EducEcoRegions Project

Foster the ecological transition of territories and communities through innovative training

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Output 1 - Report on Organic Districts (or Eco-Regions or Bio-Districts) in Europe

O1-A1: Comparative Analysis on Organic Districts (or Eco-Regions or Bio-Districts) in Europe

by Bio-Distretto Cilento (IT), Agrobio (PT), Bergerie Nationale (FR), SEAE (ES)

Coordination by Bio-Distretto Cilento

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ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

ACRONYM	DEFINITION
AB	Agriculture Biologique (in France)
ABRE	Associação da Bio-Região de S. Pedro do Sul (Association of the Bio-district of S. Pedro do Sul) in Portugal
ACTUAR	Associação para a Cooperação e o Desenvolvimento (Association for Cooperation and Development) in Portugal
ADL	Associações de Desenvolvimento Local (Local Development Associations) in Portugal
AE	Agroecology
AGROBIO	Associação Portuguesa de Agricultura Biológica (Portuguese Organic Agriculture Association)
APAEMA	Associació de La Producció Agrària Ecològica de Mallorca in Spain
ASIR	Association for Sustainability and Rural Innovation in Spain
AVET	Agricultural Vocational Education and Training
CBPAE	Consell Balear de la Producció Agrària Ecològica
CEZ/BN	Zootechnic and animal science training center/National sheep center of Rambouillet, Bergerie Nationale, France
CIMAT	Comunidade Intermunicipal do Alto Tâmega (Intermunicipal Community of Alto Tâmega) in Portugal
CMCD	Centro Municipal de Cultura e Desenvolvimento (Municipal Center for Culture and Development)
CPLP	Community of Portuguese Language Countries
DGADR	Direção Geral de Agricultura e Desenvolvimento Rural (General Directorate of Agriculture and Rural Development) in Portugal
DGER	Direction générale de l'enseignement et de la recherche in France
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development in Portugal
EGALIM	Etats généraux de l'Alimentation
ENAB	National Strategy for Organic Farming in Portugal
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FISAS	Sustainable Food Systems
GAL	Grupos de Ação Local (Local Action Groups) in Portugal

GAOD	Global Alliance for Organic Districts
GIAHS	Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems
IeFP	Istruzione e Formazione Professionale (=VET)
IFOAM Organics International	International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements
IFOAM Organics Europe	International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements - Europe
INAO	Instutut National de l'origine et de la qualité
INIAV	Instituto Nacional de Investigação Agrária e Veterinária (National Institute of Agrarian and Veterinary Research) in Portugal
IN.N.E.R.	International Network of Eco Regions
IPSS	Instituições Particulares de Solidariedade Social (Private Social Solidarity Institutions)
LSFS	Local and Sustainable Food System
MEG	Margem Esquerda do Guadiana
MIPAAF	Ministero Italiano per le Politiche Agricole, Agroalimentari e Forestali (Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies)
MiTE	Ministero della Transizione Ecologica (Italian Ministry of Ecological Transition)
OFSP	Organic Food System Program
PAC	Politica Agricola Comunitaria (CAP – Common Agricultural Policy)
PAT	Projet Alimentaire Territorial, in France
PCAET	Plan Climat Energie Territorial, in France
PDO	Protected Designations of Origin
PNR	Parc Naturel régional
PNRR	Piano Nazionale di Ripresa e Resilienza (National Recovery and Resilience Plan)
PSR	Programma di Sviluppo Rurale (RDP – Rural Development Programme)
SAL	Sistema Agroalimentare Locale (Local food system)
SALS	Sistema Agroalimentare Locale Sostenibile (Local and sustainable food system)
SEAE	Sociedad Española de Agricultura Ecológica/Agroecología (Spanish Society of Organic Agriculture/Agroecology)
VET	Vocational Education and Training

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THE ORGANIC DISTRICTS IN EUROPE

ORGANIC DISTRICTS ALREADY ESTABLISHED

1. Cilento
2. Eolie
3. Terre degli Elimi
4. Borghi Sicani
5. Valle del Simeto
6. Nebrodi
7. Grecanico
8. Baticòs
9. Alta Murgia
10. Delle Lame
11. Monti Dauni
12. Bio-Molise
13. Val Comino
14. Etrusco Romano
15. Via Amerina e Forre
16. DIBIUM
17. Norcia
18. Il Piceno
19. Valdichiana Aretina
20. Casentino
21. Chianti
22. San Gimignano
23. Montalbano
24. Fiesole
25. Casalasco-Viadanese
26. Agrisociale Bergamo
27. Valle Camonica
28. Asiago
29. Bio-Venezia
30. Gramogliano
31. Bio-Verona
32. Colli Euganei
33. Val di Gresta
34. Valle dei laghi
35. Vanoi
36. Trento
37. Filo di luce in Canavese
38. Valli Valdesi
39. Terre del Giarolo
40. Suol D'Aleramo
41. Val di Vara
42. Bio-Vallèe France
43. Valposchiavo Switzerland
44. Mühlviertel Austria
45. Idanha-A-Nova Portugal
46. Alto Tâmega Portugal
47. São Pedro do Sul - Portugal
48. M.E.G. Portugal

ORGANIC DISTRICTS IN DEVELOPMENT

1. Bio Sardegna
2. Castelli Romani
3. Borgo urbano di Cosimo
4. Maremma Etrusca-Monti della Tolfa
5. Valdera
6. Appennino Bolognese
7. Dolomiti Bellunesi
8. Valtellina
9. Vinalopó Mitjà i Alt Spain
10. Mallorca Spain

Source: IN.N.E.R. 2021

INTRODUCTION

The Organic-Districts, also defined as Eco-Regions or Bio-District, are territories where farmers, citizens, public authorities and other local actors realize a formal agreement aimed at the sustainable management of local resources, based on the principles and model of organic farming and on the agroecological best practices, in order to boost the economic and socio-cultural development of their community.

The Organic Districts, with all the local actors involved, act on the territory by adopting a bottom-up development model in which local communities decide to move towards a real local, sustainable and healthy food system.
The Organic Districts are therefore a concrete response to the current trend of economic development, causing massive phenomena of abandonment of rural areas and the growing urbanization of people in search of better living conditions and higher incomes. The process affects both the most industrialized and developing countries, causing the degradation and progressive impoverishment of local resources, the loss of biodiversity and the traditional knowledge of local cultures.

FROM LOCAL TO GLOBAL

The first two Organic Districts were developed in Europe at the beginning of the 2000s in Italy (Cilento Bio-District) and in France (BioVallèe). They have advanced the international and European policies on environmental sustainability which, today, are more and more to the forefront with the initiatives aim to promote ecological transition and ensure a sustainable and fair-trade future for the new generations. The Organic Districts operate in a context that from the local aim to become more and more global, involving and linking similar experiences on all continents.

DEVELOPMENT OF A WORLDWIDE NETWORK

To support this important goal, was established the International Network of Eco Regions - *IN.N.E.R. - in 2014*, which in turn promoted the constitution of the Global Alliance for the Organic Districts – *GOAD in 2020*.

BASIC AIM

The main aim is to create a global sustainable food system, able to ensure healthy and sustainable diets for all. In accordance, of course, with the local diversity and products.
To achieve this goal, however, it needs international, European and national policies able to driver for "green" investments and to create job to unemployed,

contributing to the development in "clean" activities, able to make the territories safer and more livable.
Spreading the knowledge of Organic Districts and the support tools to their development globally, it means to contribute in a concrete manner to the implementation of the ecological and digital transition. The only one able to bring benefits to all the "terrestrial citizenship"[1], starting from the poorest populations of rural areas of the planet.
The experience of the Organic Districts has also shown the case to create connections between territories and their communities, to exchange skills, traditions and innovations.
That's why in parallel with the ecological transition will be pursued also the digital transition, developing the infrastructure and ensuring everyone's access to network and knowledge. Especially in rural areas.
The experience of Organic Districts has shown how it is possible, in a relatively short time, trying to make territories better, while contributing to the pursuit of the United Nation's sustainable development objectives, to the community's environmental policies, to the impact of climate change, to the reduction of CO2 emissions, to the preservation of biodiversity, to the development of green economy and digital economy.

COMMON STRENGHTS

With reference to the main positive items of the first developments of Organic District framework, of the guidelines and the first concrete approaches, and from the results of EducEcoRegions inputs, some elements clearly emerged as a positive starting point for future development. Let's see which ones.
The Organic Districts have a strong perspective to make the productive and tertiary activities an added value to the territory.
The integrated interaction between eco-sustainable sectors, such as i.e. agriculture and tourism can be a valid tool to preserve and enrich the territory not only at the present, but also for the future.
Organic Districts have the right tools to realize a collettive strategy to defend the territory, also ensuring good standards of quality life and economic income.
The strategies to promote organic production have contributed, together with the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) funds, to the increase in the area dedicated to organic production and the volume of products.
The strength of Organic Districts resides essentially in the incorporation of a collective strategy, with common objectives, which allow to present and defend the territory as a collective rather than a dispersed set of initiatives.

[1] Morin Edgar, 1999. Les sept savoirs nécessaires à l'éducation du futur. Publié par l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture (UNESCO), Paris, France. ©UNESCO 1999.

Furthermore, the example of Organic Districts already implemented, the financial support from various sources, the national and local political support and a territorial approach based on local partnerships are important levers that drive to the creation and implementation of the Organic District model.
In the Italian report it is underlined a relevant role that Bio-Districts can play, to avoid wrong approaches carried out in the past: "Too many territories suffered for years agriculture and tourism in terms of unsustainable and minimally invasive cut in territory value. An outrage of beauty, resources, traditions and culture, balanced for a mere financial support, often insufficient to local economies".

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

The national and international development of Organic Districts requires an articulated training plan, such as to allow private and institutional operators of the organic territories to better understand the nature and potential of Organic Districts. A considerable effort is required in this regard, but promising initiatives are already being developed to support this ambitious goal.
The teaching of Organic Districts issues is still fragmented in the learning of different knowledge which, united synergistically, give life to this particular form of local governance. From the examination of the various training offers within the community, agriculture still appears to be prevalent as a subject.
But other subjects such as economics, business management, tourism sciences, environmental protection, Agroecology, food safety, have an increasingly important role, precisely by virtue of the principle of multifunctionality which is primary in Organic Districts activities. At a national level, experiences of various kinds are stratifying in the various countries of the Union.
The figure of the facilitator of knowledge on organic as part of sustainable development. In France, for several years, organic farming, and with it therefore indirectly the holistic vision of Organic Districts, is part of the "Teaching to produce differently" Plan, launched in 2014. The Directorate-General for Education and Research of the French Ministry of Agriculture and Food has created the network called Formabio in this context.

The purpose of this network is first of all to develop the learning of organic farming, providing teachers with the most suitable means to achieve this goal. But this network also aims to raise awareness levels on the close link between organic farming and sustainable development of production activities. Furthermore, it is important to encourage the exchange of knowledge and cooperation between the various players in training.
An important dimension assumes the collaboration at the level of teaching networks. The Learning Centers and Competence Centers, being set up and

perfected by the Global Alliance of Organic Districts – GAOD, are proposed as a lively and qualified example of spreading the principles and values of the Organic Districts, conforming to the different local realities. They will be developed at the level of urban and rural areas and in addition to the virtual placement on the internet they will be placed in farms, university centers, schools, commercial activities. The EducEcoRegions project, as part of the Erasmus + Program, proposes among its various objectives precisely that of developing a training platform in a virtual and cooperative. It will exploit the close interaction biennial of the partnership between Italy, Spain, Portugal and France.

On the following pages we'll see how the experience of the Organic Districts was born and developed in Europe, starting from Italy, to which extensive research and legislative measures, both regional and national, were dedicated. In order to facilitate the comparison, for each one of the countries participating in the project (Italy, Portugal, France, Spain) the same elements will be analyzed: situation/evolution, experiences in progress, brakes and levers, public policies/legislation, technical aspects, training components and specialized bibliography.

ITALY

1. Situation/evolution of Organic Districts at national level in Italy

THE BEGINNING

The experience of Organic Districts in Italy was born on ***2 January 2004*** with the public meeting held in Castel San Lorenzo, in the province of Salerno, in the Cilento and Vallo di Diano National Park[2], titled "**Creation of an organic farming district**".

GENESIS OF AN IDEA

It was not easy for the speaker of that meeting, the organic farming expert Salvatore Basile, to find a title that best represented what he thought of and what he wanted to talk about. The municipal administrators had asked him to deal mainly with the technical aspects of organic farming. Essentially, at that first meeting should have been explained to farmers the benefits of the organic method and of the multifunctional agricultural system, showing them practical examples and best practices to follow. Knowing, however, the context in which he was, the speaker knew well that there would be other priorities and issues he should take into account. Due to the extreme fragmentation of the productive activities, it was clear that the first step should have been to carry on with a process of aggregation of the many small existing farms realities, most of which were (and still are) a family-owned. Before that, however, all the necessary conditions should have been created to develop the local market for the organic products (then almost nonexistent) and business sustainability.

It was also necessary restoring confidence to workers in agricultural sector, for too long mistreated, making them feel the support of the whole community. More than a transition from agriculture to organic farming a transition of the whole community to eco-sustainability and bio-economy needed.

It was in nobody's interest to realize an "eat and go" action, converting to organic a large number of farms, and then leave them to their fate.

TERRITORY FIRST

On the other hand, the prospect of carefully studying the territory attracted considerable attention, to know its citizens better and to test, right in that place

[2] In 2011 it changed its name to "National Park of Cilento, Vallo di Diano and Alburni" (Official Journal of the Italian Republic N. 186 of the 11th of August 2011)

of natural beauty and harmony, an integrated approach to sustainable management of natural, human and economic resources.

BIRTH OF THE CONCEPT OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE DISTRICT

That is why the speaker decided to introduce in the meeting's flier the concept (never used before) of "district of organic farming".

That evening the hall was full and were not only present local administrators and farmers but a large part of the local society: from the craftsman to the restaurateur, from the housewife to young unemployed looking for new job opportunities. Almost all had heard of organic farming, but few knew what it was concretely and very few supposed that it would become soon part of their live.

INTERNATIONAL STUDY CASE

Certainly no one imagined that the started experience would be replicated in hundreds of other territorial contexts in the world and in time it would become an international study case for the most important scientific communities.

The members of the Municipal Administration opened the meeting and, after explaining the purpose of the evening, they spread the word to the speaker. He also prepared a slide, in which he summarized the evolution of the sector and all the steps that a farmer had to follow to apply the organic method on the farm. Before going into technicalities and in procedures defined by the massive and complex community rules, that made the organic sector as the most standardized sector in the world, more than the aerospace sector or telecommunications sector, he decided for the first half hour to focus the attention of the audience on the opening slide, including the title of the meeting.

A COLLECTIVE CHALLENGE

Basile wanted to be clear to everyone, from the beginning, that this one would be a **collective challenge aimed at improving the quality of life and job opportunities of the whole community and not only of the farmers**. In the past there were in the area too many conferences and meetings useful only for those who organized it and not for the local populations. For that reason, Basile decided to reveal your hidden motives and to involve everyone in the draft constitution of the Organic District that, if it had moved forward (just as has happened), would have required the active participation of the whole community, as main protagonist and beneficiary of all the benefits which could descend. During the meeting they largely discussed of sustainable management of the Calore river Valley in Salerno, located inside one of the largest national parks of Italy. The shepherds and the small farmers denounced about the negative consequences of the crisis that was severely hitting also their

sector and they told the many issue related to the agricultural, forestry and pastoral activities (which were the common ones to many of the rural area). The wild boars that destroyed the crops, the difficulties to sell the products at reasonable prices, the lack of tools for the enhancement of small-scale quality products, the depopulation of the villages, the catastrophic viability which discouraged from enter in the interior areas, the lack of job opportunities for young people. These last, despite all, were deeply attached to their traditions and they wanted to continue living in their homeland.

STORIES OF EXCELLENCE

There were also stories of excellence, like those of producers of seven DOC wines, of typical dairy products, extra virgin olive oil, of chestnuts. Young people were also called in and they talked about hiking throughout the mountains, water sports, speleological activities in the many caves of the area, mountain bike tours along path surrounded by the green, and many other opportunities to live in a sustainable way the many existing cultural and natural resources. The quality of the air and of the water, the fertility of the soil and the integrity of the landscape were excellent.

A GREAT BIODIVERSITY

There was a great biodiversity from the typical Mediterranean scrub at lower altitudes to the many natural essences present in the mountain woods. There were also a lot of animals, both wild and farmed, and even otters, eagles, wolves and stags. Only at the end of evening was talk about, in practical terms, how to start an organic farm and who should do something to move forward with the creation of an organic farming district.

GREAT OPPORTUNITY

Gradually were brewing opportunities, commitments and prospects.
It felt that began in the room to spread a **collective thought/desire.** It felt as real the possibility of opening ourselves to something that can only be great and achieved with the work of all, without leaving anyone behind. Everyone could have taken advantage from the constitution of an Organic District, both in economic terms and in terms of improving the quality of life, if only it managed to put together the different knowledge and individual skills, in a **single collective act, in a project of total area**.

FIRST STEP

In a country where the economy was based on agriculture and crafts, everyone knew that to do something well it looks a lot of time and work. Nothing could be created overnight, without sacrifice. With these wise conditions was taken the decision to see each other again after a couple of weeks, to look specifically

and concretely the aspect of organic zootechnics. A very sensitive topic, because of almost all families besides having a small piece of land they had some animals to look after.
On invitation of the speaker, the participants of the meeting left the room thinking of something to do, of some relative or friend to be involved in the project. And this was undoubtedly an excellent result and an encouraging starting point.

A BIG CHALLENGE
Basile knew that what he was going through would be a challenge in which he was going to jump himself body and soul.
That night he met organic winegrowers, farmers with free pasture livestock for most of the year, public administrators who aimed at the biological for the sustainable land management, fans of naturalistic tourism, youth people willing to invest their time in activities to carry out in their own native land.

ROOM FOR THE IMMAGINATION
Basile also tried to imagine how the "construction" of an Organic District could have to enhance all the activities and the professionality of the territory, by linking them to each other and to the beautiful cultural landscape in which they took place.
The next morning, he began to write down all his thoughts and his second meeting outline, that would take place shortly.
The results of the first meeting were beyond the most optimistic of expectations: the merits and the difficulties of the territory has begun to emerge, the real needs of the population, a path was mapped out to follow to exalt its potential and to start from the bottom a process of transition of agriculture and of the whole society towards eco-sustainability.

THE IDEAS FLOURISH
After two weeks of hard work, Basile involved new experts in the initiative, organic farmers and public officials. Two other public meetings were undertaken, and was involved also the Mountain Community of "Calore Salernitano" with its 16 municipalities, and was put in place a first document in which were some must-have characteristics for an Organic District.
First of all, the **multisectoriality** (to ensure a homogeneous development of the territory) then the "low approach" (after the initial opening words of the municipality, was up to the citizens lay down directly "the rules of the game") and finally a **governance** with the participation of all the representatives of the community (farmers, other economic operators, public administrators, active citizenship).

FIRST GUIDELINES

It was springing up the first guidelines of Organic Districts, which defined in a simple and clear way who should do what, sharing commitments and responsibilities in a balanced way.

The next few months were all an increase in activity. The network of bio-paths finally started.

SET UP OF THE COMMUNICATION

Particular attention was devoted to the aspect of communication. The definition of "Organic District of the Calore river Valley in Salerno" was too long and restrictive, also in the light of other decisions taken at the third meeting of 17 January 2004 **to connect other territories concerned into the project.** Since everything was based on respect with the principles of organic farming, it was decided to put the suffix "bio" before the word "district". Furthermore, as there is not at that time other experiences of biological territorial, it seemed right to eliminate any geographical reference.

BIRTH OF THE WORD "BIO-DISTRICT"

And that's we get the terms "Bio-District", which was related to the only experience of biological territorial existing at that historical moment. And that it would have remained for the next five years.

SPREAD OF THE MODEL IN ITALY

To a year from the beginning of the experience, on 8 January 2005, took place in Castel San Lorenzo the fourth public meeting.

It was at a turning point; it was decided to make know to the rest of Italy what was going on in Campania. Speakers of national importance were invited, among them Professor Cesare Zanasi, from the University *Alma Mater* of Bologna, who in those year promoted a new Master's degree on Fair Trade, in which the biological was of great importance. All the guests attended the meeting not only as speakers but also as guests of the territory, and there they met experts, farmers, administrators and technicians who were working together, for a year, **at the first Italian experience of territorial biologic.**

PROMOTION OF ANCIENT QUALITY FOOD CHAINS

Meanwhile in another area of the National Park was being born the interest in Bio-District Agriculture Councilors of ten municipalities in Cilento made a coordination and met each other regularly to establish together joint policies and measures aimed at the promotion of ancient quality food chains (white fig of Cilento, extra virgin olive oil, wine, honey, pulses, meat and cheese). Three of the ten municipalities had territories which stretched from the hills to the sea coast (Ascea, Casal Velino, Pisciotta) the other were of the internal Cilento

(Castelnuovo Cilento, Ceraso, Orria, Perito, Prignano Cilento, Salento, Stella Cilento).

FIRST CRITICAL ASPECTS

Thanks to the Campania's experience the "Organic District" is also part of the Italian Action Plan for organic farming, published in early 2005 by the Department of Agriculture. It could have been a good opportunity to start its diffusion in other regional contexts. Unfortunately, as we'll see later, the studies started as a result of Nation Plan were commissioned to universities and companies that have taken no account of the work done in Cilento, instead, they developed a top-down model on the territories, which was (thankfully!) only wrote and never led it to the establishment of any Organic Districts.

THE EARLY DAYS

2006 was a year full of initiatives for the Bio-District, due to the new lifeblood brought by the entrance of the other ten municipalities, and to the institutional support of the Provincial of Salerno, that supported the realization of several bio-paths by the three municipalities of Ascea, Casal Velino and Pisciotta.
A great success was also the initiative of territorial marketing of Bio-beaches. The plan was to promote in the beach establishments the organic products of the territory, introducing to tourists by producers, supported by experts in organic farming, communication operators and by … (bio) lifeguard.
These last represented with tourists the informal interface of public administration and producers.

TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT AND FIRST INSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITIONS

In 2008 the municipalities members of the Bio-District had already become about thirty. It was necessary to find a concise name, easy to remember, that set it geographically and that identified it in a unique way. **It was decided to adopt the term "Cilento Bio-District".**
In 2009, five years following the opening experience, due to the
Agriculture Regional Councilor Gianfranco Nappi, the Campania officially realized its existence. Firstly, with the publication of "Cilento Bio-District Guide", then with the realization of markets and finally with the subscription of the protocol of understanding for the official announcement of Bio-District, published on BURC (official gazette of the Region of Campania) N. 63 of 19th October 2009.
This was **the first formal identification document of an Organic District** in Italy and around the world.

The 23 December 2009 was officially opened the Cilento Bio-District's headquarters in Ceraso in Piazza San Silvestro 10. The municipality of Ceraso gave in loan-for-use the prestigious building, already center of Pietro Ebner's studies center.

Bio-paths in Ascea, Casal Velino, Pisciotta

Bio-paths

Bio-beaches

Delivery course certificate to a Bio-lifeguard

Bio-market

THE BOTTOM-UP APPROACH

For five years, from 2004 to 2009, the Cilento Bio-District was the only organic district in Italy.

In fact, the "Biodistrict" and "BIOREG" Projects financed under the National Action Plan for organic farming by the Ministry of Agriculture to universities and several private companies did not lead to any useful result, for the definition of various national guidelines, for the identification, realization and valorization of Organic Districts in Italy.

The "scientific" way of approach required by those studies provided an identification of the

"most sustainable territories to become organic districts" with a top-down choice which taken absolutely no account the priority aspect of willingness of the local community to implement the economic transition.

The bottom-up's approach, describes in 2004 into the guidelines of Cilento Bio-District is today an essential prerequisite to realize an Organic District.

INVOLVEMENT OF ORGANIZATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS

In 2009 to promote the dissemination of bio district model on a national level, several conferences were made and several organizations and associations were involved. Salvatore Basile was also, at the time, the President of AIAB Campania and Biocert Training Center, and for this reason it was decided to invite in Cilento the BoD of AIAB National and several trainers/experts of organic farming. In this way the presence on the territory of several regional delegations and trainers/experts, to which were explained the procedures and were delivered the instruments necessary for the creation of new organic districts.

Slowly began to see their first results of the initiative.

The AIAB Calabria expressed the interest in promoting the constitution of organic district in Reggio Calabria, in the Aspromonte National Park, in a rural area marked by cultural continuity with Magna Grecia, related to the Byzantine spirituality, which was the behind the Greek-Calabrian linguistic persistence.

A vast cultural heritage, linked to the ancient past, with the ancient rites marked the time and the passing of rural activities.

MULTICULTURALITY

The aspects of multiculturality and the protection of linguistic minorities, as possible additional characterizing elements of Organic Districts, intrigued and encouraged the promotors of Cilento Bio-District to give as much support as possible to the initiative.

All the knowledge passed on in five years of work and on 2 October 2009 there was the joining to the project in Calabria of the municipalities of the Greek area, all in the same linguistic minority of the Greeks.

Thus, the idea that an Organic District that had not been able to activate a strong territorial identity would have no reason to be strengthened. Also, it would have lost its effectiveness and strategic interest if, instead to turn towards to the outside and join together with other virtuous territories, it had led to isolation and to self-closure.

"THE TAKE-OFF"

On **29 November 2009** in Bova Marina (RC), at the Hellenophone Institute, took place the meeting from which started the **Grecanico Bio-District**.

However, it took two years for the take-off at national level of Organic Districts. **On 30 November 2011** took place in Milan the conference "the Bio-Districts as a conversion tool of territories and development of local resources", where Salvatore Basile and Emilio Buonomo presented the state of the art of the experience of biological territorial in Italy. That was the opening event of the AIAB Federal Congress, where Basile would be elected national vice president, with delegation to the Organic Districts.

In chronological order, were established the following Bio-Districts: Greve in Chianti (2012), San Gimignano (2012), Via Amerina e Forre (2013), Valli Valdesi (2013), Valle dei Laghi (2013), Val di Gresta (2014), Val di Vara (2014), Il Piceno (2014), Val Camonica (2014).

BUILDING OF AN INTERNATIONAL NETWORK

But the true quality jump came in 2014 when, on the basis of an agreement signed between the Cilento Bio-District and BioVallèe, was held the conference on "Bio-Districts: meet to know each other and establish new alliances", paving the way for the establishment of the International Network of Bio-Districts IN.N.E.R.

2. Detailed description of all the experiences in progress

ORGANIC DISTRICTS (OR ECO-REGIONS OR BIO-DISTRICTS) IN ITALY

ORGANIC DISTRICTS ALREADY ESTABLISHED

1. Cilento
2. Eolie
3. Terre degli Elimi
4. Borghi Sicani
5. Valle del Simeto
6. Nebrodi
7. Grecanico
8. Baticòs
9. Alta Murgia
10. Delle Lame
11. Monti Dauni
12. Bio-Molise
13. Val Comino
14. Etrusco Romano
15. Via Amerina e Forre
16. DIBIUM
17. Norcia
18. Il Piceno
19. Valdichiana Aretina
20. Casentino
21. Chianti
22. San Gimignano
23. Montalbano
24. Fiesole
25. Casalasco-Viadanese
26. Agrisociale Bergamo
27. Valle Camonica
28. Asiago
29. Bio-Venezia
30. Gramogliano
31. Bio-Verona
32. Colli Euganei
33. Val di Gresta
34. Valle dei laghi
35. Vanoi
36. Trento
37. Filo di luce in Canavese
38. Valli Valdesi
39. Terre del Giarolo
40. Suol D'Aleramo
41. Val di Vara

ORGANIC DISTRICTS IN DEVELOPMENT

1. Bio Sardegna
2. Castelli Romani
3. Borgo urbano di Cosimo
4. Maremma Etrusca-Monti della Tolfa
5. Valdera
6. Appennino Bolognese
7. Dolomiti Bellunesi
8. Valtellina

Source: IN.N.E.R. 2021

The following is a brief description of the Organic Districts already established in Italy.

1 - **CILENTO** (Campania) 	cilento@biodistretto.it www.biodistretto.it Headquarters: via Serre 39, 84052 Ceraso (Salerno) Venue for conferences and public meetings: Piazza San Silvestro 10, 84052 Ceraso (SA) Constitution date: 2/01/2004 It is the first Italian bio-district. The members of the Cilento Bio-District Association are: 40 municipalities, environmental and cultural associations, organic farms, holiday farms. It's a founding member of IN.N.E.R., in 2014, and participated in the establishment of the Global Alliance for Organic Districts (GAOD), in 2020.
2 - **EOLIE** (Sicily) 	biodistrettoeolie@gmail.com www.biodistretto.net/bio-distretto-eolie-sicilia/ Via Francesco Crispi, 86 – 98055 Lipari (ME) Constitution date: 6/03/2016 The members are: the municipality of Santa Maria Salina, environmental and cultural associations, farmers, agricultural technicians.
3 - **TERRA DEGLI ELIMI** (Sicily) 	protocollo@pec.comune.petrosino.tp.it www.biodistretto.net/bio-distretto-eolie-sicilia/ Piazza della Repubblica, Petrosino (TP) Constitution date: 11/06/2019 Members of the bio-district: Organic farms, associations and 13 municipalities: Petrosino, Alcamo, Castelvetrano, Salemi, Valderice, Castellammare del Golfo, Paceco, Pantelleria, Campobello di Mazara, Buseto Palizzolo, Calatafimi-Segesta, Salaparuta, Partanna.
4 - **BORGHI SICANI** (Sicily) 	biodistrettoborghisicani@gmail.com www.facebook.com/Borghisicani Palazzo Panitteri - Via Panitteri, 1 92017 Sambuca di Sicilia (Agrigento) Constitution date: 3/03/2017 Lead member is the municipality of Sambuca di Sicilia (Agrigento), other municipalities involved in the activities are: Contessa Entellina, Caltabellotta, Giuliana, Santa Margherita di Belice, Menfi, Montevago e Burgio.

	Through a project funded by Measure 16.4 of the 2014-2020 Sicily RDP, an e-commerce platform for the products was activated: www.bioshopsicilia.com
5 - **VALLE DEL SIMETO** (Sicily)	biodistretto.simeto@gmail.com Santa Maria di Licodia (Catania) Constitution date: 8/07/2016 The territory of the bio-district coincides with that of the "Simeto River Pact"" and includes 15 municipalities, 4 in the province of Enna and 11 in the province of Catania: Paternò (capofila), Catenanuova, Centuripe, Regalbuto, Troina, Adrano, Belpasso, Biancavilla, Bronte, Maletto, Motta Sant'Anastasia, Ragalna, Randazzo, Santa Maria di Licodia, Maniace. From the confluence of the Cutò, Martello and Saracena streams to the mouth in the Plain of Catania, the valley is crossed for 113 km by the Simeto, the largest river on the island. 27.3% of the UAA is organic, for a total of 22,289 hectares.
6 – **NEBRODI** (Sicily)	biodistrettonebrodi@gmail.com www.facebook.com/biodistrettonebrodi/ Palazzo Cupane, 98070 Mirto (Messina) Constitution date: 8/11/2018. The initiative was promoted by the Local Action Group (Leader Programme) Nebrodi Plus, the municipality of Mirto and the Città del Bio Association. In 2020 it is reconfigured as a "Food District", in response to a call from the Italian Ministry of Agriculture.
7 – **GRECANICO** (Calabria)	aiab.calabria@aiab.it www.aiabcalabria.it/il-bio-distretto-grecanico/ Via Monte Bianco, 22, 89035 Bova Marina (Reggio Calabria) Constitution date: 2/10/2009 It covers an area of about 600 square kilometers, from the coasts of the Ionian to the highest peaks of the Aspromonte, involving 12 municipalities, which are part of the Greek-Calabrian historical linguistic minority: Bagaladi, Bova, Bova Marina, Condofuri, Melito di Porto Salvo, Montebello Ionico, Motta San Giovanni, Palizzi, Roccaforte del Greco, Roghudi, San Lorenzo, Staiti.
8 – **BATICÒS** (Calabria)	baticos.15@libero.it www.baticosbiodistretto.it

BATICÒS Bio-distretto Alto Tirreno Cosentino	Headquarters at the organic farm "Vincenzo Lentino" Contarda Feliceta – Via Piano del fico - Santa Domenica Talao 87029 – Cosenza Constitution date: 31/08/2016 The municipalities of Aieta, Belvedere Marittimo, Buonvicino, Verbicaro have joined Baticòs. Baticòs is also active with its members in the following municipalities: Tortora, Praja a Mare, Scalea, Santa Domenica Talao, Santa Maria del Cedro, Orsomarso, Marcellina, Grisolia, Maierà, Diamante and Buonvicino.
9 - **ALTA MURGIA** (Apulia)	info@parcoaltamurgia.it www.parcoaltamurgia.gov.it Via Firenze, 10 – 70024 Gravina in Puglia (Bari) Constitution date: 29/12/2020 The Organic District Alta Murgia is a "Food District" and have the Alta Murgia National Park as coordinator.
10 - **DELLE LAME** (Apulia)	www.comune.ruvodipuglia.ba.it comuneruvodipuglia@postecert.it Corso E. Carafa, 46 – 70037 Ruvo di Puglia (BA) Constitution date: 18/09/2019 Promoters of the "Bio-Distretto delle Lame" are the municipalities of Ruvo di Puglia (Bari) and Bitonto (Bari).
11 - **MONTI DAUNI** (Apulia)	associazionecittadelbio@gmail.com www.facebook.com/cittabio Città del Bio Association, Via Santa Chiara 1 – Torino The initiative is part of the activities of the "Città del Bio Association", which together with some municipalities promoted the project called "Terre del Bio", for the establishment of organic districts. The experience was not very successful and in any case there aren't recent noteworthy activities.
12 – **LAGHI FRENTANI** (Molise)	Constitution date: 4/10/2017 The following municipalities adhere to the association: Larino, Bonefro, Casacalenda, Colletorto, Guardialfiera, Montelongo, Montorio nei Frentani, Morrone del Sannio, Provvidenti, Ripabottoni, Rotello, Santa Croce di Magliano, San Giuliano di Puglia e Ururi
13 – **VALLE DI COMINO** (Latium)	info@valledicominobio.com www.valledicominobio.com

biodistretto Valle di Comino	Via del Littorio n. 7 - 03041 Alvito (Fr) Constitution date: 23/02/2018 It waas the first biodistrict to receive the official recognition by the Latium Regional Council. It brings together numerous municipalities: Acquafondata, Atina, Alvito, Belmonte Castello, Casalattico, Casalvieri, Campoli Appennino, Fontechiari, Gallinaro, Pescosolido, Picinisco, Posta Fibreno, San Biagio Saracinisco, San Donato, Settefrati, Vallerotonda, Vicalvi, Vitucuso, Villa Latina and with them the National Park of Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise and the Valle di Comino Bio Association.
14 - **ETRUSCO ROMANO** (Latium) Biodistretto Etrusco Romano	info@biodistrettoetruscoromano.it www.biodistrettoetruscoromano.it/ The Biodistrict insists on the Municipalities of Fiumicino, Cerveteri and totally includes the State Natural Reserve of the Roman Coast. With an area of about 37,000 hectares, it is protected by environmental standards for about 80% of its extension. Constitution date: 2020
15 - **VIA AMERINA E FORRE ROMANO** (Latium) via AMERINA BIO-DISTRETTO della VIA AMERINA e delle FORRE	info@biodistrettoamerina.com https://biodistrettoamerina.com/ Operational headquarters: Via Lorenzo Filippini, 1 – 01035 Gallese (Viterbo) Registered office: Via SS. M. Giovanni e Marciano, 10 – 01033 Civita Castellana (Viterbo) Constitution date: 2011 Associated municipalities: Civita Castellana, Castel Sant'Elia, Corchiano, Fabrica di Roma, Faleria, Gallese, Nepi, Orte, Vasanello, Calcata, Vignanello, Vallerano and Canepina. In 2017, 3 other municipalities of the Cimini Mountains joined the bio-district: Canepina, Vallerano and Vignanello. It is a founding member of the IN.N.E.R.
16 - **DISTRETTO BIOLOGICO UMBRO – DIBIUM** (Umbria) diBiUm distretto biologico umbro	info@dibium.it www.dibium.it Località San Marco CS92 - 06036 Montefalco (Perugia) Constitution date: 4/05/2018 The Dibium network is made up companies exemplary for their sustainable vocation and virtuous relation between tradition and innovation.

	It ranges from biodynamic goat farms to the use of geese in the vineyard as an instrument for controlling and protecting the land, passing through pig farms in the wild among woods and vineyards; ancient practices that have been revived, such as the growing of wild and country herbs, and cultivation of hemp, a large multifunctional plant that creates different supply chains: from beer, to flour, from seeds to flowers, with interesting employments in health care and well-being.
17 – **NORCIA** (Umbria) DISTRETTO BIOLOGICO DI NORCIA	vincenzo@bianconi.com http://biodistretto.net/norcia Via Alberto Novelli, 1 – C.a.p. 06046 – Norcia Constitution date: 5/12/2017 It includes farmers, breeders, the municipal administration, the Sibillini National Park, accommodation facilities and trade associations. Among the objectives, to encourage the consumption of organic products within the community, such as in school canteens, in associated restaurants and in the promotion of solidarity buying groups.
18 - **IL FERMANO PICENO**	aiab.marche@gmail.com www.aiabmarche.org Info: AIAB Marche, Via M. Fazioli 11, Ancona Constitution date: December 2020. The "Il Piceno" Bio-district, promoted by AIAB Marche, was established on March 31, 2014 during a public assembly held in the municipality of Carassai (Ascoli Piceno). In December 2020, other territories were added and the "Fermano Piceno Bio-District" was born in the municipality of Altidona (Fermo)
19 - **VALDICHIANA ARETINA** (Tuscany) BIO DISTRETTO VALDICHIANA ARETINA	biodistretto.valdichiana@gmail.com www.biodistrettovaldichiana.it Piazza San Francesco, Castiglion Fiorentino (Arezzo) Legal office: Via Mino da Poppi 18/2 – 52100 Arezzo
20 – **CASENTINO** (Tuscany)	biodistrettocasentino@gmail.com www.biodistrettocasentino.it

	Constitution date: 21/05/2014
21 – **CHIANTI** (Tuscany)	biodistrettochianti@gmail.com www.biodistrettodelchianti.it Via Chiantigiana, 1 53011 Castellina in Chianti (SI) Constitution date: 27/09/2016 The municipalities currently involved in the activities are: Greve in Chianti, Castellina in Chianti, Gaiole in Chianti, Radda in Chianti, Castelnuovo Berardenga and San Casciano Val di Pesa.
22 - **SAN GIMIGNANO** (Tuscany)	biodistrettosangi@gmail.com https://www.facebook.com/biodistrettosangimignano Constitution date: 2013
23 – **MONTALBANO** (Tuscany)	biodistrettomontalbano@gmail.com https://biodistrettodelmontalbano.com/ Piazza Vittorio Emanuele II n. 1 59015 Carmignano (Po) Constitution date: 2017 The association has over 120 members, including companies and individuals, in 10 municipalities: Carmignano, Quarrata, Poggio a Caiano, Monsummano, Serravalle Pistoiese, Capraia e Limite, Cerreto Guidi, Larciano, Lamporecchio and Vinci.
24 – **FIESOLE** (Tuscany)	info@distrettobiologicofiesole.it http://www.distrettobiologicofiesole.it/ Via Sermei, 1 – Fiesole Constitution date: 2017 Out of 100 farms in the municipality of Fiesole, 30 are already certified to produce organically or in conversion, others are in conversion.
25 - **CASALASCO-VIADANESE** (Lombardy)	distretto.agribio@gmail.com www.facebook.com/Distretto.AgriBio.Casalasco.Viadanese Mantova-Cremona Constitution date: 28/10/2017

26 - **AGRICOLTURA SOCIALE DI BERGAMO** (Lombardy)	info@biodistrettobg.it www.biodistrettobg.it Operational headquarters: via Valmarina,25 - 24123 Bergamo Registered office: via San Bernardino, 59 - 24122 Bergamo Constitution date: 12/11/2016 It's dedicated to organic farming, social inclusion, care for the environment, protecting the health of citizens, an economy based on a sustainable model.
27 - **VALLE CAMONICA** (Lombardy)	biodistrettovallecamonica@gmail.com www.biodistrettovallecamonica.it Registered office: vicolo Sonvico, sn, 25040 Cerveno (BS) Operational headquarters: via Grigna 34, 25040 Esine (BS) Constitution date: 15/11/ 2014 Members: 12 municipalities, 15 environmental and cultural associations, social cooperatives, farms, farmhouses, restaurants, B & Bs, organic shops. It is a founding member of the IN.N.E.R. and has a "Charter of values".
28 – **BIOALTOPIANO ASIAGO** (Veneto)	segreteria@bioaltopiano.org www.bioaltopiano.org Via Beata Giovanna, 36010 Canove di Roana (Vicenza) The bio-district includes eight municipalities: Asiago (the main center), Conco, Enego, Foza, Gallio, Lusiana, Roana and Rotzo.
29 - **BIO-VENEZIA** (Veneto)	info@biovenezia.it www.biovenezia.it Piazza Vittorio Veneto, 1 30020 ANNONE VENETO (VE) Constitution date: 5/11/2016 Eastern Venice represents an important reality of organic production, with particular reference to wine production, concentrated on the territories of Annone Veneto, Cessalto, Motta di Livenza, Portogruaro and Pramaggiore (Municipalities with over 837 hectares of surface destined for organic production) and about 30 interested companies.
30 – **GRAMOGLIANO** (Friuli Venezia Giulia)	info@biodistrettogramogliano.it www.biodistrettogramogliano.it operational headquarters: Piazza 27 Maggio, 23 – 33040 Corno di Rosazzo (UD)

Bio Distretto Gramogliano FRIULI COLLI ORIENTALI	Registered office: Piazza Divisione Julia, 1 – 33040 Corno di Rosazzo (UD) Constitution date: 2015
31 - **BIO-VERONA** (Veneto)	info@bioverona.it www.bioverona.it Caprino Veronese - Località Platano 6, c/o Palazzo Malaspina Nichesola Constitution date: july 2019
32 - **COLLI EUGANEI** (Veneto) BIO DISTRETTO COLLI EUGANEI	Piazza Martiri, 10 – 35030 Vo' (PD) www.biodistrettocollieuganei.it Constitution date: 19/11/2016
33 - **VAL DI GRESTA** (Trentino Alto Adige)	presidenza@biodistrettovaldigresta.it www.facebook.com/biodistrettovaldigresta Via del Car, 50 - 38060 Ronzo-Chienis (Trento) The idea of the bio-district in Val di Gresta was born in 2013 by the the Province of Trento and the municipality of Mori, Ronzo Chienis and Isera, the Community of Valle della Vallagarina, the local tourist board, the Val di Gresta Consortium, of the Exhibition Market Committee, the rural bank of Trentino Sviluppo.
34 - **VALLE DEI LAGHI** (Trentino Alto Adige) Bio Distretto Valle dei Laghi	biovallelaghi@gmail.com Legal address P.zza Mons. Perli 3 fraz. Vezzano – 38096 Vallelaghi Operational office: Via Lónga, 1 38072 - Sarche di Calavino – Madruzzo (TN) Constitution date: 2018 Presidente: Michele Bortoli (sindaco di Madruzzo) The promoters are: the Community of the "Valle dei Laghi", APT Trento Valle dei Laghi, Cassa Rurale Valle dei Laghi, Fruit and Vegetable Consortium Valli del Sarca and various organic farms.
35 – **VANOI** (Trentino Alto Adige)	biodistrettovanoi@gmail.com www.vanoi.bio Via Roma, 58 38050 Canal San Bovo (TN) Constitution date: 2017

	The project was initiated by the municipality of Canal San Bovo (Trento)
36 – **TRENTO** (Trentino Alto Adige)	info@biodistrettotrento.it www.facebook.com/biodistrettotrento Constitution date: 28/06/2018 Trento is the most populous center of the province, its the largest agricultural municipality, with 1750 hectares of cultivated land, of which 817 organic, for 125 farms involved.
37 - **FILO DI LUCE IN CANAVESE** (Piedmont) 	biodistrettocanavese@gmail.com http://biodistrettofilodiluce.it/ CASTELLO DI MONCRIVELLO Via Duchessa Jolanda, 8 - Moncrivello (Vercelli) Constitution date: 21/06/2015 Participating municipalities: Moncrivello, Pavone Canavese, Burolo, Cossano Canavese, Palazzo Canavese, Vische.
38 - **VALLI VALDESI** (Piedmont)	biodistrettovv@gmail.com http://www.aiabinpiemonte.it/news-e-eventi/75-biodistretto-delle-valli-valdesi Sede di Torino presso MAG 4, Via Brindisi 15 10100 | Sede di Luserna San Giovanni – Via Fuhrmann 23 10066 Participating municipalities: Luserna san Giovanni (Torino) and Torre Pellice (Torino) Constitution date: 2014
39 - **TERRE DEL GIAROLO** (Piedmont)	associazionecittadelbio@gmail.com www.facebook.com/cittabio Città del Bio Association, Via Santa Chiara 1 – Torino Constitution date: 2015 The initiative is part of the activities of the "Città del Bio Association". It was developed in the scope of the Integrated Territorial Program of the Apennines and high Monferrato: "energies, waters and nature ". The project involved various entities, including: Regione Piemonte, Comunità Montana Terre del Giarolo, the Montane Unions included in the territory (Terre

	Alte, Borbera and Spinti Valleys, Curone Grue Ossona Valleys), Città del Bio Association. The total amount for the "Constitution of the Terre del Giarolo Biodistrict" project was of € 609,098.09.
40 - **SUOL D'ALERAMO** (Piedmont) italia del bio SUOL D'ALERAMO	associazionecittadelbio@gmail.com www.facebook.com/cittabio Città del Bio Association, Via Santa Chiara 1 – Torino Constitution date: 2016 The initiative is located in the territory of the Piedmontese Apennines and is part of the activities of the "Città del Bio Association", which together with some municipalities promoted the project for the establishment of bio-district. The experience was not very successful and in any case there aren't recent noteworthy activities.
41 - **VAL DI VARA** (Liguria) Biodistretto Val di Vara Valle del Biologico	info@biodistrettovaldivara.it www.biodistrettovaldivara.it Via Maurizio Caranza, 26 – 19028 Varese Ligure (SP) Constitution date: 5/04/2013 It is located in the Alta Val di Vara, the innermost portion of the territory of the province of La Spezia, and includes the municipalities of Varese Ligure, Maissana, Carro, Carrodano, Zignago, Sesta Godano and Rocchetta Vara. It extends over a contiguous territory of about 345 km with an altitude varying between 120 m and 1639 m a.s.l. and resident population of 6,239 inhabitants.
42 - TERRE MARCHIGIANE DISTRETTO BIOLOGICO TERRE MARCHIGIANE	Constitution date: November 2020. The organic district was promoted by AnaBio Marche, the organic farmer's association linked with "CIA – Agricoltori italiani" (one of the Italian Farmers Confederation). It's located in the Province of Pesaro-Urbino and associates 110 organic farms (5.200 hectares), 3 Agrarian Schools (Cecchi of Pesaro, Salvati of Jesi, Morea Vivarelli of Fabriano), the Montefeltro Mountain Union, 13 municipalities: Pergola, Frontone, Serra Sant'Abbondio, San Lorenzo in Campo, Fratte Rosa, Mondavio, Terre Roveresche,

	Monte Porzio, Sant'Ippolito, Fossombrone, San Costanzo, Cagli, Cantiano??, Urbino.
43 - MARCHE Distretto Biologico Marche La biodiversità che ci unisce	https://pattobio.regione.marche.it/ Info: Regione Marche, Via Gentile da Fabriano, 9 – 60125 Ancona. Tel: +39 0718062167- +39 0718062581 Fax: +39 0718062171 E- mail Assessore Agricoltura: mirco.carloni@regione.marche.it Constitution date: 8 April 2021. A typical example of experience top-down, promoted by the Marche Region and several agricultural and trade organizations, with the aim of establishing a single organic district that includes the entire regional territory. With the signing of the pact for organic, which took place on April 8, 2021 in the headquarters of the Marche Region in Ancona - Palazzo Raffaello between the vice president of the Region and Councillor for Agriculture Mirco Carloni and regional representatives of AGCI, Coldiretti, CIA, Confagricoltura, Confcooperative, Copagri, Legacoop, UECOOP, UNCI and Chamber of Commerce, the Marche region aims for the first time to create a single and large district of organic strong numbers, projects and important objectives. The organic UAA is about 100,000 hectares and the number of organic operators is around 4000 units, 1000 of which have already joined the organic district.
44 – **VALPOLICELLA E DINTORNI** (Veneto) Biodistretto Valpolicella e dintorni	Via Betteloni, 7 - 37029 San Pietro In Cariano (VR) e-mail: info.biodistrettovalpolicella@gmail.com www.biodistrettovalpolicella.org Constitution date: 2020 It was born from the experience of the association Terraviva, which since 2010 has been involved in the promotion of culture and organic production in Valpolicella, also carrying out educational activities on organic farming. Started in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic, at the moment there are no municipalities participating.

45 – **VALDERA** (Tuscany) 	biodistrettovaldera@gmail.com https://www.facebook.com/biodistrettovaldera/ Constitution date: June 2021 E-mail Mob. President Stefano Gonnelli: +39 3357886550 From a strictly geographical point of view, Valdera indicates the valley crossed by the Era river (Pisa), from its origin near Volterra to its entrance into the river Arno at Pontedera. Among the typical products of Valdera it is worth mentioning the Chianti DOCG wine, the Tuscan EVO oil DOP, the Pecorino cheese of the Balze di Volterra DOP, the Truffles, the Cherries of Lari and the Chestnut of Rivalto.

3. Brakes and levers for the creation of Organic Districts

The word "sustainability" is surely one of the most used in Italy. A word that evokes empathy, consensus and sharing among large sections of the population. Managers of public administration, representatives of associations, communication and marketing experts, operators of tourism, agriculture and productive sectors, can count, for a long time, on this charming "mantra" to play in conferences, working and negotiation tables, talk show and classrooms of public forum.

It is certainly a pleasure that the statement of sustainability goes ahead quickly, but maybe its practical application not always has an easy life.

The adjective "sustainable" then travels more and more often in the company of other reassuring adjectives, such as responsible, enduring, conscious. However, we must be careful not to make "sustainability" an illusory quality mark to show off for a purely opportunism. Too many territories suffered for years agriculture and tourism in terms of unsustainable and minimally invasive cut in territory value. An outrage of beauty, resources, traditions and culture, balanced for a mere financial support, often insufficient to local economies.

The Organic Districts are, on the contrary, a unique opportunity to make the productive and tertiary activities a means of adding value to the territory. Agriculture and Tourism – by being responsible and integrated –can with caution tap into Organic Districts resources such as the nature, the landscape, the tradition, managing to preserve intact and enriched the territory for the future.

Following the Covid-19 pandemic in Italy the debate on sustainability and ecological transition became even more intensive.

In 2021, for the first time in its history, Italy has a Ministry for Ecological Transition, meaning a specific institution for the transformation of the Italian production system towards a more sustainable model. This is more than simply an enhanced Environment Ministry, but a brand-new concept that aims at subverting the entire approach to production, consumption and lifestyle in the country at large.

Specifically, the Ministry is going to play a big role in the decision on how to spend €70 billion ($84 billion) out of 209 billion ($260 billion) of the Recovery Plan, the European scheme to relaunch Italy, of which green policies constitute more than one third (37%).

The newly founded Ministry is going to gather some of the key responsibilities that normally pertain to the Ministry of Economic Development; specifically, it

is going to accrue all activities revolving around energy policies, transport emissions, alternative energy resources, sustainable development policies, circular economy and related policies. On top of these, the Ministry is going to deal with more classic environmental responsibilities such as waste management, water resources management and environment defense[3].

Surely, among the most important levers for the diffusion of Organic Districts in Italy there's that of the constant advocacy action carried out by the IN.N.E.R. Association in all the Institutions and the representations of the International Organizations (e.g., FAO - Rome).

IN.N.E.R. has also signed in 2017 a protocol of agreement with the Ministry of Agriculture, aimed to protect, enhance and promote the Organic Districts in Italy. Another protocol was signed with environmental and landscape protection organizations, with the aim of promoting Organic Districts in protected Areas (especially national parks).

IN.N.E.R. has also developed an Italian website dedicated (www.biodistretto.net) and one in English (www.ecoregion.info).

The Cilento Bio-District also plays an important role, which, in addiction to accompanying Italian territories in the creation of new Organic Districts, has created a publishing house that publishes the magazine "BIO-DISTRICTS" and several book series on this specific subject.

[3] Irene Dominioni, What's Italy's New Ministry For Ecological Transition, Forbes, Feb 27, 2021

a. Public policies/legislation

In Italy there isn't a specific development policy of Organic Districts.
However, there are several national and regional laws, and private guidelines (e.g., IN.N.E.R.), which regulate in detail their constitution and management.
An additional incentive to the development of Organic Districts could come from the Recovery and Resilience Facility - PNRR (being defined) which, relying on the huge resources provided by the Recovery Plan, represent a key tool for the implementation of ecological transition.

NATIONAL LEGISLATION
The Italian **national Law no. 205 of 27/12/2017 modifies the law n° 228/2001 introducing the Organic Districts in the "Food districts" category**, in order to promote territorial development, cohesion and social inclusion, promote the integration of activities characterized by territorial proximity, ensure food security, reduce the environmental impact of production, reduce food waste and safeguard the territory and the rural landscape through agricultural and agri-food activities.
The effects of this law have not been positive for the Organic Districts, because most of the resources are destined to experiences created ad hoc to take the funds.
The national law on organic agriculture is in the process of approvation by the Italian Parliament. It will also regulate the Organic Districts.
Italy was the first country in the word to have promoted a draft law providing for the recognition and regulation of Organic Districts.
The iter of law's approval in this country, however, is very long and articulate, providing various steps in the two branches of Parliament (House and Senate and in the respective Commissions).
Therefore, although it was approved by the House of Lords on 11 December 2018, just on 13 January 2021 the Senate's Committee Agriculture concluded the examination of the **Draft Law n°988** containing the "Measures for the protection, development and competitiveness of agricultural production, agri-food and aquaculture with organic method".
Now the measure is waiting for further parliamentary passage in the courtroom, both in the Senate and in the House.
We analyze below the specific article on Organic Districts, as it was approved by the Italian Senate's Committee Agriculture.

Art.13 (*Organic Districts*)
1. Without prejudice to Article 13 of the Legislative Decree 18 May 2001, n° 228, which includes the Organic Districts and Bio-Districts among the food districts, Organic Districts are also **local production systems, including an**

interprovincial and interregional nature, with a marked agricultural vocation in which are significant:

a) the cultivation, the animal farming, transformation and food preparation, within the territory identified by the Bio-Disctrict, of organic products in accordance with current regulations;

b) the primary organic production which persists in a supra-municipal territory, including areas belonging to several municipalities.

2. The Organic Districts are also characterized by integration with other economic activities in the area of the district itself and for the presence of important landscape areas, including national and regional protected natural areas referred to the Law of 6 December 1991, n°394, and the areas included in the "Natura 2000" provided by the regulations referred to the decree of the President of the Republic of 8 September 1997, n°357. The Organic Districts are also characterized for the limited use of plant protection products within them. In particular, public bodies may prohibit the use of herbicides for cleaning roads and public areas and may establish compensatory facilities for enterprise. Conventional farmers adopt the necessary practices to prevent accidental pollution of organic crops.
3. Local authorities, individual or associated, may participate in the Organic District, adopting policies for the protection of organic production, for the protection of the environment, for the conservation of agricultural soil and for the protection of biodiversity, as well as research entities who carry out relevant scientific activities.
4. By decree of the Minister, subject to agreement in the standing Conference for the relations between state, the autonomous regions and provinces of Trento and Bolzano in accordance with the Article 3 of the Legislation of 28 August 1997, n°281 are regulated the requirements and conditions for the establishment of Organic Districts. In order to preserve the quality and health characteristic of organic products and to safeguard their image, by decree of the Minister, in agreement with the Minister of the Environment and safeguard of the territory and the sea and with the Minister of economic development, subject to agreement in the standing Conference for the relations between State, the autonomous regions and provinces of Trento and Bolzano in accordance with the Article 3 of the Legislation of 28 August 1997, n°281 appropriate measures are designed to reduce the human impacts on soil, waters and the atmosphere caused by implantations or other installations who carry out the activities set out in the 2010/75/EU Directive of the European Parliament and the Council, of 24 November 2010, and set out in Annex VIII to the second part of Legislation 3 Avril 2006, n°152, subject to the integrated environmental indicated in Article 4, clause 4, letter *c)*, of the same legislative decree, or from other sources of significant risk to organic production, except for

implantations or other installations whose activities is directly connected to the working and transformation of products related to the company's activities.

5. The Organic Districts were created in order to:
   a) promote the conversion to organic production and encourage the sustainable use of natural and local resources in agricultural production processes, as well as ensure the protection of ecosystems, supporting design and innovation in the service of a circular economy;
   b) stimulate and encourage the territorial approach to the conversion and the conservation of organic production, even outside of administrative boundaries, promoting the cohesion and participation of all economic and social actors with the aim of pursuing a careful development to the conservation of resources, using the same in production processes so as to safeguard the environment, health and local diversity;
   c) to simplify, for the organic producers operating in the district, the application of organic certification rules and environmental and territorial certification rules stablished by current legislation;
   d) encourage the development, the enhancement and promotion of the process of preparation, transformation and marketing of organic products;
   e) promote and support multi-functional activities related to organic production such as the administration of organic food in public and collective catering, direct sale of organic products, agritourism and fishing tourism activities, rural tourism, social agriculture, actions to protect, enhance and conserve agricultural and natural biodiversity and to reduce the use of plastics;
   f) promote greater local dissemination and promotion of organic products;
   g) promote and realize participatory research projects with companies and the dissemination of innovative practices.
6. Companies, individuals or associates, organizations of producers and public and private entities that wish to promote the establishment of an Organic District constitute a promoting committee, which presents the request of recognition of the district itself to the region to which they belong. In the case of districts located within in the territory of more than one region, the application for recognition must be submitted to each region. To the participants in the promotion committee compensations, benefits, attendance fees, refunds of expenses or other payments however named are not up.
7. In the Organic Districts that have obtained the legal recognition a Governing Council is constituted, adopting the statutes and organizational rules of the authority, also for the purpose of submission of applications for contributions in European Union's common agricultural policy and

participation in national research programs. The Governing Council is appointed to represent the administrative, economic and commercial body of the district, also with the application of simplified models for the management of administrative practices. To the members of the Governing Council compensations, benefits, attendance fees, refunds of expenses or other payments however named are not up.

8. The autonomous regions and provinces of Trento and Bolzano may provide gradual paths of conversion to the organic method for the recognition of Organic Districts.
9. The Ministry and the regions promote, also through their own institutional *website,* the dissemination of best practices in Organic Districts, enhancing the results obtain, including the setup of cards that contain information, of administrative and technical nature, concerning the activities and projects of development and research related to Organic Districts.
10. The autonomous regions and provinces of Trento and Bolzano may define specific criteria on the basis of which to give priority to the funding projects presented by individual or associated enterprises, or by individual or associated local authorities operating in the territory of Organic District or the Organic District itself.
11. The Organic District promote the establishment of groups of operators, on the basis of Article 36 of regulation (EU) 2018/848 of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 30 May 2018, in order to achieve group certification forms.

REGIONAL LAWS

There are five Italian regions that have a law on Organic Districts.

LIGURIA, Regional law n°66 of 28 December 2009 "Regulation of interventions for the development, protection, qualification and promotion of Ligurian organic productions". In Article 8 the law regulates the districts and organic areas.

SARDINIA, Regional Law n° 16 of 7 August 2014 "Rules on agriculture and rural development: agrobiodiversity, collective mark, districts". Article 30 defines the requirements for the identification in Bio Districts.

LATIUM, Regional Law n°11 of 12 July 2019 "Provisions for the regulation and the promotion of organic districts". Identifies Organic Districts with food districts.

TRENTINO ALTO ADIGE, Trento Province Law n° 16 of 28 July 2021 on the promotion of Organic farming and support for the agricultural economy, with a section dedicated to the Organic Districts.

TUSCANY, Regional Law n°51 of 30 July 2019 "Regulation of Organic Districts". It provides the issue of regional recognition within 90 days of the request. The organic area must be at least 30 % of the agricultural area used. Effectively, it excludes all those realities that focus on the development of agroecological practices and organic non certified. A serious problem, because the majority of small family farms, using alternative commercial channels, often does not need to sell the products with the organic brand. Overall, we have noted that the current regional laws have not been of particular utility to the development of the sector, indeed, they have often generated confusion among the territorial actors. For the future, we hope that, if there are other regional laws, they take into account the work already carried out by existing Organic Districts (they are now present in all regions) and their real needs.

b. Technical aspects

The organic district productive system is based on the organic farming and agroecology best practices, adapted to local conditions. It aims to optimize the health and well being of crops, animals and humans and to maintain and enhance the environment and the landscape.
It is also important to say here that the use of agricultural practices which result in un-natural treatment of animals, waste or residue accumulation and the loss of soil structure and soil fertility are banned in an organic district.
The main components of the productive system are the avoidance of artificial fertilizers and pesticides and the use of crop rotations and husbandry to maintain fertility and to control pests, weeds and diseases.
Soil quality, biodiversity, landscape harmony and happiness of living creatures are key elements for the success of an organic district.
Organic farming and agroecology have all the technical solutions needed to ensure a perfect harmony between nature, cultivated land and people.
Given the importance of the soil element, IN.N.E.R. and GAOD have become full members of **4x1000 initiative** and keep the associated organic districts constantly informed on the objectives and activities.
"Building on solid, scientific documentation and concrete actions on the ground, the "*4 per 1000 Initiative: soils for food security and climate*"aims to show that food security and combating climate change are mutually complementary and to ensure that agriculture is a source of solutions. This initiative consists of a voluntary action plan under the Global Climate Action Agenda (GCAA), backed by an ambitious research program"[4].
Why 4x1000? A "4 per 1000" annual growth rate of the soil carbon stock would make it possible to stop the present increase in atmospheric CO2. This growth rate is not a normative target for every country but is intended to show that even a small increase in the soil carbon pool (i.e. 0.4%, including grasslands and pastures) is a major tool for improving soil fertility and agricultural production and contributing to achieving the long-term objective of limiting the temperature increase to +1.5/2°C, a limit beyond which the scale of the consequences of climate change would be significant. This Initiative is intended to complement the necessary efforts to achieve a comprehensive, global reduction in greenhouse gas emissions across the
economy as a whole. The Initiative is voluntary and it is the responsibility of each member to define its own contribution to achieving its goal.
The "4 per 1000" Initiative aims to improve the organic matter content and promote carbon sequestration in soils through the application of agricultural practices adapted to local situations.
Organic districts are also areas rich in biodiversity.

[4] https://www.4p1000.org/

"Biodiversity encompasses diversity of life on all levels: diversity of species, genetic diversity as well as diversity of habitats and ecosystems. A rich biological diversity is essential for preserving natural processes contributing to man's ability to live. For instance, natural pest regulation, pollination of fruit blossoms by insects, and the decomposition of organic matter into humus. Agricultural policies are increasingly promoting ecologically-oriented farming methods that preserve biodiversity and conserve natural resources. In historical times, a more diverse landscape unfolded through farming from what was once an undifferentiated landscape dominated by forests. Today as well, a farming system that is site-adapted and using extensive forms of cultivation are essential prerequisites for a diverse, species rich landscape"[5].

c. Training components

The educational and training offer on Organic Districts is very high in Italy and distributed to all levels of education, from primary schools (with awareness programs included in POF), in the secondary ones (in particular those that propose agricultural studies), up to universities.
We report below some of the most interesting courses of study.

Since 2018 a Consortium of training institutions, universities, companies, IN.N.E.R. and Bio-District Cilento, promotes a Training Course (supported by Campania Region) for the **Superior technician for the sustainable management of traditional local Agri-food supply chains, focused on organic districts**. The course of 800 Hrs (265 in classroom, 195 laboratories, 340 stage and meetings with stakeholders), allows the access to the International Register of technicians of Organic Districts (www.biodistretto.net/registro-elenco-tecnici/), managed by IN.N.E.R.

The Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari (MAIB), part of the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM) promotes the MOA – Mediterranean Organic Agriculture Master programme that aims at preparing graduates to produce innovation in Mediterranean organic agriculture, creating and maintaining sustainability in the farming system, assisting and contributing to national development of organic legislations and regulatory framework. As part of the Master, organic districts are treated, and study visits are also carried out.

[5] Lukas Pfiffner, Organic agriculture promotes biodiversity. FIBL.
https://www.fibl.org/en/themes/biodiversity-info.html

Among the **pedagogical initiatives** we can highlight **the initiative "From the field to the plate" promoted by Vallo-Novi School in Cilento**, during the Covid-19 Pandemic. An exemplary remote teaching activity, involving the bio experts in the educational activities on the Italian and foreign Organic Districts. An experience certainly to be renewed in other training contexts, even after the pandemic emergency.

Important new training tools, validated at European level, will also be developed with the Erasmus + "EducEcoRegions" Project, in line with the ESD – Education for Sustainable Development- Unesco guidelines. "UNESCO aims to improve access to quality education on sustainable development at all levels and in all social contexts, to transform society by reorienting education and help people develop knowledge, skills, values and behaviours needed for sustainable development. It is about including sustainable development issues, such as climate change and biodiversity into teaching and learning. Individuals are encouraged to be responsible actors who resolve challenges, respect cultural diversity and contribute to creating a more sustainable world"[6].

[6] Education for Sustainable Development https://en.unesco.org/themes/education-sustainable-development

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PORTUGAL

Introduction

It is unanimous the idea that the dynamism and progress of the primary sector, namely Agriculture, in Portugal, involves promoting Agriculture capable of better valuing the role of the farmer, improving his income through the valorization of the food he produces, but also, its invaluable contribution as an active agent in the promotion of the environment and territorial cohesion, contributing to its valorization and protection - example: prevention of forest fires. Public policies that promote the installation of young people in low-density territories must consider the promotion, simultaneously, of organic farming.

Organic farming is attentive to the specific edaphoclimatic conditions of the region where it is practiced, as well as to the natural life cycles of plants and animals, to obtain healthy food that is in harmony with the environment in which it is produced. If there is a need for adaptation, this must be carried out in compliance with organic production standards, considering the sanitary situation, regional and local climate specificities, the stages of development and specific production practices. In this way, organic farming emerges as a viable alternative that aims to produce healthy and high-quality food, promoting sustainable practices with a positive impact on the agricultural ecosystem, namely in the maintenance and increase of biodiversity.

The Portuguese and European market increasingly wants Portuguese organic products. The European market grows on average 15% per year and Portugal has excellent conditions for the organic production of vegetables, fruits, nuts, legumes, and some types of cereals. In animal production, in addition to eggs and meat of different species, the potential in the production of organic dairy products in the Azores stands out.

However, National Production is lacking, and financial incentives are rare, poorly "designed", and when they exist, they promote cultures that do not correspond to the wishes of the citizens. An example of this is the fact that 73.5% of the area cultivated in organic farming is pasture, forage, and arable crops, that is, areas linked to animal production, but there is practically no meat certified as “organic” on the Portuguese market.

In public consultations carried out within the scope of the creation of the National Strategy for Organic Farming, more than 50% of the Portuguese said that they intend to consume in organic, above all, fruits, vegetables, cereals, legumes, dairy products, and some meat.

According to the 2nd Great Sustainability Survey (2019), the Portuguese population intends to consume food produced in a healthier and more

responsible way, so it is known that the promotion of organic farming is increasingly meeting the concerns of consumers who, being increasingly informed and enlightened, they are consciously and increasingly opting for products that are safer for their health and obtained in a more sustainable way. Portugal has a National Strategy for Organic Farming (ENAB) and Action Plan (PA) 2017-27, which is urgent to promote and implement, but which has lacked financial resources to put it into practice.

Due to the multifunctional nature associated with Organic Farming, it increasingly attracts new generations, both of producers and consumers, and new European and even national policies, namely those relating to Climate and Energy Transition, can play a key role in change.

A sign of this was the emergence and realization of four Organic Districts in Portugal, located in Idanha-a-Nova, Alto Tâmega, São Pedro do Sul and Margem Esquerda do Guadiana (MEG). Organic Districts consist of territorial development driven by public policies of an integral and transversal nature, aimed at the economic growth of the respective regions and their sustainability, whether from an economic point of view, or from a social, environmental, and cultural point of view. Organic Districts have the function of promoting, encouraging, and developing organic farming, contributing to local and sustainable development. From the perspective of the multifunctionality of the biological agricultural space, an Organic District must provide the generation of agricultural income through rural tourism, environmental education, and social agriculture. Organic Districts have a social and economic dynamic that is based on a clear logic of diversification of economic activities and, as a rule, adopt short circuits for the commercialization of agricultural products.

1. Situation/evolution of Organic Districts at national level in Portugal

The Organic Districts emerged in Portugal, after the completion of a Master's thesis in Organic Farming, carried out by Custódio Oliveira, at Escola Superior Agrária de Ponte de Lima of the Instituto Politécnico de Viana do Castelo, under the theme "Proposta de desenvolvimento de uma estratégia territorial biológica – o caso do Bio-Distretto e a sua aplicação em Portugal", this work is largely the result of a professional internship carried out in Italy, under the Erasmus Program, developed at the Italian Association of Biological Agriculture (AIAB). in direct collaboration with the Associazione Bio-Distretto Cilento.

Participation in the III Forum of Rural Innovation, on July 27, 2017, in Idanha-a-Nova, as speakers, Emílio Buonomo, President of Organic District do Cilento and Custódio Oliveira, author of the master's Dissertation in Organic District, the interest in creating an Organic District in Portugal was born.

The Municipality of Idanha-a-Nova was represented at the general meeting of the International Network of Eco Regions (INNER), which took place in December 2017 in Ceraso, Italy. Participation resulted from joining this international network, a process in preparation and unprecedented in Portugal. At this meeting, Idanha-a-Nova was identified as a good example and invited to make a presentation of its strategy in the areas of sustainability, organic farming, and green economy.

On February 20, 2018, in the presence of the Secretary of State for Rural Development, the solemn ceremony of accession of the Bio-district of Idanha-a-Nova to INNER was held, represented by President Salvatore Basile and by Directors Emilio Buonomo and Custodio Oliveira.

On May 11, 2018, the International Conference on Bio-districts was held at Forum Braga, during which the constitution of the Portuguese network of Bio-districts INNER was presented. Idanha-a-Nova, the first eco-region in Portugal, was invited to share their experience. The Bio-distict of Idanha-a-Nova was represented by Armindo Jacinto, Mayor, by Catarina Pereira, President of the Municipal Center for Culture and Development, and by Jean-Claude Rodet, from Centro Documental Raiano, an institution at the service organic production and natural health based in Idanha-a-Nova. At this conference, Armindo Jacinto was invited to present the strategy of Idanha-a-Nova as a Bio-district, due to its pioneering character that has stimulated the creation of a network of Eco Regions in the country. "Idanha-a-Nova's adhesion to INNER has allowed us to work and promote the council's potential, from companies to tourist, gastronomic, cultural products, among others, in a differentiating and more sustainable way", summarizes Armindo Jacinto.

The Bio-district of Idanha-a-Nova was the target of an episode of Biosfera, a RTP program that emphasizes environmental issues. Speaking to Biosfera, the Mayor of Idanha-a-Nova, Armindo Jacinto, said that there are already biological products in the municipality in the areas of bread, cheese, meat, cosmetics, oils, seeds, liqueurs, vegetables, and fruit, but he adds that this dynamic also encompasses sectors such as restaurants, hotels, or tourist entertainment. The program is available on RTP Play: https://www.rtp.pt/play/p4238/e350848/biosfera.

The Bio-district of Idanha-a-Nova and the innovative Green Valley Food Lab project, implemented in this municipality, which already has 55 companies installed, are highlighted in the magazine of the Associação Portuguesa de Horticultura, the largest technical-scientific association in the country in the agrarian sciences. The magazine is dedicated to organic farming and includes an interview with the Mayor of Idanha-a-Nova, Armindo Jacinto, about the strategy to make this municipality the "Silicon Valley" of the Rural World. Where it is stated that Idanha-a-Nova is the municipality of Portugal with the largest agricultural area certified in Organic Production Mode, however the objective is to increase the biological certification of all products and producers in the region, through the implementation of a program for help entrepreneurs convert to organic farming.
On November 23, 2018, INNER Portugal organizes the III International Conference on Eco-Regions in Torres Vedras, Portugal. Although it is not a Eco-Region, it has launched several initiatives aimed at the ecological transition of the territory. For example, activated Organic canteens in schools. To facilitate this process of ecological transition, it organized the III Portuguese Conference on Eco-Regions, combining it with a seminar on the Mediterranean Diet, further proof of the interest in establishing sustainable local agro-food systems. On November 25, 2018, a visit was made to the Termas de S. Pedro do Sul. The mentor of the Bio-district of São Pedro do Sul, Dr. Ângela Abreu, made us discover the villages of Covas do Monte, Pena, Fujaco, Manhouce, where the oldest Portuguese traditions are transmitted. On the same day, the Public Forum of Eco-regions was also held, at Balneário Auditório Rainha D. Amélia, in the Termas de S. Pedro do Sul. The meeting was presented by Dr. Ângela Abreu, from the Municipality of São Pedro do Sul and by the Vice-President. President Pedro Mauro, who illustrated municipal policies for organic farming. Representatives from producers, consumers, tour operators, schools and universities were among the numerous participants. The municipal program was introduced to support the conversion of farms to organic farming, which operates both economically, through support for conversion costs, and at the

level of technical assistance, through a stipulated agreement with the Politécnico de Viseu.
On November 26, Dr. Ângela Abreu accompanied INNER representatives on a field visit to the main biological realities existing in the municipality. The company Vasco Pinto & AS LDA produces, processes, and distributes high quality organic products, thanks to the experience acquired by the owners during 20 years in Switzerland, essentially in the production of organic aromatic herbs.
After the creation of the Bio-district of São Pedro do Sul, the need arose to increase the network, also with other realities in other neighboring municipalities. In fact, although the commitment of the Municipality of São Pedro do Sul in launching a territorial organic experiment is appreciable, the need to broaden the scope of the project, perhaps extending it to the entire sub-region of Lafões, which is part of the region center of Portugal, and comprising 15 municipalities: Aguiar da Beira, Carregal do Sal, Castro Daire, Mangualde, Mortágua, Nelas, Oliveira de Frades, Penalva do Castelo, Santa Comba Dão, São Pedro do Sul, Sátão, Tondela, Vila Nova de Paiva, Viseu, Vouzela. The Commission that promoted the Bio-district will have to work on this basis, in agreement with the Municipality of São Pedro do Sul.
On June 27, 2019, in Serpa (Portugal) the Meeting for the presentation and adhesion of MEG to INNER was held. The meeting was attended by Mr. Tomé Pires, Mayor of Serpa, Eng.º David Machado, President of the Rota do Gualiana Association, Salvatore Basile, President of INNER, Custódio Oliveira, Coordinator of INNER Portugal, representatives of municipalities and organic producers.
On October 25, 2019, at CADES in Serpa, the session of adhesion of MEG to INNER took place. The initiative, promoted by the Associação Rota do Guadiana-ADI, also had the founders, the five municipalities of MEG (Serpa, Mértola, Moura, Mourão and Barrancos), AGROBIO, CCBIO and INIAV, I.P. The Eco-Region process seeks to link entrepreneurship to efforts towards sustainability. In this logic, it is intended to strengthen the economic role of agrarian activities, favoring the commercialization of small production that, when framed in certification and agglomeration processes, can reach quality and volume capable of penetration in new markets, also generating economic effects and social issues. Bio-district intends to open new alternatives for business agriculture in MEG's municipalities, focusing on differentiation through quality and environmental performance. Through promotion on marketing platforms to create new market opportunities, where the articulation between producers and consumers will be more effective. In addition to the founders, CCDRA, DRAPAL, Parish Councils, Producer Organizations, Companies, IPSS and Schools, as well as several individual promoters, were also present at the ceremony for the delivery of the MEG

integration certificate to INNER. Bio MEG is the fourth Eco-region in Portugal and the first in Alentejo.
The International Congress of Eco-Regions was held from 17 to 21 July 2019 in Monsanto (Idanha-a-Nova) within the framework of the International Forum Relevant Territories for Sustainable Food Systems (FISAS). This event will allow INNER to join for the first time and had the representation of Spain, France, Italy, Sweden, Tunisia, as well as the participation of the GIAH1 secretariat of the United Nations, which allowed a joint reflection and exchange of experiences from the various territories, with the presentation and sharing of cases of international success, allowing the identification, discussion and reflection of good practices associated with the development of rural territories. Several themes were addressed, within the scope of the sustainable development objectives and the strategies adopted for the implementation and consolidation of INNER for the development of regional, national, and international policies.
For a greater reach of the event, the possibility of participation via streaming was also made available, where it is possible to watch the congress again, through the following link:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1mpM5xoXDfw

The writing of the "Manual das Bio-Regiões" is currently in progress, which aims to standardize and propose a strategic plan for the implementation and development of the Bio-Regions model in a manner adjusted to the reality of rural territories in Portugal, ensuring the preservation of agricultural systems and the promotion of sustainable food and diets. This manual will be another tool to support and inform Portuguese territories interested in joining INNER and the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS).
For the construction of the methodology manual regarding the identification of Eco-regions, three groups/workshops were held, with plenary sessions and working groups to discuss:
- Governance of the Eco-region, based on the dynamic preservation of GIAHS;
- Actors, contributions and responsibilities;
- Eco-region recognition criteria, based on the dynamic preservation of GIAHS.
For the construction of the manual, three workshops were developed, which took place on February 18, 2020 at the Escola Superior Agrária de Viseu, in which the Bio-district of São Pedro do Sul participated, the second on February 26, 2020 at the Centro Musibéria de Serpa, with the collaboration of the Bio-district of Margem Sul do Guadiana and the third on November 10, 2020, through the Zoom platform, with the participation of Bio-district in the preparation of Tâmega e Sousa.
These workshops allowed the participation of several entities, such as associations of municipalities, city councils, local development associations,

regional directorates for agriculture and fisheries, agricultural companies, catering entrepreneurs, tourism, and individual participants. This allowed for a joint and participative reflection between local actors already integrated in INNER, others in the process of adhesion and national and international experts in governance, roles of the project actors, parameters necessary for recognition and the main steps in the implementation of an Eco-region. These meetings allowed us to understand which factors should be adapted to the proposal of Eco-Regions in light of the diversity of Portuguese territories, contexts and challenges.

Following the International Congress of Eco-Regions in 2019, partnerships were established with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP) and GIAHS. Following the protocol made directly with the CPLP, it allowed the beginning of negotiations to move forward with the model implementation of Eco-regions in São Tomé, Cape Verde and Brazil.

CPLP Member States unanimously approved a regional initiative of GIAHS in the Action Plan of the CPLP Food and Nutritional Security Council (CONSAN-CPLP). Since then, the first systems in Portugal, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Angola and São Tomé and Príncipe have been pre-identified in a participatory manner. The holding of this International Seminar under FISAS contributed to a greater understanding of the relationship between the dynamic protection of these systems and the SDGs and to the establishment of partnerships with other initiatives within the scope of the implementation of the activity to promote sustainable food systems in CPLP. In this context, the possibility of the GIAHS, and respective dynamic preservation plans, being able to constitute virtuous nuclei of a broader territorial pact for the promotion of sustainable food systems will be evaluated.

According to FAO, SIPAM are systems and landscapes, transformed natural ecosystems that reflect the cultural evolution of humanity, the diversity of their knowledge and the relationship they have developed with nature and biodiversity. These agricultural and food systems are currently under threat. In this context, FAO patrimonialized and classified 58 systems in 21 countries. In 2018, the Agro-Silvo-Pastoril do Barroso System was classified in Portugal. The participatory construction of a GIAHS multi-stakeholder action plan emphasizes the promotion of family farming, in line with the Pact foreseen for Eco-Region recognition.

2. Detailed description of all the experiences in progress

ORGANIC DISTRICTS IN PORTUGAL

Alto Tâmega (Boticas, Chaves, Montalegre, Ribeira de Pena, Valpaços, Vila Pouca de Aguiar) (2018)

S. Pedro do Sul (2018)

Idanha-a-Nova (2018)

Margem Esquerda do Guadiana (Serpa, Barrancos, Mértola, Moura, Mourão) (2019)

Location of the Bio-districts of Alto Tâmega, S. Pedro do Sul, Idanha-a-Nova and Margem Esquerda do Guadiana.

The following is a description of the Organic Districts already established in Portugal.

BIO-DISTRICTS OF IDANHA-A-NOVA

I

n 2017, INNER and the Municipality of Idanha-a-Nova initiated contacts to study the possibility of creating an Organic District in Portugal. After a long participatory process, in February 2018, Idanha-a-Nova became the first Portuguese municipality to integrate INNER, in the presence of the Secretary of State for Rural Development, in a solemn ceremony for the adhesion of the Bio-district of Idanha-a-Nova, to INNER, represented by President Salvatore Basile and directors Emilio Buonomo and Custodio Oliveira.

The Municipal Center for Culture and Development (CMCD), in partnership with the Municipality of Idanha-a-Nova, manages the Bio-district of Idanha-a-Nova. The CMCD is an integral part of a whole situation created with the foundation, interest, and responsibility for the work to be developed.

Currently, Idanha-a-Nova is considered an organic council, the result of the work and promotion of the potential of a rural territory that aims at progress based on sustainability, on the enhancement of quality, always in accordance with European policies and trends in world production and consumption.

The Collaborative Laboratory (CoLab) FoodLab was publicly presented on October 17, 2019, in Idanha-a-Nova, where it is headquartered, and aims to place Portugal at the forefront of food production.
CoLab has the support of the Municipality of Idanha-a-Nova and brings together 14 partners from academia and business who will test various technologies to improve food production processes in terms of CO_2 mitigation, environmental impact, combating climate change, absence of the use of synthetic chemicals, water management, preservation of biodiversity and the efficiency of the entire value chain. In addition to this, CoLab also aims to stimulate the creation of qualified employment, which generates economic and social value, encouraging research and innovation models that bring together companies, universities and research centers.
The municipality of Idanha-a-Nova started the project " Hortas Pedagógicas - Food Lab Kids" in the Free Time Activities Centers in Ladoeiro, Monsanto, Penha Garcia, Rosmaninhal and Termas de Monfortinho, during the summer holiday period of 2020. This project aims to develop activities so that children can learn to cultivate a vegetable garden, allowing them to create living learning laboratories related to rural entrepreneurship, agriculture, and vegetable production.
In the field of education, the municipality of Idanha-a-Nova edited two children's books in 2020, entitled "À Mesa com a Natureza" and "A Arte de Cultivar", dedicated to promoting healthy eating and sustainable agriculture in a didactic way and creative.
The book "À Mesa com a Natureza" proposes a journey through the world of food and the way we cook affects our health and the Planet. For its part, "A Arte de Cultivar" reveals the path to a balance between food production and sustainability, addressing concepts such as organic farming and the importance of caring for the soil, water, plants and animals. The publication of the books is part of the Integrated and Innovative Plan to Combat School Failure, promoted by Comunidade Intermunicipal da Beira Baixa (CIMBB).

Currently, the Municipality of Idanha-a-Nova is developing the Bio-Região Market, with the aim of:
- Support the commercialization of local products, providing a close relationship between the local producer and the consumer;
- Encourage the search for products originating in the territory of Idanha-a-Nova;
- Promote associations of local producers;
- Promote the purchase of agricultural and processed products originating in Idanha-a-Nova;
- Preserve local products, specialties and traditions and captivate new producers.

BIO-DISTRICTS OF ALTO TÂMEGA

The Bio-district of Alto Tâmega comprises the municipalities of Boticas, Chaves, Montalegre, Ribeira de Pena, Valpaços and Vila Pouca de Aguiar, which are part of the Comunidade Intermunicipal do Alto Tâmega (CIMAT). The adhesion of the Bio-district of Alto Tâmega was formalized on November 21, 2018, during the II International Conference on Eco-regions, in the auditorium of the Câmara Municipal de Vila Pouca de Aguiar.

CIMAT covers an approximate area of 2922 km² and a resident population of 94 371 inhabitants, where agricultural and agro-industrial activities are very important in this territory of low population density. High quality endogenous resources represent one of the main differentiating factors in these municipalities, many of which are guaranteed protected designations of origin (PDO), with emphasis on products such as meat, honey, chestnuts, potatoes, sausages, "folar", among others.
To increase agricultural innovation in rural areas through organic farming and the agro-ecological model of production and consumption recommended by Eco-regions, it is necessary to promote the participation of the various actors involved in rural development, through a partnership work that will mobilize entities the scientific and education system, local, regional, and national public entities, farmers, the community, among others.

CIMAT's strategy for the Bio-district of Alto Tâmega aims to achieve the following results:

- Organization of three working groups with agents related to the development of the territory (municipalities, public administration entities, associations for the development of the territory, farmers, community, etc.);

- Use digital marketing to raise awareness and mobilize the community for the Bio-district concept;

- Organize public sessions in the various municipalities to communicate to the community the strategy of the Bio-district of Alto Tâmega;

- Conducting field visits to the exploration of organic farming, in order to encourage the adherence to the biological and agro-ecological production model to producers in the Tâmega region;

- Organization of workshops to train conventional producers who intend to convert to Organic farming, with the objective of creating a movement that boosts the growth of the agricultural area and the business volume of farms for organic;

- Elaboration of the regulation and contract for the adhesion of producers to the organic basket;

- Stimulate the consumption of organic products in the Tâmega region;

- Preserve and enhance biodiversity and cultural, natural and landscape resources;

- To make children and parents aware of the importance of organically produced food, through the creation of educational gardens in schools and the preparation of a weekly Organic meal.

BIO-DISTRICTS OF S. PEDRO DO SUL

The Municipality of S. Pedro do Sul has developed over the last 20 years a work to enhance the agricultural activity, providing technical support to the producer, streamlining short circuits, and promoting the spas and mountain tourism as commercial channels for local products.

After the adhesion of the region of Idanha-a-Nova to INNER, the Municipality of S. Pedro do Sul started to take a stand in the direction of joining this movement. In September 2018, the Municipality of S. Pedro do Sul began the first contacts with INNER and the INNER representative in Portugal. After the elaboration of the strategy outline for the Bio-district and the recognition of the necessary conditions to become a Bio-district, a pre-accession to INNER was made.
After this, the working group contacted several producers, schools, among other entities and promoted the meeting of founders of the Association of the Bio-district of S. Pedro do Sul (ABRE), created on March 20, 2019, and which

was attended by the presence of 40 partners (producers, local authorities, hotels, a group of schools, IPSS, Parish Councils, the 2 GALs, Termalistur).

ABRE in partnership with the municipality of São Pedro do Sul, managed to implement 9 editions of a program of organic meals for children (about 600 students per edition), and participated in other activities promoted by the municipality, such as the VII Termas Handball Cup where it managed provide organic food for the preparation of more than 1500 meals in a single event.

This process was concluded on April 3, 2019, during the International Symposium on Good Practices in Tourism, with the formal adhesion of the S. Pedro do Sul region to INNER. São Pedro do Sul thus becomes the third Bio-district to be created in Portugal.
Several biological agriculture farms are in S. Pedro do Sul, bringing together actors with recognized dynamics at local and national level (Vasco Rocha Pinto, Casa do Aido, Quinta da Comenda, Mais Ecológico), among other producers, totaling around 30 producers in organic farming.

After formally joining INNER, ABRE immediately began to develop various initiatives and events of a local nature, such as "Vila Maior Aldeia Bio", the VI Festa da Vitela da Lafões, SIBTUR, in the organization and promotion of the ORGANIC market at Termas de São Pedro do Sul, in the promotion of the ORGANIC weeks on the HORECA channel, but also in the realization of the IV International Eco-Regions in Braga, at the I World Congress of Eco-regions in Idanha-a-Nova, in partnership with the municipality of São Pedro do Sul in the "À Descoberta da Bio-Região" programs, managing 22 visits to organic farms in the region where a total of 543 participants took part, among many other activities.

The municipal strategy for the Bio-district of S. Pedro do Sul focuses on the following pillars:

1. Sustainable production: Promote the change of agricultural practices to more sustainable modes of production (organic farming):
   - Technical support to producers;
   - Monetary support for organic certification for producers who adopt this mode of production;
   - Organization of training courses on Organic Farming, Good Agricultural Practices, among other topics;
   - I support the birth of indigenous breeds of cattle;
   - Introduction of a participatory and product quality assurance system.

2. Short distribution channels (Product with KM 0)
   - Producers Market: "Terras de S. Pedro";

- Events aimed at the promotion and sale of products from the region (Feira da Laranja; Feira da Vitela de Lafões; Feijão.Com; Vila Maior Aldeia Bio, Festival of Chestnut and Honey);
- Creation of an online store in the Bio-Region Platform;
- Promotion of Producers' Markets in Termas de S. Pedro do Sul;
- Promotion of the sale of local products in collective catering.

3. Sustainable and healthy food implemented through a Municipal Food Policy with the following objectives:
   - Promote the local food culture and consumption of local, seasonal produce;
   - It encourages the consumption of products from sustainable agriculture;
   - Decrease waste;
   - Improve population health.

BIO-DISTRICTS OF MARGEM ESQUERDA DO GUADIANA

The application for recognition of the Left Bank of the Guadiana as a Bioregion was presented in April 2019 jointly by the municipalities of Serpa, Moura, Mértola, Barrancos and Mourão, the Associação Rota do Guadiana and INIAV. On October 25, 2019, the creation of the Bio-district of Margem Esquerda do Guadiana was formalized, thus becoming the fourth Bio-district to be created in Portugal.

The strategy defined by MEG has as main objectives:

- Recognition and enhancement of products associated with territories through the appreciation of primary or transformed organic productions and their connection with culture, gastronomy and other tourist products and services;
- Recognition and appreciation of agriculture as a central activity in the production of healthy foods and in boosting the local economy, since primary organic productions are fundamental elements in a Bio-district;
- The promotion and participation of joint work between rural development agents aimed at schools, organic farmers from several sectors and other service providers, including hotels and restaurants. The project intends to carry out a medium-term strategy for the implementation and management of the Bio-district whose governance model will be participated;

- Transfer good practices and knowledge to qualify the intervention of rural development agents through the holding and participation of seminars;
- Promote the image and potential of rural territories, associating the territory with organic production and a healthy lifestyle, to add value to the territory and its economic agents.

With a view to structuring MEG's network of organic producers, the Rota do Guadiana-ADI has developed several activities that structure its consolidation, such as:

- Survey of the number of organic farmers at MEG, with a view to getting to know the reality, and establishing future contacts;
- Application of a survey directed at MEG's organic farming producers, in order to diagnose the sector and collect information for a digital platform;
- Promotion of a 50-hour training action in Organic Farming for several entrepreneurs, with the intention of setting up or converting their production areas to organic farming.

3. Brakes and levers for the creation of Organic Districts

The strength of Bio-districts resides essentially in the incorporation of a collective strategy, with common objectives, which allow to present and defend the territory as a collective rather than a dispersed set of initiatives.

LEVERS

The example of Bio-districts already implemented, financial support from various sources, national and local political support and a territorial approach based on local partnerships are important levers that drive the creation and implementation of the Bio-districts model.
Through of the Programa de Desenvolvimento Rural 2014-2020, the creation of the "Manual das Bio-Regiões" is planned, which aims to parameterize and develop the strategic planning of the Bio-districts model in a manner adjusted to the reality of rural territories in Portugal, assuming the dynamic preservation of agricultural systems and the promotion of sustainable food systems and diets. The manual will be essential to support and inform Portuguese territories interested in joining INNER and GIAHS, regarding the correct implementation, operation and monitoring of the recommended development model. To carry out this project, a partnership was created

consisting of CMCD, AGROBIO, DGADR, Municipality of Idanha-a-Nova and ACTUAR.
The application of Lei n.º 34/2019 de 22 maio, which defines the selection and acquisition criteria for food products, promoting the sustainable consumption of local production in public canteens. For the purposes of this law, public canteens are all those whose management is ensured by the services of the central, regional and local administration, as well as public higher education institutions, public institutes that have the nature of personalized services or public funds.

BRAKES

- Reduced number of producers in organic farming;
- Deficits in the organization of agricultural production and difficulties in marketing it;
- Little articulation between agriculture, environment and tourism;
- Marketing policies with little impact;
- Possible increase in agricultural land abandonment;
- Predictable decrease in the number of farmers, with a greater number of larger farms.

Considering the small number of producers in organic farming, it is necessary to do a great job to change the current scenario. For this to happen, it is necessary to develop dissemination and training actions. For the Bio-districts project to have a territorial dimension, it is necessary that the universe of agricultural entrepreneurs who produce in organic production can reach around 10%. For this, it is necessary to encourage current and future producers to convert to this mode of production, a process that could take approximately two to three years. Thus, it is very important to carry out a strategy with associations and producers for the conversion to organic farming.

a. Public policies/legislation

In Portugal, the Despacho n.º 4680/2012, dos Gabinetes dos Ministros Adjunto e dos Assuntos Parlamentares e da Economia e do Emprego e da Ministra da Agricultura, do Mar, do Ambiente e do Ordenamento do Território, mentions that: in accordance with the «Europe 2020» strategy, and in order to ensure the sustainable development of rural areas, the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on support for rural development by EAFRD stipulates that Programa de Desenvolvimento Rural 2014-2020 is focused on six priorities, including improving the competitiveness of all types of agriculture, the viability of farms and promoting the

organization of food chains, namely through promotion in local markets and short supply chains.
These government concerns legitimize the conviction that this project makes perfect sense in the context of Portuguese territory, as it shares the same principles. Likewise, the XIX Governo Constitucional's Program defines that one of the strategic objectives for Portuguese agriculture is to guarantee transparency in the production – transformation – distribution relationships of the food chain and to promote the creation and dynamization of proximity markets. In pursuit of this objective, the program defines measures, such as the creation of a flexible legal status and an adequate fiscal and financial framework, to promote the improvement of the productivity of smaller farms and the creation of markets for the marketing of local products and of superior quality, in collaboration with local authorities. The "Portugal sou eu" initiative, which focuses on valuing national production and local production, also contributes to positively frame the objectives defined and proposed in this study.

b. Technical aspects

The project cycle may consist of six fundamental phases, interconnected with each other:

1. The identification of an indicative strategy (individualization of the process and the main methodologies financed to change an existing situation);
2. The definition of goals;
3. Plan the activity needed to achieve the goals;
4. Find the resources needed to carry out the project (financing plan);
5. The performance of individual acts (project phases);
6. Valuing and monitoring the success and impact of the activities carried out.

This methodology provides an integrated approach between the different phases of the project in the systematic definition of cause and effect. The local development program must determine the concept of developing multiple alternative and complementary scenarios. All local actors (institutions, producer associations, citizens associations, social workers, etc.) must be able to give an opinion in the project and the necessary planning.
The sustainable rural management model (environmental, social and economic) has its roots in organic farming, based on specific norms defined by IFOAM and regulated at European level by a complex set of legislation.
In this biological model, in addition to trying to convert agricultural companies, it is also intended to convert the territory. The entire production

chain, from the factory supplier to the retail point of sale, must be controlled and certified.
The Eco-região project has a territorial approach based on local partnerships. In Portugal there are Local Development Associations (ADL) that have articulated and integrated the agricultural dimension into rural development. Since agricultural activity strongly marks the rural territory, and the greater its integration with the dynamics of the territory, the greater the chances of sustainable competitiveness and greater social cohesion.
Thus, it is essential to integrate and work directly with the ADL's, as well as partners of this project. The ADL's through the structural funds (FEADER), provide the LEADER Cooperation, this cooperation allows to support the exchange between the Local Action Groups (GAL) and groups from other neighboring regions with a strong stimulus for the joint realization of projects, as well as of other countries. This program has an integrated approach, allowing its adaptation to local realities, specifically in rural areas. The Bio-district project is of great importance for the image of the Municipalities, allowing the creation of a brand that also has the function of promoting rural tourism.
The preservation of the landscape also has consequences for other activities that take place in rural areas. Tourism depends to a large extent on maintaining the characteristics of the countryside. It is a growing sector that also has the power to stimulate other activities such as culture, gastronomy, commerce and production of local products.
Another of the partners that will be very important to bring to favor the development of this project is the Intermunicipal Community of the geographical area of the municipalities.
The Regional Directorates of Agriculture, as an institutional partner, have the mission of participating in the formulation and execution of policies in the areas of agriculture and rural development, in articulation with the institutions of the central services.
The Municipal Council, representing the local government, has a series of mechanisms and actions to support the development of this project.
AGROBIO represents producers in organic farming and is of great importance in providing technical support to its members. It is an essential partner for the start and development of this project.
The producer organization has a high potential to promote and develop their products.
Companies in the agri-food sector and in the production of agricultural technical means can join the project and benefit from the local concentration of organic companies, to supply technical teams and production of raw materials for food processing. Companies in the tourism and gastronomic sector can expand and improve their offer through bio-location-season menus and visits

to the most important farms, which allow visitors to live experiences that interact with cultural, educational and leisure aspects.

c. Training components

Research and training institutions are very important in this process. The county(ies) that have higher education establishments, Escola Superior Agrária, which has a teaching staff of great experience and works and research of great relevance. The Professional Schools of Agriculture, as well as other entities in professional training, are very important in transmitting knowledge and experience. The councils are made up of various associations which, as an integral part of the project, will be called upon to develop work to promote and develop, in their specific areas, the guiding principles of this project. In addition to the associations that make up the region, it is necessary to present other national associations, such as AGROBIO, which is a national association of organic producers, which makes it an important partner in this project.

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FRANCE

The shift of Western agriculture in the 1960s was "*based primarily on a chemical approach*." The yields achieved allowed "*an apparent availability of calories per person never met in history*", but with high environmental impacts, and without solving the following paradox: "*more than 800 million people are considered food insecure*".
Today, the development of agroecological approaches allows a fundamental reflection on the dominant economic model by listing the impacts on environment and human health. Agroecology calls for a paradigm shift that requires cross examining agriculture and public policies to be implemented in terms of the long-term sustainability and resilience of systems. These questions open up crucial issues: To produce healthily and without worsening the erosion of biodiversity and the destruction of nature, how can cost be included in economic balances that assess only quantities at the expense of quality whatever the scales? How much are consumers willing to pay for a proper die ? How can we ensure that farmers are fairly paid during the transition period, which means subsidizing expenses as long as the system is not yet reached the ecological balance? [7]
To all these questions, researches, private or public initiatives are emerging and trying to provide answers. Public policies are presenting agroecology as an inspiring new model. Ecoregions could be one of the possible answers for responsible agriculture and resilient territories. That is what we will try to set out in this document in relation to the French experience.

What is an Organic District (or Eco-Region or Bio-District?

In France, there is not yet a consensus definition of what an organic district/eco-region/bio-district is. We encounter several references and definitions.

A first definition Is ecologically charged. It concerns a fairly large geographical area (aquatic or terrestrial) characterized by the uniqueness of its climate, its ecological characteristics, its fauna and flora. The Everglades wetlands are an ecoregion example. So, it is all about **ecological region or bioregion**. Looking

[7] **AFD;** FEEDING HUMANS, PRESERVING ECOSYSTEMS TOWARDS THE AGRO-ECOLOGICAL TRANSITION
https://www.afd.fr/fr/actualites/vers-la-transition-agro-ecologique

at this terminology describing a particular biotope, a second definition can be included that refers to the **Ecoterritories.** A third definition made by the association "Les colibris" defines an ecoregion as being a reorganization of an ecoregional space whose food production system respects the principles of agrobiology.

There are other examples of national communities planning to create ecoregions in their territory, but the state of play and objectives are highly variable adapted to a wide variety of situations. This is the example of the Ile de France in 2016 whose project is to make the first ecoregion Europe with a budget dedicated to environment, energy and agriculture, the amount of 84.4 million euros. Iam talking about a triple challenge: to ensure the health and quality of life of francilians, to create jobs and wealth by focusing on new energy production channels and to fight against inequalities. Among the actions that will be undertaken is the development of an Air Pact to improve air quality,to develop renewable energies in order to support production Infrastructure. Finally, the preservation of nature with the aim, among other things, of combating the resurgence of wild deposits.

https://www.iledefrance.fr/un-budget-pour-faire-de-lile-de-france-la-premiere-eco-region-deurope

Thus defined, an ecoregion ensures a profitable economic strategy in the short and long term for communities, citizens, environment and of course future generations**. The ecoregion** is de facto a spatial framework, that allows the implementation of the **principle of eco-regionality[8]: to consume an ecologically, socially responsible, and economically viable product, produced and/or processed as close as possible to its place of production.**

In this context, the ecoregion concept considers the territory as an ecosystem in its own right. We find ourselves in the working-pattern of a cell with its own metabolism (catabolism and anabolism). This form of **territorial metabolism** is the expression of a crystallization on the ground of a very visionary political strategy since it integrates the intergenerational and multifunctional dimension of each action that is decided on its perimeter. **The principle of eco-regionality is part of a policy of managing climate, energy, health and food risks while allowing the sustainable reconstruction of a region's immune system.** The

[8] http://www.ekopedia.fr/wiki/%C3%89cor%C3%A9gion

ecoregion would become the place where could be found a factual answer to global warming by managing the flow of primary and secondary energies circulating on its territory. Thus, any action within the perimeter of an ecoregion must be able to assess its environmental impact and its ability to respond to issues related to food sovereignty and think over long term integrated streams from "fork to fork", from production to consumption. It also means setting up integrated channels in the territory by reactivating or creating new tools of proximity, production, processing, conservation, consumption, waste treatment.

The formalization on site of those definitions can be found in two projects. In the Limousin and the Diois between 2002 and 2006 the concept of ecoregion emerged. The main objective was **to restore the food sovereignty of the territories at a regional level by encouraging a logic of relocation and environmental sustainability with the advantages associated to organic production methods.** This approach also aimed to build a "toolbox" for decision-makers to implement an eco-regional approach. In order to contribute to a general reflection on the future of our societies. Following the Limousin meetings that took place in Limoges in 2006 around the concept of ecoregion, a first book has been published, *Lands of the Future for a Sustainable Way*. The authors analyzed the stakes of "smart agriculture" for healthy eating and developed what could be the mesh of a "territorial intelligence" that would facilitate the implementation of a lasting change of territories. Concrete examples and synthetic sheets complete this work, which aims to be an operational tool to build a more economical and autonomous society.

Other researches in various areas of expertise have shown the harms of an internationalized food chain that moves products from one continent to another at the cost of road and air transport consuming a very large amount of CO2. They have informed against the evils of a globalized, profit-only economy, where enrichment produces new impoverishments and proletarianizations. They also show that technical and economic gains are causing further social regressions by losing in quality what is gained in quantity and where partial economic rationality causes global economic irrationality. For global experts working for alternative systems, this irrationality leads to the asphyxiation of humanity: it would take three Planets Earth to continue the Western way of life.

To solve these issues in a practical way, we will present concrete examples taking place on the French territory as well as public policies that encourage local food systems to make an agroecological transition that aims to produce in a more environmentally friendly way by limiting the impacts on climate change all by responding to consumer demand.

Indeed. as the definition of an ecoregion is not stabilized at the national level, we will explore examples that are close to it. and could reconcile the three definitions above. The example of the Drôme Valley and Limousin project have common points: they define themselves as laboratories of innovations and experiments working for sustainable development that aims to make the territory an eco-territory of reference while developing sustainable and livable activities. These territorialized projects echo the methodologies used in living labs who experiment and innovate to succeed in their agroecological transition. At the same time, in France territorial food projects are local initiatives that are similar to ecoregions but more diffusely on the French territory. But before we go further in the development of examples, let's see what public policies put forward as a framework for the development of such initiatives.

1. Situation/evolution of Organic Districts at national level in France

Since the Agricultural Guidance Act of July 1999, the 2012 law has advocated the agroecological transition of the territories. This transition within the agricultural worlds (Hervieu et al., 2010) confirms the trend towards biodiversity conservation suggested by analyses of ecosystem services (Granjou and Mauz, 2010). There is a gradual break in conventional agricultural production methods that are concerned with protecting ecosystems and biodiversity. The Ministry of Agriculture has put in place several measures to empower the act of producing for the preservation of biodiversity and natural resources. This is a major historical step because for a long time it was resistant to critics pointing to the negative externalities inherent in a predominantly agro-industrial and productive activity of agriculture. **Since 2012, it has been the agroecological transition plan that guides agricultural public policies with the idea of "promoting the role of agriculture in the maintenance of biodiversity" through practices that respect life, keys to the biodiversity survival.** This plan comes in a variety of forms and programs, particularly through scaling up agroecology by allowing farmers and producers to sell their products on local markets. Many levers to develop agroecology are activated at the territorial level by setting up a national legislative and administrative apparatus in favour of these initiatives. It means supporting local economic development initiatives, networking, training of peasant organizations, cooperatives, or other collective structures around alternative agricultural systems.

In the new recovery plan for the French economy, 2020-2022, the measures of the "Agricultural Transition, Food and Forest" component have three aims:

- strengthening food sovereignty;
- accelerating the agroecological transition to give all French people access to healthy, sustainable and local food;
- adapting agriculture and forests to climate change.

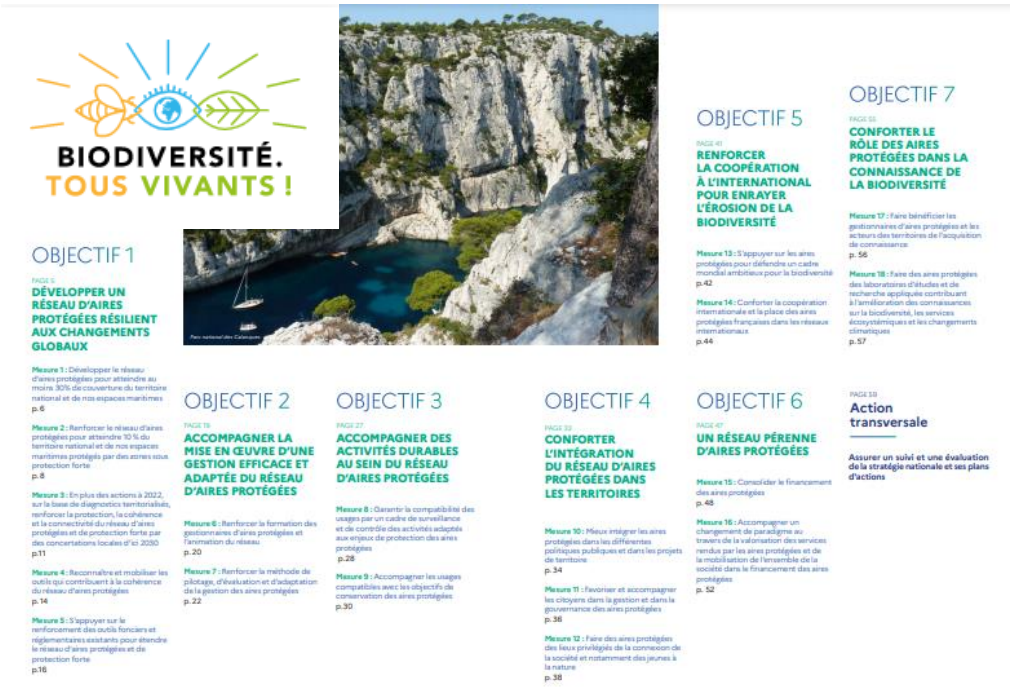
While the agro-ecological project is based primarily on agronomic principles aimed at managing systemic balances at the farm level, it concerns all person involved in agriculture (see structure of the 16 sites of the national plan). It is particularly relevant to the Agricultural Research, Development and Education apparatus and policies to support research and development (see CASDAR and PNDAR policy in particular). It also refers to the adaptation of the economic sectors that organize the collection, processing or marketing of agricultural production and constitutes a major dimension downstream or even upstream of production.[9]

This recovery plan is divided into different national and regional programs to make the ecological transition operational. The most important are related to the promotion of **organic agriculture,** the reduction of inputs by 50% in the conventional with the **EcophytoTer** project, **carbon sequestration** with the 4%1000 project which represents a major challenge for climate and food, especially with research programs that, through a better knowledge of the soils, will enable the implementation of practices favorable to carbon storage in agricultural and forest soils.[10]

[9] See. MOBILISATION OF AGRICULTURAL FILIERES IN FAVOUR OF AGRO-ECOLOGICAL TRANSITION, STATE OF THE ART AND PERSPECTIVES. REPORT EPICES - BLEZAT, IN COLLABORATION WITH ASCA - MAY 18

[10] Office Scientific Notes - Note 3 - March 2018

Concerning the protected areas, **Biodiversity** is given for the first time a national strategy - unified for France and overseas territories - integrating both land and maritime issues 2021-2023. In particular, it aims to protect 30% of the national territory and maritime areas as soon as 2022, a third of which are under strong protection. A first action plan operationally declines the first three years of implementation of this strategy at different[11] levels of scale, encouraging initiatives both at the national and local levels with the promotion of agricultural systems using biocontrol and alternatives to chemical treatments. Biodiversity also benefits from a participatory science program to encourage citizens to participate in its preservation and to inform the national database in connection with research organizations.



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The recovery plan for the agro-ecological transition can be translated into global holistic projects in the territories that attempt to implement sustainable development actions in accordance with its three dimensions as is the case with the Bio Vallée project in the Drôme. It is one of the first ecoregion prototypes in France.

Territorial food projects (PAT)

11 https://www.ecologie.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/plan%20d%27actions%2020212023%20strat%C3%A9gie%20nationale%20%20thes%20prot%20prot%C3%A9g%C3%A9e%202030.pdf

Ecoregions in France can be shaped as a territorial food project that will develop different aspects according to territorial characteristics such as developing a consumption of local and quality products, enhancing a new mode of agro-ecological production, including organic production, preserving the water resource and the quality of landscapes, combating food waste ...

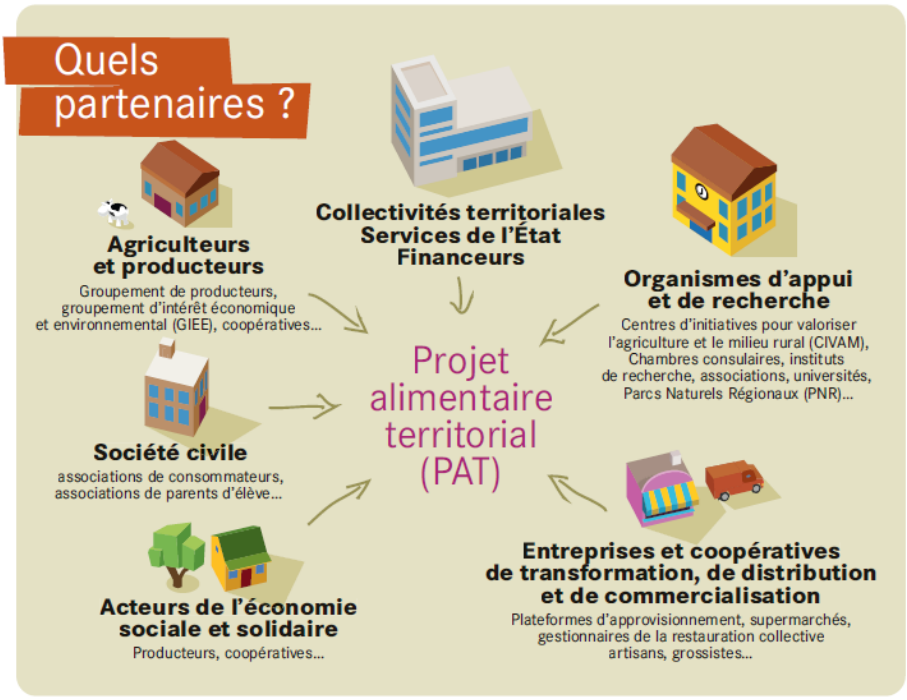
Territorial food projects (PAT) aim to relocate agriculture and food in the territories by supporting the settling of farmers, short circuits or local products in school canteens and thus raise public awareness of the quality of products, facilitate access to healthy food, create a link between the various actors, from producers to consumers ("from fork to fork"). Coming from the act for the future of agriculture, which has been encouraging their development since 2014, they are developed collectively by different actors of a territory (communities, agricultural and agri-food companies, craftsmen, citizens, etc.). The target was 500 projects. Today 150 projects have been created and 22 have been recognized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

Territorial food projects (PAT) are developed in a concerted manner at the initiative of the actors of a territory. They aim to provide a strategic and operational framework for partnership actions that address social, environmental, economic and health issues.

Territorial food projects are based on a shared diagnosis of local agricultural production and food needs. They identify the socio-economic and environmental assets and constraints of the territory.

They respond to sustainable development challenges by declining their three dimensions.

- **The economic** dimension: structuring and strengthening some sectors in the territories, bringing closer supply and demand, maintaining added value in the territory, contributing to the settlement of farmers and preservation of agricultural areas;
- **The environmental** dimension: developing the consumption of local and quality products, upgrading the development of a new mode of agroecological production, including organic production, protecting waters and landscapes, fighting against food waste;
- **The social** dimension: food education, social links, social accessibility, food donation, heritage development.



The themes explored by the food actors over the territories are very diverse:

- Food feed and economy
- Gastronomy and tourism
- Health and nutrition
- Social accessibility
- Urbanism and development
- Environment

A PAT that in defining its issues and action plan sweeps all of these themes is said to be systemic as it addresses the food issue in a comprehensive and global way.

Some jurisdictions choose to develop only a few dimensions regarded as essential considering the results of the diagnosis developed. They're said to be operational.

Local food systems and territorial food projects:

The actions of a PAT, in line with the objectives of the Regional Sustainable Agriculture Plan and the National Food Program, can be articulated with other territorial public policy tools: Territorial Coherence Scheme (SCoT), Local Agenda 21, Basin Contract, Regional Rural Development Program, PNR

Charter, Rural Contract, Local Health Contract, Tourism Strategy, Regional Planning Scheme, Sustainable Development and Development Scheme (SDET), PCAET ...

Its role is to coordinate, animate and support the initiatives of the actors of the territory who contribute to the agroecological transition; it is to this extent that the PAT device can be likened to an "ecoregion" approach.

It is noted that the contracts for recovery and ecological transition (CRTE, 2020), become the main tool of contracting the State in the territories by gradually integrating all national programs and contracts (rurality, city contracts, state/region pact...). The stated objective is to make the inter-ministerial contracting policy with local authorities more readable by grouping existing contractual approaches under a single scheme. The ecological transition plays the role of the backbone of the document and is based on the most comprehensive state of affairs possible of the territory in relation to various areas including agriculture and local food. Seen from this angle, this is reflected via PAT (territorial food projects) whose perimeter cannot be less than the intercommunal mesh. The CRTE is structured with the State-Region Plan Contract (CPER) and funds the "PAT" measure of the recovery plan. Planned in the Future Law for Agriculture, Food and Forestry of October 13, 2014 (Art 39), territorial food projects are based on a shared diagnosis of local agricultural and food production, the food need of the community and the identification of the socio-economic and environmental assets and constraints of the territory. Developed in a concerted manner at the initiative of the actors of a territory, they aim to give a strategic and operational framework to partnership actions responding to social, environmental, economic and health issues. Food then becomes an integrative and structuring axis for the coherence of sectoral policies in this territory. The economic stakes are aim at structuring and consolidating the sectors in the territories by bringing supply and demand closer together and maintaining added value on the land. It works to contribute to the settlement of farmers and the preservation of agricultural spaces. The environmental dimension aims to develop the consumption of local and quality products to combat food waste. These agroecological production methods are aim the production of organic foodstuffs, which are intended, among other things, to preserve the quality of water and landscapes. The social dimension is reflected in food education, the creation of links, social accessibility, food donation, and the enhancement of heritage.

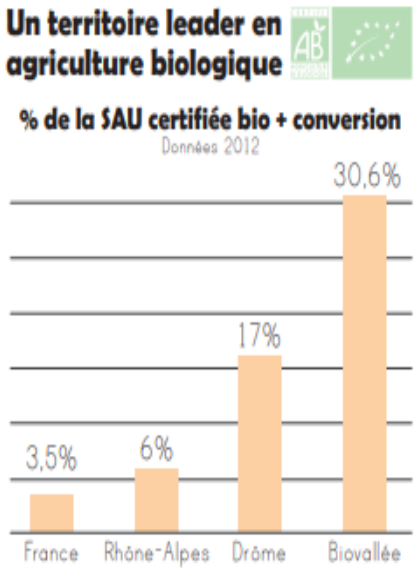
The Territorial Food Project is an extension of the local food systems (ALS) policies established in 2000. ALS meets the definition adopted in 2010 in Malaysia. Rastoin and Ghersi define the local food system as responding to an interdependent geographical delimitation of all public and private actors,

directly or indirectly participating in the creation of goods and services to meet the food needs of a set of several groups of local consumers within this geographical area. The food system is more global than "the chain that formalizes the steps, flows and relationships in-between the food production actors." In France, local food systems have emerged in particular with the creation of an AMAP (Association for the Maintenance of Peasant Agriculture) in Aubagne. They are the result of the desire of producers to recover the added value lost by the multiplication of intermediaries. These marketing channels do not jeopardize the hegemony of mass distribution. Nevertheless, it is observed that this movement is gradually gaining ground and market share. On the consumer side, the stakes are economic and social: upgrading of local production in order to keep farmers in the territory, as well as to accompany the local dynamics with schools, transport and public services. This trend correlates with the dietary health problems that have occurred in recent decades, including the BSE crisis or "mad cow disease", avian influenza, contaminated infant milk... which have undermined consumer confidence. It had therefore become essential to restore this trust with a policy of transparency and traceability of products put in place within companies and meeting quality standards and precise specifications. However, studies have shown that consumer confidence is linked to the proximity they can have with producers by meeting directly, even if direct selling is not a guarantee of food security. This meeting is a result of the development of short supply chains or local supply chains. These short supply chains, known as short circuits, were described by the Department of Agriculture in 2009. It is a model of marketing food products based either on the direct sale of the producer to the consumer (farm sale, market...) or by indirect sale if there is only one intermediary between the farmer and the consumer. In 2010, 21% of French farms sold part of their production on short circuit and 6 to 7% of food purchases were made in short circuit.

2. Detailed description of all the experiences in progress

For the bioVallèe project in the Drôme implemented since 2002, the sustainable development project of its eco-region aims to reach 50% of farmers and surface in organic agriculture by 2020. To reduce the territory's energy consumption by 20% in 2025 and by more than 50% by 2040. To develop high-level training in the field of sustainable development. To offer 80% organic or local food in collective catering by 2025. To cover 25% by 2025 and 100% by 2040 the energy consumption of the territory by local production of renewable energy. To ensure that all urbanization projects take care of agricultural soils. Halves wastes to treatment centers by 2025. To develop training and research in connection with sustainable development (10 partnerships in 2012, 25 targeted in 2025) and finally to generate by 2025, 2500 new jobs in the territory through actions in eco-sectors.

(see "Draw Me an Organic Landscape" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EDepFsY9y-g&t=214s) .



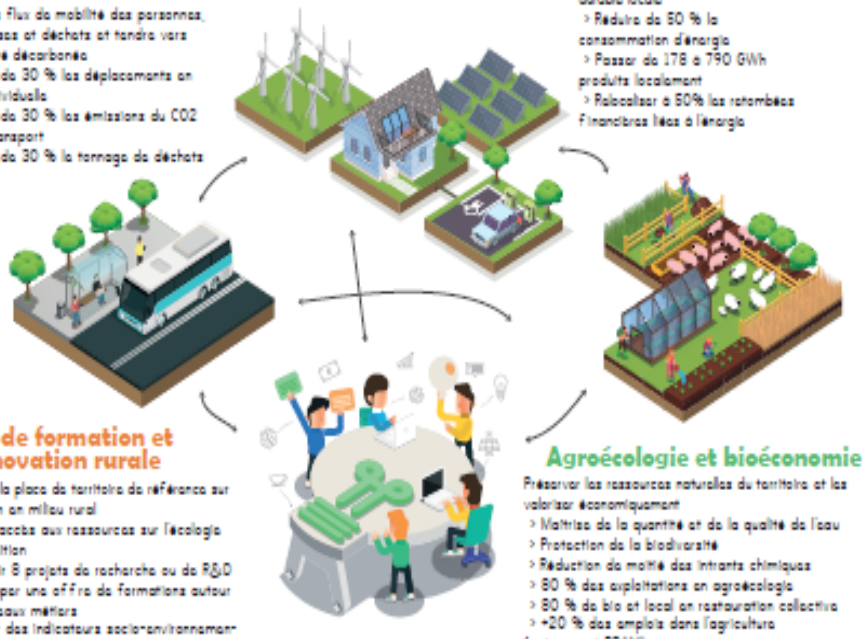
Axes et objectifs du TIGA à l'horizon 2030

Mobilité connectée et décarbonnée

Réduire les flux de mobilité des personnes, marchandises et déchets et tendre vers une mobilité décarbonée
> Réduire de 30 % les déplacements en voiture individuelle
> Réduire de 30 % les émissions du CO2 liées au transport
> Réduire de 30 % le tonnage de déchets

Autonomie énergétique

Atteindre une autonomie en énergie durable locale
> Réduire de 50 % la consommation d'énergie
> Passer de 178 à 790 GWh produits localement
> Relocaliser à 50% les retombées financières liées à l'énergie



Pôle de formation et d'innovation rurale

Consolider la place du territoire de référence sur la transition en milieu rural
> Donner accès aux ressources sur l'écologie et la transition
> Accueillir 8 projets de recherche ou de R&D
> Développer une offre de formations autour de 5 nouveaux métiers
> Intégrer des indicateurs socio-environnementaux dans la gouvernance

Agroécologie et bioéconomie

Préserver les ressources naturelles du territoire et les valoriser économiquement
> Maîtrise de la quantité et de la qualité de l'eau
> Protection de la biodiversité
> Réduction de moitié des intrants chimiques
> 80 % des exploitations en agroécologie
> 80 % de bio et local en restauration collective
> +20 % des emplois dans l'agriculture (notamment PPAM)

Association Bovillie

As an example below the local approach of the Pat of southern Yvelines:

The PAT of South Yvelines

The territorial food project of South-Yvelines was initiated in October 2018 by the PNR of the Upper Chevreuse Valley and the National Bergerie of Rambouillet. It covers a perimeter that includes 77 municipalities belonging to the following 3 communities: the Community of Agglomerations of Rambouillet Territories (CART), the Community of Communes Coeur d'Yvelines (CCCY) and the Community of Communes of the Upper Chevreuse Valley (CCHVC). This territory covers 942 km2 and is home to more than 150,000 inhabitants with a population density of 160 inhabitants per km2. It is a rural area with 40% of the area in useful agricultural area (SAU) and 40% in forests and moors.

In order to assess local agricultural and food production as well as the food needs of South-Yvelines, the PNR of the Haute-Vallée de Chevreuse and the Bergerie Nationale carried out a diagnosis, finalized in March 2020.

The diagnosis involved all the actors of the food system in South Yvelines: citizens, intercommunities, farmers, processors, collectors, distributors, public bodies, etc. Four territorial issues to which the action plan will respond as a priority have thus been identified:

- Raising awareness and information about agriculture and local food
- Structuring production lines
- Promoting local distribution
- Preserving farmland

The action plan of the PAT South-Yvelines seeks to address these four issues. It also aims to be consistent with several local public policies related to agriculture and food: the Ile-de-France Agricultural Pact, the PCAET of the Rambouillet-Territory Community or the Local Health Contract carried out by the CART and the ARS.

77 municipalities located in the south of the Yvelines have coalesced for just over 150,000 consumers to define a project around food.

More than 600 players in the territory (farmers, processors, distributors, merchants, restaurateurs, associations, elected officials, consumers, etc.) contributed to the diagnosis of the local food system and the resulting action plan.

Issues	Observation	Objectives	Achievements
Raising awareness and information about agriculture and local food	Local food actors (producers, collective catering distributors, consumers ...) have little local contact, they lack information on clean food production in South Yvelines.	Enabling residents and consumers to better understand farmers' problems Facilitate contacts, exchanges, meetings, animations and allow a better knowledge between actors upstream /downstream Informing and raising awareness of sustainable food,	Organizing evening debates for all on food ... Development of a directory of local producers Organizing a "Where does my plate come from?" day in a School Setting.
Structuring production lines	The territory of South Yvelines is very specialized in large crops. The very high demand for local products has allowed the emergence of successful agricultural diversifications. A lack of local structuring in certain sectors (meat, fruits and vegetables..)	Promote the acceptability of agricultural projects (urban planning, buildings, greenhouses and tunnels), Helping to structuring agricultural sectors (employment, regulation, access to water),	Creation of a collective short-circuit marketing structure. Setting up of a collective transformation workshop in the territory Creating a local producers' store.
Promoting local distribution	Very strong consumer and distributor demand for local products High average standard of living Diversified producers in loss-making sectors improve profitability by short-circuit marketing their production	Ensure a fair remuneration to all actors in the sector. Having access to a high quality production, Find logistical solutions to distribute locally, Promote joint projects (point of sale, processing, packaging, etc.)	Organizing professional meetings to promote local sourcing Development of typical marketing contracts between producers and distributors. Keep an eye on local partnership projects
Preserving farmland	Urban growth Decrease in agricultural land Land is very expensive Municipalities in the territory mobilize land to develop agricultural projects	To preserve the quality of the landscapes (and soils) of the territory. Promote the acceptability of agricultural projects (urban planning, buildings, greenhouses and tunnels), Meet the expectations of locals who want a quality and local food supply	Census of local farm land maintenance initiatives Creating a land watch

3. Brakes and levers for the creation of Organic Districts

Synthesis of brakes and levers for the creation of eco-regions/ Conclusions to memorize/ forward-looking

A renewal of thought and a shift of paradigm are underway around the world and in each country wishing to challenge the current economic and development model towards a transition that takes into account the limits of natural resources. Indeed, the ecological transition reveals the need to make the link between environmental, economic and ecological problems too often perceived in a compartmentalized way focusing only on quantitative and statistical aspects.

On the one hand, this compartmentalized vision does not show that the planet's problems of food, production, circulation, energy, growth and development are inseparable. On the other hand the multiplication of government plans and actions to accelerate the ecological transition of the territories is not coordinated in a coherent way on the ground. We are witnessing a heap of actions at different scales of the national territory without having links or bridges that allow them to give them overall coherence and therefore more weight and efficiency on the ground.

On another level, on the regional and above all local level, relevant and innovative initiatives are emerging, but they are not visible enough to encourage other territories and other actors to draw inspiration from them. To overcome this obstacle, it is a question of identifying and considering exemplary pilot experiences in urban and rural areas and carefully examining proposals to promote at the same time local food, rural activities, organic farming combining wisdoms of experience and creative innovations, farm production, in the perspective of the development of eco-regions. Countless local initiatives and inventions are to be valued nationally and internationally to encourage and publicize these initiatives. Indeed, their weak point remains in their dispersion across the planet and the lack of communication. Paradoxically, we are also witnessing through local and international networks the swarming of multiple local initiatives around the world that inspire local projects. Everywhere we see the appearance of a plural, supportive economy, with projects pooling knowledge and know-how, as for forms of supportive cooperatives, projects of fair trade with an ethic of the economy in which would coexist a planetary capitalism and a living fabric of territorialized economies.

Current public policies do not adequately take into account the interactions and links that characterize the functioning of complex systems. In a democratic system it would be wise to facilitate the implementation of innovative agricultural models that facilitate connections between upstream and downstream sectors, in parallel with the industrial agricultural system, and that is true whatever the scale : urban or rural areas. For example, public

policies have been put in place to encourage farmers to reduce the use of pesticides and pharmaceuticals (Ecophyto Plan). The target set in 2007 was to reduce the use of plant health products by 50% though, according to data from the Union of Plant Protection Industries (UIPP), sales of plant protection have increased by 20%. This is despite the use of very high public funds (400 million euros in 2018).

Local authorities are sometimes divided and support the agro-ecological transition issue in a very heterogeneous way. This handicaps the territorial political support of eco-regions (PAT, PCAET,...). Thus some territories take concerted and far-reaching actions when they are supervised by communities and supported by specific funding, while others see their initiatives remain at an individual level and only reach a minority of their population because of a lack of support.

Ecoregions in their various forms are localized territorial projects that can respond in a concrete way to many urgent issues related to policy deficiencies for example. The modalities of living labs or research-actions are intended to enable experiments and multi-actor innovations in a local territory. These projects aim to bring the needs of the territories into line.

Societal demand from the citizen-consumer is not always listened by the actors upstream of the production or decision-making channels (e.g. elected officials, producers, distributors, processors). The proliferation of intermediaries leads to the introduction of so many filters that blur the initial message of the citizen and make it inaudible or incomprehensible at the very top of the chain. The misunderstanding between citizens and food producers or decision-makers, characteristic of long-term sectors, is a factor of social tension (agri bashing) that affects our societies more and more frequently. On the contrary, short-circuit marketing brings the two ends of the sector closer together and can contribute to a better social cohesion resulting from a better understanding of the actors in the territorial food supply.

The use of land in urban and suburban areas is confronted with the problem of landowner speculation that can see the value of their land multiplied by a hundred depending on whether it is classified as agricultural or constructable. This weakens the maintenance of some productive arable land and the settlement of young farmers. Current solutions are only partial to protect the agricultural vocation of the land as the planning documents are changeable after a certain period of time and depending on the shift of local political teams. The state-set up agricultural compensation fund aims to protect agricultural land. But it is observed to have a very limited efficiency since it always allows investors to carry out their projects at the expense of the preservation of agricultural land. So this is a weak sustainability policy based on compensation and that looks like the polluter-pay principle.

a. Public policies/legislation

Public policies in favor of agroecological transition in the territories – Appearance of "ecoregions" in France from the 1960s until today

French public policies in favour of maintaining the environment in France:

Year	Public policy	Key objectives
1960	National Parks	Preservation of flora and fauna
1964	Financial agencies (now the 6 water agencies)	• Rational use of water in watersheds • Fighting pollution • Protecting aquatic environments
1967	Regional natural parks (53 PNR to date)	Protecting and developing a heritage and a landscape of high value
1976	July 10 Nature Protection Act	Introduce: • Protected species status; • Impact studies for infrastructures; • A status for the (domestic) animal; New protected area status (natural reserves)
1986	Coastal Planning : Protection and Development Act. Awareness of the negative impacts of agriculture on water quality (pesticides, livestock effluents and chemical fertilizers...)	• Setting up land standards and zoning • Incentives for environmentally friendly farming practices
1999	The Agricultural Guidance Act of 9 July	• Creating Protected Agricultural Areas (ZAPs) • Creating agricultural and forest space management documents
2003	CAP conditionality of compensatory aid	• Decoupled aids • Modulation of direct aid
2004	PCAET Currently The Territorial Energy Climate Plan (PCET).è	• Putting in place actions to limit climate change
2014	Future Food and Forestry Act (13/10/2014)	• Setting up Territorial Food Projects (PAT)
2018	The EGALIM (General Food States) Act	• Relocating food in the territories

b. Technical aspects

In parallel to public policies, agricultural research and development are implementing research programs and experimental protocols to achieve results that facilitate changes in farm practices through a set of levers based on ecosystemic services (biocontrol...) and environmentally friendly agricultural practices (greenhouse seeding, market gardening on living soil). AB ....). That's what's going to be developed in this part.

Technical aspects (recognized scientific approaches and consequences on agricultural practices) *Agroecology: redesign of agricultural systems*

Landscape ecology and ecosystem services, tools of sustainable agriculture on ecoregions.[12]

The Anthropocene is a reflection of a development model characterized by the use of thermodynamic and nuclear energy, giving autonomy to the industrial country and intensified agriculture using fossil energy and chemical prophylaxis to produce food. The consequence has been the erosion of biodiversity, pollution, climate change, etc. Each consequence has been demonstrated by several research programs around the world. Therefore, the question may be: can ecoregions with organic farming and agroecology become an alternative model of development taking up the challenge of climate change and food sovereignty? With the latest research results, we can find measures at the same scale as landscape ecology and ecosystem services that public policy and the eco-charter can take to address current challenges. In this area, we need to present some conclusions from the collective expertise of the ESCO and EFESE programs, which show that the industrial model of agriculture has taken very little benefit from natural ecological services; it has been substituted by chemical inputs (pesticides, fertilizers). This model generates a homogeneous landscape, promotes the development of populations of agricultural bio-aggressors. This is due to the great disturbance of habitats and the great homogeneity of Agro-Systems. The multifunctionality of the landscape has not been a driving force for the development and maintenance of functional Agro-Systems. These negative effects are particularly observed in simplified landscapes that cannot act as biological reservoirs. In addition, collective expertise shows the technical leeway and

[12] Author, Lamia Latiri-Otthoffer/Rambouillet National Shepherd/communication on the Congress of Ecoregions-Portugal, jully 2019.

levers to integrate landscapes and biodiversity as an essential element in producing food associated with organic farming in order to achieve mutual benefits. [13]

For agriculture, biodiversity is understood as a "natural" compartment (species, habitats) to which agriculture is closely associated. The importance of ecosystem services provided by biodiversity at the landscape level for solid production systems suggests changing this scale to better understand biodiversity and agro-ecosystems, from the plot to the landscape, particularly the territory, with much better integration of biodiversity into agricultural production processes based on ecosystem service packages. From simplification to complexity, the proposal of new prototypes of agricultural models breaking with conventional models has focused on redesign and designs of agroecological infrastructure as an important element for a resilient strategy with a broader set of innovations. Systemic ecosystem services of biodiversity cover a wide range of factors that contribute to agricultural income. We can summarize with more or less 5 axes:

1- production and quality of production
2- biological pest control and pollination
3- Intra-plot diversification and the positive impact of biodiversity in agricultural production processes.
4- the quality of the landscapes for a better functioning of the agro-systems:
5- soil fertility and ecosystem-related services.

The five components of an agricultural territory are characterized by the agricultural matrix, which is comparable to the landscape mosaic formed by land uses. The landscape mosaic is therefore a decisive element for the preservation of biodiversity in agricultural areas at the territorial level. It mitigates the negative effects of plot-wide intensification by the percentage and composition of the semi-natural elements present, connectivity and habitat quality. These offsetting effects are only exercised in sufficiently heterogeneous landscapes. Improving the ecological services of agricultural systems relies on the complexity of spatial structures, edges of fields and plots/plots at landscape scale. Land use can be characterized by the de-intensification of

[13] The results of various programmes were consulted under the name OF EFESE-EA, NutriNet, BioBioEsco Ecophyto Ecophyto.

cropping systems through the reduction of pesticides and mineral fertilizers, simplified soil work, the introduction of long and diversified rotations, the use of a wider range of cultivated species and varieties, the preservation of genetic diversity and the installation of IA (agrological infrastructure) to facilitate the functioning of eco-system services.[14]

The tasks / (dispersed area) that represent different environments of the matrix (wood, pond, natural meadows ...), ensure a heterogeneous environment in the landscape and offer a greater diversity of species the possibility to settle there. These elements are essential to the preservation of biodiversity, if they are connected, well distributed in space, well maintained and of high quality. This ultimately determines the biological richness of a landscape.

The corridors, which are different linear elements of the matrix, connect the tasks between them (hedges, ditches, rivers). From the structure of the landscape, we can understand that the geometry of the environment and the effects of the neighbourhood are factors that control the presence of individuals of a specie and the dynamic of populations, because the movements and dispersions of species are the key process of ecosystem services. It is related to the structure of the landscape which is essential for organic systems. Each of these elements provides one or more functions; the whole is supposed to make up a coherent ecosystem. As a result, agro-ecological infrastructure is an essential part of the landscape. They offer a variety of functions, including providing habitat for wildlife on farms. They are also a permanent breeding, feeding and hibernation site for the local species. These components of the landscape have effects on the abundance and richness of species with strong interactions on the structure of the agricultural plot and in particular on the way the land is used.

The landscape becomes the level of organization for ecological systems which is superior to the ecosystem characterized mainly by its heterogeneity and dynamics governed in part by human activities. The mesh specific to the mosaic and its networks constitutes the landscape pattern.

This research shows that the ecosystem services offered by biodiversity to agriculture refers to complex space-dependent phenomena that can only be understood at the plot level, but at the landscape level. Highlighting the crucial role of the spatio-temporal configuration of managed covered crops (cultures, agro-ecological infrastructure and associated plant biodiversity), which

[14] Hedges, groves, selvedges, isolated trees, field borders, ecotones, Etc.

directly determines the level of delivery of ecosystem services, 11 to 14 biological regulatory services studied from plant to landscape (CICES), long-term biological and agronomic monitoring of landscape networks has led to a better understanding of these complex relationships and to show the suppressive nature of landscapes for diseases, in order to improve the multifunctionality of the concept of landscape. These works show that the value of strengthening the mobilization of landscape and territorial levers for the provision of ecosystem services can design and evaluate the combined effects of coherent agricultural systems at interlocking spatial scales. The installation of effective planned biodiversity in the sense of its direct roles and its ability to promote wild biodiversity, ensuring that essential functions are a very specific lever for agro-ecosystems at different scales. Ecosystem Biodiversity Services respond to the environmental parameters on which farmers (through agricultural practices) and other landscape managers can intervene to maintain or increase the level of ecosystem service packages. [151617]

An imperfect knowledge of the relationship between agriculture and biodiversity and the difficulty of assessing them with a standard adapted to the different scales and territories of the landscape suggests that it is likely that the scale of eco-regions could be a useful lever to remove obstacles and define instruments of public action, which are satisfactory in light of the current challenges regarding the different objectives set by international commitments. Indeed, the preservation and management of biodiversity, the complexity of landscapes and the balance of ecosystems for effective ecosystem services involve different levels of governance within the framework of European or national public policies or through regional and local initiatives.

The agroecological transition in the territories shows an increased need for high-tech knowledge and experimentation that requires highly specialized technical expertise in the functioning of natural systems, on soil-plant functioning and interaction, plant-plant interactions, and insect-plant interactions for example, and to go very far in this understanding in manipulating these interactions.

[15] CICES (CICES) Common International Classification of Ecosystem Services (CICE), report to the European Environment Agency, 2013

[16] *Papaix Papaix until 2018*

[17] *Vinatier and until 2016.*

We could use the concept of a living laboratory. This tool allows to set up innovative projects bringing together actors in the field, technicians and researchers, local actors around a living laboratory to experiment, not empirically but also scientifically, the solutions that facilitate the transition towards resilient and sustainable food systems.

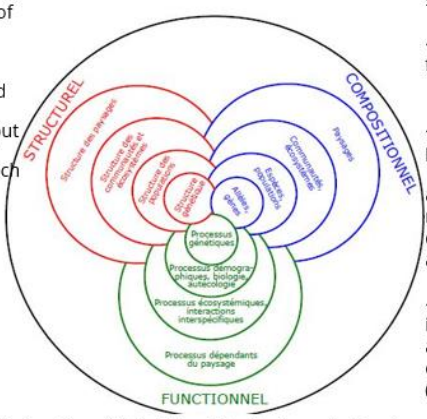
In conclusion, we can suggest that the territorial level on which ecoregions are deployed could be integrated into its landscape-wide charter biodiversity as a lever for the deployment of ecosystem service packages in organic agriculture. But also, as levers of local public policies, which play other roles in local development at the level of the circular economy (agrotourism, pathways for the interpretation of the cultural landscape, well-being, etc.):

- With the preservation and protection of several natural resources,
- With stronger policies promoting carbon storage to combat global warming.
- It could also integrate and compensate for the dispersion and instability of protection and conversion systems and the difficult compatibility of the various objectives of the CAP (common agricultural policies).
- The ecoregion charter could make direct forms of recognition through labelling that could be side by side with indirect forms of CAP support, with the introduction of a payment for services.
- Finally, it is all the more desirable since the landscape has many values that add up. In addition to its value as a support for biodiversity development for pesticide-free production systems, the landscape has a heritage and a cultural value. It is also an effective image of communication on the quality of local products; it highlights an aesthetic of societies by the aspect of the arrangement of their living environment. It is also a tool for planning, redesigning the territory for an ecoregion that can meet the challenges of the future

The role of the landscape in agroecological systems

Three of the main features of the landscape

- The outermost circles correspond to the scale of the landscape.
- Agricultural practices and their direct impact on biodiversity need to be put in perspective of the landscape context in which they apply.



the three dimensions of biodiversity and their different levels of organization. According to Noss 1990

✓Ecosystem components can be viewed as filters that affect the composition and structure of communities:

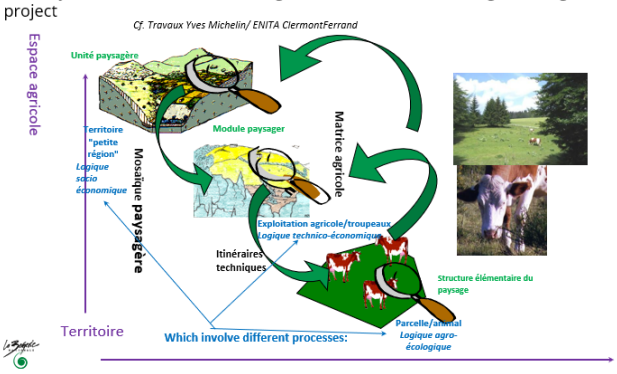
✓the landscape is thus the first filter (Bestelmeyer & al 2003),

✓ he selects the local species pool present according to the access to the habitats necessary for their development. (Tscharntke & al 2012)

✓The quality of habitats influenced by human activities and abiotic conditions, constitutes a second filter (Lortie & al 2004)...

Complex agricultural landscapes with a high proportion of semi-natural elements: the negative effects of intensification "compensated" by the heterogeneity of the landscape and the maintenance of semi-natural elements.

The Landscape: A MUTLISCALAIRE Scale of Analysis which makes it possible to understand the interrelationships between the different spatial units of a territory / farm and to take advantage of them for an efficient agro-ecological project



The effects of agricultural practices and the landscape are difficult to dissociate *(Kennedy and al.2013, Tuck and al 2014), they* are often part of a logical territorial management of rural areas. The richness of the landscape in uncultivated areas does not in itself imply a decrease in pests. The management of semi-natural elements and crops is an important lever to preserve and improve ecosystem services (Kremen, and Miles 2012) by promoting their diversity and interactions (complementarities, compromises, synergies).

This research suggests that organic farming and the different forms it can take in alternative systems is the best prototype for the agro-ecological transition. In France, the Barnier plan encourages the development of organic farming throughout the country. In ecoregions and PATAs, organic farming is more or less developed according to the local professional culture.

Development of agriculture and sustainable food in France
Sustainable agriculture

Organic farming

In 2020, according to the organic agency, the organic sector is anchored in all the territories. In all regions without exception, the conversion rate of land to organic farming is now more than 9%. The sector is organized locally, particularly in connection with the communities, for the supply of collective catering. The aim of the EGalim law is to achieve 50% of products that are sustainable or under signs of origin and quality, 20% of which are organic products in school canteens by 2022. Local productions - or at least of French origin - are increasingly in demand. This trend, particularly pronounced among the consumers of organic products (source: Bio Agency/Consumer Barometer 2020), is driven by the desire to participate, through the act of purchase, in the development of the territory. The growth of French organic agriculture allows to meet the growing demand without increasing imports. These remain stable, at 33%, with prospects of decline thanks, among other things, to the establishment of French sugar and banana sectors.

In agricultural education

The development of organic farming in agricultural education[18]

Developed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the national network "Formabio" supports institutions in teaching organic farming practices. Every year, it organizes meetings and events all over France to help the establishments.

The development of organic agriculture, supported by the public policies of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, has led to changes in the shelves of our greengrocers, but also in teaching methods.

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18 **Organic farming in agricultural education,** Panorama, brakes and levers, Jean-Marie Morin, Bertrand Minaud (Minaud), For 2015/3 (No. 227), pages 207 to 215

Organic farming is one of the guidelines proposed by the **"Teach to Produce Differently"** plan, launched in 2014.
To support these changes, the DGER has also set up the national **"Formabio"** network. It provides assistance to agricultural training institutions in implementing actions to develop organic farming and accelerate its learning. The goal? Give tools to teachers and trainers so that they can best teach their students about this way of culture.

Helping to promote organic farming for teachers

This thematic network of agricultural education has several missions:
help institutions:

- to raise awareness among students, trainees, apprentices and students of agricultural education about organic farming as part of the sustainable development;
- to set up specific training courses on this topic to professionalize the actors;
- to develop organic farming on the farms of the establishments.
- develop the cooperation of institutions with organic farming professionals on the themes of Research Training Development;
- disseminate information on training, resources, news, calls for projects...
- capitalize, value the know-how and experiences of the institutions.

The transition to more sustainable production systems is based on a change in knowledge and practices and habits. This is a necessary development to pass on new practices to the farmers of tomorrow.
The work of the facilitators of the "Formabio" network amplifies the actions implemented by the partners of organic farming.
"*Some young people may be hesitant to discover organic farming, but once they understand what it is, they are convinced and go into organic conversion themselves after their studies,*" explains Françoise Degache, in charge of Formabio.
Each year, the network organizes meetings, workshops on the situations encountered by teachers. Farm and high school managers, teachers, trainers... Formabio brings together public and private agricultural education staff. Currently, more than 70 institutions are participating. The institutions that are more ahead of the curve on this subject bring their expertise and teaching methods to others.
Organic farming in agricultural education in a few figures...

- 123 farms with at least one workshop conducted in organic farming;
- 26 farms entirely in organic farming;
- 4,235 hectares cultivated in organic farming.

(Source: **DGER)**

MINISTÈRE
DE L'AGRICULTURE
ET DE L'ALIMENTATION
Liberté
Égalité
Fraternité

L'agriculture biologique

47 196
EXPLOITATIONS ENGAGÉES EN BIO
+13% >2018

179 500
EMPLOIS DIRECTS
+15% >2018

2,3 millions
D'HECTARES SOIT LA 2E SURFACE DE L'UE
+13 % >2018
SURFACES BIO DOUBLÉES EN 5 ANS
C'est **8,5 %** de la surface agricole utile française

Répartition des fermes bio en %
RECENSEMENT AGRICOLE 2010

AB AGRICULTURE BIOLOGIQUE
Label officiel délivré par l'État
RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

Surfaces bio par type de production
Part bio de la surface totale de chaque production

- **34%** légumes secs
- **26%** fruits
- **18%** plantes à parfum, aromatiques & médicinales
- **14%** vignes

LA CONSOMMATION DE PRODUITS BIO PÈSE **11,9 milliards €**

67% DES PRODUITS BIO CONSOMMÉS SONT FRANÇAIS

98 % DU LAIT ET PRODUITS LAITIERS BIO CONSOMMÉS
99 % DES ŒUFS, VIANDES, VINS & ALCOOLS BIO CONSOMMÉS

Le marché du bio en Europe

ALLEMAGNE	FRANCE	ITALIE
11,97 milliards d'€	11,93 milliards d'€	4,09 milliards d'€

+ 28 % DE PRODUITS BIO EN RESTAURATION COLLECTIVE 2017 > 2018

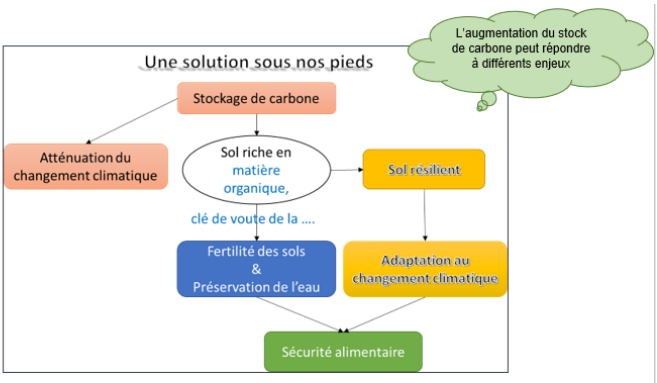
SOURCE : AGENCE BIO, 2020. DONNÉES 2019.

Soil conservation agriculture

Based on on the principle of no-work on the soil, soil conservation agriculture was cited by a former Minister of Agriculture, Stéphane Le Foll, as an example of agroecological production. Indeed, its principle is to store carbon in the soil to enrich it with organic matter, maintain a vegetation cover, do no tillage of the soil, avoid compaction as much as possible, improve the structure of the soil so as to avoid as much as possible erosion. The known term is the technique of elimination of inter-cultural vegetation cover, which relies on the use of glyphosate.

This method has inspired many simplified soil techniques (TCS)

The "4 for 1,000" initiative
Launched on 1 December 2015 as part of COP 21, this initiative aims to help **offset net CO2 emissions into the atmosphere worldwide** (4.3 trillion tonnes of carbon per year) with an annual increase of **0.4% or 4 per 1,000 in soil carbon stock.** This target represents, according to the calculation method, 3.4 trillion tons of carbon out of a total of 860 billion in the first 40 cm of soil, or 6.3 billion out of a total of 1,580 billion in the first meter of soil. These two different results explain some of the controversies surrounding the initiative. This climate and food security initiative aims to voluntary unit public and private **actors** (states, communities, businesses, research organizations, NGOs, etc.). It has about 150 members in a consortium and 281 partners in an advisory forum. It also links on a scientific and technical committee (CSE) of fourteen members.



Les pratiques stockant du carbone contribuent à l'atteinte de différents objectifs agricoles (autonomie fourragère, réduction des pesticides, temps de travail, qualité de l'eau…).

Agroforestry

In the agroecological model; agroforestry is one of the pillars of innovative agricultural systems. Indeed, the "Everal" effects contribute to improving the sustainability of the agricultural production system by playing on the complementarity and synergy of trees and crops. More and more mixed agricultural projects are emerging such as orchards, agroforestry in the wine system, agroforestry in the grain system, etc. In particular, we note: protecting soils from erosion, loss of fertility and nutrient leakage; protecting water by reducing the risk of diffuse pollution of groundwater and rivers, and maintaining humidity (limited evapotranspiration reduces the need for irrigation); Boosting biodiversity by providing a wide variety of shelters and food resources; long-term carbon fixation in trees and its deep burial by the root system. The fight against global warming on a conspiracy scale.

Agroecology: redesign of the agricultural system

An ecosystem is a defined environment, in which living animals and plants interact with inert matter, in a relationship of interdependence, to form an ecological unit. When the balance of the ecosystem is preserved, the fauna and flora (micro, meso and macro fauna and flora) develop in complementarities, allowing the balance of the system (virtuous loop).

An agro-system is a specific ecosystem in which humans intervene by implementing agricultural production techniques, such as preparing soils for crops (ploughing, organic matter inputs), establishing and maintaining crops, by implementing breeding activities and by providing good fertilization in compensation for harvests. Human intervention must be reasoned and take into account natural mechanisms, in order to preserve the balances essential to the sustainable development of agricultural activity.

Agroecology combines technical responses that enable humans to balance productivity with low environmental pressure with sustainable management of natural resources. It takes into account the interactions between soil, water, plant, animal and landscape in order to integrate activity into the environment and is based on a number of principles in the management of these elements.

The agro-ecological transition of agricultural farming systems will work when agro-ecosystems will offer, at different scales, **structural characteristics, composition** and **functioning** to promote the expression of ecosystem services (ES) supporting agricultural production. The landscape structure, whose complexity and richness in semi-natural habitats, influences the functional biodiversity that causes ES, which play a major role in this transition. However, greater complexity of the landscape does not always mean a lower abundance of pests. This lack of a clear relationship is often explained by a too approximate description of the landscape.

Biodiversity is therefore not limited to the sum of species, but represents all the multiple and complex interactions between living things, as well as their physicochemical environment, on several levels (see the 1992 secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity 2003) hence **the difficulty and complexity of defining and measuring ecosystem service**

The quality of food products/landscape quality.

In France, the INAO (Institut National des Appellations d'Origine) is an organization that deals with the certification of the various products of terroirs of high heritage value (landscape, mode of production).

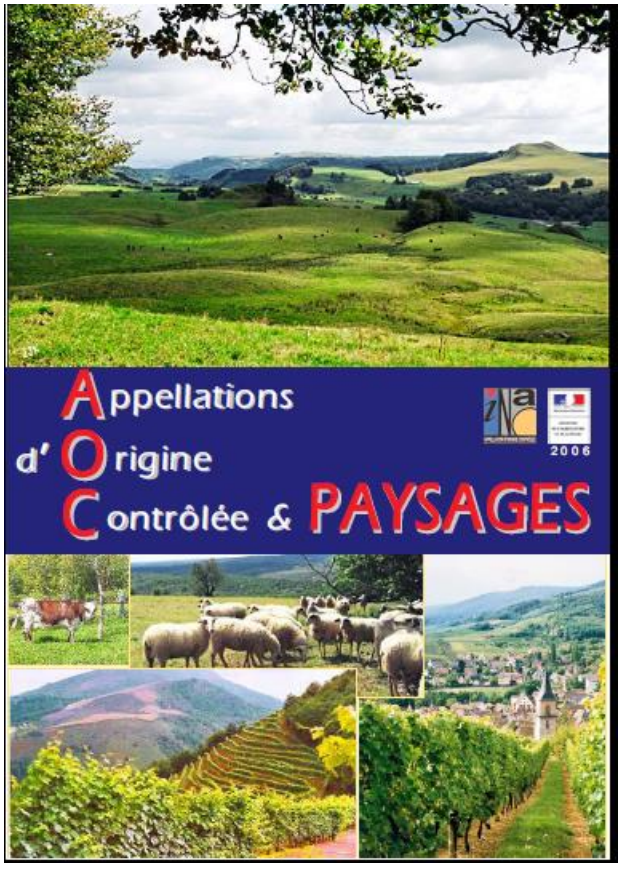
Practices that help beautify the fields often make them not only more productive, such as when planting olive trees and trees in rows, but even more saleable, and add price to the fund. Products in controlled appellations of origin are a search for excellence in clearly identified rural soils. Each of the names of these products evokes original taste sensations and brings out images of emblematic agricultural landscapes, the Bleu de Gex and the Prébois of Haut-Jura, Condrieu its white wine and its walls of dry stone terraces, the grazed orchards of the country of Auge with its cider and camembert... Yet the unconscious relationship that the consumer makes between the quality of a product and the quality of a landscape, very useful in terms of communication, is not self-evident. It requires to be worked, legitimated and strengthened.

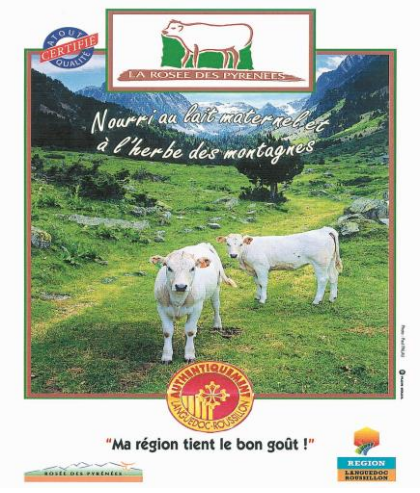
The solutions found by some exemplary regions have been inspiring for other regions to engage more and more in reflections leading to improvements in both their products and their landscapes. Their results demonstrate that attention to the landscape can serve both the agronomic and commercial interests of producers and offer them the opportunity to be recognized for the role they play in maintaining an attractive living environment that is a common good.

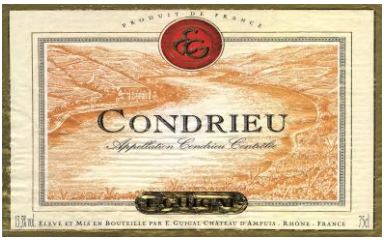
The quality of local products and the quality of the landscapes are strictly linked to the characteristics of the agro-ecosystem and its richness in biodiversity. In addition, it refers to a whole traditional know-how related to the local culture. This can give a nationally and internationally recognized heritage and gastronomic value.

Some PATs rely on this characteristic and aim to promote their local products and communicate with the consumer in order to develop their marketing in the short chain.

INAO-specifications and different appations-qualities-terroir-landscape







c. Training components

Agricultural vocational education is an essential lever to support the ecological transition by disseminating new techniques and innovations for producing differently towards the public of the initial and ongoing training. Ecoregions and PATAs are training materials for learners to build their knowledge through system approaches that involve cross-disciplinary knowledge. In France different training courses exist to train future professionals. Such as:

Creation of the "Senior Agricultural Technician Patent:

Environmental Management and Protection (BTSA GPN) 1970

The BTSA GPN, a pioneer in environmental education, is innovative in its pedagogy: alternating environmental studies, contribution of different fields of study, ecology, geology, sociology... and an "information and communication" part for argued debates.

The training has initiated a global approach to environmental issues. This approach, in antagonism with the repositories and the culture of productive agricultural training in force at that time, was a first step in environmental education (systemic approach, interdisciplinarity, project pedagogy) that has since spread and inspired most of the repositories of agricultural education.

Permanent Environmental Initiative Centers 1972

In 1972, the Interdepartmental Committee for Action on Nature and the Environment (CIANE) decided to promote the creation of centers specialized in real life education.

The action of a ICCE concerns a very large audience, from decision-makers to ordinary citizens: local elected officials and local authorities; school populations and educational institutions; inhabitants and socio-professional actors of the territory.

All ICCEs have two main missions for the sustainable development of the territories:

- Be a force for bringing forward proposals and be a support to the actors (communities, associations, companies) to design and implement their environmental projects;
- To implement awareness and education activities for all audiences. The ICCEs share the same values (humanism, promotion of citizenship and respect for the scientific approach) and are engaged in a national Charter.

The CPIEs bring together volunteers and aa employed team to serve their associative project. Each ICCE acts on a coherent territory of intervention, whose environmental, socio-economic and cultural issues it knows. It cooperates with all actors, public or private, concerned with the environment and sustainable development.

Agriculture and agroecological development in agricultural education

Since the 1990s, the concepts of **sustainable development and "global" diagnosis of the farm** have appeared in the diploma repositories. Teachers and trainers in the agricultural sectors were encouraged to address the environmental and social issue and to focus only on an economic and productive vision of the agricultural enterprise, considering its impacts on nature and the environment. Thus, ecological modules previously reserved for specialized sectors (Management and Nature Protection) have entered the training repositories in agricultural production. Similarly, environmental issues have become increasingly prominent in the agricultural analysis and diagnostic work required from candidates presenting exam tests validating their work-level internship or apprenticeship.

This trend only increased in the 2000s, which was also necessary, regarding the evolution of environmental regulations resulting from **successive reforms of common agricultural policies (CAPs).**

- **1999:** Agenda 2000 and birth of the second pillar of the CAP, in line with agricultural market policy
- **2003:** Reform with decoupling of direct aid from production and additional resources to rural development
- **2008:** health check-up
- **2013:** CAP reform introducing greening of direct aid
- **2015:** CAP reform comes into force and milk quotas come into force

The Future Act for Agriculture, Agri-Food and Forestry of October 13, 2014 devotes a component to agricultural education and makes it a vector of agro-ecology. In October 2014, the launch of the "Teaching to Produce Differently" action plan by Stéphane Le Foll, Minister of Agriculture, is a concrete sign. The deployment of this plan on the ground represents an opportunity to unite stakeholders around a joint project Teach to produce differently 1

Plan "Teaching to produce differently" phase 1, 2014-2018

The **"Teaching to Produce Differently"** action plan has launched a process of profoundly changing teaching methods in agricultural institutions to support the transition to new and more sustainable production systems.

Four major axis have been identified:

> **Axis** 1: Revisiting pedagogical repositories and practices;
>
> **Axis** 2: Redefining the role of the school's farm in its educational component but also as a tool for demonstration and experimentation in the territory;
>
> **Axis** 3: Strengthen regional governance to energize institutional networks, support technology farms and workshops in their projects;
>
> **Axis** 4: Rethink staff training and support institutions in their "Teach to produce in a different way" projects.

The balance sheet is positive 22% of the SAU in AB, 70 institutions participated in putting in place at least one action.

The plan is renewed for the period 2019-2025 with EPA 2 which expands the thematic scope of actions towards food, bio-economy and rural services.

The example of the farm operation of the CEZ Bergerie National

- A platform for training, experimentation and extension, the Bergerie Nationale has since 2014 converted its 50 cows and 220 hectares to agro-ecology and organic.
- From agroforestry to multiple species
- "*On a few* hectares of *meadows, a mixture of forest species (oaks, lime trees, chestnut trees...) and fruit species (plum, apple, pear) have been planted,*" explains Roland Delon, deputy director of the National Bergerie. "*This experiment aims to reconcile the tree with the crops by imitating the functioning of a forest to improve agricultural production and the well-being of herds. Launched in the fall, this agroforestry project will then be completed by the introduction of a few pigs that will consume acorns, chestnuts... We want to move towards a circular economy! ».*
- La transformation sur le site de la Bergerie Nationale
- The farm sells its milk for 53 cents (instead of 30 cents in conventional collection) to a local processing unit (The Sigy Farm) which manufactures yoghurts and cheeses that are intended for local marketing, in school

collective catering, as well as on a network of shops including the establishment's shop. The aim is to reach the finished product, to avoid the cost of collection and the kilometers of transport as well as to offer the best value to the production.

- Over the next year, locally grown organic wheat will be processed into flour through investment in a flour mill and sold directly to local consumers. This will help meet consumer demand for quality local production (AB) while improving the value of cereal surfaces.

Teaching to produce EPA2 - 2020

Following the results of the first phase, this second strengthens the ambitions of the Ministry of Agriculture in its approach to support agricultural educational institutions in the agroecological transition.

Once again, four axis have been chosen in order to encourage innovative actions and initiatives in the pedagogical practices of agricultural education.

1) Encouraging the speaking and the initiative of the learners over the questions of transitions and agroecology issues.
2) Mobilize the educational community to teach agroecology and to prepare transitions.
3) Amplify the mobilization of farms and technology workshops as ways to teach, demonstrate and experiment.
4) Expanding animation and the swarming of innovative practices.

Specific arrangements are used to support the establishments in this process, so that regulatory references have been appointed to accompany the concrete actions put in place in the institutions. These are teachers or trainers freed from part of their time face to face. Their mission is to:

- animate the teaching teams around the agroecological transition projects of the institutions
- lead these projects
- work in network with the actors of the territory concerned (institutional, professionals, associations, consumers ...)
- transmit and communicate about these projects.

Thus, new institutions are entering or continue their conversion to organic farming, and are called upon to mobilize the teaching teams and learners in these steps that actively participate in the pre-diagnosis and the development of evolutionary scenarios.

Teach to market in short supply chain using the farm of the establishment and the territory at the CFA of the National Bergerie

In the BTSA ACSE repository, a local initiative module (MIL) allows each institution to adapt its teaching according to the specific characteristics of its territory. At the NL CFA the theme chosen is that of "suburban agriculture, multifunctionality and short chain marketing" Patricia Viteaux, a teacher in the training division of the national sheepfold that leads this module, has chosen to draw on the experience of operating the National Bergerie, which has been developing a short circuit marketing strategy for many years and which is currently setting itself a target of 100% short supply chain in its mode of marketing. Other farms in the territory have also been chosen to illustrate this theme and serve as a support for student reflections.
They are put in a position to pursue a mission for the territorial community to carry out an investigation among the actors of the territory allowing them to:
Contextualize the territory at the social, natural and economic level
Define the overall impacts of agriculture on the territory.
Reveal a specific problem-solving for the territory.
Identify the local marketing channels, identify the positive or negative effects of short logistic chains on the territory, farmers and citizens (residents)
Define the conditions to optimize these positive effects by meeting the sustainable development goals.
They are asked to create a poster and present their results to the actors of the territory by relying on a slideshow.
It is interesting to note that this pedagogical activity fits well within the framework of the plan "Teaching to produce differently":
It puts learners in a position of active participation in a project by relying both on the operation of the National Bergerie and on its territory by also allowing it to communicate their reflection and their experience.
This module was set up some twenty years ago and as many apprenticeship promotions have followed this educational sequence. It is possible to take stock of its effectiveness in the agro-ecological transition. Some of the learners are now settled as producers and sometimes in the territory of southern Yvelines and it is significant that the vast majority of them has developed, often successfully, a diversification with a quality certification (AB) allowing them to take advantage of the opportunities of the territory by marketing it directly

to a local clientele. In addition, they become relays of training by exposing their experience to new generations of students. This module therefore has an innovative dimension in terms of pedagogy since it connects learners, in an active situation, with their predecessors who pass on their experience to them. The trainers then play a role of connecting and mediating with the professional world and not only that of transmitting theoretical knowledge in a decisive way. It also demonstrates its effectiveness in raising awareness, inciting and teaching to produce differently.

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SPAIN

Introduction

Spain used to be an agrarian country, the agrarian activity has shaped the landscape, culture and gastronomy of the mosaic of territories and regions that make up its geography. Until the 1960s, agriculture was the main support of the Spanish economy, but currently it employs less than 6% of the active population. As the Spanish economy turned to be based in other economic activities, mainly on tourism, its agriculture became more intensive and relying on the use of large amounts of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers.

The main crops grown in Spain are olive trees, barley, wheat, sugar beets (or beets), corn, potatoes, rye, oats, rice, citrus, vines, tomatoes and onions. The country's climatic and topographic conditions make rainfed agriculture mandatory in a large part of Spain, but in the Mediterranean regions most of the production has long been based on intensive irrigation systems, mostly under plastic and with a high use of energy and environmental cost. A good example of this can be found in Almería, where there is the largest extension of greenhouses in the world, becoming the "orchard of Europe" but with a high social cost in addition to the environmental one.

Complementarily, livestock currently contributes to almost 20% of Spain's final agricultural production. This percentage grew significantly in the 1960's due to a change of model towards a high intensification of the productions. The livestock density was increased significantly, the internal composition of the hut became based mainly on imported breeds or the so-called industrial crosses and dependent on the importation of feed. This has led to a transformation of livestock spaces that nowadays can appear independent of the rural environment and host livestock that, in some cases, deserves the consideration of agricultural use, but, in others, of industrial utility.

Some of the main problems faced by Spanish farmers and people living in rural areas can be the altitude, the tough climate conditions and the soil erosion. Spain is a country with a high average altitude (about 600 meters), being only 11.4% of the Spanish territory at the optimum altitude for the development of agriculture. The average annual solar insolation along the country is 2,500 hours, but, on the other hand, most of the country also suffers from frequent and severe frosts and the distribution of rainfall is also very irregular, especially in regions with a Mediterranean climate, where almost all annual rainfall falls in a short period of time. These heavy rains drag a large amount of soil from the elevated cultivation areas to lower areas or to the sea.

The on farm workforce has been greatly reduced in recent decades, reaching 5% percent of the working population in 2016. Small and medium farms are disappearing, farmers that used to manage them are forced to leave their properties and those are farmed by big farms and more and more frequently by corporations and service companies. There is a lack of young farmers and the limitations for agriculture as a labour alternative for young people are increasing. Because of all these conditions, rural areas are becoming depopulated.

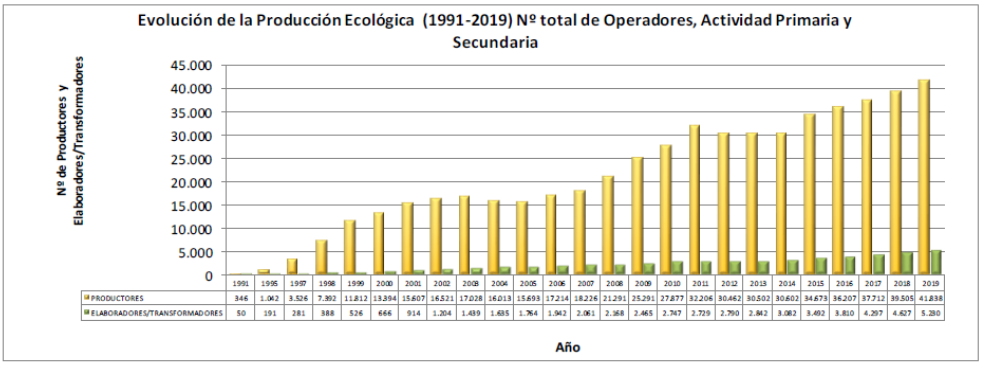
In the irrigated areas, the practice of intensive farming has contaminated soil and water resources with fertilisers and pesticides, has forced sea intrusion and coastal waters eutrophication, landscapes have become veritable seas of plastics and, apart from the loss of biodiversity that this implies, it has also had terrible social consequences on the health of day labourers and the neighbourhood inhabitants.

Organic farming has become a very interesting option for Spain's agriculture and rural areas, as it provides healthy and high-quality food without harming nor threatening the environment and human health. It contributes to family farming and short food supplying chains, which ensure a fairer share of benefits providing "food for all".

And in this sense, the establishment of Ecoregions/Organic districts is the complementary tool for dynamizing the economy in rural areas and for redesigning Spain's economy.

1. Situation/evolution of Organic Districts at national level in Spain

The development of Organic farming in Spain has had a steady growth for the last 3 decades, reaching 2.354.916 hectares and 47.108 operators in 2019.



	1991	1995	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
PRODUCTORES	346	1.042	3.526	7.392	11.812	13.894	15.607	16.521	17.028	16.013	15.693	17.214	18.226	21.291	25.291	27.877	32.206	30.462	30.502	30.602	34.673	36.207	37.712	39.505	41.838
ELABORADORES/TRANSFORMADORES	50	191	281	388	526	666	914	1.204	1.439	1.685	1.764	1.942	2.061	2.368	2.465	2.747	2.729	2.790	2.842	3.082	3.492	3.810	4.297	4.627	5.280

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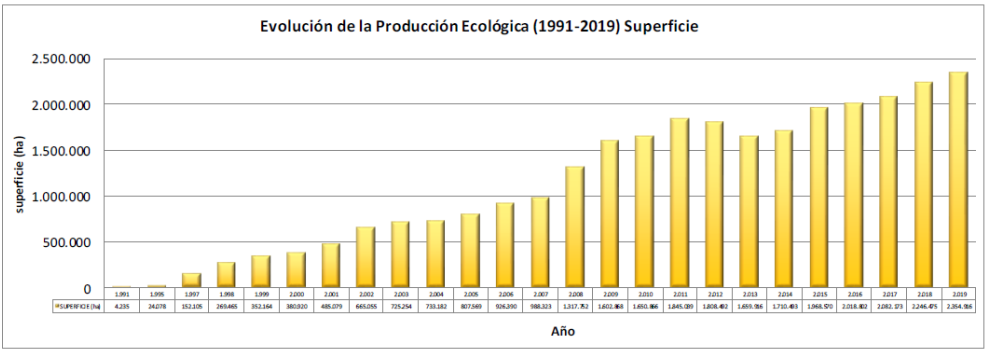

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Although this exponential growth in production, it's share of the agricultural land is still only 9,7 % and the local market still has a long path before we can consider it fully developed, being the estimated share of the internal consumption around 2,2 % according to the last market study developed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAPA).

The development of projects and initiatives with an agroecological approach at local level have been mainly conducted by farmers, consumer's associations or the result of the combination of efforts from both parts. These initiatives have helped increasing the consumption and production of organic products, but also have raised the debate on the dominant agrifood model and its negative impacts on the Climate, the environment and human health.

The need of a change in the agrifood system, and in the lifestyle of the Spanish society at all levels, is something that can no longer be circumvented. But, while the generalized discourse seems to focus entirely on this transition, this is not accompanied by the actions from the administrations nor from most of the population.

This change of model needs a complete change of paradigm, and to make it become a reality with no collateral damages, the collaboration of all parts involved is needed, either in its definition as well as in its implementation.

We need to build resilient societies and agroecosystems, ensuring that we can provide food for all human beings and other species that live together in a territory, while protecting the climate, the environment and soil and biodiversity against erosion and degradation. This process will require efforts and investments, and those cannot be supported only by concerned farmers and consumers, the whole of the society needs to contribute to the compensate these public benefits and, at the same time, we must reduce socioeconomic gaps and make sure that we all have access to a good life quality.

Several researchers and organizations are working on agroecological proposals that aim to ensure sustainability, respect and fairness throughout the whole of the agrifood chain. These proposals have been presented to policy makers at

all levels and the Organic Districts model is one of the proposals presented for resilient territories.

2. Detailed description of all the experiences in progress

Spain has a central government, seventeen regions with their own competent authorities, 50 provinces and two autonomous cities. So, when it comes to decision making or stablishing policies in a certain territory, we might have to deal with the municipalities, the provincial council, the regional competent authority and, depending on the subject, the central government.
Spain hasn't come to a common agreement on a certain strategy for the development of Organic Districts throughout the entire state territories, so each initiative has started independently from the other although SEAE (the Spanish Society for Organic Farming and Agroecology) has been involved in all of them.
At the present we have the Region of Vinalopó Mitjà i Alt, in Alicante, that fulfilled the process of getting a signed agreement by the main stakeholders involved to become an Ecoregion, and Mallorca, which is still in the process of stablishing the agreement.

ORGANIC DISTRICT "ECOREGION VINALOPÓ MITJÀ I ALT"

The choice of the Vinalopó regions for the development of the initial Ecoregion in Alicante served several fundamental reasons. On the one hand, it is an area of great agricultural tradition and with a significant share of organic production. Both regions are the second and third region in the province, both in number of organic operators (mainly vegetable producers and industries) and in organic certified area. The existence of organic operators with a long history and with successful productive practices made the conversion of other farmers in the area much easier.
In addition, they are inland regions where conventional tourism has a relatively low presence, but with the possibility of making connections with the coastal municipalities whose inhabitants are increasingly approaching these regions to get away from the crowded and noisy touristy areas. This phenomenon is contributing to the development of the Agrotourism sector, which recognises the value of local and organically produced products and where crafts and gastronomy play an important role.
On the other hand, the integration of the municipalities, highly sensitized with organic farming and sustainability, in an association (ASIR) makes it easier to undertake joint actions that stimulate organic production and consumption. The union in an entity with its own legal personality facilitates the design and execution of actions where it is necessary to mobilize different actors.

The process started as a LEADER project run by South Alicante's Local Action Group as an initiative of ASIR (Association for Sustainability and Rural Innovation), and the first step was to draw a diagnosis of 4 municipalities of this area and identify all actors in the agri-food network.
The main goals pursued with the process of establishing an organic district in Vinalopó Mitjà i Alt were to:

- Diversify agriculture, integrating plant production with animal husbandry and incorporating new frontiers of sustainability (energy, water, biodiversity, quality of life and work). Farms in this region are small and a territorial and associative project would help to concentrate the offer of local organic products to local consumers.
- Facilitate access to land. Access to land has become increasingly difficult for those without high financial resources and specially for young people who wish to become a farmer. The proposal for an Organic District included the possibility of offering young farmers access to public farmlands and land banks.
- Rebalance power in the food chain, creating new direct relations between producers and consumers, implementing alternative distribution models shortening chains and stablishing solidarity trade groups, as well as urging the public administration to increase green public procurement for school canteens and other public services of the territory.
- Recover Food Sovereignty, giving back local communities the right to decide on what and how to produce.
- Simplify the control and certification system for organic products, to make it less bureaucratic, more efficient and to include inclusive processes, such as group certification and participatory guarantee systems.
- Communicate in a more effective way the values and benefits of organic by shortening the chain and getting farmers and consumers together.

A diagnosis for the constitution of the Organic District of Vinalopó Mitjá i Alt, was carried out.
Stakeholders interested in the development of the project were identified in the municipalities integrated in ASIR (Association of the regions of Vinalopó Mitjà i Alt): El Fondó de les Neus, Hondón de los Frailes, Algueña, La Romana and Salinas. The project aimed to be later extended to the rest of the municipalities that are part of ASIR; Daya Vieja, Busot, Aigües, Torremanzanas, Agost and the districts of Elche, districts of Orihuela and the districts of Almoradí.
The social agents involved in the process were ASIR, with advice from SEAE, CAECV- Comité d'Agricultura Ecològica de la Comunitat Valenciana (Valencia's regional public control authority for organic farming) and the municipalities. The role of local administration was vital for educational

activities on organic farming, proper nutrition in schools, green public procurement and other sustainable initiatives. Local organic producers had a very important role in the process and highlighted the need for markets that appreciated their productions so, retailers, restaurants and tourist establishments joined the process intending to articulate a network for promoting organic consumption.

115 agents of the territory were identified using the snowball sampling methodology, with a continuous process of incorporation of actors throughout the project and were segmented accordingly to their activity:

- Organic farmers and processors
- Retailers at local markets and stores.
- Hotels, restaurants and cafeterias
- Local administrations

Subsequently, a semi-structured interview was carried out in the case of producers, processors and Local Administration, and a survey with open responses for retailers, restaurants, cafeterias and hotels. The aim was to identify the brakes for adopting an agroecological model of production and consumption. The results of the interviews and surveys were that there was a low rate of consumption of organic products and those were not easily available for consumers. The participants showed interest in the development of an Ecoregion in the area.

In order to initiate small pilot actions in the municipalities, meetings were held with Local Administration and producers for the organization of local organic markets. With the information generated and the participation of the different agents, the market proposal was drafted and its programming began at the same time as the actions for its visibility.

As part of the actions to make the project visible, representatives of the region participated in the Symposium on Municipalism, Agroecology and Rural Development: Organic districts, proximity connections and agroecological adaptations to climate change, held in Salinas in autumn 2018.

And the final result of the whole process there was the signing of a manifesto on February the 8th, 2019 and as the first action of the commitment a network of local agroecological rotational markets was stablished in the 4 municipalities (Hondon de las Nieves, Hondon de los Frailes, Alguena and La Romana) was stablished and 8 local organic farmers are part of the experience.

The pilot project covers a 14.308 m2 area with 4.837 inhabitants and the 4 municipalities and Alicante's regional government were involved in the diagnosis and the 4 months pilot project. The project intended to extend to the entire territory of the Local Action Group of South Alicante. Having coastal cities in the network will be key to promote organic regional consumption.

ORGANIC DISTRICT IN PROCESS IN MALLORCA

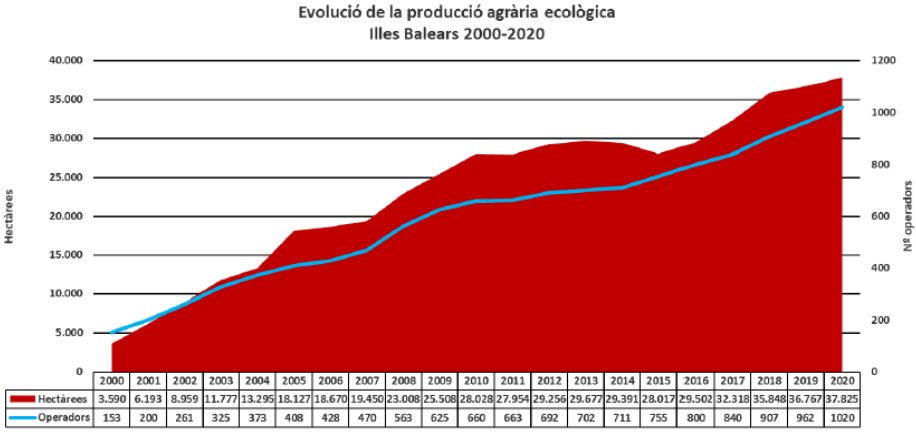
Mallorca is a Mediterranean Island of 3640,11 km² and currently has over 900.000 Inhabitants. Its economy was based on farming until the 1960s, when it started to be taken over by tourism. From the 1980s until the 2020's COVID-19's pandemic the island's economy has been mainly based on tourism, farmers have been displaced from the farmland due to the urban pressure derived from the proliferation of villas on rural land. In the past decades, more than 1/3 of the farmland has been abandoned.

The island is divided into 6 subregions with different pedoclimatic conditions, allowing the production of a wide range of diverse and complementary agri-food products, from a nutritional and gastronomic point of view.

The effects on the island of the climatological phenomenon Gloria, showed the vulnerability of Mallorca's food system and the current socioeconomic situation, derived from the social and tourist restrictions due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, require a redefinition of the economy and the process of Organic Districts is as a viable and accessible opportunity.

Prior to the beginning of the process, Mallorca's organic sector had advanced in its own structuring and organization for improving their productions and for the joint offer of products, as well as in building close relationship with consumers and with public administrations.

Also, the organic sector had maintained a steady growth since the publishing of the first European Regulation for Organic Farming, Regulation 2092/91 In 1991.



	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Hectàrees	3.590	6.193	8.959	11.777	13.295	18.127	18.670	19.450	23.008	25.508	28.028	27.954	29.256	29.677	29.391	28.017	29.502	32.318	35.848	36.767	37.825
Operadors	153	200	261	325	373	408	428	470	563	625	660	663	692	702	711	755	800	840	907	962	1020

Statistics for the last 20 years; Font: www.cbpae.org

The share of farmland managed under the organic system has increased as the same time as the internal organic industry and market were developed.

Within all this process, a crucial step was the creation of the Association of the organic operators of Mallorca, APAEMA, as well as the internal organization of it in sectoral work groups to be able to share knowledge and jointly generate new capacities, identify the needs and opportunities for the sector as well as to organize productions and defend common interests.

The Association was organised in sectoral working groups, which facilitated the exchange of specialised knowledge between farmers and the access to advisory services specifically focussed on organic farming. It also helped programming the productions to ensure providing the market regularly and steadily with a wide range of products.

The establishment of weekly markets for local organic products in different towns and cities (Palma on Tuesdays and Saturdays, Santa Maria on Sundays, etc.) was promoted by organic consumers associations since 2006, as well as the establishment of Mallorca's Annual Fair for Organic Products.

In 2008, the first attempt to implement a strategy to supply organic products for school canteens was started, but it wasn't until 2019 that it really started to work. This was the first experience of Green Public Procurement (GPP) in the island.

As the demand for organic products increased, the need for a specific structure for jointly offer products to restaurants, public school canteens and retailers, became more and more evident, so the Organic Farmers' Cooperative was stablished with sectoral joint production planning, processing and commercialization, either for meat and vegetable products.

The signing of an agreement between Tour operators and the Cooperative for the purchase of local organic products and for the supply of organic vegetable waste for composting was the first step to get Tour Operators involved.

Social and school organic orchards have also been a tool to promote organic methods as well as a great excuse for breaking age and cultural barriers through getting together people from all generations and nationalities.

Since 2019, SEAE started a participatory process in several municipalities of Serra de Tramuntana, which is part of UNESCO's World's Heritage but is threatened with soil erosion. Multi-stakeholders' workshops were conducted in 7 municipalities in the Serra de Tramuntana, to identify both needs and potentials at local level, as well as the interest in jointly advancing in the consolidation of Organic Districts.

As a first result of the participatory process, local stakeholders agreed to walk the path towards becoming an Organic District and drafted the first Action Plan.

In another part of the Island, Pla de Mallorca, with serious problems with water contamination due to Nitrates, multi-stakeholders' workshops were conducted to identify possible actions to be taken to reduce nitrates contamination in

water at a local level, as well as the interest in jointly advancing in the consolidation of Organic Districts.
The agents involved in this process were:

- SEAE- Spanish Society for Organic Farming and Agroecology, member of IFOAM EU.
- APAEMA-Mallorca's Association of Organic Operators's.
- CBPAE- Balearic Islands public Control Body
- Fundació Iniciatives del Mediterrani; NGO
- Administration: Balearic Islands Government through the competent authorities for agriculture and environment, Mallorca's Regional Council, Municipalities
- Local Organic Consumers' Associations
- Local Civil Society Organizations
- Tour Operators & hotels, restaurants and cafeterias.
- Local food retailers

One of the main demands of the stakeholders involved in these processes was the need of real and reliable data on the resources and person working hours invested in each crop when working in diversified farms that follow the circular economy principles, produce their own inputs, transform their productions and sell directly to consumers. An urgent need to calculate the actual Annual Work Units (AWUs) for the Mediterranean Islands' Areas, and specifically for the Mediterranean Mountainous Areas was identified.
Also, access to farmland was defined as one of the main bottlenecks for farming in the island, due to the high rates of speculation on the land and a proposal for establishing Land Banks and Territorial Agreements to allow access to land to new farmers (young and not-so-young ones) was raised.
The process is still ongoing and Menorca, Eivissa and Formentera are willing to start with similar strategies.
The Process of constitution of the Organic District in Mallorca will be formalized during the Short-term joint staff training event, that will take place from 4th to 8th of October 2021.

PROSPECTING PROCESS STARTED IN ANDALUSIA TO IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP ORGANIC DISTRICTS

A first study to elaborate a "Diagnosis and participatory proposals for the consolidation of local agroecological networks in Andalucía" was carried out in early 2021 by the Agricultural and Fisheries Agency of the Spanish region of Andalucía (AGAPA), together with the University of Granada. The aim of the work was to identify networks recognized as alternatives to the predominant

agri-food system that offer social innovations that contribute to the local economies and the environmental sustainability.
The main goals were to:

- Identify the main difficulties, obstacles and barriers encountered by these local experiences.
- Prepare joint action proposals between the different experiences as well as proposals for public policies to support them.

A mixed methodology, with quantitative and qualitative analysis, was used, based on the following tools: a survey (questionnaire), the semi-structured interview, and a participatory-prospective workshop.
Some of the networks and experiences currently working to promote Local Agri-Food Systems with an agroecological and organic basis, were identified and located, using 70 surveys and 22 semi-structured interviews, a diagnosis of the current situation of each of the initiatives detected was carried out, identifying the main weaknesses and threats, as well as the strengths and opportunities for growing and consolidating.
In the meanwhile, SEAE initiated contacts with Malaga's regional government to draft a project for the development of Organic Districts in the territory through participatory processes using the snowball strategy. And, on the other hand, the Region of La Axarquia, also in Malaga, already recognised as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS) by UNESCO, initiated contacts and exchanges of experiences with ACTUAR and BIO-REGIÔES about the Portuguese experience with Organic Districts.
GIAHS (SIPAM, in Spanish and Portuguese) represent natural landscapes with agricultural practices that create livelihoods in rural areas while combining biodiversity, resilient ecosystems and tradition and innovation. The process for identifying the interest of a territory to become a GIAHS has many similarities with the strategies used for Organic Districts, so synergies between both processes can be stablished.
This initiative is still at a very initial stage, but it is clear that it is of interest of many different stakeholders that have started the path using diversified complementary approaches.

3. Brakes and levers for the creation of Organic Districts

a. Public policies/legislation

Public policies at national level

1985	Ley de aguas y Código de Aguas	Water Law and Water Code
2003	Ley 43/2003, de 21 de noviembre, de Montes	Law 43/2003, of November 21st, on Forests.
2007	Ley 42/2007, de 13 de diciembre, del Patrimonio Natural y de la Biodiversidad.	Law 42/2007, of December 13th, on Natural Heritage and Biodiversity.
2007	Ley 45/2007, de 13 de diciembre, para el desarrollo sostenible del medio rural.	Law 45/2007, of December 13th, for the sustainable development of rural areas.
2011	Ley 22/2011, de 28 de julio, de residuos y suelos contaminados	Law 22/2011, of July 28th, on waste and contaminated soils.
2011	Real Decreto 1336/2011, de 3 de octubre, por el que se regula el contrato territorial como instrumento para promover el desarrollo sostenible del medio rural.	Royal Decree 1336/2011, of October 3rd, which regulates the territorial contract as an instrument to promote the sustainable development of rural areas.
2014	Ley 30/2014, de 3 de diciembre, de Parques Nacionales.	Law 30/2014, of December 3rd, on National Parks.
2014	Estrategia para el apoyo a la producción Ecológica 2014-2017	Strategy to support organic production 2014-2017
2017	Ley 16/2017, de 1 de agosto, del cambio climático.	Climate Change Law 16/2017, of August 1st. Draft Law on Climate Change and Energy Transition and National Integrated Energy and Climate Plan in preparation
2017	Estrategia para el apoyo a la producción Ecológica 2017-2020	Strategy to support organic production 2017-2020

Despite the fact that at the state level there is a legislative framework that favours sustainable and environmentally friendly management of the territory, the agroecological development of the agri-food sector and the healthy

revitalization of rural communities and of life in general throughout the state, the application of such legislation is very low and, in some cases, nil.
The Forestry Law lays the foundations for sustainable forest management so that while forest areas are conserved, they are protected against fires, erosion and the loss of biodiversity. However, year after year there are fires that devastate large areas of high natural value due to human negligence, either accidentally or intentionally.
On the other hand, Spain has pioneering legislation in Europe for sustainable development and the implementation of tools for its management and promotion that has not been applied in practice for more than a decade.
The promulgation, on December 13, 2007, of Law 45/2007 for the sustainable development of rural areas, established the bases of its own rural policy, as a State policy, fully adapted to the particular economic, social and environmental conditions of the Spanish rural environment, which allow complementing the application of the instruments of European policies and conventional sectoral policies, to ensure sustainable development in rural areas. Unfortunately, the Law was never developed or applied in the Spanish State. And in the same situation is the Royal Decree that regulates the territorial contract as an instrument to promote the sustainable development of the rural environment.
The strategies to promote organic production have contributed, together with the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) funds, to the increase in the area dedicated to organic production and the volume of products, but not to the diversification or development of local markets and territorialized agroecological agri-food systems.
Therefore, the legislative and policy framework represents an opportunity for the advancement of Organic Districts throughout the state, but real political intentionality and social awareness are needed.

b. Technical aspects

Organic farming has proven to be a method of managing agroecosystems that provides healthy food in sufficient quantities to cover the nutritional needs of the population without compromising the environment, the climate or future productions.
Despite this, there are still great challenges to overcome at the production level, such as the readaptation of the means of production to organic farming, to find a solution for the coexistence with other agricultural production methods that generate drift or cross contamination, among others.
To advance in these aspects, investment in research and experimentation on organic methods are required, as well as the application of the "polluter pays" logic.

The agroclimatic conditions of the Spanish territory, the diversity of its agroecosystems and its agrarian tradition, make agriculture a unique opportunity for the redesigning of its economy from the transition towards organic, healthy and territorialized agri-food systems and the enhancement of the natural, agri-food, landscape and cultural heritage.
However, the capacity for social reaction to this opportunity remains low. Sometimes due to the lack of awareness about the vulnerability of the environment and of our own species, in the face of the abuses of extractive and highly polluting activities on which the economy has been based in recent decades. In others, due to the blockage derived from an excess of alarming and worrying news, which leads to discouragement, laziness and inaction. And, in most cases, due to a lack of knowledge and tools to promote taking advantage of this opportunity.
That is why the participatory and social dynamization processes included within the Organic Districts methodology allow us to work on the aforementioned limitations, identify the potentialities of each participant and offer solutions in which all parties are heard, considered and benefited.
The short experience that the Spanish state has in this methodology has shown that, as in most processes, constancy and perseverance is required in the accompaniment, since it is about living territories with changing dynamics and agents, in addition to the permanent threat of the lack of socialized tools to manage conflict or discouragement. In the case of Vinalopó Mitjà i Alt, the process was stalled for a time when the accompaniment ceased.

c. Training components

Training components are crucial to overcome the brakes already mentioned.
There is a wide range of training tools available that can be used in the Organic Districts processes, including online and face-to-face trainings on technical aspects or on participatory social dynamization, and also knowledge transferring. This knowledge transferring can be from researchers to society and the different economic sectors involved in the agri-food network, or via the farmers-to-farmers approach, which has proven to be very successful when used.
In this sense, the special needs for training identified in the Spanish experience have been classified according to the target group to which they were addressed.
Training needs for farmers:

- On organic farming methods, either through specialised training or advisory services
- On business model: focussing on short commercial circuits, local processing

- On legal requirements and policy options

Training needs for Civil Society:

- On how to help the organic agrifood network and the Organic Districts Process.
- On participatory social dynamization and conflict management.

Training needs for consumers in general:

- On organic farming: for self consumption productions
- On environmental social and health benefits of consuming organic products and the story behind food
- On local traditional gastronomy
- On recognition of the patrimonial value of the environmental, landscape, gastronomic and cultural heritage

Each training that becomes fixed within the curricular project of the educational system is crucial, since it not only establishes capacities among professionals working in the educational system at the same time as to the students, but also, all this knowledge is internalized in the coming generations, covering that lack in knowledge that the current ones have suffered. The training included in the educational system should cover all the areas described above, in order to initiate the transition towards economic models in which life is placed at the centre and prioritized.

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