

Workshop on

“RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES TOWARDS AGROECOLOGICAL TRANSITION”

How to boost our impact by working together?

2 - 3 October 2024

VENUE - CIHEAM BARI (Via Ceglie, 9, 70010 Valenzano BA, Italy)

BACKGROUND & INTRODUCTION

The EU project AgroServ joins together 12 Research Infrastructures aiming at supporting the transition towards more sustainable systems by providing integrated research services. To ensure a long-lasting impact of the project, we are looking to establish links and complementarities not only among RIs but also with other relevant actors of the Agroecology Community. Sharing knowledge, exchanging experiences allows mutual learning from successes and mistakes, avoids duplication and increases the impact of project results.

Under the framework of this project, we have organized a workshop to discuss 3 major topics of paramount importance within the Agroecology community and RI: i) The role of RI in AE Transition and its collaboration with LLs, ii) Transdisciplinarity in research and iii) the deployment and use of global standards to move towards AE transition.

To discuss these issues, we are organizing the 2 days workshop in the following 3 working sessions.

Working Session 1 - Transdisciplinarity in research

In the ever-evolving landscape of research, the demand for transdisciplinary collaboration among researchers has become increasingly apparent. This is especially relevant in complex disciplines such as agroecology as it simultaneously includes elements from agronomy, ecology, sociology and economics. Researchers, professionals, and experts from various fields need to join forces to address sustainable and resilient agriculture in times of global challenges. Transdisciplinarity is a broad concept encompassing any collaborative effort that brings together expertise, insights, and challenges from various disciplines. Conventional categorization of such collaborative work often revolves around how knowledge and processes from different disciplines are amalgamated and integrated. Transdisciplinarity is essential to address complex problems by integrating the knowledge and methods from multiple disciplines, including diverse viewpoints of the problem. It encourages researchers to confront questions that traditional disciplines do not ask while opening up new areas of research and promotes disciplinary self-awareness about methods and creative practices. However, it also brings important challenges such as the need to codevelop a shared understanding of the domain, issues and key components or the need of involvement of users and non-academic stakeholders in the research and development process.

During this working session we address the following questions:

- *How can EU projects harness the synergy of scientific disciplines to effectively advance the objectives of agroecology and sustainable agriculture?*
- *Which good practices implemented by other EU initiatives can be implemented in AgroServ to foster the advancement in cross-domain research?*

Working Session 2 -Global standards for assessing and evaluating AE transition

The promotion of Agroecology brings the need to evaluate the performance of AE across different scales and contexts. Holistic assessment frameworks are required to determine the agronomic, economic, environmental, and social performance of farming systems at different stages of transition toward AE. The results from such assessment frameworks can be used to identify when agroecological practices are effective at meeting multiple locally or globally important outcomes, and when trade-offs arise between development objectives. However, assessment frameworks struggle to balance the trade-off between capturing standardized, globally comparable metrics or capturing metrics that are locally relevant and context-specific (Rosenstock et al., 2017). Establishing these evidence banks provides a valuable resource to catalyse research among agroecology actors to transform food systems to meet production, environmental and social goals in tandem.

During this working session the following questions will be addressed:

- *Which are the gaps and limitations of existing monitoring frameworks for assessing Agroecological transition?*
- *How could RIs (and their specific tools and services) support the implementation of those frameworks?*

Working Session 3 - The role of RI in AE Transition

RIs are defined by EC as “*facilities that provide resources and services for research communities to conduct research and foster innovation*”. RI contribute to advancement of excellent science, the mobility of knowledge and researchers and the dissemination and optimization of results in the field of relevance by implementing long-term and FAIR data principles. They can reduce fragmentation of the research and innovation ecosystem, avoid duplication of effort and enhance coordination among researchers to respond to global challenges. RIs within AgroServ address different aspects of the AE and can therefore be important facilities for AE transition as they can support on 1) redesigning of various degrees of agriculture and agri-food, 2) assessing resilience of agroecosystems and 3) dynamics of AE transition. RIs are also complementary to LL, by enabling the transfer of basic science into applications across different scales, they can provide science-based evidence and innovation on key research topics of AE.

The burning questions that will be addressed in this working session are:

- *How can we improve and mainstream the access and use of RI services? How can long-term measurement data be shared and harmonized?*
- *How can we enhance RI collaboration with LLs and other real-based innovation arrangement? How can we share and co-create knowledge and innovation at various scales?*

A final “Implementation in practice” session will help to understand how the approaches identified can be translated to the real world and adapted to the needs of end users communities.

AGENDA

2 OCTOBER - DAY 1

8:30-9:00 **Welcome/ Registration**

9:00 - 9:30 **Welcome and Introduction AgroServ project**

Welcome (CIHEAM Bari Director)

Project presentation (Michel Boer, AnaEE, project coordination)

Workshop introduction (Iria Soto, LifeWatch ERIC event organizer)

9:30-12:30 **Working Session 1: Transdisciplinarity in research**

9:30- 9:50 **Agroecology transect Project**

Stephen Leitheiser, WUL

9:50 - 10:10 **FoSSNet Project**

Matteo Sabini, EUFIC

10:10 - 10:30 **SOLO Soils for Europe Project**

Teresa Nóvoa, Evora University

10:30- 11:00 *Coffee Break*

11:00 -12:30 **Guided discussion and conclusions of the working session**

Moderated by Ivana Cavoski and Pedro Gabriel Silva (UTAD)

12:30 - 14:00 *Lunch*

14:00-17:00 **Working Session 2: Global standards for monitoring AE transition**

14:00-14:20 **Agroecology Partnership WP5: Data & Monitoring for AE transition**

Jose Manuel Avila (LifeWatch ERIC), WP5 coordinator

14:40-15:00 **Agroecological indicator frameworks for the assessment of AE transition**

Ioanna Mouratiadou (ISARA)

15:00- 15:20 **Mixed project**

Francesco Accatino, INRAE

15:20 - 15:30 *Coffee Break*

15:30 - 17:00 **Guided discussion**

Moderated by Iria Soto (LifeWatch ERIC) and Monica Dantas (UTAD)

3 OCTOBER - DAY 2

8:30-9:00 Welcome/ Registration

9:00-12:00 *Working Session 3: Enhancing the role of RI in Agroecological Transition*

9:00 - 9:20 Agroecology Partnership. WP7: Expanding the capacities of RIs & LLs
Gerald Schwarz (Thuenen Institute), WP co-coordinator

9:20- 9:40 Microbes4Climate project
Confirmed, tbc the specific person that will be present

9:40- 10:00 Integrated Research Infrastructure Services for Climate Change risks Project
Janne Rinne (Luke), Project co-coordinator

10:00-10:30 Coffee Break

10:30 - 12:00 Guided discussion
Moderated by Roland Pieruschka (EMPHASIS) and Livia Madureira (UTAD)

12:00-13:30 Lunch

13:30-17:00 *Implementation in practice*

13:30-13:50 *Experiences of Occitanum Living Lab initiative*
Veronique Bellon, INRAE

13:50-14:10 *Experiences of implementation of a LL initiative*
(tbc)

14:10-15:30 Guided discussion
Moderated by JoseManuel Avila and Livia Madureira (UTAD)

15:30-15:45 Coffee Break

15:45- 16:15 Conclusions of the workshop and Next Steps
Iria Soto, LifeWatch ERIC