

NUTRIHAF: NUTRITION-SENSITIVE AGRICULTURE IN ETHIOPIAN BIOSPHERE HOTSPOTS

Governments and development agencies are promoting the production of staple foods to combat hunger and to provide export crops to generate income. Nevertheless, it is not only calories or cash that count, but also nutritional values. Fruits and vegetables are significant for a healthy and balanced diet. Agricultural policies and practices should therefore become more 'nutrition-sensitive'.

The biosphere reserve in the Yayu Region of Ethiopia is a biodiversity hotspot. More than 90 percent of the population are smallholder farmers. The major cash crop is coffee,

which is grown under trees in the forest. The NutriHAF Africa project, in which ZEF is a research partner, investigates the possibility of integrating vegetables into this farming system to increase nutrition security, intensifying agriculture and thus reducing pressure on natural habitats.

The suitability of crops for multi-storey cropping systems depends on shade-tolerance and the risk of wild animal damage. New crops should also not 'disturb' coffee plants, so management needs to be adapted to avoid negative impacts on coffee production. Nutritious crops will affect gender-relations: Horticulture production could result in a better income for women, as well as an increase in their workload. Both factors may affect the nutrition of their families. Women prefer their home gardens for horticulture over forest plots. The negative image of leafy vegetables as 'weeds' or 'poor man's food' and consumer habits may also be a challenge. It is thus important to find out how nutritious crops can be promoted and how markets for fresh, processed and preserved vegetables can be developed.

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NOVEL RESTORATION STRATEGY OF GOLD MINING AREAS IN COLOMBIA

Gold mining is considered an axis of development in Colombia. Yet, there is a common perception that the expansion of gold mining has environmental and health impacts, leads to competition over land and water, as well as to the loss of livelihood for farmers.

Alluvial gold mining generates a vast amount of deposits. Gravel and sand completely cover the natural soil and destroy riparian ecosystems. In Colombia, about 79,000 ha of land area are affected by gravel deposits, especially in the Antioquia Department.

Degraded land can be reclaimed for agroforestry purposes. Since 2000, a gold mining company has been reclaiming deposits in two municipalities of Antioquia by supporting settlers through the establishment of farmland with integrated trees and shrubs. Cassava and plantain are combined with lemon and orange trees and livestock in these agroforestry systems. This complements reforestation efforts. More than 600 ha have already been reclaimed this way.

This ZEF research project provides a comprehensive understanding of transition processes from nutrient-poor and acidic deposition sites towards productive agroforestry-based systems. It explores the spatial variability of substrate properties and their changes over time and assess the influence of these properties on biomass production and the nutritional status of the vegetation. Another study component looks into farmers' perceptions and strategies to cultivate various qualities of the land.

Gold mining in Colombia



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