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Transforming access to farmland for local food supply – Cases studies from the Isère County in France

Farmland management in France is witnessing an evolution pertaining to the development of collective projects allowing farmland access to farmers aiming to contribute to local food supply. The challenge facing farmland management nowadays is that of prioritizing local food production in a context where multiple farmland uses are in competition: industrial food production, recreational activities and urban development, along with their impact on environmental conservation (biodiversity and water).

Farmland dominant management model in France is that of the contractual relationship between landowners and farmers. This contractual relationship is constrained by national and European regulations (Boinon, 2011). In the present case, the dominant farmland management model is not always suitable for meeting local food supply objectives. As an answer, collective projects, calling for collective action¹ for their implementation, are developing to facilitate farmland access for farmers having a local food project.

The aim of this research is to study collective farmland projects aiming local food supply objectives, by focusing on the institutional arrangements² characterizing them. We will focus on two case studies from the Isère County in France: the agricultural land grouping of Chartreuse and the collective farm *La Clef des sables*. These projects aim to develop alternative institutional arrangements helping farmers to access farmland and develop local food supply. To study the evolutions brought about by these projects, we use the analytical tool of property as a bundle of rights³ (Schalger et al., 1992; Sikor et al., 2017). This tool helps understanding how institutional arrangements operate in practice, meaning which land user holds which rights over land, and the nature of the interactions between different land users.

Our results show how farmland excludability is decreased and its accessibility increased at different levels: rules' definition processes, users' participation to farmland management (specifically citizens), degrees of users' auto-organization and benefits distribution. The issue of the interaction of these projects with local authorities and other scales dealing with local food supply is also analyzed.

¹Defined as individuals engaging in actions in interdependent situations where they share common interests (Poteete et al., 2010).

² Institutional arrangements are defined as rules in use defining farmland management: users' community, rules' implementation, rights and accessibility (Ostrom, 1985).

³ Property rights are here defined as the relationship between individuals concerning specific (in) tangible objects, in our case farmland.

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