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Community agrobiodiversity management in Europe: The role of community seed banks

Regine Andersen
Senior Research Fellow (Dr. Polit)

Side event on the importance of sustainable use of PGRFA in Europe
at GB8, 15 November 2019, at the FAO in Rome

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Overview

- Background on community seed banks (CSBs):
 - Common features of CSBs
 - Historical roots
 - Some words on research
 - Context of ITPGRFA
- Survey on CSBs
- Ongoing efforts in Europe to organize the CSB initiatives



While we are negotiating...



Earth Negotiation Bulletin, IISD



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Trying to solve huge challenges...



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For 15 years (and more...)



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Something is happening...



Arche Noah,
Austria



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Map of Community Seed Banks in Europe. If you want to be shown on this map with your initiative, please contact us [here](#).



This project has received funding from the European Union's H2020 Programme under grant agreement no 633571

CSBs: Some common features

- Saving/storing seeds for conservation, maintenance and making them available
- Jointly managed by the people involved, as networks, cooperatives or organizations
- Work mostly on a non-profit basis, with an aim of improving seed and food security and the livelihoods of farmers (DCs)
- Are often platforms for community based-agrobiodiversity management in a broad sense, including capacity building in seed selection, breeding and agricultural methods



Historical roots

- Seed savers in the North, from the 1970's
- CSBs in the South from the 1980s, different forms and functions
- Aimed at maintaining plant genetic diversity and provide access for farmers, horticulturalists and gardeners who cannot find what they need or wish in the formal seed sector



Treaty implementation from below

- CSBs in Europe have evolved as grassroot initiatives from farmers or gardeners, mainly
- Important contribution to the conservation and sustainable use of crop genetic diversity, and to make this available for farmers and gardeners.
- Thus important contribution to the implementation of the Plant Treaty in Europe.



A survey from DIVERSIFOOD

- Several studies on CSBs in the South, few in the North:
- Survey by the EU Horizon 2020 project DIVERSIFOOD was carried out in 2016-17
- DIVERSIFOOD was aimed at evaluating and enriching the diversity of cultivated plants within diverse agro-ecosystems to improve their performance, resilience and quality.





COMMUNITY SEED BANKS IN EUROPE

Results from a questionnaire survey
Carried out by **Beate Koller, ARCHE NOAH, Austria**
in collaboration with **DIVERSIFOOD-partners**

Presentation by **Regine Andersen, Senior Research Fellow,**
Fridtjof Nansens Institutt/DIVERSIFOOD



Embedding crop diversity and
networking for local high quality
food systems



This project has received funding
from the European Union's Horizon Programme
under grant agreement no. 101017727

www.diversifood.eu

Further reading

**COMMUNITY SEED BANKS:
SHARING EXPERIENCES
FROM NORTH
AND SOUTH**

REPORT
FROM A GISE EVENT HELD
11 NOVEMBER 2017,
DURING THE SEVENTH
SESSION OF THE
GOVERNING BODY OF
THE INTERNATIONAL TREATY
ON PLANT GENETIC
RESOURCES FOR FOOD
AND AGRICULTURE
IN KOSGAL, RWANDA

Flágra Aráimair, Pádraig
Sinnott, Glóia Ó Súilleabháin,
Náilíní, Fíona Keenan and
Andrew Murray

Logos: Diversifood, European Union, International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, Bioversity International, LEADER

**COMMUNITY SEED BANKS
IN EUROPE**

**REPORT
FROM A STAKEHOLDER
WORKSHOP IN THE
FRAMEWORK OF THE
DIVERSIFOOD PROJECT,
HELD IN ROME ON
21 SEPTEMBER 2017**

Edited by Deane Kofler, Bella Bartha,
Riccardo Succi, Maria Carrascosa,
Piero Pinella and Ragnir Andriessen

With contributions of Fátima Sáez, Brigitte
Wobst, Fabrizio Barba, Esther González
Bono, Ximena Cadena, Vinougan Chakir,
Zanna Nazario Chaves, Christiana Estanovic,
Catalina Fariña, Susana Dugganwagalla
García, Jean-François Guéhenno, Johannes
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Matti, Serey Demomène, Alice Padoa, Emil
Ratzer, Gerrit Paulsen, David Martin Pico,
Eva Ricci, Aurora Sánchez, Simon van
Soestbergen, Barbara Tagliapietra, Rosana Veronesi

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- Introduction
- Presentation of initiatives
- Outlook with a global perspective

Logos: Diversifood, European Union, Bioversity International, LEADER, and other project partners.

www.diversifood.eu

Community seed banks

- Are bridges between national gene banks and farmers/horticulturalists/gardeners
- Promote the management of crop genetic diversity on-farm – expand diversity
- May provide a platform for cooperation with breeders and scientists – for more capacity
- May enable the expanded use of crop genetic diversity along the value chain
- Promote enthusiasm for crop diversity and increased popularity

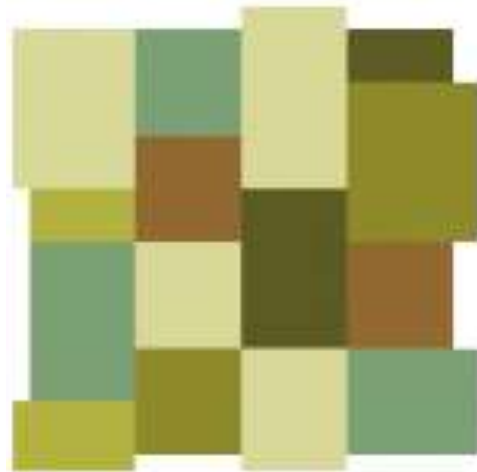




Establishment of Réseau Semences Paysannes, France, 2003



Efforts to organize initiatives



DYNAVERSITY

www.dynaversity.eu



www.farmerspride.eu



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Thank you for your attention!

