Learning in agroecology: the experience of ISSAE

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Rationale, achievements and perspectives of the International Summer School of Agroecology (ISSAE)

1/ Main objectives (of the ISSAE)
To share with participants our vision of agroecology: connecting practices, sciences and public policies.

*The triangle of agroecology*:
(Bell & Bellon, 2013; adapted from Wezel et al., 2009)

To stimulate scientific debates on agroecological research and action agendas.
To promote an international learning network.

2/ Target groups
Students MSc & PhD levels, interested in transdisciplinary approaches in agroecology.
Professionals involved in the development of agroecology or sustainable agriculture (< 25% of the 30 attendees/year).

3/ Focus
Alternatives to the dominant models of agriculture, innovation and food systems.
Systemic thinking and practice: Problem Based Learning (PBL).

*The PBL loop:*

4/ Organisation
One-week session in English, mid-July, Toulouse (Fr)
Combination of: field visits, conferences, & case studies

Practical case studies (3 to 4) are the cornerstone of the learning process, based on problem finding and collaborative work among participants.

5/ Achievements
An educational method that favours learning of complex issues, places learners at the centre of the stage and considers their needs and objectives
Immersion into transdisciplinary approaches.
Case studies open to various farming situations and ways of envisioning transitions to agroecology
Attendees become part of a network of academics, researchers, and practitioners. This is an opportunity to develop their professional projects
So far, 150 participants from 10 countries attended 5 editions of ISSAE
Connections with other masters from Europe and Americas

6/ Perspectives
Extending the network of participant countries and institutions, with a library of case studies.
Creating a community of professional agroecologists, with specific degree and organisation.
Enabling ISSAE pluri-annual funding through a project supported by agencies.

Website http://issae.enfa.fr/