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ForumforAg 2021 Regional Event in France



Minister Julien DENORMANDIE



Editorial

Thierry de l'ESCAILLE, *Secretary General*

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The invasion of Ukraine has meant a profound change in the way we see our world. We find ourselves thrown out of a system where access to agricultural products, energy and commodities that were perceived as guaranteed are in short supply. By holding the Forum for the Future of Agriculture on March 15, we allow ourselves the chance to reflect on the future of our food and agriculture sector.

This crisis and the tensions on the markets that it generates have indicated that these issues are to be seriously challenged. Some are already asking for a readjustment if not a rethinking of the Green Deal according to the new situation.

What impact will Russian and Ukrainian agriculture have on world markets once the crisis is over?

How should Europe profile itself after that?

These are questions that we will have to answer.



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ForumforAg 2021 Regional Event in France



The Forum for the Future of Agriculture hosted its second regional conference of the year on December 2, in Paris, France. The discussion was primarily split into three different sessions: the EU's environmental targets in the Farm to Fork Strategy; sustainability standards in international trade; and forestry management and climate mitigation. The day also featured an intervention on geopolitics and food security and the first edition of the Forum's start-up corner with its 'Leaders of Change'.

ForumforAg 2021 Secretariat

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The ForumforAg Chair, Janez POTOČNIK, launched the dialogue in the morning declaring that *"we need system change and we need to address drivers and pressures leading to the multiple crises we face."* He also stressed the importance of France's role when it comes to healthy quality food and sustainable agriculture. *"With the COP26 ending only a few weeks ago, and with the build-up to the French Presidency getting started in the EU; we have an opportunity to add to these important, timely and crucial dialogues. Honest and open dialogue certainly helps and I very much look forward to the ideas that will follow the input of our expert speakers in today's event and how all addressed could help us shape the common vision."*

This speech was followed by French Senator Sophie PRIMAS and French Minister of Agriculture, Julien DENORMANDIE who highlighted the significance of combating deforestation saying that with the EU French Presidency there will be a push towards *"engaging in a policy to combat imported deforestation"* which will contribute to the goal of applying EU standards to imported products. The French Minister also stressed

that *"we must not lose sight of what must guide our action for the future of European agriculture, namely our agri-food sovereignty. This sovereignty is essential, this sovereignty has to be base of our political vision. This sovereignty must be adhere to the three missions of agriculture for which we must achieve: nutritional needs, environmental protection but also food production"*. Mme PRIMAS shared her thoughts on how can we achieve a just transition in Europe towards a better food system for all.

Achieving the environmental targets with the Farm-to-Fork strategy

The first panel discussion was framed around how the environmental targets in the Farm-to-Fork strategy can be achieved. Eric THIROUIN, AGPB, underlined that as exporters, it is essential for AGPB that the French Presidency restore coherence to Europe's trade policy, which is currently under review; and in that respect mirror clauses are of limited interest. He stressed the urgent need of removal of import tariffs on fertilizers. Pierre DUBREUIL, OFB, wel-

comed sustainable and strong environmental standards but he highlighted the fact that we have already *"damaged the tools of farmers"* in the past and therefore we should work alongside farmers instead of imposing restrictions. Sébastien TREYER, IDRI, underlined that targets are important, undoubtedly, to give direction and depth of change, as done by the Farm to Fork, especially for two issues: re-diversification and building an economic strategy for the livestock sector.

For a sovereign, inclusive and responsible Europe - context

Dominique CHARGÉ, La Coopération Agricole, made a special addresses putting in context the focus on food sovereignty: a major challenge to be met, necessarily in a collective manner and necessarily on a European perimeter. He stressed that our response to the challenge of sovereignty must be a responsible growth. He also highlighted the need for support from public authorities, in a logic of pragmatism and coherence.



Bruno BARANNE (on the screen); Pierre-Olivier DREGE, Francois-Xavier CANOVA

Sustainability standards through EU trade agreements

The following session explored sustainability standards in international trade and. Maud Lelièvre, IUCN, stressed that when it comes to trade issues, deforestation is a hot topic for her organization. As one of the biggest importers in the world, Europe has to be mindful of what they are importing to reduce the number of unsustainable products being traded. Matthieu BRUN, Club DEMETER, highlighted that “if we think about the sustainability of our food system we cannot do it alone and in isolation”. He argued that to ensure sustainable development we must work together to achieve higher trading standards for our food system and support one another. The idea of food security cannot be achieved when coupled with the aim of food sovereignty, as they contradict each other due the interconnectedness of our global economy and world. In agreement with him, Iliana AXIOTI-ADES, COCERAL, noted the importance of keeping trade open and working with countries around the world. During the panel discussion, Arnold PUECH d’ALISSAC, FNSEA, highlighted some of the confusing measures made in relation to the EU-Mercosur trade agreement negotiations and stressed that our trade standards need to be harmonised in the EU and level the playing field.

Pierre-Olivier DRÈGE, President of ELO and Bruno BARANNE, Director Syngenta France made the closing comments of the morning sessions. Mr BARANNE underlined that the issue of food sovereignty is a major one: the need to produce more, and more sustainable to feed a rapidly growing world population in an affordable way is a global challenge; “we are well aware of this challenge today with the soaring price of wheat to over 300 euros per tonne and its associated risk of social disorder and even political destabilization. As Matthieu BRUN explained perfectly earlier the importance of French exports in the geopolitical stability of the Mediterranean basin and beyond. The feeding function is indeed the primary mission of agriculture, to quote Mr DENORMANDIE’s

introductory words. To feed France, but also Europe and the world, France must remain an exporter”. They both underlined the importance of sustainable nutrition, sustainable food, and sustainable agriculture, being the topics the Forum is all about - the common vision for sustainable farming and land use.

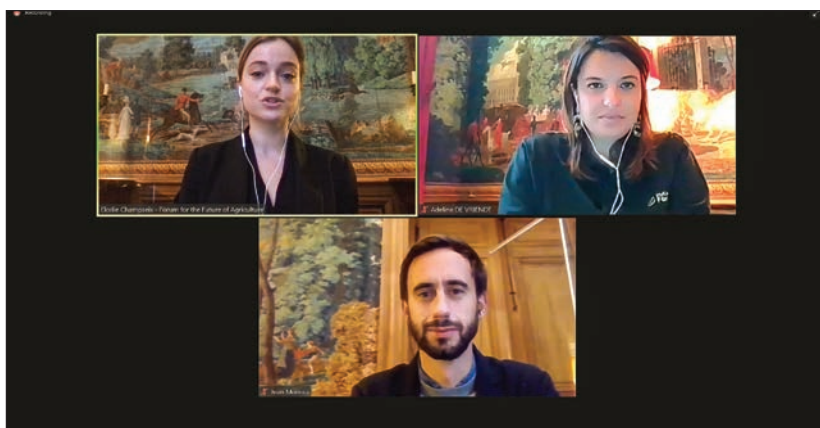
French forests and climate change adaptation

The discussion on French forests and climate change adaptation led to an insightful panel discussion. Opened by Jean-François DHÔTE, INRAE, he launched the discussion highlighting the potential of forests & wood-based products regarding carbon sequestration and carbon storage. Sylvie ALEXANDRE, Académie Agriculture de France, stressed that the polarised debate on forest management has to change as the current debate is framed around the notion that managing forests is not compatible with biodiversity as if “forestry was

an attack on nature and signifies deforestation”. Guillaume SAINTENY, FRB, added to the dialogue that forestry is widely recognised as a positive practice to combat global issues yet this is not reflected in our legislation. More concrete actions are required at a policy level to support forest management. Bertrand SERVOIS, UNISYLVA, noted the big difference between agriculture, forestry and time perspective; the yield in the forest is over several decades, whereas agriculture has an annual yield. A management error is both expensive and difficult to rectify for foresters. Antoine d’AMECOURT, FRANSYLVA, stressed that French forestry must be diversified. Currently, the demand is restricted and homogeneous with specific types of trees. This leads to poor diversity of harvests which limits the potential of forests. All agreed on the importance of the role of nature-based solutions.

For more information on the speakers and to watch the replay: www.forumforagriculture.com

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In discussion with start-ups

We would like to thank all ForumforAg 2021 supportive partners, founding, strategic and local, who made Forum’s Regional France a reality! Special thanks to French ELO members: AGPB and Fondation François Sommer, and for the moderator François-Xavier CANOVA, Uprightly; as well as for the speakers of the Start-up Corner: Adeline DE VRIENDT, MyEasyFarm and Jean MOREAU, Phénix.



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2021 European Biodiversity Conference Soil Strategy: Where to go? A chance to make it work at a local level?

The 2021 edition of the European Biodiversity Conference was organised under the auspices of the European Parliament Intergroup Biodiversity, Hunting, Countryside, and took place on December 7 as a hybrid format.

Delphine DUPEUX, ELO

Both Member of European Parliament, Alvaro AMARO and chair of the RISE Foundation Janez POTOČNIK opened the conference highlighting the essential role of soil as a basic foundation of European food security and biodiversity richness. Under valued soil as a natural resource has come with a cost, especially for climate resilience. The soon to be published report of the RISE Foundation will address the barriers and practical solutions to improve the situation contributing to the discussion around a new EU Soil Strategy. The EU context of the Green Deal combined with CAP, Farm to Fork and 2030 Biodiversity Strategy is putting the Soil Strategy under the spotlight. The EU aim is to address soil- and land-related issues in a comprehensive way and to help achieve land degradation neutrality by 2030, one of the commitments in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Arwyn JONES, from the Joint Research Center (JRC) opened the first panel with an overview of the state of soil health and the acceleration of land degradation in the EU. He states that the biggest challenge remains to have a set of indicators that combine both measurements of soil properties and practices which have an impact on ecosystem services. The EU Soil Observatory created by JRC will help build upon data gathering and improve soil research

Claudia OLAZABAL, Directorate-General of the Environment, explains that the rationale of a new Soil Strategy is anchored at the heart of the EU Green Deal and the 2030 Biodiversity Strategy. Governance and integration with other EU policies will be indispensable, especially with the new CAP. Emanuel PETEL, from Directorate-General of Agriculture, stresses in a complementary statement that CAP strategic plans will be crucial to improve soil conditions in Europe as part of the Member States' priorities. To conclude, Jari PENTINMAKI from Yara emphasized the role of a well-balanced nutrition system at the farm level. Farmers need better access to knowledge, tools and financial incentives. The Soil Strategy should recognize the link between soil health and nutrient cycling.

As a practical illustration for improving

soil health in Europe, the AgriLife project founded by ELO was launched during the conference This is the first-ever European label that will reward and encourage farmers as central actors in restoring biodiversity while promoting quality production through best practices. It will build a pan-European alliance of all public and private stakeholders to achieve environmental, social and economic goals

Alain SCRIBAN, ELO Special Advisor and Chair of the Steering Committee, emphasizes that AgriLife anticipates movement

towards regenerative agriculture, promotes innovation & aims at ensuring the economic and social viability of agribusinesses. This objective, thanks to impact measurement on biodiversity, relates to several types of agriculture from conventional to many other types. It establishes a common methodology based on scientific criteria to assess the agro-biodiversity conditions of European territories and farms still in development.

Professor Martin GERZABEK, from the Institute of Soil Research, Boku University and Chairperson of the Scientific Com-

BELLEUROPA AWARD 2020
7 December 2020, BRUSSELS

HÖGESTAD & CHRISTINEHOF
WINNER: *Conte Carl Piper*

Sweden

Högestad & Christinehof was established in the 18th century and has been run by the Piper family ever since. The company covers an area of 13000 ha in the Skåne region. The business includes forestry, agriculture, livestock breeding, nature conservation, game management, apple cultivation and property management.

Over the years the Piper family's green spirit lives on, and the company continuously initiates environmental projects in all parts of its business.

The forestry is conducted with a gentle hand and with great consideration for the environment: completely without chemical pesticides. The agricultural sector uses the latest technology and takes care to provide abundant habitats for birds, pollinators and other beneficial insects, including the presence of the red-listed species: mosshumla.

The company breeds organic beef cattle according to the Swedish KRAV standard, the grazing animals naturally contribute to diversity and keeping the landscape open.

2 200 ha (≈17 %) of the company's land is protected and several of the nature reserves and Natura 2000 lands have such unique natural values that they attract tourists from all over Europe.

Högestad & Christinehof grundades på 1700-talet och har drivits av familjen Piper sedan dess. Företaget har en areal på 13000 hektar i Skåne. Verksamheten omfattar skogsbruk, jordbruk, boskapsuppfödning, naturvård, viltvård, äppelodling och fastighetsförvaltning.

Under årens lopp lever familjen Pipers gröna anda vidare och företaget initierar kontinuerligt miljöprojekt i alla delar av verksamheten.

Skogsbruket bedrivs med varsam hand och med stor hänsyn till miljön - helt utan kemiska bekämpningsmedel. Inom jordbrukssektorn används den senaste tekniken och man ser till att skapa rikliga livsmiljöer för fåglar, pollinatörer och andra nyttiga insekter.

En inventering av området efter dessa miljöåtgärder visade att den rödlistade arten, moss carder bee, finns på området. Företaget föder upp ekologiska nötkreatur enligt den svenska KRAV-standarden, och betesdjuren bidrar på ett naturligt sätt till mångfalden och till att hålla landskapet öppet.

Belleuropa, 67 rue de Trèves B - 1040 Brussels

mittee explains that the labelling process should be a guide for farmers towards the preservation of ecosystem services. The relationship between biodiversity and land use are complex and upscaling will be a challenge. He describes the work which will have to be produced for defining the right indicators always bearing in mind the objective of such measures. He insists on finding the right balance between scientifically based indicators and practical possibilities; between status, process and outcome and finally between direct (species based) and indirect (management practices) indicators. He brought up several examples of criteria that will be used for the AgriLife scorecard such as tillage, soil cover, crop protection; soil health indicator, the structural elements of the landscapes and connectivity in semi-natural habitats (*red.: all presentations are available on the ELO website*).

François OMNES, Associate director at the Office Français de la Biodiversité and member of the Scientific Committee, points out

the necessary evolution towards agri-environmental solutions. Ecosystems services are an essential part of the good functioning of farming systems and the OFB is providing 10 possible practices at the farm level to improve the state and conditions of their natural resources (crop mosaic, field margins; permanent soil cover etc...) He reminds us that networking efforts and collaboration between farmers themselves and also between farmers and other stakeholders (technicians, universities, NGOs) are essential. Conscious of this need, OFB created the Agrifaune programme to ensure convergence between regulatory framework, voluntary schemes and the different sectors.

The conference was again the perfect opportunity to present the **Belleuropa Award** to an exemplary member of the Wildlife Estates project. This year, **the winning estate was Högestad & Christinehof** run by the Piper family in Sweden. The estate's manager Christian NEGENDANK received

the award from Thierry de L'ESCAILLE (ELO Secretary-General) and Konstantin KOSTOPOULOS (Wildlife Estates CEO). The territory covers an area of 13000 ha in the Skåne region. Over the years the Piper family's green spirit lives on, and the company continuously initiates environmental projects in all parts of its business. The forestry is conducted with a gentle hand and with great consideration for the environment, all without chemical pesticides. The agricultural sector uses the latest technology and takes care to provide abundant habitats for birds, pollinators and other beneficial insects. A census of the area after these environmental measures showed the presence of a red-listed species: a wild bee (mosshumla). The company breeds organic beef cattle according to the Swedish KRAV standard, the grazing animals naturally contribute to diversity and keeping the landscape open. 2 200 ha (≈17 %) of the company's land is protected and several of the nature reserves and Natura 2000 lands have such unique natural values that they attract tourists from all over Europe. Visit: www.hogesta.se

Please check on the recording of the conference for presentations and other information:
<https://www.europeanlandowners.org/events/biodiversity-conference>

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ELO General Assembly in Paris

Twice a year, the ELO General Assembly (GA) takes place in the country that is about to take up the rotating Presidency of the Council of the EU. Nevertheless, in view of the continuing difficulties and restrictions in travelling between the countries of the European Union, the GA was held in a hybrid form, giving the possibility to join the meeting in person or “online”, respecting COVID-19 rules and social distancing in place. More than 50 people took part in it, from 19 European countries. It allowed also to welcome a new member from Slovenia: the Association of Slovenian Large-Sized Forest Properties (ZVGP).

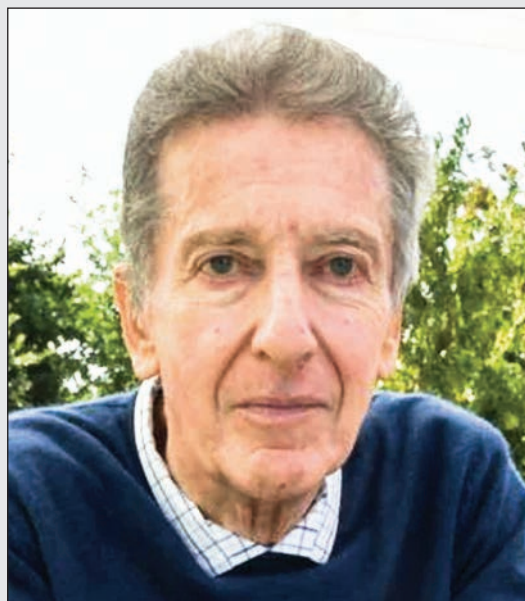
The GA provided the opportunity to listen and debate the priorities of the French Presidency with the respective authorities. It was also a chance to hand over the ELO's main messages for agricultural and environmental priorities.

ELO delegates underlined the importance of landowners, farmers and foresters with their major contribution both to providing food for the citizens of the EU and, at the same time, playing a big role in reaching the targets of the Green Deal and carbon neutral economy. They all have a major part to play and the capacity to offer solutions. As such, they have to be trusted. To enable landowners to reach such targets, without having a dramatic fall in global production and in the income of the rural areas, free access to innovation is needed, especially to NGTs, which could help reduce the footprint and enhance production.

As far as forests are concerned, the point is to highlight forestry as a contribution to carbon sequestration and biodiversity. ELO doesn't believe the new forest approach is balanced to that scope.

The ELO would like to warmly thank you the French *Association Générale des Producteurs de Blé et autres céréales* (AGPB) and *Fondation François Sommer* for their support to organize this meeting which enabled fruitful discussions and planning for 2022 actions

**The next GA
will take place in Prague, Czechia
on 17-18 May.**



Giuseppe NATTA has passed away at the age of 78 and is deeply mourned by his family.

He was known simply as ‘the engineer’; his surname did not even need to be mentioned. Son of Nobel Prize winner for chemistry Giulio NATTA, following in his father's footsteps, he graduated in Industrial Chemistry and later in Chemical Engineering. His name is linked to the foundation of Ecodeco in Giussago, a waste recovery and disposal company sold to A2a in 2007.

A life studded with successes but also with challenges to the plants, always defended with strenuous technical expertise and passion for the territory in which he lived. His legacy is the territorial area La Cassinazza of the Neorurale group, a project started in 1996 with the bet to transform an agricultural territory from intensive to natural use. A path of renaturalization that had led him in November 2003 to Brussels to receive the Euroducks International Wetland Conservation Award, a sort of Nobel Prize for the environment. Since 2017, he was committed to the production of Anno Mille rice, which would also entail a twenty-year long renaturalization process of 7 farms over 1,400 hectares with the aim of restoring biodiversity back to its state of a thousand years ago.

(Based on the article published in “Il Giorno” on 16 March 2022.)

On behalf of the Friends of the Countryside and European Landowners' Organization we would like to convey our deepest words of appreciation and gratitude, and for his lifetime achievements. We would like to convey our most sincere words of comfort to his family. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all.

Michael SALM zu SALM, FCS President
Thierry de l'ESCAILLE, ELO Secretary General

ELO (European Landowners' Organization) accepted as member of IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature)

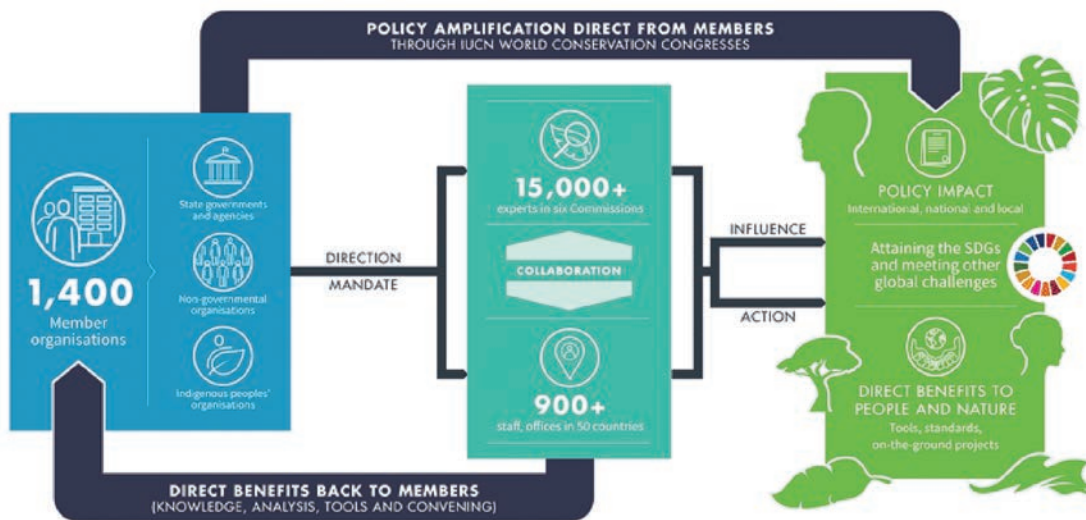
On 9th February 2022 ELO was accepted as IUCN's newest member organisation. It reflects the international recognition ELO is getting for its work in the field of private land conservation.

As an advocacy organisation, ELO represents more than 2.3 million private landowners from all over Europe towards the European institutions and international organisations.

IUCN is a membership Union composed of both government and civil society organisations. It harnesses the experience, resources and reach of its more than 1,400 Member organisations and the input of more than 18,000 experts. This diversity and vast expertise make IUCN the global authority on the status of the natural world and the measures needed to safeguard it.



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www.iucn.org



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Droits de propriété environnementaux/ Environmental property rights for the environment

Max Falque Editor/ sous la direction de
Préface de Laurent Fonbaustier
Préface de Richard Epstein

BRUYLANT

DROITS ET DEVELOPPEMENT DURABLE

Droits de propriété environnementaux / Environmental property rights for environment

MAX FALQUE EDITOR/ SOUS LA DIRECTION DE
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In this book, around 25 French- and English-speaking lawyers open new perspectives on the role of property rights in the protection and the management of environmental resources in the service of humankind and the planet. Contrary to the doxa of the political ecology, property rights are at the core of civilization and, provided they are adapted to the new environmental challenges, they are also the best safeguard against overregulation.

Belgium adopts new legislation regulating property ownership

Belgium adopted an entirely new system on property ownership that entered into force on 1st September 2021. Among the new provisions appears one problematic one, both from a nature protection and biodiversity point of view and from a right of ownership point of view for landlords, farmers and other lawful occupants of plots of land situated in rural areas.

Indeed, a new article 3.67 entitled "Landowner's tolerance" provides as follows in its paragraph 3: "Where an undeveloped and uncultivated property is not fenced, anyone may enter it unless this causes damage or harm to the owner of that property or the owner has made it clear that access to the property is forbidden to third parties without the owner's permission. (...)"

This provision therefore allows anyone to temporarily access undeveloped, uncultivated and unfenced land or land not marked as not accessible. The purpose of this provision would be to allow people to walk around, play, picnic or just hang out for a few hours!

In forest areas, special legislation regulates traffic and walking and limits it to roads, marked areas, paths and trails open to the public, particularly in the Walloon Region of Belgium where the country's most important forest areas are located. In urban areas, it is understandable that this new provision applies to vacant lots and other plots of land to which access is not prohibited by fences or signs. However, can one accept that this provision applies to parks and gardens, as many of them are not fenced or marked?

In any event, the issue has greater acuity in rural areas, where the imprecise concepts and the lack of nuances of the provision may be detrimental not only to farms, but also to the proper conservation of habitats and natural environments and increase the pressure on the fauna that lives and feeds there, as well as on their flora and their biodiversity. All natural habitats deserve protection, even those that are not protected

by specific regulations. Thus, all rural plots, whether cultivated or, above all, uncultivated, constitute essential habitats and natural environments for the proper development of fauna and flora.

In Belgium, non-cultivated and non-aquatic open areas contain about 10% of habitats of Community interest or host species of Community interest covered by EU Directive no. 92/43/CEE, named the Habitats Directive, part of which are not protected by Natura 2000 sites. However, the Habitats Directive requires them to be protected, under penalty of sanctions by the European Union if their degradation does not allow the objectives of the Directive to be met.

This new provision of the Civil Code now allows "anyone" "to enter", "unless this causes damage or harm to the owner" an "uncultivated property", "not fenced" or without a mark making "clear that access (...) is forbidden". These various concepts lack precision and nuance, if only because not everyone is necessarily able to distinguish between an uncultivated plot and a

cultivated one (hay, fallow, AECM, headland etc.). In matters of habitat conservation, these various concepts may have adverse implications mainly through loss of tranquility and increased scaring of species already threatened by other pressures. There is actual concern that this new provision will lead to an increase in the number of visitors to natural environments and, as a result, cause degradation of habitats through trampling and untimely disturbance of the fauna, where refuge areas are shrinking.

Finally, in rural landscapes, one can already witness a blossoming of prohibition signs and fences put up by legitimate occupants wanting to protect their assets, and this will only result in making these landscapes, which are also threatened by other pressures, look worse.

For more information, please contact the editorial team.

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Restoring peatlands with wet agriculture

In the 19th century the use of peat became popular for fuel resulting in a significant reduction of healthy peatland in Europe. Drainage of these peatlands for energy production or agricultural activity also greatly contributed to their decline. Today, the climate debate puts peat back in the spotlight as one of the most space-effective carbon reservoirs known on earth. The European project CarbonConnects (CConnects) is guiding farmers and landowners in restoring degraded peatlands through practical solutions, innovative business models and the elaboration of effective compensation mechanisms.

Anne-Sophie MULIER, ELO & Pauline PIRLOT, ELO

Healthy peatland is water-saturated throughout the year. When organic material on this soil dies, the high water table hinders its decomposition, and peat is formed. The carbon from this organic material is fully co-stored in the soil making the peat layer act as an important carbon sink. 3% of the world's land area consists of peat, with a carbon storage capacity of no less than 500 gigatons. By comparison, although forest occupies ten times more surface area than peat on a global scale, it stores only half as much carbon. Moreover, living peatlands form important self-regulating landscapes for water purification and water management as a natural buffer against flooding and drought. Peatlands are a breeding ground for unique fauna and flora and provide a habitat for self-sustaining birds, insects and plants.

Despite the great ecological value of peatlands, today they are the most degraded ecosystem in Europe. In addition to historical reclamation, peatlands are often drained to use the land for energy production or agricultural activity. When a peatland is drained, the drained peat oxidizes and the huge carbon reserves, which had been stored in the soil for centuries, are released into the atmosphere. The important net carbon sink then turns into an immense carbon source. In the past about 15% of peatland worldwide was fully drained resulting in annual greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of roughly 1.6 gigaton CO₂eq/year. The CO₂ emissions from these drained and burned peatlands are equivalent to 10% of all annual fossil fuel emissions, or twice the direct emissions from aviation. More than 5% of all GHG emissions in the EU, come from degraded peatlands. In some EU countries, drained peatlands even account for more than 25%

of total emissions from agriculture and agricultural land use. Given the immense impact of degraded peatlands, there is every interest in ensuring that these areas are properly restored and maintained. Peatland restoration is most often done by raising and stabilizing the water table.

In 2017 CConnects started with the aim of reducing carbon emissions caused by traditional practices on agriculturally converted peatlands in NW-Europe, while developing viable and sustainable use models for peatlands. To do this, CConnects is promoting an alternative practice of wet farming that reduces carbon by raising the water table, introducing new crops, and isolating carbon in the output of the land (biomass, building material). To field test their findings, 11 pilot sites of 3-10 ha in NL, FR, BE, UK, IE, were set up, collectively representing all peatland types in NWE. Farmers/landowners in these EU Member States were introduced to innovative land management techniques that provide both environmental benefits and sustainable economic opportunities. Moreover, a stronger connection than originally anticipated was established between 4 EU projects (Care-Peat, CANAPE, LIFE Peat Restore) with a series of workshops, a white paper on blue/carbon credits, and collaboration at the Forum for Future of Agriculture, the IUCN Congress and COP26.

Based on their successes, a project extension has now been accepted to expand their impact by incorporating market actors as a new target group. The original combination of knowledge-based organisations, water and land management authorities and network facilitators will now be fully concentrated on the market dimension of their work and

expertise, to successfully leverage business and funding opportunities for peatland owners and farmers. Given the centrality of connecting to the market, the participation of financial actors will be required and expertise from existing and new partners with prior experience in eco-schemes will be further leveraged.

For more information contact:
pauline.pirlot@elo.org

 www.nweurope.eu/projects

Project info

The CarbonConnects project received funding from NEW-Interreg Program, 2018-2023

EU Funding : 3.2 M

Why rewet drained peatlands?

- Mitigate climate change
- Reduce peak flows and flooding
- Increase groundwater availability and natural drinking water regulation
- Promote unique biodiversity: birds, plants, invertebrates and microorganisms
- Create a unique area for recreation
- Economically equivalent production possible: Biomass production for animal feed, bio-based insulation and building materials, paper, bioplastics, energy production and cultivation substrates



Valdeameno Estate

Francisco BAHAMONDE, owner of the estate

In the first third of the last century, in Galicia, as in the rest of Spain and Europe, there was a boom in the construction of summer residences that sought a life in contact with nature or a presence in the summer resorts in vogue, all with the aim of finding a break from urban life. The former generally had a strong component of interrelation with the rural environment, while the latter were conceived with less attention to the flora and fauna of their surroundings. In both cases, locations well communicated with the city are sought, taking advantage of the presence of the train and an incipient road network. The town of Guisamo (Bergondo - La Coruña) was a place where several villas with their gardens were built during this period, all of which are now destroyed, victims of speculation or abandonment, except for the estate we are dealing with here.

The period of the greatest boom in the construction of these villas was between the end of the Great War and the last years of the Restoration, and fully encompassed the "happy Twenties".

Precisely in 1920, inaugurating this decade which brought a new organisation of Europe and consequently a new way of life, the so-called "Villa Julia" was planned and built, and "Valdeameno" with its gardens was growing. This complex is included in the catalogue of the historical heritage of Galicia. In this work

very modern elements are introduced at the same time that it is integrated in a singular geographical context: the mariñas of Coruña, a territory full of landscape values and with a rich fauna. In the vicinity of Valdeameno is the Fraga de Cecebre, which inspired Fernández FLÓREZ's novel "The Animated Forest", the Mandeo marshes and since 1975 the Abegondo - Cecebre reservoir, which is located at the former confluence of the Barcés - Mero rivers.

In this environment of benign climate and natural singularity, a Residence was created, due to the smallholdings endemic to Galicia, which emphasise the presence of singular botanical species and the establishment of the fauna of its surroundings. The main building, attributed to the architect António TENREIRO (1893-1972), is an exercise in modernity and international language mixed with traditional elements, a subtle interplay between art deco design



Trunk and part of the inside of the crown of a bicentennial fig tree (*Ficus carica*).

and rationalist elements, with a strong Italianate cultural link and very well integrated into the surroundings. In this innovative design, which speaks of the present day by the hand of a young, recently qualified architect, the cornice of simple and refined lines stands out, which has its replica in the design of the pergola next to the main entrance.

The landscaped space is planned by combining the open design, in the British tradition, with a geometric arrangement related to the gardens of the manor houses. The construction of an apparently very simple space is sought, but in reality it is enormously complex in its relations with all the architectural and arboreal elements.

From the botanical point of view, an old fig tree is preserved, approximately from the beginning of the 19th century, which is perfectly related to the general layout and common species are introduced in the surroundings, such as walnut trees or laurels, and even purely autochthonous flora, such as yew trees, in order not to disturb the local fauna, although what is pursued in the end is the creation of a botanical garden, in which exotic or little known species in the region stand out.

Most of these specimens survive, centenarians today, highlighting a magnificent *Abies pinsapo*, three *Magnolia x soulangeana*, which articulate one of the axes of the garden and other rare specimens in Galicia as *Thujaopsis dolabrata*, *Chamaecyparis plumosa*, *Phoenix canariensis*, etc.. The development of these species has created a pleasant space and a suitable habitat for the fauna of the area, among which we can highlight the Long-tailed Salamander (*Chioglossa lusitánica*), the Iberian Long-billed Toad (*Discogloss-*



Eurasian Sparrowhawk (Accipiter nisus) and Great Spotted Woodpecker (Dendrocopos major)

us galganoi), the Eurasian Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*), a great variety of Great Tit (*Family Paridae*), the Wren (Troglodytes troglodytes) and the Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*), among other specimens present in Valdeameno.

This natural area, heavily anthropised, experienced half a century of great development, but in the 1970s a period of decadence and abandonment began as a consequence of family inheritances. In 1990 it was acquired by its current owners, who, with the aim of restoring it to its former splendour, proceeded to refurbish and extend the main building to adapt it to their needs, enhancing the value of the other

buildings and landscaped space, all with the approval and authorisation of the competent cultural and historical heritage bodies. The garden, catalogued since 1992, was in a state of abandonment, but still recoverable as most of the original species were still alive and the primitive layout, although blurred, could be rehabilitated; although originally all the paths were covered with gravel, it was decided to keep gravel only on those paths that had to support the movement of vehicles to access the property. The rest of the walkways, as well as the flowerbeds and clear areas of the layout, were kept covered in grass to provide a favourable habitat for the fauna of the area.

To know more: www.wildlife-estates.eu



Magnolia x soulangeana, from one of the three centenary specimens, in bloom. Each one of them has a canopy of about 12 metres in diameter and forms a group that defines the main walkway of the estate.





Julian CORTES, ELO

TerraNova is the European Landscape Learning Initiative, funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie SKŁODOWSKA-CURIE action.

The project aims to develop an unprecedented digital atlas of Europe compiled by an interdisciplinary group of researchers that combine research on human population patterns in the past, plants and disturbances, animal development, and climate change.

This project aims at improving our understanding of landscape histories and land use strategies in the past in order to identify major previous shifts in resource use

and energy regimes. This will ultimately provide options for the future transition to a low carbon society.

Since 2019, the project researchers and partners have worked towards the development of this digital atlas.

On the 22nd and 23rd of March 2022, TerraNova will be holding a public event: Launching the transition to the low-carbon society – that will take place in Brussels on March 22nd-23rd, at the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, in a hybrid format.

We are pleased to invite you to the upcoming TerraNova public event. During this event, the main results and deliverables of the TerraNova project and their relevance to ongoing EU policy development for biodiversity, climate change, and rural development, as outlined in the European Green Deal will be presented.

During this hybrid event, TerraNova researchers and experts, alongside EU institution representatives and other stakeholders from the scientific community and civil society will present useful insights to contribute to specific objectives of the EU Biodiversity Strategy, sustainable management of rural landscapes, in particular related to the impacts of agriculture intensification and land abandonment.

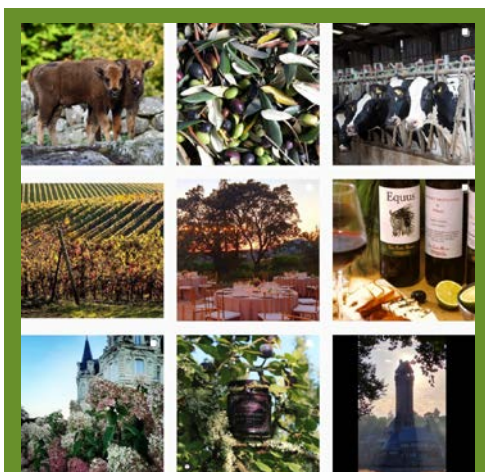
A special feature to be launched is the TerraNova digital ATLAS which helps to identify various scenarios of future land management, and thus areas of Europe with positive potential for ecological restoration and sustainable landscape management practices. This information will be of relevance to policy-making and landscape decision making for achieving the ambition of a zero-carbon sustainable future.

As the European Union is rising to address the biodiversity and climate change related challenges and recognises the urgency to transition towards sustainable landscape management, TerraNova is keen to connect with EU policy-makers and other stakeholders to exchange on policy recommendations that inform future policy and decision-making, and contribute to realising this transition.

We look forward to welcoming you for an inspiring exchange.

Given the uncertainties with the COVID-19 situation, we propose a hybrid format for our event, with on-site participation (in compliance with measures of the Belgian government at that time) and live sessions streaming.

If you are interested in joining this event, you can pre-register using the link on our website: www.TerraNova-itn.eu



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This project has received funding from the European Union's H2020 research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement number 818083.




Virtual Final conference of the Water2REturn project on March 21st

Daniel MONTELEONE, ELO

After five incredible years, the Water2REturn project will be coming to a successful conclusion with a Virtual Final conference on March 21st. This event, titled Resource-Oriented Solutions for Industrial Wastewater Treatment will be a comprehensive presentation of project results. The event structure will have interactive and engaging sessions, and is aimed towards stakeholders from different fields (water industry, farmers, administrations at different levels, and academia). During this event, there will be capacity building material, guidelines for the use of technology and discussions on how this procedure will revolutionise the world. This event will be the start of the Solutions week as part of the Month of March with the Forum for the Future of Agriculture. Be sure to register at the ForumforAg website.

Of course, the final conference is not the only exciting part. We've held 8 workshops already in the past 6 months, with 2 more scheduled, including a virtual event at the end of March here in Brussels! We will be hosting a networking event to connect farmers and scientists. ELO and other project partners also met in Seville to discuss the results of the project. We've also uploaded a video of how the process works, with subtitles in Italian, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish. We'll be publishing policy briefs on the results and that's just the tip of the iceberg! If you'd like to find out how to get great organic fertiliser, or clean energy from slaughterhouse by-products or to visit the demo plant or more, let us know and we'll put you in touch with the right people.

 <https://water2return.eu/>

SOILGUARD

SOILGUARD project - sustainable soil management practices

Frederico COSTA PEREIRA, ELO

Unsustainable agriculture and climate change contribute strongly to soil degradation. This is a reality that severely threatens biodiversity. There is therefore an urgent need to use sustainable soil management practices. In order to do so, it is necessary to highlight and fill knowledge gaps related to sustainable land use in order to preserve biodiversity and ecosystem services from the soil.

It is within this framework that the EU-funded *SOILGUARD* project intends to develop a conceptual and analytical framework to become the global standard for future assessments of soil biodiversity status. The objective is therefore to stimulate sustainable land use in order to maintain ecosystem services from soils while promoting social, economic and environmental well-being.

This objective of the *SOILGUARD* project will be achieved by creating strong links between soil management, biodiversity, multifunctionality and human activities in different regions. Currently, *SOILGUARD* is in the project stage where the main objective is to collect soil samples from different regions in order to be able to analyse soil conditions. This holistic and innovative approach will provide the necessary evidence for sustainable agricultural practices.

If you are a wheat farmer based in Belgium, Hungary, Denmark, Latvia and Spain, and you want to be part of the soil sampling, don't hesitate to contact us via this email address: frederico.costapereira@elo.org.

If you'd like to learn more about the project, be sure to follow us on:

 <https://soilguard-h2020.eu/>

 [company/soilguard](https://www.linkedin.com/company/soilguard)

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The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Union Horizon 2020 under the Grant Agreement number SEP-210673565, SOILGUARD project under the topic Sustainable Food Security.



Annual Conference & pre-Forum events

March 14 – 15, 2022
In Brussels & online

Our Annual Conference will be held on March 15, consisting of live broadcasts, moderated panel discussions and dialogues, interactive interventions, networking opportunities and exhibitions, all within an innovative virtual platform.

The day before, on March 14, immediately before the Annual Conference, the virtual platform will be open for a preview session allowing visiting the exhibition area and there will also be some pre-Forum events taking place.



Solutions and Policy events

March 21 – 28, 2022
Online

Following the Annual Conference, we will host a series of workshops, with the Forum partners, exploring innovative approaches and solutions supporting the overall theme of “striving for food system transformation.”

From water to trees, from biodiversity to food prices, and much more, there is something for everyone at the Solutions and Policy events in March.



Final Wrap-up and Soil Award

March 29, 2022
Online

To conclude all of our activities during March, we will host one final online session which will summarise the learnings from the month's events plus discuss the next steps as we strive for food system transformation.

During the final session we will also celebrate success as we announce the winner of the Land and Soil Management Award live.



Founding partners



Strategic and International partners



Supporting partners

