Tropical Agroecosystems (TAEC)

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Editorial

Agriculture has a key role for development throughout the world, but especially so in the tropics where many of the population are self-employed subsistence farmers, dependent on it as their only means of survival. Most temperate zone farming techniques are inappropriate for tropical areas, due to differences in climate, soils and not being geared to small-scale farming. Tropical Agriculture systems are characterized by both planned and unplanned diversity. Planned diversity includes the spatial and temporal arrangement of domesticated plants and animals that farmers purposely include in the system, along with beneficial organisms that are deliberately added. Unplanned diversity includes weedy plants, herbivores, predators, microbes, and other organisms that persist in the system after it has been converted to agriculture or colonize it from the surrounding landscape. Both types of diversity have strong effects on agroecosystem productivity, stability, pest regulation, soil processes, and the movement of organisms between agriculture and natural habitats in the agricultural landscape. Tropical Agroecosystems (TAEC) focuses on achieving efficient and environmentally sustainable crop and livestock production in tropical areas – which could ultimately help reduce hunger, malnutrition and poverty and improve the livelihoods of the people who live here. Tropical Agroecosystems (TAEC) explore topics including the main farming systems in the tropics, soil management, water conservation, food crops and cash crops, managing livestock and rural development.

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