

INTERNATIONAL AGROECOLOGY SHORT COURSE



Agenzia Regionale
per la Protezione
Ambientale dell'Umbria



Agenzia nazionale per le nuove tecnologie,
l'energia e lo sviluppo economico sostenibile



Università
degli Studi
di Perugia



2-5 May 2018
Polvese Island
Trasimeno Lake
Italy

COURSE DESCRIPTION

There is no doubt that humanity needs an alternative agricultural development paradigm, one that encourages more ecologically sound, biodiverse, resilient, sustainable, and socially just forms of agriculture. The basis for such new systems are the myriad of ecologically based agricultural styles developed on hundreds of millions small farms that produce a large share of the food consumed today in the world, mostly without agrochemicals. Agroecology represents this paradigm: a dialogue of wisdoms between traditional agricultural knowledges and modern agricultural sciences that uses ecological concepts and principles for the design and management of sustainable agroecosystems where external inputs are replaced by natural processes.

This international Agroecology short course will be held from May 2nd to 5th, 2018 at Centre “Climate Change and Biodiversity of Lakes and Wetlands” in Polvese Island, Lake Trasimeno, Umbria (Italy) [\[see map\]](#), and is designed for scholars, students, farmers, practitioners and anyone interested in learning more about agroecology and its applications to the design of more ecologically sound, biodiverse, resilient, sustainable, and socially just food systems in the Mediterranean region. The students will gain the theoretical and practical foundations needed to design an agriculture that ensures food security, conserves natural resources, and provides ecological services in the face of ongoing climate variability and change.

Learning outcomes include:

- knowledge about the principles of agroecology and their application to the design of biodiverse, productive and resilient farms;
- temporal and spatial diversification schemes at the farm to landscape level;
- practices and techniques for the ecological management of soils, water and the enhancement of beneficial biodiversity in agroecosystems;
- understanding of the principles underpinning successful agroecological initiatives that promote food sovereignty and resilience;
- modelling tools and methodologies to assess agroecosystem sustainability and resilience;
- agroecological strategies for promoting ecologically sound, economically viable and socially just food systems.

FIELD TRIP

The course includes hands-on agroecological assessment of a real farm – the Montalera farm, located in an area between the shores of Lake Trasimeno, and the innermost hill. The farm is dominated by the castle of Montalera, at the top of the highest hill. Along the slope are the terraced olive orchards. In the plain there is arable land where mostly cereals and legumes are grown. Montalera is an organic farm. The crops are perfectly integrated with the surrounding natural environment. Part of the farm is included in a site of the European Natura 2000 Network because it features protected habitats and species of European interest. Due to its characteristics, Montalera can be defined as an agroecological farm.

Who is this course for? This course will appeal to students, researchers, farmers and the general public interested in food issues and alternative agricultural production systems.

When subscribing, please provide a brief (max one page) letter presenting yourself and providing motivation for attending the course: this will help roll out a more targeted, useful course experience.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

Clara Inés Nicholls

University of California, Berkeley, USA [\[web\]](#) & Latin American Agroecology Scientific Society (SOCLA) [\[web\]](#)

Miguel A. Altieri

University of California, Berkeley [\[web\]](#) & SOCLA [\[web\]](#)

GUEST LECTURERS:

Andrew Paul Gutierrez

Center for the Analysis of Sustainable Agricultural Systems Global (CASAS Global) [\[web\]](#)
& University of California, Berkeley [\[web\]](#)

Antonio Boggia

University of Perugia, Department of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Sciences (DSA3) [\[web\]](#)

Euro Pannacci

University of Perugia, DSA3 [\[web\]](#)

Valentina Della Bella

ARPA Umbria – Regional Agency for Environmental Protection [\[web\]](#)

Adolfo Rosati

CREA – Council for Agricultural Research and Agricultural Economics Analysis [\[web\]](#)

Luigi Ponti

ENEA – Italian National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and Sustainable Economic Development [\[web\]](#) & CASAS Global [\[web\]](#)

(and others TBD)

PROGRAM

Wednesday 2 May 2018

Morning – Principles of agroecology

- Welcome and arrangement
- Course introduction
- The ecological crisis of modern agriculture
- Group discussion on the causes and symptoms of the crisis in Italy

Afternoon – Diversifying farming systems

- The ecological role and use of biodiversity in agroecosystems
- Agroecological strategies for the conversion of farming systems
- Contribution of wetland ecological functions to sustaining vital ecosystem services
- Agroforestry systems in Umbria and Europe
- Group discussion

Thursday 3 May 2018

Morning – Ecologically based pest management in agroecosystems

- Biodiversity and pest management in agroecosystems
- Soil ecology and management: Healthy soils–healthy crops
- Ecologically based weed management approaches

Afternoon – Promoting food sovereignty and resilience

- Traditional, peasant, indigenous, and small-scale family agriculture
- Designing climate change-resilient farming systems
- Conservation of landraces and crop wild relatives

Friday 4 May 2018

Morning – Assessing agroecosystem sustainability and resilience

- The economy of nature and humans: ecological analogies
- Indicators of resiliency and sustainability
- Holistic analysis of sustainable agricultural systems
- Ecological economics and the evaluation of ecosystem services

Afternoon – Scaling up agroecological food systems

- Pathways for the amplification of agroecology
- Perspectives on sustainable rural development in Latin America
- Discussion: how does an agroecological food system look like in Italy?

Saturday 5 May 2018

Morning – Assessment of an agroecological farm (field trip).

Hands-on agroecological assessment of a real farm

Afternoon – Design/management options (field trip)

Group presentations and discussion on field trip assessment

TO SUBSCRIBE:

- 1) Send an email to: care@carearth.org with your personal data (first and last name, Institution if any, address, email) and a brief presentation of yourself and your motivation for attending the course.
- 2) Make a bank transfer for € 350 to the following bank account details:

IBAN: IT29X0200803043000101229772 Unicredit Bank
BIC SWIFT: UNCRITM1J11

In the “reason for payment” please, write “Polvese Course” and your name
Subscriptions are managed by CARE srl, spin off of the University of Perugia
If you need more information please write to: care@carearth.org

The subscription fee is € 350, including:

- Course attendance
- Teaching materials
- Coffee break
- Lunch
- Field trip

Deadline for subscription: 15 March 2018

INFO:

Polvese island is connected to the mainland by a public boat service. It is possible to have accommodation on the island, or at least nearby in the mainland in agro-tourism facilities. More information on logistics and prices will soon be available at:

<http://www.arpa.umbria.it/articoli/international-agroecology-short-course>

Organized by:

ARPA Umbria - Regional Agency for
Environmental Protection
University of Perugia, Department of
Agricultural, Food and Environmental Sciences
ENEA - Italian National Agency for New
Technologies, Energy and Sustainable Economic
Development
CARE srl, Spin off of the University of Perugia

Keynote speakers:

Miguel A. Altieri, University of California, Berkeley, USA
Clara I. Nicholls, University of California, Berkeley, USA and SOCLA - Latin American Agroecology Scientific Society

Contributions by:

ARPA Umbria - Regional Agency for Environmental Protection
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