

Agricultural forestry is a system of agricultural land management in which trees or shrubs are grown around or among crops or pastures. The term has entered European politics through a new agricultural strategy From farm to fork and as part of the European green plan. The development of the European Green Agenda also requires the introduction of new terminology into political discourse, but also the side effects of new terms.

The diversification of the agricultural system triggers agro-environmental succession, such as that in natural ecosystems, and thus begins a chain of events that improve the functionality and sustainability of the agricultural system. It is a dynamic, ecological system of natural resource management that, by integrating trees on farms and on agricultural land, diversifies and maintains production for increased social, economic and environmental benefits for land users at all levels.

Agricultural forestry systems are multi-purpose systems that can provide a wide range of economic, sociocultural and environmental benefits, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) points out. Fruits, palms, bamboos, nuts, medicinal, shrubby plants, etc. can be planted. It also has added economic value thus increasing farmers' earning potential, but it also increases food supply and biodiversity, reduces soil erosion, prevents flooding, cleans the air and stores greenhouse gases. Such practices have so far been mainly used in sub-Saharan Africa on small farms, and now the practice is spreading to other continents. Given that the new system is so different from previous European agricultural practices, farmers are confused. The EU's agricultural strategy so far has defended the planting of more than a hundred trees per hectare. Exceeding this limit jeopardized the payment of aid because until now the EU considered that planting trees in the fields endangered agriculture itself. The European tendency to bureaucracy and strictly defined houses in which the entire organization of society must fit is one of the problems of the EU, especially because the bureaucratic systems developed in this way are the result of deep distrust in its inhabitants. The irony of the European problem lies in the fact that even the strictest bureaucracy has not prevented many suspicious types and organizations from taking over payments from European funds. While on the periphery of the union it may have failed politicians (such as the former Croatian Minister of Agriculture), in its center these are well-known old mafia organizations (eg Italian). Under the new plan, member states will have full freedom to pay aid to farmers who plant trees in their fields.

### **Typically European barriers**

Pressed by the need to find solutions to climate problems, the EU is forced to become much more flexible in defining seemingly unambiguous terms. But this conceptual change still

does not mean that reform and new opportunities communicate well with farmers. However, those accustomed to European penalties and reduction of funds (remember, until last year, the EU's plan was to completely abolish aid for agriculture, which Croatia was particularly opposed to) are now reluctant to hurry with planting trees in their fields, which in turn The EU is creating problems in implementing new environmental strategies.

On the other hand, the European Federation of Agricultural Forestry (EURAF) estimates that there are about 20 million hectares of agricultural forests in the EU, and that 90 percent of grassland would be suitable for this form of conversion (of course, this does not mean that it will be used because nor is it an environmentally sustainable practice). As much as 99 percent of arable land in Europe can be converted into arable forests (agricultural forests). In order to make better use of and maintain all this, the EU plans to develop, as part of a general digitization strategy, a way for the FaST (satellite monitoring of agricultural land) system to perform an additional function of assessing which trees to plant in which fields. However, compartmentalized as it is, the EU makes things difficult for itself, so none of the Horizon2020 projects includes the parameters needed to produce the best forestry models.

This example shows us that the EU must necessarily change along with its green policy. Previous practices, in addition to not meeting the needs of “users”, ie. people, obviously no longer meet the needs of the state administration either. The only question is whether civil servants on the periphery of the Union will be able to master these new methods of work, because if you look at the Croatian example, in the conflict of old, unsatisfactory paper practices and new digital technologies, the latter will not prevail.

Source: bilten.org