The Project

Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change: Collecting, Protecting, and Preparing Crop Wild Relatives

CWR project staff with partner and farmer evaluating finger millet in Western Kenya

What are Crop Wild Relatives?

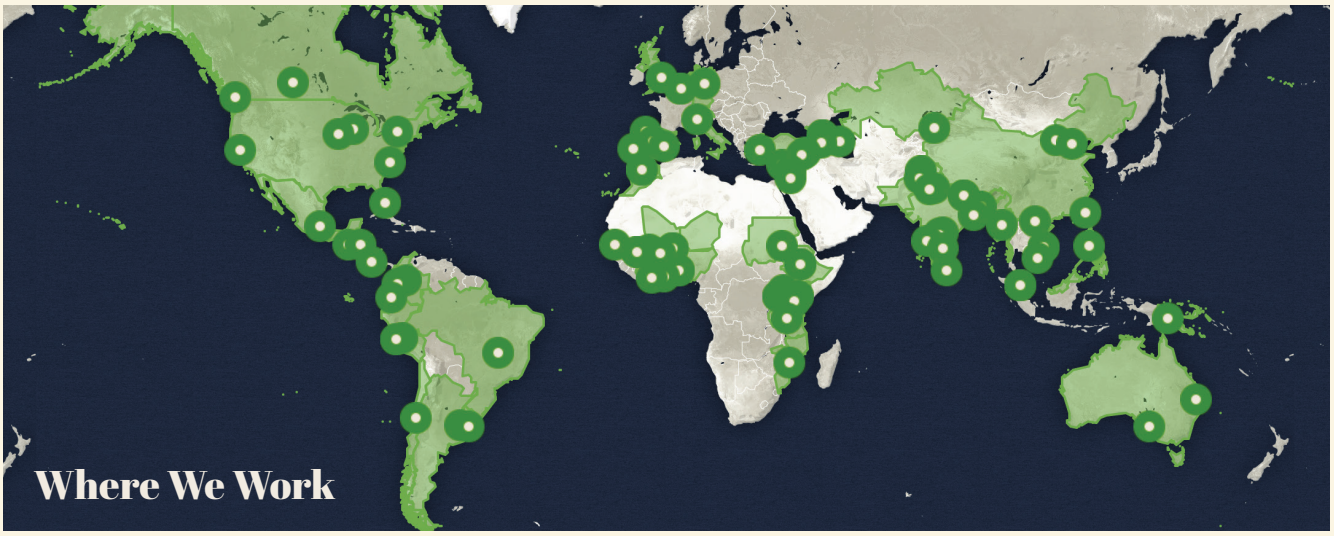
Crop wild relatives are cousins of our food crops that still grow in the wild. Many have evolved to survive tough conditions, such as drought, flooding, high temperatures or poor soils. This means they are an untapped source of genetic diversity. This diversity is useful to plant breeders searching for ways to make food crops more resilient.

The project is a global, long-term effort to collect, conserve, and use crop wild relatives to develop food crops that don't just survive, but thrive under climate change.

Why is Conservation of Crop Wild Relatives Important?

Vital as they may be, many crop wild relatives are not conserved in genebanks, and many are threatened in their natural environments by urbanization, deforestation and the expansion of agriculture. The Crop Trust and its partners identified the most important and at-risk wild species, and where to find them, and set up teams to collect and conserve them.

The wild relatives that have been collected have been studied for useful traits as part of the project. In addition, important wild relatives already conserved in genebanks have been studied. The findings of these studies will help crop breeders prioritize particular plants of interest and speed up adaptation to climate change.



Project Activities

The project includes four main components: the prioritization of CWR based on a gap analysis, the collection of CWR in the field, CWR conservation in genebanks, and the use of CWR in pre-breeding efforts to prepare them for crop breeders and farmers.


Wild eggplant growing in Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

Priority Crops

alfalfa
apple
asian rice
bambara groundnut
banana/ plantain
barley
bean
carrot
chickpea
cowpea
eggplant
faba bean
finger millet
grasspea
lentil
oat
pea
pearl millet
pigeonpea
potato
rye
sorghum
sunflower
sweetpotato
vetch
wheat

Contact Us

This work is part of the initiative "Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change: Collecting, Protecting and Preparing Crop Wild Relatives" which is supported by the Government of Norway. The project is managed by the Crop Trust with the Millennium Seed Bank of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew UK and implemented in partnership with national and international genebanks and plant breeding institutes around the world. Keep up to date with project activities by visiting the project website at **www.cwrdiversity.org** or by following us on Twitter and Facebook **@CropWildRelativ**. For general inquires, please contact **cropwildrelatives@croptrust.org**.

About the Crop Trust

The Crop Trust is an international organization working to support conservation and use of plant genetic resources. It supports genebanks, the Svalbard Global Seed Vault and pre-breeding activities around the world. The Crop Trust is recognized as an essential component of the funding strategy of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. For more information, see **www.croptrust.org**.

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