



Supporting Agroecological Transformation in Rajasthan for Climate and Biodiversity Goals in India



Context

With a population of 1.4 billion and the second largest arable land of 159.7 million hectares, India has the potential to make a significant contribution to the global challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and food security. As India envisions becoming a USD 7 trillion economy by 2030 (Department of Economic Affairs, Govt of India, 2024), it must balance economic growth with its commitments under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), and the Paris Agreement.

The country's agricultural sector is essential for global food production, but also for the nation itself, being the largest source of livelihoods for more than 50% of the population. In Rajasthan, where over 70% of the population depends on agriculture, the sector faces severe challenges including water scarcity, land degradation, soil erosion, rising temperatures, and erratic rainfall which are additionally reinforced by climate change. While the Indian government has made policy changes to adopt sustainable practices in agriculture, large scale transformation towards a sustainable agri-food system is yet to be achieved.

Project name	Supporting agroecological transformation in Rajasthan for climate and biodiversity goals in India
Partner countries	India (Rajasthan)
Volume	3 Mio. EUR (2.5 Mio. EUR of EU; 0.5 Mio. EUR BMZ)
Duration	January 2026 to November 2028
Implementing partners	Department of Agriculture, Government of Rajasthan and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Target groups	Agriculture and natural resource-dependent rural communities in Rajasthan, with a particular focus on women farmers, Self Help Groups (SHGs), and Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs).

Implemented by

Unsustainable agricultural practices remain one of the key drivers of biodiversity loss. Increasing pressure on natural resources and ecosystem services caused by increasing food demands, agricultural practices and climate change continue to be a critical challenge for sustainable development.

Transitioning to sustainable and climate-resilient food systems based on agroecology — integrating crops, indigenous seeds, trees, and livestock while reducing chemical inputs — requires an integrated approach involving supportive policies, technology, finance, knowledge, markets, and strong community engagement, with special focus on empowering women farmers.



Farmer managing trees and crops under an agroforestry system | © GIZ India / Aashima Negi

Objective

The project aims to support India in achieving its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement and facilitate a green, low-carbon, and climate-resilient transition in line with Mission LiFE principles. At the state level, it seeks to support agroecological transformation of agri-food systems in Rajasthan, contributing to the global sustainable food systems goals.

Approach

The project adopts an integrated approach combining institutional strengthening, community action, and market development to promote sustainable and climate-resilient agri-food systems.

It is embedded and implemented as part of the Strengthening Gender Responsive Forest Ecosystems Management and Agroforestry (G-VAN) project, supported by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). It builds on experience, partnerships and lessons from agroforestry and sustainable landscape management initiatives in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, adapting successful approaches to Rajasthan's context.

The project follows a two-tier governance structure (National and State-level Steering Committees) and will be implemented in Barmer and Nagaur district of Rajasthan.

Expected outcome

- Strengthening institutional capacities for agroecology and agroforestry.
- Supporting agriculture and natural resource-dependent communities in adopting climate-resilient agroecological practices through training and pilot demonstrations.
- Enhancing economic opportunities for FPOs and women SHGs via certification, value addition, and improved market access.



Knowledge exchange session with farmers and community representatives on sustainable agriculture | © GIZ India

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