

NEWSLETTER

June 2026



REFOREST

What did we learn for four years of agroforestry action?



At the start of the ReForest project, there were **far more questions than answers.**

Could agroforestry be successfully adapted to the wide variety of farming systems, landscapes and climatic conditions found across Europe? How would farmers perceive the opportunities and challenges associated with integrating trees into agricultural land? What kind of support would be needed to move from curiosity and interest to real implementation?

There were also broader ones. Could farmers from very different regions learn from each other despite language barriers, and differences in climate and farming traditions? How could knowledge and experience be shared effectively across such a diverse network having ambitions to include people from all over Europe? Was it possible to bridge the long-standing divide between agriculture and forestry, not only in terms of knowledge and practice, but also within policy frameworks and financial support systems?

And perhaps most importantly, is there sufficient political and institutional willingness to support agroforestry at the scale needed to make a real difference and what are our mechanisms to support it?

ReForest was also confronted with a time challenges familiar to anyone working with agroforestry. Trees grow slowly, while our project has a limited lifetime of only four years. How could meaningful evidence be generated within this period when many of the benefits of agroforestry only become fully visible over decades?

Four years later, it is more than clear that **none of question has a simple answer**. But we are also confident that a lot that can be done to get closer to the answers although not reaching final ones. In fact, one of the most important lessons from ReForest is that agroforestry is not about finding definitive answers. It is about asking better questions, learning from experience, and gradually building the knowledge, mechanisms and confidence needed to make better decisions in an increasingly complex and changing environment. Living in a rapidly changing world requires more than fixed recipes and ready-made solutions. What we need are ways to navigate uncertainty with confidence, adapt to new challenges and learn from one another along the way, which is a path that the **digital tools** and the **self-sustaining communities** developed within ReForest perfectly illustrate.

Perhaps the most important of these mechanisms is **bringing people together** in a meaningful way. Not only to exchange knowledge, but also to build trust, share experience, challenge assumptions and develop solutions collectively. Building this community may prove to be one of the most lasting contributions of ReForest.

Another lesson concerns the **pace of change**. Throughout ReForest, discussions with farmers, advisors and other stakeholders highlighted that the decision to adopt agroforestry is rarely based on environmental considerations alone. The key here is not only providing piles of scientific evidence but also an

acceptable level of reliable prediction and shared experience on everyday problems and practical questions farmers have, such as “How will the system affect everyday farm management? What are the long-term costs? What happens during the transition period and is there some financial support for it? What are the successful value chain models and how I can adapt them to my specific situation?”

As none of these questions has a fixed answer considering the varieties of farms across Europe and the dynamics of their own development, our answer to this challenge was to reinforce the importance of **learning from experience** on local, regional and European level which was done through in-person meetings and events, webinars, and the ReForest platform gathering enthusiasts from all over the world. While scientific research remains essential, some of the most valuable insights emerged through direct exchanges between practitioners through the events we organised. Farmers are often more willing to explore new approaches when they can see them working under real conditions and discuss them with people facing similar challenges.

The combined efforts of the ReForest community and its many collaborators across Europe have helped bring agroforestry into the mainstream policy and research debate. Supported by partnerships extending beyond the agroforestry sector to the wider fields of agroecology, climate adaptation and sustainable land management, interest in agroforestry has grown significantly in recent years, demonstrating that it is no longer viewed as a niche practice but as an important component of Europe's agricultural future. Interest in regenerative agriculture, climate adaptation, biodiversity restoration and resilient food systems continues to grow across Europe. Through its collaboration with a wide range of initiatives and projects over the past four years, ReForest has become part of a broader movement driving sustainable land-use transformation. These partnerships and synergies will continue to amplify the project's results and ensure their relevance and impact long after the formal conclusion of ReForest. Although we are now closer to answering many of the questions that inspired ReForest, important challenges remain. Policy frameworks continue to evolve, economic incentives for agroforestry differ across countries, and many farmers still face practical and financial barriers when considering agroforestry investments.

Yet the conversation around agroforestry has changed significantly since the project began. There is greater awareness of its benefits, more practical experience from farmers and advisors, stronger connections between research and practice, and a growing body of evidence demonstrating how agroforestry can contribute to climate resilience, biodiversity restoration and sustainable food production across diverse European landscapes. For everyone involved in ReForest, this may be the project's most important achievement.

ReForest concludes with a clearer understanding of where agroforestry delivers

value, where obstacles persist, and what actions will be needed to support wider adoption in the years ahead. While many questions remain to be explored, the foundations are now stronger than ever, providing a solid basis for future research, innovation, policy development and practical implementation across Europe.



**Business
success**



**Food
production**



**Multifunctional
landscapes**

Agroforestry Is Older Than We Think: The Importance of Culture and Heritage



One of the unexpected discoveries during the ReForest project was that some of the most interesting conversations about the future of agroforestry often turned into conversations about the past. As project partners travelled across Europe, visited farms and spoke with farmers, advisors and local communities, a recurring observation emerged. Advancing agroforestry at the local level means not only embracing innovation, but also understanding the land, valuing local knowledge, and preserving the traditions and practices that have shaped

each landscape over time.

This observation inspired Miroslava Hochmalová and Tereza Červená from the Czech Living Lab team to explore the cultural and historical dimensions of agroforestry in several ReForest countries. Their work reveals how many of the landscape elements that we now associate with agroforestry were once a natural part of everyday farming.

In many places, trees have never completely disappeared from agricultural land. Hedgerows have marked field boundaries for centuries. Shelterbelts have protected crops from wind and erosion. Livestock have grazed beneath scattered trees, while orchards, wood pastures and forest edges have provided food, shade, fuel and additional sources of income for rural communities.

This connection between farming and heritage is visible throughout the ReForest Living Labs and across the partner countries.

In **Bulgaria's Strandzha region**, farming, grazing, beekeeping and the use of forest resources have developed side by side over generations. In this region, the landscape itself reflects this long relationship between people and nature, creating a mosaic of forests, pastures, small fields and beehives that continues to support both biodiversity and local livelihoods.

In the **Czech Republic**, traces of historical plužiny landscapes can still be found. Looking at old maps, it becomes clear that trees, field margins and linear vegetation were once common features of agricultural land. What we often describe today as landscape restoration was, not so long ago, simply the way the countryside functioned.

Poland offers another example. Traditional mosaic landscapes and shelterbelts emerged through generations of adaptation to local conditions. These landscapes were not designed to deliver environmental benefits, yet today they are recognised for their contribution to biodiversity, soil protection and landscape resilience.

The same can be said for the hedgerows and wood pastures of the **United Kingdom**. These characteristic features of the British countryside continue to provide ecological value, but they also tell a story about the relationship between farming, land management and local identity.

Of course, agroforestry today is not only about recreating the past. Farmers face new challenges, from climate change and biodiversity loss to economic uncertainty and changing policy environments. Modern solutions, scientific evidence and innovative tools all have an important role to play. Yet looking at these cultural landscapes reminds us that some of the ideas we are exploring today are rooted in generations of practical experience. Perhaps that is one of

the reasons agroforestry continues to attract growing interest across Europe. It combines innovation with tradition, modern knowledge with practical wisdom, and future ambitions with lessons learned from the past.

The full country stories prepared by the Czech Living Lab team are available in the News section of the ReForest website, offering a closer look at how agroforestry and cultural heritage remain connected across Europe.

[Read full stories on the ReForest website](#)

Living Labs in Focus: Looking Beyond Establishment

As ReForest approaches its conclusion, many Living Lab leaders are already discussing the future of the ReForest Living Labs. The focus is increasingly shifting from implementation to understanding long-term impacts—both within the agroforestry systems themselves and within the communities that have grown around them. Continued monitoring, the refinement of management practices, and the identification of pathways for wider adoption will be key priorities as these Living Labs continue to evolve beyond the project's lifetime. The latest Living Lab video updates from Denmark, Hungary and the Czech Republic provide a glimpse into this next phase of Living Labs agroforestry development.



Denmark: Building the Evidence Base

At the University of Copenhagen's experimental farm in Tåstrup, researchers continue to develop a combined food and energy system and integrates arable crops with belts of willow, alder and hazelnut. Over the past years, one of the major developments has been the improvement of monitoring and sampling protocols, allowing the team to better quantify ecosystem services and assess their economic value.

The Danish Living Lab highlights an important challenge for agroforestry research proving that many of the benefits emerge over long periods of time,

making continuous monitoring essential. Understanding how ecosystem services can be measured and valued remains a key step towards supporting better-informed decisions by farmers and policymakers alike.

The University of Copenhagen is committed to continuing the work initiated through ReForest by maintaining and further developing the agroforestry research farm established within the project. The site will serve as a valuable resource for future research, innovation and educational activities related to agroforestry.

Watch the Danish Living Lab update:



Hungary: Learning Through Practice

At Valaha Tanya, a family-owned farm located around 70 kilometres from Budapest, the focus is firmly on practical experience. In the short video below, the farm owner reflects on how collaboration with researchers, students and fellow farmers has contributed to the development of the farm while creating opportunities for mutual learning.

Over the last two years, the farm has continued to expand and refine its agroforestry systems. New ideas have emerged for the management of the food forest, additional plantings are being tested, and experiments with new products and processing methods are creating opportunities to diversify farm

income.

What stands out most in the interview with the farmer is the importance of knowledge exchange. For the farm team, participation in ReForest has not only generated data and research results but has also provided inspiration, international connections and a valuable opportunity to compare experiences with farmers facing similar challenges across Europe.

The interview also highlights the value of tools such as FarmTree and life-cycle assessments, which help farmers better understand both the environmental and economic dimensions of their farming systems.

Following the completion of the project, the University of Sopron will continue its collaboration with the farm, using it as a valuable site for teaching and training activities, as well as for future agroforestry research. The partnership will help ensure that the knowledge and experience gained through ReForest continue to support both education and the further development of agroforestry practices on the farm.

Watch the Hungarian Living Lab update:



Czech Republic: Adapting to a Changing Climate

In the Czech Living Lab, attention is increasingly focused on adaptation. New

agroforestry elements established in recent years include test plantings of drought-tolerant tree species, reflecting the growing importance of climate resilience in farm planning.

The video below offers a realistic perspective on the challenges of establishing trees in agricultural landscapes. Drought, wildlife pressure and the maintenance of young plantings remain significant concerns. At the same time, farmers are already observing positive impacts, including reduced wind erosion, improved habitat conditions and the gradual return of wildlife.

The Czech experience also demonstrates the importance of connecting scientific knowledge with practical farming realities. Open dialogue between researchers and farmers helps ensure that new ideas can be tested, discussed and adapted to local conditions.

Watch the Czech Living Lab update:



The Czech Living Lab will continue beyond ReForest through its integration into new national and European projects. Building on the strong network established during the project, the Living Lab community will remain active, supporting collaboration between researchers, farmers and the Czech Agroforestry Association, while continuing to promote knowledge exchange, innovation and agroforestry development in the country.

As ReForest draws to a close, these Living Labs demonstrate that some of the project's most valuable outcomes are not only the data collected or the tools developed, but the relationships, experience and practical knowledge that will continue to grow long after the project itself has ended.

Throughout the project, the ReForest Living Labs have shared their experiences through a growing collection of video materials. All video

updates, together with interviews, demonstrations and recordings from across the project, remain available on the Videos page in the Results section of the ReForest website:

ReForest Videos

ReForest Final Consortium meeting



In March 2026, project partners met in Brussels for the final consortium meeting, marking an closing point in a journey that has brought together researchers, farmers, advisors, policymakers and stakeholders from across Europe around a shared vision for the future of agroforestry. Unlike previous consortium meetings, which focused on planning activities, coordinating work packages and tracking progress, the Brussels meeting provided an opportunity to reflect on what has been achieved and to discuss how the project's results can continue to generate impact beyond its formal conclusion.

Throughout the meeting, partners revisited the project's main achievements and the lessons learned through four years of collaboration. Discussions highlighted the growth of the ReForest community, which expanded through the Living Labs, Working Groups and stakeholder engagement activities. These networks created opportunities for knowledge exchange across countries, farming systems and professional backgrounds, helping to connect scientific research with practical experience from the field.

Particular attention was given to the knowledge and evidence generated during the project. Partners reviewed results related to agroforestry system

performance, ecosystem services, biodiversity, carbon sequestration, farm economics and the broader societal benefits associated with integrating trees into agricultural landscapes. The discussions reflected the project's ambition to make the multiple benefits of agroforestry more visible, measurable and relevant for decision-making.

The meeting also provided an opportunity to showcase the portfolio of tools developed and refined through ReForest. From FarmTree and the Agroforestry Map of Europe to biodiversity and carbon assessment tools, partners reflected on how these resources can continue supporting farmers, advisors, researchers and policymakers after the project ends. Equally important was the continued development of the ReForest Platform and Knowledge Hub, which will remain valuable resources for the agroforestry community.

One of the recurring themes throughout the meeting was the importance of translating research into practice. ReForest has consistently sought to make scientific knowledge accessible and useful for stakeholders, whether through digital tools, Living Lab activities, policy recommendations or practical guidance materials. Partners agreed that this connection between science and implementation represents one of the project's most valuable contributions.

As part of the discussions, partners also reflected on the growing recognition of agroforestry within broader debates on climate adaptation, biodiversity conservation and sustainable agriculture. The policy dialogues organised during the final phase of the project demonstrated how agroforestry is increasingly being considered not as a niche practice, but as an important component of future agricultural systems.

Reflecting on the project's achievements, ReForest Coordinator Martin Lukac emphasised the broader significance of the work carried out over the past four years:

"ReForest has managed to shift the perception of agroforestry in Europe. One of the key outputs is the description of non-material benefits that we get from agroforestry that can be used to finance these systems."

This ability to better understand, quantify and communicate the wider benefits of agroforestry may prove to be one of the project's most enduring contributions, helping create new opportunities for investment and wider adoption in the years ahead.

Although the project is approaching its conclusion, the meeting reinforced a shared understanding that the ReForest story does not end here. The tools, knowledge, partnerships and communities developed throughout the project provide a strong foundation for future initiatives, continued collaboration and the further development of agroforestry across Europe.

The consortium would like to thank all partners, Living Lab participants, stakeholders and supporters whose commitment, expertise and enthusiasm made this journey possible.

From Practice to Policy: ReForest in the European Agroforestry Debate



Throughout the ReForest project, partners have worked with farmers, researchers, advisors and local stakeholders to better understand how agroforestry performs under real-world conditions. As the project approaches its conclusion, attention is increasingly turning to another important question: what is needed for agroforestry to move beyond successful examples and become a more widely adopted practice across Europe?

This question was at the centre of a policy event organised by the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA) at the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) in Brussels in the end of March 2026. Bringing together representatives from European institutions, research organisations, financial actors, practitioners and agroforestry experts, the event explored how policy and finance can better support the transition towards more resilient and multifunctional agricultural systems.

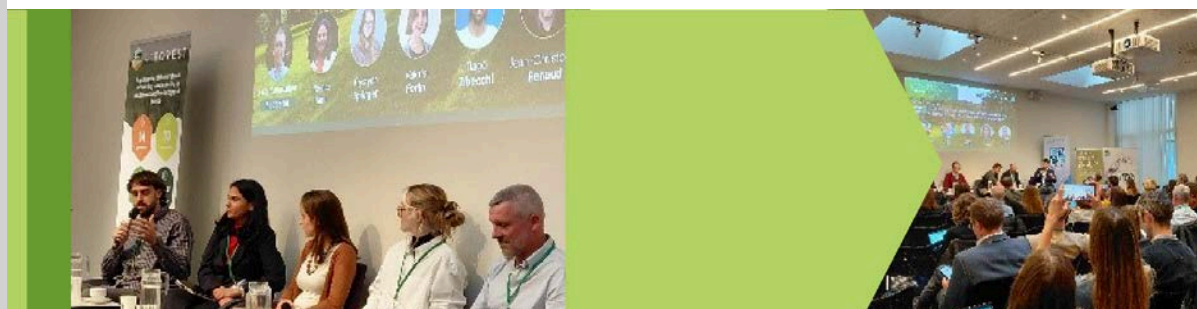
One of the key messages emerging from the discussions was that the **benefits of agroforestry are increasingly well understood**. Across Europe, evidence continues to demonstrate its potential contribution to climate adaptation, biodiversity conservation, soil health and farm resilience. The challenge today is not whether agroforestry can deliver value, but how to create the conditions

that allow more farmers to adopt it.

The event therefore focused on two closely connected areas: regulation and finance.

From a policy perspective, discussions highlighted the need for greater coherence between agricultural, forestry and environmental policies. Agroforestry often sits between these sectors, making implementation more complicated than it needs to be. Participants explored opportunities for better integration within future policy frameworks, including the upcoming Common Agricultural Policy programming period.

Financing agroforestry was another major theme. While many of the environmental and social benefits generated by agroforestry are well recognised, farmers often face significant upfront costs and long investment horizons before those benefits are reflected economically. The dialogue therefore examined how **innovative financing approaches, blended finance mechanisms and new market opportunities could help reduce risks and make agroforestry investments more attractive.**



Shortly after the Brussels policy dialogue, the discussions continued during a closed **expert workshop in Barcelona**, bringing together policymakers, researchers and practitioners to further explore the governance, digitalisation and investment challenges affecting agroforestry adoption across Europe. Building on the insights generated in Brussels, participants examined how agroforestry can be better integrated into future policy frameworks, supported through practical digital tools and monitoring systems, and enabled by more attractive financing mechanisms. The workshop provided an important opportunity to refine and validate the key messages emerging from the ReForest policy dialogue process and contributed directly to the development of the project's final policy recommendations.

Together, these events contributed to the development of recommendations aimed at supporting future policy and financing frameworks for agroforestry in Europe. For ReForest, this represents an important achievement. Beyond generating scientific knowledge and practical experience, the project has helped bring agroforestry into policy and financial discussions at the European level. As the project concludes, these conversations will remain essential for

ensuring that the evidence, tools and experience developed over the past four years can translate into wider adoption on the ground.

Because ultimately, the future of agroforestry depends not only on what happens on farms, but also on the policies, institutions and investment frameworks that support them.

ReForest is over: what's next?



Over the past four years, ReForest has contributed to strengthening the evidence base for agroforestry in Europe, demonstrating its potential to support productive, resilient and environmentally sustainable farming systems. The project delivered new scientific knowledge, practical tools, policy recommendations and digital resources that continue to support farmers, advisors, researchers and policymakers across Europe.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to everyone who engaged with ReForest throughout this journey. The project's growing audience demonstrates the increasing interest in agroforestry solutions. ReForest resources reached more than 30,000 users through the project website alone, generated over 150,000 downloads of more than 80 project materials, and attracted a vibrant online community of 4000 followers on the project social media accounts, as well as over 3000 views of our videos. These numbers reflect not only visibility, but also the growing demand for practical, evidence-based information on agroforestry.

The ReForest legacy will continue beyond the project's lifetime. The website, knowledge resources and communication channels will remain active, ensuring continued access to project results and new publications. Key outputs, including digital tools, policy recommendations, the Agroforestry Map of Europe and Living Lab networks, will continue to be developed, applied and integrated into new national and European initiatives. Many project partners are already building on ReForest outcomes through follow-up projects, educational activities, long-term monitoring programmes and further research collaborations.

To support this next chapter, ReForest and DigiAF are planning a joint legacy event in autumn 2026, bringing together partners and stakeholders to reflect on lessons learned, showcase ongoing developments and explore new opportunities for collaboration. While the project may be reaching its conclusion, the knowledge, partnerships and momentum created through ReForest will continue to contribute to the future of agroforestry in Europe.

In the meantime, we look forward to seeing many of you at EURAF 2026!



Check the EVENTS section on our website for the latest updates and information on how ReForest will be presented!

[ReForest Events](#)

ReForest online:

To keep up with the latest updates from our Living Labs, upcoming events and newly released tools and resources, we encourage you to regularly visit the ReForest website and explore the Engagement Platform.

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