RESEARCH PROJECT

EELAP

In progress EELAP | 31/05/2025 → 30/04/2028

Enriching European landscapes with agroecological practices

Contact our coordinator

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Summary

European agriculture is facing major challenges involving the protection of natural resources (air, soil, water), preserving biodiversity, mitigating and adapting to climate change, while providing healthy and nutritious food for a growing population. All of this has to be realized on a limited area of agricultural and forest land, with growing pressures from urbanisation. There have been intense discussions over priorities in the Green Deal, Farm to Fork Strategy etc., and recent moves to "simplification" of the CAP have caused some legislation to be abandoned before the launch of consultations (e.g. the framework for Sustainable Food Systems), or after trialogue (e.g. the Sustainable Use Regulation), or be passed by very narrow margins (e.g. the Nature Restoration Regulation). Yet there is agreement on the **need for sustainable solutions and multifunctional landscapes**. **Agroecological practices** can help resolve conflicting goals. They present both **climate mitigation** and **climate-adaptation solutions** and fit will with plans for a voluntary carbon removals certification framework.

The EELAP project will create and extend **multi stakeholder living labs** in **five EU countries** (DE, HU, SL, SK, IE) and includes **policy and modelling input** from FR and CH. Living labs will be in regions characterised by arable (**crop production**) or grassland (**livestock production**), at different spatial scales and with different types of local and regional governance structures. EELAP will **promote the transition to agroecology**, focusing on **long-term practices** such as agroforestry. It will close knowledge gaps and explore how agroecology can be integrated in the cultural landscape through spatial planning and management. Innovative solutions will be explored through **biophysical modelling focused on farms in living labs**. The main objectives and work packages within EELAP are:

WP1 Describe the knowledge of and support agroecological practices in existing agricultural, forestry, climate and energy policies of participating Member States and regions and propose new policies and public/private incentives for improved integration of agroecological principles into regional and national agricultural, forestry and climate policies

WP2 Establish new or repurposed Living Labs of farmers, foresters, market-partners, municipalities, local governments and NGOs as mutual learning networks for improved agroecology knowledge transfer and capacity building

WP3 Identify business-models and value-chains for agroecological practices, taking into account their socio-economic benefits at a regional level

WP4 Assess (improved) spatial planning tools and approaches to the quantification of environmental benefits

WP5 Upscale agroecological practices and tools from the parcel and farm scale to landscapes and to integrate agroecological principles in regional development strategies.

WP6 Project management

The EELAP project will address and involve all relevant stakeholders along the entire agrifood value chains, as well as those who are crucial for long term decisions on the landscape level, e.g. CAP administrative bodies and the nature conservation sector. By **addressing the socioeconomic effects of agroecological practices**, we will provide a **collaboratively developed approach** to incorporate environmental and social benefits into the business models of farmers and groups of landowners.

Publications

Interview with project coordinator Rūta Žulpaitė

Top image: Livestock production. Source: Hes Mundt on Unsplash

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