

France – National Pathway Toward Sustainable Food Systems

For many years, France has attached particular importance to the food of its citizens and considers agriculture, the agrifood industry, forests and fisheries to be strategic sectors deserving of strong, ambitious support policies and measures.

This is reflected in the existence of a set of policies, laws and strategies that are mutually complementary and consistent, and which also constantly evolve to adjust to new issues, innovations, research outcomes and studies of the impacts of policy implementation, in addition to societal expectations. Added to this are the commitments and voluntary initiatives of actors in the relevant sectors, the goal being to bring all actors on board for the transition, which in turn means that there must be a capacity to acknowledge and highlight the value of their efforts in this direction. France’s “pathway” is being implemented in this way through a very comprehensive, dense and diverse set of instruments (cf. the non-exhaustive listed appended hereto).

Those policies, laws and strategies are defined at different levels: European, national and regional. At national level and in local regions they are being constructed in association with all stakeholders (agricultural trade organisations and federations, NGOs, non-profit organisations, public entities, research bodies, agrifood companies, among others) or through long-standing forums such as the Higher Council for Guidance and Coordination of the Agricultural and Food Economy” (*Conseil Supérieur d’Orientation et de coordination de l’économie agricole et alimentaire* – CSO) attached to the Ministry of Agriculture, the National Food Council (*Conseil national de l’alimentation* – CNA), or through processes put in place specifically such as the National Food Conference (*États Généraux de l’alimentation* – EGA) in 2017 or “ImPACtons”, a national public debate held in 2020, which looked at the preparation of France’s National Strategic Plan (*Plan Stratégique National* – PSN) produced under the Common Agricultural Policy 2023-2027.

Such consultations can lead to recommendations and proposals, some of which involve passing legislation (an example: the two EGALim laws generated by the National Food Conference) adopted after debate in parliament.

The complete set of public policies on agriculture, food, commerce, health and the environment is driven in a concerted, consistent manner aimed, in total coherence with the goals of the Green Deal defined at EU level, at initiating a transition towards food systems that are healthy, resilient and sustainable, representing a convergence of multiple goals and issues:

- ensuring resilience in the face of climate change, ensuring protective, sustainable management of natural resources (water, biodiversity, soil, air) and mitigation of impacts on the climate,
- enabling the maintenance, or indeed an increase, in agricultural yields without compromise to nutritional quality or soil health,
- limiting food loss and waste to a minimum,
- matching realities and issues in local regions,
- guaranteeing access for all to food in sufficient quantity, variety and quality and protecting the health of the general public,
- while at the same time ensuring that farmers and growers can earn a decent living.

For the last ten years, France has been fully committed to supporting the agroecological transition in the farming and agrifood sectors in order to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement.

The French approach on sustainable, resilient farming and food systems is structured around four pillars: 1) farm economics and income, 2) preservation of ecosystems, climate and natural resources, 3) rural development and the attractiveness of local regions, and 4) food policies and nutrition.

Agricultural and food policies cannot be considered independently of each other (cf. transition of food systems, One Health). They relate to the three pillars of sustainable development: economic sustainability, social sustainability and climate/environmental sustainability.

These focuses must not lead to working in silos and must improve transparency and collaboration between actors. Only a holistic, horizontal approach with programmes conducted in an integrated manner can provide a response

to these global, interdependent and connected goals and issues (climate change, conservation of ecosystems and natural resources, food security and nutrition).

Focus 1: Guaranteeing a decent income for farmers and improving their economic resilience

Given the volatility typical of agricultural markets and farmers' income, a major factor for resilience is to be found in direct income support acting as a key safety net for the retention of farmers and growers in local regions by ensuring that they have the financial resources to live, produce and invest.

The European Common Agricultural Policy, through so-called **CAP first pillar payments**, provides support for producers' income while at the same time introducing an enhanced environmental architecture based on environmental and social conditionality criteria **and the new eco-regimes, thus helping promote sustainability**.

This assistance is supplemented by the **second pillar**, and particularly the area-based payments this provides, favouring the environment and the climate and farming in geographical areas with natural handicaps (mountain regions most notably), organic farming and rural investment.

The EGAlim law sets out to renew the way in which prices are formed. It proposes a novel procedure for establishment of contracts between producers and buyers/distributors. The goal is to improve the sharing of value-added along the food value chain while at the same time ensuring better responses to consumer expectations. The development of quality label and certification programmes also makes it possible to add value to efforts on sustainability through more remunerative prices.

Additionally, strengthening the **resilience of the agricultural industry when confronted with fluctuations in prices** (for both products and inputs), or with adverse climate and sanitary events, will involve the implementation of more diversified, less vulnerable systems of production based on a specific effort to invest in protective equipment and the development of mechanisms for **private or collective insurance cover for risks**.

Focus 2: Assisting the agroecological transition to protect the environment and natural resources and combat climate change

Food production must seek at every level to integrate environmental goals and issues.

The CAP's various environmental architecture tools (e.g. conditionality, ecoregimes, AECMs) /organic) are being called into play along **three broad thrusts that reconcile environmental performance with economic performance** in the sector:

- **Combating specialisation** in favour of more resilient and diversified systems that make it possible to reduce the use of inputs, strengthen biodiversity and protect more effectively against adverse events by protecting the environment (water and soil).
- **Self-sufficiency for types of production**, local regions and sectors (grass-fed livestock farming and protein self-sufficiency).
- **Resilience and restraint in the use of inputs** (fertilisers, pesticides, organic farming, agroecological transition).

The National Strategic Plan (Plan Stratégique National - PSN):

The PSN is constructed jointly with France's regional government authorities and represents over €9 billion a year in EU and national funds which go to more than 400,000 beneficiaries under 120 first and second CAP pillar programmes. The PSN came into force on 1 January 2023 and is intended to consolidate the efforts begun in the previous programme period (2014-2022), as well as further advancing their practical implementation. It aims to provide support to the transitions already under way in the farming world in terms of improving the sustainable competitiveness of its various sectors, value creation, farm resilience and restraint in the use of inputs in pursuance of food security, as well as responding more effectively to societal expectations.

The plan pursues three core goals:

- 1. An economic goal underpinning payments** to support farmers' income; it also consolidates support for coupled payments, payments to agricultural sectors and the most vulnerable local regions.
- 2. An intensified environmental goal** (conditionality and ecoregimes).
- 3. A societal goal:** *this relates to a major issue for food sovereignty and the attractiveness of local regions, promoted by upgrading the support provided to young farmers and the introduction of social conditionality. This support will be rolled out by central government (all area-based measures under the first and second pillars) and regional government (non-area second pillar measures) in order to boost investment in farms and industry sectors, assist farmers and rural areas and ensure that application of the CAP matches needs as closely as possible.*

The CAP 2023-2027 National Strategic Plan (PSN) therefore places special emphasis on the following priorities:

- **Development of production of legume vegetables** – this is because grain and forage legumes have the particular characteristic of combining high levels of plant proteins with agronomic and environmental virtues (fixation of atmospheric nitrogen, reduced use of inputs, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, etc.) that help limit GHG emissions and combat imported deforestation while at the same time enhancing the resilience of our systems of production.

This means that France will be doubling the relevant area by 2030 (2m hectares), leading to a 7% reduction in its use of nitrogen fertilisers by the end of that period. To that end, it has notably increased the budget earmarked for coupled aid for legume vegetables, which will rise to €236m in 2027 (with a steady increase), up from €137m in 2020.

- **The target of doubling organically farmed area by 2027** to total 18% of all agricultural land, based on an unprecedented effort to assist farm conversions (€340m annually on average over the period of the PSN, i.e. an increase of 36% in the budget devoted to supporting organic compared with 2014-2022).

This is the PSN's main lever for reducing the use of plant protection products specifically, and at the same time the Commission is planning alongside this to review the regulatory controls on pesticide use in order to reduce such usage and the associated risks.

The “Ambition Bio” programme 2022 is organised around seven major focuses, funded essentially by increasing the resources earmarked for payments supporting organic conversion and a doubling of the “Avenir Bio” (“organic future”) structural fund managed by France’s Agence Bio, this being raised in stages from €4m to €8m yearly. In addition to conversion support and the Avenir Bio fund, the agricultural component of France’s Grand Investment Plan will assist individual and collective projects.

- *Focus 1: Development of production to achieve 15% of France’s organically farmed land by the end of 2022.*
- *Focus 2: Organisation of agricultural sectors.*
- *Focus 3: Development of consumption and support for the market offering of organic products for all consumers, including the most disadvantaged and vulnerable categories.*
- *Focus 4: Intensification of research.*
- *Focus 5: Training for industry actors.*
- *Focus 6: Adaptation of regulations.*
- *Focus 7: Organic farming in France’s overseas territories.*

- **The incentivisation, notably based on ecoregimes (with funding equal to 25% of direct payments, i.e. approximately €1.7bn/year) and AECMs, of adoption of agroecological farming methods on a maximum of holdings; specifically:**

➤ **Greater crop diversification** (increasing natural biodiversity, enhancing the agroecosystem’s capacity to cope with climate disruption and uncertainty, reduced use of inputs, including pesticides), with the notable inclusion of more legume vegetables in crop rotations, grassland and diversification crops (e.g. flax, miscanthus, hemp).

➤ **Where sustainable livestock farming is concerned**, France is implementing dedicated agri-environmental measures (AECMs) to promote forage self-sufficiency for ruminants and open-air access for monogastric livestock and more support for conversion to organic, as well as measures encouraging investment in the modernisation of livestock housing. **Specifically, conservation of permanent grasslands** (which provide a wide range of ecosystem services, help feed livestock, protect soils and contribute to the establishment of systems more favourable to animal welfare) and the avoidance of tillage of such areas, the aim being to **maximise grassland carbon storage capacity**.

➤ Management of habitats to match defined goals: **biodiversity conservation** (e.g. management of specific habitats, protection of flora and fauna), **soil management**, **water protection** measures, and so on.

- **Hedge retention or planting**, hedges are a part of the landscape providing numerous environmental amenities (biodiversity, storage of carbon, water, etc.).
- **Recognition of the services rendered by the systems** operated using **agroecological** farming methods: firstly, an overhauled “**High Environmental Value**” **certification scheme** and, secondly, “**organic farming**” **certification offering specific remuneration** linked to this model.
- **Development of synergy between crop growing and livestock rearing** within a single holding or a local region, thereby offering economic, social and environmental benefits compared with specialisation (e.g. closed loops, management of fertilisation).

It is of course **the complete set of public policies applied in the fields of agriculture, food and the environment that will allow these goals to be reached**, and the PSN is simply one of the tools for assisting farmers and growers, above all by rolling out voluntary incentives additional to conditionality.

Among the other policies, programmes, strategies, and plans that supplement the PSN and help underpin the agroecological transition for the conservation of the environment and natural resources, the following can be highlighted:

- **The Ecophyto II+ Plan** aimed at accelerating the withdrawal of substances of most concern, at promoting the recognition and wider use of biocontrol products and natural preparations of little concern, at enhancing prevention of exposure of the general public to pesticides and their impacts on the environment and biodiversity, at supporting research and especially research into alternative solutions, and at assisting farmers in achieving transition using a range of measures, contacts between farmers among them. Each year, €71m goes to the Ecophyto plan at national and local levels thanks to a tax raised on sales of plant protection products.
- **The National Low-Carbon Strategy (Stratégie Nationale Bas-Carbone – SNBC)** is France’s roadmap for combating climate change. It points to the ways forward for action in every sector of activity in pursuance of the transition to a low-carbon, circular and sustainable economy. It defines the pathway to lower greenhouse gas emissions over the period to 2050 and sets short- and medium-term targets governed by two goals: achievement of carbon neutrality by 2050 and reducing the carbon footprint of consumption in the French population. The SNBC is one of four key tools for the French energy/climate strategy (*Stratégie française énergie-climat – SFEC*), which also includes a third national plan for adaptation to climate change (*Plan National d’adaptation au changement climatique – PNACC*) covering the years 2023-2027.
- **Economic actors are also participants in the transition through voluntary initiatives** they undertake (an example: the “**low-carbon dairy farm**” programme advocated and developed by CNIEL, the trade body representing the dairy industry) and/or their adoption of certification programmes underpinned by a framework developed by the French authorities.

The “Low-Carbon” label

Aimed at achieving the climate goals in the national low-carbon strategy (SNBC), the “Low-Carbon Label” scheme adopted in 2019 is France’s first voluntary form of climate certification. It provides a guarantee that carbon reduction and sequestration projects conducted on French territory represent correct, transparent contributions to the attainment of targets on the basis of credible and verified greenhouse gas (GHG) accounting methods. This label has been developed by the Ministry of Ecological and Inclusive Transition in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and many other partners (I4CE, ADEME, French Livestock Farming Institute, CNIEL, CNPF, ONF, NGOs and others) with a view to changing behaviours and assisting the transition by incentivising investment in a low-carbon French economy. Farms can earn the Low-Carbon label notably by increasing the level of organic material in soils using a range of agronomic techniques (agroecology, conservation agriculture). For livestock farming and plant crops it is possible to make use of agroforestry, for example by planting hedges, putting animal excreta to good use (permanent grassland, methanisation), reducing the use of chemical fertilisers, or possibly by using legume plants. It is also possible to act upon the overall footprint, by limiting imports of animal feed for example. It is generally the case that all these initiatives have an overall impact on the environment and society (biodiversity, quality of water, air and food, health). Farms can be supported financially in conducting their certified Low-Carbon Label projects, as can also those local government bodies wishing to use “carbon credits” to offset their CO₂ emissions. In this way, the Low-Carbon Label involves the whole of society in combating climate change through collaborative projects.

Focus 3: Contributing to rural development and the attractiveness of local regions while also enhancing the French response to novel societal and food-related demands

The third focus targets rural development and the importance of retaining population in rural areas. A number of levers can be used for this, such as employment, livestock farming, forestry, transition and innovation, as well as geographical product indications.

The objective is to create sustainable opportunities, protect know-how and promote high-quality methods protective of the environment in order to add value in local areas and address general issues and societal demands.

Fostering rural activity and employment: France advocates giving high priority to entry into the industry of young farmers while at the same time seeking to ensure a better fit between projects and regional needs and resources. Assistance for diversified projects will be put in place in certain regions, notably projects proposed by **new farmers** over the age of 40. The **compensatory allowance for natural handicaps (ICHN), a CAP second pillar measure** intended for regions affected by specific natural handicaps needing to be offset if economic activity and farming-related employment, especially livestock farming, is to be maintained in mountain areas, is a major factor in the conservation of open spaces, landscapes and certain types of high-quality production.

Regional government authorities have also been called upon **for improvements in basic services and infrastructures**, especially in relation to particularly isolated areas, support for enterprise creation and for the economic activities of companies, in addition to LEADER and the cooperation measure aimed at reinforcing local engineering and project pooling.

*The **farming advisory system (FAS)** allows all willing farmers to obtain advice on land and farm management, particularly with regard to the application of CAP payment conditionality. In France, it is notably aimed at contributing to the agroecological transition of agricultural holdings. **Approved advisory bodies.** Networks involving one or more advisory bodies are given official approval in the regions for the provision of advisory services either individually or collectively on the following topics:*

- *The conditionality of CAP support payments.*
- *Greening and maintenance of land in good farming condition.*
- *Measures applicable to agricultural holdings in terms of their modernisation, enhanced competitiveness, sectoral integration, innovation, market-led operation and promotion of entrepreneurship.*
- *Requirements applicable to farms under the Water Framework Directive.*
- *Requirements applicable to farms linked to the application of the Directive with regard to integrated crop pest control techniques.*
- *Promotion of farm conversions (including conversion to organic) and diversification of their economic activities.*
- *Programmes related to climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity and water protection.*

Protecting our forests: forests play a multifunctional role in our society and are responsive to long-term strategies: investment in forests enables development of sustainable sylviculture favourable to adaptation to climate change, ecosystem conservation and modernisation of the forestry sector notably in order to develop the bioeconomy as well as the societal role of forests (tourism, recreation, landscaping, etc.). They will in this way be used to enhance the resilience of forests, adaptation to climate change and improvements in the performance of the forest/wood sector as part of the development of a decarbonised economy, especially in the energy and construction industries.

Encouraging advisory services, innovation and training: the support dedicated to innovation, advisory services, development and research is a key lever for public action in a range of areas: digital tools, efforts to modernise or encourage agronomic or organisational innovations, are all focused on responding to issues relating to social, sanitary and environmental performance, furthering the development of **economic agricultural and food systems that are viable, healthy and sustainable**. Such programmes will lead to major progress in how

farms and companies are run, irrespective of the nature of their production or operational approach at the present time.

Geographical product indications: the development of quality labels, geographical indications in particular, linking a product's quality and reputation to a specific local area is in large part a response to this dynamic. Geographical indications can guarantee commercial outlets, increase revenue for local producers and processors and generate value from local heritage based on the decentralised management of natural resources. Their promotion requires the involvement of all actors in sectors dependent on local forms of expertise. Such claims to a special identity for products are also vehicles for components of a drive to conserve and add value to the biological and farming diversity of the geographical areas in which they are produced or manufactured.

Protecting and improving the welfare of farm livestock: given the observed fact that the human/animal relationship is evolving against the backdrop of greater sensitivity to the living conditions of farm livestock, a very substantial majority of the French population consider it important to protect the welfare of animals on farms. Indeed, conditions relevant to the welfare of livestock are in fact covered by EU regulations that are among the strictest in the world, making this issue one aspect of sustainability in the running of livestock farming and production of foodstuffs of animal origin to which the public, farmers and the authorities attach importance.

Improvement of conditions on livestock farms, by for example providing **housing** better suited to their physiological needs, reduces the risks of sickness, helps limit the use of medicinal inputs and enhances the resilience of agricultural holdings. When animals are reared **in open air settings, access to grazing, the control of risks** linked to contact with wild fauna and the likelihood of accidents also contribute to farm sustainability. **French farm sectors are engaged** in programmes involving audits and improvement of livestock conditions, most notably under sectoral plans developed by them following the 2017 National Food Conference (*États généraux de l'alimentation*).

Additionally, the **first French national strategy on animal welfare adopted in 2016 was reinforced with a priority action plan in 2018** notably focused on training those involved, informing consumers, supporting farmers in difficulty as well as the inspection and penalty aspect. This notably means that it is now mandatory for every livestock farm to have an animal welfare referent trained on this issue. Moreover, France has undertaken to ban the destruction of male chicks in egg production sectors, as well as prohibiting the castration of piglets without anaesthetic given that these practices are now considered to cause pain, making them unacceptable to the consumer.

Focus 4: Food that is sanitarly safe, healthy, balanced, takes account of societal expectations and guarantees consumer choice

The holistic approach to food is of central importance for France. It allows account to be taken of numerous issues relating to sustainable development: methods of agricultural production, health and nutrition, development of regions and land use, food education, social cohesion and the enhancement of social harmony ...

France has created a **National Programme on Nutrition and Health (Programme National Nutrition Santé - PNNS)** the goal of which is to allow its citizens to remain in good health throughout their lives thanks to good habits for better eating and physical activity, along with a National Food Programme (**Programme National pour l'alimentation – PNA**). France's policy on food is aimed ultimately at "ensuring the population has access to food that is safe, healthy, diversified, of good quality, in sufficient quantity and produced in conditions that are economically and socially acceptable to all, fostering employment, protection of the environment and landscape and contributing to mitigation of climate change and adaptation to its effects". PNA3 has been built around **three core themes**: social justice, combating food waste and food education, and **two horizontal foundations**: local regional food projects and institutional catering services.

The regional level is assisted with tools offered to local government bodies to assist them in developing regionally-based food systems. Institutional catering has also been identified as a powerful tool for promoting healthy, diversified food based on sustainably produced foodstuffs. In this context, it notably underpins the development of organic and quality-labelled products in the institutional catering setting. **Several programmes provide support to specific actions on nutrition** (the "fruit & vegetable", "eat & move" (*manger-bouger*), "five fruit & vegetables a day" programmes, among others).

The effort devoted to development of legume vegetables (+€100m in coupled payments in 2027 compared with 2020) also covers **pulses** intended for human consumption, an issue addressed in consultations of environmental organisations and the general public, likewise the creation of a support scheme for **small-scale market gardening**

(€10m) targeting the development of diversified, local production aligned with nutritional recommendations and the food policies implemented in local regions and the development of short food distribution channels.

In order to reduce loss and wastage, France's armoury of legislation has been strengthened over the years for the control of loss and wastage (energy, natural resources and agricultural products, consumption) incompatible with the goals of sustainable development. It is now the case that the ban on rendering consumption of foodstuffs impossible where they are in fact still suitable for consumption applies to the agrifood industry, wholesalers, distributors and institutional catering establishments. Similarly, these actors are under an obligation (above a defined threshold) to offer contracts for donations to charities. Ranging from the national pact against food waste signed in 2013 to the Garot law of 2016, and including the EGAlim law in 2018, France has put numerous legislative measures in place to combat food waste. At the same time, it supports the development of tools in local regions to ensure that food waste reduction is an actual, daily reality.

And lastly, France is an advocate of the horizontal **“One Health” approach based on the principle that human health, animal health and plant health are interdependent** and linked to the health of the ecosystems in which they exist. This holistic stance requires that the whole of society and governments cooperate in order to understand and anticipate risks to global health and to address them. The **One Health** approach is notably reflected in the targeting of significant reductions in the sales and use of antibiotics on farms (as well as in medicine), mainly using official normative measures that control the prescription of certain molecules, especially the most critically important for public health.

The combat against antimicrobial resistance, a major global public-health challenge, is part of the above approach. France has undertaken to address this challenge by implementing “Ecoantibio” plans. The Ecoantibio 2 plan currently under way (2017-2022, with a third plan now in preparation) comprises four core focuses:

- Development of measures to prevent infectious disease and facilitate recourse to alternative treatments.
- Communication and training on the issues surrounding the combat against antimicrobial resistance, rational prescription of antibiotics and other methods of controlling infectious disease.
- Shared tools – provision of tools for the evaluation and monitoring of antimicrobial use, along with tools for their responsible prescription and administration.
- Shared effort – ensuring that rules for proper usage are correctly applied at national level and encouraging their adoption at the EU and international levels.

Additionally, it should be recalled that given the global challenge represented by the emergence of antimicrobial resistance, the use of antibiotics as growth promoters in livestock reared in the EU has been banned since 2006. The European Union has expanded this prohibition with a regulation that came into force on 28 January 2022: Article 118 of regulation (EU) 2019/6 on veterinary medicinal products requiring products imported into the EU to come from animals that have not been treated with antibiotics employed as growth promoters.

In order to extend and deepen the support for the transition in the context of generational renewal, France has initiated **a consultation process at national and regional levels for the establishment of a pact and law for the orientation and future of farming (*Pacte et une loi d'orientation et d'avenir agricoles* – PLOAA) at the instigation of the President of the Republic. Three themes have been identified:**

- 1) Orientation and training.
- 2) Entry into farming and transfer of holdings.
- 3) Adaptation and transition in the context of climate change.

In addition to programmes aimed at assisting the agroecological transition in the country, France seeks to avoid negative impacts on global public goods and the environment in other countries that arise from its own consumption. A specific aim in this is to combat deforestation using the national strategy against imported deforestation (*Stratégie nationale de lutte contre la déforestation importée* – SNDI), and also at the EU level, through the EU regulation against deforestation and forest degradation, to ensure that products imported into the EU, placed on the EU market or exported from the EU have not been produced by deforestation or forest degradation.

At EU level, France also endeavours to promote **coherence between the goals of agricultural, environmental, food and trade policies** with a view to avoiding phenomena of “environmental/carbon leakage” type to third countries which could diminish the effectiveness of all the measures directed at promoting the transition to sustainable food systems in the European Union. The goal here is to take better account of the issues in the areas of environmental protection (combating climate change, erosion of biodiversity, protection of natural resources) and sanitary protection (e.g. combating antimicrobial resistance) along with European collective preferences (e.g. animal welfare) where trade is concerned, always adhering to the rules of the multilateral system of trade, to which France attaches great importance.

And lastly, France is a participant in numerous international initiatives in favour of resilient, sustainable food systems, of which the agroecology coalition, the school canteen coalition, the coalition of public agricultural banks, France’s overseas development agency (*Agence française de développement* – AFD) and the platform for sustainable livestock farming are examples. It has put in place for the period 2019-2024 an international strategy on food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture, one of the five goals of which is specifically devoted to the development of sustainable agricultural and food systems. France has also set itself ambitious targets for its international cooperation (zero climate impact for programmes implemented by AFD).

Annexes

In order to achieve the above goals in the area of food policy and the environment, France is relying on a series of public policies in the areas of farming, environment and food.

The legislative and regulatory domain

- **2014 – The law on the future of agriculture, food and forests.** French agriculture and the agrifood and forest industries are levers for addressing the challenge of economic, social and environmental competitiveness. The *Loi d'avenir pour l'agriculture, l'alimentation et la forêt* of 13 October 2014 provides for the practical application of agroecology with a view to achieving high performance at every level – economic, environmental and social – on our agricultural holdings. Since the promulgation of the law over one thousand Economic & Environmental Interest Groupings¹ (involving more than 12,000 farmers and growers) have been formed, along with 180 “Dephy Ferme²” groups (around 2,000 farms) and 890 “Ecophyto 30.000”³ groups (approximately 10,680 operators).
- **2018 – The EGALIM Law** for balanced business dealings in the agricultural sector and healthy, sustainable food. This was finally passed in the National Assembly on 2 October 2018 and promulgated on 1 November 2018. This legislation derives from France’s National Food Conference (*États généraux de l'alimentation - EGAlim*) and corresponds to an undertaking by the President of the Republic. The conference was held from 20 July to 21 December 2017. Its workshops at national, regional and local levels and the public consultation process provided a period for shared reflection and collective construction of novel solutions. This legislation has several goals: to ensure fair remuneration for producers, enabling them to earn a decent living from their work; to strengthen the sanitary, environmental and nutritional quality of foodstuffs; to favour healthy, safe and sustainable food for all; to strengthen commitments on animal welfare; and to reduce the use of plastic in food-related applications.
- **2021 – EGALIM 2:** the bill known as “EGalim 2” was promulgated in the *Journal Officiel* on 19 October 2021. It introduces new arrangements for regulatory controls and transparency with a view to improving the earnings of French farmers and growers. This effort, commencing in 2018 with the [so-called "EGalim 1" law](#), made possible the beginnings of “forward progress on prices”, i.e. greater consideration of agricultural production costs in the formation of the prices at which produce is purchased from farmers, the development of numerous sectoral plans with five-year horizons by the interbranch bodies representing agricultural sectors, and encouragement of the development of producer organisations. The application of EGalim 2 is closely monitored in the proceedings of the [commercial relations monitoring committee](#).
- **2022 – the law against waste for a circular economy** introduces a series of measures to advance the combat against food waste. It strengthens the provisions introduced to control wastage of food. The law reinforces the measures against food waste: wholesalers whose annual turnover exceeds €50m are now subject to obligations to refrain from destroying unsold products and to make food donations. The penalties have been strengthened for cases of destruction of unsold foodstuffs still suitable for consumption. The goal of this legislation is also

¹ *Groupements d'Intérêt Économique et Environnemental* (GIEE) are collectives of farmers recognised by government and engaged in multiyear projects to modify or consolidate their farming methods with the aim of achieving goals that are simultaneously economic, environmental and social. The measures in each project must relate to agroecology.

² The “DEPHY” network for the Demonstration, Experimentation and Production of references for systems for the economic use of plant protection products is a major component of the Écophyto plan. The “FERME” scheme comprises groups of holdings covering seven types of production: mixed crops & livestock, major field crops, fruit growing, vegetable production, winegrowing, horticulture and tropical crops.

³ Programme 4 under the Ecophyto II plan provides for support for **the transitioning of 30,000 farms to agroecological systems** with only limited dependence on plant protection products. The aim is to move on from “pioneers” to the widest possible application. This programme relates to collectives of farmers either already established or formed as a result of their adoption of the programme. The “30,000” group members are selected by the committee of regional finance bodies once they have responded to a call for project proposals issued every year by Ecophyto 2 regional management or the Water Agencies.

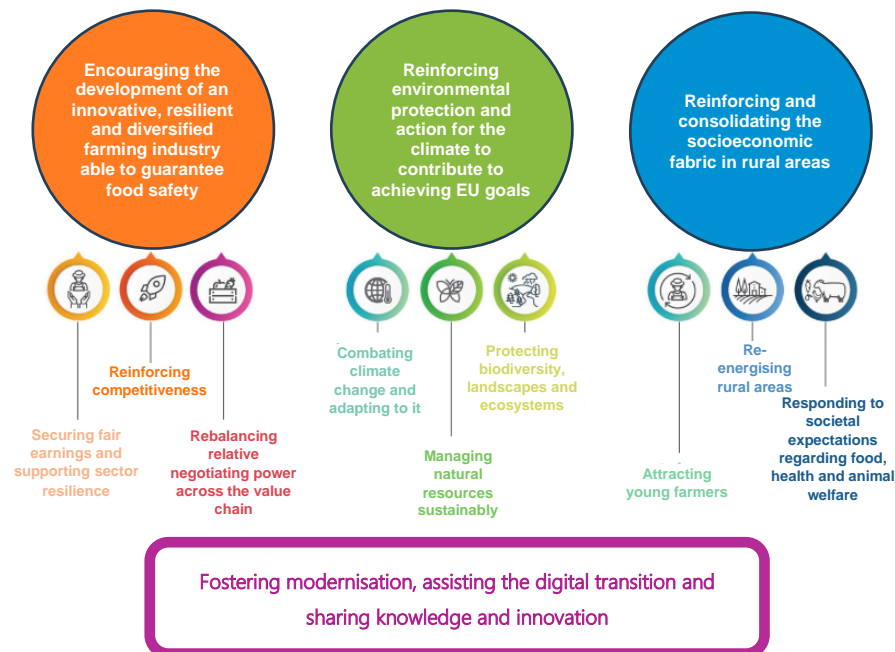
to improve stock management through improved data processing. It also provides for the creation of a national “anti food waste” label in order to add value to initiatives.

- **2023 – Climate and resilience:** deriving from the work done by the citizens’ convention on climate (*Convention citoyenne pour le climat*), this legislation against climate disruption, and in favour of greater resilience in coping with its effects, was promulgated and published in the *Journal Officiel* on 24 August 2021. It embeds ecology in our society: in our public services, in the education of our children, in our town planning, in the ways we travel, in how we consume, and in our judicial system.

National strategies:

Guidelines, legislation and strategic frameworks channel the transition in the direction of agriculture and food that are resilient and sustainable, along with access for all to healthy, diversified food.

- **The National Strategic Plan under the Common Agricultural Policy (PSN CAP)** is one of the two major changes proposed by the European Commission as part of CAP reform. It involves imposition of an obligation on all Member States to develop a single document covering five years of programmed spending for submission to the Commission to obtain its approval.



- **The Plant Protein Plan** aims to reduce France’s dependence on plant proteins imported from third countries, to allow livestock farmers to improve their self-sufficiency in feed for their animals and to encourage the French population to boost their consumption of plant proteins to meet new recommendations on nutrition.
- **The National Strategy Against Imported Deforestation (*Stratégie Nationale de lutte contre la Déforestation Importée – SNDI*)** is the outcome of a collaborative effort between five government ministries (Ecological Transition & Territorial Cohesion, Foreign Affairs, Agriculture and Food, Higher Education, Research and Innovation, Finance) and was adopted on 14 November 2018. Its purpose is to put an end by 2030 to imports of non-sustainable forest and farming products contributing to deforestation abroad (soybean, palm oil, cocoa, beef and its co-products, hevea, wood and its derivatives, and so on).
- **The National Strategy on Food, Nutrition and the Climate (*Stratégie nationale pour l'alimentation, la nutrition et le climat – SNANC*)**, introduced by law 2021-1104 of 22 August 2021 on combating climate disruption and strengthening resilience to its effects, determines the focuses for policy on sustainable food that generates less greenhouse gas, is protective of human health, is more favourable to biodiversity, promotes resilience in agricultural systems and regional food systems, and safeguards food sovereignty and the focuses of nutrition policy, based on the national food programme and the national programme on nutrition and health.

- **The National Low-Carbon Strategy:** introduced by the Law on Energy Transition for Green Growth (*Loi de Transition Énergétique pour la Croissance Verte – LTECV*), the national low-carbon strategy (*Stratégie Nationale Bas-Carbone – SNBC*) is France’s roadmap for combating climate change. It defines focuses for effort in all sectors of activity in implementing the transition to a low-carbon, circular and sustainable economy. It defines the pathway for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions over the period to 2050 and sets short- and medium-term targets: carbon budgets. It has two goals: to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 and to reduce the carbon footprint of consumption by the French population. It must be taken into consideration by public policymakers at both national and regional levels.
- **The National Food Programme (*Programme National de l’Alimentation – PNA*)** is totally aligned with the international recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Organization for Food and Agriculture (FAO). The PNA addresses virtually all food-related aspects – health, nutrition, food aid, education, waste, regional embedment, the circular economy, protection of the environment and biodiversity – and proposes a horizontal, integrated approach that reaches out to a very wide range of target audiences (children, adults, local government, food chain operators, non-profit organisations, etc.). It is also part of the agroecological project driven by the Ministry of Agriculture.
- **The National Nutrition & Health Programme (*Programme National Nutrition Santé – PNNS*).** The PNNS was launched in 2001 and its general purpose is to improve the state of health of the population as a whole by acting on one of its major determining factors: nutrition (covering food, physical activity and sedentary lifestyles). This programme was renewed in 2006 (PNNS-2), in 2011 (PNNS-3) and in 2019 (PNNS-4). Over the last twenty years, implementation of a policy on nutrition has been seen as a public health priority. Nutrition plays a role as a factor protecting against, or causing, risks of the most widespread medical conditions in France.
- **The Ecophyto Plan** is a response to an EU obligation laid down in directive 2009/128/EC establishing a framework for Community action to achieve sustainable use of pesticides. It provides as follows: “Member States shall adopt National Action Plans to set up their quantitative objectives, targets, measures and timetables to reduce risks and impacts of pesticide use on human health and the environment and to encourage the development and introduction of integrated pest management and of alternative approaches or techniques in order **to reduce dependency on the use of pesticides.**” They include the measures provided for in the action plan of 25 April 2018 on “plant protection products and agriculture less dependent on pesticides” and those relating to the “glyphosate abandonment plan” announced on 22 June 2018
- **The national pact against food waste (*Pacte national de lutte contre le gaspillage alimentaire*)** is aimed at mobilising all actors in the food chain around shared commitments, thereby defining ways forward for action. It notably lays down a national target of a 50% reduction of food waste by 2025, equivalent to an average annual reduction of 5% over the years 2013 to 2025.
- **Acceleration strategies in the farming and agrifood industries:**
These strategies are part of the fourth future investment programme (*4ème Programme d’Investissements d’Avenir* (PIA4) launched in 2021. Funded with almost €880m, these two initiatives supplement the €2bn earmarked for food in the France 2030 plan. The first acceleration strategy is aimed at developing “innovative solutions for greater resilience and competitiveness in the farming world.” The ecological transition is central to these objectives. **Digital technology, robotics and genetics** are also expected to contribute. The goal of the second strategy is to “design and deploy solutions for food that is more sustainable and better for health”.