



FORUM ORIGIN, DIVERSITY AND TERRITORIES

Agroecology: Multiple transitions the territories

Lausanne, December 4th-6st 2019

Workshop 6. Biological processes and social networks in the agroecological transition: drivers for building resilience of farmers and territories

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Context

Agroecology is built on scattered initiatives around the world. Their networking in different forms, at different time and spatial scales, allows initiators to consolidate their knowledge and know-how. This social networking is also the local catalyst for creating networks of habitats and areas of high biodiversity value, which often have a very positive impact on the acceleration of the recovery of endangered species. The positive consequences of both social and biological connectivity of farms are a favourable factor in resilience to climate change and to other causes of agroecosystem shocks. This workshop will discuss the retribution options of biological networks as ecosystem services, and the role and place of farms and their operators as drivers of resilient and sustainable agro-ecological models.

Session 1: Farmers' networks carrying ecological networks of high biological value. As an ecosystem service, measures for biodiversity can be incentivized at the level of the cultivated plot or even the farm. This session aims to explore this type of collaboration between farmers, by bringing together different points of view on this issue: points of view of farmers, but also biologists, who advocate these ecological networks. What are the actual results and outcomes of these actions and the modality of their remuneration for ecosystem services (for example in Switzerland on the bird population according to the Sempach Bird Observatory atlas in 2018)? What are the dynamics triggered by the social networks that drive these biological networks?

Session 2: Research and practice exchange networks for agroecological transition. Different networks and social movements have emerged to promote a renewal of ways of doing and thinking in agriculture. The modalities are contrasted: while permaculture is developing on the fringes of official agricultural research stations, agroforestry brings together influential actors in agricultural research. This session will address the following questions: how are innovative research networks built and structured around various forms of agroecology? Around which exchanges of knowledge and practices? How does knowledge circulate? What role does agricultural research play? What is the structuring role of public, para-public and private institutions in these networks?

Session 3: Hybridization and mixing of social networks in the ecological transition. Consumers, farmers, and researchers can become real partners in the transition. These citizen movements are the result of a collective awareness of the need to act collectively, in response to several crises, including climate change. These movements include, for example, circular economy initiatives, networking of producers to reduce margins, "zero kilometer" initiatives. The questions raised by the workshop are as follows: how to position the importance of these networks in institutional changes for the agroecological transition? What roles do engaged citizens play in this



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transition? Is it just a mirage of a few scattered and weakening citizen initiatives? Or a shared, radiant social movement capable of taking political influence?

Session 4: This session will address resilience, temporality and spatiality, as well as porosity between different emerging or consolidated networks. Indeed, the comparison of biological and social processes opens up the gap between the time of action and that of results on organizations and ecosystems. Biological processes have their own rhythm, very different from the time it takes to learn to do "without pesticides" for example. We will also address in a transversal way the concept of resilience underlying these networks, to shed light on how resilience at the level of farming practices (through a better consideration of the biology) goes hand in hand with societal resilience (through a better inclusion in socio-political/ mutual aid networks).

Organization: 2 half-days = 4 sessions of 90 minutes each (3-4 speakers per session).