

Ad hoc support : TIERS-DIV

Revisiting the role of diversity of actors in the landscape of dynamic diversity management: collective reflection on the concept of the third place

ABSTRACT

A plurality of actors are involved in preserving cultivated biodiversity, ranging from the cultivation and multiplication of local varieties in the field (in situ conservation in a co-evolutionary logic) to the conservation of genetic resources in biological resource centres or gene banks (ex situ conservation). Researchers, and sometimes breeders, are the main users of these genebanks, which therefore serve a rather narrow community of actors. Collaboration between stakeholders in the various forms of conservation and management of cultivated biodiversity is still too marginal. How can genebanks evolve their conservation, characterisation, documentation and distribution practices as well as their governance arrangements to better serve the needs of a wider range of actors and organisations (first and foremost farmers)? What are the expectations of current and potential users? What are the opportunities and constraints for opening up genebanks to this diversity of actors? Based on the Arcad scientific inter-institutional dynamic dedicated to the study and preservation of tropical and Mediterranean plant agro-biodiversity, which also seeks to open up to a greater diversity of stakeholders, a series of multi-stakeholder workshops were organised in November 2019, and then in June 2020, within the framework of two research projects: the COEX flagship project[1] financed by the Agropolis Fondation and the H2020 project Dynaversity[2]. These workshops brought together a group of about twenty actors from different backgrounds (West Africa, Europe and France) embodying a diversity of visions and practices of conservation and management of cultivated diversity: researchers in social sciences or biology, representatives of gene banks, farmers representing farmers' seed houses, seed artisans and NGOs. The first workshop used an anticipation method to project into the future and imagine different desirable and undesirable scenarios. The second workshop used an innovative design method, the Knowledge Concept Proposal method, to imagine different courses of action that would allow us to work together.

Four main lessons emerged from these workshops:

1. the need to improve mutual knowledge and understanding between members of the collective in order to remove any blockages and areas of uncertainty and to collectively define common values in order to move forward in confidence
2. the need to better characterise the diversity of the actors, beyond the collective gathered in these workshops, by means of a participatory inventory
3. the desire to develop collaborative research programmes to co-construct research questions related to the diversity maintained in the gene banks
4. the desire to set up a neutral governance body based on the model of third places that would provide a long-term framework for research/civil society interactions on agrobiodiversity.

Based on these results, a roadmap aimed at defining various short-term actions was drawn up in order to initiate a network dynamic with two long-term objectives: the establishment of a third place and the definition of a pilot collaborative research programme hosted in this third place. Based on the now well-established framework of the Commons, third places are 'hybrid' spaces that aim to bring together a diversity of actors (constituting 'commoners') involved in the creation or maintenance of common resources (Vallat, 2017, Levy Waitz 2018, Lhoste, 2020). By circumventing the blockages that can emanate from 'institutional' places, the third place could constitute a collective framework, a multi-actor space that not only recognises the coexistence of a diversity of management practices of cultivated diversity but above all facilitates interactions and collaborations between the different actors that make it up. Third places, living labs, fab labs, hacks labs, or coworking spaces have become very popular over the last ten years. Behind the use of these very innovative and "trendy" concepts, there are very diverse forms of application. A Master 2 IPAD thesis carried out within the framework of the CoEx project

identified a certain number of these potentially inspiring 'Science-Society' third places and/or places that could house the theme of cultivated diversity (Boutique des Sciences, Les Localos, SCIC TETRIS, LISRA, etc.). As the two research projects CoEx and Dynaversity come to an end, it seems necessary to find new financial means in order to continue the collective dynamics in this phase of structuring the community by organising a collaborative work around a common vision and project around this concept of a third place. [1] CoEx: Adaptive governance of coexistence of crop diversity management systems, this project is mainly focused on West Africa and aims to test methods and tools to characterise the diversity of seed systems on a social, political and biological level and to highlight the relationships between the diversity of plants, seeds, actors and rules. The overall ambition of the CoEx project is to improve the understanding of the mismatch between policies and laws on seeds and genetic resources on the one hand, and crop diversity management practices on the other. Furthermore, it aims to propose innovative governance mechanisms that better take into account the diversity of crop diversity management practices [2] Dynaversity: Dynamic Seed Networks for European Crop Diversity Management: aims to analyse and describe the actors involved in crop diversity conservation with the aim of proposing new governance and management models and building new forms of networks. It facilitates the co-construction between a plurality of actors (farmers, amateur gardeners, nature parks, seed producers, gene banks, ex situ actors, consumers) and establishes new forms of networks, knowledge and socio-environmental practices.

Keywords : Cultivated diversity, Third place, Science-Society, Network, Collaborative governance

Year : 2021

Project number : 2100-011

Type of funding : SP

Project type : PC

Research units in the network : DIADE IPME

Start date : 2021-03-01

End date : 2021-12-31

Flagship project : no

Project leader : Selim Louafi

Project leader's institution : CIRAD

Project leader's RU : AGAP

Budget allocated : 10000 €

Total budget allocated (including co-financing) : 10000 €

Funding : Labex

GOAL

The objectives are to consolidate the collective around the eventual creation of two projects: (i) the establishment of a third place that brings together a diversity of actors acting at the interface between research and action for the dynamic management of cultivated diversity and (ii) the definition of collaborative research programmes on the dynamic management of cultivated diversity. In addition, ARCAD should be positioned in a dynamic of openness integrating social diversity by strengthening and anchoring the link between research and civil society. To help achieve these objectives, an international seminar bringing together the group already formed, extended to new actors interested and/or involved in third places initiatives, is envisaged as a milestone event to continue the collective reflection on the construction of third places.