

# CountrySide

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**Farming and Innovation:  
Natural Partners**



# Editorial

Thierry de l'ESCAILLE, *Secretary General*

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*The Midterm Review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy says that European progress towards its 2020 biodiversity targets is not going near fast enough: 70% of our species are still threatened with habitat loss and the EU-28 is still live far beyond the limits of its bio-capacity. In our sectors, the information provided is unfortunately not much better; despite some improvements, only 11% of agricultural habitats are in a favourable conservation status, and the Review cannot identify significant improvement for our forest species and habitats.*

*The Review also concludes that it is not just our biodiversity and our species that suffer, but it is also our rural economy and our shared prosperity. If the estimates of a 50 billion Euro loss due to missed opportunity costs are correct, and with 1 out of every 6 EU jobs in some way related to biodiversity, then we must act now.*

*The ELO has long flagged that a much further, much more positive integration of sustainable private land management must be part of the solutions to these problems. Our members know that careful, long-term stewardship of private land can deliver real results. We have demonstrated this with our LIFE+ 3watEr project, with our FP7 HERCULES project, and through many events and conferences.*

*However, the programme that may contribute the most to the challenges posed by the review is our Wildlife Estates label. Right now, we are celebrating our 10th anniversary and the results are astounding: 191 registered estates now bring together 1.000.000 hectares of privately managed land for conservation. The ELO and Wildlife Estates have a proven model of biodiversity conservation, and with such challenges as we faced right now, how can these estates be anything else than a real future for Europe's biodiversity?*



# Farming and Innovation: Natural Partners

*On the timeline of human society, the fact that Europe now spends only around 10% of its income on food is a relatively recent development. Europeans have the fruits of the earth and sea at their fingertips year-round; strawberries in the depth of winter and kale and cabbage at the height of summer. In fact, we have so much food that we do not seem to worry about throwing much of it in the garbage bin, rather than re-using efficiently – 100 million tons of it estimated in 2014.*

Robert de GRAEFF, ELO Policy Officer

However, all this bounty must come from somewhere. It comes from the farms, pastures and forests that take up so much of Europe's land outside the city. Wheat from northern France, cured hams from Italy, potatoes from Holland and Spanish oranges fill European shelves. It is produced by European farmers, with high safety standards and in staggering abundance.

What has made all of this possible is a long timeline of invention. From the moment civilizations became sedentary and seeded the first fields, agriculture has been on an upward curve of invention. As our knowledge of farming practice and the environment grew, so did we innovate: the development of the curved plough allowed us to till the soil much more effectively. A German monk experimenting with peas created theories of plant breeding which we still use today. The development of the tractor allowed us to reduce our reliance on oxen and horses, and modern fertilizers allow farmers to vastly increase the yields from the same hectare.

All this makes agriculture and innovation natural partners. Whether the development is internal through generations of farmers improving their own in-field practices and tools, or external through public-funded research, specialised companies and agencies like machinery and chemistry or through new conceptual notions of agriculture such as agro-ecology or bio-dynamic farming, this partnership has delivered both much-needed increased food supplies and better environmental protection.

## Innovation for Europe's Rural Entrepreneurs

With higher fixed costs such as labour and land prices than elsewhere in the world, Europe's farmers need to be at the cutting edge, both in organic and in conventional farming. In order not just make a living, but to expand their business as part of a global marketplace, land managers depend on the power of innovation.

Innovation is necessary in order to meet two of the central challenges that threaten not just land managers but the whole of the food chain. The first major challenge is to achieve substantial waste reductions and improve recycling rates, not just in terms of the 100 million tonnes of food that are thrown out each year, but also for the inputs required for food, feed, and fibre production. As costs rise and availability goes down, the challenge of waste reduction can only be met through innovative products and practices that place inputs where they need to be.

The second challenge is to reduce the impacts of the agricultural sector on the environment; not just in terms of preventing unwanted side-effects, but by husbanding our resources in the best manner possible. More than anything else, this will require us to increase the knowledge input per hectare to know how to get the best results out of organic farming, the best strategies for combining conventional farming with environmental action and how to open up a debate on GM that has been stuck in polarized positions for far too long now. While great advances have already been made to reduce our impacts, Europe's land managers know that a great deal of work is still to be done in order to combine high productivity with true sustainability and long-term profitability.

Fortunately, both the private and public sectors have now acknowledged the need for innovation and are pushing this forward in many directions. From the EU's Innovation Partnership and FP7 and Horizon 2020 programs to the organic sector's 'Opportunities for Innovation' and the European Risk Forum's Innovation Principle – all these initiatives show the need for real progress in agriculture in order to future-proof our food supplies.

## How Do We Push Innovation Forward?

Like all other industries, agricultural innovation is driven by the push and pull of necessity and creativity. From its earliest onset, these two drivers have given rise to innovations and practices that are now standard, and will continue to develop new ideas. New ideas and concepts always stand on each other's shoulders; innovation takes place at the heights its predecessors achieved.

The recent decades have seen a change in the practice of farming in Europe. While the majority of Europe's farmers still continues with a known model of productivity and continuously improves and updates its own tools and practices, new forms of agriculture are emerging like green shoots. Greening practices, organic farming, precision farming, agro-ecology, shortened food chains, mixed business models that incorporate tourist activities on the farm; all these have given new impulses to a classic way of life.

A fundamental part of any innovation, whether agricultural or not, remains a measure of risk. Without risk, we cannot innovate. Risk is the chance we must


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continue to take, the inherent partner of exploration. Today, more than at any other time we can control risk through testing, probability analysis and a degree of measurement that has never before

been possible. While this is undoubtedly an impressive leap, there are still many natural factors that we cannot fully measure, and this is likely to remain so.

and using new tools and techniques do with them, and how these inform our drive towards sustainability, environmental protection, the countryside business case as well as the public interest. Nearly all innovative technology can be used for good and ill, used and abused. What we need is a framework which supports innovation, but studiously and continuously questions the acceptability of risks associated with its use. When intractable positions are taken in favour or against certain technologies, innovation is itself stifled. Even with the best intentions, fear or limited perspectives, we risk eliminating the next best idea, rather than having the more pertinent debate over if and how it should be used, by whom, under which circumstances and for what purpose.

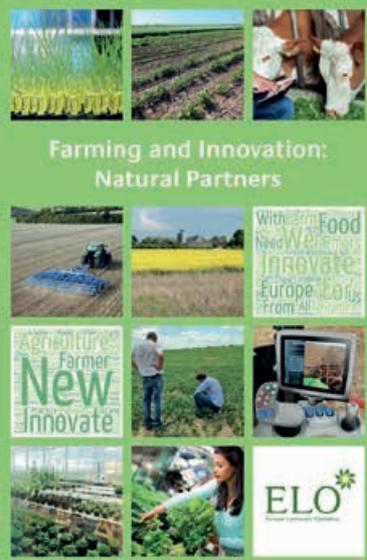
However, what we cannot do and must not accept is that agriculture can thrive without any form of risk; it is in the grey areas of acceptable risk that we find progress – not only in terms of products, but for our business models that will shape and improve the countryside of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This means not only a need for strict and clear regulation that protects, but one that is balanced with an appreciation for the power of and need for innovation itself. Indeed, a commitment of the EU institutions to systematically evaluate and address the impact which draft legislation can have on innovation would in itself help to stimulate confidence of those who we all need to invest in this sector.

The central question, therefore, should not be whether or not agricultural innovation is beneficial in and of itself. It should rather be what those developing

**Note: This article is an abstract of the new ELO brochure on Agriculture and Innovation.**

**The full brochure is available on the ELO website: [www.elo.org](http://www.elo.org).**

**Farming and Innovation:  
Natural Partners**



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La Casinazza

## Productive agriculture and the Environment can coexist

*The first regional Forum For the Future of Agriculture (FFA) 2015 took place under the auspices of the EXPO Milan and gathered together the major stakeholders in the agricultural field under the theme: "Future and Innovation in Agriculture" - the debate panels saw high level speakers from the national and European level. The event was closed with the signature of the Milan Charter.*

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Ana CANOMANUEL, ELO

On September 11, the regional FFA was hosted at EXPO Milano 2015, the perfect location to discuss agriculture and environment, under the theme "Feeding the planet, energy for life". The event was organized by the ELO and Syngenta, under the patronage of EXPO 2015; the Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies and of the Lombardy Region.

Michael Prinz ZU SALM-SALM, Vice president of ELO welcomed the participants on behalf of the ELO, and stressed that the FFA is not just about "seeing the challenges but also about proposing the solutions". Indeed, Luigi RADAELLI, CEO of Syngenta Italy pointed out the great opportunity that meant to showcase the FFA at Expo, not only in terms of visitors but also in terms of content.

The first panel focused on the role of the institutions in the future of agriculture. Andrea OLIVERO, Deputy Minister of Agriculture endorsed the challenge of feeding the world safeguarding its natural resources: *"I hope the dialogue and debate among all stakeholders will lead to a profound reflection on the way we are building the future of agriculture and of our planet in general. I strongly believe the task of the institutions is to promote shared actions in this regard, to encourage and facilitate righteous behaviours, to support investments and spread good practice"*.

In the same line, Germana PANZIRONI, member of the Ministry of Economic Development stated the importance of the cooperation between all the Ministries and together with the farming sector in order to succeed to promote innovations

that will allow to create profit but also to protect the environment.

Under the title "The Environment as an opportunity for Agriculture", the second panel presented existing models of sustainable agriculture, such as an efficient use of water resources, new technologies and tools for enhancing biodiversity. Mario VIGO, owner of the *Fratelli Vigo* farm producing maize, explained that 30ha of his farm are devoted to natural barriers to protect soil and biodiversity, and he raised the relevant question: *"who decides to protect the environment?"*. Martin SCHEELE, Head of Unit at the Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Commission, took up the question: *"we need to establish a political mechanism to pay farmers for their services, for providing public*

goods partnerships with the relevant actors and action at all levels is needed to deliver the outcomes we need”, and he pointed some of the already existing mechanisms to do so, like the agri-environmental payments of the rural development programs and the European Innovation Partnership (EIP).

The closing panel focused on the Italian food sector, a contradictory one, as was stated in the speech that Paolo de CASTRO MEP, former Chair of the EP Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, delivered to the audience by video conference: *“Italian agriculture and food system feature a most valuable food chain, that benefits from very distinct local characteristics and products, unlike other countries”,* but at the same time is too fragmented to be competitive *“it is not enough to keep high quality standards, but also to value the production and to transform the excellence also in more income for the farmers”.* Luca SANI, President of the Agriculture Commission of the Italian Chamber, endorsed this paradox: *“Italian products are making enormous export numbers, while we see Italian farms struggling.”* The concluding remarks of the panel were delivered by Luigi RADAELLI in the form of a challenge for the way forward: *“There is a big knowledge gap be-*



*tween the field and the laboratory; there is still work to do”.*

The FFA Milan event ended with the signature of the ELO and Syngenta Italy, as well as other institutions that took part on the FFA debate, on the Milan Charter, a commitment document representing the legacy of EXPO 2015. The Charter affirms the right to food as a fundamental human right by supporting environmental sustainability and to raises awareness about the challenge of feeding a growing population.

The day before the forum at EXPO, the participants had the opportunity to visit one of the most significant properties in terms of biodiversity in Italy, La Cassinaz-

za (Agroittica Acqua&Sole), covering an area of 1,400 hectares in the Pavia region. This FFA event was also co-organised with the support of Deutz-Fahr, under the patronage of Regione Lombardia. Francesco NATTA, owner and manager of La Cassinazza, opened the event, which saw high level speakers as well as examples of innovative practices in land management, such as Operation Pollinator and precision farming. Visiting the property, the participants could see the results of the efforts put in the coexistence between agriculture and the environment, as well as the innovative Nutrient recycling plant, a particularly successful example of circular economy.



EXPO 2015

## ELO General Assembly in Luxembourg

*In June, a packed ELO General Assembly arrived in Luxembourg for its biannual General Assembly, traditionally held in the country that is about to take up the Presidency of the Council.*

Robert de GRAEFF, ELO Policy Officer

The Luxembourg countryside was highlighted by several speakers during the event, with a warm welcome provided by Hubert de SCHORLEMER, who spoke of the high levels of farm consolidation now taking place in Luxembourg, with farm sizes now moving towards 300-500 hectares and only 1.000 dairy farms left. Many farmers who have now departed have sold out to construction and development, as the city of Luxembourg grows faster. A secondary problem has become a lack of domestic farm works, with high wages and expectations now forcing farm-

ers to replace them with workers from outside the country. Looking to Luxembourg's forestry sector, Mr REINARDT of ProSilva demonstrated his company's "close to nature forest management", which takes the forest as a self-organizing entity and perceives its products as close to a crop.

"Climate change is the concern of the world" and would therefore be one of the main concerns of the Luxembourg Presidency, said Camille GIRA, Secretary of State for Sustainable Development and Infrastructure, especially as the Presiden-

cy would fall during the vital COP21 climate negotiations in Paris. Landowners, the Secretary of State said, would be especially affected as they "look at a 100-150 year time frame". In order to achieve a low-carbon environment, Mr. GIRA noted that a transition towards a more decentralized energy generation would be needed, with windmills, solar energy and biogas all contributing in the countryside. Such a transition would also help land managers achieve a greater diversity of their income and allow the future countryside to be energy-independent.

ELO Secretary-General Thierry de l'ESCAILLE gave an overview to ELO members on the political situation in Europe, echoing Mr. FLIES' comments that the JUNCKER Commission would concentrate on better regulation over the creation of more legislation. Turning to the CAP, he noted that a vast majority of farmers would not need to change the operations in order to comply with the 5% ecological focus area rules, as this limit had already been reached. He further warned that the EC proposal on nationalising the import of GM feed could have disastrous consequences for the internal market, and could create unfair competition between livestock breeders in different countries.

On the day after the General Assembly, members had the chance to meet the Luxembourg Minister for Agriculture, Fernand ETGEN, who discussed both the agricultural situation in Luxembourg as well as his intentions during the Presidency. Among his stated goals are the CAP simplification process, concerns over non-desired substance residues, as well as the school food programme.

As always, the General Assembly not only provided ELO members with a chance to hear the latest updates on the EU political scene, but also to get together and share experiences and opinions, such as during a lively debate on the Natura 2000 ReFIT and over the Gala dinner, which took place on the site of the Villeroy & Boch porcelain factories.



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## Fitness Check of EU Nature Regulation: For a Better Implementation?

*The European Commission is currently engaged in the ReFIT; a review exercise of EU legislations including the Birds and Habitats Directives. This is being done in order to assess whether the regulatory framework for environmental policy (including the Natura 2000 programme) is "fit for purpose".*



On October 20<sup>th</sup>, the European Parliament Intergroup on "Biodiversity, Hunting, and Countryside" met with land managers, policy makers and representatives of the civil society in order to discuss both the current review and the implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives. Among the questions discussed were whether or not they are both achieving their goals and whether they are compatible with modern countryside management.

According to the President of the Intergroup, MEP, Karl-Heinz FLORENZ, "The preservation of biodiversity concerns and affects all of us (...). Personally, I believe the implementation of EU nature legislation on national and regional level should become better, more pragmatic and more flexible. We have to involve local stakeholders much more. Only by doing that we will be able to increase acceptance at regional level and stop the loss of biodiversity".

Annie SCHREIJER-PIERIK, MEP and Secretary General of the Intergroup, added "The fitness check of the EU Nature Legislation is of the utmost importance to the EU in general and to citizens of the Netherlands as a Member State in particular. The current implementation in policy fields such as hunting, agriculture and water management directly contradicts our EU goals in other policy fields. This can sometimes even cause contradictions between the goals of EU natural conservation policy itself! Therefore time has come to enable a more flexible implementation of EU nature legislation at the level of Member States and local authorities."

Finally, Konstantin KOSTOPOULOS, Adviser of the ELO stated "we believe that the necessary adjustments of the Nature Directives should take into account the results of the ReFIT and the state of nature report published by the European

Commission last spring. Furthermore, any reform should be done in close consultation with those who manage Europe's land. Rather than introducing new legislation, maximum use should be made of the flexibility provided by the existing Directives and by a better guidance as regards their implementation. Finally, we need better links with the main financial in-

struments of the European Union in order to create the much-needed outcomes".

**For further information about this Intergroup session please contact: Delphine DUPEUX, Policy Officer, Intergroup coordinator at [delphine.dupeux@elo.org](mailto:delphine.dupeux@elo.org) or visit [www.elo.org/intergroup](http://www.elo.org/intergroup)**

### Celebrating 1.000.000 ha of private conservation management

*Ten years ago, a group of key players in the field of wildlife management decided that our natural capital is as much a concern for private individuals as it is for society.*

#### The WE Team



Very early on, this group of private landowners saw that their estates have a tremendous impact in maintaining healthy ecosystems and thriving biodiversity which are the foundation of prosperous countryside businesses. However, they saw that doing their best on their own estates was not enough. In order to be seen and acknowledged, rightly, as strong guardians of nature, the visibility their hard work and achievements needed to be greatly expanded.

The end result of this was the Wildlife Estates Label, which identifies those estates contributing to nature conservation and biodiversity. In doing so, it demonstrates that nature conservation by private stakeholders, while respecting and promoting Europe's cultural heritage, can often be better and cheaper than the public alternative, as well as easier to attain.

Today, the Wildlife Estates network consists of 191 estates covering more than 1.000.000 hectares. Over the 10 years of operations of the programme, labelled hectares passed from a mere 23 000 to more than 1.000.000 (count the estates that are undergoing evaluation), and the trend in the more recent years is upward.

To celebrate this outstanding achievement and to set new targets the WE National Delegations gathered together in Trujillo, Spain on September 14<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup>. The plenary session included a half day conference entitled "What benefits does the Wildlife Estates Label bring to land managers and the whole of society". The objective was to debate the role and benefits of the WE Label not only from the nature conservation point of view but also in economic and social terms. The issue of private land conservation and its integration in environmental policies at the European, national and regional level was also discussed.

**To apply with your estate or for more information, visit [www.wildlife-estates.eu](http://www.wildlife-estates.eu) and subscribe to the WE Newsletter.**

## Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management CPW

### CIC contributed to success of first CPW Wildlife Forum

*For the first time ever, on September 9th 2015, the CPW arranged a full day forum dedicated to the issue of sustainable wildlife management within the framework of the World Forestry Congress (WFC) in Durban, South Africa. The high level opening platform, as well as the four subsequent parallel sessions, covered a broad range of topics, the most notable being involving local communities in wildlife management, human-wildlife conflict, wildlife crime, and bush meat.*

#### The CIC Team

Jan Heino, CPW Vice-Chair and President of the Policy and Law Division of the CIC, presented the main outcome of the forum:

- Sustainable wildlife management plays a decisive role in addressing the Sustainable Development Goals: it provides crucial benefits for food security, livelihoods, natural heritage, biodiversity, and ecosystem conservation.
- Multidisciplinary approaches and strong community participation is required to properly design sustainable wildlife management programs. Legal frameworks and health protocols will be strengthened; law compliance, cross-sectoral collaboration, innovative market approaches, and best practices will be promoted.
- The participatory role of local communities in wildlife management (including wildlife monitoring and the fight against poaching and wildlife crime) is vital and must be strengthened.
- The sustainable harvest of wild meat and other non-timber forest products is an integral part of conservation. It improves livelihoods, food security, and nutrition. It is crucial to gain a better understanding of the causes and effects of human-wildlife conflict.

- Combating the illegal trade of wildlife requires: (1) a coordinated effort at all levels; (2) the involvement of local communities; (3) stronger interagency and cross-border collaboration; and (4) the deployment of innovative approaches for the monitoring of wildlife populations, sustainable use, and trade.

After the Forum, the CIC organized an interactive field excursion to Tala, a community/private game reserve. After viewing the abundant wildlife, the participants held a discussion on the reserve's current concept as well as the future of sustainable use in Africa as a whole. The conclusion underlined, once again, the vital importance of sustainable use for the future of wildlife in Africa.

### FACE elects Dr Michl EBNER as its new President

The ELO warmly congratulates its long-time friend Dr Michl EBNER for his appointment as new FACE President. We hope that our common friendship, begun during his years of duties in the European Parliament, will be continue in his new post.



The election took place during the September General Assembly of the *Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the EU* (FACE). Michl EBNER (1952) belongs to the Austrian minority of Northern Italy where he lives, and currently holding the office of President of the Regional Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Crafts and Agriculture in South Tyrol. Elected three times as a member of the European Parliament (1994 – 2009), in 1999 he was also chosen as President of the *Intergroup Sustainable Hunting, Biodiversity and Countryside* of the European Parliament, a post which he held until 2009. His role in the restoration of the cultural heritage is also well known. He is an active hunter, as well as an enthusiast of an active land management; being himself a landowner.

(red.), source: [www.face.eu](http://www.face.eu)

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## The Dutch project “Bee Deals” from the Centre for Agriculture and Environment wins the 2015 European Bee Award

The runner-up prize goes to the “Czech Bumblebee project” run by Agricultural Research Ltd

Standing from 23 applications, the project “Bee Deals” from the Centre for Agriculture and Environment (CLM) in the Netherlands has emerged as the winner of the 2015 European Bee Award edition. A particularly innovative approach, involving relevant actors (farmers, municipalities, retailers) along the food chain that commit to promoting bee-friendly practices in their daily activities. We have spoken with the coordinator Jenneke van VLIET, to learn more about the goals and roll-out of the project.

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Beatriz ARRIBAS, CEMA, Ana CANOMANUEL, ELO



**The CLM’s ‘Bee Deals’ project is focused on putting in place good practices in order to protect pollinators. How did you come up with this idea?**

*There is a fierce scientific and public debate going on about the decline of honey bee and wild bee populations, in which controversy reigns on ‘the’ major threat to these beneficial insects. We wanted to show that there are ways out: we can all do our bit to help the bees! We promote action amongst the food supply chain as pollinators are crucial for pollination and thus food production. But we also involve*

*important ‘neighbours’ of our farmers: provinces, waterboards and municipalities that own land which they can manage in a bee-friendly way.*

**‘Bee Deals’ is addressing 3 major threats to bees: lack of food, lack of shelter and use of harmful insecticides. What are the main objectives of the project and what are the main practices promoted to achieve the set goals?** *Bee Deals aims to raise more awareness and knowledge about how to implement good bee practices by introducing Bee Deals. Bee Deals*

*takes an innovative approach in which key actors in value chains commit themselves to implement good bee practices in their own operational activities. Good bee practices may consist of sowing flowers or flowering green manure and establishing bee-corridors for example with flowering wind barriers in orchards, selection of bee-friendly plant protection methods and means and better practice in applying pesticides. By drafting and signing a Bee Deal for a number of key actors within a chain, the effects of the implemented practises will be larger and the mutual commitment*



© Český čmelák

to implement and maintain good bee practices will be strengthened.

**Among the practices that 'Bee Deals' promotes, the techniques to reduce spray drift were mentioned. What role did agricultural machinery play in developing 'Bee Deals' project?** We promote the most efficient spraying machinery amongst farmers and their contractors: Wings-sprayer, air supported sprayers, lowered boom height. And raise awareness on how speed, pressure and right nozzle choice influence the effectiveness of crop protection AND water quality and bee health.

**'Bee deals' involves public and private partners. What are the benefits of partnering with both of these sectors?** Public partners feel the responsibility towards biodiversity protection (often because their constituents demand so from them), but they do not always have the legislative or financial power to influence the farmers' or consumers' practices. Farmers are careful to accommodate new market demands, like bee-friendly production. And consumers have an increasing interest in the origin of their food and are thus more receptive for information on biodiversity along with the products on the supermarket shelves.

**How many partners are involved so far? Based on your current experience, are you planning to sign 'Bee Deals' with other partners in the near future? Maybe exporting your idea to other countries?** Yes, in the Netherlands more 'Bee Deals' will be signed in the upcoming months for example between the municipality of Oss, the water board Aa en Maas and dairy farmers who will sow clover in their meadows and manage municipal verges so that these become more flowery. A project proposal by Amigos de las Abejas & CLM to start 'Api-Acuerdos' is currently waiting for approval for funding from the Fundación Biodiversidad. Also German counterparts have demonstrated interest.

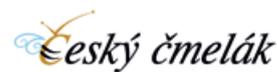
**The project is running from 2013 till 2016. We are halfway through the project's development. Could you tell us some of the main benefits for bees' populations you have observed until now? What are your expectations for the future?** The first years have been spent on 'sowing', now is 'harvesting' time: this summer we observed a lot of bees visiting the flower strips. Next spring we will instruct farmers and volunteers in how to recognize wild bee species, so that they themselves can monitor the effect of their efforts. We do not intend to start a full quantitative monitoring into bee populations as this is very costly. But the practices that we promote have already proven their effectiveness.

**Which tools did you use to promote 'Bee Deals' at the local level? How did you engage with the local communities?** We produced information tool cards for the involved parties and general public on bee friendly measures they can take. Jumbo supermarkets spread the word on Bee Deals to 700.000 consumers in their monthly magazine.

**How did you hear about the European Bee Award?** Came along on the internet.

**Is it the first time you have participated in a pan-European Initiative to promote your project?** Yes

**Have you already thought about the use you will give to your prize money?** Currently under debate !



The second prize has been awarded to the project "Czech Bumblebee" from Agricultural Research Ltd., a successful project in the Czech republic that consists on the repopulation of local bumblebees. The nested bumblebees are identical to the wild native populations (*bombus terrestris*) and are sold to farmers and any interested people in the community to foster crop pollination while supporting local biodiversity.

On one hand, the project fights against the super hybrid pollinators used for commercial pollination of crops at the beginning of the XX century. On the other hand it raises awareness on the importance of pollinators in local landscapes and communities. The laboratory and farm where the nests are reared, are open to the public and receive more than a thousand visitors every year.

To learn more about the European Bee Award, visit: [www.elo.org/awards/bee-award](http://www.elo.org/awards/bee-award) or contact the award coordinator at: [ana.canomanuel@elo.org](mailto:ana.canomanuel@elo.org)

## European Bee Award

The European Bee Award was launched for the first time in 2014 by the European Landowners' Organization and the European Agricultural Machinery Association CEMA with the aim of contributing to the promotion of common solutions for the benefit of biodiversity. The European Bee Award rewards farmers, landowners, land managers or rural entrepreneurs who contribute with an outstanding and innovative project to the protection of bees and other pollinators in the farmed environment.

### SAVE THE DATE!

The **2015 European Bee Award Ceremony and cocktail reception** will be hosted by Franc Bogovič MEP, member of the 2015 European Bee Award jury and will take place **On:** Wednesday, 9th December 2015

**From:** 15.00 onwards (15.00 - 18.00 Conference; 18.00 - 20.00 Award Ceremony)

**At:** Press Club Brussels Europe, rue Froissart 95 - 1000 Brussels

## RISE Expert Workshop on Sustainable Intensification of Agriculture and Nutrient Recycling and Reuse

*On the 23rd of September, the RISE Foundation held its Conference on the Sustainable Intensification of Agriculture and Nutrient Recycling and Reuse in the EU Pavilion at the EXPO Milan. The first aim of the workshop was discuss the key drivers for greater nutrient recovery and reuse in Europe. Second, participants evaluated the main challenges and opportunities of such an approach.*

Elisabet NADEU, RISE Researcher

The event was the second of two events prepared on request of the Milan EXPO's Scientific Steering Committee on its event-wide theme of 'Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life'. During the workshop, progress on the RISE Foundation's new study 'Nutrient recovery and Reuse in European Agriculture: a review of the issues, opportunities, actions and policies', launched earlier in May this year, was presented by Allan BUCKWELL, the study's director.

"Sustainability is not an option ... it is a must", said Dr Janez POTOČNIK, former Commissioner for the Environment, and current RISE Chairman, as he opened the conference with a keynote speech on the importance of Circular Economy. He emphasized that this concept was not only about re-use of materials, but also about biological cycles - noting its role in food security, the preservation of the environment and in the creation of opportunities for new rural businesses. Dr. POTOČNIK stressed the need of increasing nutrient use efficiency and reducing the impact of excess nutrient use on the environment and human health. These are identified in the RISE Foundation's study as being among a set goals and concerns facing nutrient management in the EU.

Throughout the workshop, speakers and participants agreed on the importance



M.SUTTON, A.BUCKWELL, M.ROSSE, C.PIRZIO-BIROLI, Ch.THORTON

of tackling the inefficiency of the current agri-food system and on the dissemination of current knowledge in order to raise public awareness on such a timely topic. Reinhard BUESCHER, Head of Unit at DG Enterprise, mentioned that the new Fertilizer Regulation will be delivered within the EC Circular Economy package early December.

The new package will aim to establish a level playing field for mineral and organic producers that will contribute to new business opportunities and more options available for farmers.

The conceptual discussions were brought to life by a visit to Aqua & Sole Nutrient Recovery Centre outside of Milan. There, participants were introduced to technical and practical aspects of nutrient recovery. When fully operational, the Centre will have the capacity to process 120.000 tonnes of waste annually, producing 190.000 tonnes of organic fertilizer, deodorised and sanitised through a thermophilic anaerobic treatment. In addition to the plant visit, several successful projects focusing on nutrient recovery throughout the EU were presented. Speakers stressed the importance of finding local, tailored solutions for each region, the need for good economic conditions that enable investments, and the development of a market for new products deriving from recovered nutrients.

The discussions on nutrient recovery and reuse will continue in the next RISE event: an Expert Workshop in the European Parliament on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November.

**The RISE report on Nutrient Recovery and Reuse in European Agriculture will be presented next March 2016 at a side event during the FFA conference.**



## YFCS General Assembly

*This year, the YFCS chose Denmark and Sweden as the location for their annual GA. The Board and Members are very grateful to our Danish Ambassadors, Jacob WACHTMEISTER and Jacob de NEERGAARD, together with our Swedish ambassador Johan SUNDBY, who volunteered to organize the three day event in both countries.*

William HILLGARTH, YFCS



Members arrived in Copenhagen on Friday 28th August and drove over to Ellinge Estate in southern Sweden to visit this diverse estate, which is the birth place of luxury vodka brand *Purity Vodka*. YFCS was given a tour of the distillery and learnt about this award winning vodka whose heart is distilled a remarkable 34 times, and handcrafted in small batches for an incredibly smooth full-bodied taste. We were allowed a tasting of the smooth liquor, which has been described as the "Rolls Royce of Vodkas".

The following day the YFCS were kindly hosted by the MUNRO family at Ledreborg Estate on the island of Zealand in Denmark, where our panel of speakers had the opportunity to address various topics and have an engaging Q&A session with the attendants. The session was open by Carl-Phillip von CROÿ who thanked our hosts for their generous hospitality and went on to welcome the potential members attending the session with a presentation on YFCS' aims, structure and vision.

We then had Morten OLESEN of the managing company of Ledreborg Estate to speak to us about the farming business model and certain aspects of farming specifically in Denmark. He was followed by Marie-Louise BOISEN THOGERSEN from Tværfagligt Fødevarerforum discussing "Food Politics of Today: A World in Black and White". Her passionate talk spurred a very interactive dialogue and open discussion about the perception of farming methods, such as the use of pesticides, from the customer perspective. She expressed her passion to create a thinktank around the subject of food politics and certainly encouraged the audience in doing so.

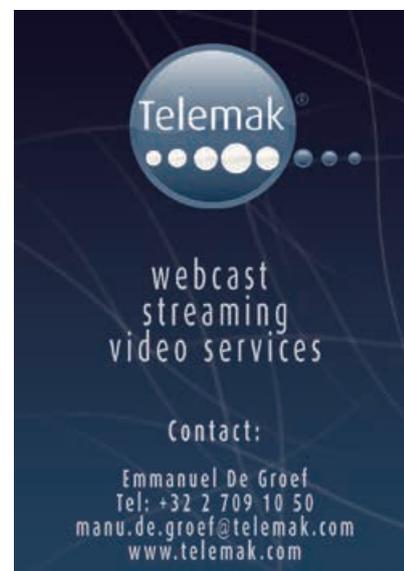
Malthe HOLTST was then kind enough to bring us through the challenges he is facing on his family dairy farm, as well as his cheese making business. We were able to have a great Q&A session and then Marie-Christine SCHÖNBORN presented the background, history and criteria for the Famigro Entrepreneurship Award, awarded to the best young countryside entre-

preneur. The winner receives EUR 5,000 to go towards the project and a full year's coaching from our sponsor Edmond de ROTSCCHILD Group. Please get in touch with our Secretary General, Francesco KINSKY (francesco.kinsky@elo.org) for more information.

We closed the meeting with a short panel session with the speakers moderated by William HILLGARTH, touching on subjects regarding the balance between the authenticity of a family farm and the quest for turnover.

After lunch Jock and his son Alec MUNRO very kindly gave us a tour of the very well managed estate, which includes a golf course, an iron-age research center, restaurants, forestry, farming, facilities for organizing events and meetings, as well as teambuilding events on the estate's zip-wire course.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our ambassadors for the organisation of the event, as well as our hosts for their drive in teaching the next generation, and our new members for joining the team. We look forward to seeing you at our next event!



## Diary dates

### 19 - 20 November, Barcelona

The 2015 ScienceBusiness Annual Summit: Innovating for Growth

**http://www.sciencebusiness.net/Eventsarchive/innovationconnection/Default.aspx**

### 20th November, Brussels

High -level conference on Fitness Check of EU Nature Legislation (Birds and Habitats Directives)

**Web-streaming: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/fitness\\_check/conference\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/fitness_check/conference_en.htm)**

### 24 - 25 November, The Hague

ELO General Assembly

**www.elo.org**



### 25th November, The Hague

Regional Forum for the Future of Agriculture, co-organised by ELO, Syngenta, Federatie Particulier Grondbezit (FPG), YARA and Deutz Fahr

**www.forumforagriculture.com**

### 30 November - 11 December, Paris

21st Session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP21/CMP11) - "Paris 2015"

**www.cop21.gouv.fr/en**

### 1st December, Press Club, Brussels

ELO conference "Technological challenges and opportunities for the food production of tomorrow"

**www.elo.org**

### 1 - 2 December, Brussels

EU Agriculture Outlook Conference

**Web-streaming: [http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/events/2015-outlook-conference\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/events/2015-outlook-conference_en.htm)**

### 7th December, Paris

Time to act on climate resilience? Side event organised by Mott MacDonald with ELO active participation

**climate.resilience@mottmac.com**

### 9th December, Press Club, Brussels

Annual ELO Biodiversity conference and European Bee Award ceremony

**www.elo.org**



### 22nd March 2016, Brussels

9th Forum for the Future of Agriculture (FFA)

**www.forumforagriculture.com**

## You can't see the forest for the climate

how climate issues cloud environmental problems

**Guillaume SAINTENY**

Ed. Rue de l'échiquier, 2015



Is the priority given to the climate by nations, NGOs and the media justified? Raising this simple question seems, of itself, to be iconoclastic; it is commonly admitted that "the fight against climate change" is the mother of all environmental battles.

Author Guillaume SAINTENY masterfully demonstrates that the climate issue has taken on such importance since the 1990s that it overshadows all environmental policies. This may even damage such policies and make it impossible to tackle other key issues such as air and water pollution, soil degradation or vanishing biodiversity.

A true bombshell and an unorthodox argument by one of France's leading environmental experts.

**Guillaume SAINTENY** held several senior positions within the French Ministry in charge of Environment and Sustainable Development, including Director of Economic Analysis and Environmental Assessment. He has taught sustainable development for many years, including at the 'Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris' and the 'Ecole Polytechnique', as well as teaching at *AgroParisTech*. He is the author of several books on this subject including *Plaidoyer pour l'écofiscalité* (Buchet-Chastel, 2012).

Let's increase our food supply without reducing theirs

the good growth plan

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