

28<sup>th</sup> June 2022

Call for expression of interest: **Consultancy to develop two policy briefs on the contribution of agroecology to the conservation of biodiversity beyond the farm.**

### Summary

The Biovision Foundation is launching a call for expression of interest for a consultant based in Switzerland or Europe (ideally) to support the Biovision-FAO initiative “FAO Geneva Dialogues for Agroecology”. This initiative aims to document, map and discuss multiple pathways for food system transformation through agroecology. This is done under the leadership of a guiding group and through an open dialogue with international actors (with a focus, albeit not exclusive, on the Geneva international community). The consultant will support the initiative, through the coordination and drafting of two policy briefs on the topic of “the contributions of agroecology to the conservation of biodiversity beyond the farm”.

The dialogue will i) explore and raise awareness of the potential of agroecology for biodiversity conservation beyond the farm, and ii) explore concrete pathways to increase synergies and collaboration between the agroecology and conservation communities in food system transformation through policy reform, knowledge creation, and investments. For more information, please consult the concept note of this dialogue at the end of this document, and the concept note of the dialogue series at:

[https://www.agroecology-pool.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/AE-Dialogues\\_Concept-planning.pdf](https://www.agroecology-pool.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/AE-Dialogues_Concept-planning.pdf)

### Main Tasks and Responsibilities:

The proposed work consists of the following activities:

**1) Participate in the design workshops for this dialogue, which will define its focus and structure.**

**Tasks include:**

- a. Participate in the inception workshop of the guiding group (virtually end of July 2022 – attendance negotiable in case of schedule conflicts)
- b. Lead the design of the structure of the policy briefs and the process to develop them. One brief will target the agroecology community (focusing on reflections that can strengthen the mission of the Agroecology Coalition, e.g., policy recommendations). The second brief will target the wider conservation community by discussing the potential of agroecology as an approach to addressing the drivers of biodiversity loss.
- c. Bilateral meetings with guiding group members to follow leads and discuss content relevant to the policy briefs after the inception workshop
- d. Initial scope of literature on the topic through the consultant's own research and through the suggestions done by the guiding group

The scope of tasks c) and d) will depend on outcomes from the inception workshop (task a).

Deliverable: A short concept note for the policy briefs (e.g., including guiding questions, the outline of the document, methodology to integrate inputs from the dialogue, etc.).

**2) Support and participate in the FAO Geneva Dialogue on the topic of the contributions of agroecology to the conservation of biodiversity beyond the farm to be held on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2022.**

**Tasks include:**

- a. Support the coordination of agenda and format of the event by providing inputs on content, speakers, and messages
- b. Identify possible case studies relevant to the theme of the dialogue, and secure presentations of these case studies in the dialogue
- c. Prepare and coordinate a background document to be shared ahead of the dialogue presenting the topic and problematic and guiding questions
- d. Coordinate the gathering of inputs from the dialogues to be integrated into the policy briefs
- e. Documentation and organization of outputs coming out from dialogue, which will be the main inputs to the policy briefs. This will be done in collaboration with the organizers.

Deliverables:

Background document to be shared ahead of the dialogue.  
Documentation of outputs coming out from the dialogue.

**3) Coordinate further collection of inputs for the policy briefs.**

**Tasks include:**

- a. Produce a first draft of the briefs to be presented and consulted with the guiding group.
- b. Incorporate feedback from guiding group after consultation and group meeting.
- c. Conduct any other rounds of feedback (e.g., bilaterally) with members of the guiding group when necessary.
- d. Presentation of the final draft of review to the guiding group. Incorporation of final messages as identified with this group.

The briefs should provide evidence, showcases and reflections that can help identify 1) the contributions of agroecology toward biodiversity conservation beyond the farm, 2) recommendations to enhance synergies between the agroecology and conservation communities, and 3) key messages on whether conservation targets can negate the upscale of agroecology?

Deliverable: Draft of two policy briefs. Depending on the length, it should contain an executive summary/abstract that provides a good overview of the topic for the audience.

**4) Support final drafting and dissemination of policy briefs.**

- a. Assistance with the design of the policy briefs that present reflections discussed in the dialogue event.
- b. Provide support to dissemination activities of final policy briefs, including presentation to the Agroecology Coalition (<https://agroecology-coalition.org/>).
- c.

Deliverable: Final draft of two policy briefs

**Nature of Relationship:**

The Consultant will be hired as an independent contractor and not as an employee of Biovision.

**Required skills and qualifications**

<b>Necessary Qualifications</b>	<b>Further necessary Skills</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Postgraduate degree in political science, land systems science, governance, sustainability or other relevant fields (Proven writing and communication skills to non-scientific audiences required)</li><li>• OR scientific or policy journalist with proven knowledge and experience in the fields of agricultural development, conservation, biodiversity</li><li>• Knowledge on conservation, biodiversity and agricultural policies and frameworks. Knowledge and experience on agroecology are desirable.</li><li>• Good understanding of food system transformation</li><li>• Fluency in English</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ability to transfer recommendations from a multi-stakeholder process into a policy brief (coordination of multiple inputs and ideas)</li><li>• Ability to work with limited standardized procedures and need for own initiative and independent work</li><li>• Experience in multistakeholder dialogue</li><li>• Skilful writing and experience in writing policy briefs.</li></ul>

**Submission of expression of interest**

To apply, please send your entire electronic application documents by 8<sup>th</sup> July 2022 to [c.pavageau@biovision.ch](mailto:c.pavageau@biovision.ch). This should include a detailed curriculum vitae, cost for the proposed work, and a work timeline. A decision will be made by 15<sup>th</sup> July 2022 or before if a suitable candidate is found beforehand.

We expect the work to start as soon as possible until 31 October 2022. For further information please contact [agroecology@biovision.ch](mailto:agroecology@biovision.ch).



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## “Agroecology Dialogue Series”

### **Beyond the farm: Exploring the synergies between the agroecology and conservation communities**

Concept note version of 22.06.2022

**Dates and format:** 14<sup>th</sup> Sept 2022 (TBC), hybrid form (Geneva and online)

*The Agroecology Dialogue Series is an FAO and the Biovision Foundation initiative to support the Coalition for food systems transformation through Agroecology (Agroecology Coalition).*

This dialogue will build on the past efforts to connect agroecology and biodiversity conservation topics (e.g., CFS 49 side event, FAO events). Various frameworks have been outlined to advance either agroecological food system transformation and/or biodiversity conservation: (e.g., post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), commitments on achieving Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN), implementation of the UN Decade of Ecosystem restoration, and the CFS' Policy Recommendations on Agroecological and other Innovative Approaches). The potential of these efforts for transforming our food systems will depend on synergies and collaborative action, evidence mobilization, an enabling policy environment, and the increased availability of resources. At the same time, there are growing concerns that competing interests from conservation approaches might negate the upscale of agroecological approaches.

#### **BACKGROUND**

##### **The current pressures from our food systems on nature remain a significant source of degradation and biodiversity loss**

- Our global food system has played a key role in exacerbating the climate and biodiversity crisis.
- Between 18 to 33% of agricultural lands currently have insufficient biodiversity: this degrades ecosystem functions, creates unacceptable risk for food security, and compromises the resilience and sustainability sought <sup>[1]</sup>
- There is increasing recognition of the importance of transforming food systems for reducing pressures on biodiversity, preventing the transgression of planetary boundaries, and in strategies to mitigate and adapt toward climate change.
- Different actors in the food system have put forward a wide range of sustainable agricultural approaches. Yet, a systemic view of food system transformation is gaining recognition as the way forward to solve some of our more pressing environmental and social issues.
- Given the diversity of sustainable agricultural approaches that have been brought forward, there is a need to clarify the many terminologies, assess the evidence that underpins them, and understand their real contributions to biodiversity conservation under different local and regional contexts.

##### **Agroecological transformation of food systems can contribute to biodiversity conservation beyond the farm**



- Agroecology is recognized as one of the approaches that can drive food system transformation towards sustainability. World Conservation Congress, for instance, in its WCC-2020-Res-007 Resolution calls for the recognition of agroecological practices as nature-based solutions.
- Agroecology explicitly promotes the sustainable use of biodiversity on-farm, the importance of species and genetically diverse production systems, and the benefits of rich diets. By planning and managing diversity, agroecological approaches enhance the provisioning of ecosystem services, including pollination and soil health, upon which agricultural production depends.
- However, the contributions of agroecology to the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems beyond the farm are less explicitly recognized within existing narratives of the agroecology or conservation communities.
- Such contributions include for instance:
  - o Increasing resources (e.g., food, shelter, etc.), habitat area, and functional connectivity for locally and globally endangered species
  - o Reducing edge effects, leakages, and runoffs to the landscape and protected areas
  - o Maintaining complexity by embedding natural habitat in agricultural landscapes
  - o Reducing leakages and runoffs to the landscape (in particular aquatic ecosystems)
  - o Maintaining overall ecosystem processes (e.g., pollination, nutrient cycling, water cycling) that are crucial for maintaining overall ecosystem integrity and that underpin the services of ecosystems to society

## OBJECTIVES

Thus, the objectives of this dialogue are

- 1) To explore and raise awareness of the potential of agroecology for the conservation of biodiversity beyond the farm
- 2) To explore concrete pathways to increase synergies and collaboration between the agroecology and conservation communities in food system transformation through policy reform, knowledge creation, and investments.

## POTENTIAL GUIDING QUESTIONS TO THE DIALOGUE:

### The contributions of agroecology toward biodiversity conservation beyond the farm

- How does agroecology contribute to the conservation of population and species?
- How does agroecology contribute to overall ecosystem integrity and functionality?
- In what ways can agroecology address the drivers of biodiversity loss? What is the evidence? What evidence gaps are there?

### Enhancing synergies between the agroecology and conservation communities

- How to grow consensus toward agroecology as an effective tool to address the biodiversity crisis?
- How to increase policy support, investment, and research synergies for integrating agroecology and biodiversity conservation approaches?



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- How to bring conversation actors to the agroecology movement?

#### **Can conservation targets negate the upscale of agroecology? For example,**

- By increasing land constraints to comply with area-based targets (e.g., 30x30, half-earth)
- By competing for land with restoration/rewilding programs
- By promoting agriculture intensification to spare land
- By reinforcing “carbon tunnel vision” through conservation solutions that are not systemic and operate through climate mitigation and adaptation mechanisms (e.g. tree planting, reforestation).

#### **Potential key case studies/examples**

The case studies will consist of examples of programmes implementing agroecological approaches that provide wider biodiversity conservation benefits.

- Agroforestry systems in Madagascar or India
- Partridge project north-sea region
- Traditional cattle farming in Los Llanos region
- A case study on high mountain conservation?

#### **Core guiding group for the theme**

The design of the dialogue will be led by a core guiding group, which will be composed of partner organizations (including the Agroecology Coalition) and external experts/stakeholders. The members will bring expertise to the topic as well as connections to broader networks.

#### **Potential experts/ key speakers**

- Martina Fleckenstein (WWF): potential key note speaker?
- Maria Santos (University of Zurich): lead author ipbes science assessments
- Radhika Murti (IUCN): Director of the Global Ecosystem Management Programme
- Potentially someone involved in COP 15: e.g. Costa Rican government as a key actor that can bring recommendations to the process

#### **Audience for this theme**

- 50 participants
- the *Agroecology coalition* members and its working groups
- Conservation community: actors involved in COP15 negotiations or science bodies linked to these processes, actors promoting specific conservation frameworks (e.g. GBF, nature-based solutions, ecosystem restoration)
- International environmental bodies or unions (UNEP, IUCN, WCMC)
- Civil society organizations (e.g. WWF, WCS, The Nature Conservancy,
- Policymakers designing or implementing conservation policies
- Actors from the inputs production sector: private sector, but also public/investment actors: WBCSD, WEF communities, GDPRD
- Other Policymakers designing or implementing agricultural policies (Food Policy Forum for Change)



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## Relevant resources

- Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Science briefs on targets, goals and monitoring in support of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework negotiations. 2022. CBD/WG2020/4/INF/2/Rev.2. Available from:  
<https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/c874/6eb7/813f0201cd67299c9eb10a4a/wg2020-04-inf-02rev-02-en.pdf>
- World Conservation Congress resolution on “Developing agroecological practices as nature-based solutions”  
[https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/resrecfiles/WCC\\_2020\\_RES\\_007\\_EN.pdf](https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/resrecfiles/WCC_2020_RES_007_EN.pdf)
- World Conservation Congress resolution on “Transforming global food systems through sustainable land management that is aligned to the UN SDGs”  
[https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/resrecfiles/WCC\\_2020\\_RES\\_003\\_EN.pdf](https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/resrecfiles/WCC_2020_RES_003_EN.pdf)
- <https://www.iucn.org/theme/global-policy/our-work/convention-biological-diversity-cbd/post-2020-global-biodiversity-framework/post-2020-resources>
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- <https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/2020-017-En.pdf>