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FFA2021

Regional Event in Portugal





Editorial

Thierry de l'ESCAILLE, *Secretary General*

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How to balance forestry and biodiversity conservation

As we move into the summer with the CAP reform coming to an end, we must analyse the debate it has generated and draw some clear takeaways from it to begin preparing for the future to come. Despite a whirlwind of new ideas, some good, others much less so, Europe has remained on course.

I do not think that political ambition can justify everything: we have a responsibility linked to sustainability. This is based on three pillars: economic, environmental and social. To disrupt their balance, as some have tried, is not only a major ethical risk but also an economic and environmental liability that future generations will pay the price for.

We are living in an ever-increasingly interconnected and globalized world so that what is decided here or elsewhere impacts us all at the global level, one way or another. In September we welcome a new dialogue with the United States; the Mercosur project must be framed differently than with the political slogans that do not take into account true realities; a new balance must be found with England and Scotland cannot move away from the choices made in neighbouring countries.

And all this at the same time as discussions continue on biodiversity, forestry and climate, both at the global and aggregate level. The debate is in fact far from over, but the steps taken today give us hope that reason and scientific research will be respected when dealing with the future of our forests, our biodiversity and the various intricacies of rural management.

It is time for the urban majority to realize that there is real expertise in the countryside and that knowledge is not simply an emotional or even a majority issue, but that it is well-founded expertise based on applied science on the ground. Failure to respect this will lead to cyclical repetition of avoidable mistakes. Respect for people of the countryside allows for solutions to be found while arrogance closes doors.



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Opening session of the FFA2021 Regional Event in Portugal



Session 2: António GONCALVES FERREIRA, João RUI FERREIRA, Mark TITTERINGTON, Emily REES, Bruno BOBONE, Cristina NOBRE SOARES

FFA2021 Regional Event in Portugal



FFA2021 went on the road for its first hybrid regional event in Santarém to discuss Food System Renewal

FFA2021 Secretariat

In partnership with:



The Forum for the Future of Agriculture went on the road for its first hybrid event this year, enabling the audience to follow it online or attend in person while adhering to social distancing rules. Organised under the auspices of the Portuguese Presidency of the European Council, the entire day was hosted by Cristina NOBRE SOARES, Science Communicator and Mark TITTERINGTON, FFA2021 Senior Adviser, Strategy & Partnerships. Hundreds of online viewers were able to actively participate in the debate through the Forum's unique digital venue. The FFA2021 digital venue, which remained open for the week, featured various rooms for digital attendees to explore including a kitchen with sustainable recipes, a lounge to network with other attendees and a virtual exhibition area with stands to access exclusive content from.

Discussing Food System Renewal

The debate was opened by Janez POTOČNIK, FFA2021 Chairman, who made clear that at the root of these seemingly very different issues chosen to be discussed that day was the same monstrous

problem facing humanity: the climate change emergency. He underlined: *"This means that we must engage simultaneously on two tracks of immense importance; readying our food systems and societies for greater disasters to come and doing all we can to find a different direction. The compass that has led us to this point is broken and we desperately need a new direction. (...) It is high time that global and local communities live up to the promises they have made about sustainability. Whether it is about access to water, international trade agreements, or climate change. There is still some time left if we want to avoid the worst and remain under two degrees warming"*. He concluded his address by emphasizing that we should *"therefore begin today by fixing problems that we are well aware of, and in many cases know very well how to fix. The collective effort we have shown in the face of the global pandemic in the last two years shows us how much we can achieve together – if we only choose to do it."*

What followed was an exceptional line up of speakers discussing two topics of critical importance not just for Portugal, but for the global community. The first

panel focused on farming practices and sustainable management of farmland and water use. Thierry de l'ESCAILLE, ELO Secretary General, reiterated how providing farmers with the right tools and methodologies while rewarding them fairly for their work should be the priority for improving their land management practices to protect farmland habitats. He went on to highlight the importance of healthy soils for healthy habitats referencing the works of French poet, Jean de LA FONTAINE, who wrote poetry about soil as early as the 17th century. All panelists then shared the best farmland management and water use practices in which were involved their respective organizations: WWF Portugal, Espirituosos España and Confederacao Dos Agricultores De Portugal.

The second panel focused on increasing sustainability standards in global trade deals. The panelists debated on how to increase sustainability standards in European and global trade deals, the responsibilities of the public and private sector when it comes to enforcement of any sustainability chapters, and how to prevent dumping and outsourcing of environmental and climate consequences. Those



Garlich von ESSEN, Paula CRUZ DE CARVALHO, Alexandre QUINTANILHA, José PEREIRA PALHA, Cristina NOBRE SOARES

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issues were particularly relevant as the EU attempts to ratify the Mercosur trade agreement. The representatives of the Portuguese Chamber of Commerce, CEL-CAA, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), European Centre for International Economy and C.E.Liège touched upon such issues as how we should expect the growing visibility of climate change to influence EU trade policy and how can commitments made under the UN Sustainable Development Goals best be included in international trade agreements, and what level of enforcement mechanism are necessary. Emily REESE (ECIE) delivered a unique analogy by comparing trade deals to weddings stating that the trade deals, much like weddings, are the starting point of new relationship reinforcing the idea that much of the commitment lies ahead for trading blocs when agreeing to a trade deal.

Sustainable tools to face climate change

A solution workshop dedicated to new genomic techniques (NGTs) took place in the afternoon. A first-rate line up of speakers met in person and virtually to exchange on two important topics: are NGTs one of the tools for achieving the Farm to

Fork Strategy targets?; and the impact of NGTs on Europe's agriculture, trade and development policies.

The speakers of the first panel were asked to discuss the potential upsides that NGTs could bring to European agriculture, specifically where it concerns the EU's long-term aims of agricultural and climate sustainability as embodied in the Farm to Fork Strategy as well as the Green Deal. How could those tools be placed in the hands of farmers and what advantages can (and should) be demonstrated in the field, particularly where it concerns the specific challenges of Southern European agriculture, reduced water access, increased temperatures, soil erosion, desertification and more? The keynote speech was delivered by prof. Andreas WEBER, EU-SAGE, having as respondents WWF Portugal, Iplan-protect, an agronomist from Valuaro company and a member of the European Parliament.

The second panel looked at the important aspects beyond the Farm to Fork or Biodiversity Strategies to tackle with such policies like the EU-Africa strategy or non-discriminatory and multilateral trade agreements (WTO), which may all be impacted if indeed Europe decides to move in a differ-

ent direction than the rest of the world in its approach towards the NGTs. These and many other issues were discussed by the representatives of the Portuguese Ministry of Agriculture, Euroseeds, National Association of Cereal Producers and a member of the Portuguese Parliament.

The afternoon session was concluded by the representative of the Instituto Gulbenkian Ciencia and ANSEME.

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

We would like to thank all FFA2021 supportive partners, founding, strategic and local, who made FFA2021 Regional Portugal a reality! Special thanks to Portuguese ELO members: Associação Nacional dos Proprietários Rurais (ANPC), Confederação Dos Agricultores De Portugal (CAP), União da Floresta Mediterrânica (UNAC) and C.E. Liege; as well as Agroportal, ANSEME, ApexBrasil, CIB, Consulai, Euroseeds, and Travel Tomorrow.

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Penzion Na Razpotju, Slovenia; partner of the REWARD project



Farm CERNELIC, Slovenia; Soil Award 2021 winner

The ELO General Assembly travels virtually to Slovenia

More than 40 people took part in the ELO General Assembly held on June 15 as an “online” format. The event gave us the opportunity to discuss with the Slovenian authorities the priorities of the EU Council Presidency that they are taking over from July 1.

Emmanuelle MIKOSZ, ELO

Roman ZVEGLIC, President of the Chamber of Agriculture and Forestry of Slovenia, founded in 2000, presented the advisory work they are providing to the farmers and foresters. They represent its members’ interests, provide free technical aid in agricultural, forestry, legal and economic consultancy for the members, inform members of current issues in agriculture and forestry, and inform the public on current problems in agriculture, forestry, fishery and rural development. The membership for natural or legal entities in the Chamber is compulsory, and today includes more than 105 000 members.

Anton HAREJ, State Secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, and his team presented the priorities for the Slovenian Presidency. He highlighted the need to enhance resilience and improve crisis preparedness of the EU, as well as the green and digital transition. In the field of agriculture, the priorities include sustainable food production, long-term rural development, and, in relation to climate change, the support of sustainable solutions that will logically integrate agriculture in systems of natural resources management.

The main priority remains the formal adoption of the legislative package and implementation procedures to adapt technical acts of the CAP reform, which should be still finalised under the ongoing Portuguese Presidency. He underlined that their presidency will do everything in their power to facilitate the preparations of the CAP national strategic plans.

The Slovenian presidency will closely monitor the question of the unfair trading practices in the food supply chain which will be addressed at the council level in November, and the issue of the origin of agricultural products, in particular of honey blends. He also presented the priorities in the area of forestry and fisheries. Pierre-

Olivier DREGE, ELO President, opened the very lively exchange by handing over virtually the “ELO messages for the Slovenian Presidency” and wishing a great success to Slovenia for the forthcoming six months.

Thierry de l’ESCAILLE, ELO Secretary General, summarised the last six months of ELO activities and focused on the works ahead of the Secretariat. The most important point remains further implementation of the Green Deal, the reform of the CAP and Biodiversity Strategy. All those topics, as well as Farm to Fork Strategy, Zero Pollution and Carbon Farming, and many more were discussed in depth during the afternoon session of the ELO Policy Group. It gave also the opportunity to present national issues during the *tour de table*. All members underlined their interest and expectations towards the new Forestry Strategy, which was scheduled to be released by the end of July.

Last but not least, the General Assembly concluded on a more personal note with two major changes. ELO members warmly thanked Michael SALM zu SALM (Germany) for his years of service as he stepped down from his function of ELO Vice-president. All welcomed Max von ELVERFELDT (Germany) and wished him all the best as he was unanimously elected to take over that function. Moreover, Zeno PIATTI (Austria) took over the co-chairmanship of the Policy Group from prof. Emeritus Allan BUCKWELL (UK). ELO members warmly thanked prof. BUCKWELL for having shared his knowledge for so many years and wished all the best to the new Co-Chair.

The ELO Secretariat would like to thank the Team of the Chamber of Agriculture and Forestry of Slovenia and the Team of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food who took part in the debate during the GA. A special thanks goes to Vesna ČUČEK and Primož MAROLT who facilitated the organisation of the event.

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FAMIGRO AWARD 2021

The winner is a regenerative farm and entrepreneurship hub in Spain

As always, the Committee for the Famigro Award met with great excitement in April to review the applications received by members and non-members of the Young Friends of the Countryside. This year an exceptional number of applications were received and it became very clear that there were several excellent applications.

Marie-Christine SCHÖNBORN, YFCS President



© La Junquera

The Team of La Junquera Regenerative Farm

The Famigro Award itself was created to develop innovative solutions for the creation and conservation of local economic development and to foster business opportunities. Ideally, the winner also sets an example of good practice to other communities and is scalable and adaptable to different rural contexts. In addition, a long-term vision is of the utmost importance.

Having considered all criteria, Karl GROTENFELT, Thierry de L'ESCAILLE and the Young Friends of the Countryside are very happy to award the Famigro Award to LA JUNQUERA REGENERATIVE FARM AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP HUB in Spain by Alfonso Builduino CHICO DE GUZMAN. In addition, four Diplomas of Recognition were given to IN OVO, GUT WALTERSTEIG GbR, FLOURISH PRODUCE and LettUsGrow, closely following the winner's application.

LA JUNQUERA REGENERATIVE FARM AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP HUB's project area is the Finca La Junquera, a family-owned farm. There, the farm had been changed from conventional management to organic and regenerative farming practices. In addition, the project aims to bring in more rural entrepreneurs connected to the farm and to bring the village alive. Furthermore, it includes a local hub for sustainable farmers, entrepreneurs and experts in the area. The ultimate aim of the project is to connect young entrepreneurs and academics in the Spanish countryside for them to become innovators in the fields of regenerative agriculture and restoration. For example, with the Ecosystem Restoration


Camps, the project hosts volunteers to re-forest natural areas, hedges and borders of the farm. Overall, LA JUNQUERA REGENERATIVE FARM AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP HUB is seen by the Famigro Award Committee as a lighthouse project, setting an example to other farms not also in terms of entrepreneurship, but also in bringing life back to the countryside. The jury would like to congratulate Alfonso Builduino CHICO DE GUZMAN for this excellent project!

The Famigro Award Committee would like to briefly introduce the four winners of the Diploma of Recognition. FLOURISH PRODUCE by Calixta KILLANDER, based in England, UK, is a farm in Cambridgeshire. The project has seen an exceptional powerful re-shifting of strategy and an increase of product offering from vegetables to also include heritage grains, fruit and flowers. With its agroecological farming, the land is being regenerated based on principles such as soil health, agroforestry, direct market sales, resilience and education. GUT WALTERSTEIG GbR, based close to Munich, Germany, managed by Vollrad and Karl-Ludwig VON POSCHINGER, has succeeded in transforming an agricultural and forestry family business to agricultural game keeping with deer, the establishment of Christmas tree cultures as well as the recent founding of a new business branch, an event location. IN OVO, a Dutch project, founded by Wouter Sebastiaan BRUINS and Wil STUTTERHEIM, is a fast-growing business with a machine first in the poultry market. The machine attempts to gender type eggs, giv-

ing farmers the opportunity to only hatch females. LettUs GROW by Charly GUY, Jack FARMER and Ben CROWTHER, based in England, UK, aims to reduce the environmental impact of fresh product by using aeroponics technology for extremely efficient plant growth in order to reduce the environmental impact of fresh produce. The project, now being scaled up, sets an example for a repeatable and scalable vertical farm solution.

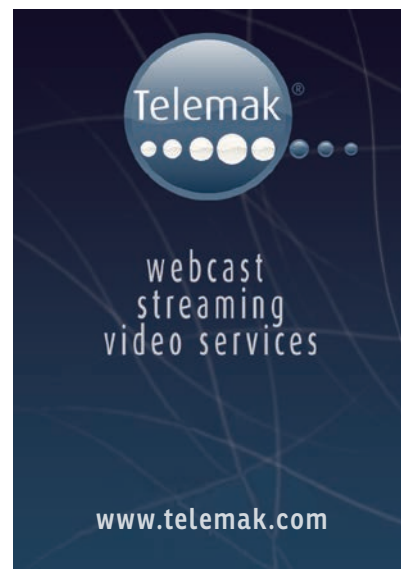
Overall, Famigro Award Committee has been overwhelmed by the number of excellent applications and we would like to thank to all the applicants for having applied for the award! Thank you for your trust and thank you for your work in drafting the applications! Last, but not least, the YFCS would like to thank to Karl GROTENFELT for making the Famigro Award possible - it is a huge privilege and we are extremely grateful. As Young Friends, we really encourage our members to not hesitate and to come up and discuss business ideas, as we all are facing great challenges in the countryside in Europe and can learn from each other and learn new ideas!

 <https://yfcs.eu/>

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Precautionary principle vs. Innovation principle

Civilisation has always strived for well-being and progress, and limiting risk is a fundamental part of that process. But what is the basis of progress? Innovation, of course! The two principles ought to support each other and work out a healthy balance. Denying the innovation principle and applying the precautionary principle to the point of excess will drive our society into decline. Combatting this should be a priority!

Daniel GUÉGUEN, Professor at the College of Europe

A quick scan through history is enough to show how, through the millennia and centuries, we have passed from savagery to barbarism, from cruelty to sensitivity. Brutal behaviour is still a recent phenomenon. Take motor racing, the 24-hour Le Mans in particular, where competitors would just keep speeding past the flaming car with its driver still inside. Fortunately, this no longer happens. The precautionary principle now extends to every area of social life: sport, work, food, health...but how far should it go?

A precautionary principle with constitutional status...

Enshrined by the Treaty of Lisbon in Article 191, the legal basis for EU environmental policy, the precautionary principle is defined as follows: absence of certainty due to lack of technical, scientific or economic information should not exclude the adoption of precautionary risk management measures in order to prevent potential harm to health or the environment. Although transversal in nature, the precautionary principle is explicitly mentioned in various pieces of EU legislation, e.g. the Biocides Regulation, the Regulation on Plant Protection Products and the General Food Law. The Court of Justice has been broadly favourable to the principle, and will not annul any precautionary measure unless there is a "manifest error" or "abuse of power".

By contrast, the innovation principle is not recognised in the EU treaties. According to Article 3 of the Lisbon Treaty, the EU "shall promote scientific and technological advance", while Article 173 provides that innovation policy should be promoted – both very vague formulations. The Commission's Better Regulation package recognises the innovation principle and encourages the Directorates-General to take it into account, but none of this is binding in any real sense.

The precautionary principle clearly has the upper hand in the legislative and regulatory architecture: it can be found in basic acts, delegated acts and comitology. Even though the Institutions are committed

to upholding it, its practical implementation remains largely at the discretion of the Commission services.

...and universally applied

In the Directorates-General for agriculture and food, the precautionary principle is applied universally. Here I refer not to DG AGRI, whose role has been wiped out, but rather to DG SANTE, DG ENV and DG CLIMA. All the sensitive policy areas – GMOs, New Breeding Techniques, pesticides, herbicides and other plant protection products – are now governed by the precautionary principle. But it gets worse. There is intense pressure to replace the principle with a new concept, one which shifts the burden of proving harmlessness onto the producer. This system is already partially applicable, most notably for endocrine disruptors where a derogation can be granted if "negligible exposure" is demonstrated.

Risk management raises the question of "zero risk". Does zero risk really exist? If it does, how do you measure it? Where is the limit of the precautionary principle, which may shift as methods of analysis are refined? If you pour a glass of blue paint into an Olympic swimming pool, it will turn up

in your analysis. By that logic, everything is a problem since there will always be traces of pesticides in something, and the precautionary principle could therefore be invoked to prevent the authorisation of any substance.

These days, innovation breeds suspicion!

We see it in the mistrust towards vaccines – even for Covid-19, which beggars belief. It is very clear that public opinion does not trust industry and scientific progress, even though our food has never been as safe and our medical treatments as effective. Indeed, average life expectancy in Europe has grown by 3 months every year for the past 60 years!

Although everyone accepts the need to move to a low-carbon economy, it must be pointed out that the Green Deal, Priority Number One for the von der LEYEN Commission, is based on the assumption that technology will stand still. The objective of net carbon neutrality by 2050 does not seem to take innovation into account. Worse still, it is ignored. In its proposals, the Commission refuses to consider the various innovative options in key sec-



Tihange nuclear power plant in Belgium



tors of the economy. By this I refer to GMOs and other New Breeding Techniques (NBTs), carbon sequestration, nuclear energy, plus a series of innovations being developed in research laboratories around the world.

In a scientific and technical sense, 2050 will be unrecognisable from today. We will be living in a whole other world, a new planetary paradigm where the concepts being discussed in 2021 will belong to ancient history...

Rebalancing the precautionary and innovation principles: a priority

I know very well that farmers and rural entrepreneurs have a strong grasp of their priorities. But in my view, it is essential to make legal recognition of the innovation principle a great European cause.

By “legal recognition”, I mean integrating the innovation principle into every draft EU

regulation and directive – and particularly into every aspect of the Green Deal. For very long-term goals (e.g. 2050), each basic act and related implementing measure must take account of the fact that technological innovation may require initial trajectories to be modified. This obviously applies to the Climate Package as well as the Taxonomy regulations.

There is no time like the present for such discussions, given that just a few weeks ago we saw the launch of the behemoth that is the Conference on the Future of Europe, during which the Institutions and Member States will try to agree on ways to improve EU governance. Their work has to be wrapped up by the time of the French Presidency (i.e. within 1 year), but unless I am mistaken, I have seen no indication at all that this Convention will address the innovation principle. They must be persuaded to add it to their agenda.

If we want to convince public opinion and our elected representatives of the importance of progress, agriculture and industry will have to make radical changes to their advocacy methods. Going it alone and speaking softly are out of the question. Taking a page from the NGO book, the various forces must be grouped jointly around a single campaign.

Every meeting with every civil servant, elected politician or decision-maker must include a reminder of how dangerous it is to privilege precaution while side-lining innovation. Business press, general press, social media: let's adopt the NGO model and use these levers of influence to maximum effect.

Conceptual disagreements are concealing the reality of ideological disputes. The fear is that these disputes will morph into full-on ideological warfare, unless we do something about it.



Policy recommendations to enhance Private Land Conservation

The LIFE+ project 'Land Is For Ever' combined European-wide surveys, workshops, interviews, webinars, conferences and desk research. This bottom-up approach has given us the chance to put insights and ideas from private landowners into concrete policy, ultimately strengthening private land conservation in Europe.

In this article we will present a look at the key takeaways, which were also presented during our online event on the 7th of June. A booklet and full report are available on the LIFE website <http://landisforever.eu/>

60% of the Natura 2000 network is owned by private landowners. Private land conservation is therefore an important tool to halt biodiversity loss in Europe. The broader the menu of private land conservation tools, the more likely a landowner will find an instrument fitting their individual needs. In addition to that, private landowners are most encouraged to engage in nature conservation by an organization or association they trust.

1. Land Trust

Typically, land trusts are independent, charitable corporations with a focus on nature conservation purposes and activities. Land trusts are funded by gifts from individuals, corporations and private foundations and/or by governmental grants and subsidies.

Land trusts can acquire and manage land and provide stewardship for conservation objectives. Land trusts can also acquire partial interests in land in cooperation with the landowner; these partial interests are typically in the form of conservation easements. In Europe the legal ownership, the stewardship and control over the property is often combined within a single organisation. By providing financial incentives and compensations to private landowners which could enable land trusts to offer collaborative services to landowners, the government can encourage more cooperation between land trusts and landowners to accomplish more and better conservation outcomes.

Financing land trust activities should be made possible within normal market conditions. To achieve this the payment for ecosystem services should further be developed.

2. Easements

A voluntary but legally binding agreement between a landowner and an entity (often called a land trust). The landowner relinquishes certain rights over the land for nature protection purposes [conservation outcomes], while maintaining the ownership and the use of the land in ways that do not conflict with the terms of the easement. For this the landowner gets compensation (tax relief, direct payment, etc.) for the lost development or production value of the land. The landowner retains the rights to use the land, produce on the land, sell it and pass it on to their heirs. Easement contracts are binding for present and future owners of the land, permanently or for the term agreed in the contract. The easement contract also describes the compensation for the landowner if a significant economic loss is expected.

Easements could be an excellent instrument to achieve the payment for ecosystem services and / or for conservation outcomes by compensating the private landowner for forfeiting their right on their land. It has been shown that easements are already legally possible in many EU Member States. However, it would be good to actively inform EU Member States about the opportunities asking for (small) adaptations in their nature conservation laws to fully implement the use of easements.

3. Conservation programs

The landowner enters a voluntary contract (for a limited period of time) with an organization or governmental agency to ensure that the property is used or managed for conservation purposes. Through the program agreements the landowner can receive support or a financial compensation for his conservation investments. This contract has a clear end.

Conservation programs are often not known by the wider public. Broader information campaigns could ensure a higher appreciation of the efforts taken by private landowners to conserve biodiversity. This would result in a broader, more intensive and more appreciated participation of private landowners.

Species conservation programmes are interesting for private landowners. Often these measures have a low impact on the estate but with some minor measures they can make the difference for the survival of certain species.

4. Land designation / OECMs

Private reserves are defined as land under private ownership that has been set aside for the protection of nature and its components through legal or other effective means for personal or public benefits e.g., natural water filter, game management, ... The landowner voluntarily submits (part of) the land as a private reserve and agrees on a long-term commitment to manage the land so as to maintain nature's values and benefits under this legal or administrative framework. This tool has significant potential to promote conservation on private land when landowners' benefits are directly linked to conservation or maintenance of wildlife.

Government entities must be able to guarantee the long-term recognition and support and allow the land manager flexibility if needed due to external factors.

By giving larger independence to the private land managers of private reserves combining conservation, economic and social challenges more private landowners would participate in this program.

5. Labels

Labels are important instruments for private landowners as it gives them the possibility to show their commitment to nature conservation. Labels also make it possible to reward private landowners for nature conservation.

In Europe the best-known label in the field of private land conservation is the Wildlife Estates Label. Wildlife Estates Label is a network of exemplary estates that voluntarily agreed to adhere to the philosophy of wildlife management and sustainable land use.

Other promising tools:

- Land Stewardship
- Conservation contracts
- Safe Harbor Agreements
- Land exchange for conservation
- Funding land acquisition for conservation purposes

Incentives and compensation mechanisms for private landowners

Each tool should offer the possibility to cover for potential financial or land value loss by financial support or economic opportunities. Many of the individual private landowners tend towards payments for ecosystem services, with a preference for annual payments and tax benefits. Payment for ecosystem services deliver services towards society with an economic return towards the private landowner. Annual payments are easily includable in existing business models. Private landowners tend more to step in conservation programs when there is an annual fee related to it, even if the annual fee is on the long-term not higher than the one-off payment.

Long-term annual payments are however not common at all for conservation agreements yet. To make sure the necessary budget remains available for the annual payment of ecosystem services, separate markets should be developed.

Financial compensation mechanisms

- Direct payments from government (based on result/based on implemented measures, cost compensation/economic loss compensation)
- Direct payment from NGO (grant, funds)
- Tax benefits (income tax, property tax, inheritance tax)
- Label or certification for market access

Although financial incentives are necessary, payments alone are likely to be insufficient however to incentivize high levels of participation in conservation agreement programs. If the owner is aware of the intrinsic value they derive from the presence of high value biodiversity they will be more willing and motivated to participate. It has also been proven that conservation programs on only a small area can be more attractive for a landowner to engage in case of non-monetary agreements than the bigger areas because of lower costs and less profit loss.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The following core issues should be taken care of when further developing private land conservation tools:

- The set of tools offered should respect the variety of private landowners and be offered on a voluntary basis
- Engagement in a conservation programs should result in public recognition
- Clear and transparent communication on the available tools is crucial.
- The tool should help to make conservation an economically feasible land use
- Tools should offer a flexibility in case of threats undermining the values of the land e.g. climate extremity or diseases or aspects that are not under the control of the landowner
- Two-way knowledge exchange in agreeing on a contract is critical to encourage trust and cooperation
- Support in insurance and liability of the private owner when opening the land for public is required
- Application and monitoring requirements should be equal and feasible for individual owners and NGO's. Tools should respect the economic value of the land
- Tools and their compensation mechanisms should be organized in a framework which the landowner can trust on the long term
- The "permanent" nature of conservation programs is in many cases a concern for landowners if only a one-off compensation can be offered.

Stakeholder organisations supporting private land conservation

From this research, private landowner organisations seem to be the most trusted partners. But also governments are doing well. Landowners also see room for improvement in relations with environmental, non-governmental organizations in most countries if this cooperation can be organized in a clear and transparent framework.

A recognized land trust or stewardship organization was found to be an effective institution to support this. A land trust secures the conservation value of land in the long-term, with respect to the reality of the individual private landowner. Land trust organizations manage the land themselves or outsource the management to an organization or individual manager who has shown his/her ability to manage land according to certain conservation criteria. The conservation management can include protection of habitat and species, as well as ensuring that the land remains for (extensive) farming, forestry, certain ecosystem values or outdoor recreational use with respect for the nature values. Most land trusts are independent, private corporations with a focus on conservation activities or a department of a larger organization whose missions extend beyond conservation.

What should be the role of supporting organisations

- **Provide the legal framework**

Legal frameworks are key to ensure long term perspectives. The EU Biodiversity Strategy has a long-term commitment. Conservation tools and incentives need to contribute to this perspective, which is beneficial for nature, for the landowners, for the trust in partnerships and to justify the use of public money for these conservation investments.

- **Communicate on the concerns on higher levels**

Climate change, strict regulations and high taxation are important challenges to tackle for private landowners.

- **Assure the landowner trust in safeguarding a certain autonomy**

A certain level of autonomy is a fundamental value of landowners that influences their willingness to engage in conservation agreements or programs.

- **Assure knowledge and expertise exchange**

A two-way knowledge exchange is critical to encourage trust and cooperation to build a good working relationship.

- **Support in the program implementation**

Supporting organizations should make sure that equal opportunities are given to private landowners and conservation organizations for equal investments and to build bridges for trust and cooperation with conservation organizations. Finding common ground is an essential step in this process we have set with this project, a cooperation between private landowners and nature conservation NGOs leads to a win-win situation.

Conclusion

Although there is great variety amongst active individual landowners, their management goals are most often long-term, as sustainable nature conservation should be. With a clear and transparent structure, they can act as most efficient stakeholders in conservation initiatives and complement the conservation organizations' approach, which often depends on a short-term political system.

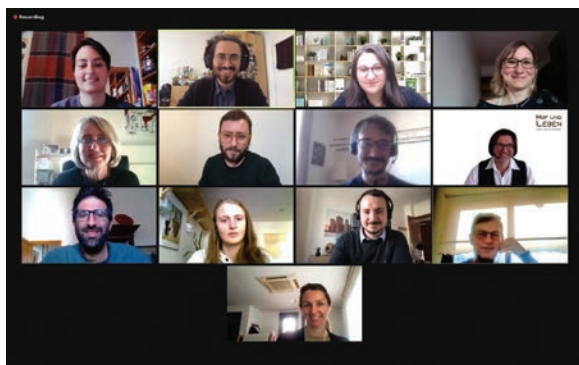
Life after Life

It has become clear that under the broad definition of 'private land conservation (PLC) tools', many governance arrangements emerge depending on contingents settings, property laws, the role of environmental NGOs and the implementation (or lack) of public policies and incentive mechanisms for the promotion of the tools. These factors should be taken further into consideration within a multi-level governance perspective when discussing the potential role of voluntary mechanisms for nature conservation.

A follow-up project, Life ENPLC (European Networks for Private Land Conservation), has started streamlining the efforts regarding PLC of the existing networks of landowners and conservation organisations by creating a joint PLC platform/secretariat of the two networks (the "Conservation Landowners Coalition"). By bringing together the two most important communities in private land conservation within a common structure it will contribute directly to developing the framework for recognizing and increasing the contribution of PLC to the EU Biodiversity target and will enable the transfer of knowledge between nature NGO and private landowners in both directions. The knowledge and network gained in the projects life Land Is For Ever offers a strong basis to continue on.

The project 'Land Is For Ever' has received funding from the LIFE Programme of the European Union under the grant agreement LIFE17PREBE001.





AGRIWATER project - state of play

Marie-Christine BERGER, ELO

The AGRIWATER project partners met on March 25, 2021 for the 2nd transnational meeting (TNM). As with the kick-off meeting in December, the TNM was held entirely online due to travel restrictions across the EU.

At the start of the meeting after a short welcome by the University of Florence, the project coordinator Asociace Soukromého Zemědělství (ASZ) updated all the partners on the progress of the project. A presentation was given on the progress of Intellectual Output (IO) 1, which comprises the National Reports of each participating country and the resulting summary report on the current state of droughts across Europe. It is aimed for the summary report to be finalised by the end of May.

This was followed by a workshop on Output 2, where the criteria for the collection of best practice examples in each participating country was discussed. Each partner explained how they would go about collecting the relevant information.

For the rest of the project, things continue to run smoothly. The next transnational meeting will hopefully be held in-person, if possible, this October in Germany. If you would like to find out more about the project, we invite you to follow us and check out our website.

<https://agriwater.eu/>

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@AGRIWATER_



Project no: 2020-1-CZ01-KA204-078212



Promoting the delivery of Agri-Environmental Climate Public Goods

Marie-Christine BERGER, ELO

The CONSOLE project focuses on promoting the delivery of Agri-Environmental Climate Public Goods (AECPGs) by agriculture and forestry through the development of improving contractual solutions between the public administration (at different scales) and the farmers. The CONSOLE multi-actor and multidisciplinary team brings together 24 partners in 13 countries, covering a range of representations from farmer organisations, regional administrations, consultancy companies, research institutions and water and forest management bodies.

The CONSOLE project partners met on March 17 and March 19 for the 5th project meeting which was held virtually. As with the previous meeting it was held virtually, due to the ongoing travel restrictions across the EU. Members from the advisory board joined as well. The meeting provided an opportunity for partners to discuss the progress of the project. The advances in modelling (WP4) and the first feedback from testing, as well as the surveys (WP3) were discussed. A 6-month extension was agreed to, as this will help with catching up on delays and will allow for more distributed interaction with stakeholders.

ELO is participating to the codesign of research, and is Work Package Leader for dissemination and outreach. It is expected that the research, outcomes and work carried out by the project will improve policy design towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular through environmental policies and the post-2020 CAP.

www.console-project.eu

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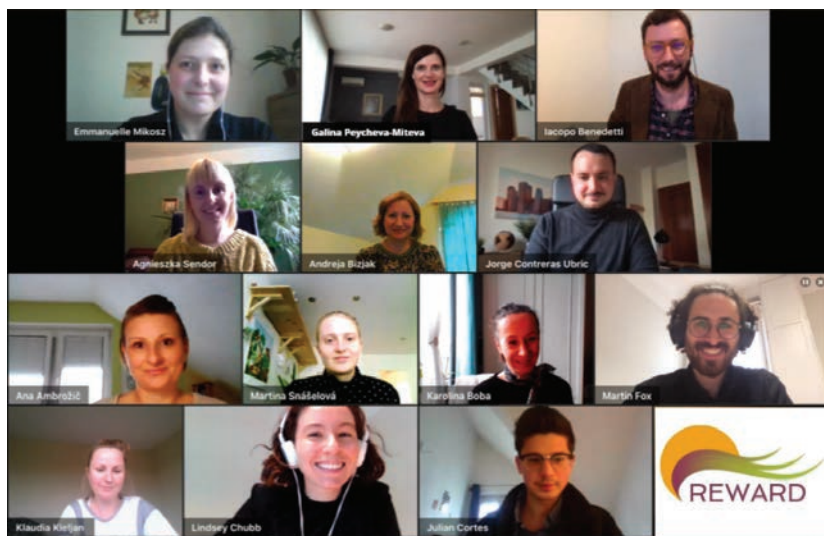
This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement no. 817949.



Learnings from the finalised REWARD project

On April 14 the REWARD consortium held its virtual final conference where key stakeholders showcased the project's free online training platform, presented case studies covering relevant women-led entrepreneurial activities in rural Europe and discussed the socio-economic situation of rural women and their experiences in the EU.

Julian CORTES, ELO



The conference began with an introduction from Emmanuelle MIKOSZ (ELO), who introduced the project partners and presented the results from an audience questionnaire, which provided context regarding the audience's prior knowledge, experiences and interests in the topic.

Iacopo BENEDETTI (OnProjects) followed, presenting the project's objectives, content and results. He provided a tour of the online training platform, covering the socio-economic situation of rural women in Europe, case studies of women-led entrepreneurial activities linking multifunctional farming and cultural heritage, and training modules providing tools and knowledge needed to start and manage one's business.

Agnieszka SENDOR (Pstrąg Ojcowski) shared her experience of restoring sustainable trout farming with her mother in Poland's Ojcowski National Park. Their farming practices, based on traditional methods of production that embody the region's cultural heritage has led Agnieszka and her mother to receive various awards including the European Innovation Award for Women farmers.

Slovenian rural entrepreneur Andreja BIZJAK (Eco house Na Razpotju) presented next, sharing her experiences living and working in the Logar Valley. She has been working in

tourism, catering and wellness services for over 20 years. Her work is founded on preserving her region's cultural heritage. Sustainable living, care for the environment and local traditions drive her entrepreneurial activities and rural development in her region.

Christiane LAMBERT, President of the Fédération nationale des syndicats d'exploitants agricoles (FNSEA) and of COPA, discussed the challenges faced by the agricultural sector and the urgent need for women farmers to be supported. She brought to light the underrepresentation of female farmers and the need to increase the number of professional opportunities for young women in different rural sectors. She highlighted the fact that rural women offer a unique vision and perspective of rural activities, especially in terms of commercialisation, diversity of rural activities and hospitality; all of which are essential to rural development. For women to succeed in such projects, barriers of entry such as disproportionate access to public services and gender inequalities must be addressed. The CAP, Farm to Fork Strategy and New Green Deal offer an opportunity for enlarging the potential for women to engage in diverse activities in the rural sector.

Galina PEYCHEVA-MITEVA from the Bulgarian Landowners Association highlighted the importance of women in developing mul-

tifunctional farming activities. She identified regenerative farming as a practice for a more sustainable future. In order to be successful in such practices, studies and models of the land need to be considered. Women entrepreneurs can work to build resilient farms and help rural communities by conducting farm research and building peer-to-peer knowledge exchange networks. She highlighted the crucial need for supporting rural women entrepreneurs in the development and expansion of sustainable agricultural practices.

Following the presentations from the speakers, a panel discussion was held to discuss the ways in which women in rural areas can truly be reached and how to increase the number of women-led entrepreneurial activities in the rural sector. Policymaking was identified as a key factor. Increasing agricultural policies that recognise the role of women in the rural sector are essential. In order to sustain and increase women-led entrepreneurial activities and to achieve gender balance and equality, the panel agreed that cooperation and support of women on all levels of society and politics is required.

<https://reward-erasmus.eu>

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How to balance forestry and biodiversity conservation

A view across Europe

FRANK KRUMM, ANDREAS SCHUCK, ANDREAS RIGLING
WSL, EFI
ISBN 978-3-905621-62-4



Forests cover about a third of the European land area and provide a multitude of ecosystem services.

They are subject to constant change and increasing demands with respect to the ecosystem services they provide. As well as provision for timber, non-timber forest goods (e.g. berries and mushrooms), clean water, carbon sequestration, and protection against natural

disasters, there is increasing emphasis being placed on conservation and promotion of biodiversity within forests. However, the state of biodiversity in European forests varies widely. Because of the different biogeographical, sociocultural, political, and climatic conditions at small scales, there is a wide variety of situations, approaches, and legacies across the continents.

This book strives to show the challenges that forest managers are faced with to fulfil the societal demands with regard to forests, and especially to integrate the promotion of biodiversity.

Diary dates

20 - 23 July, Prague (CZ), virtual event

16th Congress of the European Association of Agricultural Economists

www.eaae2021.org

21 - 26 August, Gornja Radgona (SI)

Agra Trade fair for agricultural products and food: presentation of the Water2Return project - <https://water2return.eu>

8 - 10 September, Scotland

Wildlife Estates Plenary Session - www.wildlife-estates.eu

30 September, Budapest (HU)

Protecting small fauna in fields and meadows: Best practice and management efforts in Europe – a session host during the World of Hunting and Nature Exhibition 2021; organized by ELO, CIC and FFS - www.elo.org



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