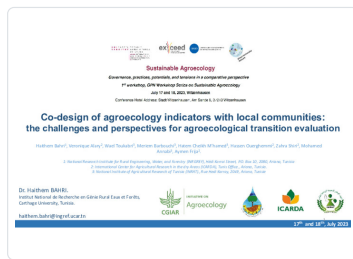


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# Co-design of Agroecology Indicators with local communities: The Challenges and Perspectives for Agroecological Transition Evaluation



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Haithem Bahri, Veronique Alary, Wael Toukebri, Meriem Barbouchi, Hatem Cheikh M'hamed, Hassen Ouerghemmi, Zahra Shiri, Mohamed Annabi, Aymen Frija. (18/7/2023). Co-design of Agroecology Indicators with local communities: The Challenges and Perspectives for Agroecological Transition Evaluation. Tunis, Tunisia: National Research Institute of Rural Engineering, Water and Forest (INRGREF).

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## Résumé

Agroecology is a farming approach which embrace a set of ecological principles, practices, and local knowledge generation to boost the resilience and adaptation of sustainable food systems. However, a transition towards agroecology food system is also not an easy task and involves the piloting of a set of very complex practices, tools, arrangements, and policies combined with behavioral changes and sustainable financing business models. This complexity and diversity of agroecology transition pathways is not easily captured using conventional productivity and sustainability indicators given that the 13 principles of agroecological transition need to be very contextualized and co-designed based on local priorities and on the agreed transition objectives across food system actors involved in this process. In the framework of the CGIAR Agroecology initiative, a consortium of research and development partners are coming together in semi-arid Tunisia to support agroecological transition in cereal-based, olive, and agroforestry systems. This initiative was setting some participatory interventions to stimulate the development and piloting of an agroecological transition pathways in these three farming systems. Once this is done, the impact assessment of the implementation of these transition pathways was then a key aspect to think about. That's also where the initiative team starts to co-develop very contextualized indicators of impact which fit to the local priorities and hotspots of biophysical and social degradation aspects. In another term, agroecology transition pathways are very contextualized at the landscape level, and thus need to also be monitored based on key contextual indicators. In our case, Northwest Tunisia, soil degradation was identified as one of the main (biophysical) threats and was thus considered as a main attribute for locally-designed indicators development. Participatory sessions were organised with few communities and other local stakeholders to co-construct soil relevant indicators which can be measured through different levels of simplicity (only observation) and/or complexity (remote sensing, sampling for lab, etc.). Results suggest that in all of the surveyed regions, farmers' perceptions of soil health were found to be "holistic," with some exceptions, as they included factors that influenced the soils and crop yields in their fields (Soil health indicators vs soil health outcomes). Farmers' knowledge and perceptions about soil health indicators also influences their soil management decisions. Overall, we conclude that linking a participatory (co-designed) agroecological transition pathway with locally adapted and relevant indicators and metrics is a possible but risky process. Risks are mostly related to the biases that can be induced by oversimplifying the process (leading to superficial and non-relevant indicators), lack of harmony and coordination between both processes of pathways establishment and indicators construction (leading to indicators which are not necessarily reflecting the progress on the transition pathway activities), and to the complexity of packaging simplistic (observable indicators which are relevant to all stakeholders including farmers) and more scientific-oriented ones which needs accurate data collection and ground truthing. This communication occurred during the 'sustainable agroecology: governance, practices, potentials, and tensions in a comparative perspective' workshop in Kassel, Germany, as part of the "Agriculture, Ecology and Societies program" initiative and the DAAD-funded Global Partnership Network of University of Kassel, as well as the DAAD-funded AURORA (Sustainable Agriculture and social-ecological systems approaches in higher education in the MENA region) project, which aims to map sustainable agroecology in diverse social-ecological, historical and geo-political contexts

## Fichiers

[Presentation \(8.98 MB, pdf\)](#)

## Auteurs

[Bahri, Haithem](#)  
[Alary, Veronique](#)  
[Toukebri, Wael](#)  
[Barbouchi, Meriem](#)  
[M'hamed, Hatem Cheikh](#)  
[Ouerghemmi, Hassen](#)  
[Shiri, Zahra](#)  
[Annabi, Mohamed](#)  
[Frija, Aymen](#)

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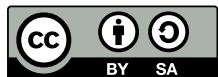
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### Author ORCID identifiers

Veronique Alary  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4844-5423>

Aymen Frija  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8379-9054>

Hassen Ouerghemmi  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7026-5256>

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