



Laboratoire Central de Biotechnologies

**3rd International conference on neglected
and underutilized species (NUS):
for a food-secure Africa**

**Neglected and underutilized food crops:
current status and actions towards an
enabling policy environment
in Côte d'Ivoire**

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3rd International conference on neglected and underutilized species (NUS): for a food-secure Africa

1. Background- What was the drive behind the new development

1.1. Current status

- ✓ The second report on current situation of Phytogenetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA) identified a diversity of neglected and underutilized species (Sangaré *et al.*, 2009).
- ✓ 22 species prospected in the centre-western,
- ✓ 20 species collected in savannah area in the north
- ✓ and 30 species identified in the southern region were conserved at CNRA (Djaha *et al.*, 1997; N'klo, 2001).

1. Background- What was the drive behind the new development

1.1. Current status

- ✓ A multidisciplinary survey carried out in 2006 around Abidjan and Yamoussoukro allowed identifying 26 species of leafy vegetables belonging to 16 botanic families (N'zi, 2008).
- ✓ Domestication of forestry food species as *Ricinidendron heudeloti*, *Irvingia gabonensis*, were undertaken (N'dri, 2009)
- ✓ Seed germination tests were made on *Garcinia kola* (Agyili *et al.*, 2007).
- ✓ *in vitro* culture in bambara groundnut (Voadzou subterranean) were undertaken (Koné *et al.*, 2007).



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1. Background- What was the drive behind the new development

1.1. Current status

- ✓ In spite of their increasing interest, NUS are still margin crops.
- ✓ There is no policy to enable their promotion and there are a few research activities committed to them.
- ✓ Available collections held by many Research Institutions are not well preserved.
- ✓ Biodiversity in these NUS is facing erosion due to extensive agricultural practiced by majority of farmers in Côte d'Ivoire.
- ✓ All these facts are attributed to lack of management policy.



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1. Background- What was the drive behind the new development

1.1. Current status

- ✓ Côte d'Ivoire signed and ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), 29th November 1994.
- ✓ International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) was ratified 25th June 2003.
- ✓ With respect to ABS, a national focal point was nominated and the legal framework was prepared and is awaiting revision before submission to parliament.
- ✓ Such mechanisms are not sufficiently and clearly dealing with neglected food crops.

1. Background- What was the drive behind the new development

1.2. The drive behind the new development

- ✓ Setting up a policy to promote NUS is of paramount importance and this needs to create an institutional framework (MLS project going on).
- ✓ Currently, there is no law related to genetic resources in Côte d'Ivoire that can be used as a basis for making a decree to implement the MLS.
- ✓ However, there is a law being developed under the Ministry of Environment to implement the Nagoya Protocol on the ABS.
- ✓ To be useful in this regard, this law needs to include provisions that recognize the ITPGRFA and MLS in particular.

1. Background- What was the drive behind the new development

1.2. The drive behind the new development

Based on national consultative platform and national competent authority for implementation of NP and the MLS of ITPGRFA it will be:

- ✓ set up a competent, formal and operational platform dedicated to NUS (stakeholders working or using NUS);
- ✓ built capacities of institutions, actors and resource persons comprising farmers using NUS;
- ✓ identified an operational unit in charge of NUS genetic resources management;
- ✓ defined operational ways or procedures for access to NUS.

2. Description of how actions towards an enabling policy environment for NUS work and how it is changing lives

2.1. Description

Methodology will be based on a participatory approach of actors involved in NUS management.

- ✓ For the creation of a national consultative platform:
 - information meetings will be organized,
 - survey with actors and users of PGRFA including foresters, breeders, and others resources persons at universities and public research centers, extension agents, farmers, private sector and NGOs will be carried out,
 - this survey will help to get a clear idea of activities conducted by different stakeholders in the use of NUS.

2. Description of how actions towards an enabling policy environment for NUS work and how it is changing lives

2.1. Description

- ✓ To build capacity of organizations:
 - training workshops will be organized among actors and resource persons by national and international experts on themes dealing with NUS,
 - under the supervision of the national authority, an operational unit in charge of NUS will be identified,
 - Operational procedures in the NUS management will be made in line of those existing in accordance with the management of PGRFA in general but taking into account particularities related to NUS.
 - Regulatory rules will be put in place in order to conform legal texts in force to the novel environment in terms of NUS.

3. How it changes real lives

- ✓ The implementation of these mechanisms (National Authority, capacity building of organizations) at institutional level, will take into account all stakeholders and concerned institutions are participating.
- ✓ It will involve all actors and allow defining an agricultural and research policy for NUS.
- ✓ Therefore, the use of NUS will be made in an enabling policy environment and progressively products derived from them will not be considered as having a low status.
- ✓ These mechanisms will allow creating an organization or a formal platform comprising all of the structures and actors using NUS: such way to ensure a better coordination to create a synergy of actions in the management of NUS.

3. How it changes real lives

- ✓ Sensitization, communication and training of actors on the ground, particularly water and forestry agents, extension agents, members of NGOs and farmers on international juridical framework in PGRFA including NUS will be realized.
- ✓ Access to NUS will be regulated as will be the fair sharing of advantages related to their use.
- ✓ The institutional framework put in place when enabling environment for NUS management will allow the implementation of a policy more valuable to them.
- ✓ NUS in their natural environment must be protected to make them available in sufficient quantity to satisfy ongoing increasing needs of populations due to demographic growth.

3. How it changes real lives

- ✓ NUS offers large categories of uses that could allow marketing them in towns by women to increase their household incomes.
- ✓ Production of NUS will be improved by Research centers and extension services.
- ✓ They could be cultivated as cash crops in periurban areas based on a total control of knowledge, technical itinerary and agronomic performances.
- ✓ Seed production and conservation conditions will be improved to promote mass production of NUS.

4. Hurdles and challenges

- ✓ One of the biggest challenges is the low interest and exclusion of NUS in agricultural Research and development agenda.
- ✓ They are irreversibly destroyed when implementing socio-economic development projects as road, dams, etc.
- ✓ Setting in place an institutional mechanism in collaboration with stakeholders will allow overcome challenges including production constraints that will be solved through research activities leading to mass production of NUS.
- ✓ Therefore products from NUS will be better promoted and will contribute to increase farmers' household incomes.

5. Expectations of ‘developers’ and users

- ✓ The implementation of the MLS project includes a number of complementary studies towards stakeholders and actors.
- ✓ These studies will help get a clear idea on experience of researchers, extension agents and users in the management of PGRFA in general and NUS in particular.

6. Limitations/constraints/future challenges

- ✓ Future limits or constraints will raise during the functioning of national structures or organizations set up to accompany PGRFA management in general and NUS in particular.
- ✓ After administrative phase of setting up regulatory rules for the implementation of organizations, actions on the ground will need funds that are not guaranteed before.

7. Responses from relevant/significant bodies

- ✓ Our participation to this international scientific event in order to give an idea of Ivorian experience in terms of actions to set up an enabling policy environment of NUS is a proof of Bioversity International interest in NUS.
- ✓ Therefore, constraints related to policy environment will be exposed in order to find solutions in the line of promoting NUS.

8. What next in terms of development?

- ✓ Development of an institutional mechanism for promoting NUS through the implementation of mechanisms related to PGRFA management is an experience that, if realized, will serve via organizers involved in the current conference.

THANK YOU