Conclusion of the study

Clarification of the **definition of agroecology** as a broad holistic concept is a clear requirement in the **BIOEAST** macro-region. **Multi-stakeholder, transdisciplinary networks** are needed to advance agroecological transition which requires both **policy and financial support** from higher levels as well **as motivation from farmers** to change practice.

As for assessing agroecology in **BIOEAST** macro-region, **a completely new indicator tool is not necessary**. There are plenty of tools which can be used to measure agroecology in practice, although **improvement, contextualization and adaption** must be completed, coupled with testing and demonstrative applications.

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The study will contribute to the **BIOEAST Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda** (SRIA) being developed in 2022.

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Read the full study on the **BIOEAST** website

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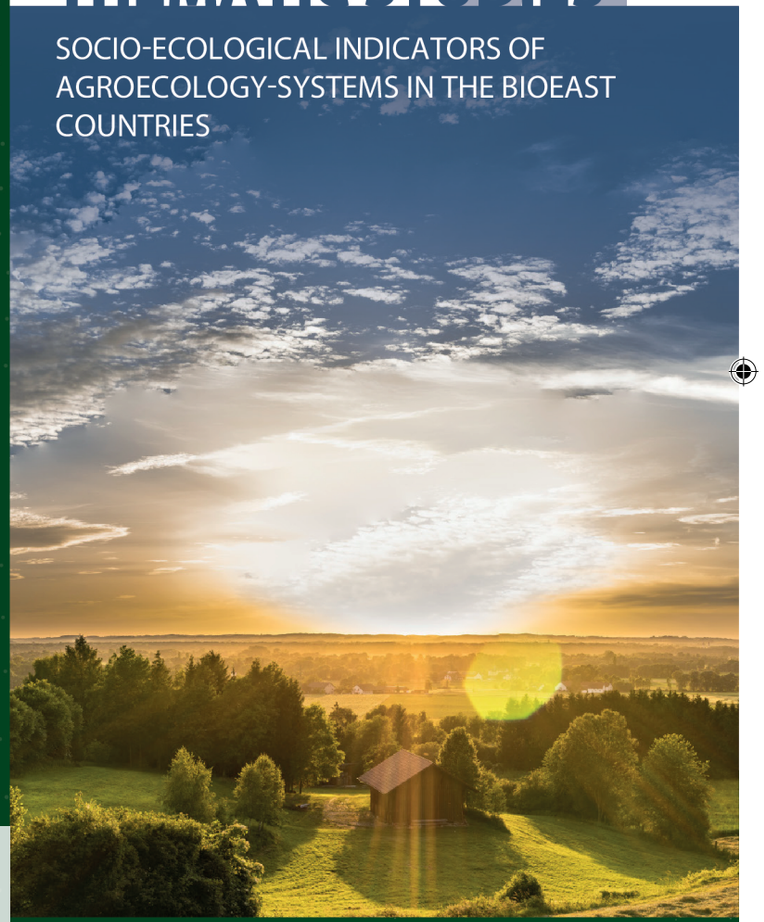
BIOEAST #1 THEMATIC STUDIES

SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL INDICATORS OF AGROECOLOGY-SYSTEMS IN THE BIOEAST COUNTRIES



What is the study about?

The study presents a comparative situational analysis of the state of agroecology in the **BIOEAST** countries and the general focus is to gain a better understanding of necessary conditions for upscaling the adoption of agroecological practices in the macro-region. The study provides an overview of already existing **assessment tools** for inspiration and guidance for future developments of specific tools for measuring agroecology holistically. The tools are evaluated based on their relevance for the **BIOEAST** countries. By determining the most important barriers for agroecological transition in the **BIOEAST** countries and also identifying gaps/weaker areas of the existing indicator sets, the study provides **supplementary indicators** specifically tailored to reflect on identified challenges in **BIOEAST** countries. The refinement of assessment tools will **help quide descision makers and stakeholders** of the agri-food system in implementing transitions toward agroecology. The recommendations of the study take into account the necessity for transition from chemical dependent, monoculture based agriculture systems to more regenerative, diverse and socially inclusive models proposed by agroecology and the continuing importance of providing support for transforming conventional agriculture.

Recommended assessment tools to measure agroecology at farm and food system levels

SAFA (Sustainability Assessment of Food and Agriculture systems) developed by FAO can be used as an overall sustainability framework. **SMART** (Sustainability Monitoring and Assessment RouTine) and **OASIS** (Original Agroecological Survey Indicator Tool) assessment tools are a good option to assess full-scope sustainability at farm level. For the food chain level, **Pathfinder** is the best available tool and can be further developed by **SAT** (Terrirotial Food Systems) and contextualized with national/local food chain standards.

> *Contrary to technology intensive conventional agriculture, practices of agroecology are knowledge intensive and context specific, therefore local innovation and the sharing of knowledge among stakeholders is of key importance.*

Proposed supplementary indicators for advancing agroecology in BIOEAST

Farm level

- Reason for commitment to apply agroecological practices
- Willingness of innovation in on-farm practices
- Diversification patterns present on the farm
- Seed saving and use of heirloom varieties
- Self-sufficiency
- Economic viability
- On-farm social innovations
- Cooperation among farmers
- Participation in independent farmers collective/association
- Landscape scale projects
- Impact/integration of the farm to the local community
- Conservation of traditional farming methods
- Access to technologies, knowledge and information
- Life quality

Food system level

- Multisectoral cooperation among stakeholders
- Short supply chains
- Food sovereignty

Policy level

- National level self-suffiecieny production optimum
- Existence of national food sovereignty forums
- Policies supporting the conservation of traditional agri landscapes and promoting agroecology
- Empowerment of local youth
- Access to land
- Change in territorial land use and farm structure
- Peer-to peer networks
- Research and education
- Awareness raising campaings
- Participation on internationl agroecological movements