LIFT

Low-Input Farming and Territories – Integrating knowledge for improving ecosystem based farming

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Third newsletter of the LIFT project

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DELIVERABLE D7.4

Workpackage N°7

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Dissemination level: Public

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About the LIFT research project

Ecological approaches to farming practices are gaining interest across Europe. As this interest grows there is a pressing need to assess the potential contributions these practices may make, the contexts in which they function and their attractiveness to farmers as potential adopters. In particular, ecological agriculture must be assessed against the aim of promoting the improved performance and sustainability of farms, rural environment, rural societies and economies, together.

The overall goal of LIFT is to identify the potential benefits of the adoption of ecological farming in the European Union (EU) and to understand how socio-economic and policy factors impact the adoption, performance and sustainability of ecological farming at various scales, from the level of the single farm to that of a territory.

To meet this goal, LIFT will assess the determinants of adoption of ecological approaches, and evaluate the performance and overall sustainability of these approaches in comparison to more conventional agriculture across a range of farm systems and geographic scales. LIFT will also develop new private arrangements and policy instruments that could improve the adoption and subsequent performance and sustainability of the rural nexus. For this, LIFT will suggest an innovative framework for multi-scale sustainability assessment aimed at identifying critical paths toward the adoption of ecological approaches to enhance public goods and ecosystem services delivery. This will be achieved through the integration of transdisciplinary scientific knowledge and stakeholder expertise to co-develop innovative decision-support tools.

The project will inform and support EU priorities relating to agriculture and the environment in order to promote the performance and sustainability of the combined rural system. At least 30 case studies will be performed in order to reflect the enormous variety in the socio-economic and bio-physical conditions for agriculture across the EU.

Project consortium

No.	Participant organisation name	Country
1	**INRAE - Institut National de Recherche** pour l'Agriculture, l'Alimentation et l'Environnement	**FR**
2	VetAgro Sup - Institut d'enseignement supérieur et de recherche en alimentation, santé animale, sciences agronomiques et de l'environnement	FR
3	SRUC - Scotland's Rural College	UK
4	Teagasc - Agriculture and Food Development Authority	IE
5	KU Leuven - Katholieke Universiteit Leuven	BE
6	SLU - Sveriges Lantbruksuniversitet	SE
7	UNIBO - Alma Mater Studiorum - Universita di Bologna	IT
8	BOKU - Universitaet fuer Bodenkultur Wien	AT
9	UBO - Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universitat Bonn	DE
10	JRC - Joint Research Centre - European Commission	BE
11	IAE-AR - Institute of Agricultural Economics	RO
12	MTA KRTK - Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Közgazdaság- és Regionális Tudományi Kutatóközpont	HU
13	IRWiR PAN - Instytut Rozwoju Wsi i Rolnictwa Polskiej Akademii Nauk	PL
14	DEMETER - Hellinikos Georgikos Organismos - DIMITRA	GR
15	UNIKENT - University of Kent	UK
16	IT - INRAE Transfert S.A.	FR
17	ECOZEPT Deutschland	DE

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1 Summary

The present deliverable D7.4 “Third newsletter of the LIFT project” describes the goal, technical issues, informational content and planned means of dissemination of the third public newsletter of the ongoing LIFT project.

2 Introduction

In order to disseminate the results of the LIFT project, it is crucial to reach selected audiences (primarily the stakeholders, but also other public groups, which might become involved or interested in the subject) and to provide key information and knowledge collected and produced by the LIFT research consortium.

The LIFT project produces regular newsletters as one of the tools to reach the public about the project’s progress, having 4 newsletters planned to be delivered throughout the project’s lifetime (first newsletter in January 2019, second newsletter in January 2020, third newsletter in February 2021 and fourth newsletter in April 2022).

Newsletters, being a traditional tool of dissemination, in order to reach a wider audience, are planned to be delivered in both paper and electronic forms, widening the possibilities to share them beyond the traditional (personal transfer, mailing) means, and translated into the languages of the consortium’s partners.

The third newsletter of the LIFT project aims to deliver information about the project’s ongoing work, achieved deliverables, published scientific articles, interactions with stakeholders, information about other research projects and upcoming LIFT and related scientific events. The newsletter also presents information about the LIFT project’s research partners, and their official logos, as well as the projects’ social medias.

3 Technical issues

The third annual newsletter of the LIFT project has been produced by LIFT partner IRWiR PAN.

The newsletter has been created with the use of Microsoft Publisher 2016 and is based on one of the templates provided by this package.

The graphics used in the newsletter are the property of the LIFT project (LIFT official logo and its elements). Official logos of LIFT partners, other projects and social media platforms are the property of respective owners.

The newsletter consists of 5 pages in A4 format in the printed-out form (5 pages single side or two and a half pages double side) or can be delivered through electronic means of communication as a PDF file with active hyperlinks.

4 Content of the newsletter

The content of the newsletter delivers information covering the third year of the project with special emphasis on the ongoing work, achieved deliverables and published scientific articles. Its purpose is to create interest towards stakeholders and the general public for them to obtain more information about the project and its results by visiting the LIFT website or the linked documents. The newsletter's content is intended to widen the audience eager to learn more about the LIFT research questions and become more involved in the field of ecological approaches, whether on the practical, policy or scientific level.

The structure of the newsletter contains the following sections and information:

- "Project's progress" providing descriptions of ongoing work in all six work packages with key deliverables to be achieved within the next project year;
- "LIFT deliverable 1.2 "Interactions with stakeholders on farm typology" describing key findings obtained within the research activities based on the farm typology developed by LIFT;
- "Large-scale survey of farmers carried out" reporting successful completion of the planned survey and results achieved, including numbers of surveyed farmers in particular European countries and key topics covered;
- "Scientific publications" bringing to the attention of the readers information about five articles published within LIFT in peer-reviewed scientific journals, including short abstracts for each article;
- "New communication and dissemination tools" informing the public about the LIFT blog that is published to deliver key information and ignite scientific discussion on selected topics based on LIFT research findings, as well as presenting a new social media utilized within the LIFT project, being an Instagram account;
- "Involvement of stakeholders" providing information on the involvement of stakeholders in the finalized second year of the project during the local stakeholders' workshops, explaining key themes currently discussed with stakeholders within the ongoing third year workshops, as well as informing the public about the activities on the LIFT stakeholder platform and the upcoming launch of the LIFT Massive Online Open Course (MOOC);
- "Related projects" informing the public about a new section on the LIFT website with information about related scientific projects and links to their websites and social media accounts;
- "Upcoming events" where both LIFT and key related events for 2021 are presented;
- "Learn more about LIFT!" urging the readers to learn more about the LIFT project through the provided link to the LIFT website (the link to the website is also present in the form of a QR code for readers' convenience), links to the LIFT social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, ResearchGate, Instagram) and LIFT Blog.

In addition, the newsletter provides logos of the LIFT consortium's coordinator and other partners. The final information present in the newsletter is the names and affiliations of the LIFT project's coordinator, the LIFT project's communication officer and the LIFT project's manager.

The newsletter conveys the information about the source of financing through the following statement "This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No 770747" complemented by the European Union flag.

The newsletter, on each of its pages in the footer, provides the link to the LIFT website containing detailed information about the project and public deliverables available for download.

5 Multilanguage aspects

As defined in the LIFT Grant Agreement, the newsletter will be translated into the languages of the consortium's partners. The 9 languages beside English, in which the third newsletter of the LIFT project will be distributed, are the following: French, German, Dutch, Swedish, Italian, Romanian, Hungarian, Polish, Greek – covering all primary official languages of the LIFT consortium partners' countries.

6 Dissemination plan

Each LIFT partner is responsible for the dissemination of the third newsletter of the LIFT project among their national/local stakeholders through any available means: during workshops with stakeholders, during conferences organized by the partners and any other events of their choice, through email and postal sending, or on websites and social medias.

The printed versions of the newsletter could be handed out in person or mailed to selected parties, while the electronic version for distribution through email. As the LIFT newsletter is delivered to LIFT partners solely in electronic form, it is their responsibility to print out hard copies.

As the newsletter is translated into the national languages, each partner will have access to all versions, making it possible to choose which version is more beneficial in each particular case.

Targeted audience for the dissemination of the LIFT newsletter includes, but is not limited to, stakeholders from the following groups:

- farmers and farmers' representatives (e.g. unions, farm producer groups),
- up- and downstream companies,
- retailers,
- other economic actors (e.g. banks),
- governments and local administration,
- citizens' associations (with objectives towards environment, communities, etc.),
- non governmental organizations (NGOs) and consumers,
- European Commission officers,
- scientific researchers.

Finding and selecting the specific entities and individuals representing the above stakeholder groups beneficial to the LIFT project's research process is the responsibility of each LIFT partner.

As knowing the number of distributed newsletters is crucial for the LIFT project's reporting, each partner is obligated to keep track of distributed (sent) newsletters (both in printed and electronic form)

and be ready to submit upon request the list to the partner responsible for the communication in LIFT (IRWiR PAN).

The newsletter will also be sent out to people who have conveyed their consent to be added to the LIFT mailing list through the LIFT website (the contact form provides such option). The partner in charge of general LIFT mailing list is IRWiR PAN, while each of the LIFT partners may have their own lists in order to better target their case study areas and national language aspects.

7 Newsletter screenshots

Screenshots of all pages of the third newsletter of the LIFT project are presented in the Appendix (Figures 1-5).

8 Conclusion

The information present in the third LIFT newsletter gives the readers an understanding of the achieved results, past, ongoing and upcoming activities.

The final version of the third newsletter of the LIFT project in the English language is made available to the public on the LIFT website in the "Documents" section, among others, as well as on the LIFT collaborative platform on February 26, 2021. The news about the newsletter will be posted on all LIFT social media accounts (Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, ResearchGate).

The third newsletter of the LIFT project has been created in the planned time frame and all defined objectives were achieved.

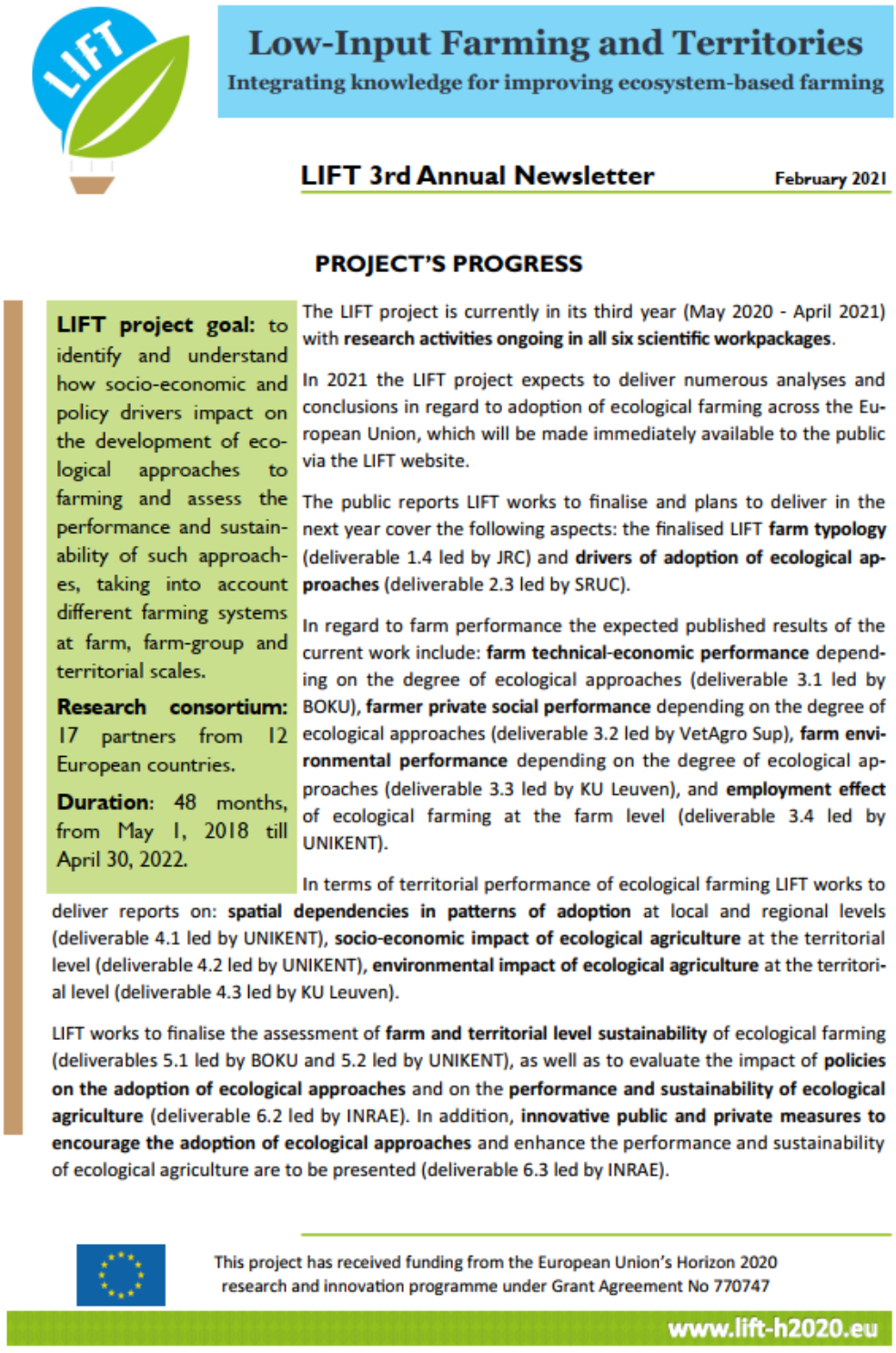
This current deliverable reporting on the preparation of the third newsletter of LIFT has been written by IRWiR PAN on time and is being made available to the partners through LIFT collaborative platform on February 26, 2021.

9 Deviations or delays

None.

10 Appendix

Following are screenshots of the full pages of the third annual newsletter of the LIFT project.



Low-Input Farming and Territories

Integrating knowledge for improving ecosystem-based farming

LIFT 3rd Annual Newsletter February 2021

PROJECT'S PROGRESS

LIFT project goal: to identify and understand how socio-economic and policy drivers impact on the development of ecological approaches to farming and assess the performance and sustainability of such approaches, taking into account different farming systems at farm, farm-group and territorial scales.

Research consortium: 17 partners from 12 European countries.

Duration: 48 months, from May 1, 2018 till April 30, 2022.

The LIFT project is currently in its third year (May 2020 - April 2021) with **research activities ongoing in all six scientific workpackages**.

In 2021 the LIFT project expects to deliver numerous analyses and conclusions in regard to adoption of ecological farming across the European Union, which will be made immediately available to the public via the LIFT website.

The public reports LIFT works to finalise and plans to deliver in the next year cover the following aspects: the finalised LIFT **farm typology** (deliverable 1.4 led by JRC) and **drivers of adoption of ecological approaches** (deliverable 2.3 led by SRUC).

In regard to farm performance the expected published results of the current work include: **farm technical-economic performance** depending on the degree of ecological approaches (deliverable 3.1 led by BOKU), **farmer private social performance** depending on the degree of ecological approaches (deliverable 3.2 led by VetAgro Sup), **farm environmental performance** depending on the degree of ecological approaches (deliverable 3.3 led by KU Leuven), and **employment effect** of ecological farming at the farm level (deliverable 3.4 led by UNIKENT).

In terms of territorial performance of ecological farming LIFT works to deliver reports on: **spatial dependencies in patterns of adoption** at local and regional levels (deliverable 4.1 led by UNIKENT), **socio-economic impact of ecological agriculture** at the territorial level (deliverable 4.2 led by UNIKENT), **environmental impact of ecological agriculture** at the territorial level (deliverable 4.3 led by KU Leuven).

LIFT works to finalise the assessment of **farm and territorial level sustainability** of ecological farming (deliverables 5.1 led by BOKU and 5.2 led by UNIKENT), as well as to evaluate the impact of **policies on the adoption of ecological approaches** and on the **performance and sustainability of ecological agriculture** (deliverable 6.2 led by INRAE). In addition, **innovative public and private measures to encourage the adoption of ecological approaches** and enhance the performance and sustainability of ecological agriculture are to be presented (deliverable 6.3 led by INRAE).

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Figure 1. Page 1 of the third annual newsletter

LIFT deliverable: D1.2. Interactions with stakeholders on farm typology.

This deliverable forms the second phase in the establishment of the **LIFT farm typology depending on ecological practices**. The purpose was to gather the opinion of local stakeholders in different case studies, in order to understand the current state of existing typologies and to collect their recommendations for the development of the LIFT typology that was initiated with a literature review in LIFT deliverable D1.1. The qualitative study in deliverable 1.2 summarised here, was carried out using face-to-face interviews or workshops with two or three stakeholders. A diversity of stakeholders was interviewed through a qualitative questionnaire. Twenty one stakeholders from five different case study areas participated.

Four major themes were covered during the interviews: 1) typologies that stakeholders know, use and design; 2) stakeholders' opinions on the practices that should be considered to capture the degree of ecological farming; 3) stakeholders' interests in a user-friendly tool to assign a farm to a farming system through a specific typology of ecological practices; and 4) stakeholders' opinions on the LIFT typology. This study reveals key elements to integrate in the development of the LIFT typology and the LIFT typology-tool. For example, all stakeholders recognised (in their area) one or more farming systems proposed by the LIFT typology, but also indicated that it is difficult to use this typology as it is, given the potential overlaps between different systems.

All of the stakeholders interviewed recognised organic farming as an ecological approach, even if some thought that it does not go far enough because there is no control of external input and use of fossil energy for organic farms. There were also similar opinions on ecological practices according to the same production: crops or livestock. All stakeholders recognised that it is difficult to differentiate farms according to their degree of ecological practices because there were no thresholds and no linear evolution, so they proposed summary indicators based on the use of chemical products and fossil energy. For this, they were interested in a simplified typology-tool.

The report has been prepared by the LIFT partners: VetAgro Sup (France) - lead, INRAE (France), JRC (Italy), IAE-AR (Romania), SLU (Sweden), UNIBO (Italy).

LARGE-SCALE SURVEY OF FARMERS CARRIED OUT

LIFT has successfully carried out the planned large-scale survey across the selected European countries. In total, there were **1,628 completed questionnaires**, with the following geographic distribution: 94 in Austria, 67 in England (UK), 229 in France, 51 in Germany, 108 in Greece, 120 in Hungary, 33 in Ireland, 100 in Italy, 100 in Poland, 52 in Romania, 113 in Scotland (UK) and 561 in Sweden.

Data for a total of 3,429 common variables were collected, including the **basic farm characteristics**, farm employment and working conditions. Among the **characteristics of plant cultivation** were questions regarding pest and plant disease management, fertilisation and soil management of crop areas, seeds, crop diversification, crop rotation and grassland management. Concerning **livestock** the data collected covered feed information for various types of livestock, livestock disease management, livestock location and management of manure and slurry. Information about landscape features and habitats, agroforestry and integrated farming, water management, precision technologies for irrigation, mechanisation, energy management, drivers of practice adoption and factors of production were collected.

Special focus was taken on the **applied farming practices**: soil tillage, planting, fertilising, pest control and harvesting. Fixed assets and investments were assessed, as well as detailed inputs for crop and livestock production. Finally farm outputs, subsidies, income and contracting for agricultural outputs and future policies were evaluated.

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Figure 2. Page 2 of the third annual newsletter

SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS

Here we present several published articles based on LIFT research findings:

Candemir A., Duvaleix S., Latruffe L. (2021). Agricultural cooperatives and farm sustainability – A literature review**. Journal of Economic Surveys.**
The literature review aims at linking the empirical findings to the theoretical understanding of cooperatives, in particular members' heterogeneity. It is shown that cooperatives play a non-negligible role in farm economic sustainability and in the adoption of environmentally friendly practices, suggesting that both public policies and private initiatives in cooperatives may be complementary. However, the trade-off between economic and environmental sustainability in cooperatives would need to be further investigated.

Duvaleix S., Lassalas M., Latruffe L., Konstantidelli V., Tzouramani I. (2020). Adopting environmentally friendly farming practices and the role of quality labels and producer organisations: A qualitative analysis based on two European case studies**. Sustainability, 12(24), 10457.**
The way in which quality labels and producer organisations influence the adoption of environmentally friendly practices by farmers is explored. It is shown that many of the quality labels in both case studies, for which agricultural farming systems must comply with a set of rules, are not specifically aimed at improving environmental impacts; there are several geographical indication labels in the Cretan olive oil sector, and in the French pig sector many quality labels focus on other practices that matter for society, namely improving animal welfare.

Heinrichs J., Kuhn T., Pahmeyer C., Britz W. (2021). Economic effects of plot sizes and farm-plot distances in organic and conventional farming systems: A farm-level analysis for Germany**. Agricultural Systems, 187.**
Plot sizes and farm-plot distances affect the economic performance of agricultural production. Their economic effects likely differ between conventional and organic farming systems due to major differences in crop production programs. The paper quantifies these effects based on big data on resource requirements of field operations, summarised by regression models. Combined with detailed case study information obtained through interviews, plot size and farm-plot distance effects for three case study farms that recently converted to organic farming are assessed.

Florian V., Rusu M., Rosu E., Chitea M., Bruma S., Pocol C. (2020). Behavioural factors and ecological farming. Cases studies**. Scientific Papers Series: "Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and Rural Development", 20(2/2020).**
The main objective of the paper is to identify and understand how Romanian farmers relate to ecological farming in terms of ecological practices and ecological products. To achieve this objective, qualitative research methods were used: hybrid forum method and in-depth interviews. The results reveal that in the county Cluj-Napoca, stakeholders opt for building an operational social system (balanced functioning of the education, production, research, distribution systems within multi-dimensional political programmes/projects).

Florian V., Rosu E. (2020). Ecological farming - rural realities, socio ecological arguments and comments. Cluj county case study**. Agricultural Economics and Rural Development, 17(1).**
The investigation of the relationship between ecology and sociology, in a sustainable agricultural matrix, provides possible complete answers to the problems generated by the respect of the environment and building a favourable environmental matrix. The interdisciplinary perspective investigates the following dimensions in sociological terms: environmental, economic and social processes induced by land use or land use changes, spatial interactions of processes and driving forces in anthropogenic landscapes. The specific trends of ecological farming are largely influenced by the behavioural factors and by the cultural and social capital of farmers involved in this type of farming activity.

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Figure 3. Page 3 of the third annual newsletter

NEW COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION TOOLS

The LIFT project has launched two new dissemination tools to reach its stakeholders and provide more options to communicate.

The first one is the LIFT blog aimed to share key researched ideas and provide an additional platform for discussion with the stakeholders. As more research outputs are produced within the LIFT project they will be discussed in its blog articles, facilitating understanding of key research assumptions and conclusions.

Another communication tool that was launched for project purposes is the LIFT Instagram account, as sharing graphic information becomes more appealing to stakeholders and LIFT produces increasingly more materials that can be presented visually. Check it out!

INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS

Within the **second project year**, LIFT has managed to carry out 23 workshops across its case study areas delivering valuable information on the researched issues both to project partners and to the stakeholders. Interactions with stakeholders have mostly been carried out face-to-face, with only three workshops that had to be carried out in an online format due to the development of COVID-19 situation in spring 2020. A total of 288 stakeholders participated in the second-year LIFT workshops, with the largest number of participants from Greece (53 persons) and 41 participants from both France and Germany, 28 people came from Poland, 25 from Sweden, 24 from the United Kingdom, 17 from Austria, 14 from Hungary, 13 from Belgium, 11 from both Italy and Ireland, and 10 from Romania.

The **third year workshops** are currently in progress. Key themes being discussed are farm level performance on case study level, how multiple drivers of change interact to determine the delivery of sustainable development in the region under different scenarios of uptake of ecological approaches to farming, the social impact of ecological systems in a region and the role for collective-based policy approaches to encourage the uptake of ecological farming.

Another tool that facilitates online interactions and cooperation with the stakeholders is the LIFT stakeholder platform, which is getting ready to launch the **Massive Online Open Course (MOOC)** for its stakeholders in the next months. The objective of the LIFT MOOC is to transfer knowledge gained on the drivers that facilitate the development of ecological approaches on farms and the improvement of performance and sustainability of such farms.

RELATED PROJECTS

LIFT has created a webpage to enable searches for related projects, which could be beneficial to stakeholders and participants of other projects in finding information about ecological farming and the sustainability and resilience of farming systems. This information with links to other projects' websites and social media accounts is available at https://www.lift-h2020.eu/links.

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Figure 4. Page 4 of the third annual newsletter

UPCOMING EVENTS

Looking forward to the following events:

- **LIFT 3rd Annual Meeting (online) on 15-16 March 2021**, bringing together all the LIFT partners to discuss the project's progress and next objectives.

- International Conference on Breeding and Seed Sector Innovations for Organic Food Systems **(online) on 8-10 March 2021** organised by EUCARPIA jointly with LIVESEED, BRESOV, ECOBREED, FLPP projects and ECO-PB.

- UNISECO Final Conference **(online) on 18-19 March 2021**, presenting the results of the UNISECO project (ending April 2021) including strategies for agro-ecological transitions in a diverse set of case studies across Europe, territorial implications of agro-ecological transitions at EU-level, and the Agro -Ecological Knowledge Hub and key recommendations for policy and practice.

- Seminar "Economics, Institutions, Development and Rural Spaces" (EIDER)" **by Research Unit Territoires (online or onsite) on 29 April 2021** presenting the results from LIFT stakeholders' survey in France on the socio-economic impacts of ecological agriculture (by INRAE and VetAgro Sup).

- 16th Congress of the European Association of Agricultural Economists **(onsite in Prague, Czech Republic or online) on 20-23 July 2021** aimed at raising the impact of agricultural economics and concerning multidisciplinarity, stakeholder engagement and novel approaches to research.

- 31st International Conference of Agricultural Economists **(online) on 17-31 August 2021** organised to foster the application of agricultural economics to improve rural economic and social conditions, as well as advance knowledge of agriculture's economic organization.

- 20th Organic World Congress **(onsite in Rennes, France and online) on 6-10 September 2021** aiming to address questions around resilience, societal transformation, ecosystem regeneration, health, and food sovereignty.

LEARN MORE ABOUT LIFT!

To stay up to date with the latest news, research results and planned workshops for stakeholders in your area or to sign up to receive LIFT newsletters and updates, please visit our website: **www.lift-h2020.eu**, check out our social media accounts or contact the LIFT project representatives through the website's contact page.

LIFT project coordinated by:

INRAE science for people, life & earth

Other partners:

VetAgro Sup, SRUC, cegasc, KU LEUVEN, SLU, BOKU, UNIVERSITÄT BONN, MTA KRTK, IRWiR PAN, University of Kent, INRAE transfert, ECOZEPT

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Figure 5. Page 5 of the third annual newsletter