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Historical and comparative analysis of the institutionalization of agroecology in french public policies

Quentin Charrieras

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INSTITUT D'URBANISME ET DE GEOGRAPHIE ALPINE
UNIVERSITE GRENOBLE ALPES

HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS
OF THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF AGROECOLOGY
IN FRENCH PUBLIC POLICIES

Written as a requirement for the Master's degree (M2) in
International Development Studies

Under the direction of Mr. Nicolas BUCLET

Quentin CHARRIERAS

Academic year 2020-2021

Preface

This thesis is the result of my year spent in the Master's program in International Development Studies at the Institute of Urban Planning and Alpine Geography of Grenoble (IUGA). It was written at the end of a 6-month internship at the UMR Innovation of the French National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment (INRAE).

This final report is entitled "Historical and comparative analysis of the institutionalization of agroecology in French public policies". The choice of a subject on agroecology was a response to a long-standing motivation, that of enriching my knowledge on agricultural and food issues. A research work on agroecology allowed me to study in more detail the multiple agricultural, food and environmental issues to which the concept is attached. As the subject was more specifically about the integration of agroecology in public policy texts, I was also able to improve my knowledge of the architecture of the French agricultural institutional apparatus. Finally, this research work succeeded in bringing together legal and political reflections - the representation by texts of the institutionalization of a new agricultural model - as well as questions related to development itself - agroecology as a new agricultural development project.

This Master's thesis consists of both traditional parts and an article that constitutes the core of the work (chapters I to VI). It is the result of a six-month research project in which my supervisors played a fundamental role at every stage of the process, from the definition of the subject to the writing of the dissertation. I wrote the entire report with their support, exchanging ideas and suggestions, and taking into account their comments during the proofreading process.

It should be noted that this research has been conducted in French. Thus, some words, expressions, concepts and documents from the research results have been retained in French, for consistency and clarity purposes. Untranslated French forms are written in this report in italics.

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I would like to thank my supervisors Pierre Gasselin and Gaël Plumecocq who gave me the opportunity to carry out this research work. They took a lot of time to answer my questions and gave me essential advice. Our discussions were for me the occasion of a real intellectual opening on subjects that I wanted to develop for a long time. They also had the constant concern to train me about the particularities of what was then an unknown world for me, that of "research". I would like therefore to thank them warmly for having trusted me with this project.

I would also like to thank Guillaume Ollivier who joined us in the second part of this internship and who allowed me, thanks to his wise eye on a subject he knows well, to deepen and enrich this research. Thanks also to Carole Gouget who provided me with important information and texts for this work.

I would also like to thank all the professors of the Master in International Development Studies at IUGA. During this particular year, between confinement and curfew, they adapted to the situation and allowed us to live a semester in the best conditions. My special thanks go to Nicolas Buclet, who supervised this work, Cristina Del Biaggio and Kirsten Koop, who doubled their efforts to provide us with quality seminars and to instil a joyful and supportive atmosphere.

This work could not have been carried out without the actors who agreed to give me interviews. I would like to thank them for the time they took to answer my questions and to explain certain details to me. Being able to exchange with those who participated in the construction of the new French agricultural policy was a plunge into the arcane of the agricultural system that made this experience even more interesting.

A less formal thanks to my fellow international students in Grenoble and to the UMR Innovation interns' colony, who contributed to make this year enriching.

A final thanks to my parents and my sister for their support and to the *campagne limousine*, where it is always good to come back.

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Presentation of the institute and the research project

The subject of agroecology, although it emerged independently late in French research (Bellon & Ollivier, 2013), is now one of the six major themes studied by INRAE¹.

INRAE is a French public institution resulting from the recent merger between the National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA) and the National Institute for Research in Science and Technology for the Environment and Agriculture (IRSTEA), which took effect on 1st January 2020. The decree merging the two establishments specifies that INRAE's main missions are to "carry out, organise and coordinate, on its own initiative or at the request of the State, all scientific and technological research in the fields of agriculture, food, forestry, environment, water, biodiversity, bioeconomy, circular economy, and sustainable land and risk management in the aforementioned areas of competence"². Under the joint supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (MESRI) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food (MAA), INRAE prides itself on being the first institute in the world to be specialised in agriculture, food and environment³. Thanks to this position, the institute claims to be able to contribute to the "necessary transitions"⁴, namely the agroecological, nutritional and energy transitions. As for its organization, INRAE is composed of 14 scientific departments spread over 18 regional centres. It has 268 research, service and experimental units⁵.

The joint research unit (UMR) Innovation and Development in Agriculture and Food, based in Montpellier, is one of them. Its mission is mainly to analyze the innovation and development process in agricultural and food systems, from understanding the objectives of stakeholders in innovating to analyzing the effects of these innovations on development⁶. Several of the research projects carried out are therefore related to agroecology, which is seen

¹ « About us », www.inrae.fr/en/about-us, accessed August 30, 2021.

² Article 2 of the Decree of 10 October 2019 on the organisation and operation of the National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and the Environment.

³ « Europe / World », www.inrae.fr/en/europe-world, accessed August 30, 2021.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ « About us », *ibid.*

⁶ « The Unit », www.umr-innovation.fr/en/the-unit, accessed August 30, 2021.

as an example of 'situated innovation', i.e. innovation that takes place in specific action situations where actors innovate to meet development challenges⁷.

This internship is part of the TERRAE project, an acronym for "Dispositifs nationaux TERRitorialisés de politique publique pour l'AgroEcologie" ("National territorialized public policy mechanisms for agroecology"), funded by the Occitanie region. Several internships and post-doctoral contracts have resulted from this project and aim to document the regional variation of the policies carried out under the French agroecological project. It should be noted that this project involves both researchers and officials from the DRAAF Occitanie, a coherent partnership for an institute placed under the dual supervision of the Ministry of Research and the Ministry of Agriculture, but which is not the rule everywhere. Thus, some regional players are more inclined to encourage the agroecological transition than others⁸.

As mentioned above, agroecology has gradually appeared in INRA documents, until it gained legitimacy in 2010 when it was enshrined in the "*Document d'orientation Inra 2010-2020 : une science pour l'impact*" (2010). The 2010s saw the affirmation of agroecology within an institute that had also the will to strengthen relations between science and civil society. Thus, a dialogue around agroecology was developed with citizens and certain agricultural actors, such as *France Nature Environnement* or the *Confédération Paysanne* (Ollivier et al., 2019). This new orientation policy for agroecology at INRA comes at a time when research projects on this topic are being strongly encouraged, particularly through substantial funding. Michel Griffon, Deputy Director General of the French National Research Agency (ANR) between 2008 and 2011, emphasizes that financial and human investments in agroecology have been "extremely important in the scientific and political legitimization of the concept"⁹.

Finally, this internship entitled "Historical and comparative analysis of the institutionalization of agroecology in French Public Policies" is part of a movement of massification of the study of agroecology in the research world, whether in terms of publications or institutions that take up the subject (Nicot et al., 2018). Hopefully, this thesis will make a contribution, however small, to the state of knowledge on the subject.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Report "Déclinaison régionale du Projet Agroécologique pour la France", CGAAER, October 2020.

⁹ Interview, August 2021.

List of abbreviations

For convenience purposes, abbreviations are listed in French and translated in both French and English.

AAP: *Appel à projets* / Call for projects

AEI: *Agriculture écologiquement intensive* / Ecologically Intensive Agriculture

ACTA: *Association de coordination technique agricole* / Agricultural Technical Coordination Association

ANR: *Agence nationale de la recherche* / National Research Agency

APCA: *Assemblée permanente des chambres d'agriculture* / Permanent Assembly of Chambers of Agriculture

CASDAR: *Compte d'affectation spécial développement agricole et rural* / Special allocation account for agricultural and rural development

CEP: *Centre d'étude et de prospective* / Centre for studies and outlook

CESE: *Conseil économique, social et environnemental* / Economic, Social and Environmental Council

CGAAER: *Conseil général de l'alimentation, de l'agriculture et des espaces ruraux* / General Council for Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas

CIRAD: *Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement* / Agricultural Research Centre for International Development

CIVAM: *Centre d'initiatives pour valoriser l'agriculture et le milieu rural* / Centre for initiatives to promote agriculture and rural environment

COREAMR: *Commission Régionale de l'Economie Agricole et du Monde Rural* / Regional Commission for the Agricultural Economy and the Rural World

CTE: *Contrats territoriaux d'exploitation* / Land Management Contracts

CUMA: *Coopérative d'utilisation du matériel agricole / Cooperative for the use of agricultural equipment*

DEPHY: *Démonstration expérimentation production de références sur les systèmes économes en phytosanitaires / Demonstration, experimentation and production of references on low pesticide use systems*

DGAL: *Direction générale de l'alimentation / Directorate General for Food*

DGPE: *Direction générale de la performance économique et environnementale des entreprises / Directorate General for the Economic and Environmental Performance of Enterprises*

DRAAF: *Direction régional de l'alimentation, de l'alimentation et de la forêt / Regional Directorate for Food, Nutrition and Forestry*

EGA: *Etats généraux de l'alimentation / General States of Food*

FAO: *Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture / Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations*

FEADER/EAFRD: *Fonds européen agricole pour le développement rural / European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development*

FNAB: *Fédération nationale d'agriculture biologique / National Federation of Organic Agriculture*

FNSEA: *Fédération nationale des syndicats d'exploitants agricole / National Federation of Farmers' Unions*

GIEE: *Groupement d'intérêt économique et environnemental / Economic and Environmental Interest Grouping*

HVE: *Haute valeur environnementale / High Environmental Value*

IAASTD: *International assessment for agricultural knowledge, science and technology for development*

INRAE: *Institut national de la recherche pour l'agriculture, l'alimentation et l'environnement / National Institute for Research in Agriculture, Food and the Environment*

IRAMUTEQ: *Interface de R pour les analyses multidimensionnelles de textes et de questionnaires / R interface for multidimensional analysis of texts and questionnaires*

IRSTEA: *Institut national de recherches en sciences et technologies pour l'environnement et l'agriculture* / National Institute for Research in Science and Technology for the Environment and Agriculture

LAAAF: *Loi d'avenir sur l'agriculture, l'alimentation et la forêt* / Law on the future of agriculture, food and forestry

MAA: *Ministère de l'agriculture et de l'alimentation* / Ministry of Agriculture and Food

MAAF: *Ministère de l'agriculture, de l'alimentation et de la forêt* / Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry

MAEC: *Mesures agro-environnementales et climatiques* / Agri-environmental and climate measures

MESRI: *Ministère de la l'Enseignement Supérieur, de la Recherche et de l'Innovation* / Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation

NGO: *Organisation non-gouvernementale* / Non-Governmental Organization

ONVAR: *Organisme national à vocation agricole et rural* / National agricultural and rural organization

PAC/CAP: *Politique agricole commune* / Common Agricultural Policy

PAE: *Projet agroécologique* / Agroecological project

PAT: *Projets alimentaires territoriaux* / Territorial food projects

PDRR: *Programmes de développement rural régionaux* / Regional Rural Development Programmes

PNDAR: *Programme national de développement agricole et rural* / National Agricultural and Rural Development Programme

RAD: *Réseau agriculture durable* / Sustainable Agriculture Network

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I. Introduction

Today, agroecology is a new object of agricultural public policies that is being deployed at all levels. While, at the European level, the Commission has been trying to encourage the greening of the CAP since several reforms (Deverre & de Sainte Marie, 2008a), it was at the international stage that agroecology was expressly enshrined, when the FAO, after the submission of an important report (De Schutter, 2011), organized a Global Dialogue on the issue comprising two international symposia (2014 and 2018) and a series of regional meetings (A. Loconto et al., 2018). The introduction of agroecology at the FAO was encouraged by France, which had previously adopted this political framework and made it the spearhead of its new agricultural policy. The "Agroecological Project for France" (PAE, *Projet Agroécologique pour la France*), led by the Socialist Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Stéphane Le Foll, was officially launched in 2012¹⁰. It was then adapted at the local level by linking several pre-existing policies (MAEC, DEPHY farms) or new ones (GIEE, PAT), in order to reconcile agriculture and ecology and to integrate agroecology into the territories and farms.

This process of putting agroecology into policy has not been without contestation, between actors with different visions of agroecology and in different social arenas (Bellon & Ollivier, 2018; Lamine et al., 2019; A. Loconto et al., 2018). The FAO, "cathedral of the Green Revolution" according to its own Director-General¹¹, has long refused to open the debate on agroecology, even though social movements had already taken up the issue and were pushing for its recognition (A. M. Loconto & Fouilleux, 2021). In France, the agroecological project came up against both the criticism of the FNSEA, which was hostile to the "ecological" aim of the program (Arrignon & Bosc, 2015), and that of farmers' associations, which conversely regretted the "technico-economic" vision¹² of agroecology that emerged from the government project. These controversies surrounding the implementation of agroecology as a political project reflect the multiplicity of visions of this notion on the part of actors who carry sometimes opposing agricultural projects. Agroecology thus acquires a different meaning depending on

¹⁰ National Conference "Agricultures: Produisons Autrement", Economic, Social, Environmental Council, 18 December 2012.

¹¹ "At the first international symposium in 2014, I said that we were going to open a window in the cathedral of the Green Revolution by placing the perspective of agroecology at the heart of the debate on the future of food and agriculture", José Graziano Da Silva, opening of the 2nd International Symposium on Agroecology, 3 April 2018 (cf. Loconto & Fouilleux, 2021).

¹² Statement " L'agroécologie ne peut être que paysanne!", www.confederationpaysanne.fr, 17 September 2014.

the actors who take hold of it and is subject to a continuous process of redefinition according to the interests and values of the groups that support it, despite the long-standing work of stabilizing its foundations and the pre-existence of historical actors carrying the notion (Bellon & Ollivier, 2018).

Although controversial, the notion of agroecology has been chosen to be the banner of the new French agricultural policy (Jolly, 2015; Musson & Rousselière, 2016). The PAE, an instrument of this policy, has been institutionalized in an original way compared to previous agricultural policies implemented by the state. On the one hand, since the modernization laws of 1960 and 1962¹³, the agricultural sector was indeed mainly governed by “top-down” policies, taken at the European level and secondarily at the national level, which introduced primarily incentive and normative mechanisms and, more marginally, contractual measures (Bosc & Arrignon, 2020b; Deverre & de Sainte Marie, 2008b; Muller, 2000a). However, the French agroecological policy, by encouraging local initiatives and a project-based organization without restrictive measures, promotes a different logic. It is a bet on the collective and on the territory that is made by a policy which, if it refuses to be considered as a top-down administrative instruction, is voluntarily presented as "a direction, an ambition and a structured and partnership-based action plan"¹⁴.

Thus, the French agroecological policy appears through a singular political program as an undertaking to institutionalize at all administrative levels a multifaceted concept, that of agroecology. Therefore, the objective of this article will be to analyze the conception of governmental agroecological policy through its texts.

To answer this question, we analyzed the framing documents of the French agroecological project, i.e. the institutional texts issued by public policy actors in the field of agroecology, published between 2008 and the present. These documents were then subjected to a lexicometric analysis that allowed us to identify the themes mobilized by the French agroecological policy during the different phases of its implementation and at the different scales studied.

¹³ The “Loi d’orientation agricole” of 5 August 1960 was supplemented by the Law of 8 August 1962.

¹⁴ “Rapport annuel sur l’agro-écologie”, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, 2014 (cf. Arrignon & Bosc, 2015).

After detailing the theoretical and methodological framework of this research, we present the characteristics of the agroecological project in terms of the forms taken by public policies and the definition of agroecology itself, at the national and regional levels. We then discuss the lessons learned and the contradictions raised by the institutionalization of agroecology, particularly with regard to the mode of governance chosen by the French policy and the place it reserves for the social dimension of agroecology. Finally, we examine the scope of the agroecological program and whether it can constitute a new frame of reference (*référentiel*) for French agricultural policies.

II. Theory

a. How is the institutionalization of agroecology problematic?

The use of the term agroecology at the top of the French government is surprising. For a long time, the concept has had an engaged and militant character, which has been used by scientists and social movements to protest against the dominant agricultural model supported by the central government (Bosc & Arrignon, 2020b). The use of such a vocabulary by the Ministry of Agriculture may therefore be questionable, unless it is seen as another attempt to redefine a term that is sufficiently polysemous to serve multiple interpretations (Derbez, 2020).

The polysemous nature of agroecology has already been illustrated several times in the course of the many movements to qualify an almost century-old concept. Several research publications (Doré & Bellon, 2019; Ollivier & Bellon, 2021; Stassart et al., 2012; Wezel et al., 2009) trace the history of the term and attribute the first mention to the Russian agronomist Bensin in 1928. From the 1930s until the late 1960s, several scientists including Klages (1928), Azzi (1928), Tischler (1965) and Hénin (1967) used agroecology to apply the principles of ecology to agriculture. From a concept confined to the natural sciences, agroecology was gradually appropriated by social movements in the 1970s in response to the excesses of the Green Revolution. Finally, under the influence of American agroecologists and sociologists (Altieri, Gliessman, Francis), the field of agroecology was extended to the entire food system and thus combines the production dimension with the distribution and consumption dimensions (Francis et al., 2003). This brief chronology shows us the constant movement of requalification of a concept that, over time and with regard to the actors who appropriate it, expands to the

agri-food system as a whole while advocating the defense of an alternative agricultural development model.

Agroecology was first established as an alternative framework (Stassart et al., 2012), opposed to the technological model of intensification. Initially seized by science, the concept was then promoted by social movements from the 1960s onwards, which gave it its engaged and even anti-state character (Arrignon & Bosc, 2015). Agroecology developed particularly in Latin America, where peasant agriculture, trade unions and local associations used the concept to call for an alternative to industrial export agriculture. Driven by these movements, it also influences and is nourished by the farmers' own practices. Agroecology was thus, until recently, a concept contained in science, social movements and practices¹⁵ (Wezel et al., 2009). How did the state appropriate the concept? The French agroecological project launched in 2012, as well as the "10 elements of agroecology" published by the FAO (2018) illustrate the consecration of agroecology on the political level. In their article, Bellon and Ollivier (2018) add the political and economic dimensions to the triptych that originally constituted agroecology. By making an alternative concept the basis of its new agricultural policy, the Ministry of Agriculture seems wanting to profoundly modify its software and switch to a new agricultural *référentiel*.

b. What is a public policy?

According to Muller, a public policy's *référentiel* corresponds to "the image of the reality on which one wishes to intervene" (Muller, 2000c). This image, also referred to as the "cognitive field", depends on the perception that the actors have of the system to be regulated. For example, the definition of an agricultural policy depends closely on society's representation of farmers (the small-scale farmer, the entrepreneurial farmer, etc.) and the role of agriculture (food-producing agriculture, sustainable agriculture, export agriculture, etc.). It is therefore on the basis of representations of the place and role of a given sector within a given society that the *référentiel* will be established. More precisely, the purpose of a public policy *référentiel* is to resolve a discrepancy in the existing representations between a sector and the society. For example, the misalignment between the environmental and climatic changes underway on a

¹⁵ It should be noted that there is a strong link between these three dimensions, with science blending with movements and practices, and vice versa. For example, Miguel Altieri founded the Latin American Society of Agroecological Scientists (SOCLA), while Stephen R. Gliessman spent nine years in Costa Rica and Mexico working with social actors.

global scale and the low consideration of these phenomena by certain sectors (industry, transport, agriculture) has led to the establishment of specific policies to try to reduce it. Nevertheless, good management of the global-sectoral relationship does not necessarily mean the formation of a new agricultural *référentiel*. Muller teaches us that the development of a policy *référentiel* requires the construction of a cognitive field that includes all the knowledge that the actors deem relevant in order to make the policy possible and controllable. This process of unifying knowledge is composed first of a phase of explanation of the changes that affect reality, and then of an operation of construction of operational algorithms that allow the transformation of the system whose evolution has been observed. Finally, the third phase corresponds to the integration of these algorithms into values, which, if they are imposed, notify a change of the global *référentiel*. Applied to the new French agroecological policy, the process of unifying the cognitive field represents the moment when the State becomes aware of the global changes and chooses to respond to them by defining a new, more appropriate agricultural model.

However, does agroecology constitute a new agricultural *référentiel*? Several French agricultural policy guidelines have followed one another since the beginning of the 20th century (Muller, 2000a, 2009). From a "maintenance *référentiel*" under the Third Republic, which aimed to keep farmers in the countryside and maintain rural balances, French policy was modernized after the Second World War. This new "modernization *référentiel*" saw farmers become more professional and organize themselves into unions to defend agricultural expansion before the State. The nascent co-management system (named *cogestion*) reached its peak in the agricultural orientation laws of 1960 and 1962, which overturned the French agricultural architecture. With the first reforms of the CAP in the 1980s, the compromise between the State and agricultural organizations was called into question, and the latter were then forced to accept measures negotiated on a supra-national scale. At the same time, the modernization *référentiel*, considered as a hindrance to the advent of an open economy and a true liberalization of exchanges at the global level, gave way to a new "market *référentiel*", which has since become the basic reference system for agricultural policies. However, a gap between the agriculture marketisation logic and French society is being felt, and is materialized in particular in the new environmental concerns, the local demands, the persistence of alternative forms of agriculture and the withdrawal of the State (Arrignon & Bosc, 2015). The emergence of agroecology and its appropriation by the French government thus seems to be both a response to this "*référentiel* crisis" and an attempt to build a new one.

III. Method

The methodological choice of approaching the question of the institutionalization of agroecology in France through public policy texts brings to light the key actors and texts that favored the political implementation of this concept and allows us to chronologically retrace the design of its implementation.

In order to analyze this evolution of agroecological policy, the chosen method implied first to build an adapted corpus of institutional texts. We chose to limit our selection to public policy texts containing the occurrences "*agroécologi_*" or "*agro-écologi_*" (noted "AE"). This choice was made in order to take into account the different spellings of the word (with or without hyphens), as well as the frequent use of the adjective "agroecological" to describe entities. Thus, we often find the expressions "agroecological approaches", "agroecological practices" or "agroecological transitions". The texts were selected from among those published by traditional public policy actors and, more specifically, agricultural and food policy actors¹⁶. They were collected from the websites of these institutions, from the legal portal "*Légifrance*", as well as during various interviews and email exchanges with some of these actors. However, some texts in which the sought occurrences appear were excluded from the final corpus, either because they do not enter into the process of constructing public policies on agroecology, or because they contain too few references to agroecology in relation to the overall weight of the text (number of pages and words). These exclusions - 59 texts were excluded - are justified by the overall coherence of the corpus, which would be overwhelmed by texts with no real connection to the subject or containing too few references to the subject in relation to the relative weight of the text. The selected corpus includes the following categories of texts: government plans (22 texts), regulatory and administrative acts (36), CASDAR calls for projects and reports (17), France Stratégie analyses (2), CGAAER reports (14), CEP analyses (17), laws (2), proposals and bills (10), parliamentary reports from the National Assembly and from the Senate (7), CESE notices (5), reports from scientific and research institutes commissioned by the executive or legislative powers (7), calls for projects and applications

¹⁶ These actors include the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, France Stratégie, the General Council for Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas (CGAAER, an internal body of the MAA), the Centre for study and outlook (CEP, also linked to the MAA), the National Assembly and the Senate, the Economic, Social and Environmental Council (CESE), and certain scientific and research institutes at the national level; the Regional Directorate of Food and Forestry (DRAAF) and the Occitanie Regional Council at the regional level.

from the DRAAF Occitanie (17), other documents of interest from the DRAAF Occitanie (5) and documents of interest from the Occitanie Region (2). In total, the corpus includes 163 texts.

The texts selected show a time frame that extends from 2008 to the present, with a number of references to agroecology that increases sharply in 2013 (see Figure 1), the day after the launch of the PAE at the "Produisons autrement" conference. The chronological analysis of the texts has made it possible to precisely define the period in which agroecology was put into policy and thus to more accurately transcribe the history of its implementation.

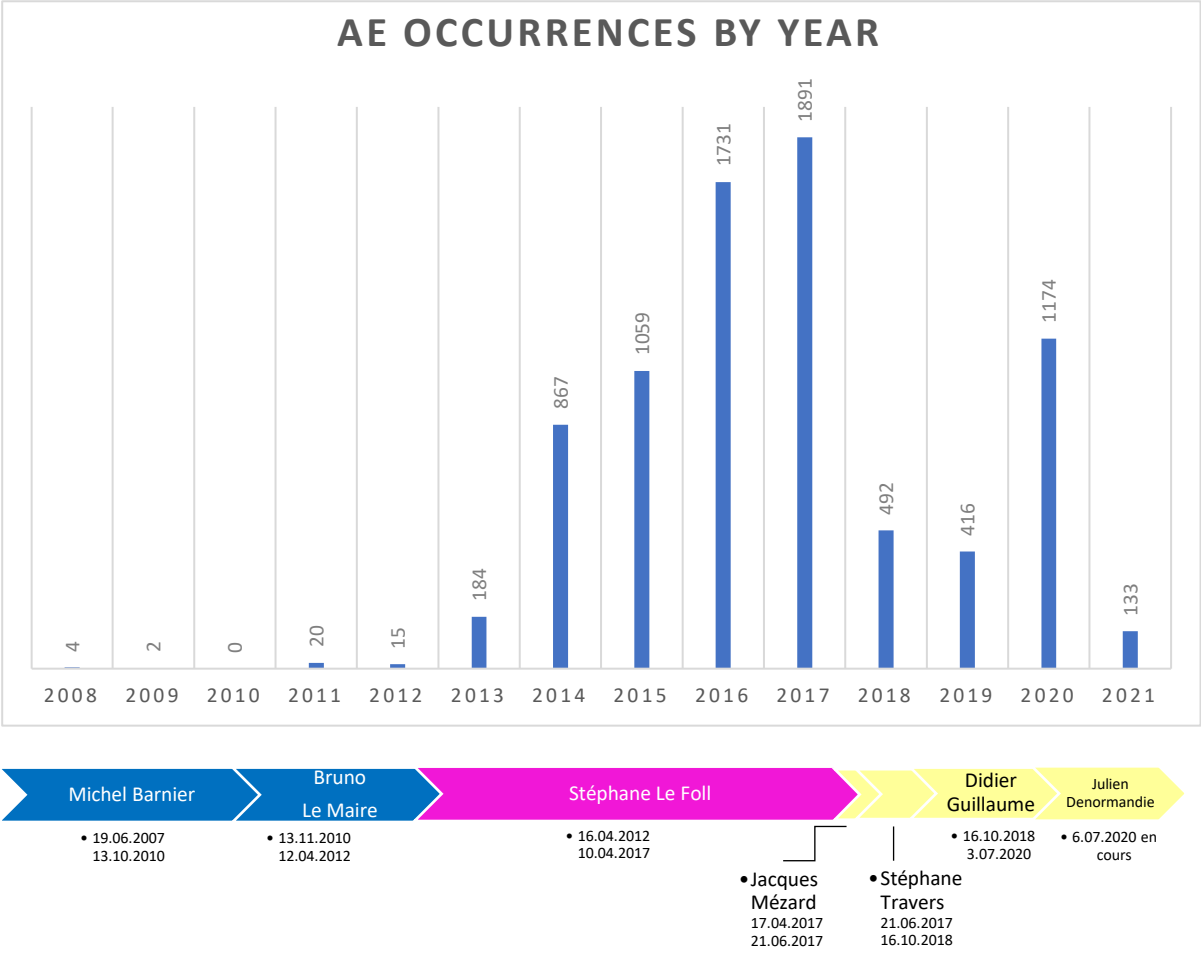


Figure 1: Chronology of AE occurrences in the corpus and successive Ministers of Agriculture since 2008

The emergence of the French agroecological project, its architecture and implementation were also detailed during various interviews realized with institutional and

political actors who participated in the construction of this program¹⁷. These discussions allowed us to clarify the texts that guide and define French public policies on agroecology, and to shed light on the role of certain key actors and institutions in the formulation of these policies.

The 163 selected texts were then processed using the Iramuteq software, whose acronym stands for "*Interface de R pour les Analyses Multidimensionnelles de Textes et de Questionnaires*", in order to perform a textual analysis of the corpus (Ratinaud, 2009). The Reinert (1993) analysis proceeds by successive partition of the corpus and allows to reveal classes of statements that group together segments of texts with similar vocabulary. These classes constitute recurrent semantic universes that structure the discourse produced in the texts by the various speakers. Each class is thus interpretable by the terms that constitute it as well as by the meta-data with which it is statistically associated (using the chi2 measure). We thus integrate several illustrative variables, such as the author of the text, the year of publication and the type of text in question. For example, we attempt to analyze the evolution of vocabulary related to French agroecological policies over time. We also discriminate between texts according to the actors who issue them in order to observe the differences in discourse according to this characteristic. The textual analysis of the corpus has made it possible to distinguish classes that describe both the singularity of public policies on agroecology and the framing of agroecology by public policy actors.

IV. Results

After several exploratory iterations, we chose to adopt a configuration that produces a partition of the corpus with 12 classes, allowing a detailed analysis of the corpus based on significant classes that appeared to be recurrent, and therefore robust, during these iterations (see Figure 2). While the first block focuses on the instruments and procedures of public policies on agroecology (classes 12, 1, 5, 4, 8, 10), the second describes the issues and objectives of agroecology as institutionalized by the PAE (class 7, 3, 2, 6, 9, 11). These two blocks refer to Muller's analysis (1995) and focus both on the cognitive and normative aspects (first block on the left) and on the instrumental dimensions of the public policy (second block on the right).

¹⁷ Interviews were conducted with the following actors: Simon Miquel and Catherine Foyer-Benos (DRAAF Occitanie), Aline Boy and Brigitte Midoux (DGPE, Ministry of Agriculture and Food), Marc Dufumier (Professor Emeritus at AgroParisTech), Philippe Mauguin (CEO of INRAE), Bertrand Hervieu (President of the French Academy of Agriculture) and Michel Griffon (Researcher at CIRAD).

From this analysis of the corpus, we wish to show that the French agroecological project results in a new public policy based on non-normativity (a) and where agroecology is revisited from the perspective of performance (b). Although these characteristics are found in a similar way at the regional level, the translation of the PAE in the territories is impoverished (c).

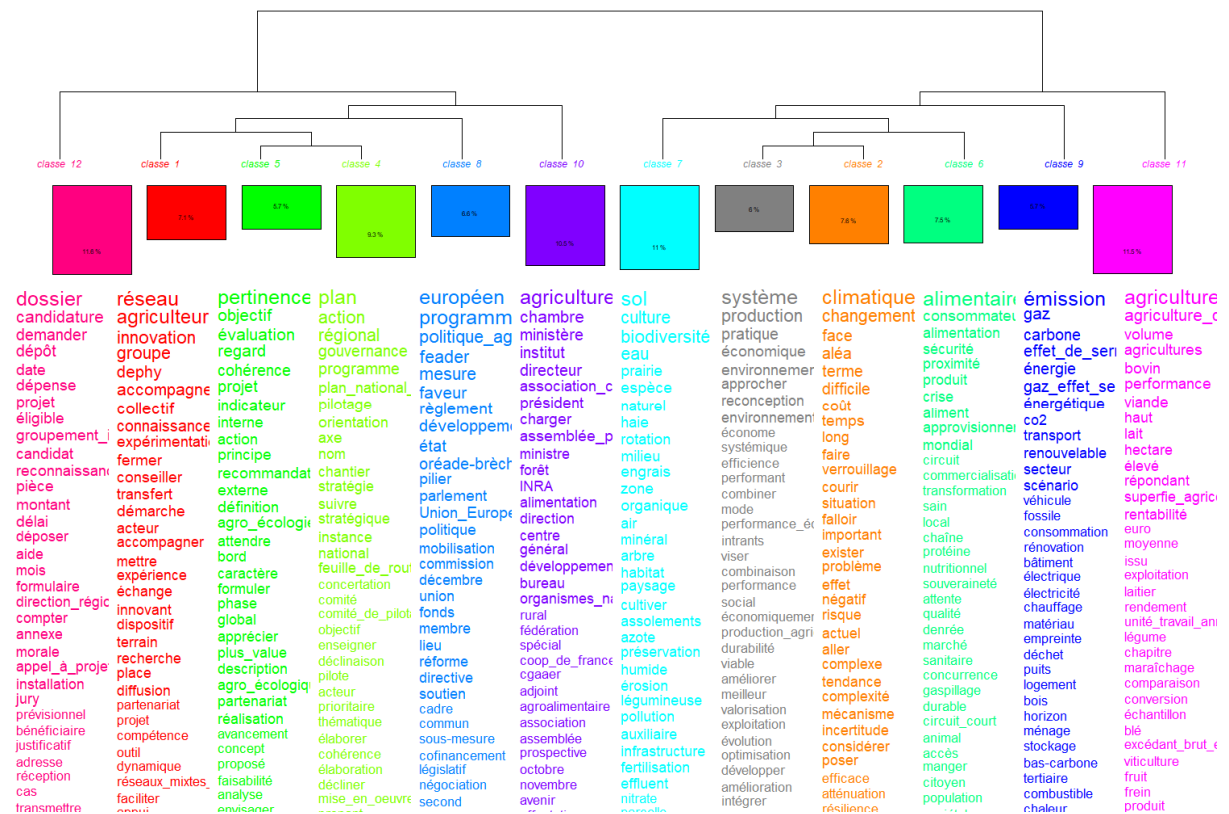


Figure 2: Dendrogram resulting from the textual analysis of the 163 texts of the corpus

a. A non-normative policy

On the 18th December 2012, Agriculture Minister Stéphane Le Foll launched France's new agroecological policy under the title "*Plan Produire autrement*" (see Figure 3). During this conference given at the CESE, the minister attempted to bring together the agricultural worlds around a common project, later renamed "Agroecology Project for France". The executive power first tried to implement the project developed by his Minister of Agriculture, notably in the form of government plans (17 in all) and administrative regulations (decree, order, circular, technical instruction).

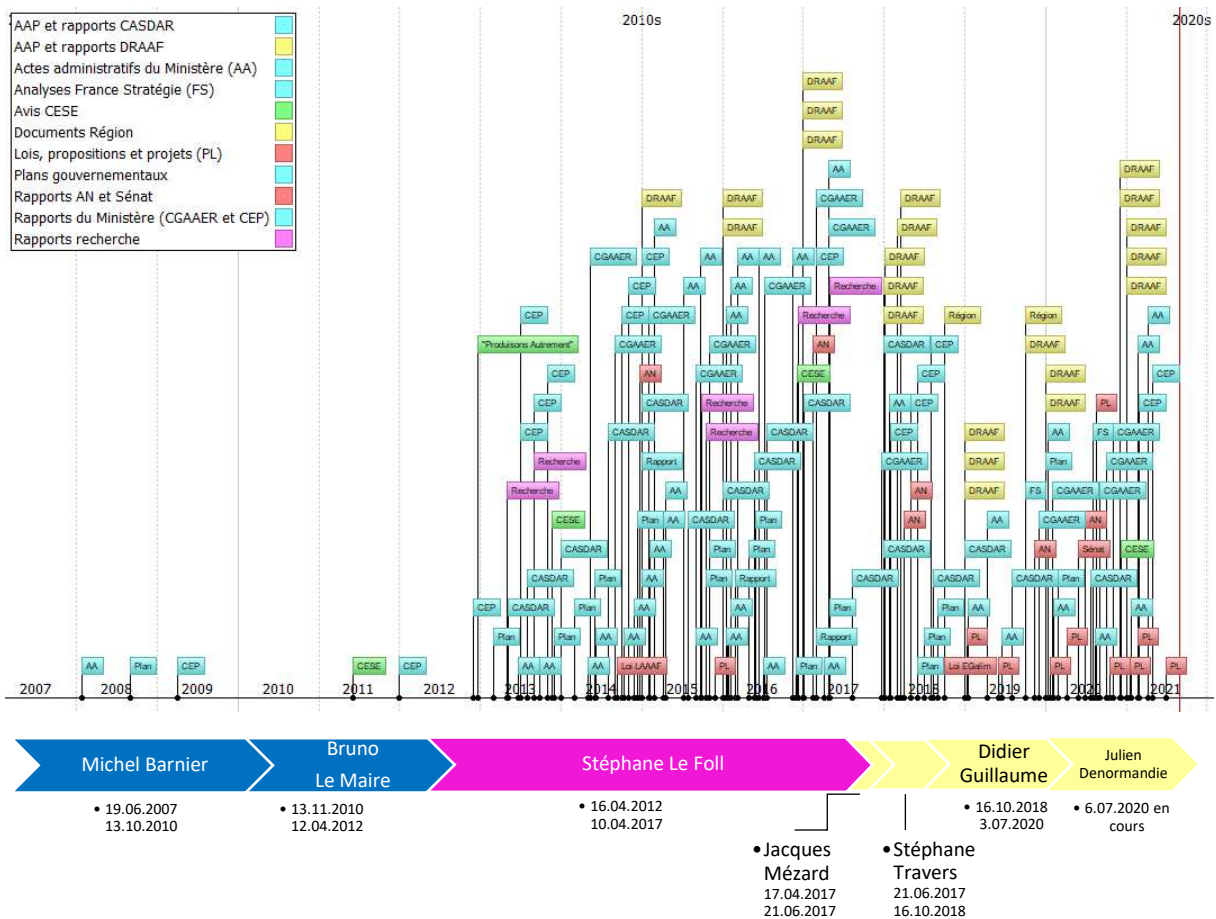


Figure 3: Chronology of the texts in the corpus and successive Ministers of Agriculture since 2008

These texts, mainly initiated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry (MAAF), multiplied in the years following the launch of the PAE and were characterized by their low level of normativity. The normativity of a policy is one of the three dimensions of a public policy analysis according to Pierre Muller, along with the cognitive and instrumental dimensions (Muller, 2000c). According to Muller, the normativity of a public policy is expressed through the establishment of standards that define the gap between the perceived reality and the desired reality. Depending on the desired model, these standards can, for example, impose a change towards a more economically efficient agriculture or force a stronger integration of the environmental issue in agriculture. However, this prescriptive dimension is not very present in the French agroecological policy, as the implementation of the PAE is rather in the form of "*projets*" and "*plans*", for which "*orientations*" and "*stratégies*" are defined (class 4). There are few binding measures and quantified objectives that would require farmers to achieve a specific and tangible goal. The absence of verbs expressing an obligation (*devoir*, *falloir*) in this class also confirms the desire to avoid any structural constraints in the PAE. In

addition to government plans and regulatory acts, the executive also governs in the form of “*appels à projets*” (class 12) made either at the national level, via the Special Allocation Account for Agricultural and Rural Development (CASDAR), or at the territorial level with the DRAAF. By definition, these calls for projects constitute a reversal of normative action, since it is no longer the State that imposes on farmers but the farmers who choose to include their action in a normative framework materialized by specifications (“*cahier des charges*”). It is also within this class that the verbs of obligation are found, which reflect more the administrative procedures to be respected for the success of the calls for projects rather than political norms enacted directly by the State.

If the government has chosen not to compel or impose, it is because it is betting above all on an agroecological transition through the diffusion of knowledge (class 1). The Ministry is therefore betting that the knowledge capitalized by some farmers on agroecology will be shared with others and that this dissemination movement will expand to create new professional standards. Class 1 also reveals that this transfer of knowledge is carried out through “*réseaux*” and “*groupes*” of farmers, in the form of “*collectifs*” and “*partenariats*”. This partnership dimension of the French agroecological project aims to involve a wide range of stakeholders who did not necessarily have a say in the implementation of previous agricultural policies and in the face of the State-agricultural profession pair. Thus, in addition to the farm advisory structures (class 1), class 10 provides information on the plurality of stakeholders concerned by the PAE, from traditional agricultural stakeholders (ACTA, APCA, Coop de France) to research institutes (INRA, IRSTEA¹⁸, CIRAD), agricultural development structures (ONVAR) and Ministry of Agriculture departments (DGPE, DGAL). These actors are mobilized to facilitate the diffusion of agroecological knowledge and to promote the implementation of the various policies conducted under the PAE in the territories. This is the case, for example, of the “DEPHY Farms” network and the “Groups 30,000”, two instruments resulting from the Ecophyto plan (launched in 2008 and renewed in 2015 and 2018) that involve several actors (Chambres d’agriculture, DRAAF) and rely entirely on the dissemination of knowledge among farmers. Indeed, the DEPHY network gathers pilot farms that aim to create, identify and share good practices related to the reduction of the use of pesticides. The Ecophyto 30,000 Groups have the same objective and aim to increase the density of the DEPHY network by multiplying by ten the number of farms involved in a voluntary approach to pesticide reduction. If this

¹⁸ INRA and IRSTEA merged on 1st January 2020 to form INRAE.

public action instrument is finally one of the few to present a quantified objective (30,000 committed farms), it is not accompanied by prescriptive measures but only tends to "disseminate the results obtained on the different farms of the network"¹⁹.

The various policies initiated and the architecture of the PAE will then be evaluated (class 5). Here, it is precisely an "évaluation" of the "pertinence" and "cohérence" of the PAE "au regard" the "objectifs" of the program that is raised. This class reveals once again the non-normative nature of the French agroecological project. Indeed, several documents regret the absence of simple and measurable "indicateurs" that would allow the evaluation of the stated objectives. While the various PAE evaluation documents point out this lack, they do not propose new, more precise result indicators and are content to make "recommandations". In an expected way, this class emerges rather late in the process of institutionalizing agroecology (2016 and 2017), at a time when the different policies have already been implemented. Class 5 can therefore be understood as an evaluation of the effectiveness of French public policies on agroecology at a time when some of these policies have failed²⁰. In the end, it appears that it is only the forms taken by agroecological policies that are evaluated, and not the characteristics of governmental agroecology itself.

b. An agroecology focused on performance

A look at the other block of 6 classes revealed by the textual analysis of the corpus shows us the specificities of agroecology instituted by the governmental project. As shown by previous work (Arrignon & Bosc, 2015; Ollivier et al., 2019), this analysis confirms that agroecology is institutionalized under the angle of performance (classes 3 and 11). Class 3 thus contains a lexicon relating to the achievement of results, through action verbs (*approcher, viser, améliorer*) and adjectives that qualify these results (*économome, systémique, viable*). The notion of performance is thus at the heart of the French agroecological project. But it is above all the notion of "performance économique" that is found, the expression being mentioned 356 times in the corpus, i.e. more than the environmental (205 times), social (66 times) and health (5 times) performance. Agroecology is not the only type of agricultural model that requires

¹⁹ " Ecophyto : objectif 30 000 exploitations agricoles ! ", Ministry of Agriculture and Food, 1st February 2021.

²⁰ The Ecophyto plan, launched in 2008 and aiming for a 50% reduction in pesticide use by 2018, has instead seen an increase in the consumption of plant protection products during the first five years of its application (cf. Guichard *et al.*, 2017).

economic performance. Class 11 provides information on other types of "high-performance agriculture", particularly the organic and conservation agriculture, for which several instruments for measuring their performance are mentioned (*hectare, rentabilité, rendement*). This performance imperative can be found in several reports commissioned prior to the formulation of the PAE by Stéphane Le Foll and the MAAF, in particular the report prepared by Marion Guillou, whose title "Towards doubly efficient agriculture to reconcile competitiveness and respect for the environment" (2013) is unequivocal²¹. Thus, "*double performance*" (which includes economic and environmental performance) is present 145 times in the corpus and "*triple performance*" (which includes the social dimension) 108 times.

This performance logic also spreads to the various issues addressed by the French agroecological project, which are the food issue (class 6) and the climate change issue (class 2). Food, which has become a strong focus of the PAE, particularly since the General States of Food (EGA) organized in 2017 under the Macron government, extends the logic of performance that structures Stéphane Le Foll's PAE. This is particularly visible in the evocation of the food "*marché*" which is often "*mondial*", and where "*concurrence*" between actors dominates. In a context of performance imperatives, the mention of the word "*crise*" in the corpus is not insignificant either. Indeed, a food crisis would have the consequence of freezing the ultimately productivist software of the PAE. The "*crise*" is therefore not perceived in its social dimension in terms of food insecurity but above all as an obstacle to the proper development of the globalized food market²². Class 2 also reveals a vocabulary in which climate change constitutes a threat to the environment, but also to the economy. Thus, the "*changement climatique*" puts farmers in front of new "*risques*" and "*aléas*" (climatic, economic and health) while leading to price "*volatilité*". This class also includes certain action and obligation verbs (*faire, falloir, aller*) that indicate the need to act in the face of this situation, both environmentally and economically.

Finally, the strong representation of a lexicon linked to dual economic and environmental performance within the PAE masks the absence of another term that is specific to historical agroecology, from the American pioneers to social movements. Indeed, the social

²¹ Report by Marion Guillou " Vers des agricultures doublement performantes pour concilier productivité et respect de l'environnement ", Agreenium-INRA, May 2013.

²² It should be noted that the numerous occurrences of the word "crise" are also related to the recent health crisis, which is mentioned in several documents of the corpus.

dimension of agroecology is very rarely present in the classes. The change from double to triple performance, precisely in order to integrate the social aspect of agroecology into the PAE, did not lead to a re-evaluation of the social performance objective. Thus, the occurrence “*performance sociale*” is found rather weakly and in only two classes of the textual analysis (see Figure 4).

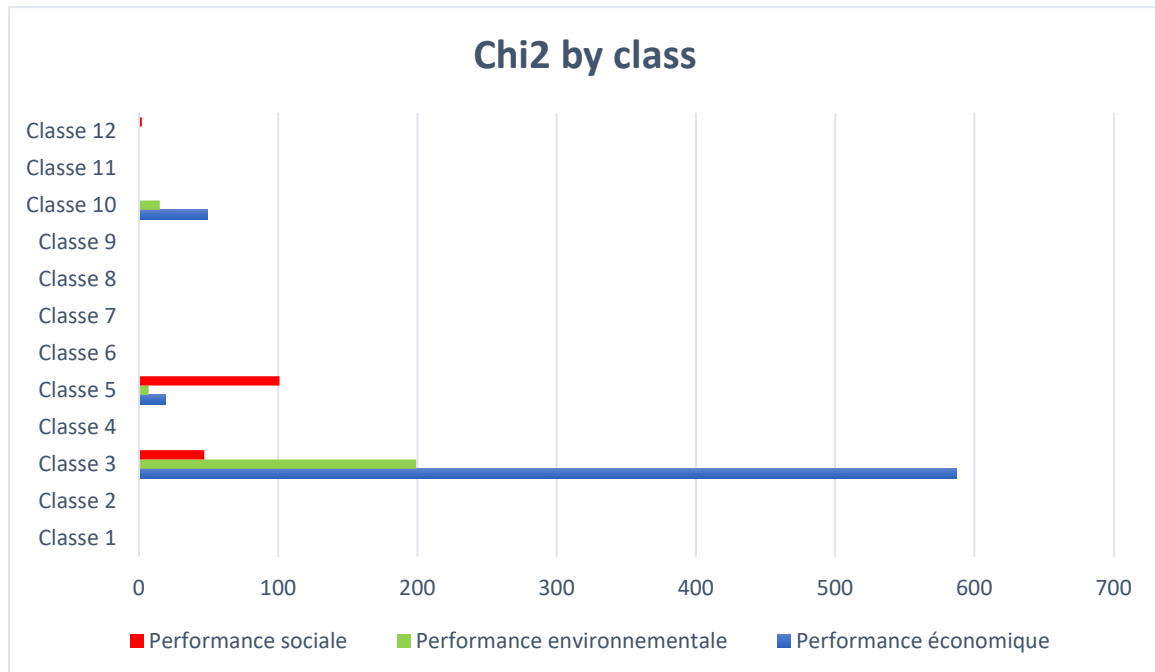


Figure 4: Chi2 by class of "*performance sociale*", "*performance environnementale*" and "*performance économique*"

It is interesting to analyze the chi2 by class of the three types of performance employed by the PAE, namely social, environmental and economic performance. Chi2 is a statistical test of independence between observed and expected values of variables according to a normal distribution. Within class 3, which deals with the characteristics and the notion of performance attached to agroecology, the chi2 is lower for the expression "*performance sociale*" (47) than for the other two components of the triple performance, namely environmental performance (199) and economic performance (587). Conversely, if the same analysis is made within class 5, which focuses on the evaluation of the PAE as a public policy, the result is very different. Indeed, the "*performance sociale*" is the first to appear within this class (101), while "*performance économique*" (7) and "*performance environnementale*" (19) are much less present. The social dimension is therefore not really taken into account in the definition and issues of agroecology, which would explain why it is highlighted in the evaluation documents

published after the launch of the PAE policies. In fact, in view of the underestimation of the social parameter, which has been denounced by certain associations, the architects of the PAE chose to reinject the social dimension into the texts and policies carried out during the examination of the project. This dimension is also present in the calls for GIEE projects published by the DRAAF, where the desire to achieve certain "social performance objectives" is mentioned.

The analysis of other occurrences also shows the low consideration of the social character of agroecology institutionalized by the PAE. An analysis of the occurrence "*travail*" shows us, for example, its absence from the classes relating to the characteristics and issues of agroecology, whereas a deep reflection on the work of farmers is usually carried by agroecology. The word "*travail*" is only present in class 5, which deals with the evaluation of public policies, and is only used for "*travailler à une meilleure mise en oeuvre du PAE*". The same is true for "*connaissance*", "*compétence*" and "*savoir-faire*" of farmers, on which agroecology wishes to rely in order to diffuse its agricultural practices. While these occurrences are quite logically part of class 1, which deals with knowledge transfer and the partnership component of the PAE, they do not appear in the other block, which focuses on the definition of agroecology.

c. An impoverished agroecology framework at the regional level

The analysis of the 23 texts of the corpus published at the level of the Occitanie region provides information on the way in which agroecology is implemented in the territories (see Figure 5). The two blocks, relating to the forms taken by public policies on agroecology and the characteristics of agroecology as put into policy by the PAE appear in a similar way as in the overall analysis (see Figure 2). These similarities can be easily understood with regard to the chronology of the implementation of agroecology in France. Indeed, the political initiative in agroecology is first carried by the government, especially following the "*Produisons autrement*" conference of 18 December 2012. It was only afterwards that the agroecological project spread to the regional level, from 2015. The first regional text included in the corpus is a call for GIEE projects for 2015 in the Midi-Pyrénées region²³. It is therefore the national

²³ DRAAF Midi-Pyrénées, " Appel à projets 2015 en région Midi-Pyrénées ", 6 February 2015. The law of 16 January 2015 on the delimitation of regions, regional and departmental elections merges the Midi-Pyrénées and Languedoc-Roussillon regions to create Occitanie (law that came into force on 31 December 2015).

frameworks for public action that are imposed on the decentralized levels of the State. However, even if the non-normative dimension of the policies carried out and the way in which agroecology is instituted from the point of view of performance are two parameters that can also be found within the regional analysis, the framing of the PAE at this administrative level is impoverished. This impoverishment is found both in the first block of classes relating to the characteristics of regional agroecology, and in the second one which concerns the form taken by the PAE at the territorial level.

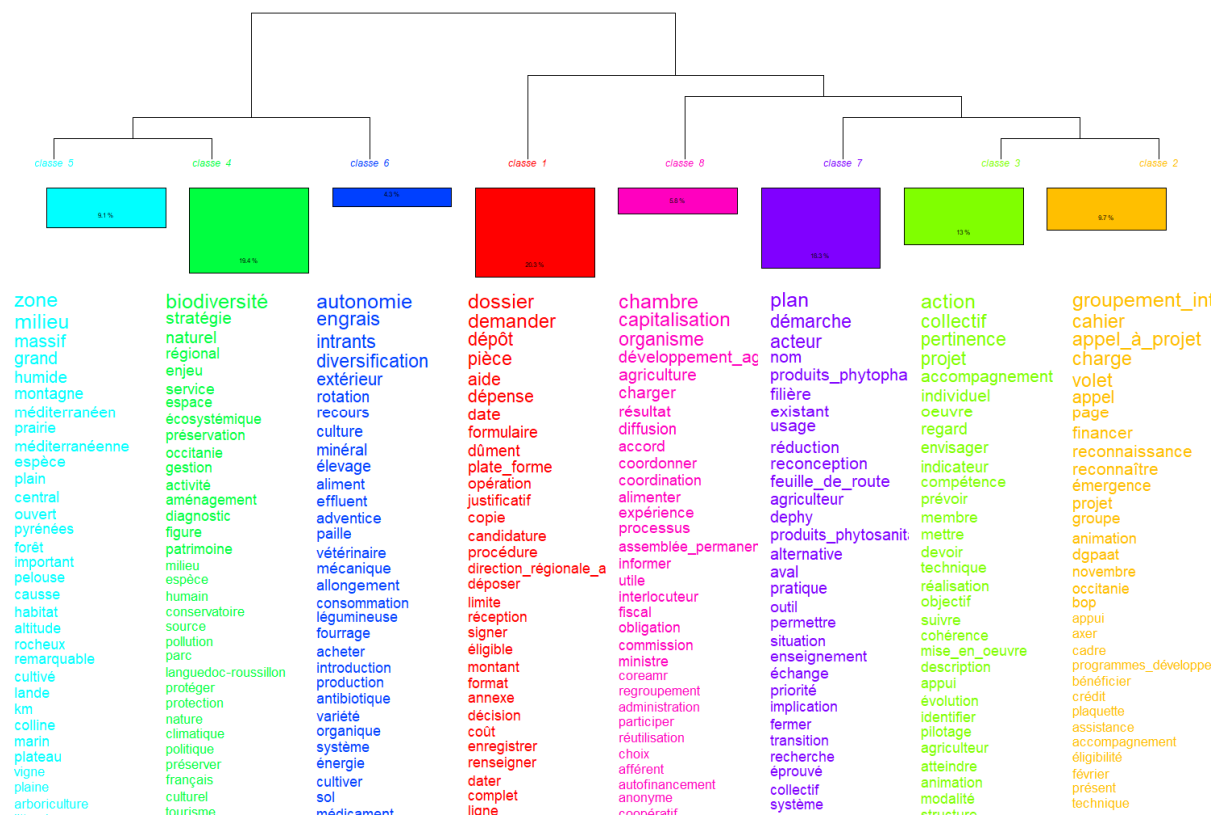


Figure 5: Dendrogram from the textual analysis of the 23 regional texts

The study of the first block (classes 5, 4, 6) reveals an agroecology logically characterized by its territory of implementation, marked by the "*montagnes*", the "*méditerranée*" or the "*causses*" (class 5). At this level, the main challenge of agroecology is the protection of the regional "*biodiversité*" (class 4) and the "*autonomie*" of "*intrants*" (class 6). Although these specificities are typical of the regional analysis, the fact remains that the diffusion of the PAE in the region has been weakened. Indeed, apart from the preservation of biodiversity, the region does not identify other PAE targets, as was the case at the global level, notably on the food or climate issue. Moreover, the new mention of agricultural autonomy is

used here to qualify autonomy at the farm level, whereas this criterion is used in a great number of calls for GIEE projects precisely for the creation of collectives. Therefore, the government's bet on the collective comes up against regional authorities that still think in terms of the farm.

The second block (classes 1, 8, 7, 3, 2) also reveals a diluted translation of the PAE at the territorial level. Class 8 on the dissemination of the agroecological policy does not mention the "*accompagnement*" of farmers or the "*transfert*" of "*pratiques*" and "*connaissances*", which are found at the global level. This class thus appears to be a very weak attempt to respond to the national desire to diffuse the PAE at all territorial administrative levels. The presence of a small number of program partners in this class (Chambres d'agriculture, APCA, COREAMR²⁴) and the absence of alternative agricultural development structures (CIVAM, RAD) confirm this idea. To complete this picture, it should also be noted that this block of classes distinguishes the two most common types of calls for projects, namely those relating to the DEPHY Farms and Groups 30 000 of the Ecophyto plan (class 7), and those relating to "Groupements d'intérêt économique et environnemental" (GIEE, class 2).

This alteration of the agroecological project in its translation at the regional level is also apparent in the surprising absence of the economic performance of agroecology, in favor of a re-evaluation of social performance. For example, the term "*double performance*" is not present in the corpus, unlike "*triple performance*", which includes the social dimension of agroecology. Conversely, class 7, which deals with the issue of plant protection products, includes many occurrences of the words "*travail*", "*savoir-faire*" and "*connaissance*", all of which being related to the social aspects of agroecology. These results are mainly explained by the chronology of the regional documents. Indeed, more than 70% of the texts (17 out of 23) were published from 2018 onwards and thus follow a period when PAE policies have been evaluated and corrected (see Figure 3, class 5). Several reports published at the national level between 2016 and 2017 effectively reported a lack of consideration of the social dimension of agroecology within the PAE. The actors of the French agroecological project were then incited to an update of their software, including more strongly the social axis in agroecological policies. As mentioned earlier, this social incentive was first carried out at the national level before spreading to the regional one.

²⁴ The Regional Commission for the Agricultural Economy and the Rural World (COREAMR) was set up by a decree of 23 April 2015 to exercise its advisory powers vis-à-vis the regional prefect for the recognition of GIEE.

V. Discussion

Having studied the results of the textual analysis of the French agroecological project, it is now time to explore its scope and contextualize it with regard to the political and institutional environment. Thus, we will see that the Ministry's focus on the non-normative and the territory does not necessarily lead to a bottom-up political approach (a). We will then analyze that the strong focus on the performance causes a deterioration in the social dimension originally attached to historical agroecology (b). Finally, it will be determined whether agroecology constitutes a new *référentiel* of the agricultural sector (c).

a. A policy with a limited bottom-up approach

The specificities of the French agroecological policy are numerous. The PAE is presented as a non-binding policy, disseminated through the practices and knowledge of farmers, and benefiting from multiple and varied partners. Governmental communication also emphasizes the territorial dimension of the agroecological project, which allows territorial actors to be empowered while justifying a certain withdrawal of the State (Arrignon & Bosc, 2015). These different characteristics of the French PAE are reflected in the historical principles of agroecology, which emphasize traditional knowledge and local practices of farmers, while relying on the collective and self-organization. While the government is trying to remain faithful to the original characteristics of agroecology, is the PAE a real "bottom-up" approach to agricultural development, i.e., a process of political construction that spreads from the bottom to the top? The bottom-up logic claimed by the government is not, in practice, really one, and suffers from several paradoxes.

First, while the objective of the PAE is to encourage bottom-up approaches (creation of farmers' groups, revaluation of local practices), the French agroecological project embodies a top-down approach precisely because it is part of a governmental program (Lamine, 2017), which imposes a bureaucratic logic of framing actions and controlling resources. The participatory dimension of the PAE, where farmers are encouraged to form collectives and reduce their use of phytosanitary products, is therefore paradoxical as these incentives are contained in programs and calls for projects launched by the state. Farmers participate in the agroecological project only within the limits formulated by the government. The PAE partners

in the territories did not seek either to detach themselves from political action at the national level in order to establish new policies. Thus, as previously stated, neither the DRAAF nor the Regional Council of Occitanie took the initiative for the PAE at the regional level but only followed the State's orientations in terms of agroecology. The content of the texts found at the regional level and their low number confirm this observation²⁵. Yet, since 2013, the Regional Councils have been managing the Regional Rural Development Programs (PDRR), financed thanks to the European EAFRD, which constitute a lever for the agroecological transition. The PDRRs contain compulsory measures and others whose opening is left to the free appreciation of the regions. While some regions are therefore more advanced than others in terms of agroecological transition, the problem remains that of the government's top-down approach. Indeed, while the PDRRs are now managed by the Regional Councils, which have their own political orientations, the Ministry of Agriculture disseminated in 2014 a methodological guide²⁶ proposing possible measures to be included in the PDRR, while the regions had already drafted their own programming document²⁷. Moreover, the polysemous, even deliberately vague, nature of agroecology favors the inclusion in the PDRRs of measures that do not target agroecology as such, but rather projects aimed at organic farming or “*double performance*”. This vagueness surrounding the definition of agroecology by the PAE is also at play in the dispersion of actions of the PNDAR, another rural development program, financed by the CASDAR (Filippi et al., 2020). The State, by its desire not to precisely qualify the agroecological project or to issue normative policies, caused a fragmentation of the measures carried under the PAE, which ultimately resulted in an “*agroécologie à la carte*” (Bosc & Arrignon, 2020a). The alleged withdrawal of the State from the implementation of the PAE is therefore illusory and above all masks an agricultural *cogestion* that, even when renewed, still exists.

Although the Ministry claims to want to rely on farmers, their skills and know-how, the PAE was nevertheless instituted and administered by the classic actors of French agricultural policies, according to a *cogestion* system. This system, which appeared in France in the 1960s (Muller, 2000a), describes the development of agricultural policies through the joint action of

²⁵ Only 23 texts were selected from the Occitanie region, 21 from the DRAAF, 1 from the Regional Council and 1 from the Regional Chamber of Agriculture.

²⁶ “Guide méthodologique pour la mobilisation du FEADER en faveur du projet agro-écologique”, Ministry of Agriculture, Agri-Food and Forestry, May 2014.

²⁷ Analysis “Regional rural development programmes (PDRR) and agroecology”, Centre d'étude et de prospective, May 2018.

professional agricultural leaders and state representatives (Hervieu & Purseigle, 2013). Co-management is, directly or indirectly, at the origin of the reformulation of the French agroecological plan (Jolly, 2015). Indeed, the Ministry of Agriculture and the majority farmers' union set the tone of the agroecological project, through ambivalent but uninterrupted relations. For example, one interviewee states that the FNSEA discussed with the Elysée Palace to promote a conciliatory minister at the Agriculture Ministry²⁸, while Stéphane Le Foll made sure to maintain dialogue with the majority unions by using expressions such as "double performance" or "agroecological transition" (Arrignon, 2020). Nevertheless, as is the habit of socialist governments, the PAE has tried to open up the management of agroecology policy to new actors. Beyond formal or informal consultations (Jolly, 2015), the public policy documents contained in the corpus reflect this and come from many institutions that each had a role to play in the development of the PAE. For example, the CESE hosted the inaugural conference of the French agroecological project; the Centre for studies and outlook (CEP), attached to the Ministry, published several analyses aimed at clarifying and evaluating the PAE measures; research institutes such as Agreenium and INRA²⁹, inherited preparatory work for the 2014 "*loi d'avenir pour l'agriculture, l'alimentation et la forêt*" (LAAAF), as did the CGAAER³⁰; parliamentarians also contributed to some aspects of the PAE³¹. However, despite the shift to a "pluralized" *cogestion* (Lamine, 2017), the construction of the PAE is entrusted to classic actors and institutions of agricultural policies, which embody less a form of rupture than a will to combine the different majority branches. The opening up of *cogestion* is therefore limited to certain partners, while other more alternative actors are excluded. The marginalization of the latter and the absence of their demands in public action documents has led to disputes, particularly concerning the weak social dimension attributed to agroecology by the government.

b. An agroecology stripped of its social dimension

On the sidelines of the first International Symposium on Agroecology organized at the FAO on 18 and 19 September 2014, a collective for a peasant agroecology denounces the

²⁸ Interview, August 2021.

²⁹ Report by Marion Guillou "Vers des agricultures doublement performantes pour concilier productivité et respect de l'environnement", op. cit.

³⁰ Report "Evaluation de la politique de développement agricole", General Council for Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas (CGAAER), 15 May 2014.

³¹ Report by Dominique Potier "Pesticides et agro-écologie. Les champs du possible", submitted to the Prime Minister Manuel Valls, 22 December 2014.

government project whose sole purpose is to "consolidate an agricultural policy with a predominantly export vocation" and within which "social issues are not taken into account." Instead, the collective demands a "social and ecological agriculture anchored in the territories"³². These protests are taking shape in a context where the French agroecological project is being elaborated around a lexicon focused on performance and far removed from the original agroecological principles. As a militant concept carried by social movements, agroecology is becoming "depoliticized" through contact with the State (Bellon & Ollivier, 2018), which strips it of its social character and gives it an appearance more likely to please the dominant players of the agricultural sector.

The loss of the social orientation of agroecology originates in the assumed desire to federate the agricultural worlds. Thus, the vocabulary of the PAE centered around the notion of performance, and in particular the emphasis placed on economic performance, made it possible to reassure the FNSEA about the program's objectives (Arrignon & Bosc, 2015). The Ministry goes even further in the economization of agroecology, presenting it as an additional guarantee of competitiveness for farmers, rather than as a means of preserving the environment (Arrignon & Bosc, 2017). Social issues are initially absent from the ministerial software, as they are also absent from the content of the *Loi d'avenir* (LAAAF), enacted on 13 October 2014. In it, agroecology is not qualified as such, it is the "agroecological production systems" that are defined as "systems favoring the autonomy of farms and the improvement of their competitiveness, by maintaining or decreasing economic profitability, improving the added value of productions and reducing the consumption of energy, water, fertilizers, phytopharmaceutical products and veterinary medicines". This inclusive definition of agroecology is also part of the government's peacemaking strategy, which aims to reconcile the interests involved by avoiding cleavages (Lamine et al., 2019; Lecole & Thoyer, 2017).

The dismantling of the social function of agroecology is moreover visible in the choice and chronology of the lexicon used by the government. Thus, it was only a year and a half after the official launch of the PAE that Stéphane Le Foll, during a press conference on 17 June 2014, added to the agroecological project the social dimension that it lacked, shifting the government's communication from a "*double performance*" objective to that of "*triple performance*"³³. This

³² Statement " L'agroécologie ne peut être que paysanne !", op. cit.

³³ " Agro-écologie, la double performance devient triple ", www.campagnesetenvironnement.fr, 17 June 2014 (cf. Arrignon & Bosc, 2015).

late addition reflects the real aim of the PAE, within which the social and protest dimension is only secondary. In this sense, a comparison between France and Latin America, the original territory of agroecology, is interesting. In Latin America, agroecology is indeed a political struggle that raises strong egalitarian demands and carries a real desire for social change (Bosc & Arrignon, 2020a). These characteristics, expressed in France by social movements, were immediately dismissed when agroecology was established as a new agricultural development policy. We can also wonder about the government's choice of the term "agroecology", as it follows several attempts to qualify a new agricultural public policy. Thus, after "sustainable development"³⁴, "agriculture with high environmental value" (HVE, *agriculture à haute valeur environnementale*) and "ecologically intensive agriculture" (AEI, *agriculture écologiquement intensive*)³⁵, "agroecology" was chosen by Stéphane Le Foll as the standard for the new French agricultural policy. However, before the "*Produisons autrement*" conference of 18 December 2012, very few public policy documents mention the term agroecology: the AE occurrence appears only 31 times in 5 public policy documents. The occurrences searched for refer either to agroecological practices or to international documents that use the term (IAASTD report³⁶, De Schutter report³⁷). None of them refers to the establishment of a French agroecological policy. Thus, it seems that Stéphane Le Foll has adopted a vocabulary that had never been used in French agricultural policies, and has lightened its social dimension in order to please the major actors of the agricultural sector.

However, this absence of the social dimension in the French agroecological project must be moderated. Although social forms of work are not effectively implemented in the PAE, the Ministry has nevertheless made an effort to enhance the status of certain key players in the territories, particularly certain agricultural and rural organizations (CIVAM, CUMA, FNAB). These structures, with greater financial capacity, have been given greater weight on the local scene and have been able to disseminate the agroecological project more easily among the actors in the territory.

³⁴ The concept of sustainable development was included in Article 6 of the Charter of the Environment, which was incorporated into the Constitution in 2005.

³⁵ These two expressions were developed by Michel Griffon following the Grenelle de l'environnement in 2007.

³⁶ Report "Agriculture at a Crossroads", International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD), 2009.

³⁷ Report "Agroecology and the Right to Food", Report presented to the 16th session of the UN Human Rights Council by Olivier De Schutter, 2011.

c. Agroecology as a new agricultural *référentiel*?

If Stéphane Le Foll wishes to bring together agricultural worlds with divergent interests, it is because he sees the PAE as a break with previous agricultural policies. This desire for a paradigm shift has been energetically supported by the Minister and his cabinet, who have endeavored to disseminate this new model within the agricultural world, as confirmed by this Ministry staff member: *"At the start of the agroecological project, we did an enormous amount of teaching ("pédagogie"). For example, we had steering committees, in the first few years we had ten a year, especially with the agricultural profession and research. This was to make people understand what we were getting at, because at the beginning the word agroecology did not necessarily appeal, and I think that now it is found almost everywhere."*³⁸ This teaching has borne fruit, as the polarization between actors linked to agroecology is less marked today than when the PAE was launched, in particular due to the appropriation of agroecology by many actors carrying contrasting agricultural alternatives (Bellon & Ollivier, 2018). Some actors critical of agriculture have thus moved closer to more neutral actors by being integrated into the program's architecture and into the policies conducted under the PAE. The General States of Food, organized in 2017 under the new political majority, brought together the whole of an agricultural sector that had little to object to an agroecology that had become consensual. Philippe Mauguin, the former director of Stéphane Le Foll's cabinet, co-chair of a workshop, confirms: *"What was striking was to see how far we have come, the consensus on the need for agroecological transition which is total and almost immediate between all the parties. I said to myself, in a few years, the debate on the need to commit to this agroecological transition has been partly won"*³⁹. In addition to having been instituted in a new agricultural policy, agroecology has thus become part of the everyday language of the sector and of civil society. It is therefore possible to question the extent of this change in order to determine whether it can be considered as a transformation of the agricultural *référentiel*.

According to Muller, a change of agricultural *référentiel* occurs when there is a gap between a sectoral *référentiel* and the global *référentiel*. The sectoral *référentiel* corresponds to the image one has of the place of a particular sector in society, whereas the global *référentiel* is defined as the general representation around which sectoral representations are articulated

³⁸ Interview at the General Directorate for the Economic and Environmental Performance of Enterprises (DGPE), Ministry of Agriculture and Food, April 2021.

³⁹ Interview, June 2021.

(Muller, 2000c). Thus, it seems that the agricultural sector, which has been locked into a market logic in line with trade liberalization since the 1980s, is out of step with the image that French society has of its relationship with the world, where the environmental issue, the emphasis placed on territories and the withdrawal of the central State are shacking up the global *référentiel*. Agroecology, like multifunctionality in its time, has thus benefited from the destabilization of the global-sectoral relationship to institutionalize itself within a new agricultural public policy since, according to Muller, "the purpose of every public policy is to take charge of the misalignments that may occur between a sector and global society" (Muller, 2000c). The arrival of agroecology at the top of the French government also took advantage of the window of opportunity offered by a political changeover. A change in agricultural policy had indeed been prepared upstream by the left, particularly within the Saint-Germain Group⁴⁰. The arrival of this new political majority then exacerbated tensions between supporters and opponents of the new agricultural model being promoted. Conflicts during a period of transition between two *référentiel* are frequent and intense, and can be explained by the fact that they involve both ideas and "the very existence of the groups in question as actors, through the image they have of themselves and the acceptance of their place in the world" (Muller, 1995). In order to avoid excessive tensions, the Ministry implemented a strategy of conciliation between agricultural actors, using an appropriate vocabulary. For example, the expression "agroecological transition", which evokes a smooth change in the agricultural system and not a rupture, has now become the norm (Arrignon, 2021). The word "transition" is also used elsewhere in the political landscape, for example in the title of the Ministry of "Ecological and Solidarity Transition", instead of the former Ministry of the Environment.

With the introduction of a new agroecological policy, is the market *référentiel* being replaced by a new "sustainable agriculture *référentiel*" (Muller, 2009)? This is far from certain, as the reference to the market remains prominent in the French PAE, symbolized by the strong focus on the notion of performance, particularly economic performance. Similarly, the desire not to constrain and to give responsibility to agricultural actors also resembles a market logic, where the State expects farmers to "regulate" the agroecological project themselves by disseminating it to the greatest number. While it is true that the PAE mobilizes several new issues at once (pesticides, food, climate) and has an assumed will to rely on local knowledge

⁴⁰ The Saint-Germain Group was an informal discussion group created by Stéphane Le Foll to discuss agricultural issues. According to Bertrand Hervieu, who was one of the twenty or so people in the group, the idea of the Saint-Germain Group was "to prepare a possible return of the left" (Interview, July 2021).

and territory, it still fits into a productive paradigm that does not allow it to be deeply differentiated from the market referential in force since the 1980s (Arrignon & Bosc, 2015). This is not the first time that the different aspects of the PAE mentioned have been translated into public policies. Indeed, favoring a bottom-up and systemic approach and promoting the territorial scale and farmers' collectives are characteristics found in some previous policies, such as those related to land management contracts (CTE) and multifunctionality. It appears that it is only their articulation within the same agricultural policy that is a novelty, not their presence as such (Lamine, 2017). Moreover, compared to these former policies, the instruments deployed by the PAE (GIEE, DEPHY Farms) are *soft law* solutions based on the belief in the knock-on effect of information and knowledge (Arrignon & Bosc, 2017). We can therefore doubt their real effectiveness, whereas the CTEs had made it possible to generalize the principle of contractualization to the agricultural profession (Léger et al., 2006). In short, the French agroecological policy appears to be an aggregate of measures already adopted in the past and within which a strong productivist logic persists. Under these conditions, the establishment of a "new" agricultural *référentiel* is therefore uncertain.

VI. Conclusion

This research reveals the process of institutionalization of agroecology in France, through its main instrument, the "Agroecological Project for France" launched in 2012 by the government. The result is that agroecology, a vocabulary initially remote from any political endeavor, has been seized by the French state, which has made it the basis of its new agricultural policy and deployed it at all administrative levels of the territory. The placing of agroecology on the political agenda in France reveals a double transformation, that of public policies in their forms - the non-normative character of the PAE being assumed - and that of agroecology in its definition itself - with an inflection on economic performance to the detriment of the social factor. The normative vagueness and the withdrawal of the social parameter are added to the particularly polysemic nature of agroecology, which finally causes an erosion of the PAE in its dissemination at the regional level. It then becomes clear that French agroecological policy carries certain contradictions. First, the top-down political approach announced by the Ministry is hampered by the need to unite the agricultural community in a context of renewed *cogestion*. Then, there is the announcement of an "agroecological" project that should include a strong

social dimension, in accordance with the principles and values of agroecology, while in reality economic performance predominates.

While the French agroecological project could be a means of operationalizing an ideology from above, it turns out that the ideology in question is not one. The governmental agroecology does not in fact carry the original idea of agroecology as defined by science, practices and social movements (Wezel et al., 2009), nor does it represent a new model that would distinguish itself from previous agricultural policies implemented in France. French agroecology thus brings together a mixture of various ideologies, where "the logic of greening agriculture and the commodification of the environment are intertwined without it being possible to decide on the outcome of the process" (Arrignon & Bosc, 2015). This vagueness contained within the PAE itself reflects on farmers who find themselves disoriented by the various contradictory incentives formulated by the agroecological project (Bonny, 2020). It is therefore possible to draw a parallel between the French agroecological policy and the policy aimed at institutionalizing family farming in Argentina, both of which were introduced without really challenging the productivist agricultural paradigm. In both cases, "the fragmentation of the agricultural sector from the point of view of public policies seems to be a response to the contradictions generated by the injunctions to remain competitive in a globalized economy and those that call for the territorialization of public action and the taking into account of the environment" (Gisclard & Allaire, 2012).

As for the question of whether the agroecological policy constitutes a change of *référentiel*, it seems for now that its ideological proximity to the market *référentiel* prevents any change in the agricultural cycle. The new French agroecological policy, in its attempt to reconcile the economy and ecology, is ultimately situated in an in-between situation that characterizes society as a whole, where the injunctions to greater general "écologisation" (Lamine, 2017) clash with the objectives of productivity and competitiveness that are still in force. The PAE is therefore the right translation within the agricultural sector of the logics that underlie global society: claiming to want to change everything, without really changing anything.

Afterword

This thesis and the internship associated has provided me with valuable lessons both from the point of view of the object of study and of research methods and techniques. Thus, the subject of the institutionalization of agroecology in French public policies allowed me to explore in more detail several issues related to agricultural development and the architecture of the French agricultural system as such. This experience also taught me a lot about the research process, especially in the delimitation of the subject and the choice of research questions, the initiation to quantitative research via the Iramuteq software, the preparation and conduct of interviews, and the writing of the final report. On this last point, learning how to write a scientific article and the multiple codes it requires is a real added value to this experience and will undoubtedly help me in the rest of my journey.

The plan initially conceived in March evolved as the internship progressed. Given the small number of documents published on agroecology at the regional level, the analysis focused more strongly on the national level, even though a comparison between the two scales was made. Another reason for this was the difficulty in making interviews with personalities who were involved in the construction of the PAE at the regional level. Furthermore, the discovery of Pierre Muller's theory of public policy made me decide to integrate the issue of the *référentiel* more fully into this work. Finally, the translation into English of a research work done entirely in French was complex. I hope, however, that this work is readable and understandable.

This year spent in the Master's program in International Development Studies and punctuated by a 6-months internship at INRAE was very rich and educative. Deepening my knowledge of specific subjects, familiarizing myself with research methods and benefiting from the experience of researchers has given me a taste for research. I would like to continue my journey in this direction.

Quentin Charrieras,

1st September 2021

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Annexes

Appendix 1. List of the texts included in the corpus

Gouvernement plans :

1. **Plan** Ecophyto de septembre 2008
2. **Plan** Energie, Méthanisation, Autonomie, Azote de mars 2013
3. **Plan** Ambition Bio de décembre 2013
4. **Rapport de présentation** du Projet Agroécologique 2014
5. **Plan** Enseigner à Produire Autrement de mars 2014
6. **Plan** Ecoantibio de juin 2014
7. **Plan** Protéines Végétales de décembre 2014
8. **Rapport** Annuel sur l'Agroécologie de 2014
9. **Rapport** de présentation du Projet Agroécologique 2015
10. **Plan** Ecophyto II d'octobre 2015
11. **Stratégie** Nationale Bas Carbone de novembre 2015
12. **Rapport** Annuel sur l'Agroécologie de 2015
13. **Plan** Agroforesterie de mai 2016
14. **Plan** Bien Être Animal de juin 2016
15. **Plan** Semences et Plants pour une Agriculture Durable de décembre 2016
16. **Rapport** Annuel sur l'Agroécologie de 2016
17. **Plan** Ecoantibio II de mai 2017
18. **Plan** Ambition Bio II de juin 2018
19. **Plan** Biodiversité de juillet 2018
20. **Plan** Ecophyto II+ de septembre 2018
21. **Plan** Enseigner à Produire Autrement de janvier 2020
22. **Stratégie** Nationale Bas Carbone II de Mars 2020

Regulatory and administrative acts :

23. **Circulaire** du 23 janvier 2008 relative aux recommandations pédagogiques pour le renforcement de l'enseignement relatif aux produits phytosanitaires
24. **Circulaire** du 20 juin 2013 relative aux orientations concernant la préparation du programme national de

- développement agricole et rural 2014-2020
25. **Circulaire** du 25 septembre 2013 relative aux cahiers des charges concernant la rédaction des contrats d'objectifs et des programmes pluriannuels de développement agricole et rural éligibles au financement du CASDAR
26. **Guide** méthodologique de mai 2014 relatif à la mobilisation des mesures du FEADER en faveur du projet agro-écologique
27. **Annexe du guide** méthodologique relatif à la mobilisation des mesures du FEADER en faveur du projet agro-écologique
28. **Note de service** du 5 juin 2014 relative au lancement d'un appel à propositions à destination des organismes nationaux à vocation agricole et rurale
29. **Décret** du 13 octobre 2014 relatif au groupement d'intérêt économique et environnemental
30. **Instruction technique** du 25 novembre 2014 relative aux groupements d'intérêt économique et environnemental
31. **Instruction technique** du 14 janvier 2015 relative au dépôt et réception des dossiers d'aides à l'installation relevant de la programmation 2014-2020
32. **Instruction technique** du 5 février 2012 rectifiant l'instruction technique du 25 novembre 2014
33. **Note de service** du 26 février 2015 relative à l'appel à projet pilotes pour accompagner les exploitations et ateliers technologiques de l'enseignement agricole dans la transition agro-écologique
34. **Instruction technique** du 9 avril 2015 relative à l'instruction des demandes d'aides à l'installation relevant de la programmation 2014-2020

35. **Décret** du 16 avril 2015 relatif à la mise en œuvre des programmes de développement rural pour la période 2014-2020
36. **Instruction technique** du 9 juillet 2015 relative à l'organisation des trophées de l'agro-écologie 2015 au niveau régional
37. **Arrêté** du 26 août 2015 relatif au plan de compétitivité et d'adaptation des exploitations agricoles mis en œuvre dans le cadre des programmes de développement rural
38. **Instruction technique** du 25 septembre 2015 relative à l'habilitation par les DRAAF DAAF des organismes de conseils pour le système de conseil agricole
39. **Instruction technique** du 19 janvier 2016 relative au dispositif national d'accompagnement des projets et initiatives des coopératives d'utilisation en commun du matériel agricole
40. **Instruction technique** du 19 janvier 2016 relative à l'organisation des trophées de l'agro-écologie 2016 au niveau régional
41. **Instruction technique** du 10 février 2016 relative au lancement de l'appel à mobilisation collective pour l'agro-écologie 2016 « Animation des GIEE »
42. **Instruction technique** du 10 février 2016 relative à la consolidation et à l'élargissement du réseau FERME DEPHY Ecophyto : démarche de réengagement et appel à de nouvelles candidatures
43. **Note de service** du 10 mars 2016 relative au développement des compétences des agents du MAAF en matière d'agro-écologie
44. **Instruction technique** du 16 juin 2016 relative à la mise en place d'une instance d'orientation et de suivi du projet agro-écologique en région
45. **Instruction technique** du 6 juillet 2016 relative à la mise en œuvre de la capitalisation des GIEE
46. **Instruction technique** du 16 novembre 2016 relative à la consolidation et à l'élargissement du réseau FERME DEPHY Ecophyto : appel à candidatures complémentaire
47. **Instruction technique** du 4 avril 2017 relative au lancement d'appel à projets en région pour l'animation des GIEE
48. **Instruction technique** du 24 avril 2017 relative au lancement d'un appel à projet visant à sélectionner des projets d'expérimentation de systèmes agro-écologiques pour un usage des pesticides en ultime recours
49. **Instruction technique** du 25 janvier 2018 relative au lancement d'un appel à projet visant à sélectionner des projets d'expérimentation de systèmes agro-écologiques pour un usage des pesticides en ultime recours
50. **Instruction technique** du 15 janvier 2019 relative à l'accompagnement des collectifs d'agriculteurs en transition agro-écologique : groupements d'intérêt économique et environnemental et groupes 30 000 du plan Ecophyto
51. **Instruction technique** du 11 avril 2019 relative à l'organisation des trophées de l'agro-écologie 2018-2019 au niveau régional
52. **Note technique** du 19 juin 2019 relative à la déclinaison régionale du plan Ecophyto
53. **Instruction technique** du 5 février 2020 relative à la protection des ressources en eau des captages prioritaires utilisés pour la production d'eau destinée à la consommation humaine
54. **Arrêté** du 6 août 2020 relatif au projet stratégique national pour l'enseignement agricole et au schéma prévisionnel national des formations de l'enseignement agricole applicables pour les années 2016-2020
55. **Instruction technique** du 1^{er} décembre 2020 relative à relative à l'organisation des trophées de l'agro-écologie 2020-2021 au niveau régional
56. **Instruction technique** du 25 janvier 2021 relative au lancement de l'appel à candidatures pour le renouvellement du réseau DEPHY FERME Ecophyto
57. **Instruction technique** du 24 février 2021 relative aux modalités d'instruction des programmes régionaux de développement agricole et rural de l'hexagone pour 2021

58. **Instruction technique** du 7 avril 2021 relative au lancement de l'édition 2021-2022 des trophées de l'agro-écologie

CASDAR calls for projects :

59. **Circulaire** du 7 mai 2013 relative au lancement de l'appel à projets CASDAR « mobilisation collective pour l'agro-écologie » pour l'année 2013
60. **Circulaire** du 31 juillet 2013 relative au lancement de l'appel à projets développement agricole et rural d'innovation et de partenariat pour l'année 2014
61. **Rapport** d'activité 2014 du CASDAR
62. **Note de service** du 4 août 2014 relative au lancement de l'appel à projets développement agricole et rural d'innovation et de partenariat pour l'année 2015
63. **Rapport** d'activité 2015 du CASDAR
64. **Note de service** du 30 juillet 2015 relative au lancement de l'appel à projets développement agricole et rural d'innovation et de partenariat pour l'année 2016
65. **Rapport** d'activité 2016 du CASDAR
66. **Appel à projets** national sur le plan Ecophyto II programme 2016
67. **Note de service** du 22 juillet 2016 relative au lancement de l'appel à projets développement agricole et rural d'innovation et de partenariat pour l'année 2017
68. **Rapport** d'activité 2017 du PNDAR
69. **Instruction technique** du 10 août 2017 relative au lancement de l'appel à projets développement agricole et rural d'innovation et de partenariat pour l'année 2018
70. **Rapport** relatif à aux actions menées dans le cadre du PNDAR 2014-2018
71. **Rapport** d'activité 2018 du PNDAR
72. **Note de service** du 10 août 2018 relative au lancement de l'appel à projets développement agricole et rural d'innovation et de partenariat pour l'année 2019
73. **Rapport d'activité** 2019 du PNDAR
74. **Note de service** du 5 août 2019 relative au lancement de l'appel à projets développement agricole et rural

d'innovation et de partenariat pour l'année 2020

75. **Note de service** du 23 juillet 2020 relative au lancement de l'appel à projets développement agricole et rural d'innovation et de partenariat pour l'année 2021

France Stratégie reports and analysis :

76. **Rapport** d'octobre 2019 relatif à la politique agricole commune et la transition agroécologique
77. **Note d'analyse** d'août 2020 relative aux performances économiques et environnementales de l'agroécologie

CGAAER reports :

78. **Rapport** de mai 2014 relatif à l'évaluation de la politique de développement agricole
79. **Rapport** d'octobre 2014 relatif aux contributions possibles de l'agriculture et de la forêt à la lutte contre le changement climatique
80. **Rapport** de février 2015 relatif à la promotion des systèmes agroforestiers
81. **Rapport** de septembre 2015 relatif aux plans régionaux d'agriculture durable
82. **Rapport** de novembre 2015 relatif à l'évaluation du plan semences et agriculture durable
83. **Rapport** de septembre 2016 relatif à la mobilisation des partenaires du projet agro-écologique
84. **Rapport** de mars 2017 relatif à la certification environnementale des exploitations agricoles
85. **Rapport** de juillet 2017 relatif à l'évolution du PNDAR pour la période 2018-2020
86. **Rapport** de décembre 2017 relatif à l'état des lieux de la mobilisation des programmes de développement rural régionaux en faveur de la politique agro-écologique
87. **Rapport** de décembre 2019 relatif à l'évolution de l'architecture du programme national de développement agricole et rural après 2020
88. **Rapport** de février 2020 relatif à l'approche paysagère accélératrice de la transition agro-écologique

- 89. **Rapport** de septembre 2020 relatif aux systèmes d'information pour la diffusion des connaissances liées à la transition agro-écologique
- 90. **Rapport** d'octobre 2020 relatif à la déclinaison régionale du projet agroécologique pour la France
- 91. **Rapport** de novembre 2020 relatif aux déterminants de la prise de décision par l'exploitation agricole d'une transition vers l'agroécologie

CEP analysis :

- 92. **Analyse** d'avril 2009 relative à l'IAASTD
- 93. **Analyse** de janvier 2012 relative à l'agroforesterie en France
- 94. **Analyse** de décembre 2012 relative aux mesures agro-environnementales « systèmes de culture économes en intrants »
- 95. **Analyse** de juillet 2013 relative aux définitions et principes de l'agro-écologie
- 96. **Analyse** de juillet 2013 relative à la double performance économique et environnementale
- 97. **Analyse** de septembre 2013 relative aux transitions vers la double performance
- 98. **Analyse** de novembre 2013 relative au Partenariat Européen pour l'Innovation
- 99. **Analyse** d'octobre 2014 relative à l'agriculture française face au défi climatique
- 100. **Analyse** de novembre 2014 relative à l'agriculture à haute valeur environnementale
- 101. **Analyse** de janvier 2015 relative aux projets agro-environnementaux innovants, intégrés et collectifs
- 102. **Analyse** de mars 2017 relative à la démarche évaluative de la politique agro-écologique
- 103. **Analyse** de février 2018 relative à la mondialisation des systèmes alimentaires
- 104. **Analyse** de mai 2018 relative aux programmes de développement rural régionaux
- 105. **Analyse** de juin 2018 relative à la mobilisation des filières agricoles en faveur de la transition agro-écologique

- 106. **Analyse** d'août 2018 relative aux exploitations d'élevages autonomes et économes en intrant
- 107. **Analyse** de mars 2021 relative au bilan des évaluations des programmes de développement rural régionaux
- 108. **Analyse** de mai 2021 relative à l'hétérogénéité des paysages agricoles, biodiversité et services écosystémiques

Laws :

- 109. **Loi** du 13 octobre 2014 d'avenir pour l'agriculture, l'alimentation et la forêt
- 110. **Loi** du 30 octobre 2018 relative à l'équilibre des relations commerciales dans le secteur agricole et alimentaire et une alimentation saine, durable et accessible à tous

Proposals and bills :

- 111. **Proposition de loi** du 25 novembre 2015 visant à favoriser l'ancrage territorial de l'alimentation
- 112. **Proposition de loi** du 9 janvier 2019 demandant l'interdiction du glyphosate
- 113. **Proposition de loi** du 5 juin 2019 pour un renouveau de l'agriculture de groupe
- 114. **Proposition de loi** du 21 janvier 2020 pour des cantines vertueuses
- 115. **Proposition de loi** du 7 avril 2020 visant à instaurer un régime public d'assurance et de gestion des risques en agriculture
- 116. **Proposition de loi** du 25 août 2020 relative aux solutions fondées sur la nature afin de protéger la ressource en eau
- 117. **Proposition de loi** du 20 octobre 2020 pour l'accélération de l'agroécologie
- 118. **Proposition de loi** du 19 janvier 2021 relative à l'instauration d'un chèque « bien manger » au profit des françaises et des français favorisant la transition agroécologique du monde agricole
- 119. **Proposition de loi** du 23 février 2021 relative aux premières

mesures de lutte contre l'accaparement des terres et pour l'installation des jeunes agriculteurs

120. **Projet de loi** du 30 juin 2021 portant lutte contre le dérèglement climatique et renforcement de la résilience face à ses effets

Reports from the Nationale Assembly and the Senate :

121. **Rapport du député** Dominique Potier du 22 décembre 2014 sur les pesticides et l'agro-écologie
122. **Rapport de l'Assemblée nationale** du 4 février 2017 sur l'avenir de la politique agricole commune après 2020
123. **Rapport de l'Assemblée nationale** du 4 avril 2018 sur l'utilisation des produits phytosanitaires
124. **Rapport de l'Assemblée nationale** du 31 mai 2018 sur une agriculture durable pour l'Union européenne
125. **Rapport de l'Assemblée nationale** du 12 novembre 2019 sur le suivi de la stratégie de sortie du glyphosate
126. **Rapport du Sénat** du 28 mai 2020 sur l'alimentation durable : un enjeu sanitaire, social, territorial et environnemental majeur pour la France
127. **Rapport de l'Assemblée nationale** du 1^{er} juillet 2020 sur les propositions du groupe de travail sur l'agriculture, l'alimentation et la pêche concernant la reprise et le plan de relance après l'épidémie de Covid-19

CESE notes :

128. **Avis** du 3 juin 2011 sur la future PAC après 2013
129. **Conférence** « Produisons Autrement » du 18 décembre 2012
130. **Avis** du 19 novembre 2013 sur le projet de loi d'avenir pour l'agriculture, l'alimentation et la forêt
131. **Avis** du 2 décembre 2012 sur la transition agro-écologique
132. **Avis** du 9 décembre 2020 sur une alimentation durable ancrée dans les territoires

Other reports :

133. **Rapport** de mai 2013 sous la direction de Marion Guillou (Agreenium) intitulé « Vers des agricultures doublement performantes pour concilier compétitivité et respect de l'environnement »
134. **Rapport** de septembre 2013 sous la direction de Hervé Guyomard (INRAE) intitulé « Vers des agricultures à hautes performances. Volume 1 : Analyse des performances de l'agriculture biologique »
135. **Rapport** de septembre 2013 sous la direction de Hervé Guyomard (INRAE) intitulé « Vers des agricultures à hautes performances. Volume 2 : Conception et évaluation de systèmes innovants en agriculture conventionnelle »
136. **Rapport** d'octobre 2015 sous la direction de Jean-Marc Bournigal (IRSTEA) intitulé « 30 projets pour une agriculture compétitive et respectueuse de l'environnement »
137. **Rapport** d'octobre 2015 sous la direction de Florence Phocas (INRAE) et Mickaël Brochard (ABCIS) intitulé « Outils et leviers pour favoriser le développement d'une génétique animale adaptée aux enjeux de l'agro-écologie »
138. **Rapport** de décembre 2012 sous la direction de Bernard Chevassus-au-Louis (Président du Comité d'évaluation) intitulé « Rapport d'avancement du comité d'évaluation de la politique agro-écologique »
139. **Rapport** de mai 2017 sous la direction de Marie de Lattre-Gasquet (CIRAD) et Chantal le Mouél (INRAE) intitulé « Etude prospective et l'usage des terres et la sécurité alimentaire à l'horizon 2050 »

Calls for projects from the DRAAF Occitanie :

140. **Appel à projets** 2015 GIEE en région Midi-Pyrénées
141. **Appel à projets** 2016 reconnaissance des GIEE en région Languedoc-Roussillon-Midi-Pyrénées

142. **Appel à projets** 2016 animation, appui technique, diffusion des résultats et expériences des projets reconnus GIEE en région Languedoc-Roussillon-Midi-Pyrénées
143. **Appel à projets** 2017 reconnaissance des GIEE en région Occitanie
144. **Appel à projets** 2017 Groupes 30 000 en région Occitanie
145. **Appel à projets** 2017 animation, appui technique, diffusion des résultats et expériences des projets reconnus GIEE en région Occitanie
146. **Appel à projets** 2018 reconnaissance des GIEE en région Occitanie
147. **Appel à projets** 2018 Groupes 30 000 en région Occitanie
148. **Appel à projets** 2018 animation, appui technique, diffusion des résultats et expériences des projets reconnus GIEE en région Occitanie
149. **Appel à projets** 2019 reconnaissance des GIEE en région Occitanie
150. **Appel à projets** 2019 Groupes 30 000 en région Occitanie
151. **Appel à projets** 2019 animation, appui technique, diffusion des résultats et expériences des projets reconnus GIEE en région Occitanie
152. **Appel à projets** 2020 Groupes 30 000 en région Occitanie
153. **Appel à projets** 2020 reconnaissance, animation, émergence GIEE en région Occitanie
154. **Appel à projets** 2021 Groupes 30 000 en région Occitanie

155. **Appel à projets** 2021 reconnaissance, animation, émergence GIEE en région Occitanie
156. **Appel à projets** 2021 GIEE et Groupes 30 000 en région Occitanie

Other documents of interest of the DRAAF Occitanie :

157. **Rapport** du 1^{er} mars 2018 relatif au bilan intermédiaire et/ou final GIEE en région Occitanie
158. **Rapport** du 15 mars 2015 relatif à la feuille de route Ecophyto II en région Occitanie
159. **Rapport** du 3 octobre 2019 relatif au bilan feuille de route Ecophyto en région Occitanie
160. **Rapport** du 4 décembre 2020 relatif aux critères d'appréciation des démarches concernant les trophées de l'agro-écologie 2020-2021 en région Occitanie
161. **Rapport** du 4 décembre 2020 relatif à la grille d'évaluation des trophées de l'agro-écologie 2020-2021 en région Occitanie

Documents of interests of the Occitanie Region :

162. **Stratégie** régionale pour la biodiversité en région Occitanie d'octobre 2018
163. **Programme** régional de développement agricole et rural 2018-2020 en région Occitanie

Appendix 2. List of texts excluded from the corpus

Regulatory and administrative acts :

1. **Arrêté** du 9 mai 2016 établissant les modalités de classement des variétés de vignes à raisins de cuve.
2. **Instruction technique** du 4 janvier 2018 relative au lancement d'un appel à projets dans le cadre du réseau rural national.
3. **Arrêté** du 7 mars 2018 modifiant l'arrêté du 9 mai 2016 établissant les modalités de classement des variétés de vignes à raisins de cuve.
4. **Instruction technique** du 20 juillet 2018 relative au lancement des trophées de la bioéconomie.
5. **Instruction technique** du 7 novembre 2018 relative au classement et au renouvellement de classement des parcs naturels régionaux et à la mise en œuvre de leurs chartes.
6. **Instruction technique** du 7 mai 2019 relative au projet de territoire pour la gestion de l'eau.
7. **Décret** n°2019-1400 du 17 décembre 2019 adaptant les orientations nationales pour la préservation et la remise en bon état des continuités écologiques.
8. **Décret** n°2019-1459 du 26 décembre 2019 relatif à l'Institut national d'enseignement supérieur pour l'agriculture, l'alimentation et l'environnement.
9. **Instruction technique** du 2 mai 2020 relative à la protection des ressources en eau des captages prioritaires utilisés pour la production d'eau destinée à la consommation humaine.
10. **Instruction technique** du 7 septembre 2020 relative à l'organisation de la 3^{ème} édition des trophées de la bioéconomie.

France Stratégie analysis :

11. **Rapport** d'activité 2019
12. **Rapport** d'activité 2020

CGAAER reports :

13. **Rapport du CGAAER** de juin 2015 sur l'eau et l'agriculture - T1 : les aspects quantitatifs.
14. **Rapport du CGAAER** de mars 2016 sur l'eau et l'agriculture - T2 : les aspects qualitatifs.
15. **Rapport du CGAAER** de décembre 2016 sur l'anticipation et la prévention de la perte du patrimoine génétique en cas de crises sanitaires.
16. **Rapport du CGAAER** d'octobre 2018 sur les conséquences de la séparation des activités de conseil et de vente de produits phytopharmaceutiques.
17. **Rapport du CGAAER** de juin 2019 sur le bilan et les retours d'expérience sur les dispositifs « chefs de projet de partenariat en établissement agricole » et « tiers temps ».
18. **Rapport du CGAAER** de juillet 2020 sur le changement climatique, eau agriculture : quelles trajectoires d'ici 2050 ?
19. **Rapport du CGAAER** de juin 2020 sur l'orientation des élèves vers l'enseignement agricole et son attractivité.
20. **Rapport du CGAAER** de novembre 2020 sur les aménités rurales et leur prise en compte dans l'action publique.

CEP analysis :

21. **Analyse du CEP** de février 2014 sur le recours aux satellites en agriculture : évolutions récentes et perspectives.
22. **Analyse du CEP** de juillet 2016 sur les espaces tests agricoles : expérimenter l'agriculture avant de s'y installer.
23. **Analyse du CEP** de mai 2021 sur les terres agricoles et la relocalisation alimentaire : des formes nouvelles de propriété et d'accès au foncier.

Proposals and bills :

24. **Proposition de loi** du 29 mars 2018 visant à exempter de l'obligation de disposer de l'autorisation de défrichement prévue à l'article L. 341-3 du code forestier les opérations de déboisement ayant pour but de planter des arbres mycorhizés par des truffes.
25. **Proposition de résolution** du 17 juin 2020 visant à apporter une réponse ambitieuse aux aspirations des citoyens pour le climat.
26. **Proposition de loi** du 25 août 2020 relative aux solutions fondées sur la nature afin de protéger la ressource en eau.
27. **Proposition de loi** du 23 mars 2021 pour une vraie loi climat.
28. **Projet de loi** du 17 mai 2021 de programmation relatif au développement solidaire et à la lutte contre les inégalités mondiales.

Reports from the National Assembly and the Senate :

29. **Rapport de l'Assemblée nationale** du 19 juin 2013 sur la biomasse au service du développement durable.
30. **Rapport du Sénat** du 17 juillet 2013 sur la filière viande en France et en Europe : élevage, abattage et distribution.
31. **Rapport de l'Assemblée nationale** du 6 novembre 2013 sur les agricultures des Outre-mer.
32. **Rapport de l'Assemblée nationale** du 28 octobre 2014 sur la candidature de la France à l'exposition universelle de 2025.
33. **Rapport de l'Assemblée nationale** du 21 janvier 2015 sur les signes d'identification de la qualité et de l'origine.
34. **Rapport de l'Assemblée nationale** du 7 juillet 2015 sur les circuits courts et la relocalisation des filières agricoles et alimentaires.
35. **Rapport de l'Assemblée nationale** du 7 juillet 2015 sur les maladies de la vigne et du bois.
36. **Rapport de l'Assemblée nationale** du 3 novembre 2015 sur la situation des

37. **Rapport de l'Assemblée nationale** du 7 décembre 2015 sur le passage à un monde décarboné.
38. **Rapport du Sénat** du 7 juillet 2016 sur les normes sanitaires et phytosanitaires applicables à l'agriculture des outre-mer.
39. **Rapport du Sénat** du 5 mai 2017 sur les actes du colloque « les pouvoirs publics face aux perturbateurs endocriniens » organisé le 11 avril 2017.
40. **Rapport du Sénat** du 13 avril 2018 sur les actes des tables rondes « Biodiversités ultramarines : Laboratoires face au défi climatique ».
41. **Rapport du Sénat** du 1^{er} juin 2018 sur les actes du colloque « Biodiversité du vaste Pacifique : quelle valorisation d'un endémisme exceptionnel ? » du 31 mai 2018.
42. **Rapport du Sénat** du 25 septembre 2018 sur le développement de l'herboristerie et des plantes médicinales, des filières et métiers d'avenir.
43. **Rapport du Sénat** du 16 mai 2019 sur l'adaptation de la France à aux dérèglements climatiques à l'horizon 2050.
44. **Rapport de l'Assemblée nationale** du 25 juin 2019 sur les freins à la transition énergétique.
45. **Rapport de l'Assemblée nationale** du 3 juillet 2019 sur l'évaluation des politiques publiques 2019.
46. **Rapport de l'Assemblée nationale** du 4 juillet 2019 sur la prise en compte du développement durable dans la politique commerciale européenne.
47. **Rapport de l'Assemblée nationale** du 2 octobre 2019 sur l'évaluation de la gestion des fonds structurels européens par les régions françaises.
48. **Rapport du Sénat** du 29 janvier 2020 sur les financements publics consacrés à l'agriculture biologique.
49. **Rapport de l'Assemblée nationale** du 4 juin 2020 sur la gestion des conflits d'usage en situation de pénurie d'eau.
50. **Rapport du Sénat** du 17 juin 2020 sur le plan de relance de la commission des affaires économiques.

51. **Rapport du Sénat** du 6 juillet 2020 sur l'agriculture face au défi de la production d'énergie
52. **Rapport de l'Assemblée nationale** du 10 juillet 2020 sur l'évaluation des politiques publiques 2020.
53. **Rapport du Sénat** du 15 septembre 2020 sur le rôle, la place et les compétences des départements dans les régions fusionnées aujourd'hui et demain.
54. **Rapport de l'Assemblée nationale** du 16 décembre 2020 relatif aux chambre d'agriculture et à leur financement.
55. **Rapport de l'Assemblée nationale** du 31 mars 2021 sur la conditionnalité des aides publiques aux entreprises.

Other reports :

56. **Rapport de recherche** AsCa et EPICES de mars 2014 sur les expériences innovantes intégrées et collectives de projets agroenvironnementaux : recensement et analyse à visée prospective.

Documents of the Occitanie Region :

57. **Rapport** d'objectifs de la région Occitanie de janvier 2020 concernant le schéma régional d'aménagement, de développement durable et d'égalité des territoires.
58. **Accord régional** de relance Etat-Région Occitanie 2021/2022.
59. **Protocole Etat-Région** relatif à l'établissement du Contrat de Plan Etat-Région 2021/2027 Occitanie.

Appendix 3. List of interviews conducted

Name	Quality	Date
Simon Miquel and Catherine Foyer Benos	Respectively in charge of GIEE development and Agroecology Coordinator, at the DRAAF Occitanie	10.04.2021
Aline Boy and Brigitte Midoux	Respectively Assistant to the Head of the Agroecological Project and Project Manager at the Agricultural Development and Chambers of Agriculture Office, at the DGPE of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food	19.04.2021
Marc Dufumier	Emeritus Professor at AgroParisTech	20.04.2021
Philippe Mauguin	CEO of INRAE (and former Director of cabinet of the Ministry of Agriculture Stéphane Le Foll, 2012-2016)	02.06.2021
Bertrand Hervieu	President of the French Academy of Agriculture (and former Vice-President of the CGAAER, 2012-2016)	21.07.2021
Michel Griffon	CIRAD researcher (and creator of the International association for ecologically intensive agriculture, AEI)	19.08.2021

Appendix 4. Sample interview guide

This standard interview guide was used as a basis for developing guides adapted to the type of stakeholder interviewed

The objectives of an interview are:

- To shed light on the evolution of the definitions and lexicon associated with the term agroecology.
- To identify the role of the different institutional texts that orient and define the national public policies of the State and the Occitanie region in terms of agroecology.
- To shed light on the historical evolution of public policies resulting from these texts in the implementation of agroecology at the national and regional levels.
- To reflect on the future of agroecology within French public policies.

<p><i>THEME 1</i> Definitions</p>	<p>What is your definition of agroecology? How has this definition evolved? What are the differences between your personal definition and that of the state?</p>
<p><i>THEME 2</i> Actors and texts</p>	<p>Which actors have contributed to the emergence of agroecology in France? What are the texts that marked a turning point towards agroecology? Was the word agroecology used prior to the launch of the PAE in 2012 in public policy documents? Why did you choose the word agroecology specifically when launching the PAE? Since 2012, how has the consideration of agroecology evolved within the state?</p>
<p><i>THEME 3</i> Public Policy</p>	<p>What do you think of the ordering of public policies resulting from these texts? What do you think about the effectiveness of public policies on agroecology?</p>
<p><i>THEME 4</i> Future</p>	<p>How do you see the future of agroecology within French public policy? Under what conditions can France fully engage in agroecological transition? What are the main obstacles to agroecological transition?</p>

