



807B

Documentation of agro-biodiversity of rainfed villages of Thanamalwila using a community based approach: Community Biodiversity Register

M C Millawithanachchi*, D P PLiyanage and A P Bentota

*Grain Legumes and Oil Crops Research and Development Center, Angunakolapellessa,
(RESMISA project, Arthacharya foundation, Thanamalwila. Sri Lanka)*

The Community Biodiversity Register (CBR) is a participatory method of documenting biodiversity within a farming community. It is a record kept by the community, which includes information on the genetic resources and their custodians, passport data, agro ecology and traditional knowledge. This could be effectively used to create awareness among the farming community on important species with respect to conservation, management and monitoring genetic erosion and new species entry. Documentation of information was undertaken with the participation of officers, field assistants, farmers and members of the farmer family of three villages, Mahawewa, SooriyaAra and Kahakurullanpellesa of the Thanamalwila Divisional Secretariat. The format developed for the data entry included, basic information of villages, crop, vernacular name, scientific name, habitat and growth habit, area cultivated, present status, past information, specific characteristics, season of cultivation, traditional knowledge and their application. One hundred and twenty two plant and herb species were found within the studied three farming communities and it included 153 different crop varieties. The highest crop diversity was found in the Mahawewa village and the highest number of crop varieties recorded by an individual farmer was 63 of the same village. Cowpea recorded the highest varietal diversity with eight different varieties followed by Yard long bean (Mae) with six varieties. With respect to Sooriya Ara the other two villages were rich in crop varietal diversity due to the high extent of chena cultivation, better availability of water resources, soil fertility and being comparatively older settlements. The Community Biodiversity Register can be used as a quick retrieval method of information on agro-biodiversity related data of a particular community.

Keywords: Community Biodiversity Register, crop varieties