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Press Release

An Agroforestry Week in Montpellier, France including a World Congress & Public Events

Strengthening the links between science, society and public policies... this is the objective of the 4th World Congress on Agroforestry (Agroforestry 2019), under the high patronage of Mr Emmanuel MACRON, President of the French Republic, to be held at the Le Corum conference center in Montpellier, from 20 to 22 2019. Open to researchers, students, farmers, NGOs, and political and economic decision-makers alike, the congress is expecting some 1500 participants from more than 100 countries. This international event is being organized in Europe for the first time, by CIRAD and INRA, in partnership with World Agroforestry, Agropolis International and Montpellier University of Excellence.

It is through a public day, organized by the Fondation de France and the French Association of Agroforestry, that this Week of Agroforestry will start on Sunday 19 May at Le Corum. "*We wanted, through this general public day ahead of the congress, to make agroforestry better known to civil society,*" explains **Emmanuel Torquebiau**, Agroforestry Project Manager at CIRAD and Chairman of the Organizing Committee of the 4th World Congress on Agroforestry.

Agroforestry, the future of agriculture?

The organizers wanted to anchor this fourth edition in the societal debate on agriculture. "*It is time for technical solutions to be discussed within civil society and to become part of public policy*", comments **Christian Dupraz**, INRA Research Director and Chairman of the Scientific Committee of the congress. By combining science and dialogue with society, the congress will be an opportunity to assess the contribution of agroforestry to the agro-ecological transition of agriculture at the global level.

Agroforestry, which involves combining trees with crops and pastures, is now recognized to protect soils, address climate change issues and contribute to global food security. This practice could therefore be the future of agriculture. The fields of application are very diverse: hedges and alignment of trees or shrubs in and around plots, multilayer agriculture, timber or fruit production in cropland, fodder trees, trees for honey, shade trees for perennial crops (coffee, cocoa, grapevines) or livestock, multilayer agroforests and agroforestry gardens.

An International Union of Agroforestry will be created at the Congress, to federate agroforestry innovations on a global scale.

Learn more about the congress: [Overall Programme](#) / [Guest Speakers](#) / [Scientific Programme \(25 sessions, 330 oral presentations\)](#) / [Field Tours](#) / [Side Events](#)



On Thursday 23 May, participants will be able to visit the oldest European experimental agroforestry site at Domaine de Restinclières in Prades-le-Lez (11 km north of Montpellier) where cereals (durum wheat and barley rotated with protein peas) are grown with many tree species, particularly walnut trees. In more stony soils, Vines are grown with pines and cormiers. This 50-ha experimental farm, which belongs to Hérault County Council, is scientifically managed by INRA Occitanie-Montpellier.

France and Montpellier, 35 years of agroforestry research

The concept of agroforestry emerged in the 1970s in international think tanks seeking solutions to the problem of tropical deforestation. Today, agroforestry has become a subject of international research, which is now part of the agricultural education curriculum around the world. It was at the University of Montpellier that the first French research on agroforestry was conducted in the 1980s. Research is now conducted within the Agropolis International scientific community, thanks to research teams at CIRAD, INRA and IRD. France has played a leading role in scientific thinking on agroforestry, with the implementation of a National Plan for the Development of Agroforestry in 2016. Today, more than 15 French research units, bringing together around 120 researchers are involved in agroforestry.

A green congress!

The organizers of the congress have opted for:

-  **Voluntary climate compensation** for participants' trips: the sums collected will be devoted to agroforestry research and development projects related to soil protection.
-  **A limited ecological footprint:** preference is given to local suppliers, natural or organic products, minimal printing of paper, public transport, and non-use of plastic tableware.

In parallel with the congress, several events for the general public!



Sunday 19 May, from 10 am to 6 pm, Le Corum

"Sustainable agriculture, a food topic: Trees on our plates!"

Is it possible to ripen tomatoes under trees? Why graze cows under fruit trees or in the woods? Can replanting hedges help to stop pesticide use? Doesn't having trees in fields hinder sustainable food production? Come and ask all these questions, and others, and awaken your senses to agroforestry by meeting the farmers, agricultural development actors, researchers, speakers, artists... from around the world who are experimenting and (re)inventing these forms of agriculture.

This is a free day, open to all, organized by the French Association of Agroforestry, and the Fondation de France, with: an international village of agroforestry initiatives, a conference cycle, an exhibition space, a space research presentation, a corner for agroforestry products, shows, conferences, tastings, and more

Learn more about this public day: <https://tinyurl.com/y466avwo>

Thursday 23 May, 9 pm, Salle Rabelais, 27 Boulevard Sarraill, Esplanade Charles de Gaulle

Film & Debate: "Can we still eat chocolate? What do tropical forests think?"

Friday 24 May, 9 pm, Salle Rabelais, 27 Boulevard Sarraill, Esplanade Charles de Gaulle

"Make our planet treed again!" Agroforestry film festival and debate with congress organizers

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<https://agroforestry2019.cirad.fr/>

