

Project acronym: SURE Farm Project no.: 727520

Start date of project: June 2017 Duration: 4 years

D5.1 Impact assessment tool to assess the resilience of farming systems and their delivery of private and public goods

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This Project has received funds from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No. 727520

Impact assessment tool for resilience and the delivery of private and public goods

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1 Introduction

Farming systems are sub-sets of food systems and thus coupled social-ecological systems (Ericksen, 2008; Liu et al., 2007). Food system outcomes arise from multiple interactions between the social and ecological subsystems (Folke, 2006) in response to internal or external pressures. A better understanding of these interactions is crucial for designing strategies that enhance social as well as ecological outcomes (Schlüter et al., 2014).

Understanding these interactions requires a comprehensive and holistic analysis of farming systems' behaviour, components and outcomes. The complexity of the connections between these underlying mechanisms makes it difficult to intuitively anticipate the consequence of a particular strategy on the ways farming systems behave, adapt and transform in case of shocks (Chu et al., 2003).

In SURE-Farm, we support our analysis by using computer models as an aid for understanding farming systems' resilience, for estimating and comparing resilience indicators and for exploring the role of different resilience attributes. Models act both as road maps that systematically represent our understanding of the system and as virtual laboratories where strategies can be tested, hypotheses can be explored and scenarios can be generated.

While models are identified as suitable tools for the complexity and multidimensionality of resilience (Carpenter et al., 2009, Walker et al., 2004), no single modelling approach or tool is likely to provide enough information to produce an integrated assessment of resilience. Hence, in SURE-Farm, we propose to use a multimethod interdisciplinary toolbox rather than a single onesize-fits-all model.

The objective of this report is to describe tools proposed within SURE-Farm Work Package 5 (WP5) to assess resilience and to articulate the rationale for using them. The report proceeds as follows. First the theoretical framework to analyse resilience is summarized. Then, we briefly describe each of the tools (models and modelling approaches) proposed to assess resilience in this project. Finally, we elaborate on how the different tools complement each other.

2 Theoretical framework

2.1 Resilience framework

The SURE Farm framework for analysing resilience (Meuwissen et al., 2018) is grounded in dynamic systems theory and aims at understanding the dynamics of a farming system's essential functions when facing changes or shocks from the environment. The proposed framework interprets the dynamics of adaptive cycles using three different types of resilience:

- Robustness: the ability to maintain desired levels of outputs despite the occurrence of perturbations (Urruty et al., 2016).
- Adaptability: the capacity to adjust responses to changing external drivers and internal processes and thereby allow for development along the current trajectory while continuing important functionalities (stability domain) (Folke et al., 2010).
- Transformability: the capacity to create a fundamentally new system when environmental, economic, or social structures make the existing system untenable in order to provide important functionalities (Walker et al., 2004). Transformability is less about planning and controlling but more about preparing for opportunity or creating conditions of opportunity for navigating the transformations (Folke, et al., 2010, citing Chapin et al. 2010).

2.2 Essential functions: Private and Public goods

Farming systems provide a wide range of functions that differ considerably from each other depending on the system's location and purpose. The conceptual framework used to analyse these functions also plays a role in defining what functions are essential. For instance, there are different perspectives regarding what is understood with social well-being or sustainable development and which functions contribute to it.

While there is not an agreement about a single group of essential functions, in general, farming systems' functions can be subdivided into the provision of private goods and public goods. In simple terms, private goods can be understood as those that can generate enough profits to repay the expenses of individuals producing them (Kaul et al. 2003). Hence, there is an intrinsic motivation to produce them (Smith, 1994[1776]). Alternatively, those classified as public goods, while offering considerable service to society, are difficult to price in normal market mechanisms and hence, unlikely to be produced as a source of profits (Kaul et al., 1999; Adger, 2005). Multiple indicator frameworks exist to asses a system's performance regarding the essential functions. The SURE-Farm resilience framework (Meuwissen, et al., 2018; Figure 1) uses EC and SAFA guidelines as a basis, augmented with own elaborations. In order to select the indicators measuring the performance of farming systems, the first step is to identify and prioritise functions related to the provision of private and public goods and, as a second step, combine the functions with the relevant indicators, which are function and farming system specific.

- Private goods:
	- o Deliver healthy and affordable food products
	- o Deliver other bio-based resources for the processing sector
	- o Ensure economic viability
	- o Improve quality of life in farming areas
- Public goods:
	- o Maintain natural resources in good condition (water, soil, air)
	- o Protect biodiversity of habitats, genes, and species
	- o Ensure that rural areas are attractive places for residence and tourism (country side, social structures)
	- o Ensure animal health & welfare

Trade-offs need to be expected between some essential functions. Although the interaction between the provision of various functions can provide significant synergies for farming systems, they are not always mutually supportive as there can be conflicts between e.g. social and economic dimensions. Thus, the level of interdependency can vary according to the farming system and its boundary. This means that each farming system has a level of sustainability which is relative to its own target functions and depending on system-specific interactions.

2.3 Impact assessment of resilience

The SURE-Farm resilience framework (Meuwissen, et al., 2018) distinguishes five phases: (1) characterising the farming system, (2) appraising key challenges affecting the system, (3) framing the essential functions of the system, (4) assessing resilience along a spectrum of robustness, adaptability and transformability, and (5) identifying resilience attributes and strategies which contribute to the robustness, adaptability and transformability of the farming system.

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Figure 1. Framework to analyse the resilience of farming systems, including example resilience indicators and attributes (Meuwissen, et al., 2018).

2.4 Resilience indicators and attributes.

We define resilience indicators as means to describe the dynamics of the essential functions in terms of their resilience. Robustness refers to being resilient to a challenge without observing any significant effects and without adaptive measures undertaken after the challenge has been observed. Alternatively, adaptation refers to being resilient by being able to bounce back after the challenge (Walker et al., 2004). Walker et al. (2004) emphasise that this bounce back is not given but the results of the adaptive actions taken by the system's actors. Finally, transformability describes a system's ability to change its nature and getting a fundamentally new structure while still providing the same essential functions (Ludwing et al., 1997; Walker et al., 2004).

Alternatively, the resilience attributes are characteristics of a farming system that contribute to improve resilience indicators and enhance systems resilience. Cabell and Oelofse (2012) identified 13 general attributes(see Table 1) contributing to the resilience of agroecosystems. The attributes are applicable to multiple scales and are based on the literature discussing resilience at farm level (Darnhofer, 2010) and socio-ecological systems level (Folke et al., 2010). Meuwissen, et al., 2018 incorporates these attributes in the SURE-Farm resilience framework as shown in Figure 1 and specify how the attributes contribute to resilience. Namely, the SURE-Farm resilience framework focuses on those attributes closely fitting to the four main process driving farming systems (see Table 1). While resilience attributes might be studied in isolation, we argue that the complexity of farming systems requires an integrated consideration in order to capture synergies and trade-offs between attributes.

Table 1: Resilience attributes considered in the SURE-Farm resilience framework

3 SURE Farm impact assessment integrated toolbox

3.1 Models and modelling approaches

The overall task of WP5 is to analyse the integrated impact of resilience-enhancing strategies and actions on European farming systems using the SURE-Farm framework by assessing how their essential functions react to challenges from the environment in terms of robustness, adaptation and transformability. The analysis aims to explore farming systems at different time and conceptual scales, and will use static and dynamic perspectives for a) describing the current state of a system, b) outlining its potential developments and c) exploring relationships between resilience and broader system characteristics (resilience attributes).

To this aim, WP5 will make complementary use of existing models (static and dynamic, quantitative and qualitative) by using them as part of an integrated toolbox for the assessment of resilience. In this report we use the term "toolbox" as a group of tools that can be used together or separately to explore different aspects of a farming system and to assess different aspects of resilience. The insights gained from the application of different models can be compared, discussed and integrated into qualitative narratives, scenarios or hypotheses for EU farming systems and their resilience. However, the model results are not quantitatively linked and the outputs of one model are not used as inputs or assumptions for any of the other models.

There are two reasons for deciding to use an integrated toolbox instead of a single model. First, the multi-scale and multi-level nature of resilience means that assessing different dimensions and levels of the systems' resilience with a single tool is complex and complicated (Cash et al., 2006). For example, to try to assess these multiple dimensions with the same model will require a representation of the many different aspects of the system (economic performance, social value, environmental services, etc.) that is extremely detailed. Moreover, this utopic model will also need to assess these aspects at different levels (national, local regional, etc.). When compounding the multiple layers and particularities of each system, such a model quickly becomes unbearable, difficult to understand and manage.

Second, there is a large variety of case studies in SURE-Farm and they differ in terms of farming systems, data availability and model expertise of the local partners(see Table 2). Building a model flexible enough to incorporate all these different types of systems and requirement will add an additional level of difficulty that does not guarantee that the results will be valid or meaningful.

Table 2: Overview of SURE Farm case studies

3.2 Overview of the models in the SURE Farm integrated toolbox

The models to be used include system dynamic models, the agent-based model of farm structural change AgriPoliS, the Farming System SIMulator (FSSIM), statistical modelling, a stochastic model, a spatially explicit model to assess ecosystem services, system dynamics models and a Framework for Participatory Impact Assessment (FoPIA). Table 3 contains an overall description of the different models. More details can be found in Appendix A.

Table 3: General description of models in the integrated toolbox

All the models operate using a wide range of inputs from the system's environment. These inputs are usually described by the initial and/or final state of the system in terms of economic, social and environmental parameters that are key drivers of farming systems (see Table 4). The inputs are fed, with the exception of FoPIA, into mathematical equations and the model uses different algorithmic methods to estimate optimal states of the system (e.g. FSSIM and the ecosystem services model), structural changes in the system (e.g. AgriPoliS and System Dynamics) or risk (stochastic model). More details about specific inputs required by each model are listed in Appendix B.

Table 4. Summary of Model Inputs from Appendix B

Note: (\checkmark) indicates the model uses this variable as an input. The inputs of FoPIA and System Dynamics are not included in the table since the specific inputs will be defined later during the project. FoPIA is a participatory approach, not a modelling technique per-se. Therefore, inputs are not explicitly needed, but boundaries and context of the system need to be clearly defined. In the case of System Dynamics, a new model will be built specifically for SURE-Farm, and hence, the inputs required are still not clearly defined.

Since the models have been built separately and for different purposes, each of them produces different outputs and provides different insights about the essential functions of the farming system under study. Table 5 shows the extent to which each of the models assesses the essential functions of farming systems. For example, FoPIA provides an assessment of all the essential functions but not in depth and hence is ranked 2nd for all of them. Alternately, the Ecosystem services model provides only insights about five of the eight functions but does it in detail (see Table 5). Using the models provide a holistic assessment of the farming system under study by producing different economic, social and environmental indicators associated with the different essential functions. The detailed descriptions of the model outputs can be found in Appendix C.

Table 1. Models' assessment of farm systems' essential functions

Note: 3=model provides in depth analysis; core functionality of the model, 2=is part of the model functionality but not in depth, 1=the model can offer a high level perspective about this function.

This diversity among models, their calculation approaches and their outputs are the main strength of the SURE-Farm integrated toolbox because it enables the analysis of the farming systems and their resilience from different perspectives. In the integrated toolbox, each model uses different analytical lenses to assess each particular function (see Table 3 and 5). For instance, FSSIM and the Ecosystem Services Model use mathematical optimisation while System Dynamics focuses on the dynamics of systems over time. The aggregation used in each model is also different. For example, AgriPoliS assesses individual farms and their individual interactions while System Dynamics aggregates farms into big groups and focuses on the aggregated dynamics between the different groups and their environment.

It is important to highlight that models are means for enhancing understanding of a given system and often go beyond quantifying or estimating parameters. Whereas some outcome functions might not be quantitatively assessed using the model, the insights resulting from analysing the model results can be used for drawing hypotheses about how these outcomes might behave. This is particularly relevant if the results are discussed with a wide range of stakeholders, using FoPIA or participatory system dynamics for example, since a participatory assessment allows us to explore aspects of farming systems that are difficult to quantify (e.g. quality of life, biodiversity, or animal health and welfare). While there is no single model able to depict all the functions in detail, combining results and insights of all of them makes it possible to get an integrated perspective of the different outcomes of the farming system and how changes in the environment might affect them.

The differences among the models are also reflected in the extent to which each model can be used to assess the resilience indicators (see Table 6). As might be expected, there is a trade-off between depth and breadth in the assessment of the different types of resilience that each model and modelling tool can provide. Most flexible models and approaches such as FoPIA and System Dynamics are able to provide less details about each type of resilience but they have the advantage of being suitable for different indicators. Alternatively, other approaches might offer a more comprehensive picture of a given indicator but they are limited in their ability to address the rest.

Table 6. Models' assessment of farming systems' resilience indicators

Note: 3=model provides in depth analysis and/ or this attribute is a core functionality of the model, 2=is part of the model functionality but not in depth, 1=the model can offer a high-level perspective about this function.

As shown in Table 6, since most of the models are static rather than dynamic, assessing transformability is probably the biggest challenge. As an alternative, we propose to use participatory discussions, for example using FoPIA or participatory System Dynamics, about alternative configurations of the farming system, transformation pathways and strategies. In particular, the models outputs and scenarios can be used to discuss: *what will happen if?,* and to build diagrams describing the chain of causal relationships that contribute to robustness, adaptation and transformability of farming systems.

The outputs of the models and assessment of the resilience indicators will be also used to study the relationships between resilience attributes and the resilience indicators. Causal relationships, statistic correlations and stakeholders inputs will be used to identify key attributes shaping the identity of a farming system and contributing specific resilience indicators. These relationships are likely to be different among case studies and the results will be bound to the data available in each case and the detail the integrated toolbox can provide about each attribute. Similarly to the resilience indicators, assessing all the proposed attributes in depth using a single model is not possible and the extent to which each attribute can be assessed by the models in the toolbox is summarised in Table 7.

Table 7: Models' assessment of farm systems' resilience attributes

Note: 3=model provides in depth analysis and/ or this attribute is a core functionality of the model, 2=is part of the model functionality but not in depth, 1=the model can offer a high-level perspective about this function.

4 Application to SURE-Farm and deliverables

The aforementioned integrated toolkit will be applied in SURE-Farm to assess farming systems' resilience through the different deliverables of WP5. For simplicity purposes, the assessment conducted using the SURE-Farm toolkit is divided in three type of analysis: a) analysis for understanding farm systems' current and past resilience, b) analysis for exploring farm systems' future and expected resilience and c) analysis about strategies for improving resilience. The models to be used for each dimension are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. WP5 deliverables and model results to be presented.

**The models to be used for strategy assessment are still to be confirm depending on the strategies proposed by other Work Packages.*

The specific case studies and scenarios used for each type of analysis and to be covered with each specific modelling approach are covered next.

4.1 Models to be used for the different case studies

As described in Section 3, there is a large variety of case studies in SURE-Farm and only some of the models will be applied in each case. Table 9 presents the case studies and the modelling approach currently planned in each case study. More applications may be possible for some tools, such as the statistical modelling. Note that system dynamics modelling will not be applied to any specific case but might instead be used to combine experiences and insights gained from different case studies about a particular farming system (e.g. arable land or livestock farms).

Table 9. Models used in each case study

Note: (V) indicates the model will be used for assessing the case study.

4.2 Potential scenarios to evaluate

Scenarios are a useful tool to cope with the future when uncertainties make it impossible to anticipate a single more likely development path. Scenarios can be used to explore—not predict the future through the identification of potential opportunities and threats and as a way to adjust strategies to a wide range of conditions (Schoemaker, 1995; Fink et al., 2004).

For SURE-Farm, Work Package 1 (WP1) developed five scenarios based on the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC AR5), called Shared Socioeconomic Pathways (SSP) (O'Neill et al., 2014). These scenarios have been used and quantified in several projects (Bauer et al., 2017; Popp et al., 2017; Riahi et al., 2017) and have been expanded in WP1 from global level narratives for the economy into narratives describing relevant conditions for EU farming systems. These scenarios developed by WP1 are described in the report "D1.2 Scenarios for EU farming" (Mathijs et al., 2018). Table 10 presents a brief description of each of them.

Table 10. Summary of scenarios for EU farming

The scenarios developed by WP1 will serve as a reference for running the models that will be used to assess how the resilience of farming systems in the EU might develop in the future. Since these scenarios are not specific for any case study they will only be used as reference framework for sketching the pathways that some key variables might follow in the future. Hence, the models will not predict the future but will explore what can be expected in terms of resilience for different farming systems and countries.

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Appendix A: Detailed model description

Table 11: Overall model description AgriPoliS

Table 12: Overall model description bio-economic farm model FSSIM

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Table 13: Overall model description bio-economic farm models: Stochastic Model

Table 14: Overall model description Ecosystem Services model

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Table 15: Overall description statistical modelling

Table 16: Overall description framework for FoPIA SURE Farm

Table 17: Overall description system dynamics modelling

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Appendix B: Models Exogenous parameters

Table 18: Exogenous parameters AgriPoliS

Table 29: Exogenous parameters the bio-economic farm model FSSIM

Table 20: Exogenous parameters bio-economic farm-models: Stochastic model

Table 213: Exogenous parameters ecosystem services model

Table 22: Exogenous parameters statistical modelling

In the statistical modelling, the resilience (means, trends, variability) of essential functions (productivity, economic efficiency, ...) is explained by variables related to the "challenges" introduced in the system and the resilience attributes related to farm management. Specific indicators can be defined based on the data.

Table 23: Exogenous parameters FoPIA SURE Farm

Appendix C: Delivery of private and public goods – sustainability indicators

Table 24: Delivery of private and public goods – sustainability indicators AgriPoliS

Table 25: Delivery of private and public goods – sustainability indicators bio-economic farm models FSSIM

Table 26: Delivery of private and public goods – sustainability indicators bio-economic farm models: Stochastic model

Table 47: Delivery of private and public goods – sustainability indicators ecosystem services model

Table 58: Delivery of private and public goods – sustainability indicators statistical modelling

The proposal is to assess the resilience of economic indicators (productivity, gross margin, economic efficiency) and the relations between environmental (e.g. nitrogen use efficiency, nitrogen losses) and social (e.g. labour use) indicators.

Table 29: Delivery of private and public goods – sustainability indicators FoPIA SURE Farm

The original FoPIA, which provides the basis for this approach, uses the Land Use Functions approach to identify the main indicators (Konig et al., 2012). By identifying three main Land Use Functions per dimension (economic, environmental and social), a holistic approach is ensured, and indicators can be compared among case studies. Indicators related to the Land Use Functions can however differ per case study. In SURE Farm, our basis is not the Land Use Functions, but the principle private and public goods. Indicators related to these should be, as much as possible, similar in the different case studies. In a next version, we may propose some first general indicators.

