# Competitiveness and societal challenges for land managers and a prosperous countryside

**14th July 2015**

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# Who We Are

The ELO,

- Represents a network of national landowners associations
- Based in Brussels, is the voice of landowners and managers in relation to EU authorities.
- Is active in more than 45 advisory committees and groups in the EU, and has high-level contacts throughout the EU authorities and the 28 Member States

# Who We Are

The ELO,

- Anticipates potential changes in the political and legal climate in the EU with significance for its members.
- Promotes the livelihood of the countryside
- Promotes the role of private initiative
- Promotes landownership and family businesses

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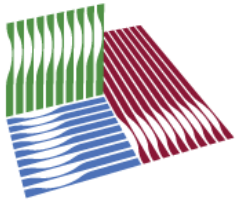
# A Selection from our 58 Members
















# Who we Are





## Working together for a prosperous and sustainable countryside

# Global challenges on Food and Environmental Security


- Urbanisation
- Population Growth
- Poverty and Education
- Energy Demands
- Food Demands
- Water Demands
- Climate Change
- Biodiversity Loss
- Public Health

# The Central Role of Research  and science

- To overcome the food and environmental challenges in the 21st century, scientific advancement is absolutely vital:
- Higher Yields
- Greater Resilience and better understanding of different interactions linked to production
- Research is needed on the reduction of Co2 emissions by global and European agriculture
- Efficient Water Use
- Maintaining Biodiversity

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# Biotechnology and Sustainable Intensification

# *Risk Mitigation and Prevention*

## The Need for Crop Protection

**The extent of crop losses to crop pest categories for key crop types [9]:**

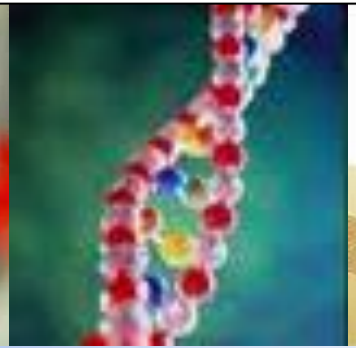
| Crop | Crop losses [%] due to | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Pathogens | Animal pests | Weeds | Total |
| Rice | 15.1 | 20,7 | 15,6 | 51,4 |
| Wheat | 12,4 | 9,9 | 12,3 | 34,0 |
| Barley | 10,1 | 8,8 | 10,6 | 29,4 |
| Maize | 10,8 | 14,5 | 13,1 | 38,3 |
| Potatoes | 16,4 | 16,1 | 8,9 | 41,4 |
| Soybeans | 9,0 | 10,4 | 13,0 | 32,4 |
| Cotton | 10,5 | 15,4 | 11,8 | 37,7 |
| Coffee | 14,9 | 14,9 | 10,3 | 40,0 |

Source: Millennium Ecosystem Assessment "*Ecosystems and human wellbeing – Synthesis*" Island Press, Washington D.C. (2005)

# Biotechnology & Sustainable Intensification

- The ELO continues to advocate sustainable intensification
- With greater technology we will be able to produce more while protecting more biodiversity






# Biotechnology & Sustainable Intensification

Promising Research Areas for Sustainable Intensification and biotech:

- Delivering **more efficient crops** in terms of water use, protection, and ‘positive’ characteristics such as better nutrition (Golden Rice)
- Delivering biotech solutions to the **organic sector**; advanced crossbreeding can help deliver much-needed
- To achieve this, Europe must maintain a sensible attitude towards the **Precautionary Principle**, and adopt an equally valid approach to innovation.

# GMO in Europe

The ELO believes that the three main global crop production methods (organic, conventional, GM) are **equally valid.**

- As long as the technology safe and there is a market, **land managers should be free to choose**.
- The ELO follows EFSA, the USDA, and other credible scientific bodies and **believes GM crops are safe for consumption.**

# Farmland Biodiversity Protection

## The Multifunctional Landscape

The ELO believes that sustainable intensification can deliver a multifunctional landscape

- High-yield production on the best areas
- Biodiversity results in marginal areas / buffer zones
- Increasing biodiversity is good for farming – pollinators, pest control, etc.





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# Conclusion

## Societal challenges addressed:

- Food security
- Environmental mitigation
- Climate change mitigation
- Land and landscape mitigation
- Agricultural resilience

## Crop improvement technologies addressed:

- Biotechnology as a whole: annual and perennial crop development
- Any type of crop improvement technology that has no human health impact, and helps farmers to reduce diseases, losses etc

# Key challenges to be addressed:

- Increased urbanisation means for us farmers and rural communities less skilled working forces; increased gap between urban and rural communities. This also means that more tasks are at the responsibility of the land manager, who stays in the countryside and manages the landscape.
- Climate change: it's already being felt by farmers and farmers adapt. They find soltuions as otherwise they loose their business
- Increased population means: - Reduced space for farming and less land, at higher prices; - increased consumption of natural resources such as water and energy, therefore less available for farmming, and more risk of other types of pollutions
- Competitiveness: who do we, as landowners, compete with/ Who competes with us? All those who wish to have access to land.
- In terms of food production, EU farmers compete with the global market. How do we keep it in a sustainable system in terms of productivity and environmenta footprint?

# Conclusions:

- Long-term approach: is key for a sustainable business
- Policy coherency between competitiveness and environmental conservation
- Europe needs to have access to technology to remain competitive. Importance to maintain the CHOICE of all tools for farmers
- Partnerships and collaboration
- Reconcile environmental protection and innovation
- Increased and better communication
- Practitioners should be at the heart of the research programmes: Research programmes ought to stay close to the fields and to the farmers
- Engage with young farmers communities

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# Thank You for Your Attention