Focus Group ‘Local plant genetic resources in view of climate change and biodiversity loss’

Chania, Greece
20-21 May 2025

From the 1st meeting to the second meeting

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Focus Group ‘Local perennial plant genetic resources in view of climate change and biodiversity loss’ 1st meeting | Madrid, Spain
27 November 2024

From the 1st to the 2nd meeting

November 2024	**1st meeting (27-28 November)**
December 2024	Preparation of draft report on 1st meeting's outcome Start of Mini Papers' process
January - February 2025	Conclusion of draft report on 1st meeting's outcome Mini Papers' 1st draft ready
March – April 2025	Revisions of Mini Papers' 1st draft Preparation of 2nd meeting (Chania, Greece)
May 2025	Mini Papers' 2nd draft ready **2nd meeting (20-21 May, Chania, Greece)**

From the 1st to the 2nd meeting

November 2024 › 1st meeting (27-28 November)

- ✓ **Starting paper**
- ✓ Showcase of **innovative projects** from practitioners (posters & presentations)
- ✓ Identify **barriers & challenges** for farmers in conserving, using & valorising under-utilised local perennial crops
- ✓ Identify key **aspects to valorise** local perennial plant varieties from environmental & economic viewpoint
- ✓ Identification of topics for **Mini-Papers**

Question: How can the **conservation & utilisation** of local under-utilised varieties of perennial crops be **attractive & profitable** for farmers and thereby **contribute to biodiversity-friendly sustainable farming under climate change**?

1. Identify **benefits** of local under-utilised perennial varieties in adapting to climate change & maintaining biodiversity;
2. Identify the **challenges and opportunities for farmers** in conserving and using under-utilised local perennial crops;
3. Collect and highlight **good practices and inspiring success stories**, approaches, and methodologies for maintaining and cultivating local perennial crops, covering different pedo-climatic areas;
4. Identify **examples of valorising local perennial plant varieties** (from environmental & economic point of view);

From the 1st to the 2nd meeting

November 2024 › **1st meeting** (27-28 November)

Benefits for farmers in conserving, using & valorising local under-utilised perennial crops

Aspects		Benefits
Conservation	- Pride of heritage maintenance - Additional income (if paid) - Part of network with research sector	- Acknowledgement of farmers' input - Prevention of genetic erosion - Rural development of conservation areas
Use	- On-farm diversification - More ecosystem services - Climatic resilience - Lower inputs	- Potential adaptation to abiotic & biotic stresses (climate, pests etc) - Genetics resources for all farming scenarios - Less environmental footprint
Valorization	- Unique character of product - Develop rural areas & tourism - Development of new products	- Support recognition of regional identity - Diversifying production - Recognition for agroecosystem & biodiversity maintenance

Clustered under broader categories, regarding aspects of climate change & biodiversity loss:

- ✓ Climate change adaptation, resilience & mitigation
- ✓ Agroecosystem diversification
- ✓ Low-input farming
- ✓ Breeding
- ✓ Cultural & Economic Importance

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Aspects	Barriers	Challenges	Opportunities
Conservation	- Lack of knowledge, training & motivation - Cost & economic sustainability - Lack of generational replacement - Access to PGR material - Availability of plant material	- Keep maintenance standards - Acknowledgement of agricultural heritage - Gap of knowledge (researchers *vs* advisers *vs* farmers) - Available information on cultivars - Upscaling cultivation - Support germplasm collections - Changing conditions of climate & market	- Access to specific EU programs & funding - Participation in decision making process - Allow traditional cultivars to keep evolving - Enhance agroecosystems resilience/services - Potential for participatory breeding - **Olive:** Increased traditional uses
Use	- Access to material in *ex-situ* collection & nurseries - Lack of knowledge & advisory services - Production of planting material - **Grapevine**: Appellations and regulations	- Cutting-edge technologies - Limited information about varieties - Demonstration farms - Recovering related TAK - Involvement of nurseries / propagation centers - Varieties resistant to diseases - Improve productivity	- Traditional Agricultural Knowledge (TAK) - Developing breeding programs for local conditions - Detect agronomic traits - Diversification of production & resilience to environmental stress - Market needs - Develop agroforestry systems - **Grapevine:** New wine styles
Valorization	- Low yield - Lack of governmental support for short value chain - Lack of public awareness - Consumer connection - Market access - Inexistent short value chain are many times - **Fruit**: More processed products	- Short chains markets - Building up proper supply chain - Branding & labelling - Promote access by market - Added value with other activities - Consumers involvement - Consumer awareness of their importance - **Grapevine:** new marketable products (less alcohol, etc)	- Better consumers awareness in local heritage - Increase nutritional value of products - New niche markets - (Re)invent products - Additional (increased) income. - Diversification of activities (e.g., tourism) - Supporting rural population maintenance - Improve customer awareness - **Grapevine:** Broader flavours

Barriers, challenges & opportunities for farmers

Highlighting multidimensional respective issues, related to farming, research, and market-related aspects:

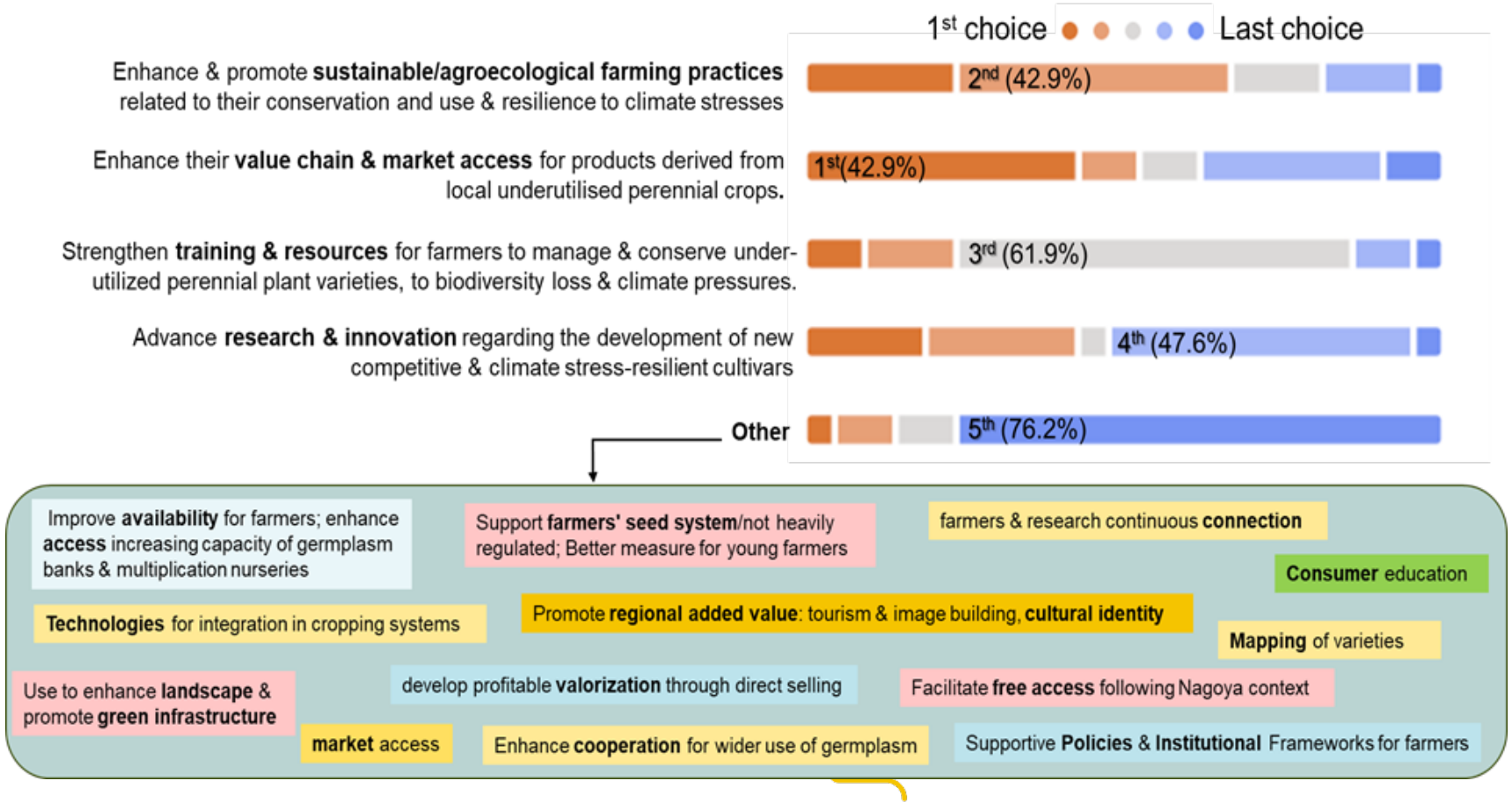
- ✓ Genetic erosion & biodiversity loss
- ✓ Traditional Agricultural Knowledge (TAK) & formal training
- ✓ Market and Economic Constraints

From the 1st to the 2nd meeting

November 2024 › **1st meeting** (27-28 November)

Important priorities

Experts' survey, prioritizing **most important aspects** of conservation & use of local under-utilised perennial plant genetic resources, in view of climate change & biodiversity loss

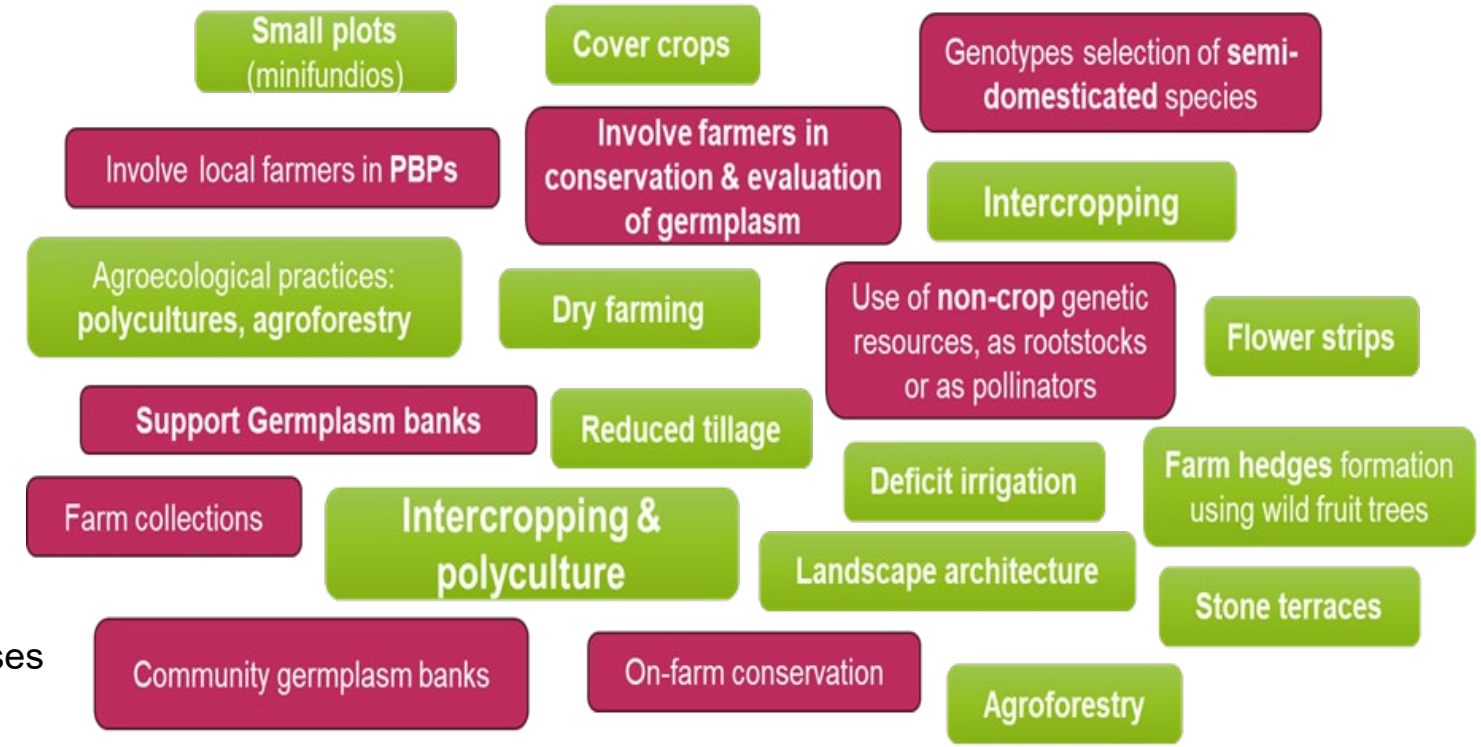


From the 1st to the 2nd meeting

November 2024 › **1st meeting** (27-28 November)

Innovative practices, approaches & methodologies in different pedo-climatic areas

Experts' survey, naming **good farming practices** of conservation & use of local under-utilised perennial plant genetic resources, in view of climate change & biodiversity loss



Agronomic practices

- ✓ Polyculture
- ✓ Intercropping:
- ✓ Agroforestry systems
- ✓ Ecological infrastructure

Breeding-related

- ✓ Participatory Plant Breeding
- ✓ Rootstock and grafting purposes

Green: Agroecological / agronomic
Purple: breeding & propagation-related practices

From the 1st to the 2nd meeting

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Valorising local under-utilised perennial plant varieties

Easy
- High value product
- Communication
- Consumer acceptance
- Sufficient production
- Definition of tradditional cultivar
- Awareness & farmer interest

Intermediate
- Niche markets
- Market scale up
- Marketing strategy
- Protection of local products
- Industry involvement
- Education & recognition by consumer

Difficult
- Ecosystem Services Payment (ESP)
- Lobbying
- Build an organisation of farmers
- Certification & branding
- Income guarantee
- Demonstration of health benefits

Key aspects, (from easy to difficult to apply), regarding **valorization** of local under-utilised perennial plant varieties from the environmental & economic point of view

From the 1st to the 2nd meeting

May 2025 → **2nd meeting** (20-21 May, Chania, Greece)

- ✓ Suggest innovative & appropriate **management practices** (through MPs presentation & related discussion)
- ✓ **Capacity building** experiences & needs?
- ✓ **Further research needs** from practice, & possible **gaps** in technical knowledge?
- ✓ **Innovative ideas** for OGs & other innovative projects?
- ✓ Draw inspiration by **concrete examples** in the field.

Question: How can the **conservation & utilisation** of local under-utilised varieties of perennial crops be **attractive & profitable** for farmers and thereby **contribute to biodiversity-friendly sustainable farming under climate change**?

5. Identify capacity building experiences and needs for preserving and utilising local perennial crops at farm level;
6. Suggest innovative and appropriate management practices;
7. Identify further research needs from practice, and possible gaps in technical knowledge;
8. Suggest innovative ideas for EIP-AGRI Operational Groups and other innovative projects.

EU CAP Network Focus Group
‘Local plant genetic resources in view of climate change and biodiversity loss’

2nd meeting | 20-21 May 2025 | **Chania, Greece**

All information on the Focus Group is available on the webpage:
https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/focus-group-local-perennial-plant-genetic-resources-view-climate-change-and-biodiversity-loss