



Report on Synergies in Resilience Research

Deliverable D7.3

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Deliverable lead	Coventry University (CU)
Author(s)	Sara Burbi, Rosemary Venn, Josep Crous-Duran
Contact	sara.burbi@coventry.ac.uk
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¹ R=Document, report; DEM=Demonstrator, pilot, prototype; DEC=website, patent filings, videos, etc.; OTHER=other

² PU=Public, CO=Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services), CI=Classified



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1 Executive Summary

This document is a report on the activities carried out by AGROMIX as part of their impact strategy, which aims at creating connections and links with a large number of stakeholders across European countries and potentially beyond that. The specific focus of this report is on events in collaboration with other projects and initiatives relevant to advancing knowledge and understanding of climate resilient agricultural systems and land uses.

The report features information on two joint events that AGROMIX hosted and organised with the two other projects funded under the same call of the European Commission Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, STARGATE and MIXED. Additionally, the report also includes information on events AGROMIX participated in which contributed to bridging the gap between science and practice. These were organised by highly relevant initiatives, i.e., EIP-AGRI seminars, the New Bauhaus Festival, and other European projects. Social media was also used to establish contact and interactions with 29 relevant projects and networks.

Further interactions and joint events are envisaged to take place in the coming two years. A third joint event is planned for December 2022, hosted by MIXED, and discussions have taken place between the three projects to identify additional opportunities to build upon the complementarities and synergies identified over the past two years, e.g., joint newsletter issues, joint EIP-AGRI articles, joint sessions or workshops at international conferences. Finally, AGROMIX and MIXED are also considering the possibility of organizing their respective end-of-project conferences close in time. Both events are envisaged to take place in Brussels in 2024, therefore, close communication between the two projects is expected in preparation for their final conferences. Despite possible barriers to interaction and, more specifically, engagement with farmers, AGROMIX remains committed to make the best out of online tools, social media, and any other means of dissemination that will strengthen existing links and collaborations, and build new ones.



2 Expected impact

Deliverable 7.3 is linked to Task 7.3 ‘Synergies in resilience research’ that is part of Work Package 7: Communication, Dissemination and Exploitation (WP7). The aim of the task is to explore potential synergies between AGROMIX and the two other projects funded under the same H2020 call LC-SFS-19-2018-2019 [Part A] and [Part B], notably the projects STARGATE and MIXED, respectively, and foster interactions through similar and complementary interests and research areas.

D7.3 is a report on the collaborations established with STARGATE and MIXED, complemented with additional events and collaborations with other projects and initiatives of interest to AGROMIX and its aims. D7.3 also reports on possibilities for further interactions envisaged during the second half of AGROMIX’s lifetime, which refer to the AGROMIX summit planned for the final year of the project (Task 6.4) and other possible joint activities and events. This is highly relevant to the objectives of WP7, which include the aim to contribute to bridging the gaps between science and practice as part of a multilateral knowledge exchange process.

More specifically, D7.3 contributes directly to the expected outcome *“5. Maximise synergies between actors within and outside the Consortium by engaging with networks and initiatives across Europe. Engage with at least 50 projects and/or initiatives and reach at least 8000 stakeholders across Europe, via knowledge hubs and comprehensive stakeholder database”*³.

Further impact is foreseen from the activities reported in D7.3 at month 24, as well as those that will take place during the second half of the project within Task 7.3, in terms of reaching out to not only researchers, but also other stakeholders from civil society and policy, in particular practitioners, farmers, land managers, community interest groups, and policymakers. This is expected to have a long-term impact beyond the lifetime of the project, advancing knowledge dissemination and stakeholder engagement to support the EU Green Deal, Farm2Fork Strategy, and the CAP.

³ As described in the project’s Grant Agreement, DoA, Part B, p.25.

3 Introduction

3.1 Why synergies in resilience research

Agricultural systems that adopt agroecological principles, such as agroforestry and mixed farming systems, are diverse and provide multiple ecosystem functions by working on the complementarities and the synergies between the various elements of the system. As a result, they can contribute to the creation of multifunctional landscapes and are more resilient to climate and other environmental and socio-economic stressors (Altieri *et al.*, 2015; Gil *et al.*, 2017; Singh *et al.*, 2021). However, resilience thinking and the challenges that come with measuring resilience in highly complex systems have been the focus of much research globally, especially considering the threat of climate change and how agricultural activities can be impacting on but also be impacted by climate change (Folke *et al.*, 2010; Meuwissen *et al.*, 2019).

AGROMIX aims at advancing knowledge on the benefits of agroforestry and mixed farming systems towards achieving climate resilient and efficient land uses in Europe. Additionally, the project aims at engaging with farmers, practitioners, civil society, and policymakers to share knowledge, experiences, and co-develop solutions that are inclusive and suitable for the diversity of contexts and needs of the various actors involved. This can only be achieved by building upon the complementarities and synergies between members of the AGROMIX consortium to contribute to progress in scientific research and stakeholder engagement.

However, AGROMIX does not operate alone but within the wider landscape of international research projects funded by the European Commission Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, now followed by the Horizon Europe programme. Projects are very diverse and can address a wide range of issues, engaging different sectors, and all are expected to contribute to the building of greener and more sustainable and resilient societies. The agricultural sector is highly involved in this process as healthy and resilient food systems are the foundations of healthy societies and environments. This is one of the elements of the EU Green Deal, which involves all sectors of society, and whose aims for agriculture are *“to ensure food security in the face of climate change and biodiversity loss; reduce the environmental and climate footprint of the EU food system; strengthen the EU food system’s resilience; lead a global transition towards competitive sustainability from farm to fork.”*⁴ The two main instruments to achieve these goals are the new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) 2023-2027⁵, which supports EU food systems, and the Farm to Fork Strategy⁶, which aims at facilitating the transition to sustainable and resilient food systems that are fairer and better equipped to face the impacts of climate change and shocks that can be environmental, economic, or global, like recently the Ukrainian war, which is a shock for European agriculture, and the Covid-19 pandemic.

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/agriculture-and-green-deal_en

⁵ https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/common-agricultural-policy/cap-overview/new-cap-2023-27_en

⁶ https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/farm-fork-strategy_en



Therefore, it is imperative for international collaborative research projects, and in particular for multi-actor projects, to engage with other projects, exchange experiences, discuss methodological approaches and results, gain insights from the challenges encountered, and develop solutions to overcome them. In other words, there needs to be greater synergy in resilience research. In practical terms, meaningful impact can be achieved by collaboration within the project consortium, as well as with other consortia, building upon the complementarities and the synergies that can arise between projects. With this in mind, AGROMIX has included in their work plan Task 7.3 which focuses specifically on engaging with other projects that have similar and complementary aims, in order to foster collaborations and build synergies.

3.2 Structure of this report

After the brief introduction to provide background to this report, this deliverable is structured in 3 main parts:

- **Chapter 4. Synergies with Horizon 2020 projects MIXED and STARGATE.** This represents the main focus of Task 7.3, which aims at strengthening collaborations and interactions between the other projects funded under the same funding topic on climate-smart and resilient farming (LC-SFS-19-2018-2019).
- **Chapter 5. Synergies with other projects and initiatives.** In the interest of international research and advancement towards sustainable and resilient future societies, AGROMIX dedicated effort to building and strengthening synergies with other projects and initiatives beyond its closest collaborations. This section reports on 6 significant interactions.
- **Chapter 6. Social media interactions.** This section reports on key interactions with other projects through social media. AGROMIX considers to be particularly important to reach to a wider audience and increase dissemination beyond researchers and interest groups already involved in research on the topics addressed by the project.

Finally, the last chapter presents concluding remarks from the activities carried out, and reports on the next steps AGROMIX is seeing during the second half of the project's lifetime.

Because of the large volume of additional material, links to presentations and other material are provided in footnotes to facilitate reading. The full list of events featured in this report is provided in Table 1 below.



Table 1. Events AGROMIX organised, co-chaired, and participated in.

Date	Event	Organiser	Country	Type of event	Participation	Target Audience	Outreach	Estimated participants	AGROMIX contribution
Projects funded under Horizon 2020 call LC-SFS-19-2018-2020 Parts A and B									
14 Jun 2021	AGROMIX-MIXED-STARGATE 1st joint meeting	AGROMIX	EU	Networking event	remote	Internal event	international	80	Coordination, co-chair, preparation of communication materials
10 Nov 2021	AGROMIX-MIXED-STARGATE 2nd joint meeting	AGROMIX	EU	Webinar	remote	Researchers, policymakers, land managers	international	75	Coordination, co-chair, preparation of communication materials
20-22 Sep 2021	Landscape 2021	ZALF*	Germany	Conference	remote	Researchers	international	400	Joint session with MIXED
Other projects and initiatives									
26 May 2021	Land webinar	MDPI publishing and UEX*	Global	Webinar	remote	Researchers	international	ca.65	Presentations on agroecology and agroforestry experiences in various countries
23-24 Nov 2021	EUKI annual conference	EUKI and CEEweb*	Germany	Workshop	remote	Researchers, practitioners, civil society, policymakers	international	ca.100	Presentation of the project and communication strategy
24-25 Nov 2021	EIP-AGRI seminar: 'Turning forest innovation into practice'	EIP-AGRI	EU	Webinar	remote	Researchers, policymakers, forestry practitioners	international	180	Contribution to discussion groups, making connections to projects involved in forestry innovation
8 Dec 2021	Soil Health Networking Day	LANDSUPPORT**	Italy	Networking event	remote	Researchers	international	ca.80	Presentation of the project and Serious Game relevance
9-12 Jun 2022	The New European Bauhaus Festival	EU	Belgium	Festival	in-person	General public	local / regional	500	Presence at the festival with a poster on the project
10 Oct 2022	LOOPS 2.0	Veltha	Belgium	Networking event	remote	Researchers, practitioners, civil society, policymakers	international	ca.100	Presentation of the project and panel discussion on the future of agriculture, drivers, and challenges to innovation

* AGROMIX partners: CEEweb: CEEweb for biodiversity, Hungary; UEX: Universidad de Extremadura, Spain; ZALF: Leibniz-Zentrum für Agrarlandschaftsforschung (ZALF) e.V. Müncheberg, Germany. ** Horizon 2020 project LANDSUPPORT: <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/774234>



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4 Synergies with H2020 projects MIXED and STARGATE

4.1 Rationale and approach

In response to the funding call⁷ requirement, AGROMIX designed Task 7.3 with the specific intent to create liaisons with the other projects funded under the same call: STARGATE⁸ and MIXED⁹. Table 2 presents key information on these projects.

Table 2. Information on the three projects funded under LC-SFS-19-2018-2019, Part A and Part B

Project Acronym	STARGATE	MIXED	AGROMIX
Project Title	reSilienT fARminG by Adaptive microclimaTe management	Multi-actor and transdisciplinary development of efficient and resilient MIXED farming and agroforestry-systems	AGROforestry and MIXed farming systems – Participatory research to drive the transition to a resilient and efficient land use in Europe
Grant Agreement no.	818187	862357	862993
Start Date	1 October 2019	1 October 2020	1 November 2020
End Date	30 September 2023	30 September 2024	31 October 2024
Official Website	https://www.stargate-h2020.eu/	https://www.mixed-project.eu	https://agromixproject.eu/
Budget	€ 6 994 405	€ 6 999 508,75	€ 6 999 256,01
Coordinating Institution	Ethniko Kentro Erevnas Kai Technologikis Anaptyxis, Greece	Aarhus Universitet, Denmark	Coventry University, United Kingdom
Part of the funding call addressed	A. [2018] Microclimate management: from field to landscape (RIA)	B. [2019] Efficiency and resilience of mixed farming and agroforestry systems (RIA)	B. [2019] Efficiency and resilience of mixed farming and agroforestry systems (RIA)

⁷ Horizon 2020 Framework Programme **H2020-2018-2020**, Work Programme: **Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine, maritime and inland water research and the bioeconomy**, Call: **Sustainable Food Security (H2020-SFS-2018-2020)**, Topic ID: LC-SFS-19-2018-2019 <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/lc-sfs-19-2018-2019>

⁸ H2020 project STARGATE (GA no.818187) on CORDIS: <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/818187>

⁹ H2020 project MIXED (GA no.862357) on CORDIS: <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/862357>



Task 7.3 is planned to last for the whole duration of the project. However, the bulk of the activities that heavily involved AGROMIX were planned for the first 24 months. This is because AGROMIX took the initiative to design a process that would create opportunities for the 3 consortia to initially familiarise with each other, their activities and aims, and then find shared interests and synergies to develop and interact on.

This approach was particularly needed because of 2 main challenges:

- STARGATE addresses Part A of the funding call, which has a considerably more technical and technological focus, with work on climate modelling and water management.
- MIXED and AGROMIX address Part B of the funding call, which focuses instead on participatory approaches to engage with farmers and land managers to facilitate the transition to climate resilient and efficient farming systems, notably mixed farming and agroforestry systems.

While similarities may be easier to identify for MIXED and AGROMIX, it was even more necessary to engage with STARGATE to find tangible common grounds that would interest all parties. Therefore, AGROMIX organised a first meeting with the coordinators on 7 April 2021. STARGATE was represented by Dimitrios Moshou, project coordinator (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki) and Stelios Kostopoulos (CERTH). MIXED was represented by Tommy Dalgaard, project coordinator, and Lise Andreasen (Aarhus University) and Francesco Accatino (INRAE). AGROMIX was represented by Sara Burbi, project coordinator, and Julia Stew, project manager (Coventry University). This was the first opportunity for the coordinating teams to introduce themselves and create a working group. Participants then discussed possible ideas for collaboration and agreed on having an initial meeting for the consortia to familiarise with each other, followed by annual webinars on topics of common interest.

AGROMIX proposed to organise 2 joint events in 2021. The first joint event would be an introductory meeting where all 3 projects get the opportunity to share information about their activities, work packages, structure and aims. The second joint event would be a webinar hosted by AGROMIX and co-chaired with the other 2 projects. The topic of the webinar was jointly decided to be resilience. This topic was chosen because it represents the central focus of all 3 projects and therefore, was an ideal starting point to discuss resilience from different perspectives.

The organisation of the webinars during the following years would be taken in turns by the coordinating teams of the 3 projects. Webinar events were chosen as a cost-effective solution to allow flexibility and create shared spaces for collaboration and interaction. This approach was agreed by all participants. Further information on the joint events and other interactions can be found in the sections below.

4.2 First joint meeting

4.2.1 Organisation

On 14 June 2021, the first joint event of the three research projects took place with more than 80 participants meeting remotely from across Europe and globally. The event was attended by staff from the European

Commission's Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI), for Environment (DG ENV) and for Climate Action (DG CLIMA), as well as from the Joint Research Centre (JRC), and had the purpose to get to know about the projects and identify potential synergies to jointly develop throughout the duration of the projects.

The first part of the meeting¹⁰ saw each project team presenting a brief overview of their structure and work packages, with particular focus on the approaches adopted and the expected outcomes from project activities. REVOLVE (AGROMIX WP7 lead) facilitated this part by sharing a template slide to each work package lead to ensure that all key information was shared among participants: work package lead contact and institution, state of the art, objectives, and expected outcomes. Each project started by presenting their work packages 'Coordination', giving a brief overview of the project structure and approach. Because of the size of the projects, this approach allowed each project to give a short introduction to all their activities and to establish an initial contact reference for follow-up^{11,12,13}.

The introductory part was then followed by a breakout session where participants could join in three discussion groups. Each project chaired a discussion group, that addressed key topics all three projects are set to work on in their working plans. Each group was invited to discuss a question, facilitated by the chair(s).

The topics covered the following issues:

1. **Estimation models and tools.** This session was chaired by STARGATE.
Discussion question: What models and tools are or can be used and developed to support land management, advancement of scientific knowledge, support mixed farming and agroforestry adapted value chains and relevant policies?
2. **Farmers as multi-actors.** This session was chaired by MIXED.
Discussion question: What are the challenges in our projects in terms of how and why they should engage in research across European countries?
3. **Policy co-development.** This session was chaired by AGROMIX.
Discussion question: What type of policy development and how are you engaging with the public?

At the end of the breakout session, each group reported back to all participants for a final panel discussion, followed by the close of the event.

The event proved to be intense and packed with information from all projects. The diversity of topics each project works on, and the size of the projects were a challenge for the organisation of a joint event; however, the discussions were enriching and stimulating, fostering interest from all three projects in establishing linkages between their activities.

¹⁰ [Agenda of the 1st Joint event](#)

¹¹ [AGROMIX WPs overview presentation for the 1st Joint event](#)

¹² [MIXED WPs overview presentation for the 1st Joint event](#)

¹³ [STARGATE WPs overview presentation for the 1st Joint event](#)



4.2.2 Press release

All projects agreed to produce a joint press release for the AGROMIX's website news section¹⁴. This was shared with the external and media contacts of the project and through the social media channels of the project.

4.3 Second joint meeting

4.3.1 Organisation

On 10 November 2021, the three research projects joined forces again to explore how to achieve resilience on the field, based on their on-the-ground experience. The event was titled “Resilience in Agricultural Landscapes - Dealing with complexity in a changing climate.”¹⁵

The choice was based on the fact that the concept of 'resilience' is simultaneously central to achieving more sustainable food systems, yet notoriously difficult to define and measure. The event was organised in two parts: the first part saw partners from each project give a brief 10-minutes keynote speech on a topic of their choice. From STARGATE, Anne Gobin, VITO & KU Leuven, and Emmanuel Lekakis, AgroApps, presented “Crop and Livestock Insurance as an Enabler of Agricultural Resilience: The role of Earth Observation and Early Warning Systems”¹⁶. From MIXED, Miranda Meuwissen, Wageningen University, and Pip Nicholas-Davies, Aberystwyth University, presented “Measuring resilience; a dialogue about two (very different) methods”¹⁷. From AGROMIX, Ulrich Schmutz, Coventry University, and Jessica Donham, Agroecology Europe, presented “Dark Resilience – how to overthrow systems and why agroecological principles matter?”¹⁸.

The topics presented in the keynote speeches were further explored in three panel discussions. STARGATE chaired the discussion on climate adaptation through the use of intelligent geospatial services; MIXED chaired the discussion on assessing resilience through statistics and qualitative approaches; and AGROMIX chaired the discussion on agroecological principles for resilient farming. At the end of the one-hour debates, insights were gathered and shared with all attendees that were around 75 in total.

This event was not limited to the 3 consortia. Announcements with the registration link were circulated by the projects through their newsletters and media accounts. The webinar attracted a lot of interest from participants and its structure was considered suitable to foster meaningful engagement without impacting negatively on time available to interact with other projects.

¹⁴ **[Strengthening collaboration between research projects. Highlights from the 1st Joint event, AGROMIX.](#)**

¹⁵ **[Agenda of the 2nd Joint event](#)**

¹⁶ **[STARGATE presentation for the 2nd Joint event](#)**

¹⁷ **[MIXED presentation for the 2nd Joint event](#)**

¹⁸ **[AGROMIX presentation for the 2nd Joint event](#)**



4.3.2 Press release

A specific and more detailed article was developed for the AGROMIX's website news section¹⁹. This was shared with the external and media contacts of the project and through the social media channels of the project.

4.4 Other collaborations

4.4.1 Landscape 2021 Conference

AGROMIX and MIXED co-chaired the Session 6.2: “Mixing crops, livestock and trees in farms and landscapes for people and planet” at the Landscape 2021 online conference on “Diversity for Sustainable and Resilient Agriculture – Diversification as an essential building block for a sustainable agricultural transformation”²⁰, hosted by the Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research (ZALF) and funded by the German Research Foundation. The topic was part of the wider Session 6 “Cross Scale Systems” and attracted a lot of interest, so much so that session 6.2 had to be split into two 1.5-hour sessions, with four speakers each, followed by in-depth discussions. The first session was chaired by MIXED, Francesco Accatino from INRAE, France, and the second session by AGROMIX, Ulrich Schmutz from Coventry University, UK (Figure 1).

During the first session, introductory 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. During both sessions, scientists from the projects' wider networks as well as externals participated, including from outside Europe, sharing their research on agroforestry and mixed farming from Colombia and Tunisia, contrasting the European examples from France, Switzerland, Spain, and the UK²¹.

The Landscape2021 conference was an excellent opportunity to collaborate with MIXED and engage with a very wide network of researchers. Furthermore, whilst the conference was originally planned for researchers, it also integrated farmers and policymakers. The 3-days event 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

¹⁹ **Resilience in agricultural landscapes: Dealing with complexity in a changing climate. Highlights from the 2nd Joint event, AGROMIX**

²⁰ Landscape 2021 Conference <https://www.zalf.de/en/aktuelles/landscape-conference/Pages/Landscape-2021-Konferenz.aspx>

²¹ Landscape 2021 Conference – Book of Abstracts, Session 6: ‘Cross Scale Systems’, 6.2: ‘Mixing crops, livestock and trees in farms and landscapes for people and planet’, p.302-314. https://www.zalf.de/de/aktuelles/landscape-conference/Documents/Landscape_2021_Book_of_Abstracts.pdf



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. Paolo Bàrberi, Scuola Superiore di Studi Universitari e di Perfezionamento Sant'Anna (SSSA), AGROMIX partner, participated in the closing plenary, during which the need for cross-level and cross-disciplines research was highlighted, if we aim to progress towards sustainable and resilient land management and agricultural systems. For this event a press Release was produced by the project²².

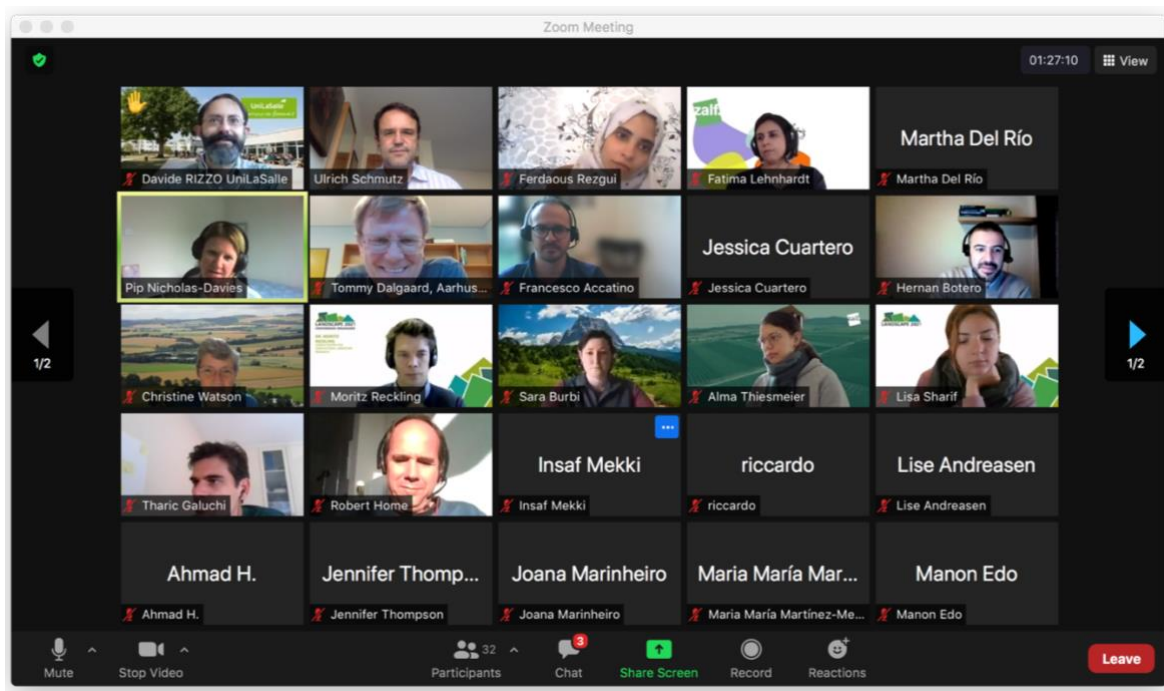


Figure 1 Screenshot of Landscape 2021 session. (Source: Ulrich Schmutz, Coventry University)

4.4.2 H2020 project MIXED webinars 2022

A series of webinars was organised by MIXED over the summer 2022. The AGROMIX consortium was invited to take part in these events to learn more about their 'innovation projects' and collaboration opportunities. The innovation studies are part of the MIXED Work Package 2 'Co-design and evaluation of farm systems for efficiency and resilience', led by Christine Watson from Scottish Rural University College (SRUC).

²² [Press release: Transforming Landscapes at Landscape2021](#)

The dates and topics for the webinars were as follows:

- 28 June at 14:00 (CET): ‘Winter Cereal Grazing’ by Robin Walker, SRUC, UK.
- 5 July at 13:00 (CET): ‘Energy Assessment of Mixed Farming; the Montado System’ by Joana Marinheiro, Centro de Estudio Forestais (CEF), Portugal.
- 31 August at 11:00 (CET): ‘Impact of tree strips on crop yield and performance of selected agro-environmental parameters – Juchowo experiment’ by Jaroslaw Stalenga, Pawel Radzikowski from IUNG-PIB, and Anna Szumelda from FSK Juchowo, Poland.
- 6 September at 12:00 (CET): ‘Integrating Organic Fattening Pigs and Willow (*Salix spp*)’ by Anne-Grete Kongsted, Aarhus University, Denmark.
- 16 September at 11:00 (CET): ‘Ways to Influence Behaviour Change in Your MIXED Work’ Simon Payne, Aberystwyth University, UK

These were an excellent opportunity to share knowledge and experiences. Both projects remain committed to engage and interact further and share links of each project events, where these are organised in hybrid or in remote form to facilitate participation without affecting the projects’ activities and financial resources.



5 Synergies with other projects and initiatives

5.1 H2020-MSCA project UNDERTREES and MDPI publishing

The H2020 project UNDERTREES²³ has been funded in 2019 under the H2020-EU.1.3. - EXCELLENT SCIENCE - Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Main Programme. The project is coordinated by the Scuola Superiore di Studi Universitari e di Perfezionamento Sant'Anna (SSSA) in Pisa, Italy. There are strong synergies between UNDERTREES and AGROMIX, with 4 beneficiaries involved in both projects (Table 3).

Table 3. Main roles of beneficiaries involved in the H2020 project AGROMIX and H2020-MSCA project UNDERTREES.

Beneficiary	Main Role in AGROMIX	Main Role in UNDERTREES
Coventry University (CU), United Kingdom	Coordination Lead WP6 'Policy Co-development'	Lead WP2 'Training and Career Development' Lead WP6 'Dissemination and Communication'
Scuola Superiore di Studi Universitari e di Perfezionamento Sant'Anna (SSSA), Italy	Lead WP4 'Participatory Research and Tools for Climate-smart Transition'	Coordination Lead WP3 'Field research and data collection'
Universidad de Extremadura (UEX), Spain	Co-Lead WP1 'Context'	Lead WP4 'Mapping and Modelling'
Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI), United Kingdom	Co-Lead WP3 'Biophysical Indicators and Scenarios'	Co-Lead WP3 'Field research and data collection' Lead Task 4.4 'Integrated sustainability evaluation at landscape scale'

These connections were established during the development stages of both projects with the intention to strengthen the complementarities between the two work plans, in line with each project's funding requirements, aims, objectives, and expected impacts. This opportunity was considered particularly beneficial for both consortia because there was considerable overlap of the projects' lifetimes, i.e., AGROMIX: 1 November 2020 – 31 October 2024; UNDERTREES: 1 January 2020 – 31 December 2023 (extended to 30 June 2025).

The COVID pandemic greatly impacted UNDERTREES, as it was declared shortly after the project's kick-off meeting at the end of January 2020. As a result, it was not possible for partners to implement the project

²³ H2020-MSCA project UNDERTREES (GA no.872384) on CORDIS: <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/872384>; project website: <https://projectundertrees.wordpress.com/>



secondments and the project was temporarily suspended. Since then, UNDERTREES has now restarted and was granted an 18-months extension to facilitate the completion of project tasks.

In spring 2021, while UNDERTREES was still suspended, Manuel Pulido Fernández from UEX was approached by the journal *Land*, by MDPI publishing, and offered the opportunity to chair a webinar. The UEX team involved in both projects then contacted project partners to organise the event, which was hosted by MDPI. The main aim of the event was to provide a platform for scientific dissemination to share research experiences and discuss concepts, methodologies, successes, and challenges in conducting research on agroecology and agroforestry. The event saw the participation of UNDERTREES partners from Ghana and Chile, as well as 3 of AGROMIX's international advisors from China, Republic of Korea, and Argentina. Contributions focused on agroecology and agroforestry experiences in diverse contexts globally, with a request for AGROMIX to provide examples of the state of agroecology in 2 European countries, which was addressed by Sara Burbi, AGROMIX coordinator, with a brief overview of the challenges and opportunities for research on agroecology, its principles, and impacts, in the United Kingdom and in Spain²⁴. Then Susanne Schnabel (UEX) moderated the panel discussions that closed the event, which addressed two topics:

- Topic 1: Agroecology/Agroforestry as Weapons to Reverse Global Change
- Topic 2: Agroecology/Agroforestry to Sustain Production and Improve Its Environment

Participants were so engaged that the discussions continued well over the planned closing time for the webinar. Participants were from Europe, South America, Africa, and Asia. While contexts may differ considerably, even within the same continent, this experience, albeit short in duration, proved that the interest in agroecology and agroforestry continues to grow and this is reflected the world over. Both project consortia welcome further opportunities for exchanges, in particular since UNDERTREES restarted in 2022. Further information on the event, including the full programme and participants introductions, can be found here: <https://land-2.sciforum.net/>

5.2 H2020 project Game On! and EUKI

The EUKI is a project financing instrument by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK). It is the overarching goal of the EUKI to foster climate cooperation within the European Union in order to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. It does so through the strengthening of cross-border dialogues and cooperation, as well as exchanges of knowledge and experiences. EUKI' annual Networking Conference aims to connect fellow project implementers and partners within the EUKI Community, representatives from the Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU), and the EUKI Secretariat, as well as external experts, to participate in and contribute to the discussion on what the pathway to a climate-neutral Europe could look like.

²⁴ [AGROMIX presentation for the MDPI *Land* webinar with project UNDERTREES](#)



In this sense, more than 150 participants registered for the 2021 edition, which was organised remotely on 23-24 November 2022. The opportunity for AGROMIX to participate came about from Gabriella Nagy from **CEEweb Biodiversity** (AGROMIX partner) and her institution's other on-going projects and interactions with EUKI. AGROMIX participated in the third session of the second day of the conference, titled: "Climate Communications: A Harvest of Possibilities. Capacity Building Mechanisms through Communications for Climate Mitigation Practices in Agriculture". The session was structured as a workshop, and it included two more projects aiming to tackle communication needs and develop innovations to help achieving a better understanding of the EU Green Deal and the Farm2Fork strategy:

- 1) "**Piloting Natura 2000 communication in Estonia**" aims to solve problems between local communities, landowners, and conservation administration to secure the continuity of the Natura 2000 network in Estonia.
- 2) "**Game On!**" is a project funded by the Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) programme, with the main goal of reaching out to the youth and involving them in climate change mitigation by developing board games, international geocaching challenges, museum exhibits, and wilderness camps.

For the AGROMIX project, the coordinator Sara Burbi briefly presented the project, while the communication leader, Patricia Carbonell from **REVOLVE** presented the communication strategy followed by the project²⁵. The workshop proved to be an excellent opportunity to share approaches and experiences to establish and maintain effective communication with a wide range of audiences and stakeholders and generating ideas to overcome potential barriers to meaningful stakeholder engagement.

5.3 H2020 project LANDSUPPORT

AGROMIX was invited to the Soil Health Networking Day organised by the H2020 project LANDSUPPORT²⁶ 'Development of Integrated Web-Based Land Decision Support System Aiming Towards the Implementation of Policies for Agriculture and Environment', coordinated by the Cross-Departmental Research Centre (CRISP) of the Università Federico II di Napoli, Italy. The event took place on 8 December 2021 and was streamed live on the organisers' YouTube channel. The aim of the event was to bring together coordinators of on-going research projects funded by the European Commission as well as representatives of other relevant initiatives and projects with a specific interest in soil health and management, with the aim to identify synergies, share experiences and findings that provide support and evidence for future policy to improve soil health. AGROMIX's coordinator, Sara Burbi, Coventry University, was invited to give a very brief overview of the project. In the few minutes available, she highlighted three topics highly relevant to the purpose of the event and well in line with LANDSUPPORT's interest in tools for soil and land management and stakeholder

²⁵ **AGROMIX presentation at EUKI conference 2021**

²⁶ H2020 project LANDSUPPORT (GA no.774234) on CORDIS: <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/774234>; Official website: <https://www.landsupport.eu/>



engagement: the participatory approach of AGROMIX throughout the project, in particular work package 2, the creation of Knowledge Exchange Hubs in work package 7, and the creation of a serious game prototype (work package 4) to facilitate knowledge exchange and networking among farmers and support the transition to climate resilient and efficient agroforestry and mixed farming systems²⁷.

LANDSUPPORT ended in April 2022, therefore additional meaningful interactions were difficult to organise. However, albeit short, this was a positive experience and highlighted the many complementarities and synergies that exist between research projects and initiatives aimed at improving soil health and land management. Notably, as AGROMIX progresses, significant contributions are expected from the work carried out in work package 3 on biophysical indicators and scenarios.

The full list of participating projects, initiatives and keynote speeches and interventions can be found here: <https://www.landsupport.eu/news/soil-health-networking-day/>

5.4 H2020 project DiverFARMING and Veltha

Veltha²⁸ is an international research centre based in Tervuren, Belgium, specialised in the design of solutions to tackle climate change. More specifically, Veltha focuses on circular economy business models, with involvement in the design of a Regional Circular Economy Approach and the development of a monitoring system for the EU Regions; scenarios for digital technologies and tools to promote circular economy solutions; and policy models to identify potential barriers of existing socio-economic policy instruments at regional, national and EU level.

Veltha has developed a series of live webinars called LOOPS 2.0 (<https://www.veltha.eu/loops/>) broadcasted on the organisers' LinkedIn channel. In each episode, the coordinators of two H2020 projects are invited to briefly present their projects and discuss approaches, findings, challenges, and opportunities to support sustainable development and the circular economy. In 2022, two episodes were featured during the #EUGreenWeek (30 May – 5 June) generating interest and engaging discussions among participants.

These topics are of particular interest to AGROMIX because of the project aims and the expected positive impact on promoting climate resilient and efficient diversified farming systems. Therefore, AGROMIX was happy to participate in the last of the LOOPS 2.0 live webinars, which took place on 10 October 2022, together with the project DiverFARMING²⁹ 'Crop diversification and low-input farming across Europe: from practitioners engagement and ecosystems services to increased revenues and chain organisation' coordinated by the Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena, Spain. Raúl Zornoza Belmonte and Sara Burbi represented DiverFARMING and AGROMIX, respectively, with interesting discussions on findings and

²⁷ [AGROMIX presentation at LANDSUPPORT networking event](#)

²⁸ Veltha izvz <https://www.veltha.eu/>

²⁹ H2020 project DiverFARMING (GA no.728003) on CORDIS: <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/728003>; Official website: <http://www.diverfarming.eu/index.php/en/>



challenges, in particular with regards to practical aspects of the transition, such as machinery, tools, labour requirements, and the complex policy landscape in which farmers and land managers need to operate. The episode attracted an audience of more than 100 among researchers and practitioners from across the world. The 2 brief project introductions were followed by a panel discussion, with questions from Europe and Africa³⁰.

This event was of particular interest to AGROMIX for several reasons. It allowed meaningful discussions with a project like DiverFARMING, which has strong complementarities and synergies with AGROMIX, carrying out research and participatory activities in diversified systems similar to those AGROMIX works with, including silvoarable systems. This is particularly relevant also because DiverFARMING is set to end on 31 October 2022; therefore, to achieve meaningful engagement and impact on society and the agricultural sector, it is important for such projects to establish a certain degree of continuity, and in fact synergies, especially considering their relevance to the EU Green Deal.

Additionally, the event allowed AGROMIX to establish a strong connection with Veltha, with the potential to be involved in their next series of live webinars, called LOOPS 4.0. Further information on this opportunity is shared in section 7.2.3 of this document.

5.5 EIP-AGRI seminar

The EIP-AGRI seminar ‘Turning forest innovation into practice’ took place online on 24-25 November 2021³¹. It was a two-day online event with over 180 participants from around 24 European countries. Discussions focussed on knowledge exchange and networking within forestry innovation. The seminar focussed on the social dimensions of innovation within forestry, with opportunities for a number of projects from across Europe, both publicly and privately funded, to present work and seek feedback. A representative of AGROMIX, Rosemary Venn, Coventry University, attended the event online, participating in the seminar, discussion groups, and gaining greater understanding of the various innovations in forestry projects currently underway in the EU. AGROMIX strives, in part, to bring forestry and agriculture closer together through the innovation of agroforestry. It was therefore relevant to participate, be informed and share AGROMIX’s progress. Findings from the seminar are relevant to AGROMIX’s work and vice versa. Of particular relevance, the opportunities for innovation in ecosystem services for all timber and non-timber goods are underestimated by decision makers and often left out of policy. Integrated approaches for forest management, such as agroforestry, were highlighted. This provided an opportunity for AGROMIX to share research progress and invite collaboration, in particular in the advocacy space. Learnings from the seminar were disseminated amongst the consortium and challenges for innovation identified, with particular relevance to AGROMIX in terms of making forest management profitable, integration into policy and the

³⁰ [AGROMIX presentation for the Veltha webinar](#)

³¹ [EIP-AGRI seminar: Turning forest innovation into practice. Link to the event’s information](#)



need for new business models and approaches, such as agroforestry. The event produced a final report from the seminar³².

5.6 The New European Bauhaus Festival

The Festival of the New European Bauhaus took place from 9 to 12 June 2022 as a hybrid event with the core activities in Brussels and side events across the EU and beyond. The festival brought together people from all walks of life to debate and shape a sustainable, inclusive, and beautiful future. The festival was a great opportunity to network, exchange and celebrate – from science to art, from design to politics, from architecture to technology.

In this event the AGROMIX project applied to be part at the FAIR of the Festival. The main aim of the FAIR was to exhibit and showcase projects and prototypes reflecting and supporting the values of the New European Bauhaus. The FAIR also offered a space for showcasing all these innovative examples and offer opportunities to meet, interact and exchange ideas, bringing together different actors from young artists to entrepreneurs, innovators to teachers, architects, students, and inventors. The poster prepared by the AGROMIX’s communication team presenting the project in English, French and Dutch was showcased during these 3 days of the festival in different squares of the city of Brussels, Belgium (Figure 2).



Figure 2. The AGROMIX project on a mobile expositor in a square in central Brussels, Belgium.
(Source: David Crous)

³² [EIP-AGRI Seminar: Turning forest innovation into practice. Final report](#)

6 Social media interactions with other projects

In addition to the co-organization or co-attendance with other projects, the AGROMIX project and the team responsible for the Social Media channels of the project have been interacting through email or via social media channels, mainly Twitter, with another 29 past or current EU funded projects and networks working on similar fields or topics (Table 4).

Table 4. List of projects and Twitter accounts with social media interaction with AGROMIX.

Project	Twitter Account	Short description (as reported by the projects on their social media accounts)
AgroFossilFree	@agrofossilfree	CSA H2020 project which aims at developing strategies and technologies to achieve a European Fossil-Energy-Free Agriculture. GA n.101000496
Best4Soil	@Best4Soil	Best4Soil is a H2020 funded project that aims to create a network of practitioners, for sharing knowledge on prevention and reduction of soilborne diseases. GA n.817696
CIRCASA	@CIRCASApject	CIRCASA (Coordination of International Research Cooperation on soil CARbon Sequestration in Agriculture)
CO-FRESH	@COFRESH_H2020	Official Twitter account of the EU H2020 project CO-FRESH - CO-creating sustainable and competitive FRuits and vEgetableS' value cHains in Europe. GA n. 101000852
DEMETER	@H2020DEMETER	H2020 EU funded large scale pilot for Agri Tech. GA n. 857202
DiverFARMING	@diverfarming	EU Project about crop diversification and low-input farming across. GA n.728003
DiverIMPACTS	@DiverIMPACTS	Horizon 2020 focusing on Diversification through rotation, intercropping, multiple cropping, promoted with actors and value-Chains towards Sustainability. GA n.727482
DIVERSify	@PlantTeams	Designing InnoVative plant teams for Ecosystem Resilience and agricultural Sustainability. GA n.600654
EJP SOIL	@EJPSOIL	Towards climate-smart sustainable management of agricultural soils. GA n.862695
EXCALIBUR	@excalibur_h2020	H2020 project aiming to exploit the multifunctional potential of belowground biodiversity. Tweets reflect only the views of the project partners. GA n° 817946
FoodE	@EUFoodE	FoodE aims to accelerate the uptake of citizen-led sustainable food initiatives across Europe. Funded under H2020. GA n.862663
FoodSHIFT2030	@FoodSHIFT2030	The future of food is low-carbon, circular and plant based! Seedling Join #foodSHIFT2030 to innovate the European food system by 2030 Raised fist An EU #H2020 project
GREENER	@GreenerH2020	Green, sustainable, efficient, and low-cost solutions for soil/sediment and water bioremediation, by integrating several remediation strategies. GA n.826312.

(Continued)

Project	Twitter Account	Short description (as reported by the projects on their social media accounts)
iSQAPER	@iSQAPER	H2020 Programme for research & innovation on interactive soil quality assessment in Europe and China for agricultural productivity and environmental resilience. GA n.635750
LANDMARK	@Landmark2020	LANDMARK is a European Research Project on the sustainable management of land and soil in Europe. H2020 project funded under GA n.635201
LANDSUPPORT	@LandSupport_EU	LANDSUPPORT is developing an innovative DSS platform to support farmers' associations, spatial planners, environmental agencies and policy makers in their work. GA n.774234
LIFT	@lift_h2020	H2020 project that aims to identify how various drivers' impact ecological approaches to farming and to assess their performance and #sustainability. GA n.770747
NUTRIMAN network	@NUTRIMANnetwork	Creating an inventory of practical and readily available nutrient recovery practices for farmers. NUTRIMAN is a H2020 funded project with GA n.818470
OPTAIN	@H2020_OPTAIN	#H2020 project, identifying optimal combinations of Natural Water Retention Measures for better water management in agricultural catchments. GA n.862756
SHui	@Shui_eu	SHui is a European and Chinese H2020 project focused on sustainable soil management for agriculture in water scarce environments. GA n.773903
SIEUSOIL	@sieuosil	Sino-EU Soil Observatory for Intelligent Land Use Management. GA n.818346
SmartAgriHubs	@SmartAgriHubs	Connecting the dots to catalyse the digitalisation of the European agrifood sector. H2020 funded project with GA n.818182
Soil Research	@RE CARE_EU	Research project protecting and remediating soil degradation threats across Europe. FP7 project GA n.603498.
SoilCare	@SoilCare_eu	Testing and promoting soil-improving cropping systems and techniques to increase the profitability and sustainability of agriculture across Europe. GA n.677407
SoildiverAgro	@SoildiverAgro	SoildiverAgro is a H2020 project that aims to generate a European-wide debate on soil biodiversity. GA n.817819
Soils4Africa	@Soils4A	Funded by the Horizon 2020 programme of the European Union, the Soils4Africa project will put in place by 2024 an Open-data Soil Information System (SIS). GA n.862900
SusCrop ERA-NET	@suscrop	#H2020 ERA-Net Cofund Action, which aims to strengthen the European Research Area (ERA) in the field of Sustainable Crop Production. GA n.771134
Wateragri_EU	@wateragri	Water retention and nutrient recycling in soils and streams for improved agricultural production. GA n.858375



7 Conclusion

7.1 Concluding remarks

The experiences described in this report were overall very positive. AGROMIX dedicated a lot of effort to establishing a framework to collaborate with the projects MIXED and STARGATE. This process led to significant interactions between a large number of researchers and with the multi-actors involved in the three projects. A considerable number of links and collaborations was also established by participating in events organised by other projects and relevant initiatives. However, a few challenges were encountered.

The greatest challenge was to engage meaningfully with many different stakeholders with diverse needs and interests. This was evident from the very beginning because of the size of the consortia involved. Indeed, large multi-actor projects bring together partners that can vary greatly in size, knowledge, and experience in international collaboration. For AGROMIX, it is of great importance to engage with farmers in particular and reach as many of them across the continent to foster greater knowledge and uptake of mixed farming and agroforestry systems that can contribute to climate resilient and efficient land uses. Researchers are accustomed to international collaboration, while farmers have specific, context-related interests and needs. Therefore, it may become difficult for farmers to feel engaged in research that can be very complex.

On the other hand, for research to have a meaningful impact on societies, it needs to engage with all its actors, in this case farmers, as well as other stakeholders along the value-chain and policymakers. As a result, the events reported in this document represent excellent opportunities to test approaches and areas for development.

Long remote events can be draining, and participants may lose interest, remaining predominantly passive or not engaging at all. Such events need to have a good balance of sessions with technical information and debates, as well as interactive sessions to allow participants to contribute in different ways.

Additionally, because of the pandemic, the number of remote events proliferated rapidly, which can overwhelm and overexpose farmers and other stakeholders to requests to participate. This can have a detrimental effect on their willingness to engage with researchers because of the duplication of efforts required of them.

The possibility of organising meetings remotely opened up to greater participation than if AGROMIX had to rely exclusively on attendance to in-person events. The pandemic forced several organisations to adapt their events to hybrid or fully remote settings. Effectively, this allowed participants like farmers, young researchers, and members of civil society to participate in large international project events, which they normally would have had difficulties engaging with. However, for these events to be successful, they require a concerted effort from the organisers and affiliated partners, to plan them with attractive sessions and promote them for a significant length of time.



Finally, AGROMIX will endeavour to build upon the links established during the first 24 months of its lifetime and, in the case of remote events, make even greater use of online tools to capture ideas and comments. In fact, so far webinars proved to be a popular choice, provided that sufficient time was allocated to panel discussions, either in parallel or plenaries. During these events, participants shared comments indicating that discussion groups were considered the most interesting parts of online events.

Further collaborations and events are envisaged in the coming two years. In particular, AGROMIX aims to strengthen its collaborations with MIXED. This is because a meaningful, closer engagement tends to be easier with farmers that are directly involved in the projects' activities, i.e., the 12 co-design pilots in AGROMIX. Therefore, AGROMIX endeavours to build upon the complementarities and synergies identified with MIXED to reaching out to the wider farming community, civil society and policymakers.

7.2 Next steps

7.2.1 Third joint meeting with MIXED and STARGATE

In line with the workplan agreed with the coordinators of MIXED and STARGATE, the third joint meeting is planned to take place in the autumn 2022. This time MIXED took the lead in the organisation of the event, which is set to be a webinar the first half of December 2022. A meeting is scheduled on 4 November with the coordinators and dissemination teams from each project to finalise the preparations and the date. Similar to the second joint meeting, this webinar will also be open to participants outside of the three project consortia and the invitation will be disseminated through their newsletters and media accounts.

7.2.2 Further collaborations with MIXED

In October 2022, Lise Andreasen and Sara Burbi from the coordinations of MIXED and AGROMIX, respectively, discussed possible ideas for further collaborations to propose to both consortia. Both projects do answer the same funding call requests and have similar aims and objectives. However, the work plans and approaches differ. Therefore, collaborations need to create opportunities for project partners to be involved in different events, depending on the relevance to their respective project activities.

In particular, each project has created a large network of contacts across Europe that include first and foremost farmers, but also other stakeholders. It is the intention of both projects to explore further the possible synergies and complementarities to capitalise on to achieve greater impact. Possible topics for collaboration include:

- Meaningful engagement with farmers
- Findings from experimental sites
- Policy recommendations
- Modelling future scenarios



A provisional outline of possible collaborations was drafted beyond the series of joint webinars:

- Year 2023:
 - Joint newsletter (at least 1 issue / year)
 - Joint EIP-AGRI newsletter submission
 - Joint workshop

- Year 2024:
 - Joint peer-reviewed article(s) with project results
 - Joint event in Brussels, Belgium. Both projects have a policy event planned during their last year. This is an excellent opportunity to organise joint sessions and workshops, with the potential to achieve greater engagement with policy-makers and interested stakeholders in discussions over current and future policy to support the transition to climate resilient and efficient farming systems such as agroforestry and mixed farming.

As project activities progress, generating feedback from participatory experiences and preliminary results, both project teams intend to advance collaborations and refine the calendar of joint events during the second half of the projects' lifetime.

7.2.3 Veltha LOOPS series 4.0

AGROMIX has successfully participated in the last episode of the LOOPS 2.0 live webinar series organised by Veltha, in Belgium. The series has run since 2020 and over time has attracted a lot of interest and participants. So much so, that Veltha has decided to organise a new series of live webinars, LOOPS 4.0. The decision for this name is because each episode will see 4 guests instead of 2: project coordinators from 2 H2020 and Horizon Europe research and innovation programmes, a stakeholder from industry, and a policymaker. Stakeholder engagement is a key requirement in any research project that aims to achieve meaningful impact on society. Therefore, Veltha LOOPS 4.0 is a much-welcomed initiative that AGROMIX is looking forward to participating in and contribute to the knowledge exchange and discussions needed to advance sustainable agriculture, climate resilient farming, and circular economies, supporting the EU Green Deal.



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