From local ecosystems to food security

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The last two years showed that many of our preferred activities, like travel, can be easily ceased, while a few basics are always needed to survive and to solve problems. These are – among others – food, health and science. AE has the knowledge to address these issues and guide policymakers.

This proposal is to initiate a working group to prepare a document on how improvement in local ecosystems can contribute to food production and food security. It aligns with the EU Green Deal and its Biodiversity and Farm to Fork strategies. The background is „ecological intensification” when agricultural production is supported by natural processes, not agrochemical input or machinery use. Proper management of ecosystems may increase the number of pollinators, natural enemies of agricultural pests, or soil organisms, thus biodiversity in general. Such management is context-dependent and, therefore may differ among geographic regions and socio-economic environments. The understanding of how local people and stakeholders accept or reject the idea of ecological intensification is thus a critical step toward broader application. Therefore, a useful study on the applicability and potential of ecological intensification needs a wide and comprehensive approach across systems in Europe; otherwise won’t give specific guidance and only remain at the general level.

We should build on the multidisciplinary nature of AE, and its large and diverse membership – which is distinct from other European advisory bodies. The publication of such a document may attract new members to AE in this underrepresented area.

When thinking is starting, we should consider other European advisory bodies’ recent reports, like:

A sustainable food system for the European Union (https://sapea.info/topic/food/)

Regenerative Agriculture (https://easac.eu/projects/details/regenerative-agriculture/)