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## Key highlights:

1. We observe a **contextual, organisational and strategic diversity** among researched actors
2. **Climate action** appears as the main driver for engagement
3. **Actors were mainly located in Western Europe.**
4. While **some strategies explicitly refer to agroecology and its principles**, other alternative approaches to sustainable agriculture are also used, partially interchangeably with agroecology.

## Introduction

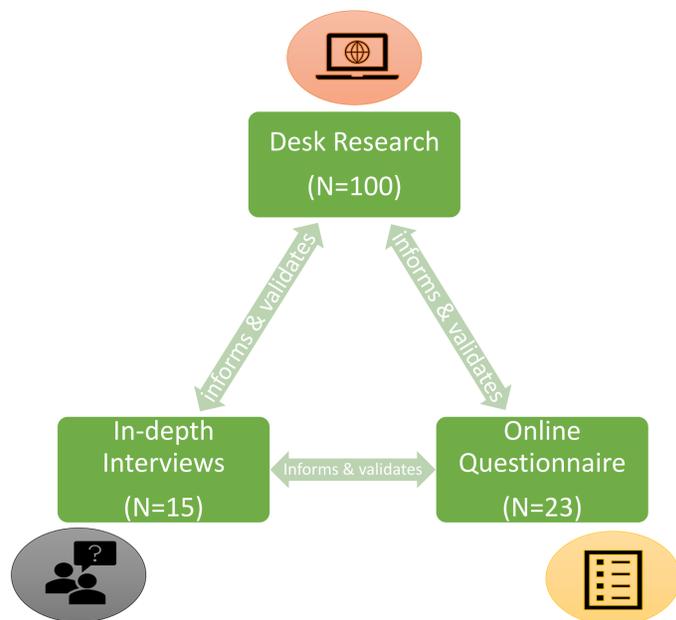
To transform the food system into a more sustainable one, **an increase and shift of funds is urgently required**. While public funding for agroecological purposes has started to be monitored<sup>[1,2,3,4]</sup>, the private sector's contributions have yet to be understood and analysed. Specifically, foundations as financially powerful and emergent actors who can take risks and consider approaches that others cannot<sup>5</sup> are an interesting starting point.

## Objectives

This research aimed to develop an initial understanding of private funding for agroecology and sustainable food systems by foundations in Europe. Beyond the estimation of funding and other financial support by foundations, this research ambitioned to explore their motivations and visions, often expressed through a theory of change, as well as their strategies to better understand their way of operating and managing money flows and thereby answering:

**How are (philanthropic) foundations currently supporting the agroecological transition in Europe?**

## Applied Methods



Data collection: method triangulation with a non-probability sampling strategy

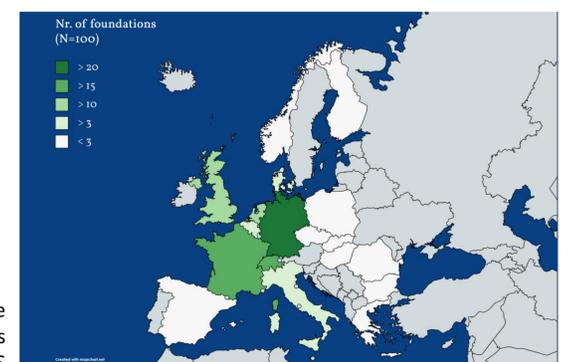
Context		Organisation			Strategy			
Geographic location	Organisational root	Nature of resources	Size of resources for agroecological purposes	Organisational size	Approach	Geography	Themes	Beneficiaries

Foundation Type Categories (adapted framework from Jung et al. 2018<sup>6</sup>)

## Results & Discussion

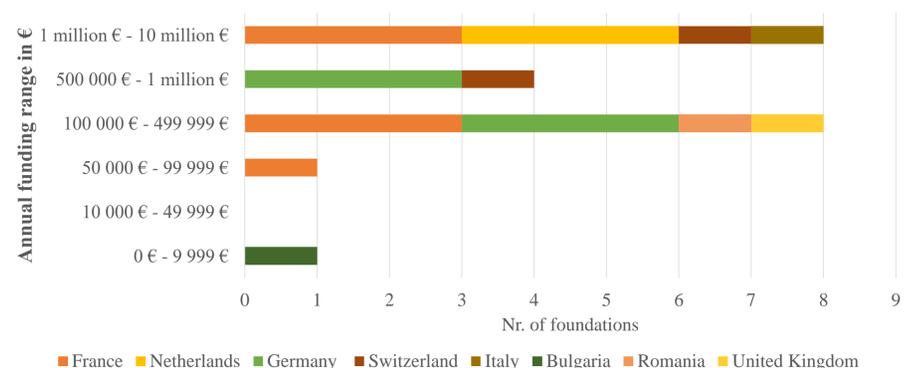
### 1. Context - Mapping foundations

The locations show a clear Western prominence. Together with the fact, that foundations mostly engage on a national scale, it suggests a similar trend concerning the resource distribution.



Heatmap: distribution of the geographic location of foundations (N=100); 7 foundations are in the US

### 2. Organisation – Size of resources



Foundations' annual size of resources by their place of origin (N=23, 1 n.a.)

### 3. Strategy – Themes of funding

Agroecology is used in 35% of the foundations' strategies and is often perceived as the desirable end-vision. However, some foundations explicitly do not use the term due to its political connotation.



Topics of funding declared by foundations and grouped after (N=89; 2 n.a.)

## Key takeaways & Future research

Foundations actively advance agroecology through policy advocacy and knowledge sharing, acting as enablers and facilitators. They can play a key role in supporting grassroots initiatives and innovation-driven approaches. However, the funding remains insufficient, and concerns about transparency and term co-optation persist, highlighting the need for future research and tracking of future funding.

## References

- [1] Moeller, Nina. (2020). Analysis of Funding Flows to Agroecology – The Case of European Union Monetary Flows to the United Nations' Rome-based Agencies and the Case of the Green Climate Fund. 10.13140/RG.2.2.18844.31368.; [2] Linares Quero, A., Irigui Yoldi, U., Gava, O., Schwarz, G., Povellato, A.; Astrain, C. (2022). Assessment of the Common Agricultural Policy 2014–2020 in Supporting Agroecological Transitions: A Comparative Study of 15 Cases across Europe. Sustainability, 9261, 14(15). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14159261>; [3] Buratti-Donham, J., Venn, R., Schmutz, U., & Migliorini, P. (2023). Transforming food systems towards agroecology – a critical analysis of agroforestry and mixed farming policy in 19 European countries. Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems, 47(7), 1023–1051. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21683565.2023.2215175>; [4] Schmutz Ulrich, Hilmi Angela, Moeller Nina, Binder Lindy, Burbi Sara, & Pimbert Michel. (2022). D3.1 – Report on public and private funding for agroecology. Zenodo. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7327101>; [5] Anheier, H. K., & Daly, S. (2007). The Politics of Foundations. Routledge.; [6] Jung, T., Harrow, J., & Leat, D. (2018). Mapping Philanthropic Foundations' Characteristics: Towards an International Integrative Framework of Foundation Types. Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 47(5), 893–917. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0899764018772135>

