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### Special Session Proposal

Places for sustainable food: what's behind and beyond the relocation of food systems?

#### New land governance for food projects

Guaranteeing use beyond land ownership on the outskirts of metropolises

The case of Paris

#### **Context and scientific framework:**

Paris is part of a large agricultural region (Bredif and Pupin, 2012; Torre et al., 2013; Dabo, 2022). At the last census (2020), agricultural land still covered 47% of the regional surface area on 4425 farms, 79% of which were oriented towards field crops on large farms (the regional average among the largest, 127ha). While trends show a decline in this type of agriculture between 2010 and 2020, it is less marked than over the previous period (2000-2010): a 12% drop in the number of farms over the last period (21% for France as a whole), with even an increase in the number of farms and market garden areas (139 farms in 2020 covering 2040 ha, compared with 74 farms and 11490 ha in 2010) (Agreste, 2021). Above all, land is holding up better: UAA (Useful Agricultural Area) is down by 4,900 ha on 2010, compared with 14,400 ha for the previous period. Even more so in the long term, land, a source of covetousness for urban projects, has been the object of resistance expressed through various forms of governance (De Biasi and Pujol, 2005; Poulot, 2014-a; Bonin, 2020; Toublanc and Poulot; Toublanc and Moquay; Aragau, 2022; Dabo, 2022, Gauthier, 2022). These have been strengthened by the acceleration since 2010-2014 of a legal arsenal at various levels in favor of resilience and food programs in a quest for local agriculture or even the reconstitution of a food belt (Phlipponneau, 1956): on a national scale, these are the Territorial Food Projects (PAT) and the EGALIM law; on a regional scale, these are the measures in favor of peri-urban agriculture promoted by the Ile-de-France Nature agency (Poulot, 2014-b; Bonin, 2020), including the Agricultural Pact (Dabo, 2023) ; on the Paris scale, the EGAAD (Etats généraux de l'agriculture et de l'alimentation durable), which led to the creation of AgriParis Seine, a territorial cooperation scheme to supply the city of Paris and its metropolis with high-quality, local and affordable foodstuffs; finally, on an inter-municipal scale, the combination of regulations consolidates

planning principles to support food systems (combining, for example, ZAP and agricultural or landscape charters, combinations of OAP, PAEN and PAT again).

### **Research question:**

In a region marked by tenant farming (nearly 90% of land area, with a very high number of owners per farm) and even more so by forms of land tenure insecurity linked to precarious leases (Dabo, 2022; Aragau, 2022), building food projects requires securing land as a production tool. This is the aim of our proposed communication. However, the Paris conurbation, which extends over a large number of administrative areas (a region, 7 départements and 1,929 communes involved in inter-municipal groupings), is not covered by a uniform land regulation system, which leaves room for specific arrangements. These cover a wide range of procedures, sometimes involving governance, such as territorial cooperation through the associative structure of AgriParis Seine to mobilize public land, or the labeling of agri-urban territories by the Ile-de-France region (De Biasi et al., 2005; Toublanc and Moquay, 2021) to promote planning that favors agriculture and food production, and experimental schemes that provide leverage for future development, such as the TIGA (Territoire d'innovation et de grande ambition) Sésame pour une transition agricole et alimentaire. What they all have in common is that they seek to ensure the sustainability of agricultural uses in order to contribute to the functioning of a food system that is wholly or partially connected to the urban markets of Greater Paris.

### **Methodology:**

Based on qualitative surveys (interviews with farmers, project managers and elected representatives, studies of strategic and planning documents, analysis of disputes) conducted in 5 Parisian territories (Plateau de Saclay, Plaine de Montesson, Seine-Aval, Marne-et-Gondoire, Agglomération Cœur d'Essonne.), the paper aims to shed light on these schemes to read what could be a Parisian specificity. The paper draws on materials from 3 research programs (AGRIGE-CAFUR-TRANSAGRI) that enable a diachronic approach with an annual return to the study territories between 2016 and 2023.

### **Results:**

Three results will be presented, each focused on enhancing use and limiting owners' prerogatives to serve a collective project. These refer to three levels of response:

- Regulatory first. Firstly, regulatory: we're talking about declassification or retrozoning, the return of land to the agricultural fold after having been extracted for urban projects. This movement, largely driven by food causes, aims to secure agricultural use by limiting property rights, since it removes any right to compensation (a specific feature of French law), unlike the principle of Transferable Development Rights (TDR), which appeared in the United States at the end of the 1960s (Strong et al., 1996). In France, the legal principle of non-compensation for easements prevails.

- Secondly, policy, through the remobilization of public land that has been diverted from its original purpose, in order to enhance its value for food resilience: mechanisms for identifying and characterizing this land, and safeguards to keep it within the food sphere. The City of Paris is paying particular attention to this public land, in line with the European "Green Deal"

principles, to work on a food strategy "from farm to fork": this public land has been identified to meet the needs of production, storage and processing, as well as the structuring of distribution for schools and EPHAD (Etablissement d'hébergement pour personnes âgées dépendantes).

- Finally, there are the legal issues surrounding the methods used to hold agricultural land for food production, which involve public-private partnerships with risks that are more or less assumed: SCIC (collective interest cooperative)-SCOP (cooperative production company) coo structures, relaying land holdings between public institutions and private structures in particular.

These results will be discussed in relation to other international metropolitan systems (McClintock, 2020), to highlight the tools deployed in the Parisian context to promote land for food systems. In so doing, they will contribute to the debate proposed by this special session of the ESRA meetings: Places for sustainable food, what's behind and beyond the relocation of food systems?

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