



**Friends of  
the Earth  
Europe**



**PRESENTATION**

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Brussels and online

*Multiburo Brussels EU Parliament,  
Square de Meeus 38-40*



## HOW TO VALUE AND FUND AGROECOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION

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AE4EU  
April 28, 2023

## MAIN FINDINGS

- Agri-environment measures can be **potentially supportive**, but might be **‘perverse incentives’**
- **Local scale**: crucial to effecting agroecological transitions, important role of municipal governments in the distribution of funds
- **Smaller amounts of funding for small initiatives**: small groups or cooperatives generally have a stronger impact on enhancing agroecological development than large-scale funding for large programmes



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## MAIN FINDINGS

- Most fundamental barrier remains the **unequal playing field** which is geared towards large-scale farms: The problem is not just **lack of support** for small-scale or agroecological farmers, but the **existing support** for conventional, large-scale, industrial production.
- Receiving subsidies through the CAP comes with **administrative difficulties** for small-scale farmers (transaction costs, time, effort and the complexity of bureaucratic processes)

# Distorted power relations aggravated by the access to funds: Who influences EU policy making on agriculture and food?

Stakeholder	Persons involved	Funding involved
AEEU 	2 persons 1 Full Time Equivalent (FTE)	70.000 euro



Stakeholder	Persons involved	Funding involved
Croplife Europe 	16 (3 FTE)	1 mio euro
BASF 	65 (22 FTE)	3-3,5 mio euro
Bayer 	79 (23,4 FTE)	6-6,5 mio euro

# Policy recommendations

1. Use the holistic concept of agroecology and not reduce it to a set of practices.
2. Fund projects that are dedicated to all levels and dimensions of food system change.
3. Avoid projects that are too large (beyond 10-15 million), as it could concentrate power.
4. Integrate long-term thinking into funding strategies and allow transformative results over time, including the continuation of successful projects after reassessment and amendments.
5. Develop results-based payments that reward evidenced results (e.g. increasing soil carbon content and insects, less pollution, higher welfare).
6. Increase the understanding and capacity of agroecology by supporting participatory agroecological research; introducing agroecological expertise into agricultural colleges and training programmes; and create farmer-to-farmer knowledge exchanges and field schools.

# Policy recommendations

7. Create intelligent and responsive funding mechanisms with simplified application processes; free or low cost agroecological advisory services for small farmers to access funding; more small-scale funding opportunities; and more flexible funding schemes which empower applicants to experiment with agroecological principles.
8. Empower local governments and municipalities to dispense funds to local initiatives, and continue to build and provide funding via the LEADER approach.
9. Create an enabling environment for agroecology by strengthening the development of short food supply chains (including public procurement); value and support small agroecological farms and enterprises, including those under 1 ha in size; support new entrants to use agroecological practices; and educate advisory services and bank personnel on the potential of agroecology.
10. Think and act systemically by overcoming siloed conversations, connecting institutions and ministries, and building integrated thinking and funding.

=> actively engage with civil society

**Thank you for  
your attention!**

