



European Agroforestry Federation (EURAF) Brussels' statement

NOW is the Time for Agroforestry in Europe

Brussels, 10 October 2012

Agroforestry, the “on purpose” mixture of trees with crops/animals, is a key component of food and fuel security in an unpredictable world affected by climate change and fossil fuels scarcity.

EURAF organised the first European Scientific Conference on agroforestry in Brussels on 9-10 October 2012, with participants from 17 European countries and delegates from America and Africa. Evidence of outstanding productivity and efficient provision of ecosystem services was discussed at the conference, with more than 50 papers offered to the audience.

Agroforestry systems include all forms of trees, either on the boundary or inside cultivated or grazed parcels. The productivity of agroforestry systems was demonstrated by both controlled experiments and farmers' testimonies, with increases in land productivity of up to 40% without additional inputs. Agroforestry is also part of the solution to the bio-energy challenge that Europe currently face, and will provide job opportunities that can't be outsourced. The provision of environmental services by agroforestry includes climate change mitigation and adaptation, soil erosion control, water protection, biodiversity preservation and fire prevention in dry areas.

As a conclusion to the Conference, all EURAF participants agreed with the 7 following statements :

1. Traditional agroforestry systems should be recognized and renewed, and innovative agroforestry systems should be promoted for adoption.
2. Agroforestry systems should be fully eligible for the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) first pillar payments and the 50 trees per hectare limit should be removed.
3. A broad agroforestry measure should be maintained in CAP Pillar 2 to help farmers establish agroforestry systems (including hedges) adapted to their environment.
4. An agroforestry measure should be incorporated in Pillar 2 to help farmers to manage and renew endangered traditional agroforestry systems.
5. As agroforestry can be implemented throughout Europe, pillar 2 agroforestry measures could be compulsory for all state members in the next Rural Development Regulation.
6. Agroforestry systems should be eligible for inclusion in the ecological focus area of farms.
7. The benefits of agroforestry systems for climate change adaptation and mitigation should be recognized and accounted for in the European Union Climate policy.

More detailed suggestions for an agroforestry-friendly Common Agricultural Policy are available on the EURAF website: www.agroforestry.eu