

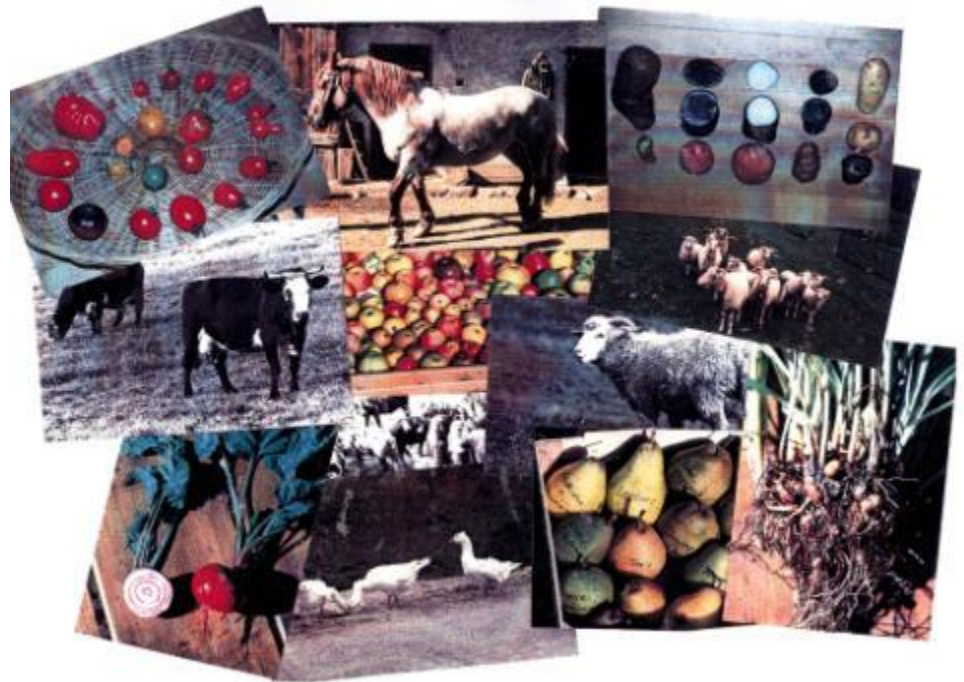


SAVE foundation

Safeguard for Agricultural Varieties in Europe
Sicherung der landwirtschaftlichen ArtenVielfalt in Europa
Sauvegarde pour l'Agriculture des Variétés d'Europe

2018/19

SAVE Foundation Activity Report



Activity Report for the period June 2018 – August 2019

Foreword

The Actors in Agrobiodiversity

The speed of climate change forces us, to have a closer look at our common agricultural production systems. In many places, where the focus has been exclusively on continuous increasing production and growth, problems arise. The high-performance systems are reaching their limits - in animal breeding, plant breeding, or even in the composition of forests. Knowledge about the interaction of robust, adapted species and the environment is unincisive among policy makers. Scientists who know about this are poorly networked with other stakeholders and agricultural associations want to keep on old patterns of production increase. With genetic engineer-

ing and the freezing of genetic material alone is not done enough for conservation and secure of agrobiodiversity. The interplay between beneficial organisms and pests in changing environmental conditions must be promoted. For this amongst others a continuous adaptation of cultural plants and livestock must be ensured.

The task of SAVE network is to create links between policy, authorities, science and NGOs to develop viable solutions for the conservation and development of agrobiodiversity. The area of conflict ranging between the various interests is obvious. Just as obvious is the urgency with which food security must be made sustainable. A most important role in this plays agrobiodiversity.



Network Office 2018 - 2019

Disease Management and Protection for Endangered Breeds of Farm Animals

In January 2018 the GEH (Germany) invited neighbour colleagues SLE (Belgium) and SZH (Netherlands) to join the workshop 'Disease Management and Protection for Endangered Breeds of Farm Animals'. This workshop was a very important moment to exchange experiences. In 2018 the Dutch food-security authority NVWA approved the protocol, designed by initiative of SZH, for quarantine arrangements for rare breed farms in the Netherland in case of an outbreak of an official infectious disease. Also in Germany in some federal states a protocol, designed by initiative of GEH, for this purpose has been approved. The text and the design of these protocols can be used as examples for rare breed organizations in other EU member states.

Contribution SAVE in new Animal Health Regulation



By request of a collection of hobby poultry and birds organizations in The Netherlands and in the EU a letter on behalf of SAVE foundation has been send to the Commission of the EU. This letter is about the new Animal Health Regulation, Delegated act on registration, article no. 18. Registration of all hobby keepers of poultry, ducks, geese, pigeons and others birds creates also in our opinion an unnecessary administrative burden and will have a negative effect on the populations of these animals including the rare breeds. The process of the EU Animal Health Regulation is still running.

Dynaversity Interview

On behalf of Liege University in Belgium, Stephanie Klaedtke and Corentin Hecquet, worked on one of the subtask within the overall project, to evaluate case studies to learn about how initiatives involved in crop diversity and in situ seed management network among each other, and identify what favours or enables this networking. This is to contribute to the overall aim of suggesting management and governance models and to



construct new forms of networking for European initiatives. Therefor Stephanie and Corentin visited the office of SZH in the Netherlands, to interview Nonja Remijn and Rob Plomp, to get more insight in both the

NGO's on saving rare breeds and seeds, and to get more insight in the SAVE network. Waltraud Kugler was interviewed during the annual meeting of DYNAVERSITY (see below). Results will be presented on the SAVE annual meeting in Belgium. More information can be found at <http://dynaversity.eu/>

Development of the SAVE Network

As a follow up on the Pitch talks on the SAVE meeting in 2018, the network team decided to expand the pitch talks for 2019 with a couple of minutes, to give all partners more time to share their best practices and learned lessons with the SAVE partners. Also because fewer members could join the meeting in 2019, there was more time in the program to focus on the pitch talks. As members were very enthusiastic about the topic of products and promotion of the rare breeds, the pitch talks in 2019 focused on does and don'ts within this theme.



As Obe Bootsma found another 'life fulfilment' he decided to stop his activities for the SAVE network team. That means only Nonja Remijn and Geert Boink are contact persons of the network team. Anyone who feels enthusiastic to join the network team can contact the SAVE Network Office by email: office@save-network.com.

Budget and Plans

To join the annual SAVE meeting members were asked to pay 80 euro pp, to cover costs for the meeting.

On the SAVE Board of Directors Meeting in Kozard, Hungary, in 2018 the board decided to send all SAVE partners a reminder to make their payment of 0,3 % of the annual turnover or a minimum of 50 euro's for 2019.

The Network team facilitate SAVE partners on knowledge sharing activities to strengthen the position of rare breeds. In 2018 and 2019 no partners asked for financial support in cross boundary activities.

The budget of SAVE Network is still guarded by SZH, but plans are made to open a bank account for the SAVE Network office only.



Pan-European Actions

Last Phase of the H2020 IMAGE Project



The IMAGE (Innovative Management of Animal Genetic Resources, www.imageh2020.eu) project ends in March 2020. Together with IMAGE partners (BOKU, Austria, INRA, France) SAVE has organized four Dialogue Fora. These meetings served to promote network and exchange among stakeholders in Europe. The dialogue fora were held close to the annual meetings of the European Regional Focal Point (ERFP) for animal genetic resources. Additionally representatives of NGOs working with animal genetic resources and the commercial breeding scene were invited to strengthen the mutual understanding of science, governmental bodies, breeders and livestock keepers.

In 2018 the IMAGE Dialogue Forum took place in Zagreb, Croatia. This time a full day was scheduled for discussions and an excursion. The topic "Economics of Conservation - Economic trade-offs between gene bank and in-situ conservation?" addressed the issue of the cost of conservation (animal) genetic resources. In discussions in smaller groups, the participants sat down with the following questions:

- Do public preferences and trends play a role in what we should be spending on ex situ conservation?
- Does the livestock conservation / the commercial breeding sector currently benefit from the genetic variability that is stored in the gene banks? How to optimize the benefit?
- What policy incentives should be used to promote (on farm and in gene banks)? Are there incentives more of a hindrance?
- In Europe there are about 25 (run by a host institution authorized and / or recognized by a national authority), the costs of which are covered by the respective state. Would one consolidated Pan EU resource bank be better than several - why / not?



The question of economic viability of animal genetic resources implies the question whether and to what extent ex situ gene bank maintenance and in situ / on farm conservation competes or complements one another.

The IMAGE Dialogue Forum conducted a survey to get views and expectations about gene banks from a range of different stakeholders across Europe:

- The conservation of animal genetic resources in Europe is seen as very important issue.

- A combined approach with a collaboration of in-situ conservation, bio banks and genomic selection is preferred by the stakeholders.
- Within their conservation work biobanks should prioritize endangered livestock breeds, but they also should be open for mainstream breeds.
- The access should be free especially for breeding societies and public research institutions.
- Decision making should take place by multi actor governance.
- Funding should come from public sources.
- In general the stakeholders have a positive attitude according an increasing use of bio banks for conservation, funded and controlled by public institutions and breeding societies.
- The use of biotechnologies for the conservation of animal genetic resources was seen different depending on the stakeholder group.

The 4th and final Dialogue Forum in August 2019 deals with the subject of Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS). ABS does not seem to matter to breeders and owners at first sight. It seems to be clear to whom the animal belongs to. But not always there is such a clear allocation. Therefore it is important to be informed about how the Nagoya Protocol and thus ABS are implemented in Europe. What are the rights and duties of the breeder and what are the responsibilities of the gene banks?



These questions will be discussed at the "Levend Erfoed Expo" in Wachtebeke, Belgium on August 24th 2019.

SAVE Involvement in other Horizon 2020 projects

Dynaversity II



The H2020 project DYNIVERSITY (DYNAMIC seed networks for managing European diVERSITY, www.dynaversity.eu) analyses and describes the actors involved in plant genetic conservation for agriculture in order to suggest management and governance models and to construct new forms of networking. It facilitates exchange and integration of scientific as well as practical knowledge on how to best manage diversity in agriculture and in the entire food chain, restoring evolutionary and adaptation processes.

The "Sharing Knowledge and Experience Platform (SKEP)" is a new concept to integrate as much actors in the field as possible and to spread the outcomes of the project to a wide audience. The SKEP sustains the project consortium in analysing opportunities, challenges and bottlenecks for the design and

implementation of best practices for in situ and on farm conservation. By starting this platform at the ignition of the project and by setting-up several meetings, the objective is to make this platform self-sustainable after the completion of DYNAVERSITY.

As a SKEP member of this project SAVE will keep informed about the ongoing development of the project which started in 2018. In 2019 the first DYNAVERSITY annual meeting took place in Budapest, in the "Impact Hub" and at the Central Eastern University.

Terms and concepts to describe the work done by multiple actors in Plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA) have been defined and discussed as well as the link between in situ and ex situ conservation and possibilities for collaboration of protected areas and local farmers.



In April 2019 the exhibition "DYNAVERSITY – Plant, People and the Future of Food" started in Scandicci, Tuscany, in the new headquarter the Casa della biodiversità (House of biodiversity) of Rete Semi Rurali, a DYNAVERSITY partner. The exhibition portrays communities and people experimenting new ways to promote agrobiodiversity, combining tradition and innovation in agriculture. Under the title "Knowledge, Innovation, Heritage,

Networks" 40 photographs show their work in the four thematic pathways, featuring the stories of different farm sites and promoting the value of diversity in agriculture, from the seed to the plate. The exhibition will travel across Europe during the next months. You will be kept informed on twitter #dynaversity or on <http://dynaversity.eu> .

GenResBridge



GenRes Bridge aims to strengthen conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources (GenRes).

Genetic resources refer to genetic material of plant, animal or microbial origin of actual or potential value, such as a medicinal plant, agricultural crop, tree variety or animal breed.

The project will accelerate collaborative efforts and widen capacities in plant, forest and animal GenRes domains by sharing perspectives, exchanging best practices, harmonizing standards, trainings and sharing resources under the auspices of the three pan-European GenRes networks: ECPGR, EUFORGEN and ERFPP. SAVE will be involved as a consultant especially for the Animal Genetic Resources and NGOs. See: <https://twitter.com/genresbridge>; www.genresbridge.eu.

Collection of wild fruits of Europe (Inforama Wild Fruit)

The project aims to promote wild fruit with its species and varieties. Many species grow in gardens and parks - but their nutrition value and their environmental benefits are largely unknown. Target groups for the project are professionals from agriculture and horticulture as well as the general public like garden owners. The project concept comprises two modules:

- Internet: comprehensive information on species and varieties is made available on an internet platform. The Internet platform was set up in 2018 <http://wildobst.info/>.



Since there was up to now no overview of the species and variety richness of wild fruit in Europe, the number of wild fruit species could only be estimated approximately. It was assumed by about 50 species and 500 varieties.

Meanwhile, the picture has changed massively: the research has shown that both in nature and in breeding crosses, hybrids and chimeras occur. Like in the hawthorn (*Crataegus*), in which hawthorn was crossed with rowan (*x Crataegosorbus*), hybrids of hawthorn and medlar have emerged (*Crataegomespilus*) or graft hybrids (chimeras) have arisen by cell fusion. The diversity of species and forms is therefore much greater than originally assumed. So far over 200 species have been recorded and partially described as well as 1800 varieties. The platform is available only in German language. Additional funds would be necessary to make translations.

- In situ collection: A collection of wild fruits makes the variety of species of wild fruit physically tangible. Information panels with QR codes link the digital information to the visitor in the field. One collection was built up in the city of St. Gall. This collection shall show arrange of varieties for a broader public. Another more comprehensive collection is foreseen in the project design. Problems with the potential place for the collection led to a delay in implementing of the concept. In the meantime we have a convenient place and the work is going on. Because of the much higher number of species and varieties we have to extend the project. Search for additional funds is going on.



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Balusha Sheep Kosovo



The Balusha Sheep of Kosovo is a highly endangered sheep breed. In the frame of the EuropeAid project "Support in the development and implementation of Food Safety and Sanitary and Phytosanitary Controls in Kosovo" the population and situation of the endangered sheep breeds of Kosovo, the Balusha, Bardhoka, Sharri and Kosovo strains of the Pramenka group have been monitored. Within that project especially the breeding and the supply chains have been investigated. The project coordinator came in touch with the SAVE Project Office. SAVE could give some ideas and advices. In the meantime this project ended, but the results – also given to the relevant ministry – will find their way into the future work on conservation in both directions, the practical work and the policy of the ministry e.g. according subsidies. Also of importance is it to see the degree of inbreeding to build up a coordinated herdbook breeding. SAVE built up a contact between the University of Giessen, Germany, Professorship of Pet and Pathogenetics, and the Faculty of Agriculture at the University of Prishtina, Kosovo. In late

spring 2019 blood samples were taken and brought to Giessen. The official transportation of the blood samples from Kosovo to Germany was very complicated. The samples will be investigated next winter. The results will be given to the ministry and will be used to find out which animals are less crossbred and useable for an ongoing most possible pure breeding. Thanks to a successful mailing SAVE is able to support not only by knowhow and ideas but also financial in a smaller scale.

Networking Activities of the project office

The European platform Arca Net was updated in early summer 2019. More than 670 places, where people can see and experience the diverse agrobiodiversity of Europe. Thanks to a lot of voluntary work the addresses and contacts could be actualized. The Arca Net partners are asked to update their entries on their own once a year. It is planned to transfer the Arca Net data to a more current content management system next year.

The **Arca Deli Awards** are a good marketing instrument for the agrobiodiversity community within Europe. A list of the up-to-date 40 awards since 2012 can be downloaded here: http://www.save-foundation.net/images/Arca_Deli/Arca-Deli-Awards-Chronik.pdf.

The quarterly **SAVE eNews** are subscribed by more than 3300 people throughout Europe, of which 1850 are subscribed to the German edition and 1505 to the English version. This distribution shows clearly that it makes sense to continue to publish the SAVE eNews in two language versions. Besides clear subscribers. In addition to the subscribers, the eNews are also available on the SAVE website and are published on various social networks such as LinkedIn, Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/agrobiodiversity>) and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/variety savers>). The circle of the readership is therefore considerably higher than the numbers above. If you would like to publish reports and articles on agrobiodiversity in Europe, please contact the SAVE project office.

The **SAVE website** is updated regularly. In particular, the event calendar gives users an up-to-date overview of activities on agrobiodiversity in Europe. In addition to the diverse activities also the current addresses and contact persons of the SAVE committees are listed. Please also note the different SAVE platforms on the homepage.

2020: International Year of Plant Health (IYPH)



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF
PLANT HEALTH
2020

Healthy plants are the foundation for all life, ecosystem functions and food security. They produce the oxygen we breathe, provide more than 80 percent of the food we eat and for nearly half of the earth's population, plants are a primary source of income. Plant pests and diseases damage crops, reducing the availability of food and increasing its cost. Sustaining plant health protects the environment, forests and biodiversity from plant pests, addresses the effects of climate change, and supports efforts to end hunger, malnutrition and poverty.

The UN General Assembly declared 2020 as the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH) and invited FAO together with the IPPC (International Plant Protection Convention) Secretariat, to serve as the lead agency to spearhead activities, and called on governments, civil society, and the private sector to engage at global, regional and national levels. An International Plant Health Conference will be among thousands of plant health events to be held globally throughout 2020.

At least since the Neolithic period, when the sedentariness and thus agriculture and livestock began, people have exchanged their goods, seeds and propagating material and brought it through migrations, for example, from the fertile crescent to Europe. Through international trade and increased human mobility, even unwanted organisms have been transported to regions where they have no natural enemies. Due to global warming, pest organisms in agriculture can settle far beyond their natural habitat. In the large monocultures of modern industrial production (also organic land corresponds to the industrial scale) harmful organisms can spread unhindered. The FAO estimates that corn caterpillars worldwide destroy about 4 percent of annual corn crops. In banana cultivation, the concentration on a single main variety takes its toll: the fungus Tropical Race 4 (TR4), the causative agent of panama disease, threatens the stocks of the Cavendish banana worldwide.

International associations such as the IPPC and EPPO (European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization) are developing and strengthening control systems, early warning systems and international risk analysis. The EU phytosanitary regulation will enter into force after a transitional period in December 2019. Plant passports and phytosanitary certificates are then mandatory for the cross-border movement of goods - inside and outside the EU. This also applies to producers of traditional varieties. Will the exchange beyond today's (European) borders be made impossible by bureaucratic hurdles? Do preservers of old varieties and niche producers have to pay the bill for globalization and industrial production?

Plant conservation organizations should use the International Year of Plant Health to highlight the requirements and needs of niche production of traditional cultural plants and their varieties. Functional agro-biodiversity, the use of beneficial insects against pests in agriculture, must increasingly be introduced into discussions about crop protection. The diversity of landraces, more diversity in agriculture and traditional cultural landscape elements such as field margins and hedges promote beneficials and restrict pests. Sources: <https://www.ippc.int/en/iypH/>; <https://www.ippc.int/en/>; <https://www.eppo.int>; <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32016R2031&from=de>

Governance

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References

Collaboration with international organisations:

- Animal Genetic Resources, UN-FAO, Rome
- Bioersity International, Maccarese-Rome
- GEF (Global Environment Facility) United Nations Development Programme
- ERFP (European Regional Focal Point), Bonn
- Rare Breeds International, Thessaloniki
- EuroNatur, Radolfzell

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- Dr. Mario Broggi (several foundations); FL-9494 Schaan
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- Grovni Foundation; CH-9000 St. Gallen