Brussels, 22 January 2026

EU Survey: Future-proofing EU Agri-Food through research and innovation

This is the text that Agroecology Europe shared with its answers to the survey

Agroecology Europe is committed to putting agroecology high in the European research agenda. Food systems must change and adapt to new challenges such as adaptation to climate change, biodiversity and ecosystem services deterioration, soil pollution, economic uncertainties and social stresses.

We are convinced that agroecology is the paradigm to follow for this necessary transformation, as it's based on 'working with nature' and put farmers' needs at the center. It recognizes the complexity of food systems, their context-dependency and the need for research based on interdisciplinarity and holistic approaches.

The EU recognizes that agroecology is a way forward, as stated in Strategic Dialogue on the Future of EU Agriculture, its mention in the Vision for Agriculture and Food. The EU ENVI Council also recognized, in 2024, the HLPE 13 principles[1] as the approach to making the EU food system sustainable. The EU is also committed to agroecology in international group and fora as it is a member of the Agroecology Coalition, alongside twelve Member States. In the research area, this recognition of agroecology as a way forward translates into concrete commitment such as the Agroecology Partnership, and the SCAR working group on agroecology.

Therefore, for Agroecology Europe, to strengthen the attractiveness, competitiveness, sustainability, resilience and fairness of agriculture, forestry and rural areas, **future research should reinforce and prioritise agroecology as a systemic, science-based and socially grounded approach**, addressing ecological, economic and social dimensions together, rather than relying on narrowly defined technical fixes.

Prior to any key themes for research, we believe that the EU should have clear goals and a commitment to a sustainable and resilient food system based on agroecology. While we recognize that the EU has put forward research strategies and key clusters, we encourage **the EU to improve the coherence and relation between research projects in time**. Defining research trajectories might boost the uptake of previous results into new research projects, which would allow continuity, coherence, logic and improvement in reaching overarching goals.

[1] The 13 principles of Agroecology • Agroecology Europe

The first key thematic area is **agroecological systems design, diversification and transformation**. Research should focus on **agroecological farm diversification**, including diversified crop rotations, agroforestry, mixed farming systems and **multispecies livestock strategies** that enhance ecosystem functions, reduce external inputs and improve resilience. Particular attention should be given to **livestock extensification**, adapted stocking densities and pasture-based systems, and their links to **animal welfare**, climate adaptation and rural employment. Long-term research on **holistic soil health**, covering biological activity, soil structure, carbon dynamics and nutrient cycling, is essential to underpin productive and resilient agroecological systems.

A second priority area is **farmer-led innovation** and **farmers-led nature restoration**. It includes landscape-scale biodiversity management, ecological corridors and restoration of soil, wetlands and grasslands. It should be recognised as a core research field, linking food production with biodiversity and climate objectives. It translates into putting farmers' needs at the center of research projects, and improve the integration of farmers – especially small-scale farmers, organic and agroecological farmers – in the design and in the participation of research projects, but also in the successful implementation of research results.

Third, research must strengthen **collective approaches and governance arrangements**. This includes **collective governance arrangements for natural resources**, such as water, soil, forests and grazing lands, as well as research on **collective farms, food and rural infrastructures**, shared processing, storage, logistics and advisory services. Supporting **small- and medium-sized cooperatives** is crucial to improve farmers' bargaining power, retain value in rural areas and enable agroecological practices to be economically viable. Food system transformation will not occur if changes only happen at the farm level. This is why research projects should have a systemic approach and consider landscape and territorial integration.

A fourth thematic area concerns **social innovation, fairness and rural vitality**. Research should address **social farming**, care farming and multifunctional agriculture as ways to enhance social inclusion, improve quality of life and strengthen the social fabric of rural areas. This includes examining labour conditions, generational renewal, access to land and capital and the role of collective organisations in ensuring fair incomes and decent working conditions.

Fifth, the EU should make sure that **results for agroecological research reach the right stakeholders, are implemented, and are sustained in the long run**. It means that support is also required at the first stages of the implementation of research results through, for instance, effective agroecological advisory services, financial and management support for created start-ups and other projects like living labs and networks.

A sixth point is about research addressing **territorial food systems and policy coherence**, including public procurement, local and regional markets and rural–urban linkages. Robust

evaluation frameworks are needed to assess agroecological performance across ecological, social and economic dimensions, moving beyond narrow productivity indicators.

Finally, as the EU is engaging in digitalization, research that concerns agriculture and digitalization should prioritise **farmer-centred digital tools and knowledge systems**. This includes the development of **farmer-centred digital platforms that allow farmers to retain control over networking, data, knowledge exchange and business transactions with the rest of society**, rather than increasing dependency on proprietary technologies. Digital tools should be developed in line with agroecological principles and created with the purpose of supporting the agroecological transition by, for instance, the support for cooperation and short supply chains development, by facilitating and participatory decision-making.

Overall, prioritising agroecology-oriented research, grounded in diversification, collective action, farmer autonomy and social justice, offers a credible pathway to more resilient, competitive and fair agriculture, forestry and rural areas in the long term.

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Future-proofing EU Agri-Food through research and innovation

The new EU agricultural Research and Innovation (R&I) Strategic Approach was announced in the European Commission's Vision for Agriculture and Food, presented in February 2025, which aims to secure the long-term competitiveness and sustainability of the EU's farming and food sector. The new EU agricultural R&I strategic approach will help achieve the competitiveness, sustainability, resilience, and fairness objectives of the Vision. It will update and replace the current strategic approach for agricultural R&I, which dates back to 2016.

This questionnaire aims to collect feedback from all relevant stakeholders (researchers, innovators, farmers, foresters, rural communities, cooperatives and associations, advisors, businesses and private sectors, NGOs, etc.). This will enable the co-creation of an EU agricultural R&I strategy. This stakeholder feedback opportunity forms an integral part of the preparation of the New EU strategic approach to research and innovation to foster the competitiveness, resilience and sustainability of agriculture, forestry and rural areas. This survey should not be interpreted as pre-empting or prejudging the Commission's proposal on Horizon Europe and the European Competitiveness Fund, which is currently under discussion by the EU co-legislators.

Sharing your reflections on new opportunities arising from today's policy context will help identify priority R&I thematic areas, bolster the uptake of new knowledge and innovation by farmers, foresters and rural actors and revamp the whole innovation journey from research to start-ups and scale-ups for the benefit of the wider EU economy.

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The consultation is structured around the main areas that fall within the scope of the new EU agricultural R&I Strategic Approach. The completion of the questionnaire should take 15-20 minutes. At the end of the survey, stakeholders can upload a file with a more detailed contribution.

The consultation questionnaire will be open until 25 January 2026.

At the same time, the European Life Science Strategy announced that the Commission will develop a strategic R&I agenda on Food Systems, complementing the strategic approach to R&I in agriculture, forestry and rural areas announced in the Vision for agriculture and food. Relevant stakeholders will also be consulted on the strategic R&I agenda on Food Systems during Q1 2026.

About you

(This survey is anonymous. Please do not provide information that would identify you as an individual in your answers below. If we encounter any such information, we will immediately delete it and/or your contribution)

1 I am giving my contribution as:

- ○ A citizen
- ○ Academic/research institution
- ○ Business association
- ○ Company/business (including SMEs, startups, scaleups)
- ○ Farmer and/or forester and/or rural organisation
- ○ Consumer organisation
- ○ Farmer and/or forester and/or rural actor
- ◉ Non-governmental organisation (NGO)
- ○ Public authority
- ○ Financial investor
- ○ Other

2 Organisation name

200 character(s) maximum

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3 Please add your country of origin, or that of your organisation

○ Austria (AT)	○ Estonia (EE)	○ Italy (IT)	○ Portugal (PT)
◉ Belgium (BE)	○ Finland (FI)	○ Latvia (LV)	○ Romania (RO)
○ Bulgaria (BG)	○ France (FR)	○ Lithuania (LT)	○ Slovak Republic (SK)
○ Croatia (HR)	○ Germany (DE)	○ Luxembourg (LU)	○ Slovenia (SI)

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- Cyprus (CY)
- Greece (EL)
- Malta (MT)
- Spain (ES)
- Czechia (CZ)
- Hungary (HU)
- Netherlands (NL)
- Sweden (SE)
- Denmark (DK)
- Ireland (IE)
- Poland (PL)

4 if another country, please write it here

5 Organisation size

- Micro (1 to 9 employees)
- Small (10 to 49 employees)
- Medium (50 to 249 employees)
- Large (250 or more)

1 . Research and Innovation as an enabler of the Vision for agriculture and food

The 2016 Strategic Approach to EU Agricultural Research and Innovation

The 2016 Strategic Approach aimed to harness EU investments in the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation in view of the following main objectives:

- *Ensure food security in the long term;*
- *Address the environmental sustainability and resilience of competitive land-based primary production for food and non-food systems;*
- *Boost the sustainable growth of rural territories.*

When implementing the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, these objectives have been developed further, in particular to respond to the new geopolitical context and the new strategic direction of the Common Agricultural Policy and the Green Deal.

In addition, the 2016 strategic approach sought to improve the delivery of research results for policy use.

1.1 **To what extent would the main objectives of the 2016 Strategic Approach to EU Agricultural R&I listed below still be relevant today?** *Please reply by ticking the relevant boxes in the table below. If you are not in a position to reply, please tick 'no opinion'.*

	Strongly relevant	Somewhat relevant	Somewhat not relevant	Absolutely not relevant	No opinion

Ensure food security in the long term	◉	○	○	○	○
Address the environmental sustainability and resilience of competitive land-based primary production for food and non-food systems	◉	○	○	○	○
Boost the sustainable growth of rural territories	◉	○	○	○	○
Improve the delivery of research results for policy use	◉	○	○	○	○

Opportunities arising from a new Strategic Approach to EU R&I in Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Areas

The Vision for agriculture and food of February 2025 aims for the European Union of 2040 to be a place where farming and food production thrive across our continent in all their diversity; a place where farming is attractive for future generations, and the agri-food sector is competitive, resilient, future-proofed and fair.

The future of this strategic sector rests on the ability of the European Union and its Member States to put in place the right conditions to enable:

- *An attractive and predictable agri-food sector where incomes enable farmers to thrive;*
- *An agri-food sector that is competitive and resilient in the face of rising global competition and shocks;*
- *The future-proofing of an agri-food sector that is functioning within planetary boundaries;*
- *An agri-food sector that values food, fosters fair working and living conditions and vibrant and well-connected rural and coastal areas*

The Vision indicates that developing a new strategic approach to EU R&I to improve the competitiveness of agriculture, forestry and rural areas will be paramount to target investments efficiently, align future priorities with scientific developments and grasp new opportunities.

1.2 **To what extent should a new Strategic Approach to EU R&I in Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Areas contribute to the following?**

Please reply by ticking the relevant boxes in the table below. If you are not in a position to reply, please tick 'no opinion'

	Strongly contribute	Somewhat contribute	Somewhat not contribute	Absolutely not contribute	No opinion
Attract new generations to agriculture and rural areas	◉	○	○	○	○

Strengthen the competitiveness of small and medium size farm holders	●	○	○	○	○
Foster the sustainability (economic, environmental and social) of agricultural sectors crucial for the EU economy and ready to adapt to future changes	●	○	○	○	○
Enable agricultural systems that go hand in hand with nature	●	○	○	○	○
Leverage the potential of innovative technologies, such as biotechnology and artificial intelligence	○	○	●	○	○
Accelerate uptake of innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas	○	●	○	○	○
Provide new business models for farmers, foresters and rural actors	●	○	○	○	○
Generate new opportunities through bioeconomy, circularity and nature-based solutions towards a climate-neutral and nature-positive economy	○	●	○	○	○
Foster co-creation of knowledge and innovation in local experimentation sites, e.g. living labs	●	○	○	○	○
Strengthen knowledge and innovation systems in agriculture and support for advisory services	●	○	○	○	○
Address consumer needs and choices impacting on the competitiveness, sustainability and resilience of agriculture	●	○	○	○	○

1.3 **To what other aspects should a new Strategic Approach to EU R&I in Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Areas contribute?**

Please reply in the box below, with a maximum 1000 characters [without spaces]

1000 character(s) maximum

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A new strategic approach to EU R&I should include a long-term objective to ensure uptake of agroecology across Europe as a holistic approach, including a set of practices, a science and a social movement. Inspiration to reach the objective should, among others, come from the Agroecology Partnership, which relies on a common vision: "Team-up and unlock the transition to agroecology so that farming systems are resilient, productive and prosperous, place-sensitive, as well as climate, environment-ecosystem, biodiversity and people-friendly by 2050". Research should consequently explore ways of developing/implementing/monitoring the application of the 13 HLPE principles as a basis for transforming food systems.
Ensuring a competitive EU food system and new business models for farmers and other stakeholders should be aligned with the development of agroecology.
New technologies should also be developed in accordance with agroecological principles.

2 . Strengthening the EU "research and innovation ecosystem" for researchers, innovators, start-ups, scale-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in agriculture, forestry and rural areas

Valorisation of results in the EU "research and innovation ecosystem" in agriculture, forestry and rural areas

Despite Europe's excellence in scientific research, the translation from research results to marketable innovations related to agriculture, forestry and rural areas is weaker than in other parts of the world. This includes, for example, the creation of startups or the registration of new patents.

For the purpose of this survey, the "EU research and innovation ecosystem" should be understood as the financial and infrastructural context provided by EU policies that enable the development of R&I activities, from basic research to the deployment and upscaling of innovations in the market. A bolstered "EU research and innovation ecosystem" should provide support to researchers, innovators, start-ups, scale-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to valorise their results and enable their innovations to reach the market and thus be accessible by farmers, foresters and rural actors.

2.1 **To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the current EU valorisation of R&I results through the "EU research and innovation ecosystem" in agriculture, forestry sectors and rural areas?** *Please reply by ticking the relevant boxes in the table below. If you are not in a position to reply, please tick 'no opinion'*

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion
Overall, the results of EU-funded and other research and innovation projects are sufficiently valorised through the creation of start-ups	○	○	○	○	◉

Overall, start-ups receive sufficient support for the development of their innovative products and services and their growth into scale-ups	○	○	○	○	●
Overall, scale-ups receive sufficient support for the full market deployment of their innovative products and services	○	○	○	○	●
Overall, SMEs receive sufficient support to develop and bring to the market innovative products and services	○	○	●	○	○
Overall, there are sufficient strategic investments (e.g. in infrastructure, pilot and demonstration facilities, new value chains, etc.) that can strengthen the competitiveness, sustainability and resilience of agriculture, forestry and rural areas	○	○	●	○	○
Overall, there is sufficient support ensuring a seamless investment journey from fundamental and applied research all the way to full market deployment, including industrial production and infrastructures	○	○	○	●	○

Fostering a "seamless investment journey" in the "EU research and innovation ecosystem" in agriculture, forestry and rural areas

A European Competitiveness Fund (ECF), newly proposed by the European Commission under the next Multi-annual Financial Framework (2028-2034) or long-term EU budget, will aim to invest in strategic sectors and technologies, for the benefit of the entire Single Market. The ECF would simplify and accelerate EU funding and catalyse private and public investment. It proposes to focus its support on four areas: clean transition and industrial decarbonization; health, biotech, agriculture and bioeconomy; digital leadership; resilience and security, defence, industry and space.

In close connection with the ECF, the next Horizon Europe, the next EU research and innovation framework programme, has been proposed to continue to fund world-class research and innovation. Together, Horizon Europe and the ECF would offer support for the entire investment journey of a project (from conception phase to scale-up) and reduce both the cost for potential beneficiaries and the time for disbursement in what is called a "seamless investment journey".

On the other hand, the new long-term EU budget will bring together EU funds implemented by Member

States and Regions under one coherent strategy, with economic, social and territorial cohesion, agricultural and fisheries policies and security at its core. This will be implemented through National and Regional Partnership Plans, to maximize the impact of investments.

2.2 **To what extent do you agree with the following as means to foster a "seamless investment journey" in the "EU research and innovation ecosystem" in agriculture, forestry and rural areas ?**

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion
Explore ways to provide stronger support for the valorisation of research and innovation results within the scope of EU-funded collaborative research and innovation actions themselves (e.g. dedicated funding for proof of concept under such actions)	●	○	○	○	○
Make greater and more systematic use of EU funding support for start-ups, scale-ups and SMEs in the fields of agriculture, forestry and rural areas	○	○	○	●	○
Explore stronger (bidirectional) synergies between EU-funded collaborative research and innovation actions and EU funding support for start-ups, scale-ups and SMEs : results from EU-funded research and innovation actions should feed more systematically into EU funding support for start-ups, scale-ups and SMEs, while EU-funded start-ups, scale-ups and SMEs should in return systematically participate more in EU-funded collaborative research and innovation actions.	○	●	○	○	○
Make greater and more systematic use of synergies between EU funding support for start-ups, scale-ups and SMEs under the next Horizon Europe on the one hand and such support under the newly established European Competitiveness Fund on the other hand	○	●	○	○	○

Explore synergies between investments under the next Horizon Europe and under the newly established European Competitiveness Fund on the one hand, with investments under the National and Regional Partnership Plans on the other hand	○	●	○	○	○

2.3 **Do you have suggestions to foster the valorisation of the results from R&I in agriculture, forestry and rural areas to strengthen the related "EU research and innovation ecosystem" and/or the related "seamless investment journey"?** *Please reply in the box below, with a maximum 1000 characters [without spaces]*

1000 character(s) maximum

Strengthening ways to implement results is key to ensure the effective transformation of the EU food system towards sustainability and resilience. Nevertheless, as stated above, the overarching goal is to make the EU food system agroecological. Therefore, research and the subsequent results (amongst which possible new businesses) should align with the agroecological principles, and participate in their implementation at farm, landscape, national and EU levels.
Another key element is advice to farmers. It's important to ensure the limitation of commercial bias in this service. And that it works at enabling agroecological transition: monitoring farms based on the principles, and accompanying farmers in implementing agroecology.

3 . Accelerating the uptake of (new) knowledge and innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas

Current R&I interactive innovation and knowledge transfer tools

The EU promotes the so-called 'interactive innovation model' through Horizon Europe and the Common Agricultural Policy, built on three principles: addressing the real needs of farmers, foresters and other actors in these sectors, and rural communities; involving partners with complementary expertise; and ensuring co-decision and co-creation throughout projects.

Central to this is the multi-actor approach (MAA), which brings together diverse participants to co-create knowledge and solutions tailored to practical needs, improving relevance and speeding up the uptake of innovations.

R&I projects increasingly use living labs to apply the MAA in real-life, place-based contexts. These labs enable user-centered, long-term, transdisciplinary collaboration, addressing social, behavioral, and technical dimensions. Likewise, EIP-AGRI operational groups are bottom-up innovation projects that unite diverse actors to co-create practical solutions for local agricultural, forestry, and rural challenges, bridging research and practice.

The interactive innovation model implemented under Horizon Europe and the CAP is expected to lead to quicker and higher impacts of the investments in research, innovation and knowledge exchange with the support of the Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) that are set up at European and Members States level.

In addition, the EU common agricultural policy (CAP) supports interactive innovation by strengthening knowledge flows among key actors and improving advisory services. Horizon Europe thematic and advisory networks, demonstration farms, and peer-to-peer learning effectively share and adapt new practices. The EU CAP Network and the national CAP Networks, play a key role in supporting these processes, in particular through its activities on innovation, knowledge exchange and the EIP-AGRI, which supports knowledge flows, showcases good practices and innovative solutions, connects advisors, researchers and farmers and helps ensure that results from EU-funded R&I and EIP-AGRI Operational Group projects are more widely disseminated and taken up across Member States.

3.1 **On the current state of play of the effectiveness of dissemination, take-up and use of R&I results in the areas of agriculture, forestry and rural: to what extent do you agree with the statements below ?**

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion
Farmers, foresters, rural actors and related stakeholders are sufficiently enabled to access new knowledge and take up new practices.	○	○	○	●	○
Farmers, foresters, rural actors and related stakeholders are sufficiently enabled to take up new technologies.	○	○	●	○	○
The communication and dissemination of new knowledge, new practices and new technologies to farmers, foresters, rural actors and related stakeholders is sufficiently fast and effective.	○	○	●	○	○
Affordable and context-specific innovations are generated and adapted to the needs of farmers, foresters, rural actors and related stakeholders.	○	●	○	○	○
Farmers, foresters, rural actors and related stakeholders have sufficient means and opportunities to test and adopt innovations.	○	○	●	○	○

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3.2 **What should be further strengthened to stimulate the uptake of innovation by farmers, foresters, rural actors, food chain operators, institutions and civil society with a view to foster the competitiveness, sustainability and resilience of agriculture, forestry and rural areas?**

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion
The multi-actor approach in agricultural, forestry and rural R&I should be applied more widely.	●	○	○	○	○
The multi-actor approach in agricultural, forestry and rural R&I should be developed and refined further through, for instance, the greater and more active involvement of actual farmers, the greater involvement of agricultural advisors, etc.	○	●	○	○	○
Cascading grants and other appropriate means should be used more widely to actively involve farmers, foresters and other rural actors in R&I activities, enabling them to participate directly in co-creation, experimentation, and the adaptation of innovations to local needs.	●	○	○	○	○
Living labs (co-creation) should be used more widely to underpin future R&I activities, providing real-life testing grounds for user-driven innovation, with the Soil Mission as a leading example of how this accelerates practical, scalable solutions.	●	○	○	○	○
The wider uptake of results of EU-funded collaborative research and innovation actions by CAP-funded EIP-AGRI operational groups should be explored.	●	○	○	○	○
The wider uptake of results of CAP-funded EIP-AGRI operational groups by EU-funded collaborative research and innovation actions should be explored.	○	●	○	○	○
Within the remit of EU-funded collaborative research and innovation					

actions, still greater attention should be paid to dissemination and exploitation activities, for instance through the use of digital technologies.	○	●	○	○	○
The dissemination of R&I solutions through on-farm demonstrations and peer-to-peer activities in demo-farms (e. g. lighthouses) should be fostered.	○	●	○	○	○
EU-funded research and innovation actions and CAP operational groups should strengthen further their links with the Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation systems, and with advisory and Horizon thematic networks, feeding their results more systematically into these mechanisms.	●	○	○	○	○
Tailor-made feedback should be generated from R&I activities for policymaking at different levels (e.g. local, regional, national, EU).	●	○	○	○	○
Inventories of agricultural, forestry and other practices should be compiled and made accessible via artificial intelligence tools	○	●	○	○	○

3.3 **According to you, what else can be done to foster the uptake of innovation in the farming, forestry and in rural sectors?**

1000 character(s) maximum

It is important to assist stakeholders that support the agricultural sector in reducing dependencies, for instance, on chemical inputs and machinery. The distinction between commercial and non-commercial stakeholders is thus relevant. Independent researchers doing research for the benefit of farmers in applying certain agronomic practices, developing new collaborations, etc., do not have any financial interest and should therefore be prioritised in public research. Studies looking at the longer term should also be prioritised. While Living Labs can play a key role in spreading knowledge, testing, and allowing various stakeholders to meet around a shared goal, the EU should consider ways to ensure their viability in the long-run, and improve the connection between them, and between existing Living Labs and research projects. In addition to that, the development of a robust public advisory service in each country, supported by the EU, that works in implementing agroecology, is paramount.

4 . Cooperating for R&I that fosters competitive, resilient and sustainable agri-food systems in Europe and beyond

In the endeavour of developing a new EU strategic approach to R&I to improve the competitiveness of agriculture, forestry and rural areas, the Vision for agriculture and food emphasises the need to further strengthen public-public and public-private R&I cooperation, and to pool resources, talents and research infrastructure. The Vision also confirms that the EU will continue working with its partners and key international organisations to strengthen the implementation of internationally agreed commitments and to increase their ambition to achieve global sustainable agri-food systems in line with Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

4.1 **To what extent should the following strengthen R&I cooperation at EU and international level to deliver innovative solutions to the global challenges in agriculture, forestry and rural areas?**

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion
Foster closer public-public cooperation and alignment of research, innovation and valorisation agendas between the EU on the one hand, and Member States and Associated Countries on the other hand, for instance through public-public partnerships	◉	○	○	○	○
Foster closer public-private collaboration (e.g. through public-private partnerships), with, for instance, the business sector and philanthropic organizations to mobilise additional resources, accelerate innovation uptake, and ensure that research outcomes are relevant, scalable, and aligned with real-world needs (following the example of the Mission Soil and CBE JU)	○	○	◉	○	○
Foster partnering opportunities with relevant international organisations and third countries to deliver innovative solutions to global challenges	○	◉	○	○	○
Foster collaboration across disciplines and sectors (e.g. One Health, bioeconomy, biotechnology, blue economy) to align economic, environmental and social goals in different policy areas (e.g. agri-food, human health)	◉	○	○	○	○

4.2 **Do you have other suggestions to strengthen R&I cooperation at EU and international level to deliver innovative solutions to the global challenges in agriculture, forestry and rural areas ?**

1000 character(s) maximum

Other parts of the globe are also conducting research on agroecology, and are supporting its implementation. The R&I cooperation could aim at improving communication and research collaboration on topics related to sustainability, resilience, and agroecology with regions that have the same pedoclimatic characteristics that European regions, and with regions that faces climatic situations that the EU will probably experience in the future (drought, flooding, ...).

5 . Thematic priorities and approaches for future Research and Innovation (R&I)

The 2023 AgriResearch Conference identified key research and innovation (R&I) priorities to advance sustainable, climate-smart agriculture, forestry and rural development.

Participants stressed the need for R&I to support climate-smart, biodiversity-friendly agriculture and resilient forestry, highlighting priorities such as soil health, integrated resource management, resilient crops, reduced dependence on synthetic inputs, improved animal health and data systems, and sustainable livestock practices. They also emphasized R&I for rural opportunities, skills, youth attraction, and circular bio-based systems. The need to foster new business models and value chains was highlighted as important to increase the attractiveness, resilience and sustainability of the sectors. Approaches should draw on agroecology, organic and landscape-level methods, long-term experimentation, living labs, and digital and data technologies to improve decision-making. Strengthening peer learning, multi-actor collaboration, social sciences integration, new business models, and international cooperation is essential to ensure farmers, foresters, and rural communities can access and apply needed knowledge and innovations.

5.1 **How would you evaluate the following R&I priority areas, which emerged from the 2023 AgriResearch conference, on their relevance to strengthen the attractiveness, competitiveness, sustainability, resilience and fairness in agriculture, forestry and rural areas ?**

	Highly relevant	Somewhat relevant	Somewhat not relevant	Not relevant	No opinion
Climate mitigation and adaptation	◉	○	○	○	○
Biodiversity friendly agriculture	◉	○	○	○	○
Sustainable management of land, soil, water and nutrients	◉	○	○	○	○
Healthy, sustainable and resilient cropping systems	◉	○	○	○	○
Sustainable and healthy livestock systems	◉	○	○	○	○

New farming, food and bio-based systems	○	○	●	○	○
Rural opportunities	●	○	○	○	○
Agroecology and organic farming	●	○	○	○	○
Socioeconomics and agricultural policies	●	○	○	○	○
Sustainable and resilient forests and forestry	●	○	○	○	○
Supporting agriculture knowledge and innovation systems	●	○	○	○	○
Digital and data technologies	○	○	●	○	○
International aspects	○	●	○	○	○

5.2 **What other thematic areas would you consider a priority to strengthen the attractiveness, competitiveness, sustainability, resilience, fairness in agriculture, forestry and rural areas ?**

1000 character(s) maximum

Research should work on finding innovative ways to tackle the entry barriers of the EU food systems, especially for young people, and for those who will to develop agroecology. For instance, access to land, access the financial support and access to markets are major barriers. By exploring approaches for agroecological farmers to get access to those elements, research will participate in strengthening the attractiveness, competitiveness, sustainability, resilience and fairness of the EU food system.

"Please ensure that you have not provided any information that would identify you as an individual in your answers above. If we encounter any such information, we will immediately delete it and/or your contribution."

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