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Contact Office for European Research
Innovation and Education

Mission of Switzerland to the European Union

Swiss Science Briefing

Agroecological approaches in times of fertiliser crisis

Evidence from Swiss-EU collaboration in the Global South

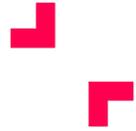


31 May 2023 – 17:15

Mission of Switzerland to the EU - Place du Luxembourg 1, 1050 Brussels

FiBL **50** JAHRE
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Event Summary



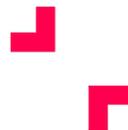
In the context of the 50th anniversary of the [Research Institute of Organic Agriculture](#) (FiBL) in Switzerland, this Science Briefing aims to discuss how Swiss-European scientific research and development activities contribute to resilient food systems in the Global South.

Climate change and over-exploitation of planetary resources are threats to the stability of the global food system. At the EU level, the European framework programmes for research and innovation address these challenges to reach the goals established in the European [Green Deal](#) and dedicated policy initiatives, such as the [Farm to Fork Strategy](#) and the [Food 2030 policy framework](#).

The event will focus on FiBL's contribution to European research through two different projects covering more than 20 countries in Africa, Europe, India and Bolivia. [SustainSahel](#) is a Horizon 2020-funded project involving 17 partners from 9 countries from the European and African continents to systematically integrate crops, shrubs and livestock in the Sahel. [SysCom](#) is a project mainly funded by the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) and focuses on three countries (Bolivia, India, Kenya), comparing organic and conventional farming systems in long-term trials for over 15 years. Both projects aim to promote practices to enhance soil quality and yields, build resilience towards climate change, and contribute to food security and better livelihoods. In light of the recent synthetic fertiliser affordability crises, the solutions researched and promoted by these projects have become more critical.

FiBL has a long-term strategy for African food systems and is working to improve the resilience of smallholder agricultural farming systems to climate change and their intensification potential through scalable innovations. Crop–shrub/tree–livestock (CSL) integration in SustainSahel and the systemic comparative approach to organic and conventional agriculture in SysCom contribute to greater productivity and farmers' income.

FiBL Switzerland was founded in 1973 and is one of the world's leading research and information centres for organic agriculture. Currently, it has locations in Switzerland, Germany, Austria, France, and Belgium. It is involved in numerous international projects in research, consultancy and training and development cooperation.



From 16:45	Registration
17:15	Welcome Alexander Renggli Deputy Head of the Mission of Switzerland to the EU
17:25	50 years of FiBL Switzerland: a differentiated approach to sustainable research for organic agriculture Beate Huber Director of Corporate Culture and Head of Department of International Cooperation, FiBL Harun Cicek Deputy Leader of the Group Resilient Cropping Systems, FiBL
17:50	Agroecology, a more viable, resilient, and ecologically sound alternative to conventional farming Johanna Jacobi Professor at ETH Zurich Moderated by Sarah Bühler, SwissCore
18:10	Panel discussion with the perspectives from: Johanna Jacobi Professor at ETH Zurich Georg Cadisch Professor at the University of Hohenheim Eva Schlecht Professor at the University of Kassel Guy Faure Senior Policy Officer at DG INTPA, European Commission Moderated by Irene Kadzere, FiBL
19:10	Networking Apéro

Speakers

Beate Huber, Director of Corporate Culture and Head of Department International Cooperation, Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), Switzerland

Beate Huber, Dipl.-Ing. agr. (FH), and her team promote sustainable agricultural and marketing systems in developing and transitional countries to improve poor rural households' well-being and increase access to good-quality, fairly-priced food. She led various research and market development projects, including the long-term systems comparison trials in the tropics (SysCom) and was involved in various EU research projects.

Johanna Jacobi, Assistant Professor for Agroecological Transitions, ETH Zürich, Switzerland

Prof. Dr. Johanna Jacobi leads the Agroecological Transitions research group at ETH Zürich, with the support of a granted fellowship of the Swiss National Science Foundation's [Eccellenza](#) programme. She studied Geography, Biology and Social Anthropology. For her PhD studies at the University of Bern, she conducted research together with the cooperative El Ceibo on the resilience of cocoa farms in Bolivia to climate change. After a postdoctoral project at the University of California, Berkeley on agroforestry, she lived and worked in Bolivia for six years, doing research on food system resilience and sustainability in Latin America and Africa. Her research focuses on agroecology as a transformative science, a practice and a social movement, and on power relations in food systems with approaches and methods from political ecology.

Harun Cicek, Deputy leader of the Group Resilient Cropping Systems, Department of International Cooperation, Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), Switzerland

Dr. Harun Cicek is a Farming Systems Agronomist at the Department of International Cooperation at the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) in Switzerland. He is leading EU-funded research and development projects in West Africa and the Mediterranean region, collaborating with more than 40 institutions. His main research areas are food system's resilience to climate, livelihoods and soil health.

Georg Cadisch, Professor, University of Hohenheim, Stuttgart, Germany

Prof. Dr. Georg Cadisch is currently Professor at the department of Plant Production in the Tropics & Subtropics at the Institute of Agricultural Sciences in the Tropics (Hans-Ruthenberg-Institute), University of Hohenheim, Stuttgart, Germany. His main research interests are the sustainability and resilience of tropical farming systems under climate and land use change. A special focus has been on improving natural nutrient cycling processes (N₂ fixation, biological nitrification inhibition, soil carbon sequestration, soil fertility) and designing integrated agricultural production systems (intercropping, agroforestry). The development of soil quality monitoring tools (infrared spectroscopy, stable isotopes) and integrated dynamic land use change impact modelling approaches coupled with animal and socio-economic (multi-agent) models are his main research approaches. He has experiences in Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Colombia, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, Philippines, Senegal, Southern China, Thailand, Uganda, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe.

Speakers

Eva Schlecht, Professor, University of Kassel and the University of Göttingen, Germany

Prof. Dr. Eva Schlecht holds the professorship for Animal Husbandry in the Tropics and Subtropics, jointly established by the University of Kassel and the University of Göttingen, Germany. She has over 30 years of research experience in sub-Saharan Africa, the Near East and Asia. The research of her group, which currently comprises seven PhD and postdoctoral scientists, addresses rangeland management, ruminant nutrition and livestock-mediated nutrient cycles as well as urban dairy farming systems in rural and urban contexts. A current focus of her work lies on the potential of browse fodder to bridge the protein gap in dry season ruminant nutrition and to reduce enteric methane emissions.

Guy Faure, Senior Policy Officer at DG INTPA, European Commission

Dr. Guy Faure is posted at the European Commission (DG INTPA) as an expert supporting EU research and innovation programs such as the DeSIRA initiative ([Capacity4dev | Connecting the Development Community \(europa.eu\)](#)) and participating in policy dialogue (UN FSS, One CGIAR, etc.). Previously he worked at CIRAD as director of a research unit "innovation and development" leading research on advisory services, innovation support services and impact of research with the perspective to contribute to the agroecological transition of food systems.

Panel moderation

Irene Kadzere, Senior Scientist at the Department of International Cooperation, Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), Switzerland

Dr. Irene Kadzere is currently a Senior Scientist at the Department of International Cooperation, Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), main research interests are sustainable food security and linking production to consumption and human health in smallholder farming setups. She is also working on linking research and practice for enhanced capacity development. She has coordinated collaborative projects such as [ProEcoAfrica](#) and OFSA and contributed to the development of many training materials, some of which are based on research findings. She has experience working in the government (Zimbabwe), CGIAR (World Agroforestry Centre), UN (FAO) and NGO settings, and has worked in several countries in Southern Africa, East Africa and West Africa.

Project funders



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