

Factsheet Nº 1

Impacts of agroecological weed management on pollinators

INTRODUCTION

Conventional agricultural practices, particularly pesticide application, can disrupt the fragile mutualistic relationships between weeds and pollinators. This highlights the need for sustainable agronomic strategies that maintain these interactions.

The role of agroecological weed management

Agroecological weed management impacts on pollinators reveal a **vital interconnection between agricultural practices and the maintenance of biodiversity**. Agroecological practices such as using varied crops, as observed in multipurpose systems, offer a **continuity of floral resources** and favor the conservation of many pollinator species (e.g., native bees) since they depend on the diversity of flowers throughout the season. Mass flowering crops can benefit pollinators and producers by boosting their abundance and diversity over sequential crop cycles. In addition, the conscious management of agricultural practices effectively promotes the richness of wild bee species, corroborating the importance of agroecological practices in transitioning to more sustainable farming systems.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1
The management of insect-pollinated weeds significantly impacts pollinator populations, which are indispensable for maintaining biodiversity and agricultural productivity.

2
Understanding weed-pollinator interactions can enlighten on sustainable ecological health and compatibility crop management practices.

3
The agroecological approach, which prioritises crop diversity, natural habitats preservation, and a decrease in pesticide application, not only promotes soil health, but also favours the presence and abundance of pollinators, which are fundamental to agricultural productivity.

FIGURES. *Crop-weeds interaction (1); weed flora resources (2); pollinators visiting weeds (3)*
(cc: Dr. Alexandros Tataridas, University of Coimbra)


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