Dear Members of Agroecology Europe,

As we reach the end of 2023, we hope that you look back on a year full of successes, community, personal growth, and unexpected adventures. Winter is a time of acceptance, rest, and kindness. We see nature regenerate to create new life, as the days soon become longer and brighter. But for now, let us enjoy the cold breeze, late sunrises and early sunsets, brisk walks, and some lucky rays of low sun.

We look back at the year with pride and excitement, remembering the 2023 Agroecology Europe Forum in Győngyös, participatory workshops in Hungary and Greece, our continued advocacy efforts for sustainable European agriculture policies, and a strengthening European and global agroecology community.

2023 witnessed a toughening EU political context for the agroecology transition and attacks on sustainable agricultural policies. The proposal for a Regulation on the Sustainable Use of Plant Protection Products (SUR) has not passed, while the European Parliament passed a watered-down Nature Restoration Law (NRL) scrapping the proposed article on the restoration of agricultural lands. As for the legislative framework for sustainable food systems (FSFS) under the Farm to Fork Strategy, a proposal was expected to be on the agenda in late 2023. However, it is not mentioned in the tentative agenda for forthcoming Commission meetings and work programme for 2024. And in the latest blow, the Commission gave the green light to 10 more years of glyphosate. PAN Europe is going to court denouncing the Commission's undemocratic reauthorisation process of glyphosate—please support their quest here.

In light of this, we need to be ever more present and vocal in this crucial year to come, with the 2024 EU Parliamentary Elections, to defend agroecology in the EU public debate. For that, AEEU needs the support of our members. Renew your membership for 2024 and continue building the Association’s position on key policy issues, identify priorities, and elaborate policy recommendations for the consideration of EU stakeholders that the Secretariat interacts with in Brussels!

Thank you for your engagement and we look forward to our continued collaboration in 2024. We wish all of our members a happy, joyful winter holiday and an abundant new year!

Sincerely,

Agroecology Europe Secretariat

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP
AEEU aims to define its agenda through the participatory engagement of its individual and organisational members. Among the several objectives and activities of the Association, there are diverse possibilities for members to participate and become active.

As a member, you will receive exclusive news, opportunities, and event invitations through AEEU newsletters and emails. The Secretariat hosts monthly members meetings as a platform to exchange ideas, network with other members, engage with current developments in the agroecology landscape, and shape the position of AEEU on policy issues.

**Become a member for 2024!**

Your membership is activated after payment of the annual subscription fee and lasts until the end of the given calendar year (membership activated on any given day of the year will be active until 31 December of that year). Membership can be continuously renewed or upgraded.

Learn more about our individual and organisational membership options on our website below!

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**Agroecology Europe Forum 2023**

*16-18 November*
Thank you for all who was present at this year's Forum, *Converging movements for resilient food systems*, in Gyöngyös, Hungary, in November.

We are grateful for your inputs, insights, and energy, making the Forum a true success of bringing together the European agroecology community. We hope that for all of you this was a meaningful few days of networking, building relationships, and co-producing knowledge.

And we would like to hear more from you! Please share your thoughts and feedback about the event by filling out this short satisfaction survey.

Concluding thoughts

During these intense and emotional two days, we delved into the three dimensions of agroecology: science, practices, and movements. Discussions spanned from the field and farm level to national, European, and beyond. Over 300 participants embarked on a journey of intense dialogue and exchange, addressing a multitude of topics....
Press release

Read our press release on #AEEUForum2023 reviving highlights from three full days of learning, creating, eating, and dancing! This Forum stood out by its social ambiance leaning into community, joy, and connection. Looking around a room full of people dancing together and smiling ear to ear reminded us of the true meaning of agroecology: connection, kindness, harmony...

Follow our social media for more Forum communications!

Read the press release

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SOLIDARITY STATEMENT

AGROECOLOGY EUROPE FORUM 2023
Converging Movements for Resilient Food Systems

GYÖNGYÖS, HUNGARY

Friday 17 November 2023

During the Forum, a group of participants wrote this solidarity statement with the aim of expressing the values of international solidarity, peace, and justice in the context of the war in the Middle East.

This solidarity statement is a collective and spontaneous initiative that emerged during the AEEU Forum 2023 and commits only the signatories.

You can share and sign this solidarity statement by filling the bellow form.

Download and share the pdf version here.
Workshops, webinars, events

Agroecology Europe hosts and co-organises events, webinars, and participatory workshops to foster connections, build capacities, and place agroecology high on the European agenda. Here are the highlights from the past months!

Report of the participatory workshop in Athens, Greece

How to start an agroecological farm project as a young farmer? This question was at the heart of a workshop organised by the Agroecological Network of Greece on September 30. The goals of the workshop were to exchange experiences and gain organisational skills, discuss barriers of entry and challenges and opportunities of reaching out to policymakers, and build working relationships for the practical implementation of regenerative farming in Greece. To see the solutions that agroecology offers to those who aspire to embark on a farming journey, read our report!

Video of the participatory workshop in Zsámbok, Hungary

Farmers, food advocates, students and community members interested in agroecology gathered on 24 September at Zsámboki Biokert to exchange experiences about the challenges and opportunities in pursuing agroecology in practice within the context of an organic market garden and associated local food communities. The workshop included discussions with the farm team, interactive exchanges with local food advocates, a tour of the organic farm, and a lunch cooked with ingredients from the garden.

Watch the video
Publications

Agroecology Europe contributes to fact sheets, open letters and press releases, and policy briefs elevating the evidence base on the benefits of agroecological practices. For a full picture beyond the highlights below, be sure to follow the Horizon projects that AEEU is part of.

Agroecology Europe's Comments on the Soil Monitoring Law Proposal

The Soil Monitoring Law (SML) marks a positive starting point for the move towards healthy soils throughout Europe, establishing a comprehensive and systematic monitoring framework to ensure a thorough assessment of soil health and its evolution across Europe. AEEU highlights the need for a more action-oriented approach in the proposed Directive, as the current version heavily emphasises monitoring at the expense of tangible actions.

[Read the position paper]

Open Letter: Maintaining the European Commission Proposal for a Regulation on the Sustainable Use of Plant Protection Products (SUR)

Agroecology Europe joins 80 NGOs representing farmers, consumers, environmental, trade, and human rights organisations to express our collective support for an ambitious Sustainable Use of Plant Protection Products (SUR) proposal. We urge the European Commission to commit to evidence-based policymaking and dedicate its work to safeguard the well-being of present and future generations. As representatives of diverse stakeholders who share a common concern for the sustainability of our food systems, we stand ready to collaborate and support an ambitious SUR proposal.
Scientific papers

Increasing diversity gradient in lentil mixtures for intercropping with wheat reveals an increase in lentil biomass with minimal impact on mycorrhizal activity

Elisa Lorenzetti, Federico Leoni, Gilbert Koskey, Paolo Barberi

*Rizosphere*, Volume 29, March 2024

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rhisph.2023.100824

The management of arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi (AMF) is crucial for sustainable agricultural systems, given its beneficial impacts on soil health and crop productivity. This study aimed to assess the effect of lentil (*Lens culinaris* Medik.) mixtures for intercropping with durum wheat (*Triticum durum* Desf.) on mycorrhiza and investigate the role of legume intraspecific diversity in mycorrhizal development and crop biomass production.

Agricultural GMOs and their associated pesticides: misinformation, science, and evidence

Michael N. Antoniou, Claire Robinson, Irina Castro, Angelika Hilbeck

*Environmental Sciences Europe*, Volume 35, nr. 76 (2023)

https://doi.org/10.1186/s12302-023-00787-4

Critics of agricultural genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and their associated pesticides have been classified as purveyors of “misinformation”. We examined these claims of misinformation on these GMOs—for example, that there is a scientific consensus that they are safe for health and the environment—in the light of the scientific evidence and public discussion on this topic. We found that they are biased and misleading and ignore or omit crucial evidence.

Featuring YOU

Do you have news to share? Tell us about your project, research, exchange, or experience that has made an impact for the agroecology transition!

We will feature it in the next newsletter.

Send your stories to Boglarka Bozsogi boglarka.bozsogi@agroecology-europe.org by March 1 with the subject line "AEEU Member story"!
This newsletter reflects the views only of the authors. The European Union, the Fondation de France, or the Fondation Ecotone cannot be held responsible for any use of the information contained therein.

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