

An Agroecological Vietnam by 2045

Position Paper

October 2023

AGROECOLOGY

Agroecology is a science, a practice and a social movement that applies ecological and justice principles to the design and management of sustainable and fair food systems.

TOC WORKSHOP IN VIETNAM

- 👉 Date: 12-13 October 2022
- 👉 38 participants, including 21 women
- 👉 22 organisations participating
- 👉 Main output: A shared vision of agroecology transitions among stakeholders involved in agroecology in Vietnam.
- 👉 Key orientations at country level for a common framework for action and interventions, for the ALiSEA network and for resource stakeholders involved in AE.



I. A FUTURE PATHWAY FOR AGROECOLOGY IN VIETNAM

This paper presents the findings from the National foresight and Theory of Change workshop and the ALiSEA National Assembly workshop held in Hanoi in 2022. The workshop was organized as part of the ASSET project to further engage activities into a transformative approach and foster a sense of belonging to a common vision for agroecology and safe food systems, as well as to strengthen ALiSEA as a coalition and community of practices. The findings of this workshop were then presented and consolidated during the ALiSEA General Assembly workshop.

II. AGROECOLOGICAL DYNAMICS IN VIETNAM

The agriculture sector plays a key role in Vietnam's national economy and welfare of its large population. The agricultural sector ensures livelihoods for over 60% of the population residing in rural areas, accounting for about 30% of the country's labor force and nearly 12% of GDP. In 2022, Vietnam agroexport achieved a total turnover of over 53 billion USD, destination of 196 countries globally.

However, this sector is increasingly faced with multiple challenges, including increasing reliance on chemical inputs, resource degradation, reduced engagement of youth in the sector, climate changes and market risks. Food quality and safety remain as a critical issue. Additionally, institutions that governs and promote sustainable agricultural development, so far have been remained less effective.



In recent years, agroecology has been considered as a strategic approach to restructure Vietnam agriculture towards sustainability including better adaptation to and mitigation of climate change,

ALISEA NETWORK IN VIETNAM

The Agroecology Learning alliance in South East Asia (ALiSEA) is supported and coordinated at national and regional level by GRET. ALiSEA's goal is to enable local and regional agroecology stakeholders to leverage one another's expertise to produce evidence-based studies and share them broadly to support a regional transition towards agroecology. In Vietnam, it gathers 47 members with diverse backgrounds, including researchers, universities, NGOs, private sector, farmer organization, networks.

environmental protection, value enhancement of agricultural products, and the improvement of livelihoods for farmers. Agroecology-supported policies recently issued include:

- (1) Resolution 120/NQ-CP issued in 2017 regarding sustainable development for Mekong River Delta in adaptation to climate change;
- (2) Decision 150/QD-TTg issued in 2022 on Strategy for sustainable agricultural and rural development in the period of 2021 – 2030;
- (3) Decision 300/QD-TTg issued in 2023 on National Action Plan for transparent, responsible and sustainable food transformation in Vietnam towards 2030; All of these policies consider AE as the important way to move forwards for Vietnamese agriculture. In specific, the Decision 300, Vietnam sets a target of achievement of a minimum of 2.5% agricultural land for organic production, and doubles organic fertilisers to be used (compared to 2020).

However, so far, agroecological adoption and practices remain confined to a small number of farmers scattering in local communities. Local initiatives have not yet reached a momentum sufficient for farming changes. While a strong policy framework has been developed and is now in place in Vietnam, with specific strategies and plans to guide agroecology stakeholders, their effective implementation in the ground remains unclear. Challenges with the appropriation of strategies at the local decisional level limit the transition towards adopting agroecology.

With the support of the ASSET project, Government Partners and the ALiSEA network organized the National Foresight and Theory of Change (ToC) Workshop in Hanoi last October. The event gathered numerous stakeholders from the agriculture sector, collaborating to identify obstacles, opportunities and trends of existing agriculture as well as Agroecology development foresights from which to construct national pathways to achieve Agroecology transition and adoption in Vietnam. The results of this workshop are presented in this Brief.

III. OBSTACLES, OPPORTUNITIES AND FUTURE TRENDS

Building on a methodological approach rooted in the ImpresS ex ante framework (*Blundo Canto and De Romemont, 2020; <https://impress-impact-recherche.cirad.fr>*) and adapted to the goals and configurations set for this ToC development under ASSET project, participants collectively analyzed the current state of the agricultural production industry, thereby pinpointing obstacles, opportunities, and potential future trends. The primary obstacles, opportunities, and trends are summarized in the table below:

OBSTACLE

Economic: low productivity, higher cost, affordability for consumers, lack of private sector engagement, agroecological input suppliers...
Social aspects: confused information, lack of awareness, trust and collaboration between stakeholders.
Governance: lack of integration in land policy and gap between policy and implementation

OPPORTUNITY

Youth and Economic Trends: Young workforce's engagement; Growing consumer demand for sustainable products; Rapid digital transformation in economic sectors.
Private Sector: Social responsibility embraced by private enterprise;
Education: Strong education system emphasizing sustainable agriculture.
Social & Environmental Factors: Incorporation of religious and spiritual values, Heightened public awareness, Recognition of environmental concerns, Government's commitment and multi-stakeholder involvement.

TREND

Large scale farming
Digitalization
Local circuits and sovereignty
Ageing population or loss of labor
Landscape agroecology
Standardization or certification



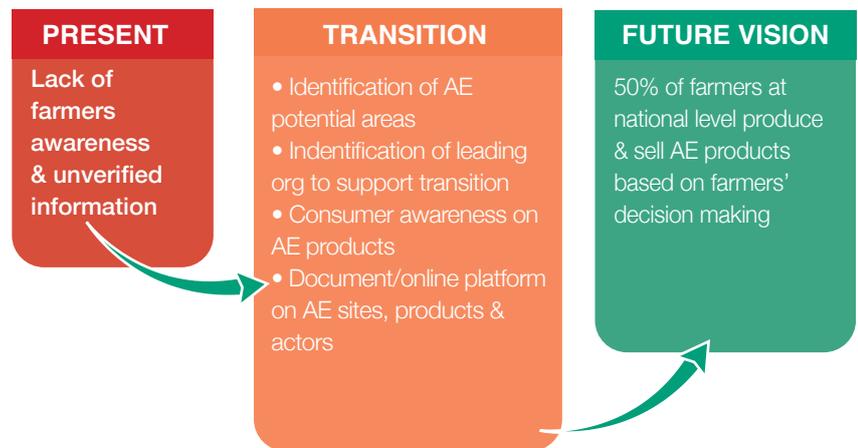
to the present. A total of 8 potential pathways were identified. In the subsequent ALiSEA national General Assembly workshop, participants prioritized 3 pathways projected to be the most effective and possible in realizing the future AE development vision.

1) First pathway: addressing farmer awareness and unverified information. It aims to reach 50% of national-level farmers producing and selling certified agroecological products by 2045. This involves identifying agroecological areas, establishing information platforms, engaging with key agencies and organizations, and changing consumer perceptions of agroecological products.

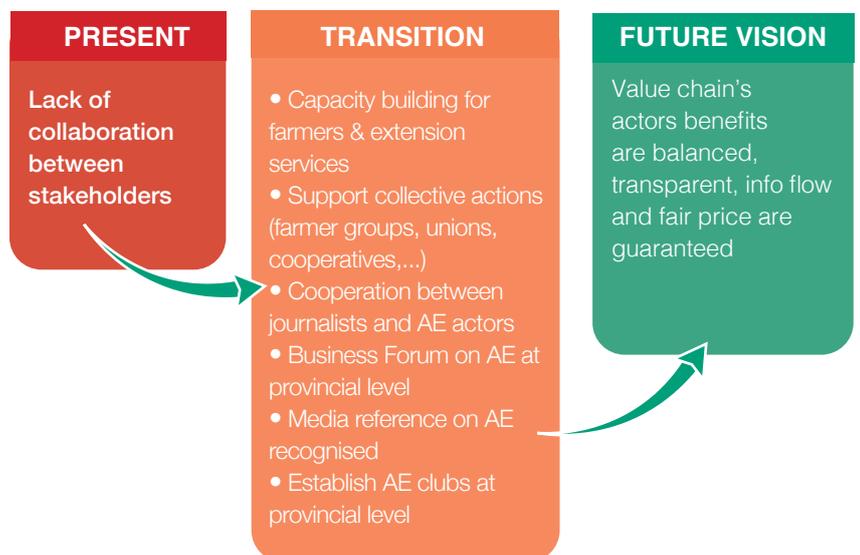
IV. AGROECOLOGY FUTURE VISION IN VIETNAM BY 2045

2045 was selected by participants as the target year for the transition. A vision of agroecology in Vietnam was then mapped by the participants, with clear targets set-up at 3 levels of the food system, to be achieved for the transition by 2045:

- 🌱 **Farmer:** 70% of rural communes in Vietnam have multi-layer integrated farming systems, 50% of farmers at national level produce and sell AE products, 30% of the active population is working in agriculture, 50% of them are youth, Farmers use advanced technology in production and processing, including control of water and soil pollution, climate risk.
- 🌱 **Value chain actors and consumers:** Value chain actors' benefits are balanced, there is a transparent information flow and fair price; 80% of consumers know how to identify healthy food and 70% can pay for healthy products (which are trustable, transparent, accessible and affordable).
- 🌱 **Policy:** Integrated management policy framework enabling multi-stakeholders within the agroecology sector and multi sectors to embark and develop agroecology from state to local level.



2) Second pathway: addressing the issue of limited cooperation among stakeholders. The transition will involve various activities, including capacity building for farmers and extension services, support for collective actions, promotion of communication, and enhanced information exchange through networks and collective activities.



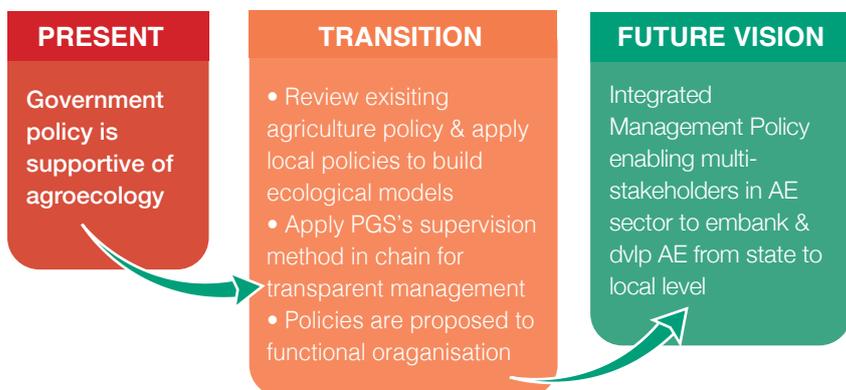
V. PRIORITY PATHWAYS SELECTED BY ALiSEA FOR THE AGROECOLOGY TRANSITION IN VIETNAM

With a shared future vision identified, participants engaged in discussions to identify specific steps that would lead to the envisioned scenario. They co-constructed pathways from this future vision back

3) Third pathway aims to promote Agroecology's development through policy support. It involves reviewing current agricultural policies, identifying gaps, sharing evidence of Agroecology adoption and success with stakeholders through various communication channels.

VI. NEXT STEPS FOR THE MOBILIZATION OF STAKEHOLDERS FOR AE TRANSITION IN VIETNAM

The identified shared future vision serves as a guiding framework for participants in Vietnam's agricultural sector, encompassing both public and private actors. It offers a clearer direction and facilitates the formulation of well-suited plans for transitioning towards agroecology. The collaborative development of this shared vision and its pathways will also equip policymakers with a more substantial foundation for crafting pertinent policies.



Within the framework of the ASSET project, particularly the ALiSEA network, the 3 prioritized pathways will help:

- 🌿 Assisting ASSET project partners and ALiSEA network members in devising action plans that are more aligned with practical needs.
- 🌿 Collaborating on the design and development of an enhanced ALiSEA national action plan and implementation.
- 🌿 Identifying priority topics for the forthcoming Small Grant Call of the ALiSEA network.



Source: ASSET, 2022. Report of the National foresight and theory of change workshop in Vietnam, 12 -13 October 2022, in Hanoi. Agroecology and Safe food System Transitions (ASSET) project.

Written by:

Mr. Do Trong Hieu, NOMAFSI | hieudt.nomafsi@mard.gov.vn
Dr. Pham Van Hoi, ALiSEA Policy Dialogue Coordinator in Vietnam, CARES | phamhoi@gmail.com

CONTACT:

ALiSEA Network
Ms. Lucie Reynaud, ALiSEA Regional Coordinator | reynaud@gret.org

ASSET Project

Dr. Genowefa Blundo Canto, Leader of ASSET Project Sub-Component 2.2: Methodological Framework
genowefa.blundo_canto@cirad.fr
Dr. Estelle Biénabe, Scientific Coordinator - ASSET Project
estelle.bienabe@cirad.fr
Ms. Marie-Christine Le Bret, ASSET Project General Coordinator
lebre@gret.org



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ADOPT AGROECOLOGY

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