

**Title** Collective action for the marketing of underutilized tropical fruits in south and Southeast Asia  
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### **Abstract**

Asia is the world's largest producer of tropical fruit. The marketing of fruit such as mango and banana is of major importance to the incomes and livelihoods of many in the region. However, there is also a wide range of lesser known fruits that are valuable in terms of food security and income and often have major cultural significance. The diversity of these fruits is threatened by land-use conversion and unsustainable harvesting practices and intervention is needed to protect them. Interventions for improved biodiversity management on-farm aim at increasing farmer utility for these resources through enhancing the income derived from them. The strategy to achieve this is by re-governing the markets for underutilized fruit products. Many obstacles in linking smallholders to markets have to be overcome and this can potentially be done through collective action. In this paper, three cases are described of the processing and marketing of underutilized fruit crops by farmer groups in India, Thailand and Indonesia, involving the species kokum, cowa and pomelo. This paper evaluates these cases using a conceptual framework for the process of collective action. It also attempts to assess the effect these chains and their enabling environment have on on-farm diversity and smallholder income.