

Press release

New study reveals the positive socio-economic performance of agroecology

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The benefits of agroecology for the environment and food security and nutrition are widely recognised. But what evidence do we have on the socio-economic performance of agroecology? And is this socio-economic performance expected to support or to hinder the agroecological transition?

A novel study consolidates, for the first time, evidence on the varied socio-economic outcomes of the implementation of agroecological practices across a large number of cases at a global level. The study, led by [ISARA](#) (Lyon, France) and the [Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna](#) (Pisa, Italy) and funded by the *European Commission Joint Research Centre* and its [Knowledge Centre for Global Food and Nutrition Security](#) (Ispra, Italy), provides a global and inclusive understanding of the socio-economic performance of agroecology - an emerging paradigm for sustainable agriculture and food systems based on diversified cropping and farming systems and a strong reduction of external inputs like synthetic fertilisers and pesticides.

The large-scale study scrutinized over 13,000 publications, from which 80 articles published between 2000 and 2022 were selected as providing scientific evidence on the socio-economic outcomes of agroecology across various metrics such as income, labour, and production costs.

The study demonstrates **the viability of agroecology from a socio-economic perspective**. “In the majority of cases, we identified favourable outcomes on income, productivity and efficiency. However, challenges remain regarding labour requirements and costs, calling for appropriate policies to support agroecological endeavours,” says ISARA scientist and study lead author Ioanna Mouratiadou.

The assessment also highlights that socio-economic outcomes depend on factors such as geographical environment, temporal scale for transition, or farming conditions. Most notable results were derived from studies in the Global South and in systems utilizing agroforestry, intercropping, and no or reduced tillage as agroecological practices.

This study, of wide interest to policymakers and farming professionals, addresses the lack of consolidated scientific evidence on the topic. It provides new insights to further support the agroecological transition, urgently needed to establish truly sustainable agricultural and food systems from the local to the global scale.

The study is available as an open access article in the Journal *Agronomy for Sustainable Development*.

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