

Merging the Old and New: An opportunity for Agricultural Cooperativity

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Issues of Agricultural Farmers

Over-arching issues

- Finance
- Marginal/Small and fragmented land—holdings
- Shortage of quality seeds
- Inadequate infrastructure

Results

- Declining agricultural growth rates
- Farmers remain poor, suicide rates high

Indigenous medicinal systems - An avenue for co-operation?

1. Global wellness economy was a \$4.2 trillion market in 2017, growing at a rate of 6.4%

2. The BRICS countries between them have vast biodiversity and traditional knowledge of using the biodiversity for healing and wellness

Brazil – 15-20% of world's biodiversity

India – 7% of world's biodiversity

Challenges to commercializing traditional knowledge

- Language and Cultural Differences
- Acceptability by mainstream/allopathic schools of medicine
- Lack of empirical data using modern biology tools to show efficacy, mechanism of action as required for other drugs
- IP and patents/ benefit sharing arrangements
- Convention on Biological Diversity

Advantages

Opens new product segments

Conserves traditional knowledge

Commercializes existent biodiversity – and could promote its safeguarding

Does not require additional technology adoption by farmers for production

Does not require or induce significant environmental changes

Reduces costs by prioritizing practices based on data

How Would this Work?



How Would this Work?

BRICS Co-operative

Private companies



Lab testing for empirical studies on
efficacy and mechanisms of action



Identification of biodiversity that could
be commercialised



Knowledge and benefits shared with farmers
and practitioners of traditional systems

Other sectors

- **Nutritional Security**
- **Bioenergy**
- **Dyes and Colours**
- **Fabrics**
- **Waste management**

Conclusion

- **Agriculture has to be looked on as an interdisciplinary science – encompassing biology, economics and public policy**
- **The interfacing of traditional system and modern biology could open new markets and product verticals for farmers**
- **Co-operation with BRICS could expedite the process and shared knowledge would be beneficial for the individual countries**

THANK YOU

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