

BioDIVA Research Group

Transformation knowledge for a sustainable and gender equitable use of agrobiodiversity



What is BioDIVA about?

BioDIVA conducts research to generate knowledge for a sustainable and gender-equitable use of agrobiodiversity in the Western Ghats of Kerala state in southern India. Over generations, indigenous communities in the area have accumulated in-depth knowledge about traditional rice

varieties and farming practices. Men and women hold different roles and responsibilities in rice cultivation systems, aiming for gender equity is crucial to achieve long-term sustainability. Using the case of agrobiodiversity and land-use change in the Western Ghats, interactions between

social, economic, ecological and institutional processes are investigated by the interdisciplinary team of BioDIVA. The transdisciplinary approach ensures the inclusion of local practitioners such as land-users, civil society and decision makers.

What does BioDIVA aim for?

The state of Kerala has a high variety of local rice landraces and associated agroecosystems in the uplands. Wayanad is undergoing changes in land-use and farming practices that results in the rapid loss of biodiversity and local landraces. The on-going changes in land management are accompanied by a degradation of agroecosystems and the transformation of social institutions and

affecting gender relations.

The Indian-German cooperation addresses these issues to generate knowledge that informs local land users by highlighting the relationships between ecological, social and economic factors of the agroecosystem in which they are acting. Policy makers and decision takers can access and use the empirical knowledge and recommendations.

With the help of GIS-based analysis of the land-use changes at landscape level and by developing different scenarios, BioDIVA advances the dialogue on sustainable use of natural resources in rural areas. BioDIVA is supported by the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) through the Community Agrobiodiversity Centre in Kalpetta, Wayanad.



BioDIVA

- Aims to generate transformation knowledge for a gender-equitable and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity in rice agroecosystems in Kerala, India
- Composed of *disciplinary research tandems* consisting of an Indian and German based researcher in ecology, rural development and economics
- Pursues an *interdisciplinary research approach* to understand the loss of agrobiodiversity and land use change from various academic angles
- Fosters *transdisciplinarity* by integrating practitioners from relevant fields such as indigenous farming communities, administration, policy makers and development experts
- Analyses current land use systems using participatory methods and multi-stakeholder dialogue

BioDIVA Team

Team Leader

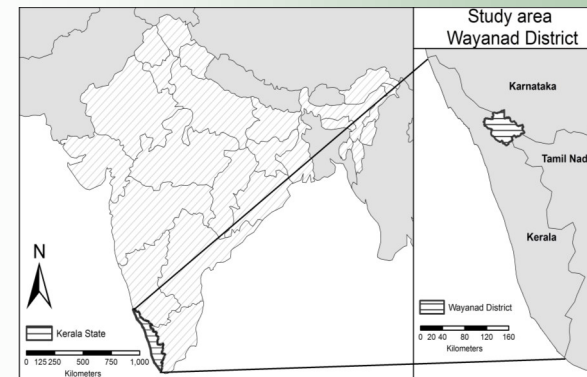
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Counterpart

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Research Scientist

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Research Fellows


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