

## Genetic Loss in Food Crops in the Pacific: Socio-Economic Causes and Policy Issues

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[https://doi.org/10.33318/jpacs.2016.36\(2\)-2](https://doi.org/10.33318/jpacs.2016.36(2)-2)

### ABSTRACT

*Genetic diversity of traditional food crops is declining in the Pacific Islands. Background information on the evolution of the diversity of these crops is provided, socioeconomic reasons for this loss are outlined, the economic consequences of this loss are analysed, and the economic benefits and costs of conserving crop varieties is examined. The potential economic benefits foregone by failing to conserve a crop variety are shown to depend on the nature of the demand function for the crop's production. The economics associated with the conservation of crop diversity by in situ and ex situ methods are discussed.*

**Keywords:** *Biodiversity loss, crop varieties, gene banks, genetic capital, food crops, food security, Pacific Islands, sustainable development.*