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MAGAZINE

**ELO Warns: Proposed EU Budget Abandons Landowners
and Professional Farmers at a Critical Moment**

**From Royal Gardens to Regenerative Farms:
lessons from Sweden's Countryside**

**Digitalisation and AI: Forum Event Looks
at the Future for Agriculture**





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Editorial

After months of political turmoil, it is time to catch our breath and get back to basics. The debate on the future of agriculture, although it contains some good ideas, is clouded by the challenge of organizing the European budget, which includes a host of new projects. Some of these are urgent and cannot be taken on by Member States, while others undermine the interest shown in agricultural and environmental policies to date.

For European farmers, it is essential to ensure that they can continue producing with credible and reasonable means. It is also important to note that the decision of the Constitutional Court in France concerning the Duplomb law marks a shift, sending a far less negative signal than some opponents have suggested. Leaving urban dreams behind and returning to reality on the ground is simply a matter of common sense.

It is equally essential for private individuals involved in biodiversity management and restoration that the EU allows them to develop within a private framework, avoiding monopolies between the public sector and NGOs. Supporting their actions, making them visible, and allowing them to flourish would be a major step forward in achieving the OECMs.

Foresters too must be recognized for their positive impact. Burdening them with regulations that aim to solve problems beyond their remit is counterproductive. Academic and ideological specialists in agriculture and biodiversity must finally accept that common sense exists in the field—and listen to it.

Thierry de l'ESCAILLE
ELO Executive President



From Royal Gardens to Regenerative Farms: lessons from Sweden's Countryside



Wallerand VAN OUTRYVE D'YDEWALLE
Policy and Project Officer -
ForumforAg Speaker Coordinator

On June 14, as part of the Friends of the Countryside General Assembly, members explored four distinctive tours around Stockholm, each highlighting the interplay between heritage conservation, innovative farming practices, and sustainability. Landowners showcased how they creatively adapt their Estates to modern challenges, offering inspiration for the future of sustainable land management.

Torsåker Farm and Axfoundation

The visit to Torsåker Farm, operated by Axfoundation near Upplands Väsby, offered a glimpse into one of Sweden's most dynamic hubs for applied research in sustainable food systems. Participants discovered a working farm that serves

as a living laboratory for testing regenerative practices and circular food models. Innovations included the development of perennial wheat varieties suited for Nordic climates, bio-based fertilisers made from reeds and wool, and an aquaculture model using fish fed with insects raised on food waste. At the heart of the Estate, the renovated 18th-century barn, Ladugården, hosts test kitchens, a bakery, and packaging labs where sustainable food products are developed and scaled. Axfoundation, an independent non-profit organisation, integrates science, entrepreneurship, and farming to create real-world solutions with measurable environmental and social impact.

Steninge Slottsby

The tour then moved to Steninge Slottsby, a residential development blending historical heritage with contemporary planning. Located beside the Baroque Steninge Palace, the project comprises eleven neighbourhoods with over 750 homes designed in harmony with the landscape and inspired by traditional Swedish architecture. The restored stone barn, Stenladan, now houses shops and a restaurant, acting as a vibrant centre for community life. The Estate illustrates how private developments can enhance cultural heritage, preserve natural beauty, and build resilient communities. Participants discussed planning models that protect green areas while integrating new housing and infrastructure, making Steninge a noteworthy example of rural-urban balance.

Drottningholm Palace

At Drottningholm Palace, participants explored one of Sweden's most iconic royal properties. Designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the palace grounds offered a journey through centuries of European landscape architecture, from formal Baroque symmetry to the English romantic style. The Drottningholm Court Theatre, a fully preserved 18th-century venue still using original stage machinery, and the Chinese Pavilion, a Rococo retreat filled with East Asian artefacts, demonstrated the estate's rich cultural layers. While the palace remains a royal residence, its grounds are publicly accessi-



Steninge Slottsby

© Oskar Söderlund



ble and well-managed, offering insights into heritage preservation as a public good. The site reflected how state-owned properties can contribute to education, tourism, and national identity.

Erstavik and Sandemar Castle

Erstavik Estate, encompassing over 2,000 hectares of forest and agricultural land, remains privately owned under a unique exemption to the abolished fideicommissum model in Sweden. Located near the Nackareservatet nature reserve, it exemplifies multi-functional land use with productive forestry, recreational access, and conservation objectives. Certified under the PEFC standard, Erstavik's forest operations include pine, spruce, and deciduous species, with an emphasis on biodiversity and carbon storage. Participants engaged in discussions on balancing economic output with long-term ecological resilience.

Nearby Sandemar Castle, located in the Stockholm Archipelago, offered a contrasting perspective. Its 17th-century manor and adjoining nature reserve form part of the Natura 2000 network, supporting habitats ranging from wetlands and calcareous fens to coastal meadows. Traditional grazing and mowing practices are maintained to protect rare flora and bird species, including the white-tailed eagle and the marsh helleborine. The estate demonstrates how historic properties can serve both cultural and ecological functions, contributing directly to the goals of the EU Biodiversity Strategy.

Nyborg, Ekolsund, and Signhildsberg

At Nyborgs Gård in Upplands-Bro, participants were introduced to a family-owned estate combining conventional farming with nature-based products and short supply chains. The farm grows cereals and oilseeds, raises Highland cattle and Gotland sheep, and sells products like rapeseed oil and honey directly through its farm shop. This model fosters rural

employment, maintains open landscapes, and connects consumers with the land.

Ekolsund Castle, once a royal residence of Gustav Vasa and later Gustav III, has been restored to reflect its Baroque origins, complete with historical gardens and waterworks. The Estate also includes a heritage inn and hosts cultural events. The site offered a discussion on the social value of heritage properties, their role in tourism, and their potential as educational spaces for the broader public.

The final stop at Signhildsberg focused on the Estate's commitment to ecological transition. With organic farming, crop diversification, and significant investment in solar energy, the Estate integrates sustainability across its operations. Solar panels now power much of the farm's infrastructure, supporting both environmental and financial resilience. Rooted in Norse legend and medieval history, Signhildsberg bridges the past with forward-looking land stewardship. Its archaeological significance, including Viking Age remains, was also highlighted.

Linking Estate Practices to EU Policy

Each Estate visit offered tangible examples of how landowners contribute to EU objectives including the Green Deal, the Biodiversity Strategy, and the Common Agricultural Policy. These properties, while diverse in function and history, shared a common thread: commitment to managing land responsibly, with attention to future generations and Europe's shared heritage.

Find out more on the Friends of the Countryside website:
www.friendsofthecountryside.org



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DISCOVER WHAT
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Friends of the Countryside 28th General Assembly in Stockholm: Defending Landowners' Vital Role



Wallerand VAN OUTRYVE D'YDEWALLE
Policy and Project Officer -
ForumforAg Speaker Coordinator

On June 13, the Friends of the Countryside (FCS) held their 28th General Assembly in Stockholm, welcoming over 100 members from across Europe. Hosted by Swedish Board members Caroline NORDENFALK BIELKE, Niels TRESCHOW and George BERGENGREN, the event reaffirmed the commitment of Europe's rural landowners to sustainability, biodiversity, and active participation in shaping EU policy.

FCS President Seger VAN VOORST TOT VOORST opened the Assembly by emphasising the indispensable role of landowners as custodians of the European countryside. He praised the ongoing efforts of the European Landowners' Organization (ELO), highlighting its significant achievements in influencing EU policies, including the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the EU Forest Monitoring Law, and the Carbon Removal Certification Framework.

Thierry DE L'ESCAILLE, Executive President of the ELO, provided an insightful update on recent policy developments, drawing attention to the challenges posed by upcoming EU budget allocations. With a still significant share of future EU budgets designated for COVID recovery repayments from 2028 onwards, Thierry DE L'ESCAILLE raised concerns about the potential impact on agricultural funding. He called on policymakers to recognise agriculture as a strategic priority, underscoring the necessity of secure, long-term funding for rural communities and sustainable practices.

Jurgen TACK, Secretary General of ELO, expanded on these concerns by outlining strategic policy initiatives. He emphasised the urgent need for simpler regulatory frameworks that facilitate, rather than hinder, innovation and sustainable practices in farming. Jurgen TACK advocated strongly for increased access to new agricultural technologies, stressing that streamlined approval processes and better incentives would significantly enhance competitiveness, resilience, and environmental sustainability across Europe's agricultural sector.

The General Assembly welcomed Martin MIKKELSEN from Denmark as a new Board member. This continued growth, with

twenty new members joining in the past year alone, reflects the relevance and vitality of the organisation.

Biodiversity and sustainable land management remained central topics, with considerable support voiced for the Wildlife Estates Network. Members were encouraged to actively participate in implementing the EU's Biodiversity Strategy 2030, highlighting the critical role of private landowners in protecting and enhancing Europe's natural heritage.

Participants also eagerly anticipated the 2026 General Assembly, set to take place in Cáceres, Spain, a region noted for its sustainable agricultural heritage and cultural richness.

The evening gala celebrated innovative achievements in sustainability with the FAMIGRO and Bel-leuropa awards. ZukunftMoor received recognition for its pioneering work in peatland restoration in Germany, while Eriksberg Castle in Sweden was honoured for harmoniously integrating cultural heritage with sustainability in forestry, agriculture, renewable energy, and wildlife management.

Closing the Assembly, President Seger VAN VOORST TOT VOORST called for continued collaboration, urging landowners to champion their crucial role proactively within the EU landscape.



INNOVATORS BY NATURE – Be Part of the Future of Nature-Driven Innovation

ACE Events, Brussels | 3 December 2025 | 9:30-18:00

Innovators by Nature is a high-level gathering of Europe's most visionary landowners, investors, policymakers, and environmental entrepreneurs. Hosted in Brussels, the event showcases scalable business models at the crossroads of nature, enterprise, and innovation.

The programme will explore some of today's most promising opportunities: **carbon farming** and wetland restoration, rewilding, **biodiversity credits**, and nature tourism, sustainable **agricultural production**, premium markets, eco-housing and **rural development**, as well as renewable energy and **digital infrastructure**.

This event will bring together a diverse community of landowners, innovators, and decision-makers shaping the future of nature-driven business.

Join us on 3 December 2025 at ACE Events in Brussels, for a day of forward-looking discussions. Together, we can chart a future where innovation and nature grow hand in hand.



Register via www.elo.org or by scanning the QR code.

For sponsorship opportunities, please contact anne.marchadier@elo.org

ELO Warns: Proposed EU Budget Abandons Landowners and Professional Farmers at a Critical Moment



Dr. Jurgen TACK
ELO Secretary-General

Brussels, July 2025 - The European Commission's proposal for the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028–2034 and the future of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) marks a serious retreat from the EU's foundational commitment to a sustainable, resilient, and common approach to agriculture. The European Landowners' Organization (ELO) considers this a turning point - one that undermines the future of landowners and professional farmers across Europe.

Less Money, More Uncertainty

The European Commission proposes to increase the total MFF to €1.816 trillion, corresponding to 1.26% of the EU's Gross National Income (GNI), up from 1.13%. However, once repayments for the post-COVID NextGenerationEU recovery package are factored in, the effective figure drops to 1.15%. This technicality conceals a far more concerning reality: agriculture will receive less.

Only just over €300 billion is earmarked for farming, nearly 30% less in real terms (adjusted for 2025 prices) compared to the current period. This comes at a time when professional farmers and landowners are grappling with unprecedented challenges: inflation, shrinking margins, stricter regulatory demands, geopolitical volatility, and the mounting costs of climate adaptation.

The Commission acknowledges the role of farming in guaranteeing food security, European autonomy, and rural viability, but offers no credible financial foundation to support that vision. Instead, the burden is quietly shifted to Member States and regional authorities, thus relegating to others their own Treaty responsibilities.

An Unravelling of the Common Framework

The most radical - and troubling - aspect of the proposal is the structural shift in governance. CAP programming and delivery would be subsumed under the "National and Regional Partnership" Fund (NRP), a €865 billion package designed to streamline various sectoral policies.

In theory, such integration promises efficiency. In practice, it risks dismantling one of the EU's most developed and coherent policy areas. For decades, the CAP has functioned on the basis of shared management between the EU and its Member

States, ensuring a level playing field for landowners and rural managers irrespective of national political cycles.

Merging the CAP with other funds erodes this stability. It opens the door to politically motivated reallocation, governance complexity, administrative delays, and the loss of strategic continuity. Long-term investments in sustainable land use, biodiversity, or agro-ecological innovation — often championed by landowners — require predictability, not fragmented, short-term programmes.

Implications for Landowners and Professional Farmers

This shift has particularly profound consequences for professional farmers and private landowners, who manage a large share of Europe's agricultural and natural areas.

1. Greater Co-Financing Responsibilities

The proposal increases the share of farming interventions subject to national or regional co-financing. Wealthier Member States may be able to compensate, but for others - including those with devolved regional competencies - this creates a patchwork of support levels, distorting competition and weakening cohesion.

2. More Bureaucracy, Less Clarity

Farmers and landowners already face extensive administrative burdens. The increased flexibility for Member States, without clear EU-level benchmarks, will likely translate into multiple and conflicting local interpretations of eligibility, compliance, and implementation.

3. Undermining Long-Term Stewardship

Landowners who invest in landscape conservation, agroforestry, carbon sequestration, or biodiversity restoration rely on

stable, multi-annual CAP frameworks. The proposed model weakens that stability and prioritises short-term deliverables over long-term impact.

4. Loss of EU-Scale Coordination

Many landowners operate across borders or participate in EU-wide certification schemes (such as ELO's Wildlife Estates Label). These depend on harmonised criteria. By devolving too much discretion to national plans, the Commission risks creating legal and operational fragmentation.

ELO's Response: A Call to Reinforce, Not Abandon, the CAP

The ELO considers this proposal a fundamental misstep at a time when the EU should be strengthening - not scaling back - its commitment to rural sustainability and strategic autonomy. Agriculture remains a shared EU competence for good reason. Fragmenting its governance undermines one of the few policy tools that directly links European citizens to nature, food, and climate action.

ELO urges EU institutions and Member States to:

1. Re-establish the CAP as a distinct and protected pillar within the EU budget, not subsumed under generic national partnerships;
2. Guarantee adequate funding, indexed to inflation and reflective of the growing obligations on land managers to deliver environmental and climate services;

3. Ensure consistency and stability in programme design, allowing landowners and professional farmers to invest with confidence in multi-annual sustainability efforts;
4. Protect the level playing field, maintaining a coherent policy and regulatory framework across all Member States and regions;
5. Recognise the strategic role of landowners, whose stewardship is essential to achieving Europe's Green Deal and EU's strategic autonomy biodiversity goals.

Conclusion: Protecting the Future of Europe's Land

The current proposal represents not a reform, but a retreat. It sends the wrong signal at a time when Europe's rural actors need more certainty, more ambition, and more partnership from EU institutions.

Landowners and professional farmers are not asking for favours - they are asking for a framework that enables them to deliver food security, economic resilience, and environmental stewardship.

ELO will continue to defend the principles of a strong, common, and future-oriented agricultural policy. We call on the European Parliament and Council to amend the proposal accordingly and to reaffirm the EU's responsibility to its land, its farmers, and its citizens.



Digitalisation and AI: Forum Event Looks at the Future for Agriculture



Liz WILSON

Digitalisation in agriculture is advancing rapidly, raising questions about its benefits and challenges. A special Forum for the Future of Agriculture event, co-hosted by MEP Maria GRAPINI, took place on Thursday June 26 at the European Parliament in Brussels. It aimed to share expertise on digital agriculture's promise, practicalities, and policy implications. This event served as a follow-up to a discussion held in January 2024.

Mark TITTERINGTON, Co-founder and Director of the Forum for the Future of Agriculture and Moderator, acknowledged Microsoft as the Forum's first tech partner and co-organizer of the event.

Perspectives from Maria GRAPINI

Maria GRAPINI, Member of the European Parliament from Romania, who also serves as Vice President of the Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee (IMCO) and a member of the Agriculture Committee underlined digitalisation in agriculture as vitally important, particularly for addressing rural depopulation and fostering related industries. She was pleased at the ongoing debates within the European Parliament to integrate innovation and digitalisation into the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

Insights from the World Bank

Kateryna SCHROEDER, Senior Agriculture Economist, Global Engagement unit of the Agriculture and Food Global Department, The World Bank, joined online – on the day the Bank soft-launched its report Harnessing Artificial Intelligence for Agricultural Transformation – and gave a comprehensive view of the current state of AI across the agricultural value chain.

AI is drastically amplifying the promise of digital agriculture by identifying patterns in massive, diverse datasets and simulating complex scenarios related to weather, soil, pests, and diseases, she said. There is significant growth in AI for agriculture, projected to rise from \$1.5 billion in 2023 to over \$10 billion by 2032.

The World Bank report highlights 60 promising and scalable AI applications, which will also be available on an accompanying dashboard. Ms SCHROEDER shared numerous examples. (...)

Panel 1 – Agtech at the crossroads: Promise vs. practicality

Mark TITTERINGTON welcomed Daniela LÜTH, Policy Officer, DG Research & Innovation, B2 – Bioeconomy & Food Systems, European Commission; Alin LUCULEASA, Farmer member, Romanian AGRINNOVATOR ThinkTank; Jørgen AUDENAERT, Manager, Small Grains Production System Innovation & Dairy and Livestock, John Deere; and Stefan SCHNEIDER, Space Downstream Entrepreneurship Officer, EUSPA (EU Agency for the Space Programme).

He invited them to state what excites them most about AI and digitalisation in transforming the agri-food system. Mark then asked follow-up questions of individual panellists on specific points.

How do we move research from pilot applications to scale in a collaborative way?

Daniela LÜTH: Horizon Europe's work program (Cluster 6) for 2025 has a strong focus on innovation actions, with one-third of projects requiring a high Technology Readiness Level (TRL 5-8). The European Innovation Council (EIC) is providing €10 billion for activities from lower TRLs (TRL 1-4,) to market-ready solutions. Additionally, a new EU Startup and Scaleup Strategy aims to address the gap between excellent research and market scaling, focusing on capacity building and capital investment.

How are digital tools and technologies changing day-to-day operations ?

Alin LUCULEASA: Data from digital tools allows tailored decisions for each field, which had led to a 50% reduction in fertilizer use across the entire farm without yield loss. Real-time satellite imagery provides detailed stress maps, highlighting water deficit, disease, and nutrient shortages, enabling precise, spot-specific treatments instead of widespread chemical application. However, the biggest challenge is his team's reluctance to embrace new systems, due to fears of losing control, requiring him to carry out constant monitoring and intervention.

What do customers say about how technology transforms daily operations, and are there regional differences?

Jørgen AUDENAERT: The key for customers is to understand and see the value of new solutions on their farms, and for easy-to-implement due to tight time windows. This often involves training, which John Deere invests in, along with devel-



oping specialists within their distribution channels. They also measure technology utilization and outcomes to identify where further support or user experience improvements are needed.

What are the current limitations of satellite technology in agriculture and how are they being overcome?

Stefan SCHNEIDER: Adoption is progressing well, there is engagement in the industry. Limitations include frequency of observation (every 4-5 days): bad weather limiting visibility; processing time for large volumes of data.

Despite these, the industry is creative, as in EUSPA's new High Accuracy Service, narrowing navigation signals to a decimetre level for greater precision. One significant challenge is interoperability between different systems from various companies, which farmers frequently report as an issue and EUSPA cannot directly solve.

A consensus on the future: revolution ahead

After questions from the audience, Mark asked the panellists: **By 2035, will AI and digitalisation have revolutionized**

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agriculture, or will we see normal technological innovation? The consensus was revolution or disruption if that term is preferred. As Daniela LÜTH said: "it's going to come fast".

Panel 2 – Navigating governance: Policy challenges in agri-digitalisation

Tassos HANIOTIS, Special Advisor for Sustainable Productivity, Forum for the Future of Agriculture; Senior Guest Research Scholar, IIASA; Pierluigi LONDERO, Head of Data Governance, DG AGRI, European Commission; Ornella COSOMATI, Director Europe Energy and Sustainability Policy, Microsoft.

Mark TITTERINGTON opened as in panel 1, by asking panellists what excites them? The discussion that followed was around what is needed to fully unlock these aspects.

Pierluigi LONDERO of DG AGRI highlighted three key areas: productivity, simplification and complex agricultural practices.

Ornella COSOMATI, from Microsoft, emphasized AI's role in decarbonizing industries, including farming, by maximizing efficiency. She shared examples, including enabling measurement, improving efficiency, and supporting carbon farming. Ms COSOMATI introduced Azure Data Manager for Agriculture (ADMA), a Microsoft tool designed to empower farmers with data-driven insights, and Microsoft's AI chatbot (Co-pilot) to answer simple questions and inform decisions. She also highlighted Terrain AI, a modelling platform developed with an Irish research centre, which allows governments to test policies before implementation.

Tassos HANIOTIS said that "AI is here to stay and grow, there is no way of stopping it," but like any technology, it brings both opportunities and challenges, as well as benefits and costs that aren't always directly linked. In agriculture, AI has applications where the benefits outweigh by far whatever costs we see – "although we don't necessarily believe it."

He made three key points: Data quantity is growing exponentially, but quality control is decreasing. Use of data means AI has significant potential for improving land management, leading to measurable outcomes for sustainability. AI can help bridge the gap between economic and environmental aspects in policy. And abuse of data "scars people" – there is a critical need for a flexible public policy framework that avoids past mistakes, ensures interoperability, and provides incentives.

Mark then opened a round of questions to the participants.

To close the event, Mark repeated his earlier question to the panellists: **By 2035 will AI and digitalisation be revolution or incremental technological innovation?** The answers indicated a strong consensus for revolution, albeit with a recognition of challenges like the digital divide.

You can read the full version of the summary or rewatch the event on the Forum's website: www.forumforag.com



Scottish Estates Break Records in Wildlife Conservation

Three Scottish estates were awarded the Wildlife Estates Scotland (WES) accreditation on 4 July at the GWCT Scottish Game Fair. The award was presented by Jim FAIRLIE, Scottish Government Minister for Agriculture and Connectivity and Member of the Scottish Parliament.

Together, the estates cover over 120,000 acres and were recognised for their exceptional commitment to wildlife management and conservation - achieving the highest scores ever recorded in the history of the WE accreditation.

The accreditations were awarded to: **Finzean Estate in Aberdeenshire, Glen Creran Estate in Argyll and Reay Forest Estate in Sutherland.** WES is the Scottish version of the European Wildlife Estates initiative. It is endorsed by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Environment. Agriculture Minister Jim FAIRLIE commented:

"This awards ceremony is one of my favourite events at the Game Fair and this year's recipients are continuing to carry the baton for excellent land management practices. Reay Forest, Glen Creran and Finzean estates all show how incorporating nature into your land management and making an asset of the biodiversity on your doorstep can offer huge benefits to both the estates and to Scotland's environment. I want to commend all three for their hard work and wish them all the best for the future."



Left to right: Sarah-Jane LAING (SLE), Dee WARD (SLE), Ben MARDALL (Reay Forest Estate), Henriette T'KINT DE ROODENBEKE (Glen Creran Estate), Andrew FARQUHARSON and Alan SHAND (Finzean Estate), Jim FAIRLIE (MSP).



Sonsoles ARMENDAIR MILANS DEL BOSCH
WE Project Officer -
Regional Coordinator Spain

Miles MONTGOMERIE, chair of Wildlife Estates Scotland, said:

"Achieving WES accreditation is a rigorous process, requiring independent evaluation of conservation work undertaken for the benefit of the natural environment. These three estates are an inspiration to other rural businesses, and indeed to all of us."

Scotland is currently in second place in the league table of Wildlife Estates land in Europe, with only Spain ahead.

Reay Forest Estate in Sutherland has received the highest score achieved by any organisation in Europe accredited by Wildlife Estates, receiving an overall rating of 91.75%. As part of its assessment, the Reay Forest Estate is also the first organisation in the UK to receive a gold accreditation.

Reay Forest is a traditional rural estate, famed for its deer, trout and salmon, and one of the three rural estates in the Grosvenor Estates' portfolio. Working in partnership with the Atlantic Salmon Trust (AST), Grosvenor's Reay Forest Estate is also delivering one of the UK's most extensive conservation projects with the goal of restoring critically endangered wild Atlantic salmon populations. It is hoped the project will restore 118km² of the landscape - an area the size of urban Manchester - with up to a million trees being planted, enhancing biodiversity and benefitting the whole ecosystem.

Ben MARDALL, Estate Manager, Grosvenor's Reay Forest Estate said:

"Everything we do at Reay Forest is focused on our long-term commitment to delivering a lasting economic, social and environmental benefit in our communities and safeguarding the estate's unique and sensitive environmental habitats. While we've always believed that this was the right approach, it's wonderful to have all of our people's hard work independently endorsed by Wildlife Estates."

More info at: www.wildlife-estates.info



A Pioneer in Sustainable Peatland Agriculture: ZukunftMoor Wins the 2025 FAMIGRO Award



Eleonore RAYNAL-PEČENÝ
Communication officer, ELO

We are proud to announce that **ZukunftMoor**, a pioneering company based in Lower Saxony, has won the **FAMIGRO Award 2025**. Received by Paul WALDERSEE, the award honours an innovative approach to peatland management - vital for **climate protection and the future of rural landscapes**.

In Germany, around 95% of peatlands have been drained, releasing vast amounts of carbon. These areas account for 7.5% of the country's total greenhouse gas emissions, about 53 million tonnes annually. To meet the Paris climate goals, Germany would need to rewet over 50,000 hectares per year. This is precisely where ZukunftMoor steps in.

The company rewets drained peatlands and cultivates **sphagnum moss**, a native plant, on the restored land. This method, known as **paludiculture**, demonstrates that wet, peat-conserving agriculture can be both environmentally and economically

viable, especially since farmers manage nearly 80% of these drained lands.

ZukunftMoor's first sphagnum farm in Gnarrenburg spans 13.4 hectares, making it **the largest in the world**. By dismantling drainage systems and restoring water levels, the company has transformed intensively used pastures into climate-positive wetlands, preventing about **440 tonnes of CO₂ emissions annually** on this pilot site alone.

Find out more on the Zukunft Moor website:
www.zukunftmoor.de



Social Farming Enhancing Elderly Care and Promoting Rural Integration in Europe



Costanza MICHELINI
DI SAN MARTINO
COO, BioVerdissimo



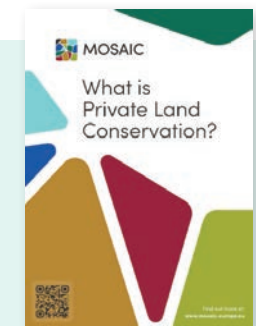
Laura TICOIU
Policy Officer, ELO

Social farming, defined as using agricultural resources to provide social services in rural areas, benefits vulnerable groups, particularly the elderly, by enhancing health, well-being, and social inclusion.

As Europe faces a declining birth rate and a growing elderly population, social farming addresses demographic challenges while fostering community integration. It supports active ageing, intergenerational solidarity, and rural development.

However, barriers remain, including lack of formal recognition, safety concerns, and limited farmer training.

ELO, through the FarmElder project, calls for long-term policy support. And the FarmElder platform (www.farmelder.eu) offers training tools to help scale this inclusive, sustainable practice across Europe's rural communities.



Private Land Conservation New Booklet

HORIZON MOSAIC's new booklet "What is Private Land Conservation (PLC)?" makes a case for voluntary conservation on private land. Designed for policymakers, it simplifies complex ideas about PLC into actionable insights. It champions stewardship, long-term commitment, and respect for landowners' identities and values. By highlighting Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs), it inspires new policy pathways for sustainable private land conservation across Europe.

Leonor CESAR DAS NEVES,
Policy Officer, ELO

Feeding the Future – Innovation and Sustainability in Animal Nutrition



Jean-François ROUS
Chief Technology Officer, ADISSEO

Wherever we look in the world today, we see volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity and there are few sectors of the European economy where that applies more than agriculture and particularly livestock. If agriculture is a strategic sector of the EU economy, as the European Commission has now rightly recognised, then livestock plays an extremely dynamic and catalysing role within it. And yet we stand at a crossroads in Europe when it comes to maintaining and expanding the use of innovative animal feeding strategies and technologies which play such a key role in the productivity, competitiveness and sustainability of this vital sector.

Whilst we should be excited and motivated by the opportunities ahead, we also need to be realistic about the hard questions and choices that now need to be made in Europe to maintain and unlock the future potential of this part of the agri-food industry.

Leading the World in Methionine

Over the past 90 years, ADISSEO has established itself as a leader in the research, development, production and trade of high-quality, sustainable, animal feed additives. Today, we are a multi-billion global company, headquartered in Paris, employing more than 3,000 people worldwide. Over two thirds of our people are based in Europe and more than 80% of our R&D budget is deployed in the EU. Consequently, we are well placed to share our thoughts on how we might address some of these hard questions and choices and to bring forward some of the necessary solutions.

For example, ADISSEO is the world leader in methionine – and has developed a unique expertise in formulating and producing rumen protected methionine for ruminants. This is the first limiting amino acid for dairy cows and is critical for about 70% of global dairy market.

By reducing the need for high protein-soybean meal use, methionine supplementation contributes to the lowering GHG emissions and nitrogen excretion. In dairy cows, such protected methionine maximizes milk production and increases levels of milk protein and fat, and thus supports the all-round productivity, profitability and sustainability of Europe's dairy farmers.

Supporting the EU's Dairy Industry

This is of vital importance given the EU dairy industry is a substantial contributor to the overall value and growth of the agri-food sector in Europe. This year, the dairy industry will be worth around €200bn in 2025, with over €15bn in exports, and it is expected to grow by over 4.5% by 2030.

As EU and Member State agri-environmental policies evolve (particularly with respect to reducing excessive nitrogen emissions from livestock), the productivity and competitiveness of the dairy industry will be challenged. The overall size of the EU dairy herd is likely to further reduce by 2035 (by approximately 11% compared with the 2022-2024 average). In which case, better feeding strategies, including the use of methionine supplementation, will be essential to support the long-term productivity, profitability and sustainability of the EU dairy industry if it is to meet the strong demand for dairy products from both EU consumers and international markets.

Given the current global uncertainties, the animal nutrition sector needs the EU to support its competitiveness and innovation so that companies like ADISSEO continue and expand its investments here.

In recent years, EU dependency on imports of critically important feed additives, especially vitamins and amino acids has become acute placing us in a vulnerable position given the strains being put on supply chains arising from current geopolitical tensions.

Over the past 90 years, ADISSEO has established itself as a leader in the research, development, production and trade of high-quality, sustainable, animal feed additives.



Delivering on the Vision for Agriculture

With all that in mind, the question is what do we need to do to deliver on the commitments, including for livestock, made in the Commission's Vision for the Future of Agriculture in Europe?

Well, we certainly need to work together to address the energy and raw material costs faced by EU operators which are 2-3 times higher than in any other part of the world.

But in addition to this, we need an enabling legislative framework for animal nutrition solutions that stimulates investment and production in Europe, particularly for feed additives:

- Like many others, we face disproportionate time and resource intensive authorisation procedures which create obstacles to bringing new nutritional solutions to the EU market. This discourages industry to select Europe as the first market to be served with innovations, as it undermines profitability, thus diminishing the EU's attractiveness for investment in capacity building in R&D and production in the EU.
- On top of this hurdle, the regulatory obstacles and unpredictability faced in the production and movement of safe animal nutrition solutions for export to third countries, even if they are not yet authorised in the EU, also constrain EU industrial production of these valuable solutions. This regulatory constraint on exports further undermines the attractiveness of Europe as a destination for investment in R&D and production facilities.

For all these reasons, we welcomed the Commission's Vision for the Future of Agriculture in Europe. We were very encouraged to see the emphasis placed on continued access to technology and innovation, particularly for animal nutrition, and especially where it improves the health and well-being of livestock; the productivity and quality of the produce; the efficiency and profitability of the farm; and offers a critical path to reducing livestock emissions and delivering improved environmental outcomes.

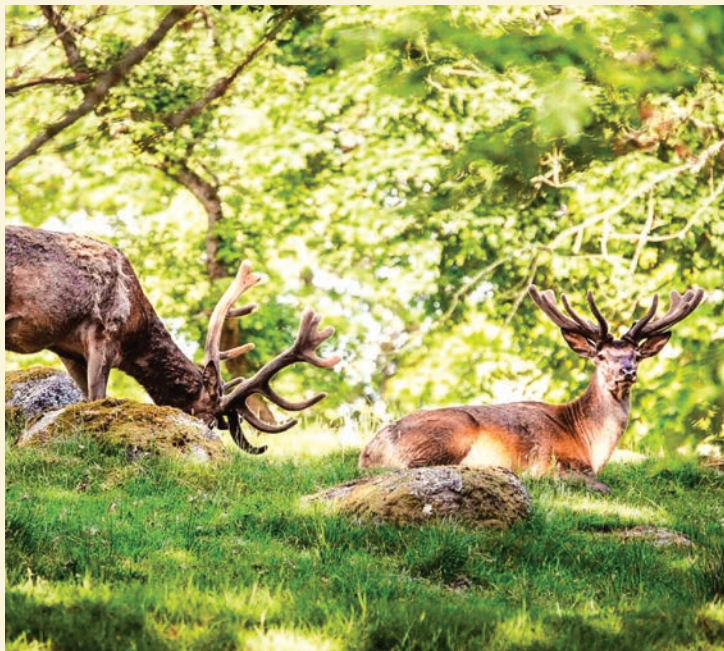
Given our own role in this area, we look forward to contributing to the Commission's workstream on the future of the livestock sector. It is critical that we accurately diagnose the sector's challenges, including global competition; address the climate and environmental footprint of the sector, and foster investment in technology and enhance the development of sustainable business models, which include advanced, state-of-the-art feeding strategies.

If we address this in the right way, and the regulatory simplification being ushered in by the Omnibus process is a positive first step, then we could still see the continued growth, vitality and competitiveness, of the EU agri-food and dairy sectors whilst ensuring food and industrial sovereignty and the achievement of our environmental and climate goals.

But the time to act is now and time is short to do the right thing if we are to feed the future with innovative, sustainable animal nutrition solutions.

ADISSEO
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Eriksberg Estate Wins 2025 Belleuropa Award



© Eriksberg Hotel & Nature Reserve

The Belleuropa Award, established by environmental pioneer **Giuseppe NATTA**, celebrates managed natural habitats and rural landscapes that support biodiversity. Each year, this award honors a member of the **Wildlife Estates Label network** for their outstanding work in favor of biodiversity.

This year's winner, **Eriksberg Estate** in Södermanland, Sweden, combines a legacy dating back to the 17th century with forward-looking practices. From forestry to renewable energy and tourism, its diverse activities reflect deep respect for nature, tradition, and community, embodying the balance between heritage and a sustainable future.






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