



THE MEDITERRANEAN CARAVAN:
LEARNING AND SHARING AGROECOLOGY

**Best Practice Guide for
Collecting Agroecological
Knowledge**

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Best Practice Guide for Collecting Agroecological Knowledge

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Best Practice Guide for Collecting Agroecological Knowledge

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CARAVAN: LEARNING AND
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Agroecology knowledge carries the hope for the recovery the ecosystem needs

Due to the global climate crisis, the importance of communities adopting sustainable methods and practices is becoming increasingly urgent. Globalised production systems and rampant consumption cause the loss of living soils, biodiversity and local seeds, the abandonment of lands, and the deepening of socio-economic inequalities.

However, some systems that sprout and flourish in this context increase our hope for a livable future. Agroecological practices, which include sustainable methods from past to present days, and nature-friendly approaches developed using today's technologies and knowledge, offer solutions to combat biodiversity loss, the climate crisis, and rural poverty. By bringing together sustainable agricultural practices and social movements, agroecology recognises co-created knowledge as a common value.

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Agroecology knowledge is applied around the world by farmers who take ecological principles in their agricultural production seriously, and by other food systems actors. It is especially important to collect traditional, nature-friendly practices before they disappear. Similarly, it is equally important to publish them in media accessible to those who need them in order to transfer this knowledge to future generations and to popularise them.

Understanding this necessity, the MedCaravan team created the Best Practice Guide for Collecting Agroecological Knowledge which aims to help the efforts to collect and record agroecology knowledge in a proper way.

This booklet carries the hope that agroecological practices, which provide solutions in many areas – from agriculture to art, from supply systems to community solidarity – will be widespread as a useful tool for the recovery of agroecosystem needs.

We hope that this booklet will be instrumental in recording as much agroecological knowledge and practices as possible.

A. BASIC ISSUES, DEFINITIONS, FRAMEWORK

A.1. Definition, framework and principles of agroecology



Our common Agroecology definition

Agroecology is a bottom-up approach built on ecological and social principles. It merges sustainable agricultural practices and social movements and is based on the co-creation of knowledge, supported by science and policy, rather than led by them.

Agroecology acknowledges the rights of rural communities and promotes intergenerational relationships that value cultural and local sustainable knowledge. In agroecology, co-knowledge is a common value. This helps to promote cooperation and encourage innovation between producers, civil society, researchers and institutions. Agroecology addresses root causes of problems concerning the sustainability of food systems and promotes resilient territories through holistic and long-term solutions, like food sovereignty.

Agroecology allows the production of a complex variety of products and services and diversifies income opportunities while improving the environment and minimising external input needs. It can help contain the destruction of natural habitats caused by industrial agriculture. Thus, it also helps to mitigate climate change.

Our common vision & principles

Agroecosystem Resources:

Ensure a holistic perspective aligned with the resources cycles to prevail in all stages of production and consumption.

This will reduce synthetic substances, promote pesticide-free practices, guarantee efficient water management, ensure soil fertility, limit soil erosion and depletion, stimulate local agroecosystems (e.g. agroforestry, biodynamic, permaculture, pastoralism, fisheries) and value local plants and animal species (especially traditional breeds and seeds varieties).

Social Principles:

Strengthen social structures that promote equality, mutual aid, and local system of knowledge exchange.

This will promote ethical and conscious consumer attitudes supporting nature-friendly, small-scale, and family farming. It will also lend support to short and local food supply chains and solidarity economy models. It will also advocate for fair and just policies that can ensure the sustainability of agri-food systems at different scales (local, regional, national, European).

A.2. Dictionary of Definitions

Can be found in the glossary.



B. INTENTION AND GOALS

B.1. Why do we need agroecology knowledge?

The industrial production system and economy of consumption threaten the health of the ecosystem, the sustainability of natural assets, and contribute to severe and irreversible climate change. Thus, the food system (from production to consumption) requires an ecological, sustainable, fair, and healthy innovative transformation.

It is clear that some anthropogenic activities could lead to extinction. Ensuring the continuity of life on earth can be possible by harmonising human activities with nature. By adopting nature-friendly practices, agroecology aims to transform every stage of our food systems, sustaining the hope to realise the recovery and restoration of global agroecosystems.

The benefits of agroecology achieving this transformation can be grouped into the following categories:

- **A strategic leverage for global sustainable development**

Agroecology is a systemic approach targeting ecological sustainability, social responsibility, and the protection of economic assets of agricultural production with its living systems. While it is concerned with preserving natural resources at the agricultural level, it is also applicable elsewhere, too. It can be adapted to all regions to achieve sufficient food production for a healthy diet.

Inspired by the natural functioning/processes of ecosystems, agroecology on the one hand protects and restores agricultural lands, and on the other, offers a systemic approach -- through concrete practices and applications -- to produce quality food in sufficient quantities. Agroecology can be applied to many contexts - it is accessible to everyone when grounded in each region's assessment of its natural and human potential.

Based on the assessment of natural and human potentials of each region, agroecology allows peoples to secure their food autonomy, therefore ensuring food sovereignty. It ensures both rational and sustainable management of resources at the regional level and thus contributes to the fight against desertification and conservation of biodiversity. Agroecology is driven by ethical principles that propose a holistic response to the global crisis.

- **Mitigation and adaptation to climate crisis**

Unsustainable farming practices, widespread free grazing, and aridification of the Mediterranean climate are causing a weakening of plant cover, resulting in the loss of many natural ecosystems, a decrease in biodiversity, and severe erosion. This is leading to extreme and hard-to-reverse desertification.

Agroecology takes the fight to desertification by enabling the regeneration of species-rich plant cover and degraded soils restoration. It reduces harmful effects - intensified by climate change - arising from the exploitation of natural habitats. Agroecology supports more flexible and complex agroecosystems which are less affected by climate risks. These complex systems are both farming and animal breeding practices based on efficient water use and species diversity. Agroecology allows family farming to maintain autonomy and flexibility by valuing different animal breeds and seeds that are well-adapted to local conditions and have been sustained by diverse peasant cultures.

- **Revitalization of rural village economies**

Agroecology supports the re-localization of the economy and the permanent settlement of peasants in their lands. Because it is technically inexpensive and economically viable, agroecology creates local employment opportunities and sustainable income-generating activities, especially for women and youth. It is at the heart of the strategies developed for climate change adaptation, acting as a lever for sustainable global development.

B.2. Why do we need to collect agroecology knowledge?

The application of agroecology knowledge (with the above definition and framework), is done mainly by smallholders and family farmers who produce using ecological principles. Family farming is responsible for producing a high percentage of the world's food. However, due to the increasing pressure of globalisation, the number of family farmers has been gradually decreasing, which makes its preservation urgent. According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), small-scale family farming "is one of the most predominant forms of agriculture worldwide, in both developing and developed countries." Spreading this knowledge to other smallholders and family farmers has strategic, socioeconomic, environmental, and cultural importance because:

- It makes the most significant contribution to food security on the planet;
- It ensures the preservation of traditional foods and a balanced diet for people;

- It contributes to the conservation of agricultural biodiversity and to the sustainable use of natural resources;
- It builds resilient agroecosystems and helps to mitigate climate change;
- It stimulates local economies when supported by social policies.

However, local small-scale family farms are gradually disappearing under the pressure of corporate farming and large-scale industrial agriculture. This leads to the disappearance of traditional nature-friendly agroecological knowledge possessed by these farms. Before the knowledge and experiences transferred orally and not present in written records disappear, they must be collected and compiled for future generations. This agroecology knowledge must be collected before it is lost.



To inform those who play an active role in this field, primarily farmers and producers, we first need to collect agroecological knowledge from the field and disseminate it in an applicable way. The way to achieve this is through recording and disseminating agroecological knowledge. Therefore, we aim to create a method and a methodology* (in other words, plans and procedures) for collecting information on agroecology and traditional knowledge, and for compiling, classifying, and recording the information. This also enables us to increase the number of people competent in using this best practice guide to collect agroecological knowledge.

What is the purpose of collecting agroecological knowledge from the field?

- To understand how the knowledge and experience of farms practising agroecology varies according to geography, scale, and conditions.
- To understand how the knowledge system works and how farmers frame ecosystem-sensitive solutions from their own perspective.
- To learn about different ecosystems and micro-areas and their impact on production and consumption.
- To be able to demonstrate the connection of agroecological practices on farms with ecological cycles such as the ecosystem, biodiversity and climate change.
- To reveal the links between biodiversity and cultural diversity.
- To think globally and act locally. To learn together by exchanging knowledge locally and acting as a knowledge/experience transfer bridge between farmer and farmer.
- To be informed about the socio-economic impacts of agroecological practices.
- To gain experience in the language used to communicate with farmers.
- To give rural life knowledge the value it deserves, and to take steps towards strengthening the diminishing ties between the urban and the rural.
- To become aware of new agroecological practices.
- To demonstrate successful and unsuccessful experiences in agroecology.
- To create a network and a basis for the dissemination of agroecological knowledge that can be used in both rural and urban areas.

** The difference between methodology and method: Methodology shows the 'logic' used when choosing certain observational techniques, evaluating data, and establishing the relationship between these data and theoretical propositions. In this respect, concepts, definitions, propositions, theories, hypotheses, and models are the basic elements of methodology. The method, on the other hand, refers to a general style of data collection.*

C. GENERAL ASPECTS

C.1. General Principles

The issues / points to be considered during the collection and publishing phase are listed below.

The Best Practice Guide will be based on the following criteria and principles:

The rights of local communities: The first and central beneficiaries of knowledge collected from a region should be the people of that region. We should not cause any rights violations or create unfair competition.

Traditional knowledge collected should be nature-friendly: Traditional knowledge can include unfriendly nature practices. Therefore, knowledge collected should be exclusively limited to nature-friendly practices.

Sustainability: Traditional knowledge should utilise tools and materials that will still be valid and applicable in the future. For example, used plant varieties should not be extinct or endangered.

Traditional knowledge should be local: Since traditional knowledge is formed in people's natural environment/ecosystem, it has local properties, and it may cause problems to use it in other ecosystems. Therefore, care should be given when sharing knowledge regarding the use of local varieties.

The place of traditional knowledge in the broader culture: Traditional knowledge integrates the cultural structure where it is produced throughout complex relationships. It therefore retains its true meaning within that structure. It may be required to identify certain cultural practices necessary for it to survive along with the knowledge collected.

Resource credibility: Traditional knowledge is integrated in the cultural structure in which it exists, therefore it is not immune to outside interaction. Especially in today's modern societies, which include constant interaction and communication, information might be collected online or through other mass media sources. Knowledge collectors should be rigorous and always identify and articulate the real source of the knowledge they want to record.

The dynamic nature of culture: In addition to recovering age-old knowledge no longer applied, current agroecological knowledge and innovation should also be recorded.

Possible risks: In the text produced, such as recipes of folk medicines, there should be warnings on possible harms or health risks.

Evaluation/Review: The collected agroecological knowledge should be evaluated/reviewed by a panel including experts on traditional knowledge, on biology and agriculture as well as representatives of local governments and NGOs, and the owners/holders/practitioners of traditional knowledge.

C.2. Identification of target group

This section lists who will benefit from the collected knowledge.

Accordingly, the target groups specified in the MedCaravan Needs Analysis are as follows:

- Farmers, producers, and rural communities;
- Agricultural technicians and engineers, agricultural educators;
- Researchers;
- Food communities and producers;
- Urban gardeners and hobby gardeners;
- Relevant national and international organisations and collectives;
- Communities;
- Policy makers, decision makers;
- General public.





D. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

D.1. Rights of the interviewees

Prior to collection of knowledge, the legal procedure should be followed within the framework of personal rights and copyrights regarding the provision of information. This includes consent around a subject: having their photo taken, publishing their information, and using their photo and video in any dissemination.

Within the framework of these rights, it is expected that the authorization documents (consent forms relating to voice recordings, photography, or video, and the publication of the information provided), are prepared in advance and signed by the interviewees before starting the questions.

To create such a document, it is necessary to have knowledge about copyright laws. This document should be clear and reassuring to the interviewee - both about the process and the information-gathering.

The interviewee may be reluctant to sign documents. Therefore, the consent document should include clear, easy-to-understand information regarding the terms of consent. *(see page 32).*

D.2. Responsibilities of the knowledge collectors

The interviewee and the knowledge collector may have been raised in different cultures. Therefore, it is important to be mindful of prejudices that may emerge in the implementation of the study. It would be beneficial if the knowledge collector adopts an approach with an insider perspective on the subject matter, similar to anthropological studies.

For example, the interviewer should avoid being biased towards or leading the interviewee based on his/her expectations. The interviewees may not be used to the question & answer method and they may feel uncomfortable or even become reactive. Therefore, the interviewer's flexibility and sincerity are important.





E. SCOPE OF THE KNOWLEDGE COLLECTION AND TOPICS

To determine the scope of the knowledge collection, first of all, it is necessary to identify the areas where knowledge needs to be collected. The following subheadings/subjects within the scope of agroecology knowledge can be used (see A.1).

E.1. Identification of the topics of the collection

For example:

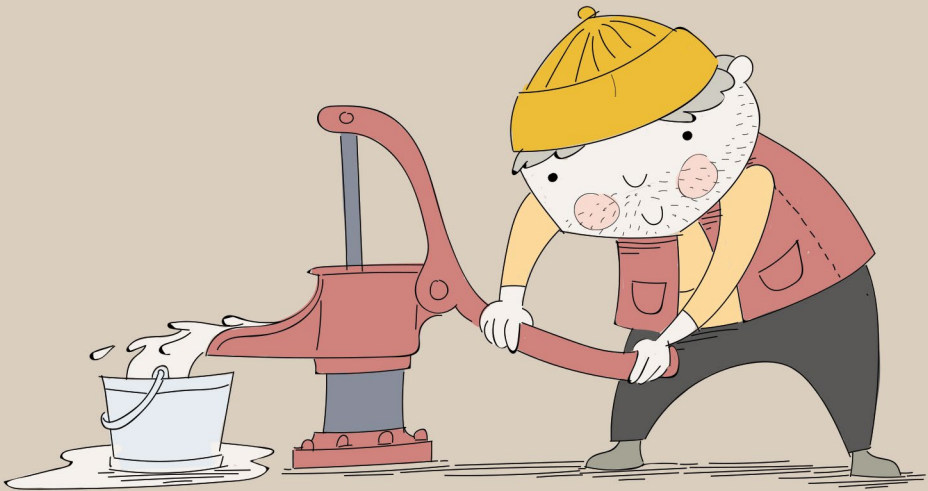
- Soil restoration
- Seed saving, traditional varieties preservation
- Calendar of sowing-planting-harvest
- Ecosystem regenerative food production
- Sustainable and regenerative practices / Pesticide-free production / Cultivated biodiversity
- Water resilience and management
- Farmers' connection with farmers, consumers and communities/ food solidarity networks
- Farm management
- Financial issues in food production
- Communication
- Circular economy / Waste management
- Food processing and preservation methods (e.g. fermenting, drying, refrigerating)
- Nature friendly cleaning/ Nature friendly accommodation
- Gender on farms
- Public policies

E.2. Identifying issues of priority

The subject(s) we want to work on can be very extensive. Working on all these issues can be exhausting and can exceed our capacity. Therefore, it is necessary to determine one or more issues of priority for the collection.

When determining the scope of the knowledge collection, we must pay attention to the kind of knowledge primarily needed. For example:

- Our list may be limited to topics such as agroecological food production practices (practical examples), sowing-planting-harvesting calendar, collecting and saving seeds, and food preservation methods.
- We can choose to collect knowledge on social and economic issues and we can make our list of topics focus on these questions: how to build strong and long-lasting relationships between producers and the communities they feed, and how to build the resistance needed to face ongoing crises.
- We can opt to conduct the collection with priority/urgent issues for farmers and for the region or country regarding agriculture and food. If it is a regional collection where the gradual depletion of water resources is a problem, the topics such as water management, soil conservation and drought resistant seeds can be prioritised.



Prioritising the topics will be helpful to identify the places/regions where we will conduct collection of knowledge, the team composition, and preparing the questions to be answered.

The Med Caravan team selected the following common topics:

- Seed saving
- Water management / Soil regeneration
- Accessibility to food
- Connections with community
- LSPAs (Strategies, achievements, challenges...).

Each member of the team can also select specific topics according to their context and needs.

E.3. Are there any issues we want to exclude from the knowledge collection?

In the process of identifying the topics to select for the knowledge collection, we can also identify the topics to exclude.

For example, one knowledge collection team may exclude medicinal plant use from the scope of the collection as they might pose risks to practitioners. Still another team may choose to collect knowledge on plants believed to have healing properties. Food recipes could be excluded since they have a commercial aspect and may cause unfair competition. However, another team may not want to exclude these recipes due to their close relationship with the gastronomic culture. These decisions will depend on the area/region we choose and on our team's capacity.





F. IDENTIFICATION OF THE SOURCES OF THE KNOWLEDGE TO BE COLLECTED AND THE PLACES KNOWLEDGE WILL BE COLLECTED

F1. Identification of sources for knowledge

In the collection of agroecology knowledge, we can use 1) real people who practise this knowledge; and 2) printed, visual and audio materials about past and present collections.

The following steps can be beneficial in identifying the aforementioned resources:

- Reviewing our capacity on written, audio and visual resources from where agroecology will be collected
- Determining our access to the people who practise agroecology: farmers, collectives, organisations
- Preparing a list by referring/consulting previous collections, published studies, articles, interviews, visual and audio publications on agroecology

For example, it can be interesting to research old interviews made by ethnologists and then go to the places where they did their research and talk to people to see what remains from this traditional knowledge. In such a way, we can determine what has changed or improved.

Selection of published resources for collection

For example, In Turkey, there is an archive of traditional knowledge collected for public interest. This archive, dating back to 1966, is within the structure of the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism. In the unit where this archive is located, there are also periodicals of the Ministry, Collections from Folk Culture, Folk Culture Studies, and publications of scientific meetings such as symposiums and congresses on various subjects of traditional culture. First of all, these publications need to be scanned. In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry launched a project titled “Recording Traditional Knowledge on Biological Diversity” in 2017 and the project is still running. The data obtained in this context will be shared over the Traditional Knowledge Management System. Scanning will be done here as well.

Apart from these, publications referenced in general scientific studies, masters and doctoral theses produced in universities (especially in the folklore departments) should be considered.

A list of “keywords” can also be prepared as a resource for knowledge collection.

F2. Identification of where the sources of knowledge are located

To identify the place(s) where the collection will be done:

- A list of regions where people who have knowledge on the topics to collect (must be places where we can easily access) should be prepared.
- If we already have contacts in these regions, we should prepare a list of people we can interview with brief information about them and their contact information.



Identifying the criteria for the location/region for collection:

- Areas with agroecological production;
- Specifically, the production methods in the area must have a significant value for the environment and a positive impact on society, and this must be explicitly concrete.
- It may be interesting to identify the agroecological experiences that survive in intensive and industrialised areas.
- Production processes should be more extensive than just working on the land
- As part of the MedCaravan project, regions should be representative of the Mediterranean region, both in geographical and climatic characteristics.

F3. Selection of people to be interviewed

The people to be interviewed can be selected either intentionally/non-randomly or randomly. Limitations on age, gender, or geographical region may be set depending on the identified subjects. Some general criteria can also be established. However, there is a risk of straying from reality when setting the criteria. If we create unrealistic criteria with ideal conditions in mind, we may not find people to be interviewed or resources to research.

In addition, as in the Snowball Technique, it is possible not to identify any criteria for the selection of individuals. The interview starts with advice/suggestion, and as the conversation progresses naturally, people will direct you to someone who might have answers or know more about the topic. No preparation or very simple preparation is done, and then the rest proceeds like a treasure hunt. This interview can begin at a central place for the community, like a town square, a centre of worship, a park or a coffee house. If the villagers see you with someone well-known and respectable in the community, like a school teacher, doctor, representative of a local authority or a religious representative, they will be more likely to trust you. These people can also help the knowledge collector to find reliable people to interview.

Interviewees should be selected from among:

- Agroecological producers
- Experts with experience in agroecological production
- Those who are willing to share knowledge and experience
- Not only commercial agroecological or organic producers, but also people who really cooperate with / interact with / converse with those within the food production processes
- Especially the farmers and experts with whom you have contact
- As a part of the MedCaravan project, people who produce in regions that show the geographical and climatic characteristics of the Mediterranean region

Even though there are predetermined criteria, other settlements and people may be included on the interview list after conversations with the notable people of the village during travels and interviews.

¹ Snowball technique is a technique to select interviewees where existing interviewees recruit future interviewees among their acquaintances. Thus, the sample group is said to grow like a rolling snowball.



G. IDENTIFICATION OF THE PEOPLE/TEAM TO CONDUCT KNOWLEDGE COLLECTION

People who will conduct the collection of knowledge should be farmers, producers, “prosumers,” members of LSPAs (Local and Solidarity -based Partnerships for Agroecology, including Community Supported Agriculture or CSA) in contact with farmers, agricultural technicians or engineers practising agroecology. Before conducting the knowledge collection, these people must be trained in the “Method for Collecting Agroecology Knowledge,” which also is the subject of this document.

The knowledge collectors should:

- have general knowledge, and if possible, some experience of rural life culture
- have agroecological knowledge (e.g., sensitive to nature conservation and sustainable living)
- have knowledge on collection, interview tools, and techniques
- be aware of the rights of the interviewee and the responsibilities of the interviewer
- have advanced communication skills and empathy
- be able to travel depending on the area where the knowledge will be collected
- be willing to work on this subject (must be motivated to motivate the interviewees)
- have language skills/knowledge of the local language (especially when working with small cultures, dialects, etc.)
- have some knowledge of the place/area where knowledge will be collected, with prior documentation if needed
- know the interview content, the purpose of the project, and the focus of the interviews quite well.
- be able to clarify doubts, confusion, and concerns of the interviewees





H. IDENTIFICATION OF KNOWLEDGE COLLECTION TECHNIQUES AND TOOLS

H.1. Data Types

Quantitative data numerical and therefore easily mathematically analysed.

Quantitative methods usually used: experiments-trials; structured interviews; questionnaires

Qualitative data mostly non-numerical, usually descriptive or nominal.

Qualitative methods usually used: in-depth interviews; observation methods; document review

Primary data data obtained directly from main sources.

Sources of primary data: experiments; surveys; questionnaires; interviews; observations

Secondary data existing data collected by others.

Sources of secondary data: books; records; newspapers; research articles and studies

Mixed methods combination of quantitative and qualitative research data, techniques and methods

H.2. Knowledge Collection Methods

Data collection the process of gathering information in a systematic way.

Interviews: organised conversations where questions are asked and answered.

They can be: structured; semi-structured; unstructured

Structured: a rigorous set of questions usually prepared prior to the interview. The same questions are asked to all interviewees in the same order. There exists the risk of preventing the interviewee from revealing the richness of his/her knowledge. These are usually applied when the literature in the area of study is highly developed. In this case, data analysis is more simple.

Semi-structured: Interviewer and interviewee engage in a formal conversation based on an *interview guide* previously prepared by the interviewer. However unlike structured interviews, the conversation flows and topics to be covered emerge

naturally. These are usually applied to collect data in the field in different places and/or with different interviewers.

Unstructured: Interviewer and interviewee engage in a formal conversation with no interview guide. The interviewer builds rapport with the interviewees and encourages them to open up and express in their own way. Usually applied in ethnography.

Questionnaires: usually used to collect information from a large number of people (by social media or phone). With a limited scope they do not allow for stakeholders' expressions beyond the structure of the predefined questions.

Focus Group Interviews: in-depth field method that brings together a small homogeneous group (usually 6-12 persons) to discuss topics which are the subjects of investigation in the study.

Observation: systematic observation entails careful planning of what to observe. This is a systematic data collection approach that must be recorded so that the information can be analysed and interpreted. The process of data collection by observation is time consuming, however it may be adopted according to specific research needs.

Survey: often used to assess thoughts, opinions, and feelings. These consist of a pre-determined set of questions given to a sample. They are often applied to analyse behaviours, evaluate political candidates, professional organisations, and in advertising.

Specific to Med Caravan: According to the information obtained from the answers to the needs analysis, there is a tendency to use different techniques within the capacity of the project team. Although there is flexibility in the techniques to be used in partner countries, here, some basic techniques used for collection of both traditional and current agroecological knowledge are provided.

H.3. Interview content/construction:

Important rules:

- Before starting the questions, the interview plan must be defined (it will help to exclude unnecessary questions).
- The parts of the plan should reflect the diversity of the knowledge we wish to collect in all countries related to the common topics and knowledge within each country about agroecological skills, practices, methods; cultural information; and so on.

- Keep an open mind when conducting the interview. Pay attention to the cultural and territorial context rather than rigorously following the interview plan. Therefore, the interview probably will not follow the topics' order and other relevant topics will likely be addressed.

H.4. Issues to be considered when collecting knowledge

- The interview should be seen as a process over the course of several moments: Trust-building, the interview, the post-interview, and returning to the content and the interviewees.
- Before starting the interview, some information about the purpose of the knowledge collection should be given. If possible, inform the interviewee(s) a few days before the interview to allow them to prepare in advance.
- Creating a roadmap helps understand what you want to collect and why: What are the characteristics of what you are looking for, and why is it useful?
- Preparing guiding questions/information in advance facilitates and enriches the flow of the interview.
- Open questions allow people to speak freely, especially in situations where information varies a lot between interviewees.
- Before the interview, the following should be provided: the name of the interviewer/knowledge collector, the place and date of the interview/knowledge collection, and brief biographical information about the source person (name, date and place of birth, education, occupation, etc.).
- The most important aspect when interviewing is trust-building. It can be stressful to have someone taking notes during the interview. Try not to be shy - it is a matter of mutual trust.
- Be careful not to create a stressful situation (such as trying to get results quickly in limited time).
- The sensitivities of local people (e.g., local dress, style, approach, etc.) must be taken into account.
- The interviewer should be honest during the interview (from the beginning to the end) and the interviewee should not be misled in order to obtain information.
- If handwritten notes are taken or voice recordings are made during the interview, the handwritten notes should be transferred to electronic media and the voice recordings should be transcribed as soon as possible while the information is still fresh in the memory.
- Conducting interviews with two people can help create quality results. One person can ask questions as the other takes notes. Two people making observations enriches the knowledge collection.
- It is recommended to send a transcript of the interview to the interviewee in order to eliminate misunderstandings and to complete any misinformation.



Interviewers should think about the interview as a nice time spent with the interviewee. While the purpose is to collect agroecology information, it should be pleasant for all parties. For example, think about cooking, drying fruit, collecting seeds, or harvesting together with the interviewee. This way it is easier to collect and learn agroecological knowledge and practices.

Surprises during the interview

We should take into account that we may come across some other data sources in interviews. For example, a data-rich material with various text and images that has been accepted as “family souvenir/memorabilia” can be waiting to be discovered in attics, under pillows, in chests in houses, perhaps in a rusted old agricultural vehicle in the corner of a barn, on faded photographs, on letters that you fear will tear if you touch, on an old chart scribbled on a piece of paper and deeds on which you will have difficulty reading.

From this perspective, accessing and recording traditional agroecological knowledge is an exciting process full of surprises.

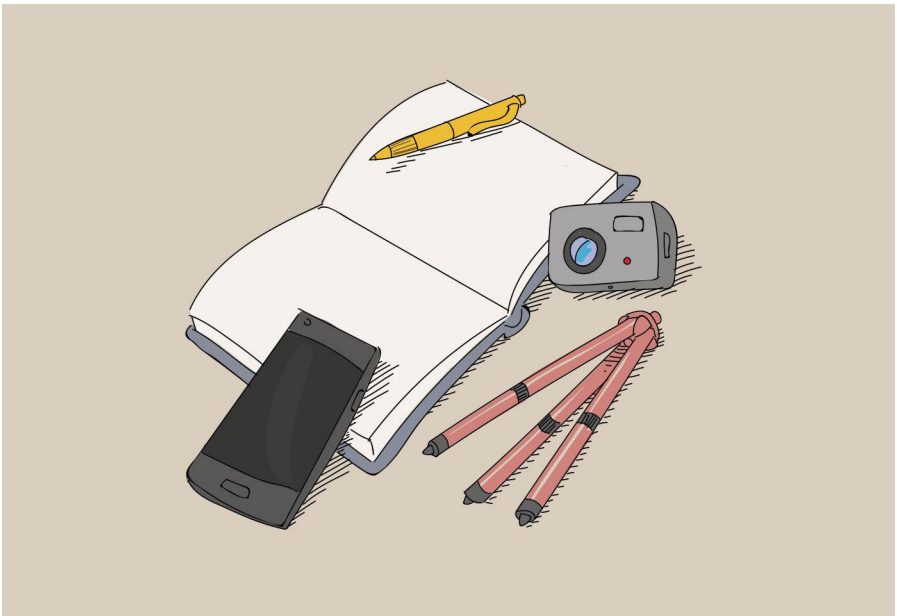
H.5. Knowledge Collection Tools: audio recorders, photo and video cameras

Recording can be done with paper, pens, tablet computers, sound recorders, photo or video cameras. Audio-visual recordings are very useful in the collection of agro-ecological knowledge. However, they require specific resources and skills, and the interviewee must give written consent for recording beforehand.

The choice of tools and technology may vary depending on the target audience. It will also depend on how we want to use and disseminate the data. For example, if we have sufficient expertise in shooting and editing, and we have the platform to publish them, it would be great to take videos. Or, if there is knowledge we want to be broadcast on local radio stations, the appropriate recording devices can be used.

However, although question forms are prepared, it is very important to record the observations made during the interviews. These records provide the opportunity to go back and check the interviews in cases of missing parts in the notes or any misunderstandings in the conversations.

Recorded Zoom interviews can be useful as well.



Materials to take in the interviews:

- Informed consent (more than one)
- Interview guide copies (more than one)
- Notebook (with enough pages available) and pens (more than one pen)
- Clipboard (if the interview will happen standing up)
- Audio recorder (or a mobile phone with audio recording program previously installed)
- Photo camera (or a mobile phone with space to store the photos)
- Video camera (or a mobile phone with space to store the videos)

Note: Do not forget to charge the mobile phone / audio recorder / camera prior to the interview and/or take spare batteries / power bank / battery pack in case there are no electricity or plugs where the interview will take place

The Med Caravan team has prepared a question form as support for the knowledge collection. This can start being filled during the interviews by the knowledge collectors and completed by each partner team during systematisation.

Medcaravan forms (Question Summary, Interview Form and Interview Feedback Form) can be found in pages 34 to 43.



The Mediterranean Caravan: Learning and Sharing Agroecology

Informed Consent Form

“The Mediterranean Caravan: Learning and Sharing Agroecology” (MedCaravan) is a project supported by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union. The project began implementation in October 2020 and concludes September 2023. It is coordinated by DEAFAL (European Delegation for Family Farming in Asia, Africa and Latin America) from Italy, in partnership with International CSA/LSPA Network URGENCI, Bugday Association (Turkey), Zelena Tranzicija (Serbia), HSEP (Croatia) and FCiencias ID (Portugal).

MedCaravan prepared a Best Practice Guide for collecting agroecological knowledge, and identified common priority areas and topics designed to collect local and rural agroecological knowledge and practices in partner countries. One purpose of the project is to widely share the collected knowledge with training materials on an on-line platform.

The participant will take part in the knowledge collection process by undergoing an interview.

In the scope of the MedCaravan project’s knowledge collection, I, as an interviewee, have been informed:

1. that providing my data is voluntary.
2. about the right to demand the amendment, deletion, or limitation of the processing of the data at any time by sending an e-mail to the following address: XXX@XXX.
3. that my data may be shared with other participants of the MedCaravan project.
4. that the person responsible for my data is: XXXXX.
5. that my data will be stored only for the purpose of the project or until I revoke my consent.

I hereby give my consent to the processing of my data contained in this Participant Consent Form strictly for the purposes of my participation in the MedCaravan Project. This consent is given in accordance with the Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation).

Also, I hereby give my consent to XXXX and other third parties engaged in the MedCaravan project to use my image and/or testimonial recorded during the interview to be used free of charge for knowledge sharing and promotional purposes of the project, including but not limited to print and online media, the XXX and the XXX publications, websites and online multimedia platforms. This includes use of image, video, voice, or all three for an unlimited time period. I further understand that these items may be subject to reasonable modification or editing.

I hereby confirm that my consent is freely given.

Name and surname of the participant:

E-mail:

Telephone:

Signature:

Date (dd/mm/yy):



BEST PRACTICE GUIDE FOR COLLECTING AGROECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

Question Summary for Knowledge Collectors

Part 1 | Introduction

- Information about MedCaravan project and the purpose of the knowledge collection
- Consent signed or recorded
- Information on the interviewer/interviewee/farm/association/cooperative

Part 2 | Common topics

for all partners

● LSPAs (Community Organisations)

- LSPA's name
- Foundation (when and how)
- Evolution
- Kind of partnership
- Number of shares and distribution
- Type of agreement between producers and consumers
- Contributions to the organisation by its members
- Role (of the interviewee) in the partnership
- Type of products sold
- Percentage of producers income from LSPA
- Benefits/challenges for the producers of the direct relationship between producers and consumers
- Relation between LSPA and producers work
- Challenges for the producer and strategies to overcome them
- Lessons learnt

for each partners to select

● Seed saving

- collecting
- exchange

● Soil regeneration

- practises
- techniques

● Water management

- practises
- techniques

● Accessibility to food

Part 3 | Specific topics

- To be prepared by each partner



KNOWLEDGE COLLECTION Question Form

Part 1 | Introduction

Interviewer

Name

Relation with agroecology

Date of the interview

Knowledge collection tools used audio recorder, video camera photo camera

Issues with collection tools used?

Interviewer

Name

Gender

Age/Year of birth

Education

Profession

Farm - if applicable

Geographical location

Altitude

Distance to forest, agricultural land, peri-urban areas

Distance to nearest town/city
Farm size
Do you have animals? What kind? How many?
Number of working people
Specific tasks
Work division
Farm production
Other activities within the farm
How long has the farm been operating for?
Additional notes
Part 2 Common topics
LSPA - Local Solidarity Partnership for Agroecology
What is your interest in agroecology / nature friendly agricultural production?
Why are you involved in this LSPA?
What type of produce do you sell within the LSPA?
What percentage of your food comes from the LSPA?

Do you know what percentage of the producer's income comes from the LSPA?
What does the direct relationship with consumers bring to the producer? Does it affect aspects of the producer's work?
What are you doing to expand the network of producers and consumers? How do you reach producers and consumers?
What challenges did the producer face throughout the LSPA journey and how did the producer manage to overcome them?
Are there any lessons learned which you would like to share with other people wanting to set up their LSPAs?
for each partner to select:
Seed saving
Collecting
Which kind of seeds do you collect/save?
Do you save seeds?
If yes, How?
Why? (If they do and if they don't)
How did you learn to save seeds?
For how long do you keep the seeds without/before sowing?
How do you share responsibility and work between your team?

How many years can you keep the seeds without sowing them?

Have you heard of other methods?

If yes, which ones?

Why don't you use them?

Are there threatened species, ancestral seeds and breeds among the seeds you save?

Are there lost/older practices in your region? (that you've heard, but don't know the details)

Are there any practices that you take as an example or would like to learn from?

Exchange

Do you exchange seeds?

If not, why?

If yes, how often and with whom?

Exchange practices (e.g. local seed banks, cooperatives, neighbours, family members)

If they don't save seeds
Why?

Additional notes:

Soil Regeneration / Water Management

Soil Regeneration

Introduction

What kind of agriculture are you practising?
(e.g. permaculture, biodynamic, agroforestry, organic, regenerative agriculture)

Are the principles behind the practices applied only in the fields/farm or in a broader sense?

Practices

What kind of practices do you use to regenerate the soil / improve soil health?

When did you start?

How long have you done it for?

From whom/where you've learnt?

Are there any changes in the soil condition as a result of sudden changes in the weather due to climate change?

Are there any seasonal changes?

Do animals play a role in soil improvement? What is it?

What are the factors that negatively affect biodiversity?

What do you do to support biodiversity?

Techniques

Do you fallow?

How?

What are the results?

Do you rotate crops?

How?

What are the results?

Do you use other techniques? Which ones?

How?

What are the results?

Water Management

Introduction

Current/ongoing problems with water - has the situation changed because of climate change?

How?

For how long have you been experiencing these changes?

Where do you get your water from?

Are you sure that your water is usable and healthy? Have you had it analysed?

Practices

Have you experienced situations where you had limited access to water because of drought or other reasons?

How were you affected?

Did you find solutions for this?

Has the water availability changed / will change the products, crops you produce?

How do water conditions affect your harvest: both in terms of lack of or abundance?

Do you think the decrease in water availability will affect your crop selection and harvest/yields?

Have you heard of other water management methods?

Which?

Why don't you use them?

Are there lost/older practices in your region? (that you've heard, but don't know the details)

Which ones?

Techniques

How do you irrigate?

What other techniques do you use to increase the water holding capacity of the soil, such as keyline design or rain harvesting or water harvesting ponds?

Do you build terraces?

How? Can you share the materials and methods used?

How do you sow, plant, weed on the terraces?

Terraces vs tractors: How do you balance such conflicts related to water retention?

Do terraces help you to retain water?

Have you ever experienced terraces causing erosion?

How do you prevent this?

Are there any good examples of water management that you know but have not implemented? Why not?

Additional notes

Accessibility to Food ...

Part 3 | Specific topics

To be prepared by each partner



INTERVIEW FEEDBACK FORM

Name and surname of interviewer:

Place of interview:

Date of interview:

Name and surname of the interviewee:

Interview:

- Were you informed and/or briefed sufficiently on the Best Practice Guide, question forms and the pre-meeting preparations? Did you have any methodological difficulties you could share?
- How was your communication with the interviewee? Did the interviewee have problems understanding and/or replying to the questions?
- Did you take photos or record any audio or video? Were there any problems?
- Do you feel the need to have an additional interview with the interviewee?
- Were there any other problems or difficulties? Why? And can you explain the nature of them?
- Is there anything else you would like to add about the interview? Do you have any suggestions to improve the methodology?

H.6. Training for using technological equipment

Before and after the collecting agroecology knowledge, expert support may be needed in:

- the use of technology and/or
- completing the missing parts of collected knowledge (e.g., making a plant analysis of a photograph from the field)

The person who will conduct the knowledge collection should have a basic training in the use of technologies such as photography, audio and/or video recording, video editing, if s/he will use it.

For MedCaravan: The person to conduct knowledge should also have knowledge on transferring/sending the knowledge collected to the Med Caravan team for systematisation.

After the interviews, basic training in photo shooting and video shooting can be given to farmers, agricultural engineers, or members of LSPAs for them to document practices or document unreachable areas.

It will be helpful to prepare a list of the fields in which experts can be needed and of experts during the planning phase for knowledge collection.



Tips and tricks for audio recording

Microphonen: Make sure to have a good microphone calibrated to record. Also, make sure you test and charge all equipment (and backup equipment like batteries) before starting a new recording.

Location: If possible, choose the location for the recording beforehand so you can set up your equipment.

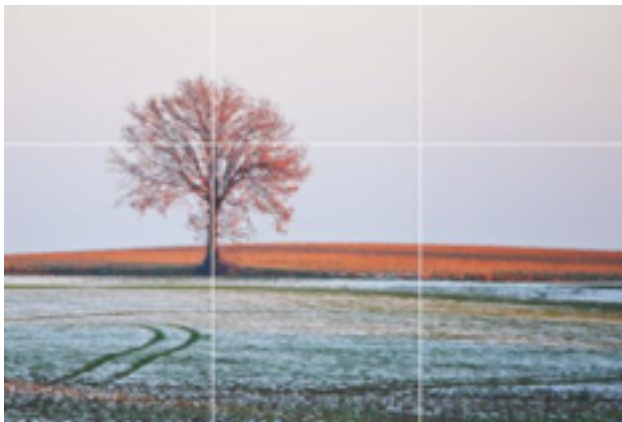
Outdoors: You should avoid recording outdoors or in public spaces. But if you must, make sure nothing is obstructing the microphone from recording. Choosing a space where you are in control of ambient sound and other interruptions will be helpful.

Indoors: If you are recording indoors, make sure the microphone is resting somewhere visible and that nothing is obstructing it from recording. Make sure everyone avoids touching the recording device.

Tips and tricks on how to take photos

Gridlines: Using grid line will help you balance your shots. It will help for better composition and keep shots parallel with any vertical or horizontal lines in your shot.

Activate the optional GRID on your camera or phone: place the subject in the middle of the camera shots or on the lateral lines of the grid, as it is in the following example:



The subject is placed on the left or the right line of the grid.



The subject is in the middle of the grid.

Digital zoom: Avoid using digital zoom as it will reduce the resolution and amplify the movement from hands.

Lighting: Use a properly lit room when photographing indoors. Make sure you look at the room through your camera lens, take some time testing the light. When shooting outdoors, shoot with the sun at your back.

Exposure: Always tap the screen to lock focus on the subject you're photographing, it will prevent you from having dark images.

Image: If you can, try not to rely on your hands to shoot a steady photograph. Instead, use a tripod. Also, be mindful of the orientation you are choosing to photograph. Use portrait for people and tall and large objects. Otherwise, use landscape orientation.



Tips and tricks for video recording

Lighting: Use a well-lit room for recording. Make sure to look at the room through your camera lens and then test shoot a few times. When shooting outdoors, shoot with the sun at your back.

Sound: Many spaces make the audio sound loud or echoey. Test the sound. If the sound is bad, use a good microphone. When using a microphone, remember it picks up much of the noise around so make sure your surroundings are quiet during your shoot.

Image: Try not to rely on your hands to shoot a steady video. If possible, try to use a tripod when filming to avoid a shaky image.

Filming: Record horizontally, the dimensions of a landscape screen are similar to a standard filming frame (FullHD 1920x1080px). This immediately gives a more professional output compared to shooting in portrait orientation.

Interviewee introduction: Ask the interviewee to first tell the camera their name, surname, and where they live. This will be helpful when compiling and archiving.

Framing interviewees: Make sure that the top of the head of the interviewee is in the video frame at all times (whether standing or sitting). If you are filming two people talking, always keep both characters in the camera view.

Gridlines: Using gridline will help you balance your shots. It will help for better composition and will keep shots parallel with any vertical or horizontal lines in your shot.

Activate the optional GRID on your camera or phone: place the subject in the middle of the camera shots or on the lateral lines of the grid.

Dynamic shots: Unless you are a professional videographer, avoid shooting while walking with the interviewee. Shooting while walking is difficult both in terms of sound quality and framing.

Zoom: Avoid using zoom while interviewing.

Space, object, and nature shots: Do not use camera movements such as zooming in/out, panning (moving the camera horizontally) or tilting (moving the camera vertically) for these types of shots unless necessary. If you must, avoid zooming and panning fast.

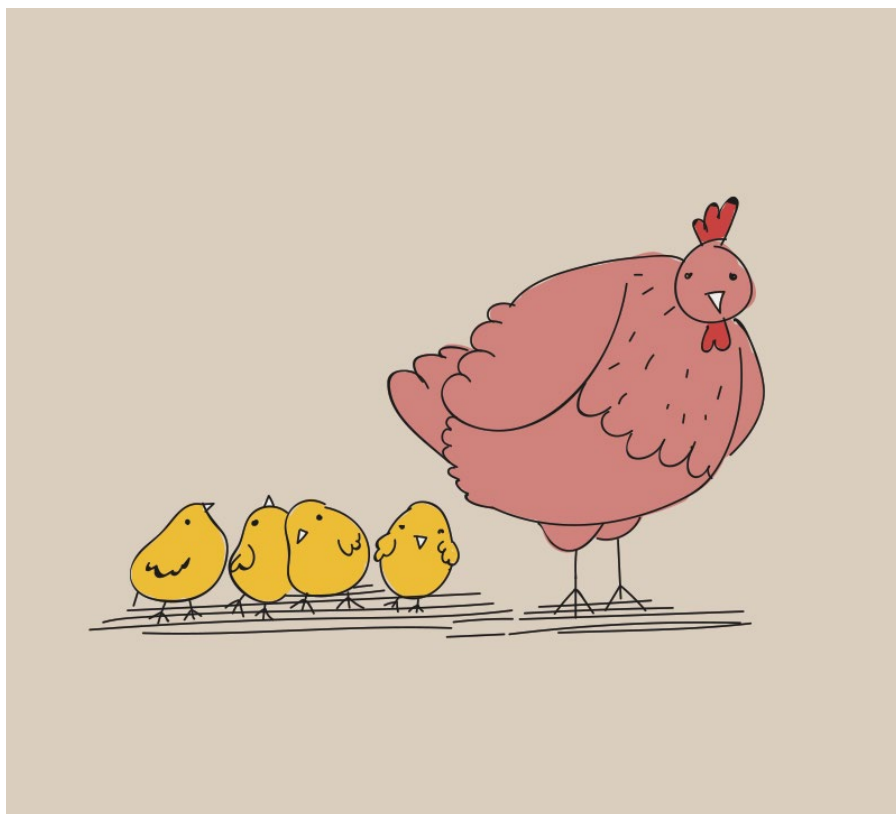


I. CREATING A ROAD MAP AND CALENDAR

For a knowledge collection project (usually in an ethnographic study) a research/col-
lection plan for four seasons should be prepared. The steps are as follows:

- Pre-collection preparation;
- Collection of knowledge in the field (this can be made in multiple stages such as preliminary work, collection, and completion of missing parts)
- Transferring the data to the desired media
- Publication

We can also prepare the calendar in line with these steps.





J. SYSTEMATISATION OF THE COLLECTED KNOWLEDGE

J.1. Systematisation of the collected knowledge

The knowledge collector will deliver the notes and recordings to be systematised. To simplify the process of organising the collected information, a table should be created and divided by parts to establish priorities and the articulation of the information collected.

It is important that the people responsible for systematising have good, strong contact with the knowledge collectors. A minimum of knowledge collectors and interviews should be defined according to the knowledge collecting objectives.

Specific to MedCaravan: The knowledge collector will deliver the notes and recordings to be worked on by each partner of the MedCaravan project. It is important that the MedCaravan team have good and constant contact with the knowledge collectors so that doubts can be clarified whenever needed. To simplify the process of organising the collected information, a table will be created with the synthesised information:

Initiative/Person Name:

TOPIC: Seed Saving / Soil regeneration/Water management / Accessibility to food / Connections with community / LSPAs

CONTEXT

Country:

Strategy (by a municipality, a farm, an LSPA, a cooperative, a regional government, etc.):

Territorial Area (urban, rural, coastal, inland, etc.):

Population Density:

Actors:

Short description:

Problems found and solutions:

ANNEX: A sample table for systematisation of information

Minimum number of knowledge collectors in each country - 3

Ideal number of interviews by each knowledge collector - 5

J.2. Review and classification of the collected knowledge

Identifying the missing parts/deficiencies in the collected information:

- Identifying whether the information described is applicable or not;
- If possible, the missing parts can be asked to the interviewees, or they can be noted as issues that can be addressed in future interviews.
- For example, while explaining the production of *tarhana**, there is a lack of information about the properties of *tarhana* herb**, and its photo can be attached.

* *a traditional fermented soup in Anatolia.*

** *Tarhana herb or Turkish pickling herb, Echinophora sibthorpiana or Echinophora tenuifolia L. subsp. sibthorpiana Tutin, used for improvement of the flavour and the fermentation of tarhana or pickles.*

The classification of the knowledge collected may vary according to the media and the format in which it will be published. For example, if the information will be published in a dictionary format, its classification should be made accordingly. Similarly, if the knowledge is in a documentary broadcast on the Youtube channel, the interviews should be organised and divided into topics.





SYSTEMATISATION TABLE FOR KNOWLEDGE COLLECTION

Initiative/Person	<i>Vivó Mercado*</i>
Topic	<i>LSPA</i>
CONTEXT	
Country	<i>Portugal</i>
Strategy	<i>Municipal</i>
Territorial Area	<i>Urban/Coastal</i>
Population Density	<i>Medium/high - during summer season</i>
Actors	<i>Municipality/farmers</i>
<p>Short Description: <i>Local weekly farmer's market where participants are divided into three different categories: organic certified, verified, and conventional. It's a market organised with the support of the Lagos Municipality by an informal farmers/growers network. The verified category was created to support small scale conventional farmers to improve their practices with the support of organic certified ones.</i></p>	
<p>Problems found: <i>Polarisation between farmers</i></p>	
<p>Possible Solutions: <i>Engaging all actors, greater involvement of all actors (conventional, organic and Vivo' verified farmers) finding ways to work together, building and maintaining a common path - finding ways to get to and support that common path.</i> <i>For Example: Creation of a cooperative that manages the product distribution (planned and organised by farmers).</i></p>	

* This is an example of knowledge collection in Portugal to illustrate how to use the systematisation grid.

Buğday Association for Supporting Ecological Living İzmir, 28-29 May 2022

To conduct our knowledge collection activity for the MedCaravan project, we decided to join in during the distribution day of an LSPA in Izmir, Turkey. The knowledge collection focused on the functioning of LSPAs, as a common topic of the MedCaravan project.

We selected the distribution day of Gediz Ecological Society (GETO) in Izmir for knowledge collection. Izmir is a city with a large and active LSPA network in Turkey and the LSPAs there are well connected with each other. GETO is the most populous of LSPAs in Izmir and both producer and consumer members of GETO participate very actively.

A distribution day, when the orders of the consumers are delivered by the producers, is a good opportunity for knowledge collection since it brings together both consumers and farmers. It is more than merely food shopping – there is also an opportunity for exchange and communication. Producers and consumers come together and chat, and requests, expectations, criticisms, and suggestions are expressed and discussed.

During the distribution in a café, Buğday's MedCaravan's four-person knowledge collection team had the opportunity to interview both producers and consumers. During these interviews, they observed the distribution and documented it in written and visual form. They conducted interviews with producers and consumers using questionnaires. Observing the LSPA members on a distribution day presented the opportunity to witness dialogue and ask the right questions. The knowledge collectors were careful to conduct interviews with the most experienced and active producers and consumers of the community.

A day before the event, the team of knowledge collectors had a meeting to go over the guidelines and questions. This review and planning both prepared the team for the next day's interviews and enabled them to develop a common, shared understanding about the problems they might encounter during the interviews.

After the distribution, the team met with the producers and consumers of GETO as well as three other LSPAs in Izmir (Originn, BİTOT, Homeros) at the farm of Fadime Zülfikargil. This farm is both an LSPA producer and a WWOOF farm. Knowledge collectors continued the discussion and dialogue about LSPAs with the producers and

consumers in these communities. Both during the distribution and afterwards at the farm, four interviewers interviewed a total of 17 producers and consumers about LSPAs.

As a result of the two-day activity, the interviewers observed the distribution process of an LSPA, documented the producers and consumers involved in the distribution, observed the farm and activities of the producer, gathered experiences, and gained information about the structure, relationships and functioning of different LSPAs.

Participants involved in the knowledge collection said that it was very constructive to come together in this way, and also claimed that the interview questions provided an opportunity for reflection and discussion on these issues.

After interviews were completed, the knowledge collection team held an evaluation meeting. The interviews were then transcribed, and short videos were prepared to be shared.



The meeting for knowledge collection on short supply chains in the farm of Fadime Zulfikargil, a farmer for LSPAs.



Distribution day for Gediz Ecological Society, Izmir, Turkey.



Interviews were conducted with farmers on the distribution day of Gediz Ecological Society in Izmir, Turkey.

Knowledge Caravan in Portugal The Lagos and Mértola Route, 13th and 14th of June

The Knowledge Caravan was organised in partnership with the Lagos (southwest Portugal) and Mértola (southeast Portugal) Municipalities. These two municipalities were invited because of their work promoting local, sustainable food systems. The municipality of Lagos supports the weekly farmers' market, *Vivo Mercado*.

At this market, participants are divided into three categories: Organic certified, organic noncertified and conventional. The organic noncertified category includes small-scale conventional farmers working alongside certified organic producers to improve their practices. This is the first step towards the implementation of a Participatory Guarantee System (PGS). The municipality of Mértola is part of an informal network where farmers, local businesses, associations, and social support institutions work to create a local food system. This local food system is designed to promote local production and consumption through participatory governance.

Our first objective for the Knowledge Caravan was to present and implement the Best Practice Guide for Knowledge Collection. However, we also aimed to promote an opportunity for experience-sharing and networking, so we organized a two-day Route on 13 and 14 of June. In each municipality, we invited three farmers/growers, two local government representatives, and two members of local associations working with agroecology. During the route, we also visited vegetable gardens and farming experiences and learned about the challenges participants face in their territories. Such challenges include water management, soil fertility, and community engagement with local food systems. We also organised a focus group to collect knowledge on developed strategies, and created plans to face these challenges. Finally, this was an opportunity to reflect on the importance of partnerships and find solutions that are long-lasting and impactful.



1. Visit to Joaquim Braz's production in Lagos – Member of Vivo' Mercado



2. Visit to Horta da Malhadinha in Mértola



3. Group picture of the participants.

K. PUBLICATION AND USE OF THE COLLECTED AND SYSTEMATISED KNOWLEDGE

K.1. Identification of the media/platform where the collected knowledge will be used

It is necessary to identify in advance the tools, technologies and expertise needed to publish the knowledge collection and reach the target audience.

Identifying the technology to use when sharing/disseminating/publishing the knowledge collected will help determine the tools and technologies to be used during the interviews.



For dissemination

Printed publications and media; electronic publications like electronic newsletters, magazines, and books; social media; podcasts; radio; TV; cinema; billboards; posters; online activities such as Zoom meetings, webinars; face-to-face organisations such as conferences, seminars, farmer meetings etc.

For example, if we want videos to reach the target audience on social media or YouTube, the editing must also be suitable for publication in these channels.

K.2. Issues to be considered during the publication of information

- The location, date, and name of the interviewer should be specified.
- The name, place, date of birth, education, and place of residence of the person interviewed should -depending on the interviewee's consent- be indicated.
- While the collected information is going through the editing process, make sure that the local names used for place, plant, product, application, pottery are registered correctly.
- For information to be understandable and widespread, an explanation of local denominations should be specified.
- Even if there is no legal practice for the protection of traditional information or intellectual property rights in the country, it should be stated that this information will not be shared for commercial profit.

K.3. Transfer of the collected information to the specified media

- Determine the format for how information will be transferred.
- Attention will be paid in transferring the missing material to the media. If some deficiencies are identified in the information collected, the interviewee can be asked to complete it, or other source(s) can be used (e.g. photograph of the plant in question).
- Best practices can be identified in order to increase participation in agroecological practices, to make them more widespread and to ensure a better understanding of the subject. Many people do not understand how it works and therefore do not participate, however, if they see that it is feasible and applicable, they can be more courageous and participate. In fact, this situation can make the media to which the collected knowledge is transferred to become dynamic, and to an interactive opportunity for updating the knowledge on the media.



BEST PRACTICE GUIDE FOR COLLECTING AGROECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE Summarised Version for Knowledge Collectors

<p>General Principles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The beneficiaries of knowledge collected from a region should be the people of that region. • Traditional knowledge collected should be nature-friendly. • Traditional knowledge should utilise tools and materials that will still be valid and applicable in the future. • Traditional knowledge has local characteristics that can cause problems in other ecosystems. • The place of traditional knowledge in the cultural whole should be identified. • Knowledge collectors should be rigorous and should always identify the real source of the knowledge they wish to record. • The dynamic nature of culture - current agroecological knowledge, experiences, and innovation -- should also be considered. • Possible risks should be taken into account, e.g., recipes of folk medicines. • The collected agroecological knowledge should be evaluated and reviewed.
<p>Target groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers, producers, and rural communities • Agricultural technicians and engineers • Agricultural educators, researchers, food communities, and producers • Urban gardeners and hobby gardeners • Relevant national and international organisations, collectives, communities, policy makers, decision makers, and the general public.
<p>Identification of sources for knowledge</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The real people who practise this knowledge: 1) Agroecological producers and experts with experience in agroecological production willing to share knowledge and experience; 2) People who cooperate with / interact with / converse with nature in food production processes; 3) Farmers and experts with whom you have contact; 4) printed, visual, and audio materials about past and present collections.
<p>Identifying sources of knowledge localisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a list of regions -- representative of the Mediterranean geographical and climatic characteristics -- where people who have knowledge topics and contact people within those regions. • Areas with agroecological production, specifically production methods with environmental and social value. These can also be intensive and industrialised areas where agroecological experiences survive. <p>NOTE: The accessibility to those regions should be considered and weighed.</p>

<p>Knowledge collectors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Farmers, producers, “prosumers,” members of LSPAs (Local and Solidarity-based Partnerships for Agroecology, including Community Supported Agriculture, or CSA) in contact with farmers, agricultural technicians, or engineers practising agroecology. ● Should have general knowledge, and some experience of rural life culture/ agroecology knowledge. ● Should have knowledge on collection and interview tools and techniques. ● Should be aware of the rights of the interviewee and the responsibilities of the interviewer. ● Should have communication skills and empathy. ● Should have the ability and willingness to travel. ● Must be motivated to encourage the interviewee. ● Should have language skills/knowledge of the local language. ● Should have knowledge of the place/area where knowledge will be collected, with prior documentation if needed. ● Must know the interview content quite well, the purpose of the project and the focus of the interviews. ● Must clarify doubts, confusion, and concerns of the interviewees.
<p>Knowledge Collection interviews. Important rules</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The knowledge collectors can use both this Summarised Version for Knowledge Collectors or the Best Practice Guide for Knowledge Collection along with the Question Form to help conduct the interview. ● Before starting the questions, the interview plan must be defined ● The interviewer should be honest during the interview (from beginning to end), and the interviewee should not be misled in order to get information. ● The interviewer should consider the sensitivities and sensibilities of local people. For example, sensibilities about clothing, style used, approach, and so on. ● The interviewer should be aware that surprises will inevitably emerge during the interview. ● Sending some questions prior to the interview may be useful. ● The transcript of the interview should be sent to the interviewee so s/he can send comments or add more information/context. <p>Question form: The interviewer should keep an open mind when conducting the interview and pay attention to the cultural and territorial context rather than rigorously following the interview guide. Thus, knowledge collectors should keep in mind that the interview may not follow the topics order and that other relevant topics may need to be addressed.</p>

<p>Knowledge Collection Tools: audio recorders, photo and video cameras</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recording can be done with note paper, pens, tablet computers, sound recorders, photo or video cameras. ● Audiovisual recordings are very useful in the collection of agroecological knowledge; they require specific resources and skills, and the interviewee must give written or recorded consent for the interview recording beforehand. ● Although the question forms are prepared, it is very important to record the observations made during the interviews and to check the interviews in case of missing parts in the notes or misunderstandings. ● The interviewer should have basic training in the technologies used to conduct the interview.
<p>Materials to take in the interviews</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Informed consent (more than one, if used). ● Interview guide copies (more than one, if used). ● Notebook (with enough pages available) and pens (more than one pen). ● Clipboard (if the interview will happen standing up). ● Audio recorder (or a mobile phone with audio recording program previously installed). ● Photo camera (or a mobile phone with space to store the photos). ● Video camera (or a mobile phone with space to store the videos). <p>Note: Do not forget to charge the mobile phone / audio recorder / camera prior to the interview and take spare batteries / power bank / battery</p>
<p>Tips and tricks for audio recording</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Microphone: a good microphone, calibrated to record, tested and charged, with backup equipment (batteries). ● Outdoors: avoid recording outdoors or in public spaces. Make sure nothing is obstructing the microphone from recording. Choose a place where you control the ambient sound. Avoid interruptions. ● Indoors: Ensure that the microphone rests somewhere visible. Make sure nothing is obstructing the microphone from recording and that no one will touch the recording device.
<p>Tips and tricks for video recording</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Light: Ensure a well-lit room for recording. Before recording, make sure to test shooting. When outdoors, shoot with the sun at your back. ● Sound: Test the sound before shooting. Make sure your surroundings are quiet during your shoot. ● Image: Use a tripod, if available, when filming to avoid a shaky image.

<p>Tips for filming</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Record horizontally, if using a phone. ● When the interview starts, ask the interviewee to first tell the camera their name, surname, and where they live. ● Make sure the interviewee’s full head is always in the video frame. ● Using a gridline will help balance the recording. Place the subject in the middle of the camera shots or on the lateral lines of the grid. ● Avoid shooting while walking with the interviewee (dynamic shot). ● Avoid zooming and panning when interviewing. ● Try not to be shy when starting recording. It’s an issue of mutual trust.
<p>Tips for photos</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Using a gridline will help balance shots. ● Avoid using digital zoom (this reduces the image resolution and increases hand movement). ● Use a properly lit room when photographing indoors. Look at the room first through the camera lens. ● When outdoors, shoot with the sun at your back. ● Always tap the screen to lock focus on the subject being photographed. ● Use a tripod to avoid a shaky image. ● Use portrait orientation for portraits of people and tall, large objects even in a landscape context. In other cases, use landscape orientation.
<p>Road Map and Calendar creation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have a pre-collection preparation. ● Collection of knowledge in the field (it can be made in multiple stages such as preliminary work, collection, and completion of missing parts). ● Transferring the data to the desired media. ● Publication.
<p>Interview content</p>	<p>Part 1 Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explaining the interview process. ● Consent Form must be signed or recorded before stating the interview. The interviewee must be fully aware of his/her rights and that the information shared will be available on the URGENCI Hub. ● Don’t forget to write the place and date of the interview and/or knowledge collection. ● The name of the knowledge collector should be included. ● Include information of the interviewee (name, date and place of birth, education, occupation, and so on).

	<p>Part 2 Common topics for all partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● LSPAs (Strategies, achievements, challenges...) <p>for each partner to select:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Seed saving ● Soil regeneration/Water management ● Accessibility to food <p>Part 3 Specific topics Prepared by each partner</p>
<p>Systematisation of the knowledge collected</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge collectors will deliver the notes and recordings to be worked on by each partner of the MedCaravan project. ● The MedCaravan team should have close contact with the knowledge collectors to avoid doubts and clarify the organisation of the information collected. ● A table has been created to simplify the process of organising the collected information stating: 1) Initiative/Person; 2) Topic: SeedSaving/Soil regeneration/Water management/Accessibility to food/Connections with community/ LSPAs; 3) Context: Country, Strategy, Territorial Area, Population Density, Actors; 4) Short description; 5) Problems found and Solutions.
<p>Number of knowledge collections</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Minimum number of knowledge collectors in each country: 3 ● Ideal number of interviews by each knowledge collector: 5 ● If possible, the knowledge collection should be done by two people: one to observe and one to take notes. This will prevent knowledge from being lost.

