

SURE
SUSTAINABLE
RESILIENT
EU FARMING
SYSTEMS **Farm**

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T4.2: Assessing how policies enable or constrain the resilience of the extensive beef cattle system in the Massif Central, France.

An application of the Resilience Assessment Tool (ResAT)

**Work Performed by P8, Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique,
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Bocage Bourbonnais Case Study (France)

General presentation of the study area and its challenges

The *Bocage Bourbonnais*, chosen as the French case study area for the SURE-Farm program, is part of the large suckling breeding basin that extends along the northwest and north edge of the Massif Central (Figure 1). It also belongs to the large hedged crescent that runs from Brittany to the northeastern foothills of the Massif Central (Figure 2). It is a hilly grassland region, with landscapes structured by a more or less dense network of hedges, where **meat farming is of great economic importance**.

This small region is located away from large regional urban centers. This relative isolation is accompanied by a marked ageing of the population and deterioration in access to the main services (hospitals, secondary education, etc.). These factors make it unattractive for people working in the local employment areas who would like to settle in the countryside. On the other hand, **the preserved countryside landscapes, and the very affordable cost of houses, make it rather attractive for people, including foreigners, who wish to acquire holiday homes**.

The agrarian history of this region is very particular. After the 1789 revolution, the aristocratic and monastic lands were bought by the local bourgeoisie to create relatively large estates (50 hectares or more), exploited by sharecroppers. In the first half of the 19th century, major industrial centers (mining, metallurgy, armaments, etc.), served by a dense network of railway infrastructures, developed in the north-east of the Massif Central. Landowners saw this as an opportunity to become meat suppliers to these new urban centers, imposing on their sharecroppers a specialization in suckling livestock, and investing heavily in the first selection schemes of the Charolaise breed.

Sharecropping did not disappear until the 1960s and 1970s, but this particular history has left its mark. The collective action of farmers has long been structured by the struggle against the exorbitant power of landlords. As a result, little emphasis has been placed on the technical and economic dimensions. The organization of the sector was thus largely left to the cattle-dealers. This history explains part of the current difficulties in **structuring a "quality meat" sector, which is unanimously considered essential to the economic viability of livestock farming**.

The farming system

The Bocage Bourbonnais is above all a cattle breeding region (57% of farms, 68% of UAA, 123 hectares on average). The region also has a large number of sheep and goat farms (15% of farms, 45 ha on average). Cereal farms are the third most important sector (11% of farms, 93 ha on average).

While grassland still represents an essential part of the area's agricultural land (77% in 2010, with three-quarters of permanent grassland), cereal and silage maize areas have been increasing steadily for 20 years. On the one hand, a growing number of medium-sized to large cattle farms (70-120 ha) are choosing to abandon livestock farming (too labor-intensive, too unprofitable). On the other hand, larger cattle farms tend to develop a fattening, based on the increased use of silage maize and cereals produced on farms. Hedges and grasslands thus tend to disappear in the sectors most favorable to cereal development, which therefore lose a significant part of their tourist attractiveness and where the important biodiversity associated with hedgerows is significantly reduced (insects, birds, etc.).

However, some farmers are looking for other development paths, positioning themselves in more profitable market niches, short circuits or organic meat production. These commercial choices are generally accompanied by a strengthening of the grassland character of these livestock farms.

The farming system of the Bocage Bourbonnais can therefore be summarized as follows:

- An area dedicated to cattle meat breeding, and sheep to a lesser degree.
- Three main types of products: young cattle for fattening; fattened cattle; lambs.
- Bocage landscapes, associated with a high biodiversity, with a good tourist activity.
- A limited fraction of the land dedicated to non-fodder crops;
- A not very dynamic professional organization.

This system has undergone significant changes over the past years :

- A drastic and continuous decrease in the agricultural population (-65% in 35 years);
- Significant expansion of farms and herds (42 to 105 hectares in 35 years);
- Development of the fattening activity, with a growing share of silage maize in animal feed, accompanied by a commercial positioning as a "quality sector" mainly targeting mass distribution. This trend mainly concerns the largest farms.
- Development of meat production in niche markets (organic, direct sales, artisanal butchery and high-end catering), with a direct takeover of the marketing process by farmers. This trend concerns a small number of medium to large farms, managed by relatively young farmers.
- Conversion of livestock farms to cereal farms.
- Disappearance of small sheep farms, less rapid for those in short circuits.

Factors that may influence these trends:

- The multiplication of extreme climatic events (droughts in late spring/summer) seriously compromises the economic health of all livestock farms.
- The ageing of the agricultural population and the low renewal rate may further amplify the mechanics of farm expansion.
- The pressure from downstream actors (large retailers in particular) in terms of prices, but also product characteristics (homogeneity of carcass sizes, drastic health rules, etc.) reduces the economic interest of switching to labelled sectors (official quality signs or private labels) and imposes significant investments, accessible only to the most affluent farmers.
- Niche strategies are fragile, given the competition in this sector. The transition to organic farming is becoming an almost necessary condition for survival in this sector, but it requires strengthening the grassland character of the production system.
- The trend towards cereal farms could accelerate, to the point of strongly affecting the landscape identity of some parts of the region. The lack of interest of the younger generations in livestock farming, the simplicity of cropping systems (wheat-canola), reinforce this trend. There is a risk, as in other French regions, of the emergence of "ghost farmers", who retain only the legal and tax status, overall management (and subsidies) and have all the work carried out by third parties, sometimes without even remaining on the area

Resilience of the farming system

In the case of the Bocage Bourbonnais, the question of resilience, as addressed in the SURE Farm program, can be translated as follows:

Under what conditions can the agricultural system be maintained or evolve?

- ***Without overtly transforming the hedged grassland landscape that produce ecosystem services of local and global interest and make it attractive for local and foreign people.***
- ***By remaining a recognized quality meat production, at the heart of the local economy.***
- ***By maintaining an agricultural population at a level sufficient to maintain and strengthen the vitality of the territory.***
- ***Thus, by maintaining the attractiveness of livestock production, in terms of comfort and social recognition of livestock farmers' work as well as economic profitability.***

These challenges obviously depend on factors internal to the system, but also on external and uncertain factors: dynamics of meat markets in France, Europe and worldwide ; changes in society's view of livestock farming ; increase in climate risk, especially in terms of extreme events but also the appearance of new animal diseases... And of course public policies.

Main documents used for the RESAT analysis

The application of CAP measures is subject to variations between countries. The choices made reflect their specific objectives. As a result, most of the literature used focused on the documents specific to the French case and, given the regional variation in the application of the second pillar, on the corresponding documents for the former Auvergne region, where the study area is located.

The numbers indicate the documents that will be cited in the next steps of the analysis.

Europe

"Mapping and analysis of the implementation of the CAP" .

- 1) *Final Report*
- 2) *Annex 3: Mapping report* pp 100-126 (France)
- 3) *Résumé analytique (fr)*
Client: European Commission – DG Agriculture and Rural Development, Brussels, November 2016;
- 4) *Réforme de la PAC – explication des principaux éléments* – MEMO European Commission, FR, oct 2013
- 5) **RÈGLEMENT D'EXÉCUTION (UE) N° 641/2014 DE LA COMMISSION du 16 juin 2014** fixant les modalités d'application du règlement (UE) n° 1307/2013 du Parlement européen et du Conseil établissant les règles relatives aux paiements directs en faveur des agriculteurs au titre des régimes de soutien relevant de la politique agricole commune
- 6) **RÈGLEMENT (UE) N° 1308/2013 DU PARLEMENT EUROPÉEN ET DU CONSEIL du 17 décembre 2013** portant organisation commune des marchés des produits agricoles et abrogeant les règlements (CEE) n° 922/72, (CEE) n° 234/79, (CE) n° 1037/2001 et (CE) n° 1234/2007 du Conseil
- 7) **RÈGLEMENT D'EXÉCUTION (UE) n° 808/2014 DE LA COMMISSION du 17 juillet 2014** portant modalités d'application du règlement (UE) n° 1305/2013 du Parlement européen et du Conseil relatif au soutien au développement rural par le Fonds européen agricole pour le développement rural (Feader)
- 8) **CAP EXPLAINED - DIRECT PAYMENTS FOR FARMERS 2015-2020** - European commission

France - CAP

- 9) *Négociation de la réforme de la politique agricole commune 2014*. Rapport du CGAER, aout 2015
- 10) **RAPPORT FAIT** au nom de la commission des affaires économiques du Sénat de la République Française sur la proposition de résolution européenne présentée au nom de la commission européenne sur la réforme de la PAC, mai 2013
- 11) **Cap sur la PAC 2015-2020, La Réforme de la PAC**. Ministère de l'agriculture, 2014

The following site, which is regularly updated, makes it possible to monitor the application of the CAP in France: <http://agriculture.gouv.fr/agriculture-et-foret/politique-agricole-commune>

Auvergne Region

12) *France - Rural Development Programme (Regional) – Auvergne* Région Auvergne - Direction générale adjointe du développement de l'économie, de l'attractivité de l'Auvergne, juin 2017

National Policies

a. Loi d'avenir (2014)

13) **LOI n° 2014-1170 du 13 octobre 2014 d'avenir pour l'agriculture, l'alimentation et la forêt** – Titre liminaire et texte de la loi

14) **Fiches techniques pour l'application de la loi d'avenir** – Ministère de l'agriculture

b. Loi de 2018

15) **EXPOSE DES MOTIFS -Projet de loi** pour l'équilibre des relations commerciales dans le secteur agricole et alimentaire et une alimentation saine, durable et accessible à tous (AGRX1736303L) - Mai 2018

16) **PROJET DE LOI** pour l'équilibre des relations commerciales dans le secteur agricole et alimentaire et une alimentation saine, durable et accessible à tous, Assemblée Nationale, Mai 2018

The chapter containing the requested table with the arguments extracted from these documents to carry out the following analysis will be communicated later

Step 4: Interpreting and scoring the data (manual treatment)

<i>Question: To what extent do the policy's goals and instruments enable or constrain the characteristic?</i>	
<i>Answers</i>	<i>Scores</i>
<i>Not clear</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>obstructs</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>counteracts</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>neutral</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>enables</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>encourages</i>	<i>5</i>

ROBUSTNESS		
Question	Scale (0-5)	Arguments
1a. To what extent is a focus on the short- term enabled or constrained by the policy goals ?	4	<p>Public agricultural policies, whether they correspond to the national (and regional, for measures under the rural development pillar) application of the CAP or merely national (Law of the Future of 2014, Law of Agriculture and Food of 2018), always have the strategic objective of permanently improving the economic, environmental and social situation in the agricultural sector, the agrifood sector and rural areas. However, a detailed examination of the operational objectives of these different policies shows a clear priority in the short term. Almost all of them target above all a form of "immediate general efficiency", which involves limited efforts to farmers and the companies that benefit from it.</p> <p>For example, the objectives set for direct payments (basic rights) are those of a gradual convergence of subsidies between regions. But, at the same time, the ambition of this convergence remains partial and it is clearly stated that it must not too much affect existing situations. The direct consequence, given the importance of their corresponding budget allocation, is to reduce the possibilities for actions that would lead to greater efficiency, in particular in terms of maintaining agricultural employment or reducing inter-regional inequalities. Large cereal farms, located in regions with the highest agronomic potential, are still largely favoured, at the expense of livestock farms and/or less favoured areas and/or small farms, which nevertheless make a significant contribution to agricultural employment and the vitality of rural areas.</p> <p>Similarly, the objectives of environmental actions (green payments, second pillar measures) are consistent with a proclamation of a desire for "dual economic and environmental performance". But, with the possible exception of systemic agri-environmental schemes, the real ambition is more a choice of non-degradation of the existing situation (example of maintaining permanent grasslands) than of a real ecological transition.</p> <p>In summary, it can be said that the stated strategic objectives, which are indeed positioned with a view to change, are only translated into operational objectives (which are those actually reflected in the actions implemented) in the short term.</p>

<p>1a. To what extent is a focus on the short- term enabled or constrained by the policy instruments ?</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>In line with what has just been indicated concerning the "temporal reduction" of strategic objectives (whose vision is indeed medium and long-term) in operational objectives (targeting rather the short term), the measures proposed in the French application of the CAP focus essentially on the short term and the stabilisation of acquired situations, whether in economic, social or environmental terms. The law on agriculture and food, which mainly targets better regulation and greater equity in supply chain relations, is in line with the same logic (but not all implementing decrees have yet been published, so it is not necessarily legitimate to make a final judgment). Measures in favour of agricultural settlement are nevertheless in line with a longer-term perspective, but openings to non-family settlements remain however limited. There are some others exceptions to this dominant "short term" trend, in particular in the measures corresponding to priority 1 of 2nd pillar (promoting knowledge transfer and innovation in the agricultural and forestry sectors, as well as in rural areas) and to the implementation of the LEADER programme. Similarly, the application of the 2014 "Loi d'Avenir" is reflected in measures favouring the medium and long term: renewal of agricultural education, promotion of collective actions aimed at triple performance, particularly in the GIEE program. But, in the latter case, this centre, apart from animation credits, receives no other financial support than privileged access to RDR measures. It is therefore to be feared that these measures, themselves generally in the short term, will not stifle the stated desire to engage farmers' groups to plan for the long term.</p>
<p>2a. To what extent is protection of the status quo enabled or constrained by the policy goals?</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>The focus of the operational objectives on the short term clearly corresponds to a desire to prioritize the maintenance of the status quo in the agricultural production sector. This attitude must be seen in the particularly concerned view of the situation on a large number of farms, particularly in the livestock sector. The Regional Development Programme for the Auvergne region is particularly exemplary in this respect. The major problem identified is that of the great fragility, both economic and social, of the greatest number of them and, as a result, of areas with a very strong agricultural bias, such as the Bourbonnais Bocage, which we have chosen as our study area. For these areas, policy and agricultural leaders seem to consider the development of quality sectors as the only way to ensure the sustainability of agricultural systems. But the first priority remains to safeguard the existing system. Measures to strengthen the immediate economic stability of suckler farms (coupled support, integration of the PHAE into the scheme for the exemption of areas with natural handicaps, etc.) are therefore of much greater importance than those that could encourage positioning on more profitable markets, guaranteeing farmers better economic viability. This is all the more so as the proposals in this area, based essentially on the development of fattening and the introduction of labels for long-term circuit marketing, currently seem accessible only to a limited number of farmers.</p>
<p>2b. To what extent is protection of the status quo enabled or constrained by the policy instruments ?</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>Protection of the status quo is encouraged by a large majority of the proposed measures, both in the first and second pillar of the CAP. Only the LEADER measures and the actions proposed under the 'Loi d'Avenir' seem to favour a break with the existing system. It should be noted, however, that this priority at the status quo does not mean that people who would like to change cannot find any solution in the proposed measures as those aimed at promoting more collective work organisations, or those supporting tangible and intangible investments for innovation.</p>

<p>3a. To what extent is the development of buffer resources enabled or constrained by the policy goals?</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Since they favour the short term and the preservation of the status quo, public policy objectives (with the notable exception of the 2014 law, but which we have seen that it does not propose many specific means) take little account of the emergence of buffer resources to face to risks, whether they are market-based or linked to climate change. We could even consider them to be counterproductive in this respect, by favouring a locking of farms in their existing state.</p> <p>The objectives associated with green payments and agri-environmental and climate schemes could potentially open up some opportunities for creating alternative resources to mitigate extreme climate events, but they remain relatively unambitious.</p> <p>Diversification of agricultural systems, another possible way to create buffer resources, is not a priority objective, either at the national level or in the study area.</p>
<p>3b. To what extent is the development of buffer resources enabled or constrained by the policy instruments?</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Even if this question of buffer resources is not a clearly stated objective in France, some measures in the CAP may go in this direction and enable farmers who wish to do so to develop their own solutions. However, the resources allocated to these measures, both nationally and regionally, remain limited.</p>
<p>4a. To what extent are other modes of managing risks enabled or constrained by the policy goals?</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>The issue of risk management is clearly present in the objectives of agricultural policies in France.</p> <p>Particular emphasis is placed on the management of climate, health and environmental risks as a structuring economic measure. It is now implemented under the second pillar, through a specific national programme, the National Risk Management and Technical Assistance Programme, based on two types of support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - crop insurance assistance; - support for health and environmental mutual funds. <p>This new framework makes it possible to consolidate the financing of risk management. It also provides greater stability and visibility to the systems, which are necessary for their further development.</p>
<p>4b. To what extent are other modes of managing risks enabled or constrained by the policy instruments?</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>With regard to economic risks, France relies mainly on market measures planned at European level. The European Commission may take measures to manage difficult market situations, such as a sudden drop in demand caused by a health alert or a fall in prices resulting from a temporary excess supply on the market. In the event of an acute crisis, these instruments may be supplemented by strictly national funds.</p> <p>Regarding climate risk, measures associated with the national risk management programme are being implemented. Support for crop insurance schemes is unevenly developed in the different sectors. In the case of livestock, which is particularly relevant to our study area, there is not yet a real insurance system for severe drought, such as the one that occurred this year. However, specific aid may be granted.</p>

ADAPTABILITY

Question	Scale (0-5)	Arguments
1a. To what extent is a focus on the middle- long term enabled or constrained by the policy goals?	3	<p>The strategic objectives of agricultural policies are medium-term and the challenges they set themselves must have an impact throughout the programming period or even beyond. Nevertheless, we have seen that their implementation into operational objectives most often results in a short-term safeguarding perspective.</p> <p>However, the medium to long-term prospects are not totally missing. This is particularly the case for those aimed at improving the functioning of agricultural sectors, improving product quality and health safety, or facilitating forms of collective action that make farmers' lives easier and thereby enhance the attractiveness of this profession (extension of the application of the transparency of the GAEC to coupled aid, for example)</p> <p>The objectives relating to the environment also apply in a medium-term perspective: green payments, for example, must and can produce sustainable effects; the French law of 2014 had as an explicit objective to bring French agriculture into an irreversible transition towards triple performance, economic, social and environmental.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the predominance of short-term objectives is obvious, and thus greatly reduces the transformative capacity of the instruments implemented.</p> <p>Think more in the short term without completely abandoning the medium term: the objectives of public agricultural policies can be described as neutral on this issue.</p>
1b. To what extent is a focus on the middle- long term enabled or constrained by the policy instruments?	2	<p>Most of the proposed measures aim to safeguard the existence of farms, maintaining the present conditions for agricultural activity and containing the degradation of the environmental effects of current forms of agriculture.</p> <p>Some measures are available to go further, whether in the field of economic efficiency, environmental performance or overall rural development (LEADER). However, they require a considered and determined choice of potential beneficiaries, who are not always equipped to navigate the complexity of the measures proposed to them. If a small number can take it, the vast majority of farmers risk missing out on these proposals. The medium term still seems to be a horizon reserved for an "elite".</p> <p>However, certain mechanisms promoting collective action, in particular the GIEE provided for in the 2014 law, with the associated animation aids, can promote a global approach necessary to plan for the medium term. But this system, which has been in place for four years now, has only concerned a small number of farmers (about 10,000).</p>
2a. To what extent is flexibility enabled or constrained by the policy goals?	3	<p>The hierarchy of CAP objectives does not seem to favour flexibility, as it is part of a short-term logic and maintains the status quo. However, these objectives cannot be considered as major obstacles to flexibility.</p>
2b. To what extent is flexibility enabled or constrained by the policy instruments?	2	<p>Most measures tend to freeze situations and leave little room for flexibility. The adaptations envisaged in their application sometimes even tend to increase the rigidity of systems (e.g. derogations from crop diversity rules for green payments in the case of maize monoculture).</p> <p>Measures in favour of flexibility, because there are some, are overwhelmed by the mass and sometimes associated with complex administrative rules that limit their implementation. A similar situation had been diagnosed during the ex-post evaluation of the French application of the RDR over the period 2006-2013, without the proposed recommendations having been followed.</p>

3a. To what extent are variety and tailor- made responses enabled or constrained by the policy goals?	2	Public policy objectives remain very generic and leave little room for bottom-up initiatives. However, the regional management of the second pillar offers interesting possibilities for adaptation to local contexts. But it is often constrained by the lack of imagination of regional administrative and professional leaders, who too often tend to perpetuate the status quo and restrict original initiatives.
3b. To what extent are variety and tailor- made responses enabled or constrained by the policy instruments?	2	Instruments are generally not very suitable for tailor-made solutions. The conditions of implementation (information provided to potential beneficiaries, administrative management, limited support from dominant professional organisations, etc.) make it even more difficult to define such individualised solutions, which require such skills and determination from those who request them that few of them can complete their projects.
4a. To what extent is social learning enabled or constrained by the policy goals?	2	<p>The question of collective learning is, if not absent, in any case very minor in the declared objectives of French agricultural policies, with the exception of the 2014 law.</p> <p>This absence can partly be explained by the tradition of delegating technical and economic advisory functions to professional agricultural organisations (chambers of agriculture, technical institutes, etc.). As a result, it is rather the particular agenda of these organizations that determines the orientations and priorities in terms of collective learning.</p>
4b. To what extent is social learning enabled or constrained by the policy instruments?	3	Measures to promote collective learning exist in the second pillar. However, access to these measures is greatly complicated by the weight of the dominant professional organisations, which constitute an essential intermediary. Nevertheless, in recent years, it has been observed that these can be bypassed, provided that public administrations, particularly regional ones, support innovative initiatives. Everything then depends on the sensitivity of these administrations to the projects carried out by these innovative actors. Paradoxically, they can have easier access to them, since the consumption of dedicated envelopes is often quite limited by "dominant advisers".

TRANSFORMABILITY

Question	Scale (0-5)	Arguments
1a. To what extent is a focus on the long term enabled or constrained by the policy goals?	3	<p>A particularity of agricultural policies in France is to be part of a vision of a permanent "agricultural vocation of the nation". Paradoxically, this ideal prevents any pragmatic implementation of this vision into innovative long-term strategic objectives: what is will be. Nevertheless, a growing number of people, both in the agricultural world and in civil society, are debating today what agriculture should be like in the future: cleaner, more humane, closer, safer in terms of health, and with lower consumption of natural resources and chemical inputs... These ideas are nevertheless reflected in public policies. They do not only seek to correct past shortcomings (especially environmental ones). They leave a place, certainly reduced by the very short-term perspective on which they are based, for these new perspectives. The 2014 law was exemplary in this respect, highlighting the need for triple performance as a challenge for the future of food and the future of rural areas. The 2018 law, by affirming the priority to be given to the reconstruction of a direct link between producers and consumers, confirms, at least in economic terms, the prospects thus opened up, which are also reflected in the regional agricultural programmes (priority to quality products, support for local agriculture, etc.).</p> <p>But it cannot be denied that, for the most part, the whole set of policies remains in a "<i>business as usual</i>" logic</p>
1b. To what extent is a focus on the long term enabled or constrained by the policy instruments?	2	<p>Measures to place the dynamics of agricultural systems in a long-term perspective are rare and too competed by short-term measures to be potentially effective. However, they can serve as a support point for local initiatives (e.g. territorial food programmes, promoting local food and, often, organic farming, in particular but not only for school catering).</p>
2a. To what extent is the dismantling of incentives that support the status quo enabled or constrained by the policy goals?	1	<p>As noted above, public policies are primarily aimed at maintaining the status quo. In France, at least, the idea of dismantling seems a taboo that no one dares to transgress. Even the 2014 law, which called for an agro-ecological transition, intended to do with the same people, in the service of the same goal, that remained to produce more and cheaper, for the country and for the whole world, even if it was with other technologies and other resources (ecosystem services) and in a more equitable way (for farmers, consumers and citizens)</p>
2b. To what extent is the dismantling of incentives that support the status quo enabled or constrained by the policy instruments?	1	<p>Too many measures favour the status quo. It is very unlikely that the very few that seem (?) to be able to tackle it will produce any effect..</p>
3a. To what extent is in-depth learning enabled or constrained by the policy goals?	1	<p>The current objectives largely reflect the objectives of the past, adding new constraints, particularly of an environmental nature. It is therefore very unlikely that they will make it possible to initiate a process of deconstruction of old roads and routines. On the contrary, they seem to claim that it would be possible to be virtuous by a rapid but gradual improvement of practices, without the need for a critical re-reading of the old ones. However, the only positive point seems to be the emphasis on a takeover of the sectors by producers, the reversal or at least the correction of the power relations that can benefit from public support (but the results have yet to be demonstrated)</p>

3b. To what extent is in-depth learning enabled or constrained by the policy instruments?	2	Some of the instruments implemented may encourage initiatives that are part of a radical logic of change, supported by innovative collectives (some GIEE) or representatives of these collectives. These people often make a "cunning use" of the measures by these people, which does not necessarily correspond to their initial purpose
4a. To what extent is the enhancement and acceleration of niche innovations enabled or constrained by the policy goals?	3	Public policy objectives consider more the idea of a gradual global change than the promotion of niche innovations. However, they do not reject it as a matter of principle.
4b. To what extent is the enhancement and acceleration of niche innovations enabled or constrained by the policy instruments?	2	The potential impact of policy instruments on the development of niche innovations is in any case very limited. The niches they can seek to promote (agrotourism, short circuits...) can no longer really be described as innovative. The problem for the carriers of these niche innovations is to be able to identify the measures that can help them in their project, always in this logic of "clever use" of the possibilities offered by public policies. This is often a difficult exercise given the small number of measures to promote innovation and the often complex administrative rules associated with them. However, too few instruments are proposed that would allow the spreading and expansion of such models, which are left to the initiative of individuals (cf. the place taken by YouTube in the dissemination of these alternatives)

Overall analysis of strengths and weaknesses

Clearly, the agricultural policies applied in France tend to favour above all the robustness dimension of resilience. This situation reflects a clear choice: to avoid a collapse of the agricultural model that has prevailed for 70 years now and which aims to find a compromise between technical and economic efficiency and social efficiency. The continued decline in the number of farms has become a problem, directly affecting the vitality of rural areas, particularly those, like the Bocage Bourbonnais, which, are far from dynamic urban centres. It also affects agricultural organizations, whose public tends to shrink and who thus lose an ever-increasing share of their political weight.

As a result, policies encouraging the status quo are largely predominant. They are only balanced by the increasingly urgent need to correct inequalities in the distribution of direct payments, to support the currently very fragile livestock sector and to limit the negative impacts of agriculture on the environment. The new methods of distributing basic direct payments, the continuation of coupled aid, green payments and measures to maintain grassland areas, changes to the system of aid for less-favoured areas and changes in their zoning are all aimed at achieving these objectives. Grassland meat farming areas, such as Bourbonnais, are obviously favoured by these trends, which have been strengthened since 2014.

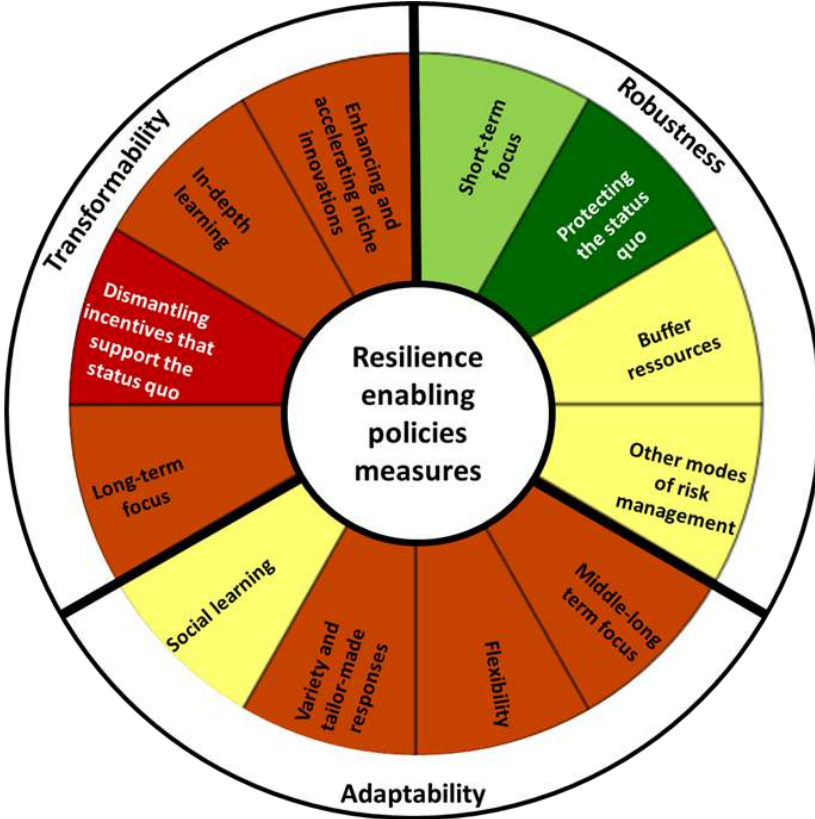
They could also benefit from measures, mainly in the second pillar and in national policy, which are implemented to strengthen the development of quality sectors and/or a better distribution of added value in supply chains to the benefit of producers. However, the low level of collective mobilization in these

regions does not allow these objectives to be effectively achieved. The problem is not only to have potentially effective policies, reinforcing the resilience of agricultural systems in all their dimensions, robustness, adaptability, transformability. There must be actors who are able to take advantage of them and make them flourish on their own scale.

A lack of a policy that undoubtedly overvalues the maintenance of the status quo is to reinforce a certain form of immobility, or even resignation. It must be acknowledged here that the blame lies not only with political decision-makers, but also with the leaders of agricultural organizations and even farmers, whose reluctance to embark on new paths is evident, even though they perceive the need for them. But the overemphasis on these types of goals tends to quash the few incentives that would allow agricultural systems to increase their resilience by adapting and transforming themselves. However, such measures are present in the texts. But it is true that the financial resources allocated to these measures are limited and that they are sometimes too complicated to implement and subject to too many administrative constraints.

Here we are confronted with another paradox of agricultural policies, at least in France. Measures exist in the texts that could promote adaptability and transformability. But they are only effectively mobilized by and for the benefit of an "elite", whether it defends an entrepreneurial vision of the future of French agriculture or, on the contrary, a new way of being "peasants" by getting closer to citizens and consumers. Systematically promoting innovators and pioneers could be a more effective policy objective, both for food production and for the quality of the environment and the vitality of rural areas. It would probably be wise to focus on measures that promote and secure change rather than continuity. But for this change to affect as many farmers as possible, collective learning schemes should also be reviewed and financially encouraged, which current policies do not do enough. The French law of 2014 tried to do this, but since the means it intended to mobilise for this purpose were in the CAP, which had different objectives, its success could only be very imperfect.

RESAT Wheels



Answers	Scores	Corresponding colour
Not clear	0	White
obstructs	1	Dark-Red
counteracts	2	Dark-Orange
neutral	3	Light-Yellow
enables	4	Light-Green
encourages	5	Dark-Green