

Research and innovation for redesigning value chains for agroecology at scale

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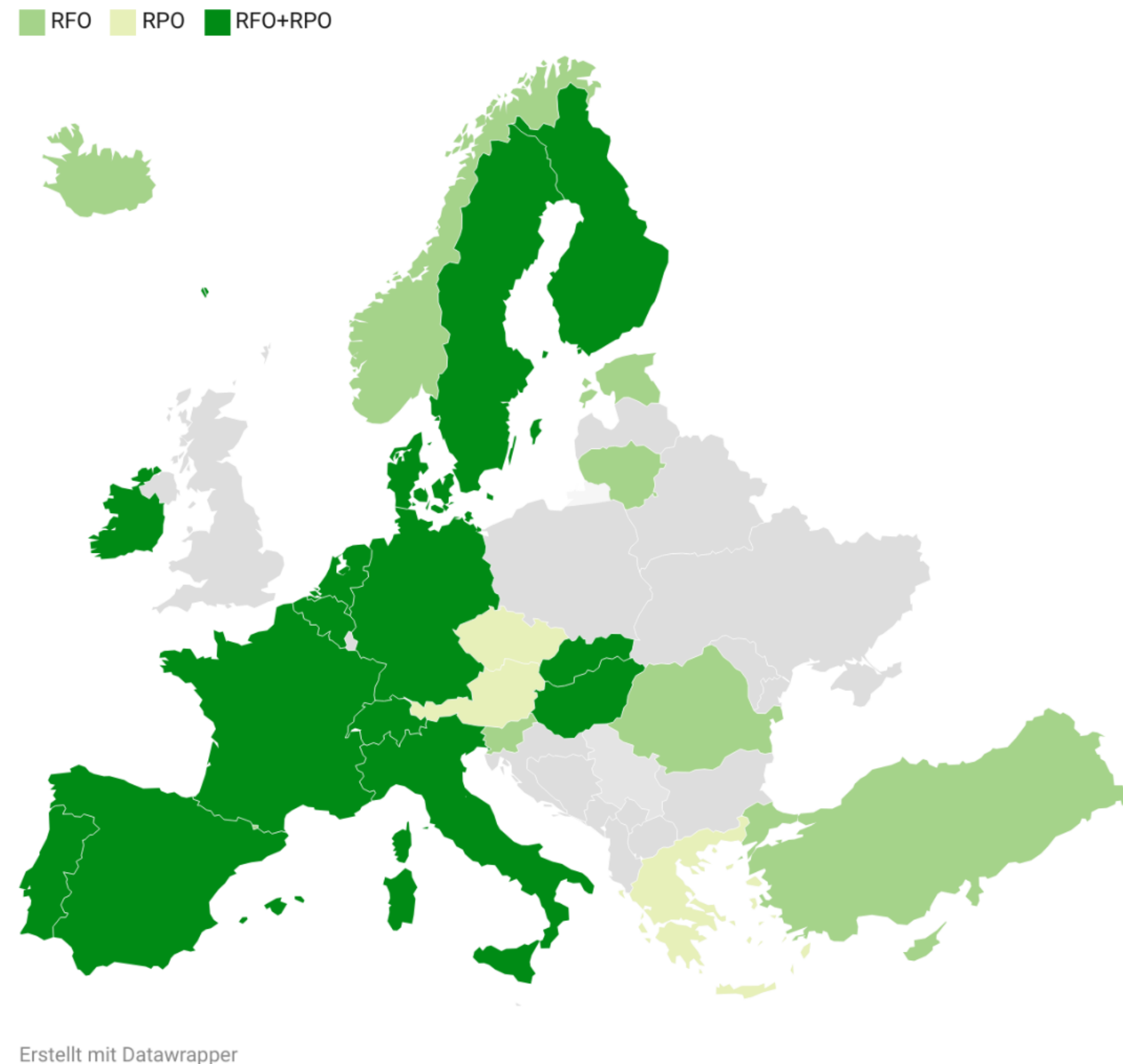
*Boosting agrifood research and innovation
cooperation for impact at scale*



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Horizon Europe Partnership AGROECOLOGY



- Pooling of resources of EU and states/regions
 - Mobilisation of 300 M€ from EU and partners over 10 years (50 % co-fund)
 - In-kind: research and networking activities
 - In-cash: transnational calls for proposals, 7 calls planned
- 72 partners from 26 countries/regions
 - RFOs: National/Regional Authorities, ministries, Funding agencies
 - RPOs: Research performing organisations
- Coordination: Project management Jülich (DE), ptj-agroecology-secretariat@fz-juelich.de
- Co-Coordination: ANR (FR)

Horizon Europe Partnership AGROECOLOGY

AGROECOLOGY in a nutshell

- Agroecology as promising approach
- Support agricultural sector to meet targets and challenges
- Real-life testing (Living Labs)
- Co-creation and multi-actor
- Research infrastructure making scientific knowledge available
- Large-scale EU R&I endeavour



Core themes

- Redesigning agroecosystems
- **Redesigning value chains**
- Living labs & research infrastructures
- Enablers of agroecology transitions

Examples of identified research needs for the redesign of agroecological value chains

- **Food systems perspective**, linking agricultural practices and value chain perspectives through the involvement of local food systems actors and related business models.
- Nutritional and organoleptic features of products **to increase consumers' acceptance**
- Co-creation of new circular, sustainable and resilient business models associated with shorter and fairer value chains **connected to territories and local actors**.
- Co-creation of value chain innovations that utilize heterogeneity of agroecology products.
- **Rethinking governance models** of farming and food systems, ensuring trust and involvement, up to the consumer, leading to the co-creation of innovations and rapid uptake.
- Addressing the **political economy and social relations** of agroecology value chains

Addressing barriers identified in previous research

- Cost-price squeeze, unbalanced shares of margins and sales uncertainty
- Investments needs – difficult to afford technology.
- Access to land and finances
- Low awareness of consumers and markets not mature
- Lack of storing and processing facilities
- Aging farmer population' and succession problematic, as a barrier to innovation and diffusion
- Policy support focuses on practices with limited systemic perspective on agroecology transition
- Power inequalities - insights into roles, influence and relationships in actor networks



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Utilising lessons learnt – supporting actions on the ground

- **Role of living labs** in strengthening collaborative actions and collective institutions
 - to **increase negotiating power** within the value-chain
 - to **scale agroecology** through local food systems
- Producers, businesses and administrations **formed a "Learning Community"** to implement solutions, e.g.:
 - networks and improved access to machinery, joint investment in processing and storage.
 - transparent accountability system to foster trust
- **Digital solutions and technologies** with roles in facilitating cooperation along value chains
- **Regional fairs, public procurement and school programmes** as additional enabling market instruments



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Emerging key issues for framing recommendations for new R&I programmes

- **Recognising different interpretations and pathways** for scaling agroecology:
 - Increasing the uptake of agroecological practices through valorising these practices in conventional value chains
 - Scaling agroecology through agroecology value chains, i.e. transformative change towards sustainable local food systems
 - *Are those pathways complementary or competing against each other?*
- Fostering of co-learning of **experiences, successes and failures** of agroecological value chains and business models
- R&I approaches for transformative change through agroecology value chains linked to **education, training and life-long learning**

Thank you!

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