

Event 3

Nature's New Economy: Financing Agricultural Biodiversity for People and Planet

A symposium exploring the instruments, opportunities, and barriers for financing nature-friendly food systems, connecting researchers, practitioners, businesses, and citizens in an open public dialogue.

Date	Monday, 1 June 2026
Time	09:30 - 14:00
Venue	KU Leuven, Leuven, Belgium
Format	Symposium: presentations, knowledge-sharing, open dialogue, networking lunch
Language	English
Admission	Free and open to all; no registration required
Organised by	Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT, CGIAR
Partners	EIT Food, Impact House, Leuven MindGate, LadyAgri, Beyond Chocolate, KU Leuven, AgriCord

About This Event

Investing in nature means directing resources, time, knowledge, skills, and funding towards protecting, restoring, and better managing the natural systems that people and economies depend on. This symposium asks how that investment can be made in practice across food systems: what instruments and opportunities exist, what rewards they generate for people and business, and what it would take to scale them across Europe.

Organised by the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT (CGIAR) with EIT Food, Impact House, Leuven MindGate, and LadyAgri, this half-day event brings together researchers, practitioners, businesses, policymakers, and citizens to explore how agricultural biodiversity, the diversity of our crops, soils, and farming systems, can be recognised, valued, and financed as an investment in nature.

Carlo Fadda, Director of Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture at the Alliance, will present global evidence on the returns on investing in agricultural biodiversity, drawing on research across banana systems, seed systems, agroforestry, soil health, and nutrition. Topics include the EU Deforestation Regulation and sustainable supply chains, financing nature-based solutions for agricultural biodiversity, soil health as a nature investment, and seed systems and community resilience.

Objectives

- Present the evidence base for investing in agricultural biodiversity as a nature-positive strategy, drawing on the Alliance's global research portfolio.
- Examine what financial instruments, public, blended, and private, currently exist for nature investment in food systems, and where the gaps are.
- Explore the role of EU development cooperation in financing nature-positive approaches in the Global South.
- Create a genuinely open public dialogue on what it would take to finance nature at scale across Europe.

- Contribute to the EU Green Week 2026 theme: investing in nature, rewarding for people and business.

Definitive Agenda

09:30	Registration and coffee.
10:00	Welcome: Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT, EIT Food, Leuven MindGate, and Impact House.
10:15	Presentation: 'The returns on investing in agricultural biodiversity - global evidence and local relevance.' Carlo Fadda, Director of Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture, Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT (CGIAR).
10:35	Presentation: 'The business case - nature-positive value chains in banana, cocoa, and agroforestry.' Beyond Chocolate and LadyAgri.
10:55	Presentation: 'EU development cooperation and financing nature-positive approaches in the Global South.' DG IntPa.
11:15	Knowledge-sharing presentations (5 minutes each): organisations working on nature-positive food solutions, sustainable value chains, soil health, and seed systems.
11:45	Open dialogue: 'What instruments exist, what gaps remain, and what would it take to finance nature across Europe?' Facilitated by the Alliance.
12:30	Networking lunch with agrodiverse food showcase.
14:00	Close.

Speakers and Partners

Confirmed Speakers

- Carlo Fadda, Director of Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture, Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT, CGIAR) - keynote presentation and dialogue facilitator.
- Beyond Chocolate representative - nature-positive cocoa value chains and the business case for agricultural biodiversity.
- LadyAgri representative - nature-positive value chains and impact investment in agricultural biodiversity.
- DG IntPa representative - EU development cooperation and financing nature-positive approaches in the Global South.

Partner Organisations

- EIT Food - food innovation and nature-positive approaches; co-organiser.
- Impact House - financing instruments for nature; co-organiser.
- Leuven MindGate - innovation ecosystem; co-organiser.
- LadyAgri - impact investment in agricultural biodiversity.
- Beyond Chocolate - sustainable cocoa and deforestation-free value chains.
- KU Leuven - agrobiodiversity, soil science, and food systems expertise.
- The Food Bridge vzw - food sovereignty and seed systems policy.
- AgriCord or Boerenbond - farmers' perspective on nature-positive agriculture.

Planning Note

This event contributes to the EU Green Week 2026 theme of investing in nature, rewarding for people and business, and aligns with the following Green Week themes: Sustainable finance, Green economy, Biodiversity, Sustainable agriculture, Innovation, Bioeconomy, and Nature-based solutions.

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