



NATIONAL WORKSHOPS REPORT TEMPLATE

IPMWORKS National Workshop France

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Participants:

- Nicolas Munier Jolain, Inrae (IPMWORKS coordinator)
- Philippe Delval, ACTA (IPMWORKS partner)
- Marianne Sellam, ACTA (IPMWORKS partner)
- Calypso Picaud, CRAO (IPMWORKS partner)
- Myriam Gaspard, CRAO (IPMWORKS partner)
- Antoine Legall, French Ministry of Agriculture
- Flore Vandier, French Ministry of Agriculture
- Odile Colnard, French Ministry of Agriculture
- Pauline Souche Suchovsky, French Ministry of Agriculture
- Philippe Cousinie, French Ministry of Agriculture
- Christian Dron, French Ministry of Environment
- Ludovic Bonnard, French Ministry of Environment
- Karine de Percin, French Biodiversity Office
- Melanie Moussours, French Biodiversity Office
- Laura Humbert, French Biodiversity Office
- Koffi Simiti, French Biodiversity Office
- Pauline Bodin, Agricultural cooperation
- Jordan Lebars, DEPHY Network
- Laura Vallée Hans, DEPHY Network

- Lenna Berthie, Cooperative national representant
- Pauline Bodin, Cooperative national representant
- Frédéric Ernoux, French Chambers of Agriculture

1. Agenda

- a) Introduction of IPMWORKS network and methodology
- b) Session 1: Validation of the IPMWORKS recommendations for scaling IPM adoption through IPM demo networks in the AKIS.
- c) Session 2: IPMWORKS strategy for Long Term Sustainability.

2. Outcomes on Session 1: Validation of the IPMWORKS recommendations

The following French specificities were highlighted:

- A pre-existing DEPHY network (2000 to 3000 farms depending on the period), which inspired the IPMWORKS project.
- A specific agricultural education system, under the authority of the Ministry of Agriculture.
 - Agricultural education is strongly linked to the DEPHY network (2/3 of agricultural schools are involved in the DEPHY Fermes network (network of commercial demo farms) or the DEPHY Expé project (network of experiments), involving not only school farms but also teachers and students).
 - The agro-ecological transition is an integral part of training guidelines (EPA 2 : Plan: teaching how to produce differently). However, some training courses lead to the award of a "certiphyto conseil" (a certificate of professional competence in crop protection), even though the teaching has not gone into the details of the topic 'integrated crop protection'.
- Significant national funding dedicated to the National Action Plan Ecophyto, with a new focus from 2024 on developing alternatives in anticipation of the withdrawal of active substances. These funds are made available by another French specificity: a specific 'diffuse pollution' tax on plant protection products sold in France.
- The DEPHY network can be seen as a European laboratory, with production situations that are fairly representative of both northern and southern Europe.
- The DEPHY network involves a wide range of partners, both public and private, involved in supporting farmers (public research, agricultural technical institutes, Chambers of Agriculture, cooperatives, retailers, national agricultural and rural organizations such as CIVAM, private consultants), even if the law on the separation of sales and advice has distanced some stakeholders (cooperatives and retailers) from the process of supporting farmers towards low-pesticides practices.

The participants expressed the following opinions on the IPMWORKS approach to facilitate IPM adoption:

- Overall, the method implemented in the IPMWORKS project is similar to that developed in the DEPHY network.

- This method has proved its worth in supporting and developing the adoption of IPM by volunteer farmers involved in the groups/hubs, and in developing the specific skills of advisors to facilitate adoption.
- It enables to compile resources (information, results) and to demonstrate that pesticide reduction is possible in different contexts, thanks to the data collected in real commercial farms implementing IPM. There is therefore a real challenge on the topic of data collection, data sharing, and data processing to produce quantitative results.
- This method emphasizes a holistic approach, whereas other public policies today emphasize the development of single solutions, and therefore more targeted technology-oriented approaches.
- Making use of results and progresses made by pioneer farmers engaged in working groups/hubs to raise awareness among a wider audience of farmers, beyond the demonstration network, is a complex task. The deliverables produced and the findings of the IPMWORKS project are in line with those of the DEPHY network. The obstacles to a wide IPM adoption observed in France are similar to those identified in the European project.
- Despite their status of demo networks, based on pioneer farmers with a specific motivation to decrease the reliance on pesticides, these networks alone cannot be expected to elicit the general appropriation and mass adoption of practices that reduce the use of plant protection products. This perception is beginning to be shared by both the partners involved in the DEPHY coordination (CAN) and the public authorities.
 - The political objective must be clearly defined
 - Other support methods are needed to assist all farmers. A proposal has been put forward by the French Chambers of Agriculture, for example, to set up comprehensive IPM-oriented individual advice at farm level.
- The engagement of agri-food chains is needed to overcome obstacles to IPM development, specifically regarding the topic of crop diversification of production (need for outlets and economic value). This applies both to the development of new crop productions, and to the development of specific markets for products from low-pesticide farms, that have to be differentiated and recognized by the market.

3. Outcomes on Session 2 : IPMWORKS strategy for Long Term Sustainability

The added value of a European network is widely shared by French stakeholders, who highlighted the following points:

- The diversity of soils and climatic contexts across Europe, and the diversity of plant health issues, makes it possible to compare and anticipate situations, particularly considering emerging pests and climate change.
- The network makes it possible to benchmark the technical solutions implemented in different countries (with a specific interest for the availability of biocontrol solutions, that differs among member states).

Other current European projects also contribute to this objective:

- A new European project: AdvisoryNetPEST aims to build a European network of advisors working on innovative solutions to reduce the risk and use of plant protection products. This project is a way of continuing to share experience and policy recommendations more widely between countries on this topic (January 2024-December 2028).

- To work on the marketing of certain solutions using low-risk pesticides (RATION):
<https://www.ration-lrp.eu/project/>
- The network enables a benchmark to be set on facilitation and promotion methods, and to share and disseminate tips for this quite innovative approach for advisory services.
- An EU-wide farm demo networks can be a good support for collective validation of innovative solutions, providing a starting point for wider appropriation and dissemination.
- It provides perspectives and emulation, thanks to cross-fertilization of activities. French stakeholders emphasized the value of using the IPMWORKS network to provide entry points for study visits supporting a wider adoption of sustainable practices, potentially inspiring farmers, future farmers (students) and advisors. The AdvisoryNetPEST project also aims to encourage such exchanges.
- A European network enables all EU member states to share objectives for reducing the use and impact of plant protection products. This helps to reduce perceived distortions of competition between member states.
- The topic of data (recording, sharing, processing, etc.) is essential to maximise outcomes of IPM farm demo networks, such as resources to benchmark IPM solutions, pesticide use, pesticide impact, and profitability. Data collection needs to be reinforced in the future, despite the difficulties and the reluctance of farmers and advisors (work load, reluctance for any additional paperwork...). It is crucial to develop technical solutions for (automatic) data collection and sharing, to overcome these reluctances.
- France will be able to continue its involvement in this network, since funding for the DEPHY network is guaranteed at national level in the medium term.

Depending on the region, links are forged at local meetings organised by local engineers from Dephy network, at national crop sectors seminars and sometimes at technical days.

In general, representatives of the regional directorates of agriculture - regional food services, Ecophyto (SUD French national action plan) delegates, - are invited. Water agencies are also invited, and even more rarely representatives of the French Office for Biodiversity.

Some of these events include farm visits, generally at national seminars organised by cropping sector.