

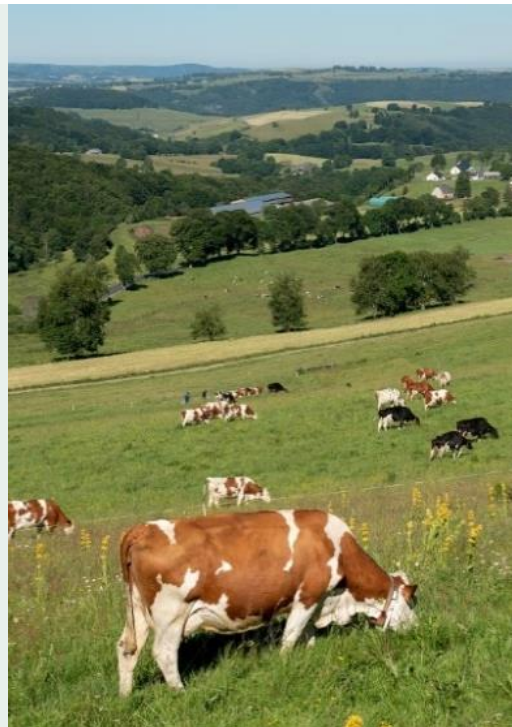
Fact Sheet for Agroecology Organizations & policy-makers

Criteria for becoming a member of a European Network of Living Labs and Research Infrastructures for Agroecology Transition

Summary

- ALL-Ready is laying the grounds for a European network of Living Labs (LLs) and Research Infrastructures (RIs). The network will facilitate and strengthen the transition towards agroecology throughout Europe.
- To better understand the boundaries of such a network, we built a set of inclusion criteria. These include:
 - Being involved in activities that have a significant impact on the sustainability and resilience of the production system through the use of agroecological methods;
 - Being involved in LLs and RIs whose capacities can accelerate the spread of agroecology.

We have created a [questionnaire](#) which allows organizations and groups to understand where their activities are in relation to the agroecology transition, and to clarify why it may be interesting for them to become part of the network.



Source: INRAE

Problem

In the ALL-Ready project, we are interested in connecting with groups and organisations involved in the agroecology transition, and whose activities correspond to the 'living lab' or 'research infrastructure' model. However, we acknowledge that not everyone involved in these activities will recognize such labels or be aware of own capacities to be part of such network. This might result in a reduced participation of initiatives in the network.

Solution

In order to recognize potential members of the network regardless of how they themselves define their activities, we:

- considered all aspects of the food system (including production, processing, distribution, consumption);
- developed criteria focusing on the activities and values of the organisations, rather than their descriptions or histories.

This ensures that all relevant organisations are included in the network, even if they do not identify themselves as living labs or research infrastructures.

To help organisations understand whether they may be interested in taking part in the network, we prepared a [questionnaire](#). This questionnaire allows an organisation or group to self-evaluate how involved they are in agroecology, and which of their activities may be significantly strengthened and scaled-up within a network of living labs and research infrastructures.

In general, relevant organisations would include:

- those already actively involved in practicing or researching sustainable and resilient agriculture, for which the framework of agroecology helps gathering their diversity;
- those whose involvement in the agroecology transition could be accelerated by their participation to the network;
- those whose involvement in the network will be beneficial to other network members, thereby accelerating the overall agroecology transition.

Benefits

The questionnaire and defined criteria can further be used in order to:

- enhance understanding of which aspects of the agroecology transition are prioritised by existing actors, and which need further attention to achieve a holistic development;
- evaluate the progress of the transition and of the network (specifically by repeated surveys of network members to highlight areas which require further support);
- identify gaps in the network which could be filled by the inclusion of specific additional actors.

The European Network of Living Labs and Research Infrastructures enables agroecology transition

Main results

The criteria and indicators are divided into the following categories:



Approach/Governance: support of co-creation of innovation and knowledge.



Objectives/Vision: promotion of resilience, sustainability and diversity.



Principles: support of climate change and environmental adaptation of agricultural practices and promotion of synergies between ecosystem functions.



Activities: the organisation promotes efficiency in the use of natural resources and is involved in responsible management and use of natural resources.



Values and "living values": the organisation is involved in creating circular and solidarity economies and is focused on values of social and ecological justice.

Practical recommendations

The criteria can support initiatives to better understand their contribution to agroecology transition and identify their interest in being part of the network. At the same time, when using it regularly, it gives an overview of the progress of agroecology transition. The use of clear criteria to identify initiatives relevant for the agroecology transition, should be at the center for the establishment of a network of living labs and research infrastructures. These criteria also feed into the European R&I partnership on agroecology living labs and research infrastructures.

Further information

ALL-READY DELIVERABLES

- The ALL-Ready project deliverables can be found here: <https://www.all-ready-project.eu/communication/deliverables.html> (after the embargo period)

FURTHER READING

- CIDSE. 2018. The principles of Agroecology. Towards just, resilient and sustainable food systems. Brussels.
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- HLPE. 2019. Agroecological and other innovative approaches for sustainable agriculture and food systems that enhance food security and nutrition. A report by the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the Committee on World Food Security, Rome.
- McPhee, C., Bancarz, M., Mambrini-Doudet, M., Chrétien, F., Huyghe, C., Gracia-Garza, J. 2021. The Defining Characteristics of Agroecosystem Living Labs, *Sustainability* 13(4), 1718.
- The Agroecology Criteria Tool. 2020. <https://www.agroecology-pool.org/methodology/>



Source: INRAE



Source: ÖMKI

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 (RI) 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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