



Policy brief

# How Living Labs and Research Infrastructures can support the Agroecology Transition in Europe – Key messages of the final conference

**Key messages**

- Long-term political and financial investments are vital at local, regional, national, and European level to foster research that provides evidence on the effectiveness of agroecology in different dimensions.
- A comprehensive approach is required to enhance our understanding of the benefits and challenges of transitioning to agroecology. This involves fostering innovation through collaborative efforts aimed at minimizing and sharing the risks associated with the transition.
- The adoption of open innovation methodologies, such as living labs and research infrastructures, which encourage co-creation in real-life settings with the active participation of all relevant stakeholders, is key to achieving long term impact.
- The European Partnership on Agroecology Living Labs and Research Infrastructures, launching in early 2024 under Horizon Europe aims to accelerate the agroecology transition across Europe by supporting a network of living labs and research infrastructures.
- Engaging policy-makers and stakeholders in a consistent dialogue is indispensable to facilitate the transition.



Source: FiBl, Lisa Haller



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## Challenges and policy context

Today, our agricultural and food systems are facing multiple challenges, such as climate change, loss of biodiversity, dwindling resources, degradation of soil and water quality. Agroecology can strengthen the sustainability and resilience of farming systems and thus contribute to addressing these challenges.

The pivotal role of agroecology in supporting key European policies, such as the Green Deal, is widely recognised by the European Institutions.

However, for agroecology transition we need a real change of paradigm in science as well as in practices for a large number of farmers in Europe.

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*We need strong incentives to create policies and regulations that are coherent and support sustainable and resilient agri-food systems – in terms of legislation, funding and other types of support, at the local, regional, national and European levels, including the Common Agricultural Policy.*

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## Conclusions

We urgently need resilient and sustainable agri-food systems. The ALL-Ready and AE4EU (Agroecology for Europe, the sister CSA project of ALL-Ready) projects have taken the initial steps towards facilitating this essential transition. The increasing prominence of Agroecology on the political agenda is an important step in achieving the Green Deal and in particular the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies. The adoption of open innovation methodologies, such as living labs, which encourage co-creation in real-life settings with the active participation of all relevant stakeholders, is key to achieving long term impact.

## Policy recommendations

- Increased funding is needed for research in agroecology ([Committee of the Regions \(CDR\) agroecology report](#)), this will provide evidence on the effectiveness of agroecology in different dimensions.
- Long-term investment is vital, while the upcoming future European partnership on agroecology with its 7-10 year time-frame is an excellent step, undoubtedly it will only be start. Long term political and financial investments are needed at local, regional, national and European levels.
- Eco-schemes are a promising tool and some of them promote agroecological practices. However, a more progressive approach is required, — one that goes beyond mere conditionality.
- A comprehensive approach is needed, that enhances the understanding of the benefits and challenges of an agroecology transition. This involves fostering innovation through collaborative efforts aimed at minimizing and sharing the risks associated with the transition.
- We need an improved accessibility and dissemination of knowledge related to agroecology, reinforcing the Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS). To ensure progress, a robust framework and monitoring of data must be established.
- A consistent engagement and dialogue with policy-makers and stakeholders is indispensable to facilitate agroecology transition.

## Further information

Press release of the conference: <https://www.all-ready-project.eu/communication/news-events/news/how-living-labs-and-research-infrastructures-can-support-the-agroecology-transition-in-europe-insights-from-two-european-projects-all-ready-and-ae4eu.html>

Recordings of the conference: <https://www.all-ready-project.eu/communication/news-events/news/recordings-of-the-final-conference.html>

Committee of the Regions (CDR) agroecology report: <https://cor.europa.eu/en/our-work/Pages/OpinionTimeline.aspx?opId=CDR-3137-2020>

European Partnership: [https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/research-area/agriculture-forestry-and-rural-areas/ecological-approaches-and-organic-farming/partnership-agroecology\\_en](https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/research-area/agriculture-forestry-and-rural-areas/ecological-approaches-and-organic-farming/partnership-agroecology_en)  
<https://www.ae4eu.eu/>

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**About ALL-Ready:** ALL-Ready is a Coordination and Support Action (CSA) funded by the European Commission (EC) with the aim of preparing a framework for a future European network of Living Labs (LL) and Research Infrastructures (IR) that will enable the transition towards agroecology throughout Europe. Based on the premise that agroecology can strengthen the sustainability and resilience of farming systems, the project will contribute to addressing the multiple challenges that they are facing today including climate change, loss of biodiversity, dwindling resources, degradation of soil and water quality.

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**Project website:** [www.all-ready-project.eu](http://www.all-ready-project.eu)

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