



## World Café Session Summary

### AGROMIX Policy Summit: Agroforestry for the Future of European Agriculture

Brussels, 17 April 2024

One of the highlights of the AGROMIX Policy Summit: Agroforestry for the Future of European Agriculture was the World Café sessions, in which participants broke out into teams to discuss possible solutions to the challenges facing the wider adoption of agroforestry policies at an EU level.

Five topics were tabled for these discussions:

- 1. Increase and streamline funding and economic incentives, both within and outside of the CAP**
- 2. Develop training resources, improve education & access to research**
- 3. Improve and condense the many definitions, statistics & tools used within agroforestry and mixed farming**
- 4. Improve policy coherence across interconnected policy objectives and strategies at EU level**
- 5. Develop diverse value chains for AF/MF products & increase their visibility and access**

Summaries of the discussions held around these topics can be found below:

#### **Increase and streamline funding and economic incentives, both within and outside of the CAP**

- Funding is too low;
- It's a complex issue as agroforestry and mixed farming are context-dependent, therefore funding could take different forms depending on the context;
- Before talking about funding, we need strong policies that support agroforestry and mixed farming. We need a bold policy dedicated to agroforestry and mixed farming that puts farmers at the centre with a landscape approach. Funding will then be a tool to achieve the objectives set in that policy;
- The current CAP is failing at the ground level: There is a lack of flexibility and too much administrative/bureaucratic burden. The current CAP is not adapted for mix models and small-scale models. The current measures in the CAP are not adequate for those models, which





ultimately has a bad impact on the economic value of those type of farms and models (as they are not well supported/retributed);

- There are alternative ways to financially support agroforestry and mixed farming, such as carbon credit. But, it could lead to the implementation of a limited number of tree species (the ones that would get the most return from the carbon credit), while, in reality, it's considered that we need more diverse agroforestry and mixed farming systems.
- Not directly related to funding, but training has been expressed in that group as a key issue. Training for farmers should be free of charge and research should integrate a more bottom-up approach, starting from farmer's needs.

### **Develop training resources, improve education & access to research**

- There is a lack of awareness about agroforestry and mixed farming at country level. More should be done, from a bottom-up and a top-down perspective. Consumers should also be informed about agroforestry and mixed farming produce.
- There already exist EU mechanisms that could support agroforestry and mixed farming, such as the AKIS and the EU innovation partnership.
- Agroforestry and mixed farming should also be better taught and promoted in farming schools. Methods such as farmer-to-farmer approaches, co-development and exchange of knowledge should be promoted. Traditional farming should be taught as agroforestry and mixed farming are strongly related to it. But the current CAP does not sufficiently support traditional farming.
- To promote agroforestry and mixed farming, pilot farms should be presented and promoted. The creation of a network of agroforestry and mixed farming initiatives seems important. This should be promoted through a recognized website. It could promote online training and be a knowledge hub.
- There are also (digital) tools that can help implement agroforestry and mixed farming.
- The creation of dedicated mechanisms/frameworks to support and facilitate farmer-to-farmer knowledge exchange is highly important.

### **Improve and condense the many definitions, statistics & tools used within agroforestry and mixed farming**





- Agroforestry should be defined as a system approach: “Agroforestry consists of agriculture activities with trees.” As agroforestry and agroecology are interlinked, those agriculture activities are related to agroecology, food sovereignty approach, and organic systems. But it should not be exclusive, as farmers might be in transition towards those activities.
- An alternative approach to define agroforestry is to start from what it’s not. It would help to identify borders around the definition. It’s not a forest, it’s not an intensive orchard, etc. It would allow us to develop pathways for those ‘excluded systems’ towards agroforestry and agroecology.
- Regarding statistics, there is some data available. Nevertheless, the idea of developing a specific ‘EU Agroforestry and Mixed Farming Mission’, as the EU Soil Mission was raised. It would help monitoring agroforestry and mixed farming.

### **Improve policy coherence across interconnected policy objectives and strategies at EU level**

- Clear and overarching targets are fundamental. Principles approaches are more important than definitions.
- Climate change should be the focus point/main driver to harmonise policies together.
- Farmers’ voices should be better included in policy processes, specifically young farmers and small-scale farmers. Policies should be developed around their needs to develop agroforestry and agroecology.
- Foresters should also be included in the discussions.
- Specific *Agroforestry Strategy* should be developed and implemented at national level. Agroecology should be embedded in those national strategies.
- Communication and collaboration amongst various EU departments and institutions should be reinforced, with a dedicated budget that would work on developing the best framework for these communication and collaboration.

### **Develop diverse value chains for AF/MF products & increase their visibility and access**

- It’s complicated to develop a specific value chain as there are a few products that come from agroforestry. Moreover, there is little consumer’s awareness regarding this type of product.
- Nevertheless, there is a need for policy and finance support to develop a specific value chain. It means, in part, developing and promoting innovation at the farm level, supporting public-private



partnership, and collaboration amongst small scale farmers to come together to market their produce.

- Consumers must get aware of agroforestry and mixed farming produce, and their benefits.
- MArketing should be controlled as there are produce that are promoted as agroforestry, local, etc but are not (greenwashing).
- There is an open-question of: how to market complex systems? Should we consider a new label?
- There are also types of incentive (carbon credit) that could also be considered to create value chains and promote agroforestry and mixed farming produce.