

MONTHLY REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2022

DID YOU KNOW?

"A nation that destroys its soils destroys itself. Forests are the lungs of our land, purifying the air and giving fresh strength to our people."
—Franklin D. Roosevelt



Protecting Agricultural Biodiversity and Constructing Scientific Food System Security.

African CSOs Biodiversity Alliance (ACBA) in collaboration with China's Civil Society Alliance for Biodiversity Conservation (CSABC) hosted a webinar which brought more perspective on protecting Agricultural Biodiversity and Constructing Scientific Food System Security on the 21st of September 2022. This webinar aimed to promote multi-stakeholders to contribute to the conservation of agricultural biodiversity in communities and grassroots organizations at the practical level.

During the webinar, ZHU Chunquan, who is the head of the Nature Initiatives of Centre for Nature and Climate from the China, World Economic Forum Beijing Representative Office highlighted about how there is inequality in the global food system. It is important for innovations that have improved food production and consumption to benefit people globally, especially at the global level. Addressing the distribution issue will be beneficial to everyone. From the global perspective, the resources needed for food production, there are natural disparities based on climate, etc. The global food system should also be of service to these parts of the world, so international trade is an important complement to strengthening local value chains.

Important it is to note that "when agriculture is evaluated, the focus tends to be on quantity, that is production" said Mr Jiang. The question of fair and equitable distribution of food is always left for "the future". "One of the issues with China's food system is waste, which can be considered across 2 dimensions – land and food itself. This waste results land degradation, biodiversity loss, and can be linked to food-related deterioration of human health, including lifestyle diseases.

His closing remarks were on how organic agriculture is not just about crop productivity. It's about ensuring that farming practices designed in an integrated and scientific manner for circular agriculture: it is possible on one farm to produce crops, generate fuel for energy, have organic manure, and so forth. The webinar attracted over 60 participants and the main outcomes were a common understanding on the importance of relationship between agricultural biodiversity and food system security. The webinar can be accessed here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDYF3N9t_nY.

COMMUNITY STORY

The Dinkwanyane Water Smart Project in Phiring Village

Phiring village is home to the Dinkwanyane People, it is situated in Sekhukhune District Municipality on the Limpopo/Mpumalanga Escarpment- a critical site for water catchment due to the wetlands and rivers running through the area. The Dinkwanyane People are custodians of the land and resources in the Blyde water Catchment area next to the Blyde Reserve. Their vision for the community is to resolve their water problems to ultimately nourish their livestock, crops, and tourism.

The Dinkwanyane Water Smart Project (DWS) was started in 2019 as a demonstration site for Kruger to Canyons Biosphere Region (K2C BR)

This project is funded by the Government of Flanders and is in partnership with K2C BR, Hoedspruit Hub and Conservation of South Africa.

The aim of the project is to show how sustainable land-use practices are enhancing ecosystem services, contributing to sustainable livelihoods and creating a resilient community. This is achieved through four core functionalities of the project which are: developing a Conservation Agreement that creates the enabling framework and guides the implementation of the project; climate- smart agriculture projects with smallholder farmers to promote long term social and ecological benefits; sustainable rangeland management project with livestock farmers to promote long term social and ecological benefits; and through various financial instruments by the from the Region for the Region (K2C project).

Hoedspruit Hub has been working with the smallholder farmers and introducing them to better farming practices, training them in crop rotation, and initiating a school garden used as a demonstration for the project. The garden is tended by the Ecosystem Custodians and all the produce goes towards the school feeding scheme. The trainees that attend the agro- ecology training work in the garden to gain practical knowledge.

Conservation South Africa trains and equips livestock owners on how to sustainably manage rangelands on a day-to-day basis. They do a vegetation study at beginning, provide grazing plans, assist farmers with at affordable prices, cattle auctions all through Conservation Agreements. Financial instruments of the projects involve savings groups which are like updated, more formal versions of stokvels which have a goal, vision and a constitution. The members contribute money on a monthly basis which they can easily formally access and repay with interest. The reality is that it is impossible for small-holder farmers with no title deeds to obtain business loans from formal institutions, their alternative is therefore loan sharks with very high interest rates. The introduction of savings groups is to ensure the farmers have nancial support and can easily receive financial assistance without losing their ports in the long term.



CSO OF THE MONTH



South African Youth Biodiversity Network

South African Youth Biodiversity Network (SAYBN) The South African Youth Biodiversity Network (SAYBN) is a national chapter of the Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN). It was founded on the 6th of September 2017, after the Africa capacity building workshop hosted by GYBN in collaboration with the Department of Forestry Fisheries and Environment (DFFE) formerly known as the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) in Krugersdorp, August 2017. GYBN is an international network of 280 youth organizations, representing a total of 664,000 members from 140 countries, whose common goal is to prevent the loss of Biodiversity.

GYBN is the coordination platform for youth participation in the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and socially recognized by the CBD Secretariat.

GYBN aims to represent the voice of global youth in the negotiations under the CBD, raise awareness among young people of the values of biodiversity and connects individuals and youth organizations to build a global coalition of young people who will work together to halt the loss of biodiversity. South African Youth Biodiversity Network's vision is to transform South Africa into the country that does not experience human induced biodiversity loss and where people live in harmony with nature. While our mission is to build a national coalition of young people to halt the loss of biodiversity through advocating for progressive policies, raising awareness on the importance of biodiversity, empowering young people and giving them an opportunity to participate in grassroots projects.

Their objectives are to contribute to the South African youth perspective in decisions of various Multilateral Environmental Agreements that South Africa is a party to, especially the CBD. To organize capacity building events to train young people for participation in meetings of various Multilateral Environmental Agreements, especially the CBD. We do environmental education through social media and other events. We administrate a mailing list (and Facebook or Twitter) to share vacancies, internships, workshops, scholarships and other opportunities relevant to youth in conservation and also undergo planning and participating in grassroots projects that protect, conserve or restore.

In line with the current post2020 Global Biodiversity Framework consultations, and because South Africa is youthful, SAYBN has hosted successfully in collaboration with various partners, six meetings with the aim of gathering perspectives of the youth on biodiversity issues and unifying them into a single motion.

POLICY UPDATES

INTERESTING NEWS FROM THE REGION AND BEYOND

25 - 28 October 2022: Third meeting of the Sustainable Ocean Initiative (SOI) Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fishery Bodies

17 - 21 October 2022: Western, Central and Eastern Asian Training Course on Risk Assessment of Living Modified Organisms

UPCOMING EVENTS



CITES CP19: Panama City, Panama

14 - 25 November, 2022

COP 27 , Climate Change conference: Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt

6 - 18 November, 2022

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