



EUROPEAN AGROFORESTRY FEDERATION

EURAF, 14, Rue Pagès, 34070 Montpellier, FRANCE

www.agroforestry.eu

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1. EURAF AND POLICY

EURAF has been quite actively moving Agroforestry (AF) forward within the CAP (Common Agricultural Policy) 2014-2020, since it was founded in December 2011. By that time, the European Commission (EC) already launched the “First CAP Document” (November 2010), which after discussion and 1200 contributions presented by stakeholders.. EC delivered the first draft report of the Commission about the CAP legislative proposal in October 2011. Soon after founding EURAF, the elected Executive Committee members went to Brussels to present EURAF and support Agroforestry in the new CAP. By that time, CAP changes only could be forwarded through the EC and EP members. For this reason, EURAF met with influential people from these institutions dealing with CAP during 2012.

EURAF also met with people from different EU Directorate units like CLIMA, Environment, Horizontal Aspects of Rural Development, Agriculture Policy Analyses and Perspectives, Direct Support, Management of Market Measures and Promotion, Agriculture and Rural Development and European Network and Monitoring of Rural Development, among others. EURAF is really grateful to Francesca Ricardi from the Agriculture Veneto Region in Brussels, who always helped us with the meeting organization and to be on time with our busy agenda. As a result of these meetings, we were invited to be part of the EC advisory groups, to the meeting [“Shaping the future of the Common Agricultural Policy”](#) by Mr. Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos, chair of the EP Intergroup “Climate change, biodiversity and sustainable development”, as well as to the Green Week Conference 2012.

EURAF also pushed AF land use management as one of the solutions for a more sustainable agriculture at the EU level in the successful First Conference of EURAF excellently organized by Jeroen Watté (Thanks Jeroen!!) in Brussels, which included a one hour meeting at the European Parliament with plenty of Members of the EP. The EP meeting was arranged thanks to the funds provided by the French Agroforestry Association. Mr. Gaston Franco, chair of the “Forestry” group of the European Parliament Intergroup “Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development” chaired the Parliamentary session of EURAF “Agroforestry: Trees for Sustainable European Agriculture” held at the EP in Brussels on the 10th of October 2013, where people from DG Development, Agriculture and Environment were present and where farmers, researchers and politicians participated. A clear [Statement](#) for policy makers was delivered by EURAF by that time.

The statement highlighted some aspects that did not appear in previous EU documents and tried to eliminate some inconsistent rules that prevent from AF implementation at farm level. Among others EURAF detailed that it was necessary to include AF systems as part of Pillar I as a type of Ecological Focus Area and the recognition of the role of AF as key for carbon sequestration, mitigation and adaptation to climate change. EURAF also denounced the elimination of the “damaging rule” of 50 trees per ha to consider a land to be eligible for CAP purposes. EURAF also highlighted the importance of



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having a clear promotion of AF in Pillar II (Rural Development) through the recognition of all types of traditional and innovative AF and the adequate allocation of funds for the establishment and maintenance of AF.

All these meetings allowed us to serve as supporters of AF in the new CAP, explaining how AF and its productive and environmental advantages better fit in the CAP 2014-2020. We were part of all the long procedures to get the final CAP that was approved by EU Parliament (February 2013) and EU Council (March 2013), when for the first time, the EP played a key role as co-legislator in the final outcome of a reformed CAP. After those initial approvals, EURAF was also part of the “trilogue” process (final discussion of CAP among EC, EP and European Council) suggesting how AF better serves the EU environmental and productive needs to EC and EP.

What did AGROFORESTRY get from CAP 2014-2020?

At the end, EURAF was able to convince the EU policy makers about the appropriateness of AF promotion for the European CAP and it was included in both Pillar I and Pillar II. It is true that EURAF expectations were more ambitious than the final results, but a significant step forward can be declared in the promotion of AF in the reformed CAP. It means that there is a lot of work to do, but we are on the right track. The **EU Regulation 1307/2013** which establishes the rules for direct payments (**Pillar I**) describes agroforestry as a type of Ecological focus areas (5% of arable land of the holding that will be increased to 7%) as well as forest strips due to the role that both elements play in improving biodiversity on farms. However, only agroforestry plots which have received or receive funding from the 2nd pillar can be included in EFA.

Current Rural development Regulation (**Pillar II**) also made a step forward towards implementing AF practices along Europe. The Rural development Regulation 1305/2013 establishes a clear definition of agroforestry: “land use systems in which trees are grown in combination with agriculture on the same land.” EURAF was able to convince EU to delete the word “extensive” from the AF definition, indicating that more productive AF are included but also provide flexibility to the EU Member States to select tree density in accordance with their own conditions as it literally indicates “The minimum and maximum number of trees per hectare shall be determined by the Member States taking into account local pedo-climatic and environmental conditions, forestry species and the need to ensure sustainable agricultural use of the land.”

Moreover, it increases the maximum percentage of eligible costs to be claimed to the EU for agroforestry establishment and maintenance up to 80% (10% higher than the previous Rural Development Regulation (1698/2005), being this amount one of the highest that could be claimed, compared with other measures (excluding payments dealing with Restoring agricultural production potential damaged by natural disasters and introduction of appropriate prevention action which amounts a 100%). Money for this purpose (AF establishment and maintenance) can be claimed by private land-holders, municipalities and their associations. It is worth highlighting that maintenance costs are included for a period of 5 years, even though we asked for 10, but this is highly relevant, as no funds could be claimed for AF maintenance in the previous Rural Development Regulation 1698/2005.

Future

European meetings and EU interactions also helped EURAF to be included as an organization to be considered as part of those that are heard in Europe to draw up policies in different knowledge fields.



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So EURAF is a full member of the Forest and Cork Advisory group and provides advice during the meetings for the new system EU civil groups. EURAF was asked to take part in new groups like Arable crops, CAP, Direct payments and greening, Environment and Climate Change, Rural Development, Animal Products, and Forestry and Cork. EC will have to present a first assessment of EFA system after one year of implementation and an evaluation report on the implementation of EFA by 31 March 2017, which probably will be contributed by EURAF under the AFORWARD project.

EURAF continues lobbying with AlienorEU, Jeroen Watté and Jabier Ruiz, always knowing what is happening in Brussels and informing and asking to all EURAF Executive Committee members their opinion in order to defend AF in the most important European forums, where AF could be promoted across Europe.

Even though we were able to start convincing policy makers, much remains to be done at EU but also at National and Regional level, to allow farmers, technicians and policy makers to get advantage that AF practices can provide. In the wake of the European elections, building up on what has been done with some MEPs and convincing the newly elected ones about the benefits of AF is a challenge to be taken up in order to keep fostering agroforestry in the EU.

Source: Rosa Mosquera-Losada, Mélanie Lamaison, Christian Dupraz.

2. REGIONAL AGROFORESTRY NEWS

2.1 FRUIT-BASED AGROFORESTRY SYSTEMS – AN INNOVATIVE OPTION?

The necessary cutback of agricultural inputs - especially pesticides - without losing productivity needs a fundamental restructuring of horticultural systems. Optimizing ecological services such as biological pest control (enhancing natural enemies and decreasing pest pressure) will only be possible by modifying the global organization of agro-ecosystems, rather than by replacing inputs only. A social issue to consider is the shortage of land resources, especially around cities, forcing farmer's to design viable agro-systems on limited acreage. Agroforestry systems with fruit trees and vegetables are potential candidates to address these challenges. These types of mixed cropping systems are common in tropical regions, but have not yet been extensively investigated in the temperate zone.

French partners started a participative research project at two locations in southern France: the "Durette farm" (Avignon, Vaucluse) and the "Plate-forme TAB" (Etoile-sur-Rhône, Drôme). The biggest challenges are to find compromises between economic and technical constraints and to optimize farmer's income, farm biodiversity and ecosystem functions.

The Durette farm is an organic holding, combining fruit trees and vegetable crops on four hectares. It is managed by two farmers, located in the suburbs of Avignon, and designed for direct marketing.

The TAB farm is under organic management too, combining cereal and vegetable crops on five hectares and designed for selling to wholesalers.

The participative research project started in 2013. The farm's performances will be assessed under various criteria (to be defined), and the farm's social and economic feasibility and environmental benefits will be evaluated too. The available data will be used as a data pool for simulating prototypes based on farm's production objectives (e.g. diversification level and land availability).

We'd very much welcome an exchange of information with comparable projects elsewhere in Europe!

More information: TAB Farm: icastel@drome.chambagri.fr; Durette farm: francois.warlop@grab.fr



2.2 AGROFORESTRY IN FLANDERS: AN ECONOMICALLY PROFITABLE ANSWER TO THE DEMAND FOR AGRO-ECOLOGICAL PRODUCTIONS METHODS



Agroforestry offers many opportunities to enhance farm resilience and respond to future challenges in Flemish (and West European) agriculture. Some examples of this are diversification in production and supplying a wide range of ecosystem services. Economically speaking, the expected increase in demand for biomass and high-quality wood products may make agroforestry a shock-proof investment for farmers. Agroforestry potentially meets the social demand for eco-efficient agro-ecological production methods while being economically profitable.

Nevertheless, experience with agroforestry in Flanders is very limited.

In addition to stumbling blocks regarding legal and administration issues, many technical, organizational and economical questions remain unanswered.

With this project we aim to increase the opportunities for agroforestry in Flanders, through (1) an integrated collaboration throughout the entire chain of stakeholders, (2) co-development of research knowledge and practical experience, and (3) provision of solutions and guidance for the target group. We primarily focus on the soil-bound agricultural sector, but we also include other stakeholders such as tree nurseries and wood and biomass processing plants.

The overall project objective is to create a breakthrough in a relatively short time of feasible, profitable and effective agroforestry systems in Flanders. This will be realized by conducting a participatory process with relevant stakeholders, fueled both by in-depth research and effective dissemination of knowledge and experience.

More specific objectives are:

- Evaluating opportunities for various agroforestry systems in Flanders;
- Increasing knowledge of ecological interactions, ecosystem services, technical impact and especially economic opportunities for a selection of agroforestry systems relevant to the Flemish agricultural context;
- Obtaining an increased understanding of intention,





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attitude, norms, perception and social identity of those involved, to overcome the psychological and social barriers to agroforestry adoption;

- Providing decision support guidelines, practical suggestions and innovative solutions to farming enterprises with regard to the application of agroforestry;
- Encouraging and assisting stakeholders in the implementation of agroforestry measures, adapted to a given set of farming and environmental conditions. This responds to the current demand for well-founded support for farmers having a specific demand for transition towards the application of agroforestry. With this project we therefore not only aim for a change in attitude but also effective adoption.

In this project, a participatory course is followed, through which co-development, consultation of stakeholders, transdisciplinary guidance of practitioners and capture of grassroot ideas are enabled. As such the project aims at maximizing the relevance and validity of the knowledge and experience gained and disseminated. This participatory course runs through the entire project with regular feedback to and from other work packages. Project duration: September 2014 – August 2019

Total budget: €1 013 677

Project coordinator: Institute for Agricultural and Fisheries Research (ILVO)

Partners: Ghent University, Belgian Pedological Service, Inagro and Agrobeheercentrum Eco²

Further information: www.ilvo.vlaanderen.be

Source (text & pictures): Bert Reubens, Institute for Agriculture and Fisheries Research (ILVO), Belgium

2.3 AGROFORESTRY IN SWITZERLAND – A NEW PROJECT FOCUSED ON SILVOARABLE SYSTEMS

Fruit trees play in the Swiss agricultural landscape traditionally an important role. Traditional agroforestry systems, such as orchards, chestnut selvas and wood pasture dominate the cultural landscape in many regions of Switzerland and are good examples of multifunctional land use. Innovative farmers have begun in recent years to develop the traditional systems further. High stem fruit trees are now combined with arable crops. For the fruit trees ecological direct payments can be claimed, which makes the combination with arable crops attractive. The aim is to develop modern agroforestry systems that are ecologically sustainable, financially attractive to farmers, and contribute to the preservation of the cultural landscape.

Three years ago, the „Swiss Interest Group on Agroforestry » was founded, as result of the first national agroforestry project « Tree Gardens » which took place between 2006 and 2011. Members of the group are representatives of the cantonal agricultural advisory services, farmers, agricultural researchers and interested private persons. The interest group has created a website providing information on agroforestry, it organizes an annual conference and provides advice for farmers who would like to start with agroforestry on their farm.

In early 2014 a new agroforestry project called “Swiss Agroforestry Network” was started to last for five years. The main donors are the Federal Office for Agriculture FOAG and the « Fonds suisse pour le paysage ».



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One of the project's goals is to promote innovative silvoarable agroforestry systems as a form of sustainable land use in Switzerland. 25 on-farm demonstration plots spread over Switzerland will show the variety of silvoarable agroforestry systems - from intensive conventional horticultural farms to different organic farms, combinations with fruit trees, wild fruit species and forest trees. These demonstration plots will be used for a monitoring „light“ focused on biodiversity parameters, business surveys and the measurement of the carbon sequestration. In master theses' certain parameters shall be investigated more closely.

Another important project goal is to collect more practical knowledge and to link up farmers, advisors, scientists and other interested people. The Swiss Interest Group on Agroforestry will thus be strengthened in its function as an information hub and first point of contact. It will carry out regular activities, like field tours and regional meetings and exchange experiences.

For more details please contact: Mareike Jäger, AGRIDEA, mareike.jaeger@agridea.ch, Tel.: +41 52 354 97 31 (Source).

Please find below some images of farms, which joined the project:



F. Sereke



M. Jäger



F. Sereke



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Newsletter 3/2014

May 29, 2014



S. Hilpert



F. Sereke



M. Jäger



S. Hilpert



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2.4 NEW AGROFORESTRY WORKING GROUPS IN ITALY

2013 was an active year for Italian Agroforestry:

A working group on Agroforestry has been established within the [SISEF](#) (Italian Society for Forestry and Forest Ecology). The group was founded in September 2013, at [SISEF's 9th national congress](#), where contributions related to agroforestry were among the papers presented. Through SISEF, all members of the working group on agroforestry became members of EURAF. The groups' research interests are:

- benefits of agroforestry systems compared to monoculture systems, in terms of productivity, sustainability and environmental services;
- development of modern agroforestry systems that combine a maximum of production benefits (e.g. in terms of mechanization and efficiency) with a maximum of environmental benefits;
- promoting traditional agroforestry systems, e.g. with the help of new products;
- analysis of European policies (CAP RDP)

More details can be found on the group's [website](#).

A working group on Agroforestry policy has been activated, under the leadership of INEA (Agrarian Economy National Institute). The group has been working on studying the statistics, successes and failure of measure 222 (agroforestry), and the impact and importance of policy.

AGFORWARD, the large agroforestry project, funded within the VII FP, involves three Italian partners: CRA, CNR, and Veneto Agricoltura.

A regional project (Region of Umbria), funded within measure 1.2.4. of the RDP has been activated; the project is concerned with the role of trees in improving animal welfare and product quality, while providing feed, when raising local breeds of poultry and rabbit in agro-tourism farms.

Source: Adolfo Rosati. (Edits: Anja Chalmin)

2.5 LAUNCH OF THE DUTCH BRANCH OF EURAF

The Dutch branch of the EURAF was launched during a mini symposium about agroforestry in The Netherlands on the 21st May 2014. The mini symposium was attended by 50 farmers, researchers and landscape managers, with the aim to get to know and present the different agroforestry initiatives in the Netherlands and to kick off EURAF NL. The outcome of the meeting was that especially livestock farmers showed interest for incorporation of trees at their farms.

On dairy farms willows could be a third crop next to grass and maize. Wood chips can be used for bedding and energy production at the farm. They can also be used as "fodder trees". The leaves and twigs are a palatable source of protein, minerals, and trace elements. Fodder trees can be fed fresh or as silage. The experience of zoos with the production and conservation of browse material indicated new chances for local cooperation: the pruning waste from horticulture can also be used as fodder. Another inspiring example of trees combined with livestock is the use of trees on poultry farms. The trees give shelter for the chickens and can be used for energy production. The other way around, poultry in fruit orchards, is also a good combination: animals fertilize and clean the orchard from insects and leaves, reducing the chances for harmful moulds.

EURAF NL is now represented by the "Stichting Agroforestry Nederland" which will operate as the contact organization between the European partners and the different agroforestry initiatives that take place in The Netherlands. Interested people or organizations in The Netherlands can become member of Stichting Agroforestry Nederland and connect to the EURAF by this means.

Contact person of EURAF Netherlands is Mark Vonk: mark@duinboeren.nl



EUR OPEAN A G R O F O R E S T R Y F E D E R A T I O N

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This is your newsletter! If there's anything you think should be included, please pass suggestions to euraf@gmx.de for inclusion in the next issue.