

# The Agro-Ecology Metrics Project



## What is it?

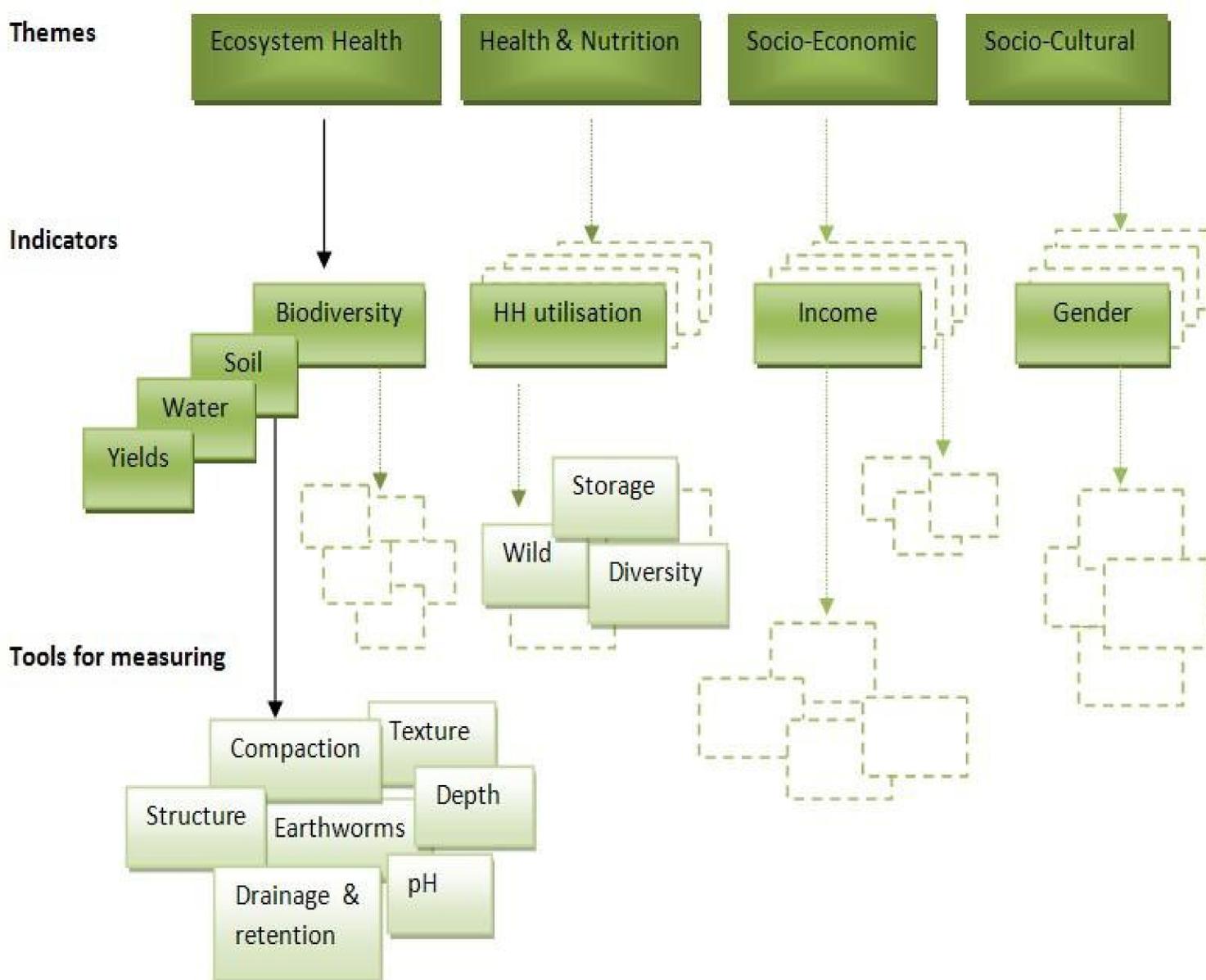
A 4 year project to create simple tests measuring a range of agro-ecological outputs; tests that can be done by any farmer with no special skills or equipment, generating a wealth of new data on the impact of agro-ecology.

## Why is it needed?

Smallholder farmers produce 75% of the world's food. Agroecology is employed by many of them, yet scientists and policy makers lack an understanding of its contribution due to a lack of empirical data. Systems for assessing agro-ecological food systems, like FAO's SAFA framework, are not suitable for smallholders. Smallholders need to clearly see the benefits of the agro-ecological innovations they implement, and share them with one another.

## What would the tests cover?

There would be four **themes**: ecosystem health, health & nutrition, socio-economic and socio-cultural. Under these, **indicators** would include: soil quality, biodiversity, crop yield, adult and child nutrition, personal and family health, income, climate resilience, gender, community well-being, etc. For each indicator, a number of **tools** would be used to measure individual factors such as soil depth and to generate **metrics**.



## What is the geographical area involved?

Four regions are covered: South Asia, South America, Southern Africa and Europe. 14 countries will be included. 100 smallholders in each country will be engaged in an iterative process, with their feedback shaping the tools.

## What's the plan?

### Year 1 (2015)

- Development of the indicators and tools in consultation with existing initiatives and local teams.
- Development of 2G mobile phone platform accessible to smallholder farmers.

### Year 2 (2016)

- Testing the tools. 1400 farmers will test the tools across the four regions.

### Year 3 (2017)

- Dissemination of findings, including papers and conferences.
- Development of advocacy tool-kit to lobby for agro-ecology.

### Year 4 (2018)

- Use of advocacy tool-kit and measurement of impact on policy.
- Dissemination of success stories and lessons learned. Tools, data and advocacy tool-kit freely available online.

## What's the current position?

In 2013 Lush Cosmetics provided £20,000 to pump prime the project and test its viability. The partner consortium has now formed and a detailed project proposal written. Delivery requires around £500,000 over the next four years. The consortium are currently awaiting a decision from a major funder, and further funding is being sought.

## Contact

To learn more about the project, please e-mail [research@permaculture.org.uk](mailto:research@permaculture.org.uk)

