Statement of the EURAF Conference 2018

The 250 participants (farmers, researchers, NGOs, advisors, policy developers) of the 4th bi-annual Conference of the European Agroforestry Federation met on 28-30 May 2018 in Nijmegen, the European Green Capital in The Netherlands, with the explicit focus on ‘Accelerating inspiring transitions towards agroforestry as a sustainable land use, including the role that agroforestry can play to mitigate and adapt to climate change’, and pursuing the aim of ‘having 50% of farmers adopting Agroforestry by 2025’;

acknowledging that:

a. Agroforestry is a sustainable agricultural land use system that deliberately integrates the woody component (trees or shrubs) with crops and/or livestock to deliver agricultural products from the lower storey;

b. Agroforestry has a range of ecological, environmental and climate benefits, including: increasing carbon sequestration, adapting to climate change, a more efficient use of resources such as light, nutrients and water, enhancing biodiversity, improving the quality of air and water, boosting water retention, controlling erosion and providing beneficial micro-climates;

c. Agroforestry increases the economic and environmental resilience of farms, reduces the impact of extreme events and creates rural employment opportunities;

d. Agroforestry contributes to many of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals;

e. Europe benefits from a unique heritage of traditional agroforestry systems that include a high degree of innovation and must take a leading role in creating a critical mass of agroforestry farmers to show that a sustainable alternative to conventional farming is available and desirable;

conclude that a European Agroforestry Strategy should be prepared and approved that:

a. Defines a set of policy measures that stimulate agroforestry practices at farm level, and support farmers in switching to agroforestry practices, with special attention being paid to funding investment and maintenance;

b. Accelerates the transition and scaling up of agroforestry throughout Europe by facilitating the intense exchange of information and practices between farmers, researchers, advisors, policy developers, industry, business and consumers;

c. Harnesses the 2021-2027 CAP to support agroforestry on a large scale across Europe;

d. Ensures that the CAP policy measures accommodate flexible national plans, stimulates farmers in their search for optimal agroforestry solutions, and helps to develop profitable business models;

e. Integrates agroforestry education at all relevant levels

f. Develops a major research line in Horizon Europe (FP9) that, together with the current Rural Development Measures linked to EIP-Agri, helps to foster the knowledge and implementation of agroforestry innovations at large scale.
Prior to the adoption of the above statement, we received the following three comments:

1. Under ‘acknowledging that’ a, line 1: change ‘sustainable agricultural land use system’ into ‘sustainable land use system’. And a, line 2: change ‘agricultural products’ into ‘sustainable agricultural products’.

2. Add to ‘acknowledging that’: ‘Agroforestry contributes to ending hunger’.

3. Add to ‘conclude that a European Agroforestry strategy ....’ under f: g. ‘Pays attention to cultural and spiritual aspects of change processes’.

The participants agreed that EURAF would include these comments in the final report on the conference.

May 30, 2018

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President of the Organising Committee EURAF 2018

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