

Facilitating Sustainability of Agriculture at Regional Level

Principles and Case Studies from across Europe

Handbook



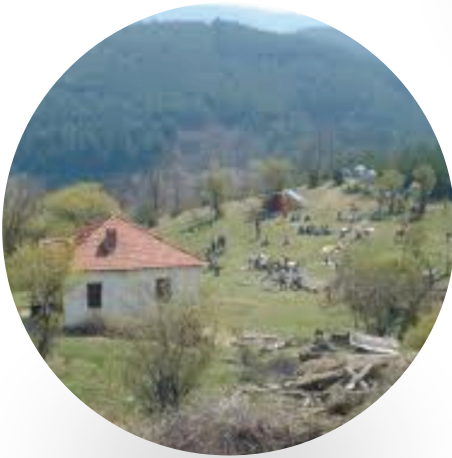
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Handbook highlights

Facilitating sustainability of agriculture at regional level – The aim of this FarmPath Handbook is to be a practical guide to help and inspire a wide range of decision-makers and policy managers who are willing to foster change in agriculture and in overall rural issues in their regions.

The FarmPath research project (2011–2014) is guided by the idea that sustainability of agriculture is best addressed 1) at the **regional level** and 2) by enabling **flexible combinations of farming models**.

Grounded on concrete cases from seven European regions and on a participatory process involving regional stakeholders through “visioning” exercises, this Handbook provides suggestions on **what to do** if you would like to:

- innovate in farming;
- maintain farming activities;
- support/ create a new concept of farming, farmers and rural areas.

In this Handbook you will find examples of **problems** that may be similar to the ones in your region, along with the **pathways** that may help you, and your region, move toward your own vision of ‘sustainability of agriculture’.

The first section addresses the purposes and uses of the handbook. In the second section, recommendations for progressing along three specific types of pathways are addressed:

- Innovation in farming
- Maintenance or re-emergence of farming activities
- New concepts of farming, farmers and rural areas

These are illustrated with examples of ongoing regional initiatives.

Means of addressing overall policy and institutional arrangements are also identified.

The Handbook concludes with a summary of the visions identified in each study country, and a table demonstrating the trade-offs between the different visions: pursuing one pathway can help or hinder progress towards a different vision.

Why this Handbook?

Over the past decade the transition towards increased sustainability of agriculture has been a central theme in the work of governments, NGOs and research institutions. It is becoming clear that changes are needed to ensure that agriculture in the EU can meet the increasing range of public goods and functions desired by its citizens.

In FarmPath we have worked with the idea that **sustainability of agriculture** is best addressed at regional levels, by enabling a variety of **flexible combinations of farming models** to represent the specific regional cultures, agricultural capabilities, diversification potential, ecology and historic ownership, and governance structures.

The definition of **sustainability at regional level** reflects a shift away from the notion that individual farms, or farming systems, can or should be expected to meet the full range of public and industry demands on agriculture. It accounts for the fact that there will be regional differences in the agricultural forms and capabilities. It also accepts that interactions between individual farm models and farming systems at the regional level are a key aspect of sustainability.

In order to move towards increased sustainability, transition needs to occur. This means that different developments at the local, regional and national level have to come together, which will lead to a **development pathway** based on new practices, technologies, knowledge, institutions, social organisations and different guiding principles and values. These pathways can only be successfully identified through a process of a co-construction which involves all the relevant stakeholders.

The potential pathways identified by FarmPath provide institutional actors dealing with the **creation of conditions for transition in rural areas** with examples of how this could best be addressed.

Handbook goal:

To present possible pathways towards regional sustainability of agriculture, at local and regional level in Europe, as conceived and designed by over 200 regional and national stakeholders from seven European countries.

Who is it for?

Decision makers and policy managers: actors that may influence processes towards increased regional sustainability of agriculture – at **local and regional** levels across Europe.

How this Handbook was created

This Handbook is based on the findings of the FarmPath research project. FarmPath is financed through the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme (*see Project Identity, p.62*). It involves seven European countries (in which the case studies were developed), as well as specialists from other countries. FarmPath began in early 2011 and will end in May 2014.

FarmPath aims to improve understanding of transition processes in European agriculture at regional levels and to provide resource knowledge for policy makers and other stakeholders, through case study research and involving the regional stakeholders in a series of visioning exercises.

The project was **implemented** through:

- The development of a conceptual framework based on **Transition Studies**.
- Study of on-going initiatives for change within seven European countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Portugal, Scotland-UK), and within seven clusters:
 - High Nature Value Farming
 - Lifestyle Farming
 - Collaboration in Agriculture
 - Certification Programmes
 - Local Food Systems
 - Reducing the Environmental Impact of Farming
 - On-Farm Renewable Energy Production
- Co-construction, (with a group of stakeholders from each of the seven regions/countries), through participation, of visions for the sustainability of agriculture in the future:
 - Aberdeenshire (Scotland, UK)
 - Freiburg region (Germany)
 - Imathia (Greece)
 - Montemor-o-Novo (Portugal)
 - Pays de Rennes (France)
 - Pazardjik and Plovdiv (Bulgaria)
 - Plzeň region (Czech Republic)
- Stakeholders' involvement in the project activities.

Transition studies build on theoretical backgrounds ranging from evolutionary economics, sociology, to innovation and on science and technology studies. To learn more about the theoretical and conceptual background of FarmPath please see 'Project identity' on p.62 or check out the website: http://www.farmpath.eu/#Trans_to_Sust

This **Handbook** in particular results from **visioning** processes (*see p. 11*) implemented through a transdisciplinary and participatory approach to research. These results are thus not only academically rigorous, but co-constructed and validated with technicians, policy managers and decision makers in seven European regions.

Such participatory processes are complex as they rely on the availability of different actors to engage in the process together with researchers, and they also have to incorporate many different visions and interpretations of reality.

However the research results and processes are linked, in this way, to grassroots experience and practitioners' expectations, meaning that they have a more concrete and comprehensive nature.

Visions and Pathways

FarmPath involved producers; professional and sectorial associations; non-governmental organisations; land managers; young farmers; experts and researchers from seven European regions. These stakeholders were asked to picture their ideal visions for the sustainability of agriculture **in their region** for 2030 (i.e. far enough ahead for real change to occur, but close enough to identify definite steps to take). In each site, these visions were grouped into two or three main visions towards the regional sustainability of agriculture.

Identified visions can be grouped in three main types:

- Increased competitiveness of farming and securing its profitability, primarily through intensification and specialization of production.
- Production which secures the quality of the landscape, environment or natural resources, as a way to guarantee its sustainability and acceptance by European citizens.
- Lively rural communities, networks and close connections between the urban and rural which strongly emphasize the role of farming within the enhancement of rural values and lifestyle.

The main regional visions are summarised and categorised in these three types in the table on p. 49. In a general analysis, we may observe that most regional visions fit better in one of three types, but yet also have (albeit weaker) characteristics from other types.

In a comparative analysis, the different characteristics of the regions do not seem to be reflected in clear differences in the type of visions formulated. Despite the differentiation of the European regions studied in FarmPath, not least their variation of dominance of intensive or extensive agricultural systems, common visions emerged in the participatory process.

The most evident common feature is the role of **community**, which is viewed as a source of strength and differentiation in the countryside (the social dimension appears to be the driver for at least one of the visions in six of the seven regions).

Increased production also appears as a driver in every region, but not necessarily to the same extent. For instance, the Czech Republic visions which link to increased production, also highlight the important social dimensions: one emphasises cooperation and networking amongst farmers, another highlights the importance of multifunctionality and a diversified rural community. In the case of Bulgaria all three visions aim for intensification, modernisation and specialisation. One vision is more 'environmentally friendly', but nevertheless all three remain within the vision group centred on neo-productivism. This particular focus in Bulgaria could have a number of explanations, including the relatively low level of agricultural modernisation in the country, or the wealth of those involved in the process. In Portugal, the two visions fit within the intensification and more community-driven directions, however both have the regional extensive silvo-pastoral land use system as a central condition for future sustainability.

The participatory work followed, which gathered stakeholders and researchers from each region, to help identify the constraints (**problems**) and the **pathways** that were needed to progress the visions in the right direction.

Suggested pathways are of central importance in this Handbook. They are based on 'stakeholders' opinions of regional sustainability of agriculture so therefore they emphasise the wide variety of suggestions that were brought up during the participatory process. They reflect both the regional differences and distinctive individual perspectives.

To learn more about this process see: <http://www.farmpath.eu/Futurevisionsforagriculture>



Bulgarian farmers focus group discussion
(Image courtesy of Mariya Peneva, February 2013, Bratsigovo)

When to use this Handbook?

- During the creation or development of strategies for regional sustainable agriculture at local and/or regional decision-making levels.
- Whilst these strategies are being implemented or relevant tools are being defined.
- Whilst looking for regional level solutions.

How to use this Handbook

This Handbook aims to be a practical guide to help with understanding the **conditions for transition towards sustainability of agriculture**. It presents a series of proposals pertaining to actions, institutions and networks which all need to work together so that a transition can occur.

1 Consulting

The Handbook structure

FarmPath findings on regional sustainability of agriculture are grouped into three main **themes**:

- Innovation in farming
- Maintenance or re-emergence of farming activities
- New concepts of farming, farmers and rural areas

There is also a general section regarding policy and institutional arrangements that are transversal and applicable to all of the clusters.

Each **theme** is composed of several **sub-themes**, which in turn are analyzed in terms of the **problems found** and the potential **pathways** for moving forward.

Theme > Sub-theme
Problems > Pathways

Note: In some cases no problems were identified, only pathways.

Regional examples are presented to facilitate the understanding of the pathways (see yellow case study boxes), plus some **recommendations** that are specifically policy-orientated.

Illustrated examples and policy recommendations arose from the case studies and visioning activities from the seven regions.

Some **in-depth regional examples** coming out of FarmPath case studies are presented in between sections as to illustrate that:

- Initiatives towards regional sustainability can come from combinations of different pathways (see boxes) – cases 1 and 3; and
- Sometimes initiatives unfold in unexpected ways – cases 2 and 3.

At the end of the Handbook there is a **table highlighting the contribution of the pathways** to the above-mentioned **types of visions** (p. 49).

Tips for an active reading:

- You can read the entire Handbook and search for similar problems or adequate pathways that best fit the needs of your region.
- To concentrate on the set of pathways that match your goal: either to innovate; to maintain farming or to foster new farming and rural concepts => use the Contents by Themes (p. 5).
- To look for the pathways that relate to one of the three future visions that may be relevant to you => use Pathways and Visions Typologies Table (pp. 50–58).

2 From words to action

General guidelines on identifying possible pathways:

- Be aware that there are not 'one size fits all' solutions.
- Analyse the specific features of your region.
- Identify all the relevant actors that may interact to create the transition you are looking for.
- Find out their visions for the region and share your own vision with them.
- Identify those pathways that best answer your specific regional problems.
- Promote participatory events where stakeholders can share concerns and make an action plan.

Keep in mind that:

Transition occurs when different actors and actions converge => combine different pathways.

No action is without unexpected or undesirable side-effects => identify the possible side-effects of each pathway before implementing it.

Examples from detailed concrete cases may help you in this task.

3 Learn more

If you wish to know more about this project, its theoretical background, concrete case studies or research approaches you can use our website and/or contact the project coordinator or the national teams (see p. 59).



Final Portuguese pathways workshop (Image courtesy of Anne Poininet de Sivry, May 2013, Montemor-o-Novo).



Pathways towards Regional Sustainability of Agriculture

1. INNOVATION IN FARMING

These pathways are to be considered when there is a need to develop new solutions and ideas in farming. Innovation must be considered broadly, including practices, network connections or technology. Pure technical innovations also have social and institutional dimensions which need to be acknowledged.

1.1. Interconnection between farming, policy and research

Problems:

- The lack of face-to-face communication between farmers, and those who develop research and new knowledge, hinders the development of problem-solving approaches to farming.
- Research does not directly reach the farming sector, because researchers have little time for extension work.

Suggested pathways

- More connection, for example through regular meetings and extension services, but also field work or field trips joining farmers, policy-makers and researchers.
- Support for university-based extension services.

These pathways can be linked to those in 'Integrated actors and strategies' on p. 38.

Example:

Lannion Bay – France

Since the 1970s, Lannion Bay has faced the problem of green tides on its beaches, causing problems for tourism, the region's image and the costs to collect green algae. This phenomenon is due to a combination of factors and according to scientists, only a reduction in nitrate losses from farming systems can mitigate the green tides.

Regional policy-makers and farmers contacted researchers to help create joint solutions. A research programme has been dedicated to developing grasslands in various types of farming systems with local farmers (pilot farms).

However, the implemented scientific models were also a source of much controversy at the local, regional and national level.

Policy recommendations:

- ✓ Define and support long-running processes of co-constructed knowledge (farmers, researchers and policy-makers) and different methods for the dissemination of results.
- ✓ Create mechanisms that may operationalize such dissemination partnerships (e.g., a research centre or a professional association being in charge of coordinating and securing the functioning of such processes).
- ✓ Ensure long-term collaboration through long-term funding to build trust.
- ✓ Create mechanisms for more sectorial research, subject to specific rules and evaluations.
- ✓ Promote new evaluation guidance for research where the applicability of the results is valued as much as the scientific rating of the journal in which it is published.

These recommendations can be linked to those in 'Economic viability of farming activities' on p. 21, in 'Farming and society' on p. 29, and in 'Integrated actors and strategies' on p. 38.

1.2. Innovative mindset

Problems:

- Local actors are too embedded in current practices, lacking the capacity to innovate.
- Conventional training perpetuates unsustainable farming systems.
- Education levels vary in the different study regions, as in some regions the level of education in farming is low, hindering entrepreneurship and innovation capacity.
- There is a lack of tailored plans for farmers.

Suggested pathways

- Carry out pilot experiments to test best practices and experience exchange.
- Regular training, including new practices and competence; these activities need to be adapted to the specific education levels and cultural backgrounds.
- Invest in and improve young farmers education, both quanti- and qualitatively.
- Knowledge transfer and sharing between researchers and farmers in order to achieve coordinated research priorities, taking into account grounded needs.
- Creation of extension services with tailored and flexible services, instead of general solutions.

These pathways can be linked to those in 'Land availability and farming succession'; on p. 24, and in 'Multifunctional rural areas and farming' on p. 36.

Case Study: Rennes – Brittany – France

Local Food Systems

The city of Rennes is characterized by very dense and productive peri-urban agriculture, which is threatened in many ways by the proximity to the city.

In 2006, policy-makers decided to organise a focus group about the future of the agriculture around Rennes with different stakeholders involved in rural areas and agriculture. They created a shared plan about peri-urban agriculture in favour of exchanges between local inhabitants and farmers, and the development of local supply chains in the region. A set of policy instruments were put in action regarding urban planning, access to land for young farmers and new entrants, on-farm investments, research about alternative marketing channels (AMC) and local food in school canteens.

- Increased awareness of consumers for higher quality of local food and increase its consumption, particularly of products from small-scale farms, and also linking these local products to food sovereignty and environmental awareness.

- Better co-ordination between policy sectors.

Decision-makers feared the destruction of industrial jobs if AMC were to be generalised. During this process other issues have also been raised: restricted governance; lack of intermediaries and inclusion of professional peri-urban agriculture only. However AMC are still a real working model for alternative food networks.

More info: <http://www.farmpath.eu/RennesMetropole>

Policy recommendations:

- ✓ Create specific guidelines and monitoring mechanisms to increase the practice-relevance of training and advisory services.
- ✓ Develop specialised farm management guidelines (available on paper and on-line) per farm type or farming system disseminated in such a way so that it reaches all relevant stakeholders.
- ✓ Increase the flexibility of educational opportunities (e.g. short courses) for young farmers.
- ✓ Create specific support schemes for farmer to farmer knowledge and innovation networks (between and across regions).
- ✓ Create a conditionality clause in supporting schemes for farm-based projects so that information sharing is compulsory. For instance, through the availability of farms' data or opening the farms to regular monitoring operations by researchers.
- ✓ Give clear and explicit priority to regional or local extension services in the RDP programmes or through other public funding schemes.

2. MAINTENANCE OR RE-EMERGENCE OF FARMING ACTIVITIES

These pathways are to be considered when there is a need to maintain or to re-activate the social and economic importance of agriculture, regardless of the farming system.

2.1. Economic viability of farming activities

Problems:

- The current subsidy policy allows non-profitable farming firms with no drive for profitability to linger.
- Some farmers which would need investment in order to increase their farm economic viability lack access to investment capital.
- The largest share of profits goes to middlemen and retailers.
- Consumers do not know the regional products and are not aware of the relevance of their choices for the survival of local farming.
- Frequently farmers lack capacity to develop marketing strategies for their products, even when they have a specific quality.



Suggested pathways

- Increase access to investment capital, effectively targeted to young farmers and new entrants and/or farmers with innovation potential.
- Build on existing, and develop a network of, local markets and trading systems of regional products enabling direct sales of small and medium- sized farms, and direct contact with consumers.
- Promote the organisation of local markets with local actors outside farming (public administration and so on), and link to other sectors (tourism, heritage, conservation).
- Promote the introduction of green technologies for energy and water use and for more efficient production, but also for the higher interest of consumers through relevant marketing.
- Support mechanisms to promote local brands.
- Further promote organic farming as a way to increase the added value of quality products.

These pathways can be linked to those in 'Going local' on p. 34.

Example:

Kurtovo Konare – Bulgaria

Local small-scale producers did not have direct access to consumers. Farmers were forced to sell their products to middlemen and food processors at low prices.

The local community centre started offering advisory services; supporting a food fair (annual Festival of Paprika and Tomato); supporting the participation of local products in food sampling events (at regional, national, international levels) and other activities in order to develop the local brand (Kurtovska Kapia).

The Festival of Paprika and Tomato has quickly become popular across Bulgaria. It has contributed to increasing farmers' contacts and awareness of consumers' preferences. Currently, most of them sell their products in advance.

Example:

Saint Amarin Valley – Vosges Mountains – France

In the 1960's peasants started leaving this region. Land abandonment and the consequential shrub encroachment resulted in losses in biodiversity, and broadly in the quality of life in the Valley. Together local farmers and mayors created a landscape plan which aimed to re-open the landscape through agriculture, connected with the administrative bodies of the agricultural sector. Very innovative agri-environmental measures were set up. It led to the creation of jobs in agriculture, to collective actions between farmers, to the settling of new farmers, and to the development of a local supply chain.

Policy recommendations:

- ✓ Develop and promote well-balanced and regionally based financing models (including guarantee models) targeted at innovative farms and technologies.
- ✓ Subsidise initial investments to cover the official requirements for direct sales (administrative fees for instance) and for establishing producers' groups.
- ✓ Expand the spectrum of subjects eligible for funding in order to facilitate farm business start-ups.
- ✓ Promote campaigns, or support such campaigns, to raise awareness of consumers for local and regional products and the need to support it (through buying it).
- ✓ Give incentives to producer groups to pre-sign contracts with buyers.
- ✓ Give incentives for the creation of a regional identity through a Local Quality Convention for products and services; or through the creation of regional trademarks and networks.
- ✓ Increase targeting of LEADER and other Rural Development Policy measures for the creation of local markets and labelling of local brands.
- ✓ Create specific mechanisms to provide training on collaborative projects as a means to reduce transaction costs.

These recommendations can be linked to those in 'Interconnection between farming, policy and research' on p. 17 and in 'Farming infrastructures and services' on p. 25.

2.2. Land availability and farming succession

Problems:

- Scattered farm plots within single farm units and a lack of land consolidation processes hinder the optimization of land.
- There is productive land which is only being partially used or not at all.
- Land speculation is increasing in different regions (*see example from the Czech Republic below*).

Suggested pathways

- Facilitate access to land to interested farmers and other users.
- Develop mentoring and apprenticeship schemes offered by established farmers to young farmers and new entrants which may encourage succession processes.
- Introduce and promote farm sharing: several associated farmers managing one single large farm together.
- Introduce and promote walled gardens: unused farming land may be distributed to community food gardens, mainly those close to urban centres.

These pathways can be linked to those in 'Innovative mindset' on p. 19 and in 'Attractiveness of rural areas' on p. 32.

Example:

Vysocina Region – Czech Republic

The production of renewable energy (biogas production through anaerobic digestion) in this Czech region led to an increasing trend of land commodification. Land has become an investment goal for non-farmers. Production of renewable energy is increasing the price of agricultural land due to the increased demand for agricultural crops.

Policy recommendations:

- ✓ Create legal support for new forms of sustainable land management like land sharing and make it eligible for agriculture support schemes.
- ✓ Set up "land banks" facilitating renting and selling of available public and private lands.
- ✓ Create mechanisms to favour land transfer of idle or abandoned lands.
- ✓ Promote long-term campaigns aiming at changing attitudes and create openness towards increasing acceptance of alternative (extra-family) models of farm succession.

2.3. Farming infrastructures and services

Problem:

- The decreasing dynamics of rural areas, the reduction of the number of farms and the consequential dispersion of active farms led to the shutdown of infrastructure related to the processing of agricultural products or broadly to rural life in some regions, which in turn resulted in a decreasing capacity within these areas to maintain active farms and attract new activities.

Suggested pathways

- Keep or create local processing infrastructure in new flexible ways, serving specifically the needs identified that can facilitate their use by farmers and decrease public expenditure with maintenance costs.
- Specific changes or adaptations in the existing legislation may be required and should be pursued.

Example:

White Carpathians – Czech Republic

Newcomers (people from urban areas) were the main drivers of this initiative. They established a collective farmers' marketing strategy: they founded new processing facilities and launched a regional food label, enabling farmers to add value to their production.

Example:

Montemor-o-Novo - Portugal

The preservation of the Montado silvo-pastoral system is based on extensive livestock production. For a higher sustainability of the farm, some farmers want to diversify and process their products in the farm, or produce small quantities of poultry together with large-scale cattle production. But they need to take the livestock to be slaughtered in large slaughterhouses more than 100 km away. A flexible structure of small and/or mobile slaughter houses would facilitate diversification, innovation, and survival opportunities.

Policy recommendations:

- ✓ Create specific legislation for small-scale slaughtering, such as those that already exist in some countries, for the selling of small-scale animal production.
- ✓ Facilitate, or directly support within the Rural Development Policy, small enterprises with mobile slaughterhouses.
- ✓ Invest in small-scale infrastructures (e.g. roads) to provide farmers with better access to their farms.
- ✓ Ensure funding for investments in regional water-efficient irrigation infrastructures.

These recommendations can be linked to those in 'Economic viability of farming activities' on p. 21, 'Going local' on p. 34 and in 'Integrated actors and strategies' on p. 38.



Low energy consumption community house in Hostětín, headquarters of the Czech initiative – the first low energy community house in the Czech Republic
(Image courtesy of Michal Lostak, 2012, Hostětín)

Case-study: Regionalwert AG Freiburg' (RWAG) – Germany

Capital for young farmers from a regional citizen shareholder corporation

One of the main problems of farm succession and new entrants into agriculture in Germany is the lack of capital as well as difficulties acquiring loans to purchase property and investment into new farm structures. Policy interventions have so far failed to solve this problem. Investment support to young farmers under the second pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy has mainly produced deadweight.

- Increase access to investment capital, effectively targeted to young farmers and new entrants and/or farmers with innovation potential.

With the objective to support organic farms and businesses of the agricultural value chain, a single entrepreneur founded the citizens' shareholder corporation 'Regionalwert AG Freiburg' (RWAG). This regionally-based farmer started the

- Further promote organic farming as a way to increase the added value of quality products.

initiative in 2006, aiming to provide access to capital for young farmers and new entrants within the region, while increasing citizen's participation in agri-food businesses. There was

a long period of discussions about alternative ways for agriculture amongst regional actors, sparked by the Chernobyl catastrophe, as well as engagement in several initiatives like the Local Agenda and the creation of a seed saving association before the launch of the initiative. RWAG combines a new investment model for shareholders into organic farms and agri-food businesses with a holistic approach, as it considers not only financial returns but it also values non-monetary social and ecological returns in annual financial reports.

Furthermore, the RWAG aims to intensify cooperation between supported businesses to establish a regional sustainable food supply chain, as well as to better distribute benefits along the value chain. The development of the initiative is thriving.

- Development of rural and urban partnerships.

The initial capital of € 1.7 Mio was increased in 2010 to up to almost € 2 Mio.

The network of supported farms and businesses increased from the original two farms to a total of 16 businesses in 2012, involving six farms, two processors, four retailers/wholesalers and four service providers. Almost 500 shareholders have

- Support farmers' networks, associations and cooperatives.

so far invested in the RWAG and most of them are located in the region. At the same time, interest in the model grew rapidly. The initiative gained public attention as a result of several awards won by the initiator. This led to the foundation of the Regionalwert trust, which supports the creation of similar initiatives in other regions.

More info: <http://www.farmpath.eu/RegionalValueLimited%E2%80%99:capitalprovision>



Direct marketing at RWAG partner Querbeet horticultural business, Eichstetten, Germany,
(Image courtesy of Simone Schiller, April 2012, Eichstetten, Germany)

3. NEW CONCEPTS OF FARMING, FARMERS AND RURAL AREAS

These pathways are to be considered when there is a need for a more holistic approach to farming, moving away from the sole dominance of the production paradigm and supporting the diversification, through deepening, broadening or re-establishment of farm activities.

3.1. Farming and society

Problems:

- Society does not yet recognise the environmental and social benefits resulting from the development of sustainable farming systems by farmers.
- With the changes in farm paradigms nowadays farming tends to be perceived more as a lifestyle, rather than an 'ordinary' occupation, and therefore it is less protected by the State. Farmers feel they lack protection in their working conditions and suitable pension schemes.
- Farming, food production and education are interconnected sectors, however they are not linked in everyday life and dietary habits are not discussed in relation to this connection.
- The current lack of employment in the secondary and tertiary sectors, created a greater need, more than ever before, to provide opportunities and motivate younger generations to become involved in farming.

Example:

Aberdeenshire – North East Scotland

The visions for agriculture and land based activities highlighted that there is a "labour drain" in this region: the constraint of the 'pull' of the oil industry providing plenty of highly-paid and skilled jobs. Consequently, farm businesses are struggling to employ skilled stockmen and tractor drivers, and farm successors are attracted by the security of this major North East employment sector, rather than the uncertain and low-paid farm business.

Example:

Plzeň region – Czech Republic

In this region, stakeholders pointed out that there is a "lacking political vision for agriculture": agriculture is not important for politicians and it is hard to justify public expenditure to support the sector. Generally, there is not a positive image of farming in the eyes of the public.

Suggested pathways

- Promote a shift in society's perception of farming and farmers toward more respect and appreciation.
- Provide better integration of new entrants with existing farm communities and support strategies to attract small property and lifestyle farmers.
- Inclusion of farming issues in the overall educational programs as a means to stimulate the young people's interest and knowledge in the sector.
- Demonstrate to the younger generation that farming can be a promising professional activity.

Example:

Aberdeenshire – North East Scotland

Former urban residents are relocating to the countryside in order to enjoy aspects of rural life. They are living on, and managing, land holdings of less than 10ha for recreational and quality of life purposes.

This has been helpful for addressing land abandonment but is leading to increased land values. Lifestyle holders are now competing with commercial farmers for land.

Although the agricultural support services are orienting themselves to these new land holders by providing specialist equipment they are still largely unrecognised by policy and therefore remain un-regulated and unmonitored.



One of two highland cattle on a lifestyle farm in Scotland-Cluster: Lifestyle Farming (Image courtesy of Brian Sutherland, June 2012, Aberdeenshire)

Example:

Freiburg region – Germany

In Freiburg, project participants pointed out that a lack of agriculture-society relations and a lack of appreciation of agriculture's achievements by society go along with a lack of financial valuation and contribute to a lack of profitability of agriculture.

Young farmers in particular expressed their concept as keepers of the cultural landscape, associated with further public goods such as biodiversity. Thus they demand their achievements to be acknowledged not as side-products of farming but as an added value.

Specific problems associated with this fact are lacking external relations of farmers, be it inter-farm cooperation or producer-consumer relations.

Policy recommendations:

- ✓ Promote campaigns for more sustainable food habits, connecting issues such as health and regional farming production.
- ✓ Create public arenas to discuss the farming profession and its role in society, in the media and through organised fora.
- ✓ Create public awards and prizes to promote and support the initiatives that improve the image of farming.
- ✓ Establish participation mechanisms of farmers in society (e.g. establish participation shares in regional boards).
- ✓ Provide training in the field of sustainability of agriculture to vocational school teachers.

These policy recommendations can be linked to those in 'Interconnection between farming, policy and research' on p. 17.

3.2. Attractiveness of rural areas

Problems:

- Rural areas are still often seen as backwards in relation to urban areas.
- Rural areas have low to very low densities and ageing populations.
- Today's lifestyle and needs (e.g. fast internet connections, easy shopping facilities, and good quality roads) are not always taken into account in a strategy to increase the attractiveness of rural areas as potential places to live.
- The several unique features that characterize rural areas can be threatened by misconceived development strategies which may lead to dis-characterization and a consequential loss of value of such areas (*See Aberdeenshire example on p.33*).

Suggested pathways

- Development of rural and urban partnerships: urban and rural development must be planned with the same level of support, while considering their specificities, and governed in a concerted fashion.
- Urbanisation processes must be controlled so that rural areas may maintain their heritage (*See Czech example on p.33*).
- Draw place-based, regional or even sub-regional strategies towards the maintenance and valuing of rural identity and rely on them for the design of support policies of various kinds.
- Secure attractiveness of rural areas by improving social, cultural, educational and health services
- Implementation of strategic housing policies that can contribute to attracting population growth.

Example:

Aberdeenshire – North East Scotland

Planning policy in Scotland does not enable the development of individual dwellings in rural areas, and the cost of land and services contributes to a serious lack of housing affordability in the local market. This in turn leads to youth outmigration, the decline of rural services such as schools and shops, and the creation of dormant villages, where only those of sufficient wealth can afford to live.

Example:

White Carpathians – Czech Republic

Rural settlements (especially those that neighbour towns) were threatened by urbanisation processes. The “Tradition of the White Carpathians” initiative took place in a small village of this region. The main drivers were educated people from the city, who enhanced environmental values and cultural heritage of the village. They managed to set up a strict land use plan in the locality and created several environmentally sound projects. These activities made the locality attractive for other (often young) people.

Policy recommendations:

- ✓ Social, cultural, education and health infrastructure must keep on functioning in the rural areas, even with higher costs than in more central places. Public authorities must consider its arrangement and foresee creative solutions to fit local people’s needs.
- ✓ Horizontal and vertical coordination of different policies to improve motivation for migration towards villages, providing for instance, tax reliefs, instalment plans for tax and other payments, better conditions for credit loans, lower interest rates, etc..
- ✓ Activate rural employment, for instance by establishing grants for the employment and training of young people on farms.
- ✓ Create ‘Partnerships of Shared Responsibility’ between urban and rural areas (that may have the origin of food as their slogan).

These recommendations can be linked to those in ‘Land availability and farming succession’ on p. 24.

3.3. Going local

Problem:

- Small farmers could increase their profits by selling local quality products, but quality food is expensive when compared to food produced at larger scales and more industrially, hence only a few think they can afford it and therefore the market for these locally produced products is reduced.

Suggested pathways

- Increase the awareness of consumers for the higher quality of local food and increase its consumption, particularly of products from small scale farms, linking these local products also to food sovereignty and environmental awareness.
- Make local food chains and quality products available for people with low incomes.
- Promote and support women co-operatives for the processing and promotion of local products.

These pathways can be linked to those in 'Economic viability of farming activities' on p. 21 and in 'Farming infrastructures and services' on p. 25.

Example:

Santorini Island, Greece

In Santorini Island, vine growers and wine makers with a 4000 year tradition, reoriented their production towards quality wine, using innovative technologies and techniques. Yet they also maintain traditional practices that promote the vineyard landscape protection. They explore the potentialities created by tourism in the island. Linkages between agricultural production and tourism have also boosted exports.

Policy recommendations:

- ✓ Directly support the production of local food when it is sold locally.
- ✓ Create legal and financial support measures for the creation of producer-consumer cooperatives.
- ✓ Create legal and financial support measures for the set-up of short supply chains, accounting for social inclusion (for example: using local currencies, like the Galéco in France, for the payment of social benefits can be solution to enable access to alternative market channels and local products).



Tourists in Santorini can visit a winery and see a traditional 'kanava'- a cave dug in the volcanic soil, which houses a wine cellar (Image courtesy of Emi Tsakalou, 2012, Santorini)

3.4. Multifunctional rural areas and farming

Problems:

- Industrial and competitive farming is large-scale and highly specialized and does not combine easily with the multifunctionality of rural areas.
- Multifunctionality in practice requires entrepreneurial and creative actors, who are not currently sufficiently attracted by rural areas.

Suggested pathways

- Promote the coupling of farming systems with other profit producing activities like on-farm energy production, using for instance municipal waste, or rural tourism (linked to gastronomy, archaeology, wine, skiing), which is better organised and promoted.
- Re-orientate some of the farms that are specialised in mass production towards coupling this to the production of farm products and rural activities missing at the regional level.
- Promote the inherent features of rural areas so that they attract the establishment of economic sectors that are traditionally placed in urban centres (e.g. creative industries, arts, etc.).

These pathways can be linked to those in 'Innovative mindset' on p. 19.

Example:

Montemor-o-Novo and Alcácer do Sal, Portugal

Multifunctional farm entrepreneurs face both highly competitive and specialized markets and specialized public services, which demand know-how in multiple sectors.

CRIE Montado is a local group of farm entrepreneurs from the South of Portugal where there is a traditional extensive system with multiple uses (Montado). The Montado has slowly been converted into multi-functional uses: rural tourism, trekking, gastronomy and other leisure activities.

This regional initiative aims at fostering know-how exchange, mutual support and lobbying, and networking at regional, national and European levels.

Policy recommendations:

- ✓ Create special legislation for those farmers who want to invest in multifunctionality regarding for instance permits for different activities.
- ✓ Create extension services that are tailored for multifunctionality.
- ✓ Develop quick and easy administrative procedures for multifunctional farmers.
- ✓ Strengthen existing demonstration farms by involving communities and broadening the range of land uses shown (including recreation and landscape aspects).



An overall view of the Paião-Reguengo landscape in Montemor-o-Novo, in the region of Alentejo, Portugal (Image courtesy of Filipe Barroso, 2012, Montemor-o-Novo).

3.5. Integrated actors and strategies

Problems:

- Many interesting initiatives promoting the differentiation of rural areas remain isolated and do not link with other parallel initiatives.
- New entrants in farming and new inhabitants of rural areas often feel isolated and have difficulties in entering existing networks.
- The potential role of new entrants and new inhabitants as promoters of new ideas and new farm concepts remain unrecognised due to their isolation from the existing local community.

Suggested pathways

- Support farmers' networks, associations and cooperatives that can offer additional support to farmers like advisory services, technical and organisational consultancy, particularly on production and marketing issues.
- Promote the work of farmers with processing partners, organised in networks throughout the regions. They may share and manage common agro-industry infrastructures like in the micro-industry or crafts model. Collaboration between farmers and producers' groups brings about other advantages: more political intervention, less production costs and more quality of life.
- Create dialogue spaces between rural actors beyond farming activities where all territorial problems are taken into account and where common goals and a territorial project are devised.
- Generate livelihoods based on the land by valuing and recapturing the sense of community spirit.

Example:

Machinery rings – Scotland

Machinery rings are networks with a relatively long history in Scotland (introduced in 1987). Originally established to promote labour and equipment sharing between farmers, they have evolved to include a number of other services, including apprenticeship programmes for young farmers and advice on renewable energy production. These new services have been taken on as part of the business model of the rings i.e. through funding provided by local councils and farming organisations. As a business within the agricultural sector, rings have the credibility with farmers and practical experience to be able to deliver these services.

Policy recommendations:

- ✓ Establish professional mediation and facilitation support programmes for a period of at least five years to groups of farmers at local and product level.
- ✓ Create training schemes for farmers in cooperative management and governance issues.
- ✓ Provide formal support to “machinery rings” or similar initiatives – activities directed at the strengthening of the mentor farm concept and of resource pools, providing training and shared resources to farmers.

These recommendations can be linked to those in ‘Interconnection between farming, policy and research’ on p. 17, and in ‘Farming infrastructures and services’ on p. 25.



Tractor in a field, Invergowrie (Image courtesy of David Riley, October 2002, Scotland)

Case-study: Wendland-Elbetal Region – Germany, Vysocina Region – Czech Republic, Aberdeenshire – Scotland

Three examples of on-farm renewable energy production initiatives

The need for diversified farm income has been recognised in EU rural development policies since the 1980s. These policy mechanisms included diversification into renewable energy production.

However, it was not until the 2000s when substantial, long term price supports were offered to renewable energy producers through the energy sector that on-farm renewable energy production rapidly increased in the three case studies (Czech Republic, Germany, United Kingdom).

The substantial scale and longevity of these subsidies gave farmers the confidence to invest in renewable energy production. Once some developments were established other farmers saw the opportunity and also undertook the development.

In all three study sites, there is growing **public protest**, owing to perceived **negative environmental impacts, rising energy prices and land speculation**.

This shows that such subsidies must be linked to regional and national strategies: whereas Germany has capitalized on the idea of renewable energy production as a regional development opportunity, through designation of bio-energy regions

and associated rewards and is continuing to develop, the Czech Republic has decided to discontinue subsidies for new renewable energy production developments once the EC-set targets have been met. In the UK, renewable energy targets

- **Regular monitoring and evaluation of policy impacts. Increased transparency and participation in these two procedures.**

are perceived to be easier to meet through large-scale corporate style developments. There is therefore a potential that associated rural development benefits will be lost.

The cases also demonstrate the importance of long-term support to encourage diversification and 'joined up' policies, which consider both renewable energy targets and the rural development potential of renewable energy production, when it is undertaken at the community level.

- **Promote the coupling of farming systems with other profit producing activities like on-farm energy production.**

- **Create dialogue spaces between rural actors beyond farming activities where all territorial problems are taken into account and where common goals and a territorial project are devised.**

- **Draw place-based, regional or even sub-regional strategies towards the maintenance and for valuing rural identity, and rely on them for the design of support policies of various kinds.**

More info: <http://www.farmpath.eu/RenewableEnergyCluster>



Wind turbine on a farm in Aberdeenshire (Image courtesy of Lee-Ann Sutherland, February 2012, Aberdeenshire).



Biogas PS on the Sasov Farm, Czech Republic (Image courtesy of Sasov Farm, 2012, Czech Republic).



4. OVERALL POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

A policy is the content-related dimension of politics (e.g. environmental policy, health policy). It is a macro-level framework that constitutes a collection of activities and legislation intended to achieve the aims in specific fields of activity. Pathways towards sustainability of agriculture imply, in any case, changes in this dimension.

4.1. Coherent policy-making

Problems:

- Agriculture policies change constantly with no consideration to the fact that changes in farming systems and respective implications on natural resources do not produce immediate results (*See Czech example below for more information*).
- Good and bad practices of a policy are not acknowledged in the policy cycle.
- There is a lack of coherent strategies at regional level.
- Policy-making at different levels is not usually tuned and one policy measure or set of measures at one level may be conflicting with others at different levels. The prevalence of top- down approaches often leads to inadequacies in local implementation and unforeseen impacts.

Example:

Vysocina Region – Czech Republic

The missing strategy for the development of renewable energy within agriculture led to a stalled trajectory.

Farmers are not able to make long-term decisions, when rules (including support) are changing too often. As a result large-investment projects related to the technologies of the sourcing of renewable energy cannot be successfully implemented.

Suggested pathways

- Participatory procedures in the production of long-term regional strategic planning and, consequently, adaptation of policy goals and instruments, even those coming from the European or national level, to this regional strategic planning.
- More bottom-up approaches, including at EU level, assuring due coherency between different levels of policy making.
- Better coordination between policy sectors.
- Regular monitoring and evaluation of policy impacts. Increased transparency and participation in these two procedures.

Example:

Bespakari hills and Elena municipality – Bulgaria

Municipal governments own the local pastureland/grasslands and rent them only on a yearly basis. This has increased uncertainty for farmers and prevented them from being eligible for CAP agri-environmental measures (which are based on five year terms).

The Bulgarian Society of Bird Protection discussed this issue with local governments and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. As a result of such advocacy efforts local policies in Natura 2000 areas in the regions changed. Municipal authorities all over the country elaborated normative rules by which livestock farmers were encouraged to make contracts on the communal pastures for five years of use free of charge.

Policy recommendations:

- ✓ Develop a mechanism for coordination on rural issues and priorities with the participation of national, regional and local level institutions.
- ✓ More consistent implementation of the measures under the LEADER programme in the different periods, in order to make use of the already existing groups of stakeholders at regional and local levels, and of their ideas for rural development.

4.2. Regulation

Problems:

- The origin and composition of products are not always clear to consumers. This makes the differentiation of good quality products more difficult.
- Farming systems that are environmentally friendly and provide employment and other services to society are not sufficiently distinguished or supported when compared to intensive agriculture systems.
- Agribusiness lacks clear and fair rules.
- Young farmers and new entrants' specific needs are not fully supported by existing policies.
- Multifunctional projects at the farm level do not have an adequate legal framework.

Suggested pathways

- Increase the transparency of the origins of products through better labelling.
- Improve evaluation and compensation of positive farming externalities, leading to clear incentives for related practices.
- Make and implement policies in order to protect, or at least create favourable conditions for, small farming systems, local food chains and multifunctional farming.
- The State and the financial sector should support young farmers and new entrants through the provision of overdraft facilities, loans, contract farming agreements, land access and capital grants.

Policy recommendation:

- ✓ Eligibility criteria (of public policies) should be more flexible towards the specific characteristics of the region.

4.3. Funding

Problems:

- The subsidies approach is not tailored to different farming systems.
- Research does not reach the farming sector because often there is not enough funding to make actual use of research findings.

Suggested pathways

- A tailored subsidy system supporting specific farming systems, which shows the creation of positive environmental and social externalities.
- The creation of tailored subsidy schemes providing grants to on- farm innovations.
- Reduce funding in Pillar 1 of CAP and move it to Pillar 2.
- Increase research funding for knowledge transfer. This needs to be done in a twofold direction: farming-research-farming.



4.4. Institutions

Problems:

- The legal setup of new rural/farming activities are difficult and time consuming processes due to a lack of communication between institutions with complementary competences.
- Those who want to start such activities have difficulties accessing information.

Suggested pathways

- More efficient support from public administration services to set up new rural/farming activities.
- Create or reinforce local councils: local rural and/or agricultural bodies are relevant spaces which involve local stakeholders in decision-making and in the definition of tailored measures to each region. They also provide feedback to other levels of administration.

Policy recommendations:

- ✓ Organise training days on a regular basis for national and local administrative staff on various types of farming to discuss common concerns; e.g. hygiene regulations or the use of common pastures.
- ✓ Create “farmers shops” where farmers can sort out all bureaucratic procedures.
- ✓ Establish “Client Service Charters” stating public services’ expected quality standards.
- ✓ Provide timely consultancy on production practices and administrative duties (accounting procedures, social payments etc.), developing the so-called “technological calendar” (i.e., a calendar of farm tasks) and “administrative calendar” (i.e., policy and funding timescales) for each farmer.
- ✓ Set up trusted intermediate bodies to facilitate cooperation between farmers, communities and policy-makers.

4.5. Global policy issues

Problem:

- Seeds regulation is restricting the use of local seeds and breeds, and consequently of local products.

Suggested pathway

- Create conditions in every country to encourage the use of its native seeds. Regional pressure in this sense is needed, supported by rural development needs and maintenance of regional identity.



Regional Visions and Visions Typology

Regions	Intensification of production, neo-productivism, farming competitiveness and profitability		Farming centred on a conservation agenda, landscape and natural resources quality as desired outcomes	Lively countryside with rural communities, networks and close connections between the urban and the rural. Strong reinforcement of rural values and lifestyle
Aberdeenshire (North East Scotland)	Farm resilience based on profitability, related to market but also to public payments for non-market goods, including the real costs of production when respecting environmental standards.		Food security through a 'local' focus where food production is maximised, re-connecting people with the land and producers; farm businesses are diversified. Environmentally friendly practices and reduced reliance on fossil fuels. Countryside quality preserved.	Connected communities and closer networks between the urban and rural areas. Innovative housing design and improved infrastructures, fitting the needs of the rural population.
Plzeň region (Czech Republic)	The core is food production and economically viable agriculture supporting local development. Protection of domestic market and higher social status of farming due to food quality.		Broad spectrum of rural activities that keep countryside viable and prosperous. Prominence of small-scale production and rural tourism; Targeting sustainability of cultural landscape.	Strong social and local dimensions that draw not only on the cooperation between farmers, but also on direct support of rural living; to small family farms and young farmers.
Freiburg region (Germany)	Agricultural enterprises that allow 'regional competitiveness' and 'environment-friendly management'; Intelligent use of energy and renewable energy production.		Cultural landscape is central and there is an improved societal appreciation of agriculture. Longer-term policy thinking secures economic viability.	The human being is at the centre, associated with the central aspects of 'sustainability' and 'individual self-responsibility'. Closer relation between society and agriculture.
Montemor-o-Novo (Portugal)	Intensification of the production to ensure the economic viability of the agriculture. The Montado system is safeguarded, but the focus is on the increased technological capacities for more intensive farming and the rationalization of production. The rural identity is significantly altered by new farm styles.		Preserve the Montado agro-silvo-pastoral system and the intrinsic rural values. Creation of a regional trademark that requires: change of mind-set, cooperation between actors, strategic plan and training, and resulting in stronger identity.	
Pays de Rennes (France)	Large competitive farms, dairy farms, and agro-processing sector managed by several associated farmers. Farmlands preserved from the city spread and a good relationship between city dwellers and farmers.		Small farms, diversification of production and rural activities, alternative market channels, cooperative organisations, micro-industry, energy production.	
Pazardjik and Plovdiv (Bulgaria)	Economic efficiency with respect to minimum environmental requirements; new technologies and maximum resource use; targeting quantity and quality of agro-products.	Specialization and intensification only for sites suitable for mechanization in crop production and animal breeding; Export-oriented sectors; industrial agricultural production at low cost.	Economic efficiency is consistent with the nature and needs of the area; cooperation and interaction promote social cohesion, leading to initiatives for local brands development and direct marketing. The quality of rural life is improved.	
Imathia (Greece)	Modernization and specialization of farming. The ultimate goal of the whole modernization process should be the establishment of a quality brand name for the products of the area.		Development of agriculture in all production sectors - emphasis on protection of biodiversity and soil; natural resources key for agricultural production; Farmers' training and specialization; more collective organisations. High quality products.	Integrated rural development; environmental and landscape friendly spatial planning, combining protection of natural resources with rational forest conservation and cultural heritage management; better quality of life and sustainability of the region.

Pathways and Visions Typologies

Pursuing one vision can help or hinder the achievement of other visions.

The following table identifies the trade-offs and complementarities between the recommended actions.

(-) and (+) show how each pathway contributes to a greater or lesser extent to each vision (when applicable).

Pathway	Farming Competitiveness and Profitability Vision	Environment and Conservation Vision	Rural Communities and Lively Countryside Vision	Overall Policy and Institutional Arrangements
1. INNOVATION IN FARMING				
1.1. Interconnection between farming, policy and research				
More connection through regular meetings and extension services, field work joining farmers, policy-makers and researchers.	+	+	+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase research funding for knowledge transfer. ● Create or reinforce local councils.
Support university-based extension services.	+	+	+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase research funding for knowledge transfer.
1.2. Innovative mindset				
Carry out pilot experiments to test best practices and experience exchange.	++		++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase research funding for knowledge transfer. ● Tailored subsidy schemes providing grants to on-farm innovations. ● More efficient support from public administration services to setup new rural/farming activities.
Regular training, including new practices and competence.	++		++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase research funding for knowledge transfer. ● Reduce funding in Pillar 1 of CAP and move it to Pillar 2.

Pathway	Farming Competitiveness and Profitability Vision	Environment and Conservation Vision	Rural Communities and Lively Countryside Vision	Overall Policy and Institutional Arrangements
Invest in and improve young farmers education quanti- and qualitatively.	+		+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young farmers and new entrants should be supported by the State.
Knowledge transfer and sharing between researchers and farmers.	+		+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase research funding for knowledge transfer.
Creation of extension services with tailored, flexible services instead of general solutions.	-	+	++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase research funding for knowledge transfer. Participatory procedures in the production of long term regional strategic planning and, consequently, adaptation of policy goals and instruments.
2. MAINTENANCE OR RE-EMERGENCE OF FARMING ACTIVITIES				
2.1. Economic viability of farming activities				
Increase access to investment capital, effectively targeted to young farmers and new entrants and/or farmers with innovation potential.	++		++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young farmers and new entrants should be supported by the State and the financial sector through the provision of overdraft facilities, loans, contract farming agreements, land access and capital grants.
Build on existing, and develop new, networks of local markets and trading systems of regional products which will enable direct sales of small and medium farmers.	+		+++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make and implement policies in order to protect or at least create favourable conditions for small farming systems, and local food chains. Reduce funding in Pillar 1 of CAP and move it to Pillar 2.

Pathway	Farming Competitiveness and Profitability Vision	Environment and Conservation Vision	Rural Communities and Lively Countryside Vision	Overall Policy and Institutional Arrangements
2.1. Economic viability of farming activities				
Promote the organisation of local markets with local actors outside farming and link to other sectors.	+		+++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make and implement policies in order to protect or at least create favourable conditions for small farming systems, and local food chains. ● Create or reinforce local councils: local rural and/or agriculture bodies are relevant spaces involving local stakeholders in decision-making and in the definition of tailored measures to each region. ● Reduce funding in Pillar 1 of CAP and move it to Pillar 2.
Support mechanisms to promote local brands.	+	++	++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase transparency regarding product origin, namely through labelling. ● Participatory procedures in the production of long term regional strategic planning. ● Create conditions in every country to make use of its native seeds.
Further promote organic farming as a way to increase the added value of quality products.	+	++	++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase transparency regarding product origin, namely through labelling. ● Tailored subsidy system supporting specific farming systems, which show the creation of positive environmental and social externalities. ● Better evaluation and compensation of positive farming externalities, leading to clear incentives for related practices. ● Reduce funding in Pillar 1 of CAP and move it to Pillar 2.

Pathway	Farming Competitiveness and Profitability Vision	Environment and Conservation Vision	Rural Communities and Lively Countryside Vision	Overall Policy and Institutional Arrangements
Promote the introduction of green technologies for energy and water use, for more efficient production and also to be of better interest to the consumers.	-	++	+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tailored subsidy system supporting specific farming systems, which show the creation of positive environmental and social externalities. Tailored subsidy schemes providing grants to on-farm innovations. Better evaluation and compensation of positive farming externalities, leading to clear incentives for related practices. Reduce funding in Pillar 1 of CAP and move it to Pillar 2.
2.2. Land availability and farming succession				
Facilitate access to land.	+		+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young farmers and new entrants should be supported by the State and the financial sector through the provision of overdraft facilities, loans, contract farming agreements, land access. Reduce funding in Pillar 1 of CAP and move it to Pillar 2.
Support mentoring and apprenticeship schemes offered by established farmers to young farmers and new entrants which may encourage succession processes.			++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce funding in Pillar 1 of CAP and move it to Pillar 2.
Introduce and promote farm sharing: several associated farmers manage together one single large farm.	-	+	++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make and implement policies in order to protect or at least create favourable conditions for small farming systems, local food chains and multifunctional farming.

Pathway	Farming Competitiveness and Profitability Vision	Environment and Conservation Vision	Rural Communities and Lively Countryside Vision	Overall Policy and Institutional Arrangements
2.2. Land availability and farming succession				
Introduce and promote walled gardens: farming land that is not being used may be distributed to community food gardens.	-	+	++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make and implement policies in order to protect or at least create favourable conditions for small farming systems. ● Better evaluation and compensation of positive farming externalities, leading to clear incentives for related practices. ● Create conditions in every country to use its native seeds.
2.3. Farming infrastructures and services				
Keep or create local processing infrastructures in new flexible ways.	+	+	++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make and implement policies in order to protect or at least create favourable conditions for small farming systems.
Specific changes or adaptations in the existing legislation may be required and should be pursued				
3. NEW CONCEPTS OF FARMING, FARMERS AND RURAL AREA				
3.1. Farming and society				
Promote a shift in society's perception of farming and farmers towards more respect and appreciation.	-		++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Better evaluation and compensation of positive farming externalities, leading to clear incentives for related practices. ● Make and implement policies in order to protect, or at least create, favourable conditions for small farming systems, local food chains and multifunctional farming.

Pathway	Farming Competitiveness and Profitability Vision	Environment and Conservation Vision	Rural Communities and Lively Countryside Vision	Overall Policy and Institutional Arrangements
Provide better integration of new entrants with existing farm communities and support strategies to attract small property and lifestyle farmers.	-		+++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better coordination between policy sectors. • Make and implement policies in order to protect or at least create favourable conditions for small farming systems, local food chains and multifunctional farming. • Tailored subsidy system supporting specific farming systems, which show the creation of positive environmental and social externalities. • More efficient support from public administration services to setup new rural/farming activities.
Inclusion of farming issues in the overall educational programs as a means to stimulate the young people's interest and knowledge in the sector.	+		+	
Demonstrate to the younger generation that farming can be a promising professional activity.	+		+	

Pathway	Farming Competitiveness and Profitability Vision	Environment and Conservation Vision	Rural Communities and Lively Countryside Vision	Overall Policy and Institutional Arrangements
3.2. Attractiveness of rural areas				
Secure the attractiveness of rural areas by improving the social, cultural, education and health services.			+++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make and implement policies in order to protect or at least create favourable conditions for small farming systems; local food chains and multifunctional farming.
Strategic housing policies that can contribute to attract populations to the area.			+++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participatory procedures in the production of long term regional strategic planning.
Development of rural and urban partnerships.			+++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Better coordination between policy sectors. ● Create or reinforce local councils: local rural and/or agriculture bodies are relevant spaces involving local stakeholders in decision-making and in the definition of tailored measures to each region.
Urbanization processes must be controlled so that rural areas may maintain their heritage.	-	+	+++	Same as above
Draw place-based, regional or even sub-regional strategies towards the maintenance and valuing of rural identity.	--	+	+++	Same as above
3.3. Going local				
Increase awareness the consumers for the higher quality of local food and increase its consumption, particularly of products from small scale farms, also linking these local products to food sovereignty and environmental awareness.	--	++	+++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make and implement policies in order to protect or at least create favourable conditions for small farming systems; local food chains and multifunctional farming. ● Increase transparency regarding product origin, namely through labelling. ● Create conditions in every country to make use of its native seeds.

Pathway	Farming Competitiveness and Profitability Vision	Environment and Conservation Vision	Rural Communities and Lively Countryside Vision	Overall Policy and Institutional Arrangements
Make local food chains and quality products available for people with low incomes.	-		++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make and implement policies in order to protect or at least create favourable conditions for small farming systems, local food chains and multifunctional farming.
Promote and support women co-operatives for the processing and promotion of local products.	--		+++	
3.4. Multifunctional rural areas and farming				
Promote the coupling of farming systems with other profit production activities like on-farm energy production or rural tourism, through better organisation and promotion.	--	+	++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Better coordination between policy sectors. ● Make and implement policies in order to protect or at least create favourable conditions for small farming systems, local food chains and multifunctional farming. ● Tailored subsidy system supporting specific farming systems, which show the creation of positive environmental and social externalities.
Re-orientate some of the farms that specialise in mass production towards coupling this to the production of farm products and rural activities missing at the regional level.	--	+	+++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create or reinforce local councils: local rural or agriculture bodies are relevant spaces involving local stakeholders in decision-making and in the definition of measures tailored to each region.
Promote the inherent features of rural areas, so that they attract the establishment sectors of the economy that are traditionally placed in urban centres.	+		++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create or reinforce local councils: local rural and/or agriculture bodies are relevant spaces involving local stakeholders in decision-making and in the definition of tailored measures to each region. ● Participatory procedures in the production of long term regional strategic planning.

Pathway	Farming Competitiveness and Profitability Vision	Environment and Conservation Vision	Rural Communities and Lively Countryside Vision	Overall Policy and Institutional Arrangements
3.5. Integrated actors and strategies				
Support farmers' networks, associations and cooperatives, which can offer additional support to farmers like advisory services; technical and organisational consultancy.	+		+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reduce funding in Pillar 1 of CAP and move it to Pillar 2.
Promote the work of farmers with processing partners, organised in networks throughout the regions.	+		+	
Create dialogue spaces between rural actors beyond farming activities where all territorial problems are taken into account and where common goals and a territorial project are devised.	+	+	++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participatory procedures in the production of long term regional strategic planning and, consequently, adaptation of policy goals and instruments. ● Create or reinforce local councils.
Generate livelihoods based on the land by valuing and recapturing the sense of community spirit.	--	+	+++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make and implement policies in order to protect or at least create favourable conditions for small farming systems, local food chains and multifunctional farming.

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To learn more about Transition Processes

FarmPath Conceptual Framework

Anchoring: the process through which a niche becomes newly connected (or connected in a new way) to a regime. Links are actively constructed by individuals and organisations at both niche and regime level. There is a focus on relations and translations between niches, and between a niche and the regime, which can lead to reconfigurations at the regime level. Initial links may still be vulnerable and may be broken depending on a range of processes and events. In FarmPath the focus is on emerging transitions, thus the anchoring efforts by niche actors and the responses of regime actors.

Niche: the locus of radical innovations. A niche is usually made up of a small group of actors, typically at the local level, which work on radical innovations. They are usually the seedling of a transition, although many of these 'seedlings' perish. In FarmPath the initiatives are mostly at the niche level, but they are already engaged in the 'take-off' phase, i.e. engage with regime actors to initiate institutional and structural changes.

Regime: dominant social paradigms and rule sets that guide developments, as well as networks, structures, practices and regulations, infrastructures, technological artefacts. The elements of the regime are characterised by being fairly stable over time, i.e. with a high commitment to 'business as usual'. Innovation occurs incrementally with small adjustments accumulating into stable trajectories. The incumbent regime designates the regime before it is affected by the pressure from one or several niches; the emergent regime designates the regime in the process of transformation through the pressure from niches.

Region: landscape and spatialized social relations that shape cultural identities. In FarmPath the region is considered as roughly the size of a NUTS 3 level, to ensure fairly homogenous biophysical and socio-cultural characteristics, but may be adapted to what has been considered nationally as a relevant spatial entity.

Sustainability of agriculture, regional: a dynamic mix of farming models which emerge from adaptive processes by members of the agricultural production and consumption network, who respond to the changing needs and preferences of consumers and citizens. It builds on diversity, cooperation and learning between a wide range of stakeholders.

Transition: a radical, fundamental change at the regime level. This emerges from a succession of systemic changes over a long time period (e.g. 25–50 years); it incorporates processes of societal, ecological, economic, cultural, technological and institutional co-evolution. A transition is surrounded by great uncertainty and complexity. A transition implies a system innovation, i.e. it not only involves new paradigms, rule sets and cultural meanings, but also new technologies, markets, market relations, user practices, regulations and infrastructures.

Transition, emerging: in FarmPath the focus is on the 'take-off' phase of a transition, i.e. focus on niches that have matured and have started engaging with regime actors to initiate institutional and structural changes, and these changes should be picking up momentum. Changes in the rule sets, technologies, networks, etc. within the regime should be clearly identifiable.

Transition pathway: set of activities, institutions and networks that need to evolve together dynamically for niches to anchor in sub-regimes and regimes, and for regimes to interact, so that a transition may occur.

Project Identity

Project Consortium

FarmPath is led by
The James Hutton Institute, Scotland in partnership with:



University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna, Austria



University of National and World Economy, Sofia, Bulgaria



Agricultural University of Athens, Greece



Institute for Rural Development Research, Frankfurt (main), Germany

The logo for the Institute for Rural Development Research (ifl), featuring a stylized green and blue graphic to the left of the text "ifl".

Czech University of Life Sciences Prague

The logo for the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague (VZU), featuring a stylized green and yellow graphic to the left of the university's name in English.

University of Plymouth, UK

The logo for the University of Plymouth, featuring the text "ENGAGE WITH PLYMOUTH UNIVERSITY" in green and black.

University of Évora, Portugal

The logo for the University of Évora, featuring a stylized graphic with the letters "UE" and the university's name in Portuguese and English.

Institute for Life, Food and Horticultural Sciences and Landscaping,
Rennes, France.

The logo for AgroCampus Ouest, featuring a stylized blue and green graphic to the left of the text "AGRO CAMPUS OUEST".

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Time frame

March 2011 – May 2014

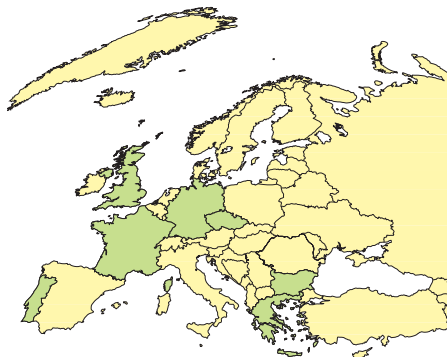
Budget

Total budget for the FarmPath project is €2 078 072.80.

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Visit the FarmPath web-site: www.farmpath.eu



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