



Land property and Environmental contracts in agriculture

Contacts

Romain Melot

romain.melot@inrae.fr

Guillaume Pain

g.pain@groupe-esa.com

Keywords

Contract
Property
Land
Environment
Agriculture

Thematics involved

Sociology
Geography
Law
Economics
Ecology

Departments involved

[ACT](#)
[AgroEcoSystem](#)
[BAP](#)
[ECODIV](#)

Units involved

[UMR SADAPT](#)
[UMR BAGAP](#)
[UMR Innovation](#)
[UMR Agroécologie](#)
[UMR SMART](#)

Partners

[Fédération des conservatoires d'espaces naturels](#) (Federation of conservatories of natural areas)

Backgrounds and challenges

Public environmental policies are taking the form of increasingly diverse and sophisticated contractualisation tools, most of which have a direct or indirect impact on land ownership rights, which need to be documented empirically, with particular emphasis on practices that have an impact on farming. The empirical research carried out on these forms of contractualisation all point to both the flexibility of these legal practices and the fact that their long-term survival depends on specific land management and a solid diagnosis of the specifications.



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Objectives

The aim of our project is to study how land ownership shapes environmental contractual practices and to propose a reflective analysis of environmental clauses and specifications insofar as they impact on the rights of the landowner, as the main manager (owner-operator or non-farming owner of natural areas that are not used for farming) or as the farm tenant (holder of a rural lease or other rental agreement, such as a precarious agreement in urban areas or a grazing agreement in pastoral areas). The project is based on the observation that contractual practices affecting landowners, both public and especially private, are still insufficiently documented. What motivates these stakeholders to adhere to voluntary practices? Does the status of owner-operator influence specific choices made by farmers (bearing in mind that the same farmer may be in a situation of direct tenure on some plots and tenancy on others)? How are rights holders governed when the owner is a legal entity (agricultural company, landowner association or syndicate)?

Approaches

Our aim is to assess the construction of the specifications and the variability of the contractual terms identified through case studies, looking at the assumptions that guide their adoption, the inflexions experienced in the negotiation process and their expected impact on natural environments and the multifunctionality of landscapes. From a social science perspective, we are interested in the profile of the landowners involved, the multi-actor governance of the contractual arrangements and the geographical characteristics of the areas concerned. From an agronomic and ecological perspective, we are looking at the way in which the specifications are drawn up, taking into account the interest for biodiversity at the territorial level, the impact on other services (climate, for example), the changes in agricultural practices recommended, the type of objects impacted (ecological infrastructures, wetlands) from a landscape ecology perspective, animal management (restrictions on access to certain plots, impact of mowing practices). Our project aims to mobilise qualitative approaches (semi-directive interviews) and quantitative approaches (analyses of the structure of land ownership in key areas). One of the aims of the project will also be to explore initiatives in this area at European level.