

## **Addressing barriers of agroecological transitions in European farming systems: Lessons and experiences from multi-actor engagement in 15 case studies**

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### **Authors:**

Gerald Schwarz, *Thuenen Institute of Farm Economics*

Jaroslav Prazan, *Institute of Agricultural Economics and Information*

Johannes Carolus, *Thuenen Institute of Farm Economics*

Marta Mrnusík-Konečná, *Institute of Agricultural Economics and Information*

Jan Landert, *FiBL*

Francesco Vanni, *CREA*

Francesco Galioto, *CREA*

Oriana Gave, *CREA*

Davide Longhitano, *CREA*

Andrea Povellato, *CREA*

### **Abstract**

With the challenge of respecting the planetary boundaries while sustaining the food supply for a constantly growing global population, agroecological practices have recently gained more attention. Despite the increased awareness of the necessity of implementing agroecological practices, transitions towards diversified agroecological systems remain slow. Using multi-actor platforms the UNISECO project aims to enhance the understanding of socio-economic and policy drivers and barriers for development and implementation of agroecological approaches, cognisant of roles of different types of actors. Based on a social-ecological system assessment carried out in 15 European case studies covering arable, perennial and livestock farming systems, the paper will analyse how barriers of agroecological transitions have been overcome or why in other cases the farming system was locked in the status quo and transitions could not be initiated. Through the engagement of multi-actor platforms in each of the case studies pathways for further transition to agroecological farming are co-constructed. Common goals of the different actors involved in agroecological transitions are explored, drivers and barriers are identified that have the potential to be addressed to progress with or initiate transitions, and roles and responsibilities of the different actors are recognised as a basis to co-construct strategies for future transitions addressing the case study specific contexts. The paper pays particular attention to multi-actor group learning and co-creation of knowledge to encourage the involvement of farmers and other value chain actors in agroecological transitions. The UNISECO project is funded by EUs Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement N° 773901.