

1 + 1 = 3

Wednesday 29th November 2017

European Parliament, Brussels



How agroforestry is boosting the revenue and resilience of Europe's farmers

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Three presentations

1. What is, where is and why agroforestry?

Paul Burgess, Cranfield University

Co-ordinator of AGFORWARD project

(P.Burgess@cranfield.ac.uk)

2. Practice of agroforestry

Fabien Balaguer

3. Policy recommendations for Europe

Rosa Mosquera Losada

What is agroforestry?

Reclaimed arable land in the Veneto region of Italy is flat, open, and exposed with few trees



The landowner explained that he was practising agroforestry by planting trees on every third drainage ditch every 90 m



Apple trees on 27 m alleys
on an organic arable farm in England



In many areas trees are
an integral part of the landscape



Sheep and wild cherry trees in Galicia



Montado and cattle in Portugal

Silvopasture and silvoarable are the main forms of agroforestry in Europe



Silvopastoral

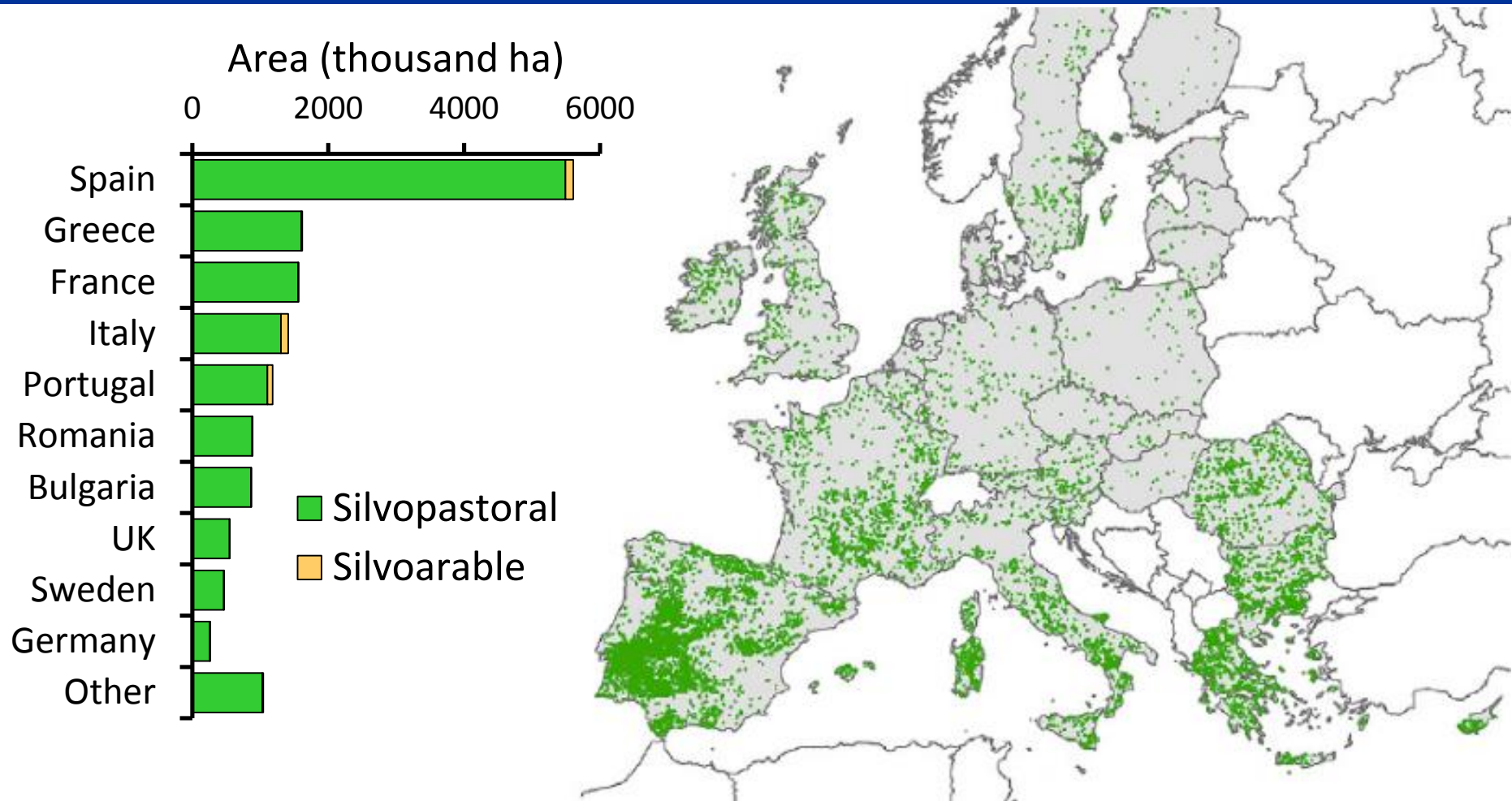
Silvoarable



**Trees and shrubs
with forage and
animal
production**

**Trees and shrubs
intercropped
with annual or
perennial crops**

Agroforestry, dominated by silvopastoral systems, covers 3.6% of Europe



Area of agroforestry: Using LUCAS data: 15.4 Mha (3.6% of total area and 8.8% of agricultural area) (den Herder et al. 2017) (excludes 1.8 Mha of homegardens).

Other forms of agroforestry



Silvopastoral

Silvoarable

**Hedgerows,
windbreaks
and riparian
buffer strips**

**Forest
farming**

**Home-
gardens**



Trees and shrubs
with forage and
animal
production

Trees and
shrubs
intercropped
with annual or
perennial crops

**Trees and shrubs
bordering farm
land to protect
livestock, crops,
and/or soil and
water quality**

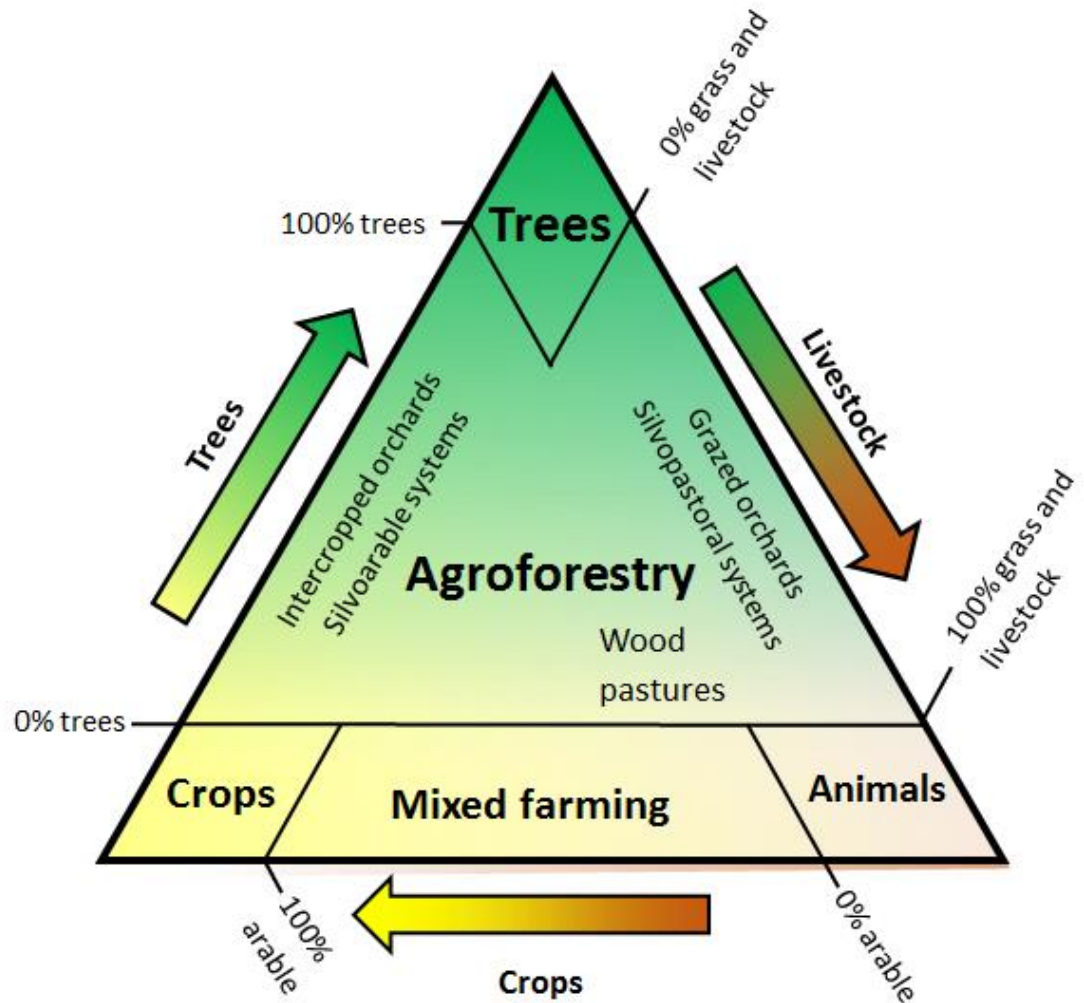
**Forested
areas used
for harvest
of
speciality
crops**

**Trees/
shrubs
with veg.
in urban
areas
(1.8 Mha)**

Agroforestry: seeking the synergy between agriculture and trees



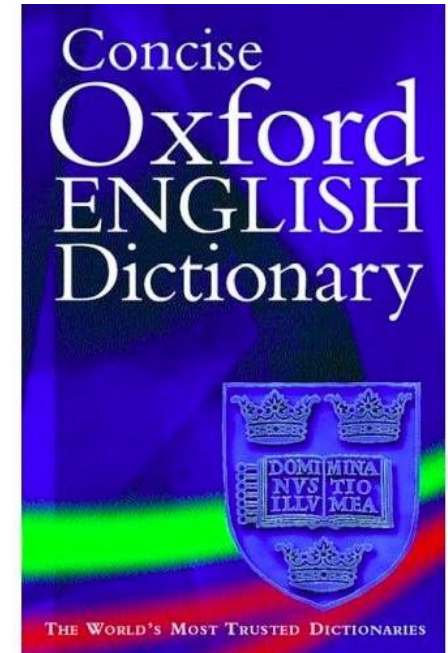
Agroforestry:
the deliberate
integration of
woody vegetation
with pasture
(consumed by
animals) or an
agricultural crop



Synergy



● **n**: interaction of two or more agents to produce a **combined effect greater than the sum of their separate effects.**

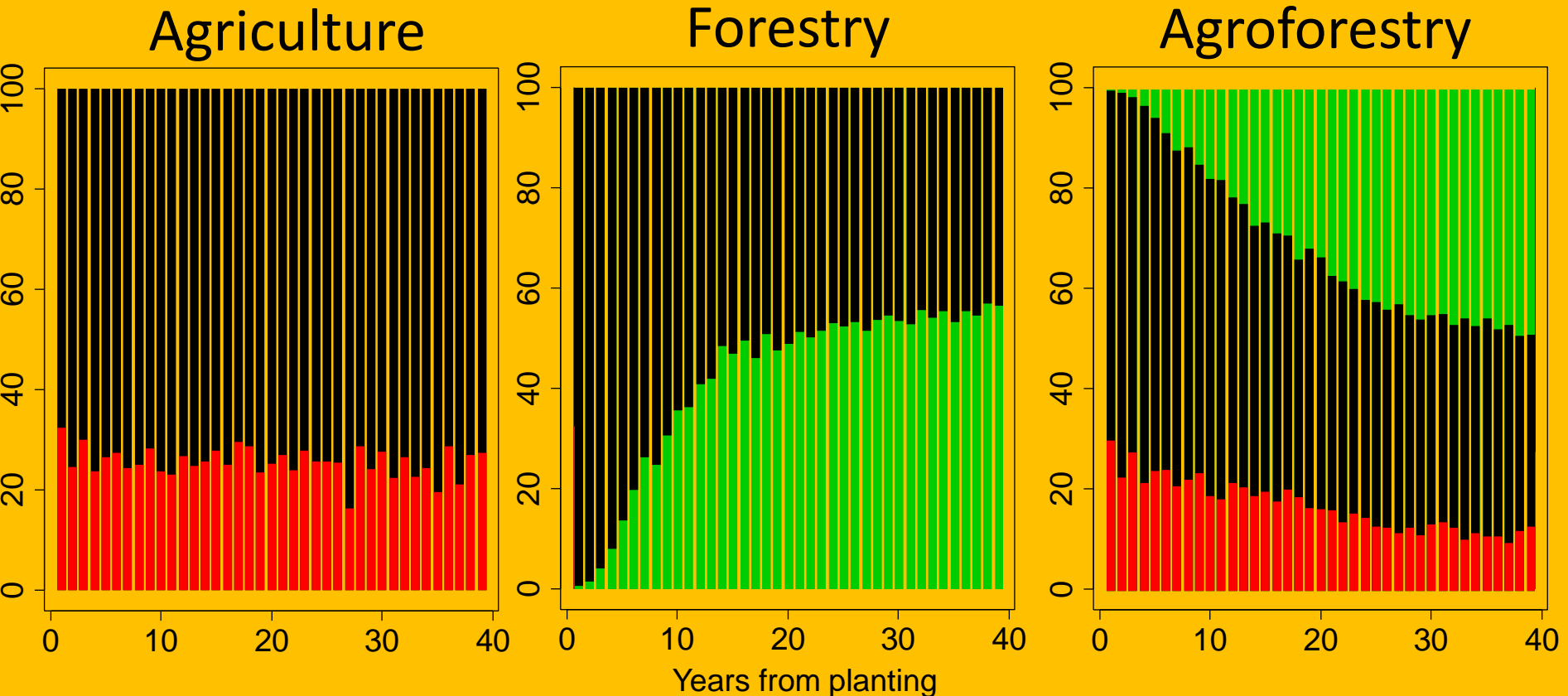


Production: proportion of sunlight used for photosynthesis



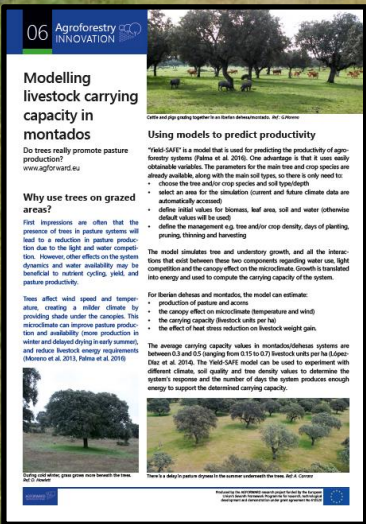
Walnut – cereal agroforestry in Southern France

Production: more sunlight used for photosynthesis



- Light intercepted by wheat
- Light intercepted by walnut
- Not used

Modelled proportion of solar radiation intercepted by wheat monocultures, walnut tree forestry, and a wheat-walnut agroforestry system over 40 years (Dupraz and Liagre 2008)



Improved seasonality of forage and fodder production



Shelter benefits for arable production in Germany

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Yield and climate change adaptation using alley cropping

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Willow rows within poplar and black locust alley cropping system. Ref: Tronek 2014

How can trees maintain crop yields?

Climate change scenarios predict fewer but more intense rain events. Dry spring and summer weather reduces crop yields. Water loss from the crop is controlled by soil salinisation, air temperature, wind speed and humidity.

Alley cropping systems can modify the crop microclimate by reducing wind speeds and temperature extremes. Lower wind speeds increase humidity levels around the plant surface, thereby slowing water loss.

Many crops that are protected by hedgerows of fast growing trees, managed as short rotation coppice, demonstrate increased photosynthetic rates and water use efficiency.



Row of poplar hedgerows with olive trees. Ref: Müller 2016

How can alley cropping be arranged?

For the establishment of alley cropping systems, seven fast growing tree species (willow, poplar, black locust, beech, alder, ash and sycamore) are currently allowed in Germany. Soil pH should range between 5.5 and 8.5, soil depth should be at least 50 cm, and for growing willow and poplar there should be a minimum precipitation rate of 600 mm.

Effective site preparation and weed control are essential for the successful establishment of fast growing woody crop hedgerows. The trees should be planted in winter or spring. Planting material is available through commercial nurseries. The material will be either seedlings or, in the case of willow and poplar, cuttings produced from the previous year's growth are also available. Planting may be done by hand or with mechanical planters. During the first growing year, weed control using chemicals should be carried out. During the second year, after root establishment, further mechanical weeding may be required.

Tree hedgerows can vary in width between 2 and 10 rows (2-15 m wide). Both single and double row designs can be used. Spacing for a single row design could be 2.55 m between rows and 0.4 m within the row. For a double row design, there should be 1.75 m between double rows, 0.75 m within the double row and 0.5 m within the row. The crop alley spacing can vary between 24 and 96 m.



Single row within poplar and black locust alley cropping system. Ref: Tronek 2014

Agroforestry is a cross-disciplinary research area involving the fields of Agriculture, Forestry, and Environmental Science. It is a key component of the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme.

Animal welfare benefits

Woodland eggs

- Hens use more of their range
- Less feather pecking damage
- Fewer wild fowl visits



Fodder trees on dairy farms

Extend the grazing season with trees and shrubs
www.agforward.eu



Young cow grazing a pasture heavily planted with fodder trees. ©F. Sarda-Hidal

Why browse woody plants?

To face the challenges arising from decreasing water and fossil fuel resources, dairy systems will have to limit their use of irrigation, external nitrogen fertilisers and exogenous concentrates.

Grazing is a critical aspect of energy and water saving management. However, the quantity and quality of grazed forage are highly dependent on climatic conditions. In Atlantic French regions, grazed grasslands currently provide forage in spring and it is a lesser extent in autumn. However, as grassland production is much reduced in summer, climate change will probably increase drought conditions in late spring and summer, and also the overall variability of grassland production annually. Trees and shrubs could provide a complementary forage resource on dairy cattle farms.



Willow planted in grassland in August 2016. ©F. Sarda-Hidal



A positive feedback from agroforestry demonstration paddocks for networks in La Rochelle. ©F. Sarda-Hidal

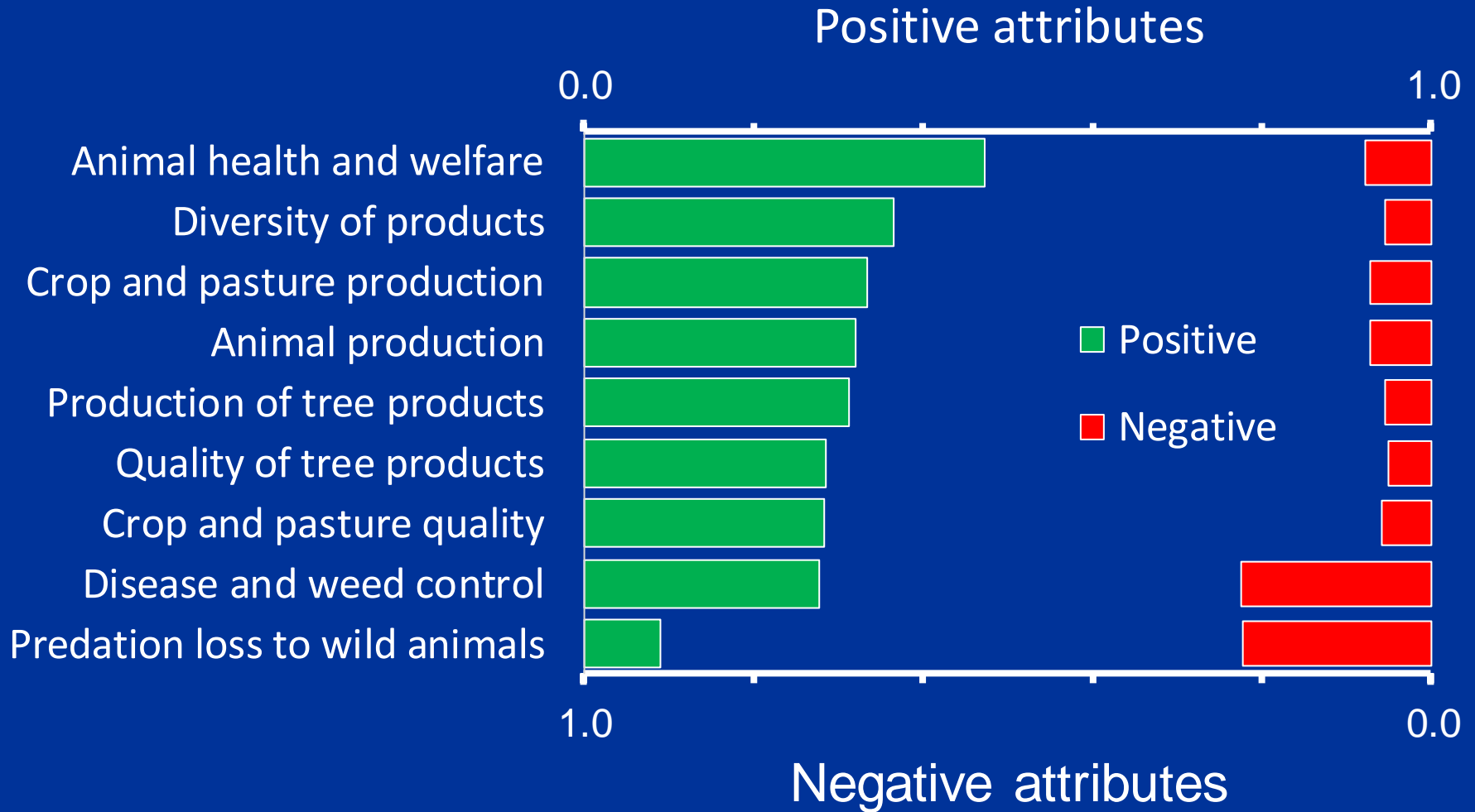
How to integrate woody plants in a grazed paddock

An agroforestry paddock (3 ha) was co-designed with farmers, researchers, technical institute engineers and extension agents and implemented in February 2015 on the experimental cattle dairy farm of INRA in La Rochelle (Nouvelle Aquitaine, France). Fodder trees were planted in the grazed paddock to be harvested by cattle in a couple of years, but also to provide wood chips. Two types of grazing techniques of fodder trees will be tested: pollards of *Alnus* and *Alnus cordata*, and coppices of *Salix* species. Other species: *Betula pendula* and *Alnus incana*. High stem trees (*Pinus* spp., *Quercus* spp., *Salix* spp.) were also planted, related with various forage with pollards and coppices, as farmers wanted to test the diversification of tree uses.

Three spatial organizations of trees were tested with single, double or triple-row sets, with an inter-row spacing of 20 m. To restrict the browsing of the newly established trees, seven types of tree protection were compared: single or double line of electric fence, electric fencing tape, metal or plastic fences, electric repellents and a barrier tape. Another option of tree protection was to exclude the paddock from grazing and to sow the grassland during the first years of the establishment phase. Additionally, the nutritive value of several woody plants leaves was evaluated to determine the woody species that could be included in the diet of lactating cows.

Tree fodder database: leaves of black locust, chestnut, white mulberry and ash have crude protein levels of 22%

Farmers also recognise production benefits of agroforestry



Responses of 344 stakeholders across 30 stakeholder groups (Garcia de Jalon et al. 2017)



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Economic benefits of grazed apple orchards in England

Grazing under half-standard or standard trees
www.agforward.eu

Why graze orchards with sheep?

Orchard grazing can offer financial and environmental benefits. The experience of stakeholders in the AGFORWARD project in their semi-hedged sheep-friendly high-stemmed orchards can successfully graze on orchards which have been pruned to a height of 1-2 m without noticeable losses in apple yields. Sheep producers can profit from an additional source of grass in the orchards, and the release of grazed land for hay production. Orchard owners can profit from reduced mowing costs, increased nitrogen cycling and a visit from the sheep owner. There can also be societal benefits in terms of employment and plant biodiversity.



Dispersive sheep and lambs in a traditional cider apple orchard in Herefordshire, England (March 2015).

Cider apple orchards and sheep

Cider apple orchards have significant economic, biodiversity, and societal benefits (Robertson et al. 2012). Cider apples are sold for their juice rather than their appearance and therefore the paddock regime can be less intensive than that required for dessert apples. This reduction in agrochemical use provides opportunities for integrating sheep. In the UK, about a third of the cider apple orchards are comprised of 'standard' or 'half-standard' trees, which have been pruned to a height of 2 m and 1-2 m respectively. This pruning allows the yields from apple trees to be maintained when the grass understorey is grazed by 'free-herd' sheep. In England, orchard owners commonly use Shropshire sheep because, if managed correctly, they cause minimal levels of bark damage.

A key feature of grazed orchard systems is that it is necessary for the sheep to be absent from the orchard for 60 days before apple harvest (generally from August to October) to minimise faecal contamination of the fruit. Hence, a sheep producer must have access to separate non-orchard grassland where the sheep can be kept at this time. Thus, a grazed orchard system involves sheep, apple trees, the grass understorey, and an area of separate non-orchard grassland for supplementary grazing.



Annual cycle of sheep production in a grazed orchard. 1. Grazing (April to June), 2. Harvest (July to September), 3. Breeding (October to December), 4. Lambing (January to March). The diagram also shows the timing of sheep production and the timing of apple harvest.

Sheep in high-stem cider apple orchards in the UK and France reduce mowing costs



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Grazing sheep under walnut trees

Producing high quality timber whilst reducing costs
www.agroforestry.eu



Picture credit: Iqbal walnut growers, Ref. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100

Why introduce livestock?

There is a high demand for hardwood timber, such as hybrid walnut, in the EU. To meet this demand, over the last decade, hardwood plantations have substantially increased production in many Spanish regions. Intensive management is often required to grow these trees in short rotations. Such management, comprising irrigation, fertilisation, and chemical weed control, however, has high economic and environmental costs. Plantation management accounts for more than 40% of the total investment costs. Moreover, these operations can have major environmental impacts, similar to the effects of intensive agriculture systems.

Introducing livestock and sowing legumes can reduce the financial costs of these plantations and optimise their environmental functions. This is known as a silvopastoral system.



Picture credit: Iqbal walnut growers, Ref. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100

Where and how to plant

Hybrid walnut trees need a rather humid climate, preferably with a moderate dry period (about 3 months without rain) and not too cold (annual mean temperature above 10°C). Some hybrid walnut progenies (e.g. M6-G0606, Juglone major a regis) show a higher tolerance to warm climates, such as in the Mediterranean areas. Some local walnut (Juglone regis). Although walnut can grow in a wide variety of soil types, it does best in a deep, well-drained soil, with a heavy texture and neutral or slightly basic pH.

Trees should be planted at a density of 333 trees/ha (6x6 m) and where planting 1-2 year-old trees, seedlings should be around 20-30 cm height. Irrigation is needed if summer drought occurs. Fertiliser should be applied in early spring at rates of 40 kg N/ha, 40 kg P₂O₅/ha and 50 kg K₂O/ha.

The trees are very sensitive to weed competition during the first 5 years. Thinning and pruning may be required, depending on tree growth.

How to graze

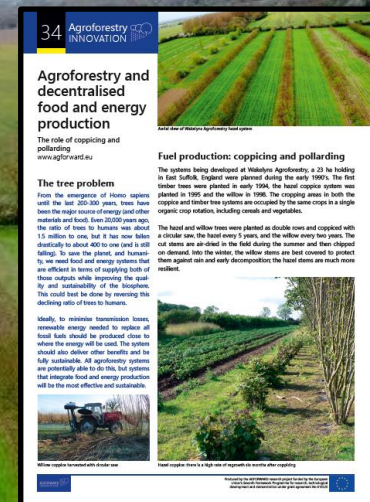
A stocking rate of 1-2 sheep/ha is recommended in the Mediterranean regions. With summer and winter fodder supplementation livestock can remain in plantations all year. Sheep can be introduced in the first years of plantation as the walnut is not palatable during this period. However, trampling damage should be avoided by using tree protection guards during the first 1-4 years. No damage will be caused after this time as the trees would have gained a sufficient height so that the sheep will no longer be able to reach the crown.

How to sow legumes

A mix of large legume (several species of Trifolium spp., Medicago, and Ononis spp.) can be sown at a density of 20 kg seeds/ha to a soil depth of 2-3 cm. In the first year, pasture should only be grazed after crops maturation to ensure self-seeding in the following years.

Intercropping or grazing with sheep increased tree diameter growth of walnuts

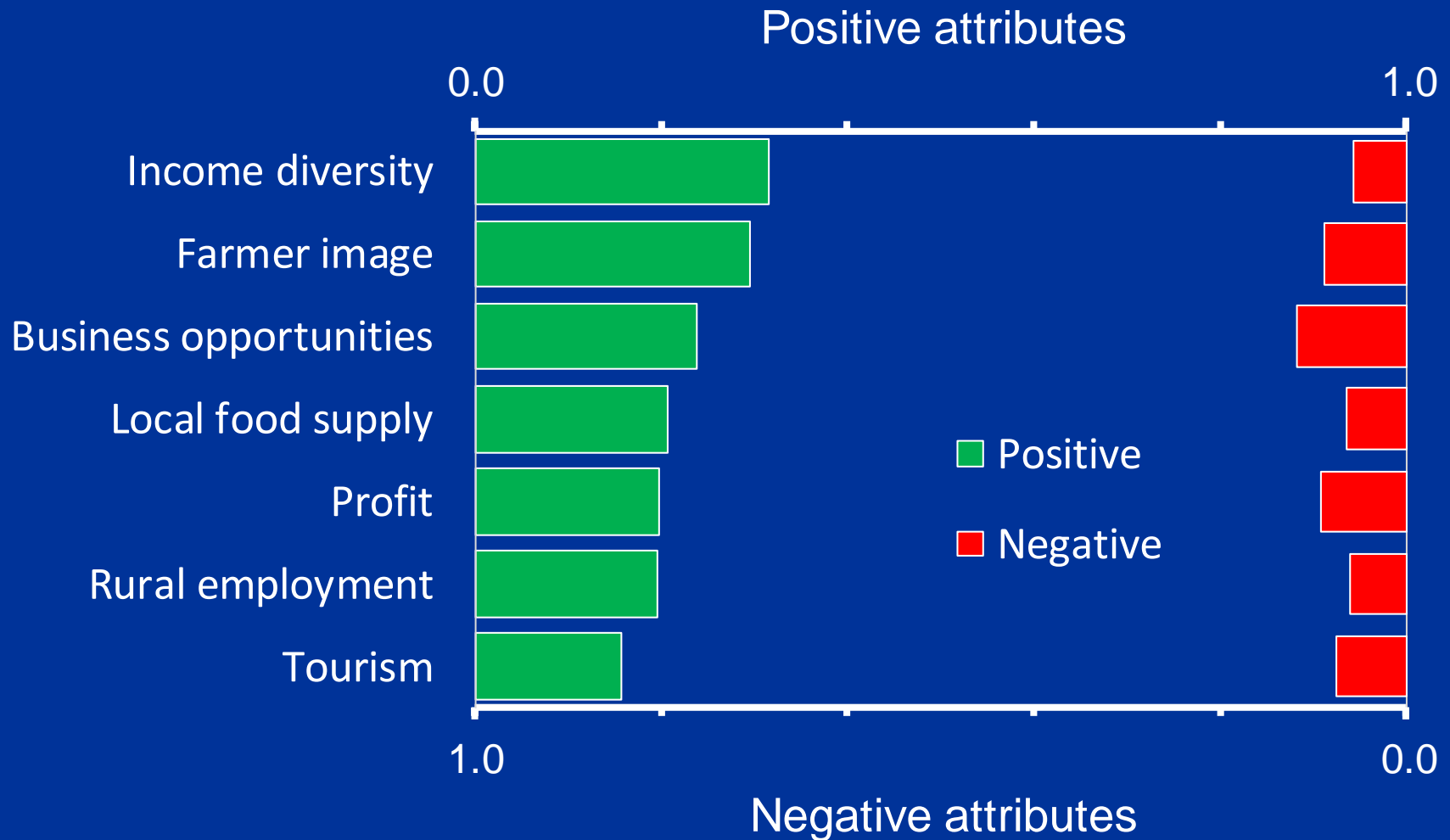
Increasing farm revenue



System	Crop	Land area (%)	Yield (t DM/ total ha)	Value (£/t)	Output (£/ha/yr)
Monocultures	Short rotation coppice (SRC)	100	8.33	60	500
	Organic wheat	100	5.00	270	1350
Agroforestry	SRC	20	3.35	60	201
	Organic wheat	80	5.13	270	1385
					1586

Personal communication, Martin Wolfe, 2017)

Agroforestry can open business opportunities



Responses of 344 stakeholders across 30 stakeholder groups (Garcia de Jalon et al. 2017)

Agroforestry is biodiverse and stores high levels of carbon

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Agroforestry
INNOVATION

Olive trees intercropped with chickpeas


Increasing income from your
olive grove
www.agforward.eu

Why chickpeas?

Chickpeas (*Cicer arietinum* L.) are valued as a high quality food for humans. They are also an excellent source of protein for animal feed. They are easy to cultivate, requiring little management and, in general, have low treatment costs. They have high monetary value, so a farmer can gain considerable additional income from cultivating chickpeas among trees.

One of the important characteristics of chickpeas is their low water demand. This makes them ideal for intercropping with trees of similar water economy in Mediterranean and other dry ecosystems.

Another important feature of chickpeas is the nitrogen they provide to the soil by the symbiotic relationship of their roots with nitrogen fixing bacteria. This benefits the farmer by reducing the need for expensive or nitrogen fertilizers, which also protects the soil and water from nitrogen contamination.




Olive trees intercropped with chickpeas. Ref. A. Pavesi

Where and how to plant

A trial was conducted in Molise, Central Greece, in a 67 year-old olive grove of "Kalamon" and "Amphissou" varieties. Tree spacing between the trees was 10m. The trial looked three treatments with three replications olive trees + chickpeas, olive trees + ongarono and olive trees alone as a control.


A 0.2 ha area was cultivated with chickpeas and a smaller one with ongarono. Another 0.2 ha of the orchards contained olive trees and other tree species and the rest only olive trees. This was used as control. The area where chickpeas were cultivated were 5 m x 80 m wide. A local variety of chickpeas named "Lecapou" was used. This variety was developed by the Hellenic Research Institute and is resistant to fungal infections. The seed quantities were 30 kg/ha. In 2015, crop sowing was delayed until the first week of April due to the wet spring period. Ongarono was sown in spring of 2016. The trial was repeated over three years (2015, 2016 and 2017).

The best timing for sowing is between late February and March for lower altitudes. However, at higher altitudes, it can be sown up to late April.



Olive production was similar in the three plots of olive trees treated with chickpeas, ongarono and olive trees alone. Ref. A. Pavesi

Olive production is expected to be high in the intercropped plots in 2017. Ref. A. Pavesi



Agroforestry INNOVATION

Agroforestry INNOVATION is a project funded by the European Union under the Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme. The project is part of the European Union's efforts to promote sustainable agriculture and rural development.

Benefits of legumes, wild flowers and mulches in tree rows

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Trees and crops: making the most of the space

Managing the tree understorey for increased food production and biodiversity
www.agforward.eu

Why manage the understorey?

In many agroforestry systems, the area between the trees and under the tree canopy is an overlooked and underutilised space. Unmanaged, this can create problems with weed control. This space can be put to productive use through planting crops that are adapted to shady conditions. In addition, when managed correctly, the tree understorey can be a resource for biodiversity, providing a habitat for beneficial insects and a food resource for crop pollinators.

Understorey crop and management options for horticultural agroforestry systems

can include cut flowers, rhubarb and globe artichokes. These are all crops which thrive in the shade and can be sold alongside other products. The understorey can also be sown with wild flowers, with species chosen to attract pollinators and provide habitat for beneficial predators.

Understorey crop options: what works?

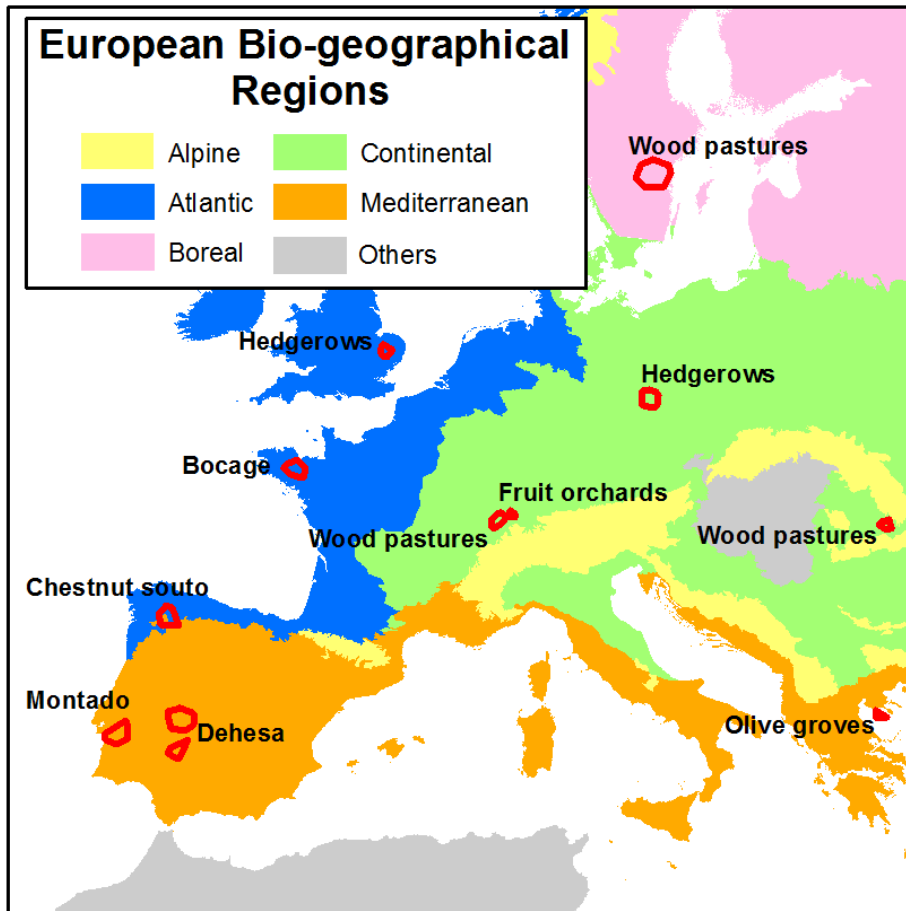
Different approaches to understorey management have been trialled at an organic farm in southern England. The farmer, Iain Tulhust, has planted a mixture of trees for fruit, timber and coppice products in single rows. Tree species are: apples (18 varieties); field maple (*Acer campestre*); white-barked Gorse (*Ulex*); Italian alder (*Alnus cordata*); oak (*Quercus robur*); black birch (*Betula betula*); hornbeam (*Cornus alba*); wild cherry (*Prunus avium*). There are 20 m cropping alleys between where vegetables are grown as part of an organic rotation. The alley width was chosen to fit with the farm irrigation system, and tree rows oriented north/south. The system is still young. Trees were planted into existing ground vegetation in March 2015, and mowing/mulch was applied around each tree to reduce weed competition.

In December 2015, the understorey of two tree rows were planted with daffodil bulbs (*Narcissus* sp.) with groups of 70 bulbs between each tree. In March 2016, rhubarb crowns were planted into another row of 35 crowns in total over the 150m row. The first saleable harvest of a small number of daffodils was in spring 2016, with the first main crop in spring 2017. Full production of rhubarb is expected in 2019. Ten species of cut flowers were sown in modules in spring 2016 and planted out in summer 2016. Globe artichokes grown from seed were planted in another tree row in late summer 2016, with the first crop likely to be in 2018.

The daffodils and the globe artichokes have been planted into rows sown with a dense legume and herb mix for pollinators. In one tree row, the understorey has been left as a long-term battle bark with perennial grasses and tall herbs to provide overwinter habitats for pest predators. Other options for understorey crops are shade-tolerant culinary herb species or species with pharmaceutical properties, such as Melissa.

Daffodils in flower, April 2016. © Iain Tulhust. Photo credit: Iain Tulhust. Rhubarb growing in the understorey, April 2016. © Iain Tulhust. Photo credit: Iain Tulhust.

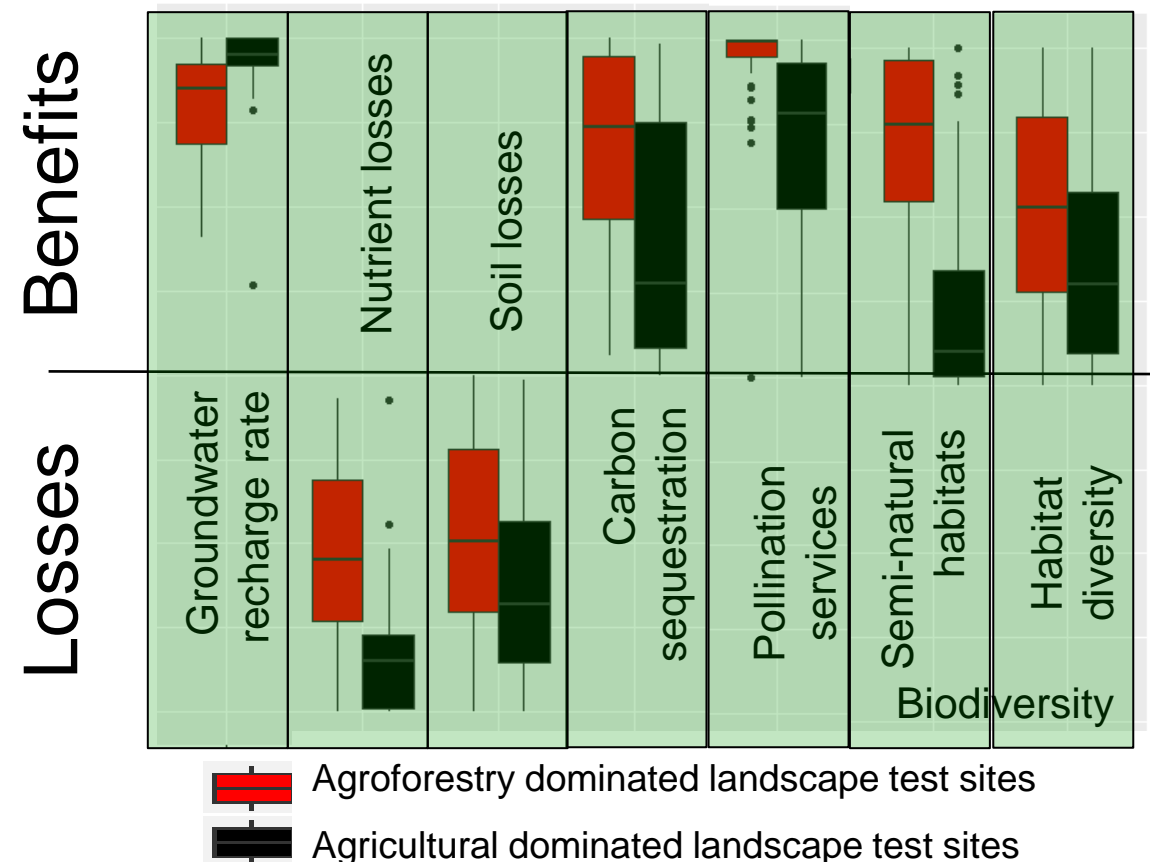
Modelling ecosystem services for landscapes with and without agroforestry



Ecosystem services modelled:

- Crop biomass yield
- Groundwater recharge rate
- Nutrient retention
- Soil conservation
- Carbon sequestration
- Biodiversity
 - Functional biodiversity (Pollination)
 - Habitat diversity

Comparison of agroforestry and agricultural landscapes across 12 sites



Agroforestry landscapes

Higher:

- Nutrient retention
- C sequestration
- Soil conservation
- Pollination services
- Proportions of semi-natural habitats

Lower:

- Groundwater recharge

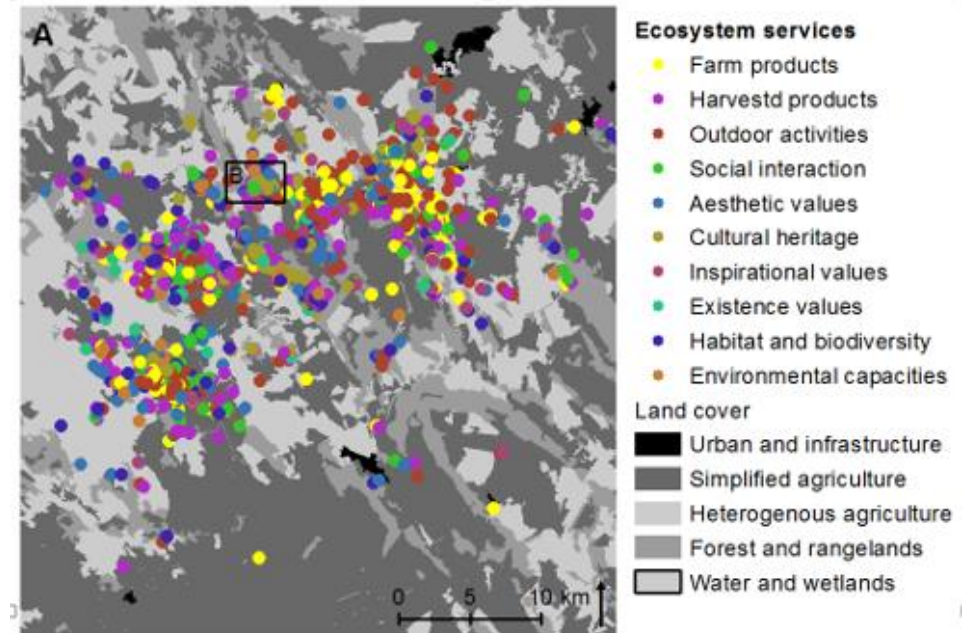
Public preference for mosaic landscapes



13 study sites in 10 countries
2300 respondents
28,878 locations of ecosystem
services

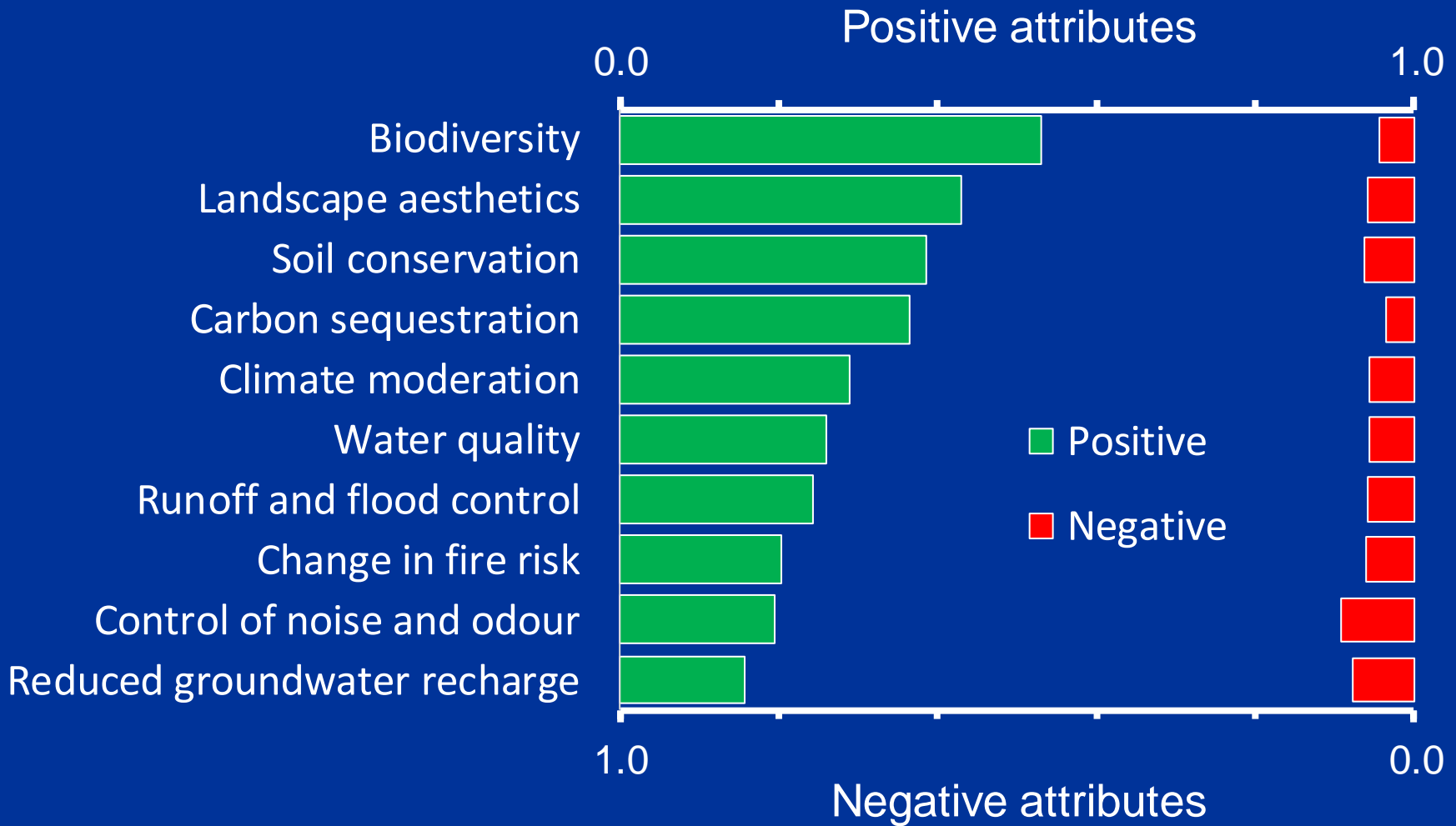


Plieninger et al (Submitted)



Public Participation GIS showed that mosaic landscapes
(Sum and diversity of services increase with landscape richness)

Agroforestry increases environmental resilience



Responses of 344 stakeholders across 30 stakeholder groups (Garcia de Jalon et al. 2017)

$$1 + 1 = 3$$

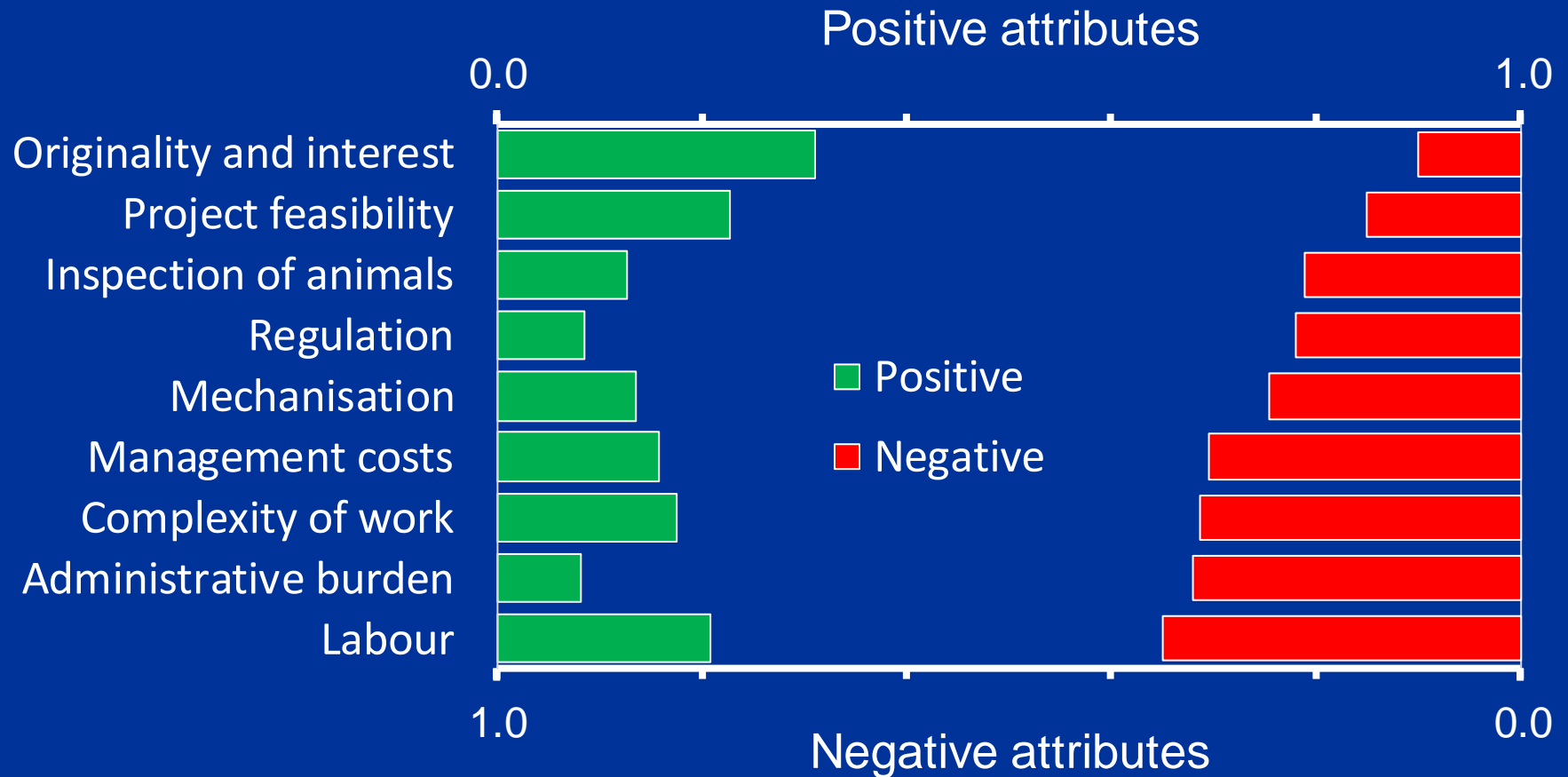


Agroforestry delivers:

1. Production and animal welfare benefits
2. Business opportunities
3. Environmental benefits

But.....

Farmers indicate that agroforestry has labour and administrative costs



Responses of 344 stakeholders across 30 stakeholder groups (Garcia de Jalon et al. 2017)

Farmers with vision



Agroforestry in Europe:

1. More important than you think
2. Production and societal benefits such as improved animal welfare, diversified income, greater resource efficiency, increased carbon storage and biodiversity and enhanced soil conservation
3. Is undertaken by farmers with vision

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