

# SHARING KNOWLEDGE FOR STRONGER AGROECOLOGY MOVEMENT in Eastern Europe and Central Asia

An Agroecology Fund project supporting the Bilim alliance  
Report by and for Bilim partners



Bilim Forum 2023, Nilüfer municipality, Bursa, Türkiye.

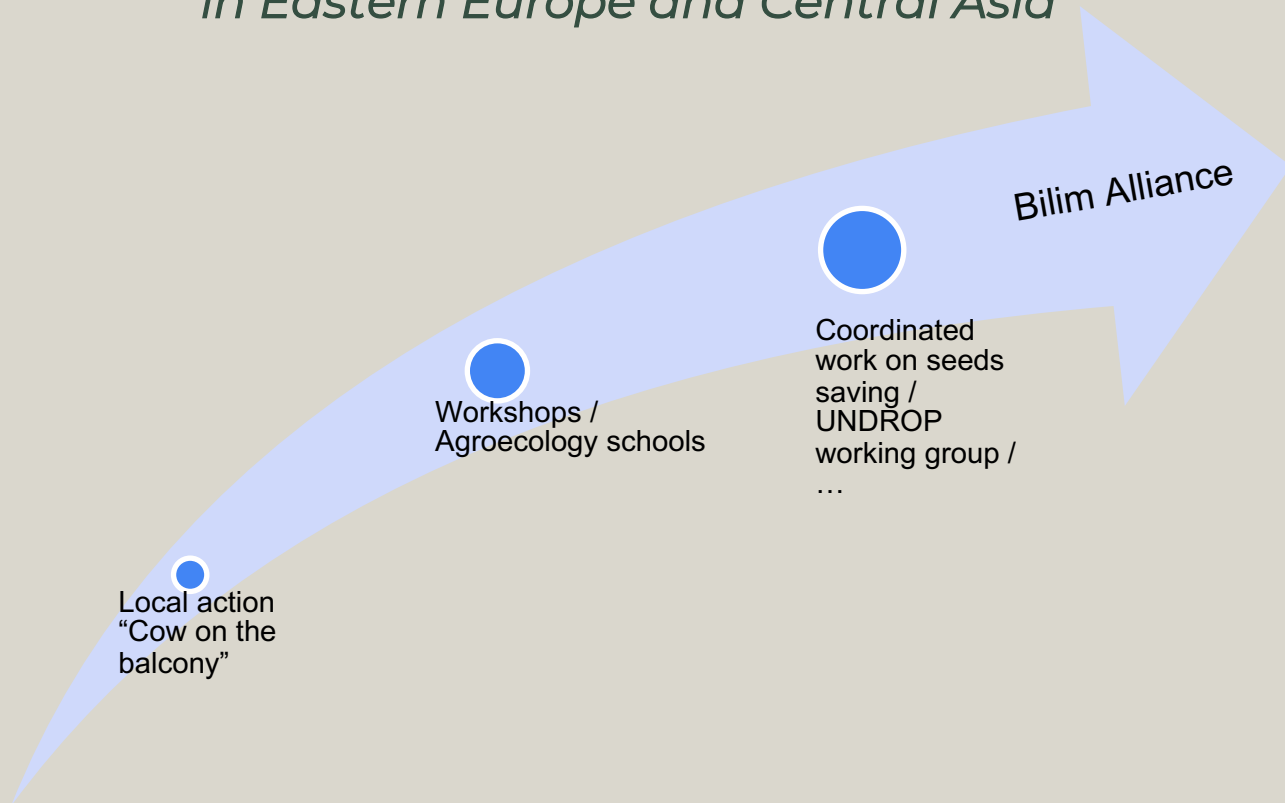


The region includes four sub-regions: Eastern Europe, Western Balkans, South Caucasus, Central Asia.

# *the Bilim community of practice on Agroecology - Geographical repartition*



# SHARING KNOWLEDGE FOR STRONGER AGROECOLOGY MOVEMENT in Eastern Europe and Central Asia



# *SHARING KNOWLEDGE FOR STRONGER AGROECOLOGY MOVEMENT in Eastern Europe and Central Asia*



## *Project's outputs*

1. Bilim forum 2023
2. Agroecology schools
3. Report of local experiences
4. Agroecology school toolkit
5. Podcasts and Videos
6. National seminars
7. Internal communication
8. External communication

BURSA, TURKEY



Schola  
Campesina



# Bilim Forum

## Europe and Central Asia Agroecology Network Meeting



10-14 JULY 2023

Supported by



AGROECOLOGY  
FUND

[Bilim report](#)

[APL Report](#)

[Forum webpage](#)

Documents: ACTION PLAN / What is BILIM?



# Agroecology school in Kyrgyzstan



4 field farmers agroecology schools on “peasant seed production” with **Dyikan Muras women seed savers** in 4 regions of Kyrgyzstan: Jalalabad, Chui, Issyk-Kul and Batken  
“The training program was developed in collaboration with members of the seed bank network and agronomists and is updated every year with topics added upon request”.



# Agroecology school in Kazakhstan



An agroecological school was organized in the Akmola region by Zher-Ana NGO in collaboration with Olzhas cooperative on **drip irrigation** for 30 local farmers

During the entire season from February to the end of September, both theoretical and practical trainings were conducted. In May-June, practical sessions were held with the installation of drip irrigation systems on the plots of farmers



« For women specifically, drip irrigation is much easier than their daily life, they can milk two cows at the same time »

« It's small and easy and we don't give big governmental projects »

# Agroecology school in Uzbekistan



One training on agroecology practices (soil-protective and resource-saving) organized by Agrarian women of Uzbekistan, for 20 women, in collaboration with the local Andijan Institute of Agriculture and Agricultural Technologies. It closely connected the academia sector with women-farmers. University scientists were thus able to learn more about the problems of farmers and the practices they use. Visit of the Institute / Visit of a greenhouses







# Countries experiences



From Bilim newsletters (Agro-Perma-Lab):

- Traditional Saami ways of eating
- The Ukrainian way of understanding agroecology
- Shortening the supply chain in Kyrgyzstan
- Agroecology and interconnectedness of things - Tomiris
- The power of seeds in Iran
- Moldova's Seeds of Change
- Restoring Peasant dignity – Elkana

And also:

- Yazidi community with Ekoloji Derneği organization created a productive oasis in a refugee camp
- ANDR Community seed bank Bushat
- Elkana seed saving and recovery
- Elkana traditional cheese making and safety rules
- RUSHNOI work on seeds
- ZZ EkoLinden cooperative and market difficulties
- Ekoder seed library
- Balkan Seed Network
- Gardens of victory
- AFZU Elders houses, schools with disabilities, ....

# Countries experiences



Yazidi community with Ekoloji Derneği organization created a productive oasis in a refugee camp



Conflicts, difficult socio-economic situations and climate change are displacing people who seek asylum, a better future, more robust food systems, as well as safer places with more stable access to resources. Bişar's story with Ekoloji Derneği's – a Turkish organization- highlights the immense capacity agroecology has to provide a space for healing and for traditional agricultural practices to be maintained, shared and passed on.

In August 2014, thousands of Yazidis had crossed the border from Iraq to Turkey. With the organisation of regional municipalities and people around the town of Diyarbakir, the first welcome was given to the Yazidis crossing the border and they were transferred to provinces and districts in the region. The Şengal Camp was established, and a Yazidi assembly helped organise camp coordination as well as the welcoming of incoming delegations, press statements, demonstrations, commemorations and festivals. **Initially, the food was distributed from the food factory, but due to the differences in the food culture of the Yazidis, upon their own request -and thanks to this assembly-, the food distribution system was changed.**

Since most of the people -especially women- suffered psychosocial traumas both before and during migration; and were facing difficult living conditions in the camps, including obstacles arising from cultural differences, and feelings of guilt due to their socio-economic inactivity; many studies and activities took place to see how these issues could be minimised in line with the views of the Yazidi people in the camp. **As a result of the interviews, it has been determined that most of the Yazidis living in the camp, especially women, were engaged in agricultural activities in their own lands, albeit on a small scale. For this reason, Ekoloji Derneği began to encourage and support small-scale agroecological production throughout the camp.**



Firstly, seeds obtained using traditional methods were collected from the villages. Small-scale orchards were established in suitable places with fertile soil behind and around the tents in the camp. Later, these gardens were expanded by obtaining animal manure and seeds were produced and production areas were created wherever possible, even in pots. Pests and diseases were prevented from areas where agriculture was carried out with traditional, natural medicines. Seedlings were grown from the seeds and offered for free distribution and exchange.



These activities were expanded when positive results were obtained in terms of the adaptation of the Yazidi people. 125 gardens were created in the camp. Tomatoes, peppers, melons and greens were grown. Hundreds of small poultry were bought and poultry houses were built in the camp. An adobe house was built together with the youth in the camp and used as a seed distribution centre. Active involvement in these activities -especially women and young people- was seen as an important field of activity as it would enable them not to think about what they were going through.

It has been observed that the socio-economic dimension, which has become the biggest problem of migration and refugee, can be overcome by ensuring their active participation in agriculture. Reducing the feeling of being away from their own land and contributing to the country where they are seeking asylum, while transferring their knowledge and experience; enabled psychologically positive developments of displaced women farmers.

Text from Bişar İçli, Ekoloji Derneği Diyarbakır

(Kurdish part of Türkiye, 2022)

# Countries experiences



"We have four traditional activities in our region that provide us food: hunting, reindeer breeding, fishing, wild fruits collecting like berries, but also mushrooms and herbs. Traditionally agriculture was not our thing. But with the influence of Russian population we started to plant potatoes, carrots, also we plant blackberries, raspberries and even strawberries." - says Valentina Sovkina, the representative of the Coalition on Indigenous Peoples Food Systems and the head of the Russian department of The Saami Women Forum in an interview with Paulina Jeziorek from Agro-Perma-Lab Foundation.

**Paulina Jeziorek: Valentina, you represent the Saami, the indigenous population of Russia who constitute the smallest national minority in Russia and are concentrated around the settlement of Lovozero.**

Valentina Sovkina: Yes, according to the last census, there are only a little more than 1,5 thousand of us. But the Saami people live in the neighboring northern countries, such as Finland, Norway, Sweden, I think there are many of us around the world. You can find the Saami in countries such as Poland or America, they are in Alaska and in southern countries, even in Asia and India.

**The Saami of Russia live in difficult political, economical and social conditions. You try to support and help the community. Why did you decide to work in the context of food sovereignty of the Saami?**

The reason why I represent the indigenous people of Saami and why I try to protect their rights, culture and food tradition is because I am Saami myself. I grew up in this context, I know the Saami language and got to know their traditions. Our family always ate traditional local products. I often went fishing at the nearby lake or wild fruit picking. The Saami culture and tradition including food was always very close to me.

**How about the other contexts of food like climate change, people's food sovereignty and preserving your culture traditions?**

The answer implies all the three dimensions you mentioned: climate change, preservation of traditional culture, way of life and food. As for myself I would like my people to stay in the area where they lived for generations. I would like them to restore the traditional way of eating and eat more reindeer meat and fish that is more common than chicken and pork. In recent years a lot of traditional products have been substituted with products from around the world. When I was in a boarding school and they tried to feed us with food they called civilized products like chicken and pork that is very common, but it is not common for us, the Saami people. For us the reindeer meat. I also thought a lot about the traditional products during Covid-19 pandemic and I think that people who ate traditional products had lighter forms of covid. They did not suffer so much. This is my thought. I experienced it myself.

I think a lot about climate change as well. We see the problem looking at our reindeer. They eat bushes and herbs. Recently they cannot find the food they used to eat due to climate change, so they slowly go north. But in the north there is not so much food for them. So in a while they will have nowhere to go. There is less and less territory remaining for reindeer each year.

Also, our food tradition and culture preservation is a very important thing. I think that if you eat the food from your area, not only you maintain your tradition, but at the same time it is a healthy way of life.

**Can you say more about traditional food of the Saami? How do you collect and produce food in your region?**

We have four traditional activities in our region that provide us food: hunting, reindeer breeding, fishing, wild fruits collecting like berries, but also mushrooms



and herbs. Traditionally agriculture was not our thing. But with the arrival of the Russian population, we began to plant potatoes, carrots as well as black currants, raspberries and even strawberries. Nowadays people have greenhouses where they plant cucumbers, cabbages, and many other vegetables which they need at the beginning of spring when they lack vitamins. I have a small greenhouse myself. Actually, most products I eat are traditional products: reindeer meat, fish and wild berries. I eat green onion and a bit of carrot and potatoes. Usually I use no spices. Reindeer meat is very tasty and does not require spices.

**You were discouraged from eating traditional food in the past, you mentioned that the kind of food was called "uncivilized". What activities do you take to promote this food and give people access to this kind of food?**

For me it is a kind of genetic memory. I remember traditional recipes or meals my grandparents prepared. Traditional products are still available to people. If you do not hunt, you can easily get reindeer meat. You can easily get fish as well. You can either buy it or go fishing as we have a lot of lakes. Also, berries are accessible. You can either buy them or go and collect them yourself. Many people I know, including myself, make fruit jams or we freeze collected berries. We dry or smoke meat. When I travel, I always take with me dried meat. I do not eat apples, bananas or pineapples as I am aware that I can deliver much more microelements for my organism eating local berries.

I also started to collect medical herbs in my area. I dry herbs as well as blueberries or cranberries. I am a part of a project called: SUGREV "Treasures of the Far North" It is a unique tea and ethnographic project. It is a set of different kinds of teas called "Treasures of the North" (1).

(1) more on the project SUGREV "Treasures of the Far North": <https://sugreff.ru/>

# Agroecology school toolkit and manual



Report available on in text version and slides version

The recording of the toolkit presentation in Russian is available on Mega [MEGA](#)  
Запись презентации на русском языке доступна на сайте Mega [MEGA](#)

SHARING KNOWLEDGE FOR STRONGER AGROECOLOGY MOVEMENT IN ECA 2022/2023

## AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS TOOLKIT

FOR ORGANISATIONS AND FACILITATORS



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# Videos



[Cow on the balcony in Kazakhstan](#)

[Farmers shop in Kyrgyzstan](#)

[UNDROP video's](#)

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YouTube FR Recherche

0:24 / 2:57

**МАСТЕР КЛАСС ПО КАПЕЛЬНОМУ ОРОШЕНИЮ**

STEPNEWS  
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Sabonner

14

Partager

Extrait

# National seminars (just some of them...)

**Elkana** (June 2023) International conference (March 2023) National Workshop and seed exchange in Tbilisi. Open event for interested agroecological/organic seed savers. Marika Kapanadze talked about the Bilim network and its benefits.

**ADI** (February 2023) in Bishkek with 25 members of the Dyikan Muras network. The main topics of this year were increasing soil fertility, pest control, biological plant protection products, a special feature of this year was studying the experience of partners - online sessions from Kazakhstan on the “Cow on the Balcony” project (from **Zher-Ana**) and an online session from **CENESTA** on Evolutionary Participatory Plant Breeding.

**EcoRuralis**: Seed working group meeting, Bilim, Agroecology, 3 days, fields work Sept 2022.



# National seminars

**Zher-Ana** (September 2023) in the village of Karabulak during the Earth Market (Slow Food project), NGO Zher-Ana held a round table with the participation of farmers from the agroecological school and the local fair. During the round table, the project farmers shared their successes, the results of the harvest using new knowledge, also discussed the difficulties encountered when using drip irrigation systems and organic fertilizers, and discussed ways for the further development of the School of Agroecology

**Alica Foundation:** Food Sovereignty and Agroecology. Sustainable agricultural production and preservation of family farms and rural life.

**Albanian Network for DR / Agroecology** as a response to climate change and benefits to farmers (16 September 2023) for youth members of the Rural Youth Hub.





# Bilim internal communication

## Digital platform / Online meetings



**Seminars on drip irrigation, Kazakhstan, Akmola region**

Pillar 2 - Ecological production | Water management | pillar-5-knowledge | kazakhstan | centralasia | казахст

This is the first time Galina\_Stepnogorsk has posted — let's welcome them to our community!

**Galina\_Stepnogorsk**

18-19 февраля 2023 года в Ақмолинской области прошли семинары «Эффективность применения капельного полива в растениеводстве и применение капельного орошения в зависимости от вида культур и особенностей земельного участка» для местных фермеров личных подсобных хозяйств. Участники семинара ознакомились с методикой капельного полива, его основными преимуществами, эффективностью и влиянием на урожайность культур, были рассмотрены живые примеры от фермеров использующих данную систему орошения на своих участках, проведено обучение по установке и особенностям использо капельного полива. Обсудили вопросы экономии водных ресурсов, важности восстановления плодородного слоя почв.

*Семинары 1-2. «Эффективность применения капельного полива в растениеводстве и применение капельного орошения в зависимости от вида культур и особенностей»*

**Historie agroekologiczne z Bilim Network: CENESTA**

Pillar 7 - Collective and organisation | pillar-7-organisation | pillar-3-territory | pillar-4-rights | iran

**BarbaraKurek**

19 Sep

AGRO-PERMA-LAB Foundation presents **AGROECOLOGY STORIES**, series of interviews where we present inspiring stories, people and unique organisations from Europe and Central Asia who work for agroecology development in their regions.

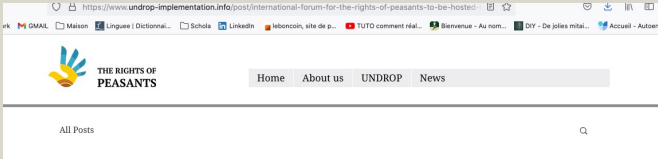
All articles you can find here

*articles*  
**LEARNING ORGANISATIONS**  
STORIES FROM THE FIELD

**THE POWER OF DIVERSITY IN IRAN**

Maedeh, could you say more about your organisation? As far as I know, you have been in the Bilim community for a short time, so I think this is an excellent opportunity to get to know you better. Especially, CENESTA is an experienced and professional organisation.

# Bilim external communication



Instagram

UNDROP Implementation • Nov 23 • 4 min read

## International Forum for the Peasants to be hosted by Uk December 2023

bursadabugun 100

DOLAR 28,98 EURO 31,87

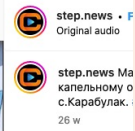
Anasayfa | Bursa Haberleri | Bölge Haberleri | Nilüfer Belediyesi'nden Doğu A

## Nilüfer Belediyesi'nden Doğu A Agroekoloji Forumu

Nilüfer Belediyesi ve Nilüfer Kent Konseyi tarafından Doğu Aru 2023.07.10 14:12 - Son Güncellenme: 2023.07.10 14:37 - Bursa Bölg



Гуляшвили Баһриковна, рускоязычная ДД "Жер Ана Астана", фермер с Карабулак



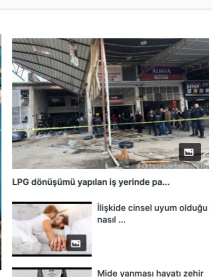
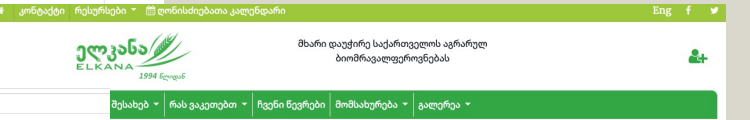
## DEZVOLTAREA AGRICULTURII DE FAMILIE – PERSPECTIVEA ALIMENTAȚIEI ȘI AGRICULTURII ÎN MOLDOVA.

APR. 4, 2023

– IN ENGLISH BELOW –

Ce este agricultura de familie și de ce avem nevoie de ea?

Deși nu există încă o definiție clară a agriculturii familiale, există unele premise care ne pot descrie și ghida înțelegerea acestui concept complex. Agricultura de familie începe cu hrana pentru oameni. Acest model de producție permite asigurarea securității alimentare și nutriționale a membrilor familiilor care cultivă alimente în primul rând pentru ei înșiși și, în al doilea rând, vînd surplusul celorlalți din comunitatea lor. Principala trăsătură a agriculturii familiale este diversitatea, deoarece o dietă diversificată contribuie la sănătatea și bunăstarea lor. Este vorba, de asemenea, despre selecție și economisirea sîmînțelor, care permite familiilor și comunităților să aibă o sursă de bază și principală de producție alimentară. Deci, agricultura de familie se referă la producătorii de alimente care folosesc pămîntul și resursele sale naturale, inclusiv solul, apă și toate ființele vii, cum ar fi insectele, plantele, rășnărită și altele animale, pentru a produce hrană pentru ei înșiși și pentru alții.



LPO dönüşümü yapılan 1 yerinde pa...  
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Mide yarınası hayatı zehir ediyorsa...



dialogue #13 CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND AGROECOLOGY with Polina Shulbaeva

Forumu - agroekolojia a adomsoalei de voroasa da cenralaun ariazi  
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ACTIVITIES	ORGANIZATION	DATE
Coordinated work on UNDROP to have a Working Group voted at the UN Assembly / Collective call to align strategy, share tools and update on the process	Bilim community	Oct 2023
Serbian national seminar to identify partnership for agroecology advocacy on the Balkans	EcoRuralis, Subotica,..	Oct 2022
Farmer's shop in Kyrgyzstan	ADI	
Organic fair in Kyrgyzstan (Slow Food project)	ADI	
Forum in Ukraine	AFZU, EcoAction, EcoRuralis	Dec 2022
International forum on UNDROP implementation in Ukraine	AFZU, EcoAction, EcoRuralis, Schola Campesina	Dec 2023
Elkana trainings: Agroecology for schoolchildren / Training on grafting / ...		
Elkana bread festival: valuing traditional wheat crops	Elkana.	
Elkana Annual Conference / Agroecology and organic farming	Elkana, EcoRuralis, Ciftci-Sen, Schola Campesina,...	
UNDROP work in the region: awareness raising, advocacy, video	Bilim, EcoRuralis	
Creation of Draft Laws on the Right of Indigenous Peoples to Free Land Lease for Clan Communities The right to realisation of the traditional economic activities of the Ancestral Communities for their maintenance.	Indigenou Forum	

## *These outputs are closely interconnected with the other activities of Bilim agroecology organizations*



Non-exhaustive list of Activities of Bilim organizations	Bilim partners	Period
Webinar on farmer's seed system (seed quality assurance)	Gradina Moldovei, Schola Campesina, Balkan Seed savers.	Nov 2023
Balkan Seed Savers development		
Webinar „Basics of Botany for saving vegetable seeds”	Gradina Moldovei	Jan 2023
Participation to the Civil Society and Indigenous People Mechanism for the Committee on World Food Security	ADI, Schola Campesina, Ukrainian Rural Development Network	2023
Participation to the FAO regional conference	Elkana, Schola Campesina, ...	
Webinar "New regulation on heterogeneous organic plant reproductive material: perspectives and opportunities for resilient seeds in Moldova"	Gradina Moldovei	Oct 2023
Webinar on Participatory Plant Breeding	Gradina Moldovei, Schola Campesina, ADI, CENESTA, Elkana	2024
Training on Participatory Plant Breeding	ADI, CENESTA	
Kazakh agroecology school focused on drip irrigation / provision of equipment, exchange of knowledge	Zher-Ana-Astana, ADI	