

Living Labs as a Catalyst to Empower NGOs and Stakeholders in Driving the Transition to Agroecology

A multi-actor approach for sustainable transformation



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Context & Problem Statement

- Growing challenges in agriculture: sustainability, biodiversity loss, and climate change.
- Transitioning to agroecology requires innovative, inclusive frameworks.
- However, the role of collective actions has been neglected posing a barrier to this transition.
- Living Labs provides a participatory environment to drive this transition.
- NGOs and stakeholders are key drivers of change, but they lack tools and spaces for collaboration.

What Are Living Labs?



Living Labs are real-world experimental environments where stakeholders co-create, test, and scale solutions.



Core principles: multi-actor approach, experimentation, and knowledge exchange.



Agroecology transition demands innovation at farm, landscape, and policy levels.



Living Labs bridge gaps, accelerate adoption, and amplify impact.

Empowering NGOs and Stakeholders

- NGOs: Enhance their capacity to engage farmers and influence policies.
- Farmers & stakeholders: Gain access to new methods, tools, and knowledge.
- Multi-actor collaboration ensures inclusive decision-making and practical solutions.
- Living Labs create a collaborative ecosystem for shared learning and action.



Impact of DIVINFOOD Project

Overview: DIVINFOOD aims to develop food chains that value underutilized agrobiodiversity, particularly minor cereals and legumes, to counter biodiversity decline and meet consumer demand for healthy, local products contributing to sustainable food systems.

DIVINFOOD LLs: The project operates nine LLs across seven European countries, serving as multidisciplinary and multi-actor experimental spaces for the collective management and valuation of local agrobiodiversity.

NGO Contributions:

- NGOs play a pivotal role in engaging local communities, raising awareness about the benefits of agrobiodiversity, and promoting sustainable agricultural practices.
- They facilitate knowledge transfer between researchers and practitioners, ensuring that innovations are practical and tailored to local needs.

Outcomes:

- Co-developed interactive marketing modes and channels that value biodiversity, supported by participatory guarantee systems and digital tools, contributing to more sustainable food systems.

Impact of NATAE Project

Overview: NATAE seeks to foster agroecological transitions in North Africa by identifying optimal combinations of agroecological practices and developing methodologies for designing locally tailored strategies.

Structure: The project has established seven LLs in diverse agro-socio-environmental zones across Algeria, Egypt, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia, representing systems such as oases, peri-urban areas, mountains, cereal plains, and irrigated valleys.

Function: LLs serve as platforms for structured exchanges on agroecological transitions, facilitating co-construction of knowledge through dialogue among key stakeholders, including farmers, industries, governments, NGOs, consumer organizations, research institutions, and local advisory services.

NGO Contributions:

- Facilitation and Coordination
- Advocacy and Policy Influence

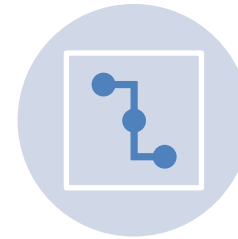
Outcomes:

- Localized Agroecological Strategies
- Market Access

Project DIONYSUS



Focus: Sustainable adaptation within the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystem (WEFE) Nexus in the Mediterranean Basin.



Living Labs: Multi-actor platforms addressing nexus trade-offs through participatory processes.

Egypt – Luxor (EASD)

- ✓ Higher farmers' participation
- ✓ National collaboration
- ✓ Cross-sectoral partners

Greece – Karditsa (TOEV)

- ✓ Higher farmers' participation
- ✓ Marginalized populations
- ✓ Policy advocacy

Conclusions



LIVING LABS ACCELERATE THE AGROECOLOGICAL TRANSITION BY CREATING SHARED OWNERSHIP AND SCALABLE SOLUTIONS.



A CATALYST FOR NGOS, POLICYMAKERS, AND FARMERS TO COLLABORATE EFFECTIVELY.



PUTTING COLLECTIVE ACTIONS AT THE CENTER OF THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS