

Overview of the workshops at the IFSA 2010

For a detailed description of the workshops as well as a list of the abstracts that will be presented at each workshop, please refer to the website: www.ifsa-europe.org

Theme 1: Knowledge systems, Learning and Collective action



Workshop 1.1: Innovation and change facilitation for rural development

Convenors: **Artur Cristóvão** and **Alex Koutsouris**

This workshop intends to be a space to continue the debates held in Clermont Ferrand in 2008, in the Workshop on "Knowledge systems and Extension approaches". In 2010 we would like to challenge the participants to explore such concepts as "ethical collective action" and "rural action learning", as well as the importance of social capital issues in innovation and change processes.

Workshop 1.2: Care Farming: Challenges in innovations across the domains of agriculture and social care

Convenors: **Dorit Haubehofer**, **Marjolein Elings** and **Jan Hassink**

There is a lot of evidence that the agricultural environment and the agricultural practice have a positive effect on a person's well-being or stimulate recovery from disease. In "Care Farming", farms and their surrounding landscapes are used to promote mental, physical and social health and well-being, through activities done on these farms. The workshop aims at discussing what care farming is, and how it influences its stakeholders (farmers, clients, society).

Workshop 1.3: Reaching the unreached

Convenor: **Huub Kerckhoffs**

Many rural stakeholders, especially in developing countries, are located in remote areas, with limited access to technologies and communication, making it difficult to reach out to the unreached, especially the rural poor. However, the participation and active involvement of all rural stakeholders in strategy formulation can ensure targeted rural development policies and high impact technological advances. This workshop discusses the various challenges and approaches to reach out to the rural poor, allowing to network with them for a better future and for better designed pro-poor developmental endeavours.

Workshop 1.4: Design methods, system approaches and co-innovation

Convenors: **Bram Bos** and **Onno van Eijk**

System approaches to developing sustainable farming systems cannot be met by focusing on one issue at a time. Heterogeneous challenges like the future of the countryside, animal welfare, or environmental concerns cannot be reconciled easily. In this workshop, we want to discuss theoretical, methodological and practical approaches to the design of sustainable farming systems. We will discuss the relation between design processes and actual processes of change.

Workshop 1.5: Transdisciplinarity as a framework for integrating science and stakeholders' perspectives into development processes

Convenors: **Bernhard Freyer, Katharina Gössinger and Sebastian Helgenberger**

Disciplinarity, multi- and transdisciplinarity offer different perspectives to describe, understand and interpret problems and to identify solutions for the challenges of 21st century. The scientific discussion offers a series of definitions of transdisciplinary research. We welcome contributions discussing different theoretical concepts of transdisciplinarity, as well as presentations of empirical findings of transdisciplinary studies related to rural development and (organic) agriculture.

Workshop 1.6: Learning from and with local experts

Convenors: **Brigitte Kaufmann, Christian Hülsebusch and Ton Baars**

Transdisciplinary research on human-environment systems (e.g. agriculture, forestry, land management) takes into account that finding solutions to problems requires the involvement of local stakeholders in the research process. In this workshop we are interested in the theoretical framework and the methods for exploring the knowledge of land users who manage successful systems. We will put an emphasis on low external input systems and on organic farming. Our focus lies on land users' actions, and the information processing on which they base their actions.

Workshop 1.7: Virtual realities and The future of distance learning in rural areas

Convenors: **Kirsten von der Heiden and Monica Commandeur**

Distance learning can be a tool for learning empowerment. Societal and technical structures need to be adapted to achieve equal opportunities, access and usability for a wide range of learners. In this workshop we will discuss both technical and didactical issues related to distance learning for stakeholders in rural areas. At the same time, YouTube, FoodTube, Twitter, MyAlbum, Facebook, etc. take an increasingly dominant role in the internet and in people's minds. This workshop will be a platform to show and discuss visual material from (or for) the internet.

Workshop 1.8: Knowledge systems, innovations and social learning in organic farming

Convenors: **Lisa Aigelsperger, Susanne Kummer, Rebecka Milestad, Christian Vogl and Ataharul Chowdhury**

Organic farming needs the context-specific adaptation of its practices by local actors. It is therefore tightly linked to a process of trial-and-error by organic farmers and consumers, i.e. the outcome of their innovations. In this workshop, we want to explore key processes within organic farming knowledge systems: social learning, farmers' experiments, knowledge transmission, innovation. In particular, we want to better understand the relevance of these aspects for the design of resilient farming systems.

Theme 2: **Transition, Resilience and Adaptive management**



Workshop 2.1: Methods and procedures for building sustainable farming systems

Convenors: **Ana Alexandra Marta-Costa** and **Emiliana L. Soares da Silva**

Farming systems are faced with a double (and often contradictory) challenge to be successful: economic performance has to be maximised while environment and natural resources need to be protected. When choosing the best alternative, the method of evaluation plays a key role. In this workshop we want to discuss various methods used to build sustainable farming systems, especially regarding their efficiency and their results.

Workshop 2.2: Narratives of interdisciplinary studies of farm system sustainability

Convenors: **Lesley Hunt** and **John Fairweather**

This workshop offers a space for those in interdisciplinary and/or transdisciplinary research programmes to present their programmes as narratives. The narrative can cover the beginning, present and future directions of a programme, funding and stakeholders, programme structure, experiences of researchers, key findings so far, relevance to stakeholders and future sustainability, and advantages of being transdisciplinary.

Workshop 2.3: Family farming under pressure. Reassessing options for liveability and permanence

Convenors: **Catherine Macombe**, **Sophie Madelrieux**, **Benoît Dedieu** and **Hans Langeveld**

Like the remainder of society, farming systems are going through a period of shifts and transitions. In this workshop we would like to address the social impacts of these shifts. Liveability can be defined as the characteristics of the systems, which satisfy farmers' expectations about farming, about his or her relations with family and other activities. Building sustainable future of rural areas requires improving the sustainability of farming systems, and more specifically their liveability.

Workshop 2.4: Farming's relation to unconscious systems: Pictures, images and symbols for (non-) sustainable futures

Convenors: **Otto Schmid**, **Nikola Patzel**, **Thomas Lindenthal** and **Flurina Schneider**

The importance of unconscious inner images and beliefs for human behaviour is well known, but until now it has been neglected in agricultural sciences. Pictures, images and symbols are commonly used in marketing but are rarely explored as a source of orientation in transitions towards sustainable futures or in strategic planning by farmers, advisors and researchers. In this workshop, we will look at relations to unconscious systems in agriculture, and explore new or old symbols expressing desirable future pathways for agriculture or showing value conflicts.

Workshop 2.5: Adaptive management in subsistence agriculture

Convenor: **Christine Buchmann**

Subsistence farmers often face difficult conditions involving risks and uncertainties. To cope with the impact of hazards and to create long-term resilience to adverse conditions, farmers continuously adapt their lifestyles and practices. The workshop will focus on the interconnectedness of subsistence agriculture's different aspects. Through the discussion among young interdisciplinary scientists (e.g. ethnobotanists), the workshop will identify common challenges that farmers face across the continents, as well as reveal adaptation and learning cycles.

Theme 3: Energy production, CO₂ sink and Climate change



Workshop 3.1: Climate change: Agriculture, food security and human health

Convenors: **Samsul Huda, Mel Taylor and Jo Luck**

This workshop session aims to address the impact of climate variability and climate change on food and health security through improved agricultural production, understanding plant and animal biosecurity issues, and promoting sustainable farming systems approach. We will address future challenges and suggests ways to maximise opportunities. Fostering and strengthening linkages across relevant disciplines and engaging community could facilitate such cross-cutting collaborative process.

Workshop 3.2: Addressing climate change in the food chain: How can science make an actual change in practice?

Convenors: **Emiel Elferink and Gijs Kuneman**

Climate change continues while actors like farmers, industry and consumers search for ways to reduce emissions – or decide not to, because they do not know how. The current challenge for science is to reach these actors and policy makers, handing them both facts and solutions. This challenge is the subject of this workshop. We invite contributions addressing the challenge to translate scientific knowledge into practical instruments, data-sets and methods of knowledge dissemination.

Workshop 3.3: Sustainable biofuel production in developing countries: "Green" energy as the key for development?

Convenors: **Harry Hoffmann and Götz Uckert**

The idea to produce energy from organic materials such as energy plants, animal fats or municipal waste has become increasingly attractive. Particularly in developing countries, they can offer job opportunities, decentralized electricity production, new income generation for farmers and mitigation of greenhouse gases. However, biofuel production can also cause major disturbances in the local socio-economic and ecological systems. The workshop will cover the different aspects of biofuel production, both for local consumption and for export.

Workshop 3.4: Promoting the discovery of alternative futures by reframing climate change communication

Convenors: **Nadarajah Sriskandarajah and Tarla Rai Peterson**

While recognizing that climate change is a complex biophysical process, this session will focus on climate change as a political issue. We will explore how framing the climate change discussion with a systemic perspective may contribute to a more sustainable set of agricultural policies that shape farming's contributions to climate change mitigation, biodiversity conservation, and cultural heritage as allied, rather than antagonistic, goals.

Theme 4: Sustainable food systems



Workshop 4.1: Mountain food products: A special system of provision

Convenors: **Markus Schermer, Cesar Revoredo-Giha and Andreja Borec**

This workshop is aimed at researchers who are interested in issues of mountain quality food products as a means to support rural development and agriculture in disadvantaged mountainous areas. One part of the workshop will consist of the presentation and discussion of results of the project EuroMARC: European Mountain Agrofood products, Retailing and Consumers. But we would also like to invite contributions from other researchers and scholars working on the specific issues of mountain food products and their impact on the future development of mountain areas.

Workshop 4.2: Localised and sustainable agri-food systems in times of rural changes

Convenors: **Paulina Rytkönen, Encarnation Aguilar and Theodosia Anthopoulou**

A reaction to agri-food globalization and liberalization is the emergence of strong localized production systems characterized by local and regional identities. Indeed, food markets have become differentiated on the basis of socially constructed quality criteria, embedded in local, cultural, and safety aspects. The aim of the workshop is to discuss ongoing research on Localized Agri-food Systems (SAL/SYAL), focusing on how these systems can contribute to the emergence of a new paradigm of socio-economic dynamic and territorial sustainability.

Workshop 4.3: Fair and regional: New trends in organic and sustainable food systems

Convenors: **Martina Schäfer and Susanne Padel**

Confronted with anonymous trade structures due to market growth, demands for transparency for consumers and fair relations between the partners of the food chain are becoming important. In the organic food chain, commitments beyond the organic regulations, i.e. the creation of an 'organic plus' approach, are discussed. The workshop wants to provide an opportunity to discuss the role of these activities and of new labelling initiatives, and share the research experiences across different levels and in different countries.

Workshop 4.4: Transitions towards sustainable agriculture: From farmers to agro-food systems

Convenors: **Claire Lamine and Egon Noe**

A transition toward sustainable agriculture involves a transition of the whole socio-technical agro-food system. This agro-food system involves not only the farming systems and related input and output chains but also the research, the extension sector, the regulations and even the civil society. The aim of this workshop is to identify the conditions and processes that are needed for the adoption of sustainable low-input practices at various levels of the food chain.

Workshop 4.5: Animal welfare: Education - Labelling - Action

Convenor: **Ulrike Nuck and Erik Schmid**

There is an urgent need for more information and education on animal production systems. Indeed, only if consumers are well informed, is it possible for welfare labelling, as proposed in the „Animal Welfare Action Plan 2006-2010“, to be effective. Ultimately, a labelling system conveying the “fairness-quality” of a product should be created. Such a label should be based on indicators for animal welfare, fair price, food miles, etc. In this workshop, we will discuss approaches to combine animal welfare and product labelling. We are especially interested in projects that educate the public (children as well as adults).

Theme 5: Landscape and Rural land use



Workshop 5.1: Designing sustainable landscapes

Convenor: **Derk Jan Stobbelaar**

In rural areas farms are the main elements in the landscape, hence the features of the farm are very important for the quality of the regional landscape. The layout of the farm is a product of a more or less conscious design process. In sustainable landscapes ecology, economy and well-being are balanced and strengthen each other. To be able to continually work on sustainability, explicit trade offs should be made in cases that this functions are not strengthening each other. The aim of the workshop is to explore ways to make sustainable farm-landscape designs.

Workshop 5.2: Landscape and tourism: New models and practices for the relation with the rural world

Convenor: **Álvaro Campelo**

The main objective of this workshop is to question meanings and reasons with which people look at the rural landscape. There are large differences based on the relationship of the people with the landscape, e.g. between inhabitants and tourists. For a strategy of sustainable tourism in agrarian space it is very important to conciliate these two relations with the rural space, and including this relation when designing tourist projects. The workshop welcomes both theoretical contributions as well as cases that allow to contextualise the theoretical discussion.

Workshop 5.3: Systems approach in technology-oriented farming system design

Convenors: **Shi-ming Luo, Peter Carberry, Helena Gómez Macpherson, Wei-li Liang and Santiago Lopez-Ridaura**

Scientists have often been embarrassed when being asked questions like: Why is Conservation Agriculture (CA) so good but so few farmers practice it? Why are there so many techniques available, yet so many people still suffer from hunger and poverty? To answer these kinds of questions might not be difficult for scientists, but to solve the problems in practice remains a challenge. The objective of this workshop is to explore trans-disciplinary 'principles' and multi-scale, multi-dimensional approaches for designing adaptive technologies in a farming system.

Workshop 5.4: Education in landscape and territory agronomy

Convenors: **Sylvie Lardon, Salma Loudiyi, Camilla Moonen and Mariassunta Galli**

The aim of this session is to strengthen the Network on Education in Landscape Agronomy which was initiated at the IFSA 2008 Symposium. The interactive session will start with a reflection on the state of education on Landscape and Territory Agronomy in university systems and curricula. Then, we will focus on the special topic of periurban agriculture in research and action projects.