



Transforming Landscapes at Landscape2021

Berlin, 20-22 September 2021

AGROMIX and MIXED - two €7m EU-funded Horizon 2020 projects – ran two fully-booked sessions on ‘Mixing crops, livestock and trees in farms and landscapes for people and planet’ at the Landscape2021 online conference on ‘Diversity for Sustainable and Resilient Agriculture’, hosted by the Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research (ZALF), funded by the German Research Foundation. Each 1.5-hour session had four speakers, and were followed by in-depth discussion. The first session was chaired by MIXED (Francesco Accatino from INRAE, France) and the second session by AGROMIX (Ulrich Schmutz from Coventry University, UK).

Presentations were given by the two project coordinators - Tommy Dalgaard from Aarhus University (Denmark) on behalf of MIXED, and Sara Burbi from Coventry University (UK) on behalf of AGROMIX, sharing their projects’ first preliminary results. Scientists from the project’s wider network also participated – including from outside Europe – sharing their research on agroforestry and mixed farming from Columbia and Tunisia, contrasting the European examples from France, Switzerland, Spain, and the UK.

Key issues discussed included how to ensure meaningful farmer participation, and how to make mixed farming and agroforestry the most economically smart agricultural model. Landscape-based metrics to assess ‘livestock carrying capacities’ and to integrate free-range sheep and cattle into intensive apple, almond and olive orchards were also discussed, as well as the long-term impact of intercropping on soil microbial communities under tree production (almond trees in the case of Spain). Challenges explored include how to balance potential short-term economic loss with long-term environmental and economic gain, the social responsibility of researchers, and how to make the most of increasing digitalisation.

The discussion expanded in the final session, reflecting on the negative impact of current European food consumption trends on landscapes worldwide. Certainly, both projects will participate in Landscape2024 with further results to increase the understanding of mixed farming and agroforestry both amongst scientists and practitioners. Details of the sessions can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

Landscape2021 brought together more than 400 participants from across the world, sharing experiences and ideas on how to achieve sustainable and resilient land use practices. Plenary sessions addressed issues such as the concept of resilience – which is still under debate due to the difficulties in carrying out tangible assessments of a system's resilience. This is particularly relevant to complex systems such as mixed farming and agroforestry, where multiple elements interact and work in synergy to benefit landscapes and communities. Speakers also discussed the implementation of the European Commission's Green Deal and the targets for biodiversity, organic farming, carbon farming, and agroforestry. Whilst the conference was originally planned for researchers, it also integrated farmers and policymakers.





The closing plenary of Landscape2021 recognised that we are gathering momentum for transformative change, for a transition towards diversification - not only of our physical landscape, but of the diversification of research as well, where all relevant actors are exchange experiences and ideas, and where we are brave enough to engage in new ways to do research. There was consensus that there is little evidence left to support monoculture systems. Now, the challenge is to upscale diversified farming, and not limit it to small-scale systems. Climate impacts are ever present and trade-offs are inevitable, but now more than ever we must come together from all disciplines – from both natural and social sciences - and from all backgrounds, joining forces to turn our vision of landscapes of the future into a reality.

For more information on AGROMIX events, [see here](#).

About AGROMIX

Coordinated by Coventry University, AGROMIX project aims to drive the transition towards resilient farming, efficient land use management, and more sustainable agricultural value chains in Europe. Funded by the Horizon 2020 European Union's Research and Innovation Programme, the project brings together 28 partners from 14 countries that will explore multi-actor co-design methods to promote and implement mixed farming and agroforestry practices across Europe.

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