

Workshop 12: Transdisciplinary approaches to sustainable agrifood systems

Convenor: Claire Lamine (INRA, France) and Pedro Lopez-Merino (INRA, France)

Impulse talks:

- Martina Tuscano (INRA, France) – “Urban community gardens to achieve social justice”
- Terena Peres (UNB Brazil – INRA France) – “Food and agroecology policies in Brazil”
- Louis Renier (University of Lyon, France) – “Permaculture in urban garden in Lyon”
- Pedro Lopez-Merino (INRA, France) – “An exploratory assessment tool to evaluate the environmental, health, social and territorial impact of our plate”
- Dounia Besson (City of Lyon, France) - “The local committee for sustainable food in Lyon”

The workshop wants to foster a reflection on the complexity of the agri-food system by analyzing the different interactions among the actors that take part in it. Two examples of urban gardening experiences in Bordeaux and Lyon were presented considering the context from different angles. In Bordeaux, family gardens have been instituted to seek for more social inclusion and food self-sufficiency in an area where most people are economically disadvantaged and unemployed. In Lyon, all 150 urban gardening experiences are united under a federation called “Le Passe Jardin”. In 2016, a study was conducted to evaluate the state of the art of those gardens and their potential for re-localizing food production within the urban area.

Both cases analyzed led to controversial consequences. The Bordeaux experience provided indeed more food security for disadvantaged people of the district, however did not foster social inclusion and on the contrary contributed to widen the gap between social classes. In Lyon, 70 members of the community gardens were interviewed which stated that the main scope of the gardens is recreational and educational, but rarely oriented toward food production.

The role of municipalities and governance in supporting the development of sustainable food systems was also touched upon. The deputy mayor Donua Besson provided some info on the initiatives and programmes on the municipality agenda to sustain local production and consumption within the city area of Lyon.

The history of the development of the Brazilian National School Feeding Programme was also presented, which gave some insight on the tremendous impact governments can have to promote changes within the food system.

During the discussion participants agreed on the need to carry out participatory research projects that involve all the actors of the food system in order to understand the complex inter-dependencies among them and foresee changes in the system. The support of governments and policy makers was also seen as fundamental for fostering the development of agroecology and sustainable agriculture that can serve citizens living in the city area. Social justice was considered as an important dimension to be considered to achieve a fairer food system and agroecology with its multidisciplinary approach is able to address this aspect.