

Towards an International Association for Sustainable Agroparks

Innovating Agriculture in Metropolitan Areas

Conventional agricultural food production puts an increasing claim on available resources and is therefore insufficiently future-proof. The convergence of a number of major trends in

- Urbanisation, logistics & transport and spatial planning
- Sustainable development and energy & water conservation
- Safety, quality & consumption of food
- Animal welfare and plant and veterinary disease

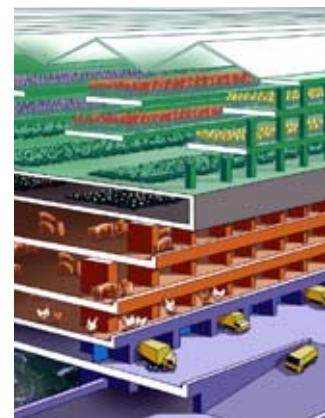
demand that we re-design the way we produce, process and distribute food.



A major way forward in this re-designing is moving fresh produce and food production & processing closer to metropolitan areas and to hubs in networks of trade and transportation, as well as promoting the symbiosis between agriculture and industry & society by integrating production & processing chains and cycles in dedicated co-locations. Such co-locations, 'agroparks', can reach triple P (People, Planet, Profit) performance and can present a challenging opportunity in earning a license to operate in future markets. Agroparks can also offer stimulating opportunities for training and education, innovation, landscaping, zoning, recreation & leisure, trade and demonstration projects. Already, various agro-business co-locations can be found on all continents. They show a common drive towards the mentioned goals, but also a rich variety in scope, due to physical, economical and socio-cultural local conditions. They offer an excellent opportunity for follow-up. Also, many issues, in particular the issue of sustainability, still require a great deal of attention.

We believe therefore that now is the time to realise and expand the concept of sustainable agroparks in an organic and stepwise manner by

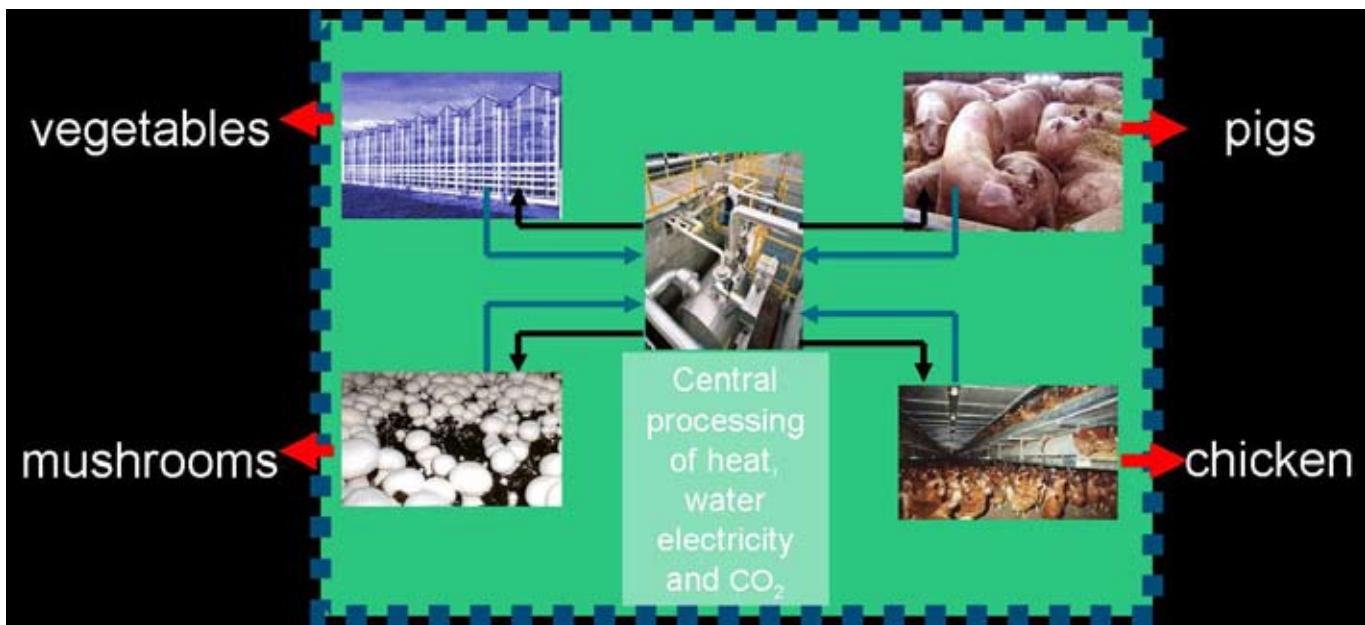
- Realising projects with emphasized triple P performance with scientific and practical evidence
- Training and education of farmers, entrepreneurs, engineers and scientists
- Sharing and disseminating knowledge and experience, creating societal support and stimulating innovation



To achieve this, we believe that an International Association for Sustainable Agroparks (IASA – working title and acronym) would be an important catalyst. Therefore we propose to set up such an association. The first step will be to consult relevant representatives from industry, government, science and NGO's and to determine the association's goal, added value and niche. It is our intention to base a go / no-go decision on the global support that we can generate before the end of 2007. We are prepared to take the lead in the first few years with the intention to realise a self-supporting and inspiring association and to reach dedicated and clear milestones according to an agreed course of action.

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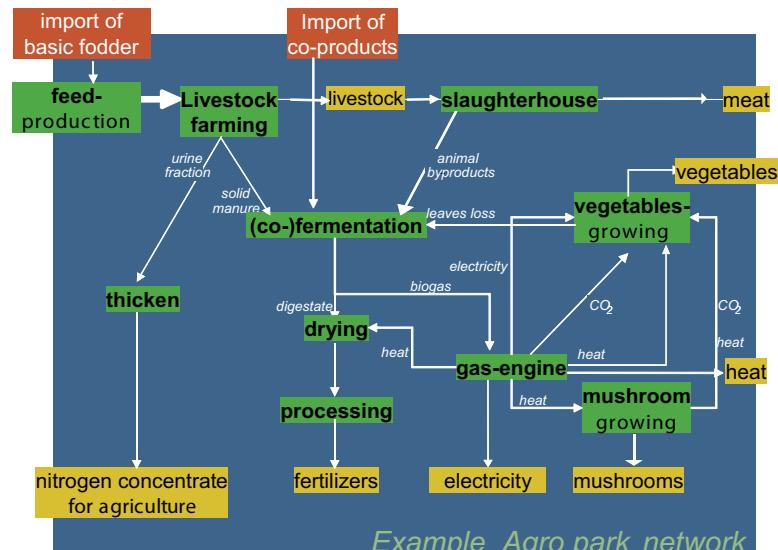


What is an agropark?

An agropark is essentially a regional cluster of agro businesses in which plant and animal production and processing chains are integrated and combined with other functions of society, including food and non-food industry, energy, water & waste management, education & training, recreation & leisure, trade, logistics & transport and spatial planning.

Agroparks are dedicated to integrating chains of production and processing and closing cycles of material flow.

Agroparks provide an answer to the question of how to restructure and innovate existing agricultural practices in order to comply with demands of sustainable growth and consumption. Agroparks offer higher quantity and quality of food to increasing numbers of people living in urban areas while reducing environmental strain and improving sustainability. Agroparks are planned, focused and managed activities in dedicated areas adjacent to urban concentrations and trade nodes. As such, agroparks fit the needs of land planning and landscaping and can fulfil requirements of, for example, energy and water conservation, food safety, clean production and profitability as well as social cohesion and eradication of poverty and hunger.



Further information

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