

Workshop 10: Becoming an agroecologist through phenomenon based and action oriented education: Making the transition

Convenor: Geir Lieblein (Norwegian University of Life Sciences)

Geir Lieblein presented a new approach in education that shifts the focus from teachers to students and from teaching to supporting the learning process. It is based on the assumption that the farm is greater than its theoretical representations and that therefore, an ontological re-reversal is needed to get back to the world as we experience it as the starting point for the learning process. However this transition also entails challenges for both teachers and students. These challenges were discussed in groups of 5-6 participants who reflected on how they can be dealt with. Major concerns expressed from a student's perspective were the necessity to shift from a passive to an active role, to accept uncertainty and/or incomplete knowledge and, linked to that, trusting one's own competence and taking responsibility of the learning process. From a teacher's perspective, major challenges identified were the loss of control on the content and shifting from a lecturing role toward a facilitation role that requires particular skills. A general challenge is related to tradition and beliefs at universities regarding knowledge and learning. Expanding peer-learning and creating spaces for exchange between teachers and/ or students as well as encouraging learning and practicing facilitation at conferences were suggested in order to deal with these challenges.