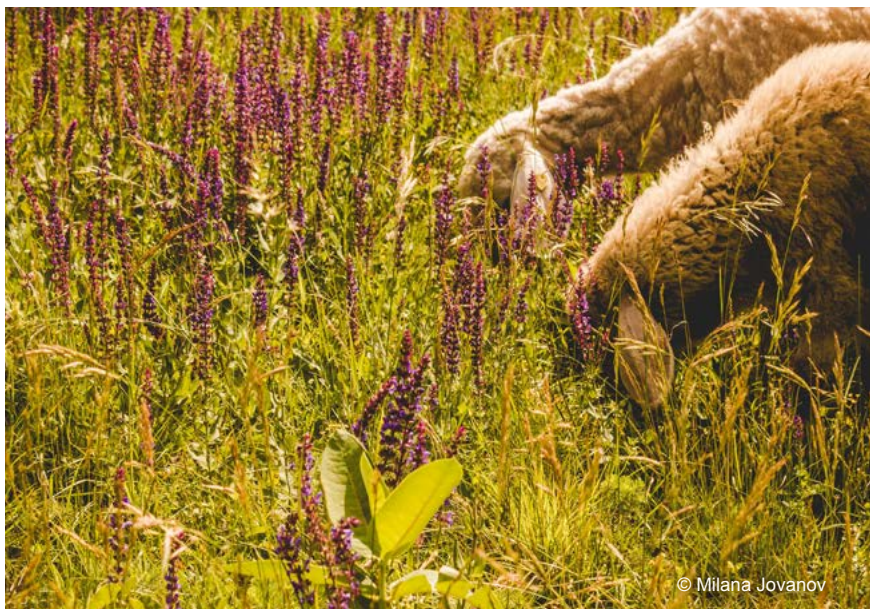
4 Prepare methodological guidelines / systematise reports on developing and piloting economic instruments that can generate finance for BFA mainstreaming and sustainable ecosystem approaches, including PES scheme and Climate finance opportunities, to support countries in developing capacity for mobilising resources for BFA mainstreaming and sustainable agriculture approaches.

Two priority activities under the **Outcome 3: Regionally recognized role of biodiversity and its ecosystem services for food security and nutrition:**

5 Collect, map, analyse and disseminate regional/ national case studies/ lessons learned of nature-based solutions (NbS), including in organic agriculture, traditional agriculture, targeting BFA conservation and sustainable use, to contribute into sharing and uptake of

good practices and tools that demonstrate the links between BFA and food security and nutrition and support the transition to achieve BFA-friendly agriculture and sustainable food systems.

6 Develop and disseminate communication materials, targeting public institutions and decision-makers, about (a) the role of small-scale producers and Indigenous Peoples and local communities as custodians of biodiversity and the importance of local and indigenous knowledge for BFA conservation and sustainable use (b) how to mainstream and integrate policy objectives for BFA conservation and sustainable use with climate change, to raise awareness amongst stakeholders about ecosystem approaches, the value of BFA and the benefits it can bring to improve the institutional and legal framework and facilitate decision-making.



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Recommendations

Summarizing the views of the participants of the two-day Regional Dialogue, a set of general recommendations for mainstreaming BFA in the region was brought to the light:

- To focus on **smallholders and small-scale farmers and local and indigenous communities**, as they are the key food producers in the region and the keepers of local diversity of plants and breeds.
- To foster a complex ecosystem approach, to integrate BFA into a broader context and address together with the issue of **climate change**, to align policies and integrate instruments.
- As multiple dimensions of BFA make it an ecological, economic, social and political issue, to encourage coordination and cooperation **across agricultural and other economic sectors**.
- To follow the **inclusivity principle**, engage in dialogue stakeholders with multiple interests and respect farmers' rights at different scales of BFA governance.
- To prioritise **generation and access to data**, as it is primary to policy development, resource mobilisation and other actions.
- To engage in knowledge producing and sharing and **adjusting the language of communication** to suit various audiences and stakeholders.
- To target at **raising awareness, training and capacity building** regional action.



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ANNEX 1. REGIONAL DIALOGUE AGENDA

16 NOVEMBER 2021	
MODERATION: ANNA KANSHIEVA, FAO	
11:00–11:05	INTRODUCTORY VIDEO
11:05–11:10	OPENING REMARKS Raimund Jehle, Regional Programme Leader for Europe and Central Asia, FAO
11:10–11:15	INTRODUCTION Tania Santivanez, Delivery manager, Regional Initiative “Natural resources, biodiversity and climate change”, FAO
INTERNATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORK AND INSTRUMENTS TO MAINSTREAMING BIODIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE	
11:15–11:25	UN CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND THE POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK: ACTION ON BIODIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE Markus Lehmann, Science, Society, and Sustainable Futures Division, CBD Secretariat
11:25–11:35	EU FARM TO FORK AND BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES: THE PATH TO SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS Andrzej Januszewski, Bilateral and Regional Environmental Cooperation, DG ENV, European Commission
11:35–11:45	GLOBAL FAO STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN ON MAINSTREAMING BIODIVERSITY ACROSS AGRICULTURAL SECTORS Frederic Castell, Office of Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environment, FAO
11:45–11:55	LET’S CULTIVATE BIODIVERSITY – GROWING RESILIENCE Didier Bazile, The French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD)
PANEL DISCUSSION: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR BIODIVERSITY MAINSTREAMING IN EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA	
11:55–12:15	CHALLENGES IN MAINSTREAMING BIODIVERSITY ACROSS AGRICULTURAL SECTORS IN EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA Carolina Rizzi Starr, Agricultural Officer, FAO
12:15–12:25	ALBANIA Prof. Dr Pellumb Abeshi, Agricultural University of Tirana Klodiana Marika, Ministry of Environment
12:25–12:35	TAJIKISTAN Ubaydullo Akramov, National Centre for Biodiversity and Biosafety, Committee for Environmental Protection Khisrav Shermatov, National Centre for Realization of Environmental Protection Actions, Committee for Environmental Protection
12:35–12:45	AZERBAIJAN Rashad Allahverdiyev, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources
12:45–12:55	TÜRKIYE Prof. Dr Alptekin Karagöz, Aksaray University
12:55–13:00	WRAP UP AND CLOSING REMARKS OF THE FIRST DAY
17 NOVEMBER 2021	
11:00–11:05	FIRST DAY RECAP Tania Santivanez, Delivery manager, Regional Initiative “Natural resources, biodiversity and climate change”, FAO
BIODIVERSITY AS AN ADDING VALUE TO THE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS MODERATOR: TANIA SANTIVANEZ	
11:05–11:20	SMALLHOLDERS, FAMILY FARMERS AND SMALL-SCALE FOOD PRODUCERS AS CUSTODIANS OF BIODIVERSITY Mariana Seremet, Gradina Moldovei (Republic of Moldova)
11:20–11:35	PAYMENTS FOR ECOSYSTEM SERVICES: ROLE IN SMALL-SCALE AGRICULTURE Marta Arnes Garcia, Consultant on GIAHS and NbS, FAO
11:35–11:50	BIODIVERSITY FRIEND CERTIFICATION: ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF AGRICULTURE IN BIODIVERSITY Enrico Ruzzier, World Biodiversity Association ONLUS (Italy)
CONSULTATIONS: ACTION PLAN FOR THE MAINSTREAMING BIODIVERSITY ACROSS AGRICULTURAL SECTORS MODERATOR: CAROLINA RIZZI STARR	
11:50–12:05	PRIORITIES AND KEY ACTIONS FOR THE MAINSTREAMING BIODIVERSITY ACROSS AGRICULTURAL SECTORS IN EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA: FOUNDATION FOR THE DISCUSSION Anna Kanshieva, Biodiversity Expert, FAO
12:05–12:40	GROUP DISCUSSION Facilitators: Carolina Rizzi Starr, Marta Arnes Garcia, Anna Kanshieva, Evetta Zenina, FAO
12:40–12:50	PLENARY
12:50–13:00	CLOSING REMARKS Irene Hoffmann, Secretary, FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

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ACROSS AGRICULTURAL SECTORS**
IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA