

Regenerating soil, nature, and society in Dutch rural regions

Action research to accelerate the sustainable farming transition

Department: Copernicus Institute of Sustainable Development

Research group: Innovation studies & Environmental sciences

Supervisor: Niko Wojtynia

Email address: n.wojtynia@uu.nl

Telephone number: 0628653175

Project description

We're currently working on several action research projects to better understand and accelerate the transition to sustainable farming in the Netherlands. The focus is on the one hand on the motivations and capacities for farmers to adopt new farming methods, such as regenerative farming or growing fibrous crops for use as biobased construction materials, as well as the exploration of farm business models that make such methods viable. On the other hand, we aim to better understand the role of stakeholders (value chain, government, service providers) in the transition, and to facilitate them to adopt strategies and practices that support the transition on the farm. The exact focus of the project will be determined by project needs and acquisition of external funds, but the main part of the research is funded for the next 1.5 years.

Concretely, research activities in this project include:

- Mapping networks of farmers and stakeholders
- Contacting farmers and stakeholders to plan interviews
- Independently carry out interviews with farmers and stakeholders (after initial interviews with the supervisor)
- Desk research on stakeholders' interactions with farmers, the role of regulations, and the functioning of markets for sustainably farmed food and resources
- Designing and organizing workshops to explore solutions for the transition

Job requirements

We're looking for an enthusiastic assistant with interest in, and knowledge of, the Dutch agri-food system. Close knowledge of the sector in Utrecht, Friesland, and/or Twente (through e.g. a farming family background, previous research, or volunteer experience on a farm) is an advantage.

Furthermore, the following skills and experience are required:

- At least A1 level Dutch and English
- Basic qualitative research design skills
- Experience conducting semi-structured interviews
- Networking and planning skills