

SHIFT Prize – Award for Transformative Agroecological Research

FARMING SYSTEMS COMPARISON IN THE TROPICS (SYSCOM)



Program title Farming Systems Comparisons in the Tropics (SysCom)

Estimated duration Phase 4 : 2019 – 2022

Project countries Bolivia, India, Kenya

Implemented by Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), Switzerland



CONTEXT

Although conventional agriculture and the green revolution led to an increase in global food production and productivity, these developments come at the cost of deteriorating natural resources and were based on fossil energy sources. Future developments thus have to be guided by a more systems-oriented approach like organic agriculture. However, solid data on the benefits and drawbacks of organic agriculture in the tropics is still missing and requires specific on-station and on-farm experiments.



APPROACH

The SysCom project compares different production systems to obtain scientific evidence on their potential and limitations in order to develop systems that contribute to sustainable agriculture. Scientific data are obtained from long-term experiments (LTEs), mainly comparing organic and conventional agriculture, as well as other sustainable approaches such as agroforestry systems. The LTEs are complemented by participatory on-farm research to ensure direct benefits for local farming communities.



IMPACT

The data obtained from the LTEs provides knowledge on production systems that enhance soil health, encourage diversification and protect ecosystem function while enhancing systems' resilience. These findings, in turn, offer sound evidence to complement the regional and international dialogue on global challenges linked to agricultural production, food, and nutrition security as well as societal, economic and environmental sustainability, providing important information for decision-makers to reach the SDGs.



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