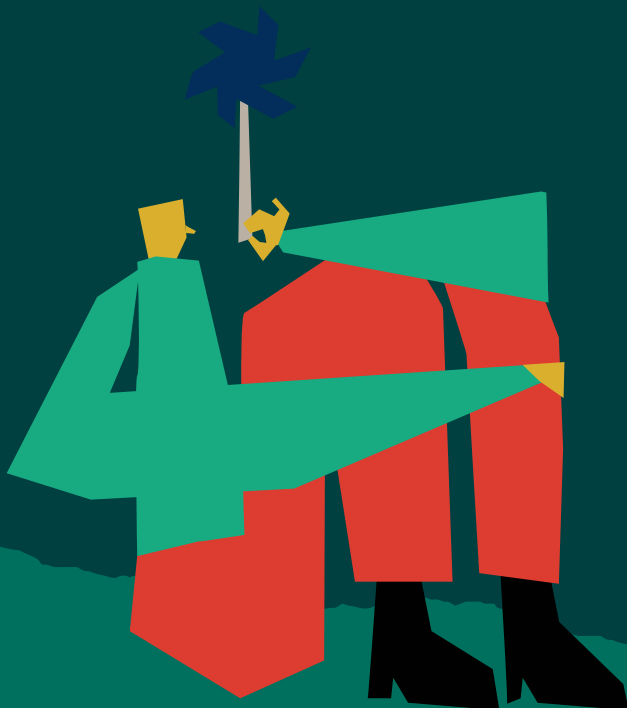




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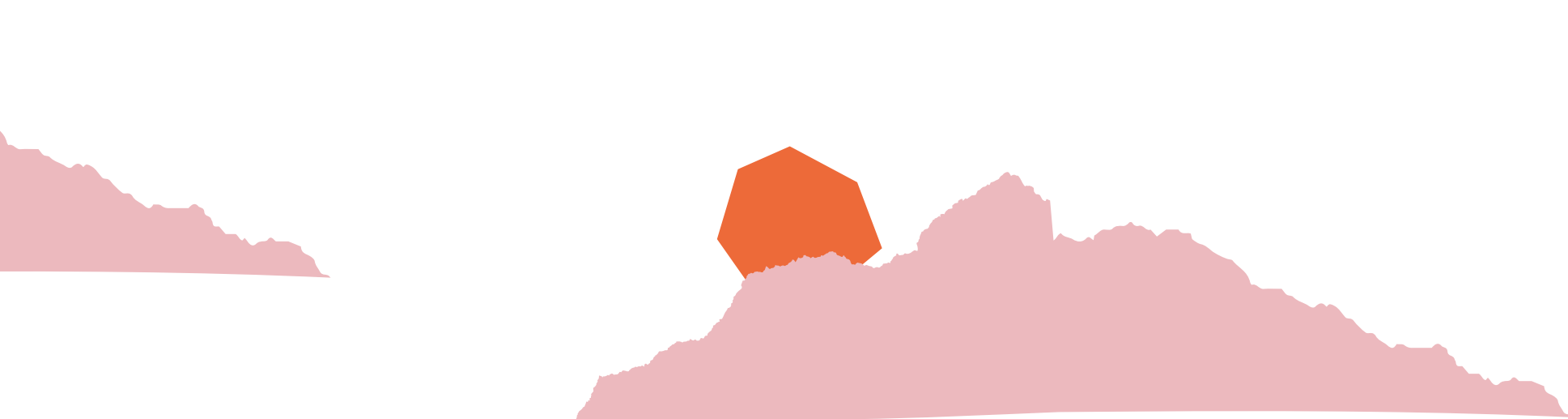
CULTIVATING THE FUTURE

A service to support organisations
collaborating with regenerative agriculture
changemakers to create shared spaces for
imagining alternative narratives about the
future of farming



Ada Maymó Costa

MA Service Design
London College of Communication
University of the Arts London
November 2023



A service to support organisations collaborating with regenerative agriculture changemakers to create shared spaces for imagining alternative narratives about the future of farming



A project by Ada Maymó Costa

Tutored by Cordula Friedlander

With the collaboration of

REVOLVE

MA Service Design 2022 - 2023

London College of Communication

University of the Arts London



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As we integrate participation in our design practice, the support of others becomes essential to realise our projects. This project would not have been possible without the involvement of many incredible people and organisations.

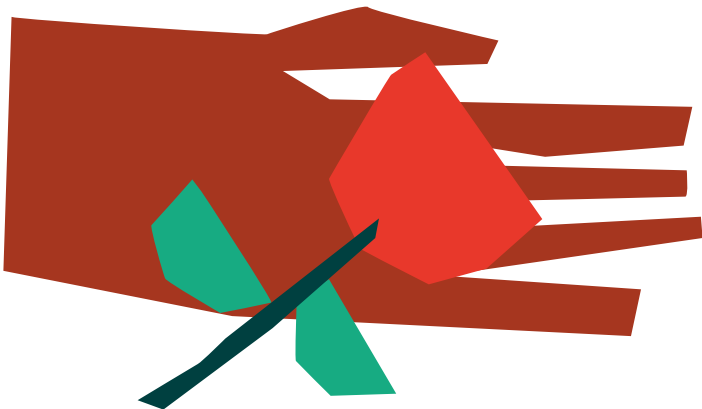
Thank you to my tutor, Cordula Friedlander, for her trust, her genuine interest in my project, her much-needed encouragement, and her flexibility.

Thank you to all the people I interviewed, especially the farmers, who took time off during a busy harvest season to tour me around their farms having the courage to be vulnerable, sharing their realities and struggles.

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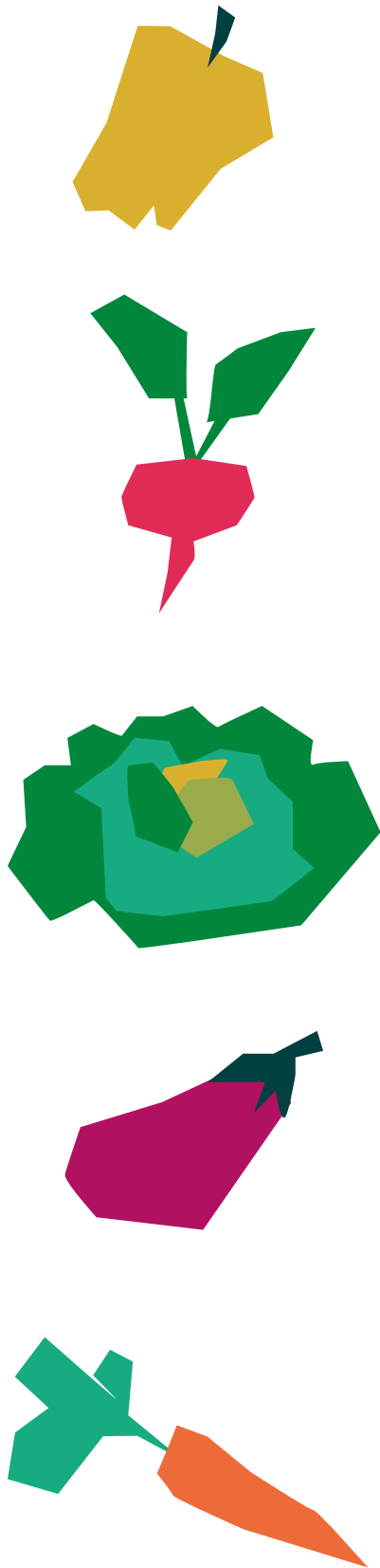
Finally, I want to express my gratitude to REVOLVE, for becoming the official partner of this project and seeing through the deployment of the service in 2024. Particularly, I want to thank Patricia Carbonell, Head of REVOLVE Mediterráneo, for her passion and extraordinary involvement in this project and for truly making participatory design possible.



DISCLAIMER

The following report and appendices are the original work of its author. The sources used have been cited and acknowledged.

Many research activities were developed in Catalan and Spanish. The quotes have been translated into English by the author.



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“As regenerative farmers, we are also advocating for a new socio-economic system. We design, we prototype and we apply the transition that will be able to feed the planet while we regenerate the soil.”

Ricard
Regenerative holistic farmer

“You cannot provide the solution, but you can encourage farmers to question their practices and the fact that it wouldn’t be so crazy to think of new ways of farming, opening up and collaborating so that they are prepared when the paradigm changes.”

Patricia Carbonell
Head of REVOLVE Mediterráneo, project partner

“We need to be able to imagine positive, feasible, delightful versions of the future before we can create them. Not utopias, but futures where things turned out OK. Having the opportunity to “test drive” the future, to experience different versions of the future, can help us feel they are possible.”

(Rob Hopkins - co-founder of the Transition Network, 2019)



HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

This report is structured in four sections. The Introduction section includes the field of study and the methodology used. The Discover & Define section includes the problem dissection through a triple exploration: understanding regenerative agriculture, the reality of farmers, and the food system where it is embedded. The Develop section includes the co-creation and testing of the service. Finally, the Deliver section includes a detailed description of the final service proposition and its touchpoints.

The report includes quotes from primary and secondary research. Quotes from primary research sources are written in yellow (farmers) and red (food system stakeholders). Quotes in green belong to secondary research sources.

ABSTRACT

This report describes the design and research journey of Regenerate, a service that supports organisations collaborating with regenerative agriculture changemakers to facilitate shared spaces for imagining alternative narratives about the future of farming.

The agricultural sector is one of the biggest contributors to the climate crisis. Measures have been in place to support a sustainable farming transition for years - for instance, the EU’s Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) has progressively raised its focus on supporting sustainable practices. However, policies have often proved ineffective, as they frequently overlook farmers’ constraints in adopting more sustainable practices.

This project engaged with conventional and regenerative farmers to understand their daily struggles and what prevents them from being more sustainable. The research shows that farmers’ narrative about the future is remarkably characterised by a deep sense of hopelessness, hindering their ability to envision a preferable future, thus preventing them from investing in sustainable farming practices today.

This service aims to support farmers striving to transform agriculture but who struggle to imagine a preferable future to work towards. The service hosts Creative Futures Visioning workshops where farmers will imagine alternative preferable futures with other regenerative agriculture changemakers such as policymakers, research institutions, industry representatives and environmental organisations. The workshop outputs will posteriorly be transformed into fictional stories that can be used to advocate for the futures depicted and inspire further change within the local communities, who can keep exploring the workshop results in working groups.

The service is co-created and enabled by REVOLVE, a communication agency collaborating in regenerative farming projects, and it will be piloted at the EURAF 2024 Congress.

FIELD OF STUDY

Agriculture's contribution to the planetary crisis

Agriculture is one of the biggest contributors to the triple planetary crisis: climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss (UN Climate Change, 2022). The conversion of natural ecosystems for crop production and pasture is the primary driver of biodiversity loss (Chatham House, 2021). Moreover, human activities related to food have the largest humanity's ecological footprint¹, with a 30% contribution (WWF, 2022, p. 67). If analysing the ecological footprint by land use, the cropland footprint makes up 20% of the total contribution (Fig. 1).

In Europe, there has been a median 60% decrease in bird biodiversity linked to agricultural land due to intensive agriculture.

(El País newspaper, 2023)

“Economic incentives have generally favoured expanding economic activity, often with environmental harm, rather than conservation or restoration.”

(WWF, 2022)

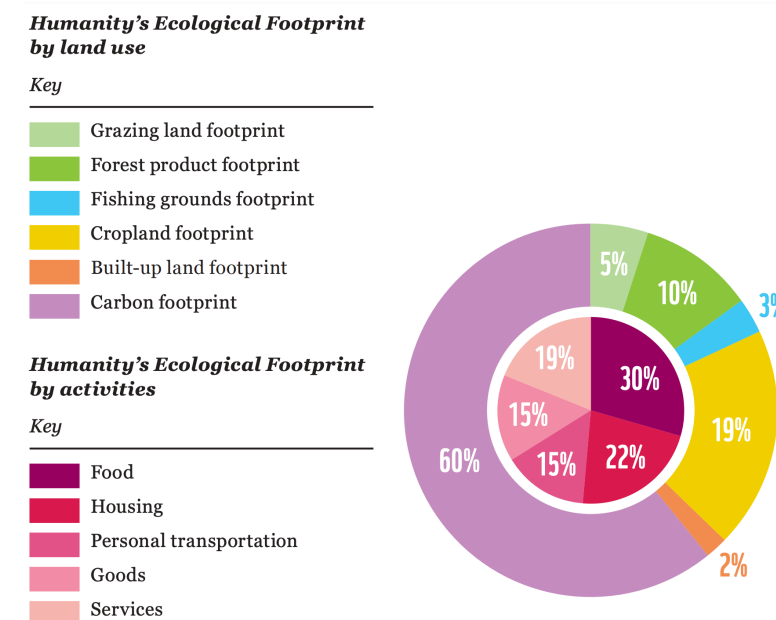


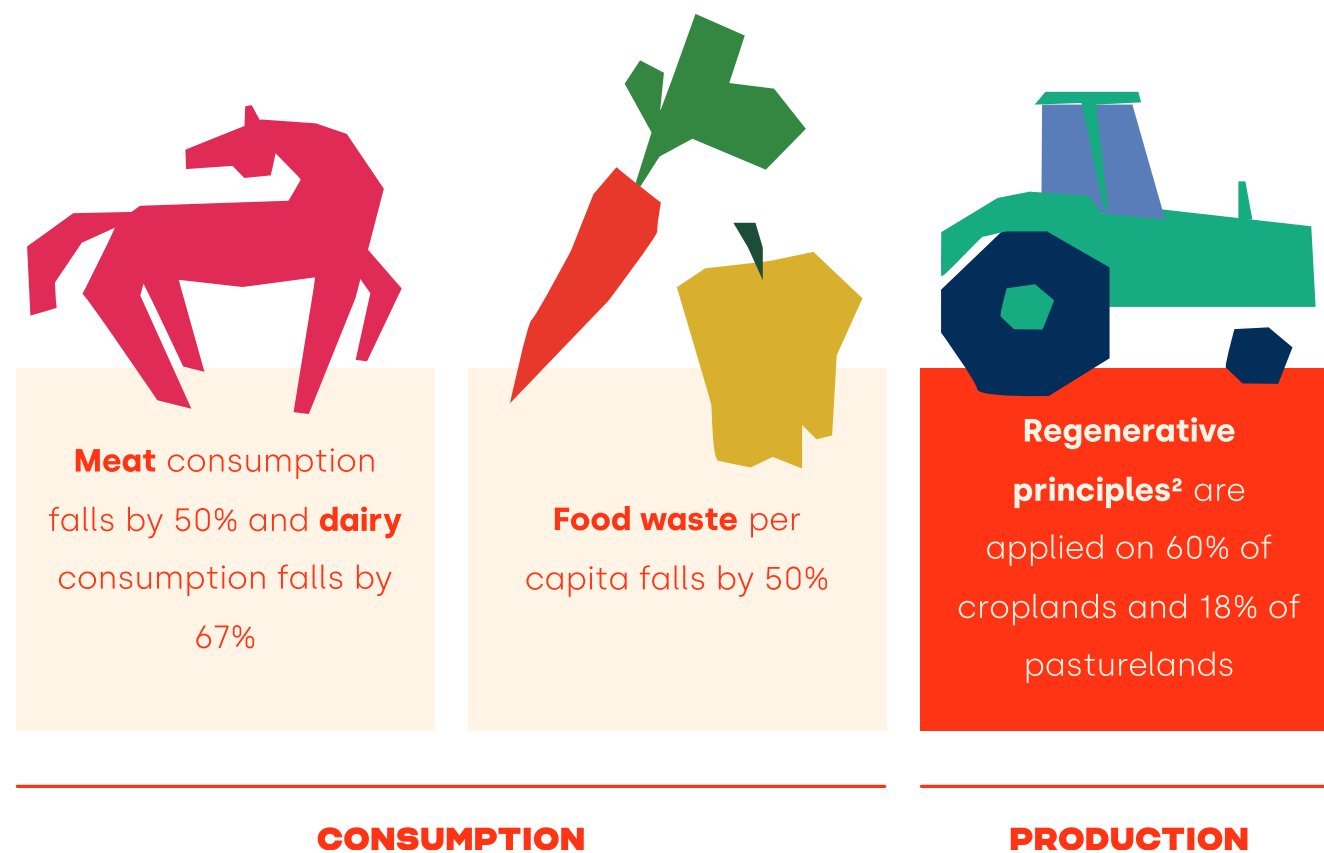
Fig. 1: Humanity's Ecological Footprint by land use and activities (WWF, p. 67, 2022)

¹ The Ecological Footprint refers to the demand human consumption places on the biosphere and compares it to what ecosystems can renew (WWF, 2022, p. 67)

Agriculture's potential to reverse the planetary crisis

Agriculture's large contribution to the planetary crisis also means it holds the potential to reverse this trend. For instance, according to Sitra's latest report on how to halt biodiversity loss through the circular economy, the food and agriculture sectors can make the greatest contribution to biodiversity recovery (Sitra, 2022). For this to happen, they present three circular economy levers of change, which need to be in place by 2050 (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2: Three circular economy levers of change in the agriculture sector by 2050 to halt biodiversity loss (Visual adapted from Sitra, 2022)



² Regenerative principles respond to agricultural practices for growing food while restoring degraded land (Brown, 2018, p. 9)

The predominant model: Conventional agriculture

THE CASE OF SPAIN

Spain is the 8th world exporter of agri-food products, with a 3.3% market share of goods exports (Montoriol, 2019). Spain's climate and low-cost production satisfy the high demand for a year-round supply of products (Haddaway, 2023).

However, the Spanish agricultural sector faces many challenges. To be able to export a large quantity of produce, the sector confronts overexploitation of water resources, agro-chemical pollution, a loss of biodiversity, modern slavery, and, more recently, decreased production due to unstable weather caused by climate change (Haddaway, 2023).

This entangled ecosystem of problems mainly derives from the current agricultural model (Fig. 3), based on intensive practices that aim at increasing cheap goods exportation at the price of local social and environmental well-being. In addition, this model does not implicate higher earnings for producers. For instance, in Almería, Spain's largest food exporter region, farmers are only paid 12% of the final selling price of the cucumbers they produce (Haddaway, 2023).

"The societal narrative is that farmers are polluting, but then in cities, they want to eat fruit all year round."

Antonio, 70
Conventional farmer in Lleida

Fig. 3: Nectarine orchard mono-crop in a highly technified big corporation farm in La Granja d'Escarp, Lleida (Spain). Image taken during this project's field research.



Towards a sustainable transition in the agricultural sector

There already exist sustainable agricultural practices such as organic farming, which avoids using synthetic fertilisers or pesticides (EPA, 2022). While these practices are more sustainable than conventional ones, they still do not propose a regenerative approach for the soil, which hosts a quarter of our planet's biodiversity (IUCN, 2022).

Many farmers are already tackling soil health by implementing regenerative agriculture (Fig. 4), a 'biological system for growing food and restoring degraded land' (Brown, 2018, p. 9). Regenerative agriculture questions the systemic use of mainstream agricultural practices that do not resemble natural habitats, for instance, tilling, monocropping and using synthetic pesticides and fertilisers. Thus, it proposes not only to be sustainable and preserve natural ecosystems but to be regenerative and recover them.

"Today's farming is more like mining. Farmers excavate nutrients from the soil, including carbon, and haul it away."

(Gabe Brown - regenerative farmer, 2018)

"This topic is going to be the priority. It is our soil, our water and our health. There is nothing more important."

Patricia Carbonell
Head of REVOLVE
Mediterráneo, project partner



How can we support farmers in overcoming intensive agricultural practices by applying regenerative principles to their ways of farming?



Fig. 4: Rows of celery and purple kale cabbages at Mas la Sala, a regenerative farm in Sant Pau de Segúries (Camprodon, Spain) visited during this project's field research. The crops are planted close to each other to prevent the proliferation of unwanted weeds while preventing the use of herbicides.

METHODOLOGY

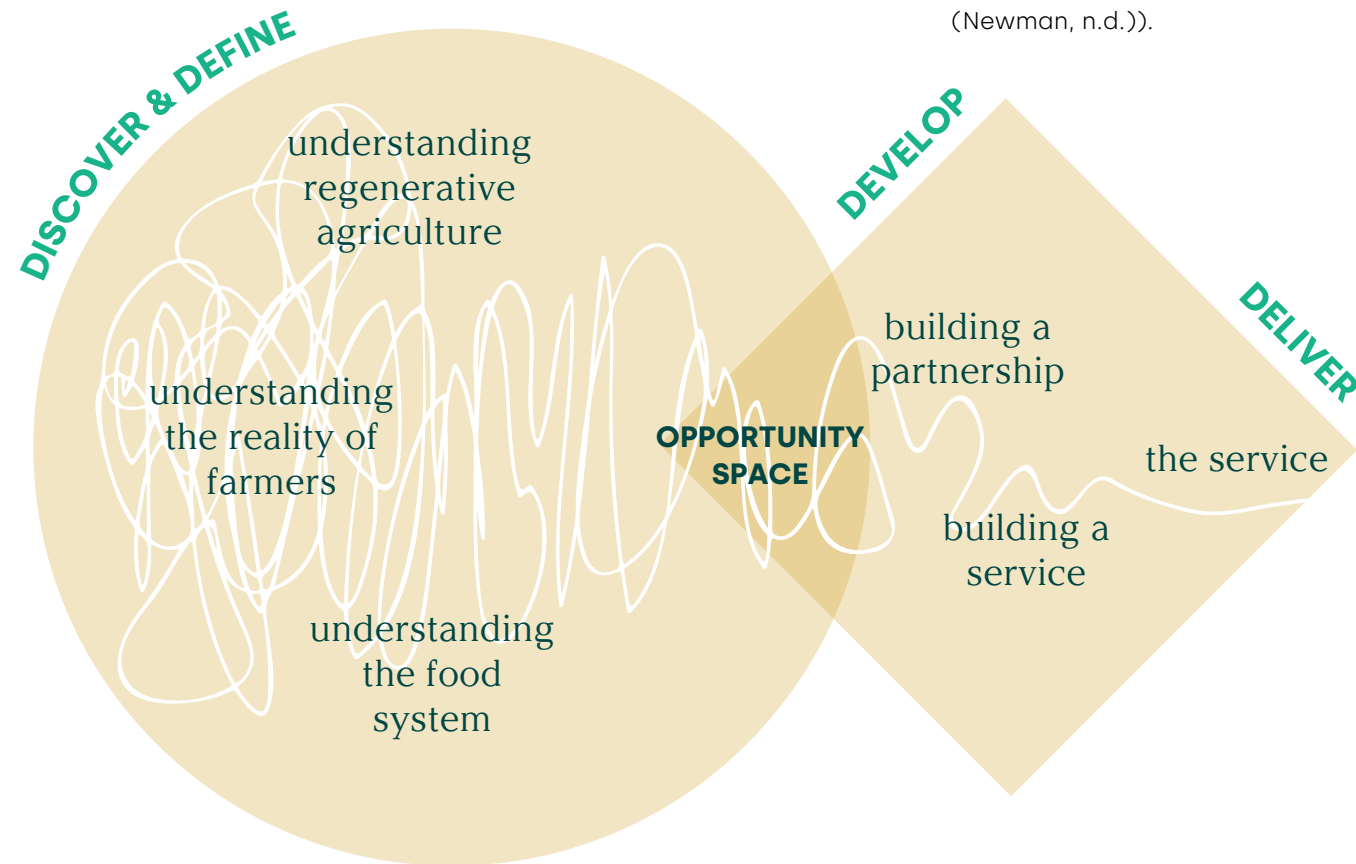


Fig. 5: Overall methodology (overlapping the Design Squiggle (Newman, n.d.)).

This project uses three different methodologies serving different purposes:

DOUBLE DIAMOND

A version of the Double Diamond (Design Council, 2002) acts as a framework for the project, considering the different phases of Discover, Define, Develop and Deliver, although taking a particularly iterative approach in the first diamond (Fig. 5).

PARTICIPATORY DESIGN

Participatory Design approaches are employed to co-design with the project partner - from a non-designer background - and engage them in the design development process (Sanders et al., 2008, p. 3). Furthermore, participatory design principles are also present in the final service design solution, consisting of new tools and methods that facilitate the co-imagination of alternative futures by the service receivers (Sanders et al., 2008, p. 15).

TRANSITION DESIGN

Transition Design serves as a mindset to design for transitions; That is, the project approaches the problem of unsustainable food systems through a long-term vision to inform a short-term system intervention (Irwin, 2015). This project uses systems thinking and futures visioning, two of the principal methods of Transition Design.

DISCOVER & DEFINE

Secondary research

FARMING

- 80+** Agriculture and food news and articles (news-papers, magazines)
- 2** Events on regenerative farming
- 5** Regenerative farmer experiences review (books & podcasts)
- 1** Food systems map analysis

DESIGN THEORY

- 20+** Sources or theory
- 2** Learning spaces (Transition Design Summer School & Theory U Course)

Primary research (Fig. 6)

- 8** In-depth interviews and co-discovery activities with farmers
- 6** In-depth interviews with food system stakeholders
- 3** Farm visits
- 1** Food co-op visit

DEVELOP

Co-design

- 4** Co-design sessions with project partner
- 2** Testing sessions
- 1** Capacity building with project partner
- 1** In-depth feedback survey
- 2** Feedback/debrief sessions



Fig. 6: Primary research map during *Discover & Define* (Map CC BY-SA 4.0 Wikimedia Commons).

01 UNDERSTANDING REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE

The health of the soil is the primary driver of decisions in a regenerative farm (Brown, 2018, p. 12). Moreover, regenerative farmers have a holistic mindset and observe not only their crops but all ecosystems living on the land, working with nature to restore and regenerate them.

The following pages explain this project's exploration journey to understand regenerative agriculture and comprehend what it means in practical terms by contemplating its benefits and challenges for farmers.



The pillars of regenerative agriculture

Regenerative farming is very context-dependent. However, at the event “Food of the Future” (Fig. 7), Tom Martin, farm manager at Village Farm,

identified six key pillars to a successful regenerative farm. The pillars were originally introduced by Gabe Brown, a regenerative farmer in the United States known for his book ‘Dirt to Soil’ (2018).

- 1. Reduce tillage** to keep nutrients, worms, roots, carbon, and soil structure
- 2. Diversify crops** by rotating and combining, and by having diverse crop margins so that the soil feeds on previous years’ harvests
- 3. Keep living roots in the soil** in between harvesting and planting seasons so that the ecosystem continues to thrive
- 4. Protect the soil** from high temperatures and heavy rain by covering the crops
- 5. Incorporate livestock** to mimic a natural ecosystem and stimulate soil regeneration
- 6. Understand the context.** Before applying the previous five points, understand the specificities of the land



Fig. 7: Picture of the event. From left to right: Alan Rusbridger (moderator), Thomasina Miers (chef, food writer and co-founder of Wahaca), Dr Tara Garnett (researcher at the University of Oxford and director of TABLE), and Tom Martin (regenerative farmer)

A sensing journey to regenerative farming

On July 15th this project took a sensing journey to a regenerative farm. Sensing journeys allow researchers ‘to step out of their daily routine and to experience places, people, and organisations relevant to issues they are working on’ (Presenting Institute, n.d.).

The farm, Mas la Sala, is located in Camprodon, Spain, and is managed by six young neo-rural people searching for a new lifestyle integrating alternative ways of producing, distributing and consuming food. Ricard, one of the farmers, hosted the visit. This sensing journey allowed the project to integrate an experiential understanding of regenerative agriculture and what it entails to embark on a project like this: the main advantages, especially for the environment, but also the main challenges linked to the practice, mainly financial. Here are some of the key learnings:

#1 Understand your soil

Soils, especially those degraded for years, have deficiencies (Fig. 8) that can be compensated for by adding natural elements. Thus, a soil analysis of mineral components, pH levels, microbiology and organic matter is essential before planting crops (Brown, 2018, p.17).

#2 Understand your ecosystems

Studying the local ecosystem (Shepard, 2022) and weather patterns to identify the farming techniques better suited for the area is crucial. At Mas la Sala, like many other regenerative farms, they do Holistic Management, which uses grazing herbivores to accelerate soil regeneration (Savory Institute, 2023).

#3 Embrace biodiversity

Biodiversity is cherished in a regenerative farm (Brown, 2018, p.46), as a biodiverse ecosystem means a healthy farm. Furthermore, biodiversity is a visible indicator of what works and does not.



(top to bottom)

Fig. 8: Pulverised rock helps cope with soil deficiencies.

Fig. 9: 3D-printed topographic map to study the terrain.

“When something is eaten by another animal we don’t count it as a loss but as a co-existence.”

(continuation) Research activity • Sensing Journey to Mas La Sala,
15th July 2023

#4 Make compromises

Many regenerative farmers face financial challenges during the first five years (Tsitos, 2022), as the land is regenerating and the farm is not fully productive. To address this, at Mas la Sala they take a semi-regenerative approach for shorter-term productivity in some of their crops.

#5 Bring added value to your customers

Regenerative farmers tend to have more direct sales to customers than conventional farmers. At Mas la Sala, for instance, they sell produce baskets to families throughout the year. However, with this model, they would still need to reach more families to be solvent.

#6 Diversify revenue streams

Many regenerative farmers opt for diversification to strengthen their revenue streams. For instance, Mas la Sala has a library to promote their world-views and a rural tourism venue.

#7 Strengthen community presence

Enhancing local presence can increase the number of customers. For instance, doing farm tours, hosting community meals and group harvesting events. Openness to the community is common among regenerative farmers (Brown, 2018, p. 75), especially among the many who are against the implementation of certification, as it would be a bureaucratic burden.

#8 Collaborate with like-minded projects

Collaboration can support innovation with little to no financing. Thanks to their collaborative mindset, Mas la Sala is participating in a new carbon market initiative and a pilot project for virtual fencing (Fig. 10).



Fig. 10: GPS collars for cows allow virtual fencing to facilitate Holistic Management

#9 Get to know the local conventional farmers

Even if they have opposing views, it is key to build trust with neighbour conventional farmers. At Mas la Sala they reject the patronising narrative of “I am right and you are wrong” and seek to learn from more experienced farmers.

“We are starting to create links and network after 4–5 years here.”



(top to bottom / left to right)

Fig. 11: Soil recovering through holistic management using sheep.

Fig. 12: Soil oxygenation without tilling.

Fig. 13: DIY prototypes to test optimal cattle rotation rates for soil regeneration - a recycled wood square meter measurer and a scale to weigh organic matter.

The barriers to regenerative agriculture

Although regenerative agriculture has many advantages, especially for the environment, regenerative farmers still face many barriers in their practice, for instance:

- Complex and lowly replicable knowledge, as regenerative farming is highly context-dependent
- Difficulty in finding viable selling channels
- Financial difficulty due to its long-term approach
- Lack of funding for the transition
- Difficulties in complying with policy
- It involves lots of experimentation and failure before being successful

These barriers were extracted from three in-depth interviews with regenerative farmers and one system stakeholder, and the review of farmer experiences through secondary research (Brown, 2018; Shepard, 2022; Mazzola, 2022; Tsitos, 2022).

“It is very connected to the context, to the country, to the region, to the climate.”

(Dimitri Tsitos - regenerative farmer, 2022)

“Where farmers do want to shift to regenerative farming, they often lack the transition finance, value chain partners to bear the risks and upfront costs, or access to markets that distinguish their produce.”

(Caroline Ashley - Forum For the Future Director of Global Programmes, 2021)

“I know many farmers that started beautiful, very well-working farms but then they had big problems with Health and Safety institutions.”

(Matteo Mazzola - regenerative farmer, 2022)

“Regenerative agriculture is not an option if you don’t consider there will be a transition process. The productivity at the beginning diminishes, as you cannot go from one day to the next into producing the same quantities in a soil that you have been extorting for decades.”

Ricard

Regenerative farmer



Fig. 14: View of a farmer’s warehouse, filled with obsolete tools due to the industrialisation of the farming practice.

02 UNDERSTANDING THE REALITY OF FARMERS

'Not all farmers are equally willing to engage with conservation measures' (Hölting et al., 2022, p. 2). This statement is a widespread societal narrative. While true in many contexts, this project's research aims not to validate this statement but to understand its underlying causes. It does so by incorporating farmers' lived experiences and local knowledge, as they are the ones ultimately implementing policy conservation measures (Hölting et al. 2022, p. 2), hence holding the power and responsibility of a transition into regenerative agriculture.

The field research presented in the following pages, consisting of in-depth interviews with farmers, visits to their farms and an agri-food co-op, seeks to understand the challenges faced and reasons behind the lack of adoption of sustainable practices by conventional farmers, their behaviours and postures, which are determinant to ensure compliance with environmental regulations (Castro Campos, 2022, p. 164), and potential opportunities for support through service design. Furthermore, a comparison between conventional and regenerative farmer behaviours is made to uncover differences in mindset and approach.



Research activity · Farmer interviews and co-discovery activities, June and July 2023

Research plan

Interactions with farmers took place between June and July, although most occurred during a 4-day research trip to Lleida, in Spain, in July. A conversation guide and engagement tools were prepared beforehand, such as 'produce journey maps' (Fig. 17) and two speculative newspapers (Fig. 15), to be completed and discussed together (See full version in Appendix 1).

The in-person visit was essential, as some interactions were arranged last minute or happened on the spot. This is because farmers are used to in-person interactions, and the visit took place during harvest season, a particularly busy time which reduces their ability to commit in advance. Both aspects should be contemplated when designing a participatory process with farmers (Hölting, 2022, p. 6).



(left to right)

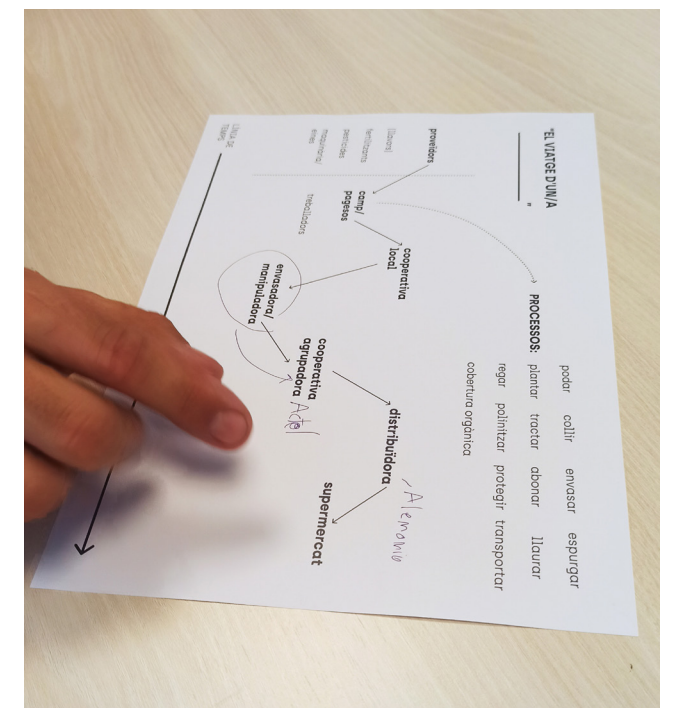
Fig. 15: Discussing the future of farming with a farmer through a speculative newspaper.

Fig. 16: Guide for the semi-structured interviews.

Fig. 17: Mapping 'the journey of a pear' from crop to consumer with a co-op president.

INTERVIEW GUIDE

- **Background information on their farm:** crop type, hectares, farming techniques, etc.
- **Distribution channels:** 'produce journey map' exercise and discussion on alternative models
- **The role of farmers:** tasks beyond farming (finances, insurance, HR...)
- **Collaboration:** with other farmers and other people in the farming sector, formally and informally
- **Generational replacement:** in own farm and neighbours
- **Support:** from co-ops, from the government/EU, from the private sector
- **Sustainable farming:** position on the topic and practices already being implemented
- **The future:** Hopes and fears, and discussion with speculative newspaper



Key insights from conventional farmers

The field trip included two visits to farms and one food co-op, and in-depth interviews with five conventional farmers and a co-op president. The interviews used a prepared structure and

two co-discovery activities (Fig. 15 to 17). The following insights synthesise the collected farmer experiences and observations during the visits.

#1 A shift in the farming practice cannot happen without a transformation in how the system works

Many challenges faced by conventional farmers are rooted in a systemic issue of how the food system works, from production and distribution to consumption and waste. It is a chicken and egg situation: a change in production is needed to spark a change in distribution, and vice versa. Consequently, many farmers lack decision-making power in their business models. Furthermore, the current model is so ingrained in their practice that they are unable to think of alternative models.

“I sell to the local co-op and they sell to Actelgrup, the integrator, who I think sells our produce in Germany.”

Antonio, 70

Conventional grain and fruit farmer (42ha)

“The way the produce is distributed is a problem but it is so ingrained in how we do things and we know this is how it works, so we don’t see it as a problem.”

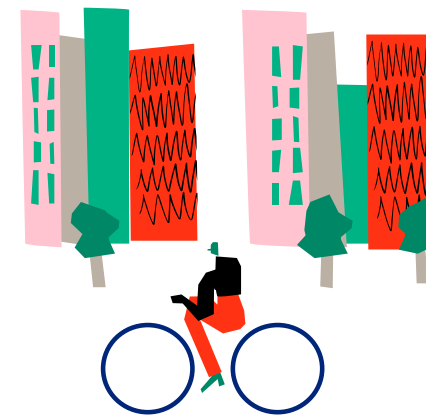
“If we had the same personnel needs throughout the year, it would be a good job because you could create your team.”

Xavier, 39

Conventional fruit farmer (17ha), pest consultant and former co-op president

#2 Farmers feel disconnected from urban communities, as they feel blamed by society and neglected by policy-makers

Conventional farmers feel very disconnected from urban communities, from whom they feel blamed for the climate crisis. Furthermore, they think policies do not consider the realities of farmers and believe policy-makers should be closer to the farmland.



“They see us as we are the ones polluting.”

Antonio, 70

Conventional grain and fruit farmer (42ha)

“They are very good at working in Brussels’ offices but don’t know how to work the land.”

Ramon, 45

Co-op president

#3 Lack of predictability in yields prevents conventional farmers from acquiring more sustainable farming practices

Conventional farmers see sustainable practices as hard to control and with low productivity. On the contrary, they tend to over-treat their crops to increase control over their production and ensure revenue. Furthermore, many conventional farmers do not know what regenerative agriculture is, even though some of their practices are regenerative.

“There are many problems in agriculture because it is in nature. It is a product you have to treat, it is not like having clothes in a store.”

“Doing organic farming is very complicated. Not everything works, you have pests, and you might not be able to sell internationally.”

Bob, 65

Conventional fruit farmer (9ha)

“I don’t believe in organic farming. It is not worth it. Depending on the weather conditions, the organic farmers I know lose at least one crop every year.”

Xavier, 39

Conventional fruit farmer (17ha), pest consultant and former co-op president

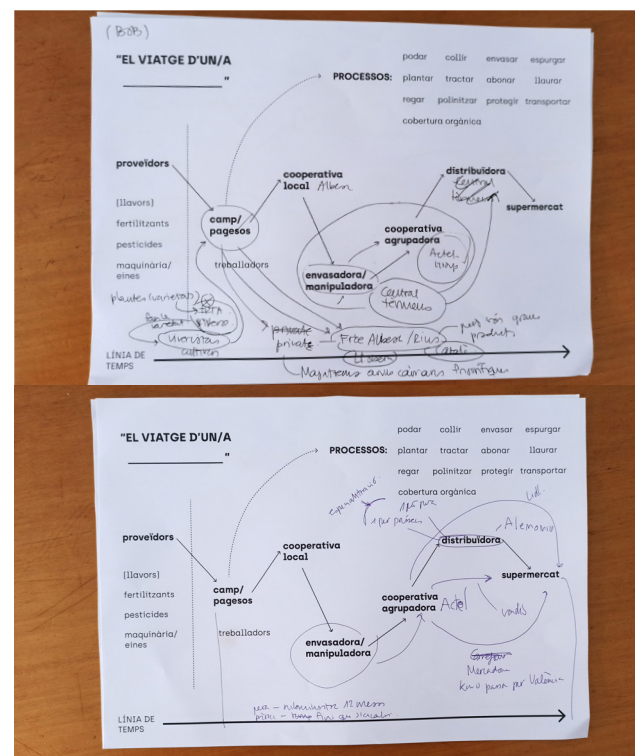
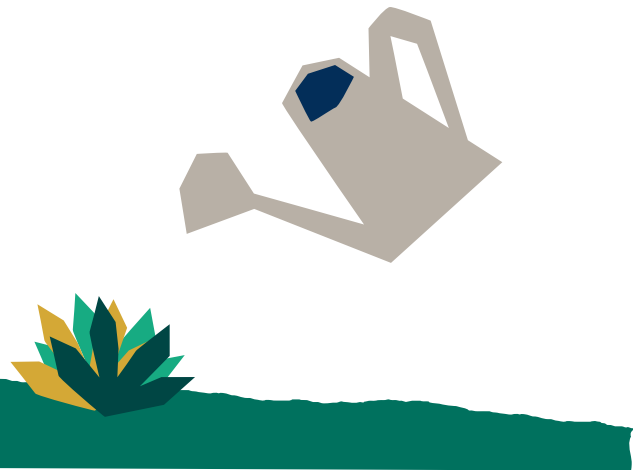


Fig. 18: Mapping the produce journey helped farmers think about the distribution model. This activity made it noticeable many farmers never thought about this before.

#4 Over-competition hinders the ability of conventional farmers to learn new things and collaborate

Competition overpowers collaboration, which is very low even among conventional farmers who are part of a co-op. Furthermore, although farmers have more training than they used to, there is a general perception that studying is not needed to farm, which makes it hard to engage farmers in training and keep up to date.



Formació
Escoles Agràries
Curs bàsic d'agricultura
biodinàmica
Alfarràs, del 17 d'octubre al 28 de novembre de 2023

Presentació i objectius

Cada vegada més, els productors de fruita tenim interès i inquietuds per aprendre sobre agricultura biodinàmica per tal de donar un valor afegit a la qualitat de la fruita que produïm. És per això, que creix el nombre de finques fructíferes que fan aquest pas amb bons resultats.

La regeneració dels sòls, els preparats per a la seva revitalització, els calendaris biodinàmics per realitzar les tasques del camp i un conjunt d'estratègies i tècniques ens iniciaran al coneixement de la fructicultura biodinàmica per, posteriorment, aprofundir en aquesta especialitat. El nostre objectiu és produir fruita amb alt poder nutricional i energètic.

Requisits de preinscripció i matriculació

Es necessita aportar la següent documentació:

- Còpia del DNI i de la targeta sanitària.
- Justificant de pagament.
- Rebut de cotització d'autònom o capçalera de la nòmina.
- Fitxa d'inscripció que es facilitarà a l'alumne el primer dia de curs.
- Declaració responsable que es facilitarà a l'alumne el primer dia de curs.
- Declaració jurada i full de recepció del material que es facilitarà a l'alumne el primer dia de curs.

Professorat

Marisol Garrido, Dra. enginyera agrònoma, especialista en sòls i directora oficina de certificació Denominació d'Origen Protegida.

Josán Palacio, enginyer agrònom i professor de l'Escola Agrària d'Alfarràs.

Joan Salicrú, enginyer agrònom a Vivens Salicrú.

Roger Prats, enginyer agrònom i professor de l'Escola Agrària d'Alfarràs.

Realització

Lloc:
EA d'Alfarràs.

Calendari: del 17 d'octubre fins al 28 de novembre.

Horari: matí, 9.00 a 14.00 h

Excepte la sessió 4 que serà de 15.00 a 20.00 h

Durada: 30 h

Inscripcions

Podreu inscriure-us-hi a l'Escola Agrària d'Alfarràs

Coordinadors:

Roger Prats rogerprats@gencat.cat

Josán Palacio josanalpacio@gencat.cat

Telèfon 973 76 01 00

Cost del curs:

Dret d'inscripció: 32 € (ORDRE ARP/45/2017, de 24 de març)

Pagament per transferència al compte de l'Escola Agrària d'Alfarràs: ES70 2100-0518-87-0200097129

Més informació: agricultura.gencat.cat

Generalitat de Catalunya
Departament d'Acció Climàtica,
Alimentació i Agenda Rural

**Pla Anual de
Formació Agrària**

“We used to help each other. We supported others to harvest their fruit, to prune... Now the land is too big so we need employees.”

Bob, 65
Conventional fruit farmer (9ha)

“There is no collectivism anymore. We don't support each other. We clap when someone else had a bad harvest.”

“We used to offer training but stopped because we didn't have enough people coming, even though we did some of the training directly in the crops. It's hard to get farmers into training.”

Ramon, 45
Co-op president

Fig. 19: There are many learning opportunities: Public announcement by the town hall of Albesa, Lleida, regarding a subsidised 30-hour biodynamic agriculture training (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2023).

#5 Hopelessness about the future hinders farmers' ability to envision alternative futures

Farmers have a hard time engaging in conversations about the future. Their narrative is alike and characterised by a deep sense of hopelessness. This inability to envision a better future takes away the motivation for farmers to invest in changing their practices today.



Fig. 20: Conventional farmer discussing the future over a speculative newspaper. Even with prompts like the newspaper, it was difficult to talk about the future.

“The big ones will be bigger, and the small ones will farm until they retire and then sell off or lease their land to the big ones.”

Bob, 65
Conventional fruit farmer (9ha)



“If you don't inherit the land and machinery, you cannot become a farmer.”

Antonio, 70
Conventional grain ad fruit farmer (42ha)

“In 5 years, young people will quit. The ones that are 50 don't quit because they wouldn't find another job.”

Xavier, 39
Conventional fruit farmer (17ha), pest consultant and former co-op president

A new approach to the problem

According to the 2003 White Paper of the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, in Catalunya, the leading region in the agri-food industry in Spain and where this field research was conducted, there are challenges regarding the loss of cropland, increasingly lower margins, a rural exodus by young people, an increasingly ageing population, low levels of training, and seasonal and poor job conditions (pp. 379-421), among others. Twenty years later, the challenges found throughout this project's field research are the same or have even aggravated. Furthermore, the narrative on the present is very negative, with no mention of any positive aspects of being a farmer, and even more pessimistic on what lies ahead, with small hope for a future that farmers feel powerless about.

Therefore, a need to develop and share more positive stories about the future is identified; without a positive future outlook, it is unlikely there will be a change in farming practices in the present. To help farmers think of a better future, we first need them to imagine it, tell stories about it, and long for its realisation (Hopkins, 2019, p. 9).

These conclusions facilitated the first project framing: Instead of helping farmers change their unsustainable practices, the project will support a change in the mindset perpetrating these practices by strengthening farmers' ability to imagine and tell stories about more preferable futures for themselves and the planet.



"What is the moment we are in? I think it is a moment where the old world is no longer making sense but a new world hasn't yet emerged, and in that gap what we see is fatalism and fear. That makes it harder than ever to imagine alternatives."

(Sophia Parker - Director of Emerging Futures at Joseph Rowntree Foundation - 2023)

FRAMING #1

What if we support farmers envision preferable futures to motivate a change in their practices today?



Differences in mindset between conventional and regenerative farmers

This project's research also includes three interviews with regenerative farmers, an interview with an agronomist working at ADV Ecològica de Ponent³, and regenerative farmer testimonials retrieved from through secondary research. The experiences shared by regenerative farmers differ from those of conventional farmers. Specifically, they showcase intrinsic differences in their mindset.

Through meticulous analysis, interview excerpts were categorised and complemented with secondary research. Some categories were notably more populated with perspectives from regenerative farmers than conventional farmers. The following insights correspond to these categories:

#1 Learning

Regenerative farmers learn by doing and see agriculture as a continuous learning process. They question the current practices and prototype new ones. Furthermore, 'mistakes and failures are inevitable in farming' (Brown, 2018), so it is essential to try new things and accept the feedback (Shepard, 2022).



"Trying new things; That is the way you learn. You cannot do it all at once. You need to start implementing changes and see how the land reacts. It is a process."

Eloi

Farmer, Keyline farm design and holistic management consultant

Fig. 21: Book about pear and apple orchard plague control and treatment (1994), written by an interviewee's father. Practical guide, reporting personal learnings through trial and error

"If you want to make small changes, change the way you do things. If you want to make major changes, change the way you see things."

(Don Campbell - regenerative farmer (Brown, 2018, p.24))



³ ADV Ecològica de Ponent is an organisation that supports 150 organic and regenerative farmers in the Lleida region (ADV Ecològica de Ponent, n.d.)

#2 Knowledge

Regenerative farmers are more open to discussing their farming process and why they do it a certain way. Their focus is not on the practices but on the reasons behind implementing them. Furthermore, regenerative farmers usually reference a set of principles (p. 18) but not specific standardised practices.

#3 Collaboration and community

Regenerative farmers collaborate on innovative pilots and prototypes. They also value collaboration as a key to promoting knowledge exchange and a support community. For instance, ADV Ecològica de Ponent³ interviewees had recently hired a community manager to facilitate farmer community engagement since this had become one of their priorities.

#5 Motivations for farming

Some regenerative farmers expressed their political positions on sustainability and their views on the changes needed in the system. These farmers not only farm to produce food but also as a way of doing activism.

"It should be about training farmers so they make their own decisions by understanding why they do what they do."

Eloi

Farmer, Keyline farm design and holistic management consultant

"Our neighbour is a conventional farmer. We have our differences, but we still learn from each other."

Ricard

Regenerative holistic farmer (12ha)

"The farmers need spaces of encounter, for emotional support, to feel like they belong. They cheer each other up."

"We already have the knowledge and scientific information. Now we need to work on the narrative to motivate others to want to make the transition."

Marina

Doctor in Agronomy, technical advisor at ADV Ecològica de Ponent



03 UNDERSTANDING THE FOOD SYSTEM

Farmers interviewed highlighted various challenges, many of which were not directly related to food production, but to other parts of the food value chain. Despite this reality, over the last decades, the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) has been primarily focused on changing farming practices, but less attentive to the influences the whole value chain has on these practices. This siloed approach might explain why policies 'have largely been unfruitful in changing farmers' attitudes and behaviours towards adopting more sustainable agricultural practices' (Castro Campos, 2022, p. 164).

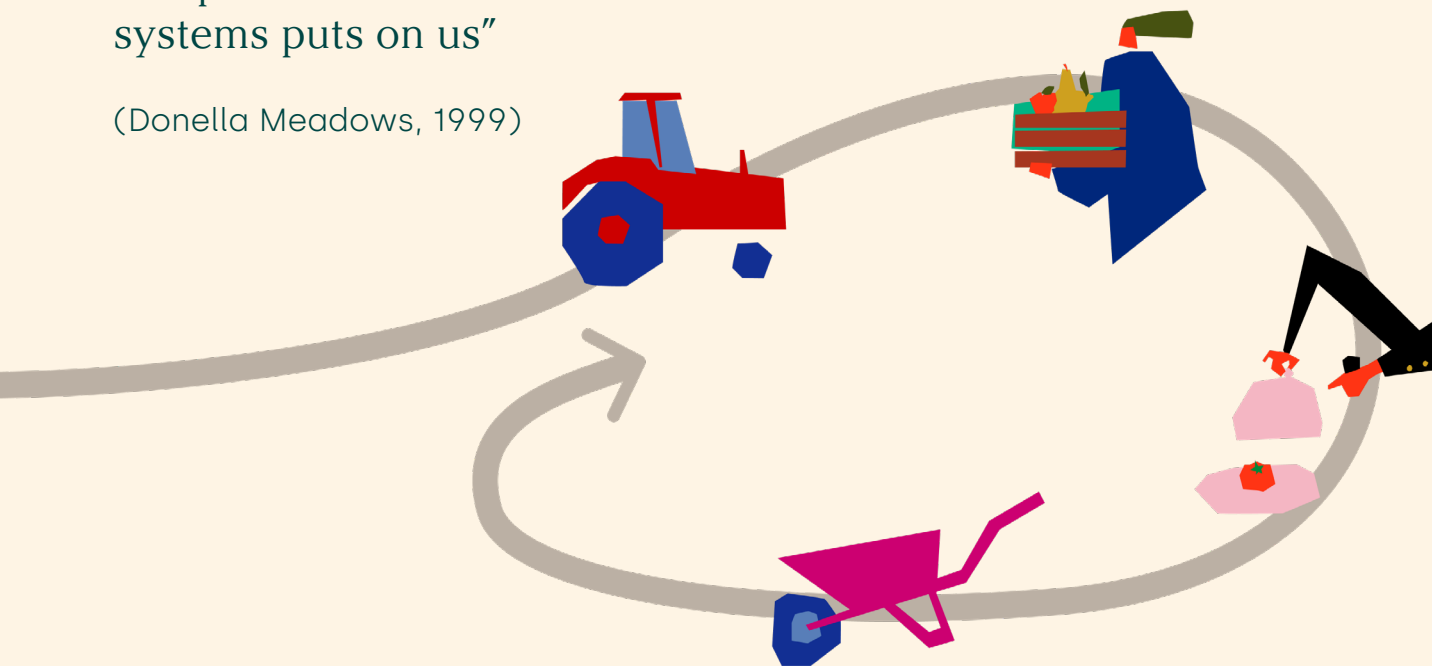
Mapping the system and understanding the established feedback loops that ensure its perpetuation (Meadows, 2008, p. 15) is essential to work towards a transition in agricultural practices - Even if the final goal is to change farming practices, the design of services to support this change might be somewhere else in the food system.

This project carried out a thorough analysis of the food system components and relationships. The goal was to identify leverage points for change in the system (Meadows, 2008, p. 6) that could be addressed through a service design approach.

The following pages include a reflection on the two key learnings of the system analysis, which further informs two project reframings and the opportunity statement.

"We live in a system that is making us be unsustainable. (...) We all produce the result in the system that we don't want, and we do it out of rational response to the constraints, incentives and punishments that the systems puts on us"

(Donella Meadows, 1999)



Research activity · Interview with ReImagined Futures and systems map exploration, August 2023

Systems map as a design tool

System maps are most valuable not as a static element to look at but as a tool to design (Tonkinwise, 2023). Furthermore, they should include various points of view. In their research with Generalitat de Catalunya (Spain) and IRTA (Institute of Agrifood Research and Technology), ReImagined Futures, an organisation aiming to 'facilitate systems change for a regenerative and resilient future' (ReImagined Futures, n.d.), developed a systems map of the Catalan food system (Fig. 22) through a participatory approach. During six months in 2020, they looked at research and carried out interviews and map-validation

workshops with more than fifty practitioners and experts.

The resulting map has many overlaps with this project's research. Additionally, it was co-created with practitioners and experts the project did not have direct access to. Viliana Dzhartova, co-founder of ReImagined Futures, was interviewed to learn more about the map. She provided very insightful recommendations and kindly granted permission to use the map for this project's research (see Appendix 2 to access the full version of the map).

What forces prevent the circularity, fairness, and equity of the Catalan food value chain?

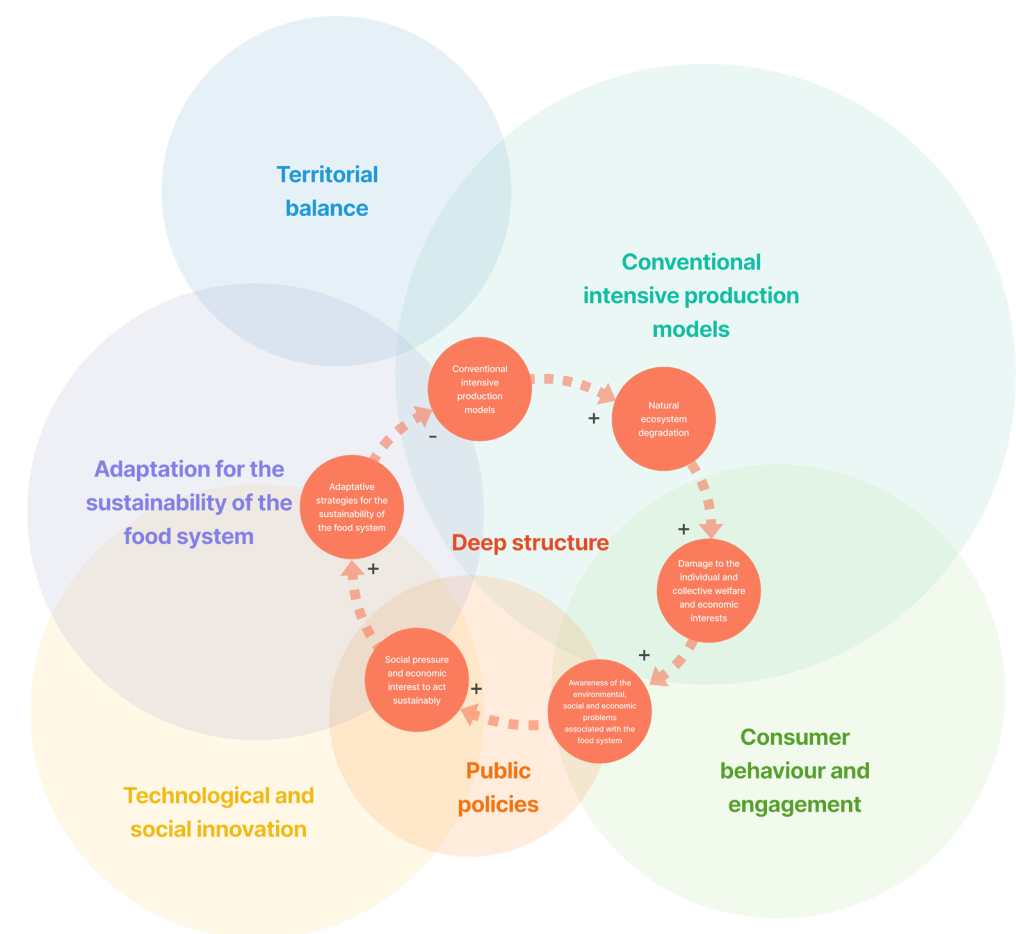


Fig. 22: Simplified version of the ReImagined Futures map

Key learnings from map analysis

#1 Look for systems with less resistance

Although conventional agriculture is a system in itself, it also belongs to a larger system - the food system - and it is interrelated with other 'semi-autonomous and integrated subsystems' (Kossof et al., 2020), such as consumer behaviour and engagement, public policies, or sustainable agricultural practices (Fig. 22).

After her experience in Relmaged Futures co-creating the map with agriculture stakeholders, Viliana Dzhartova argued that directly tackling the big system issue - conventional agriculture - would be very challenging. Instead, it would be more fruitful to focus on building viable alternative models (Fig.

23) by supporting regenerative farmers who promote them - As identified in the research (pp. 32-33), regenerative farmers possess more openness, eagerness for collaboration and energy for change.

This realisation facilitated the second project framing: Instead of changing the system from within by aiding conventional farmers who experience many barriers, the project will support regenerative farmers with the drive to lead, inspire others and advocate for change.

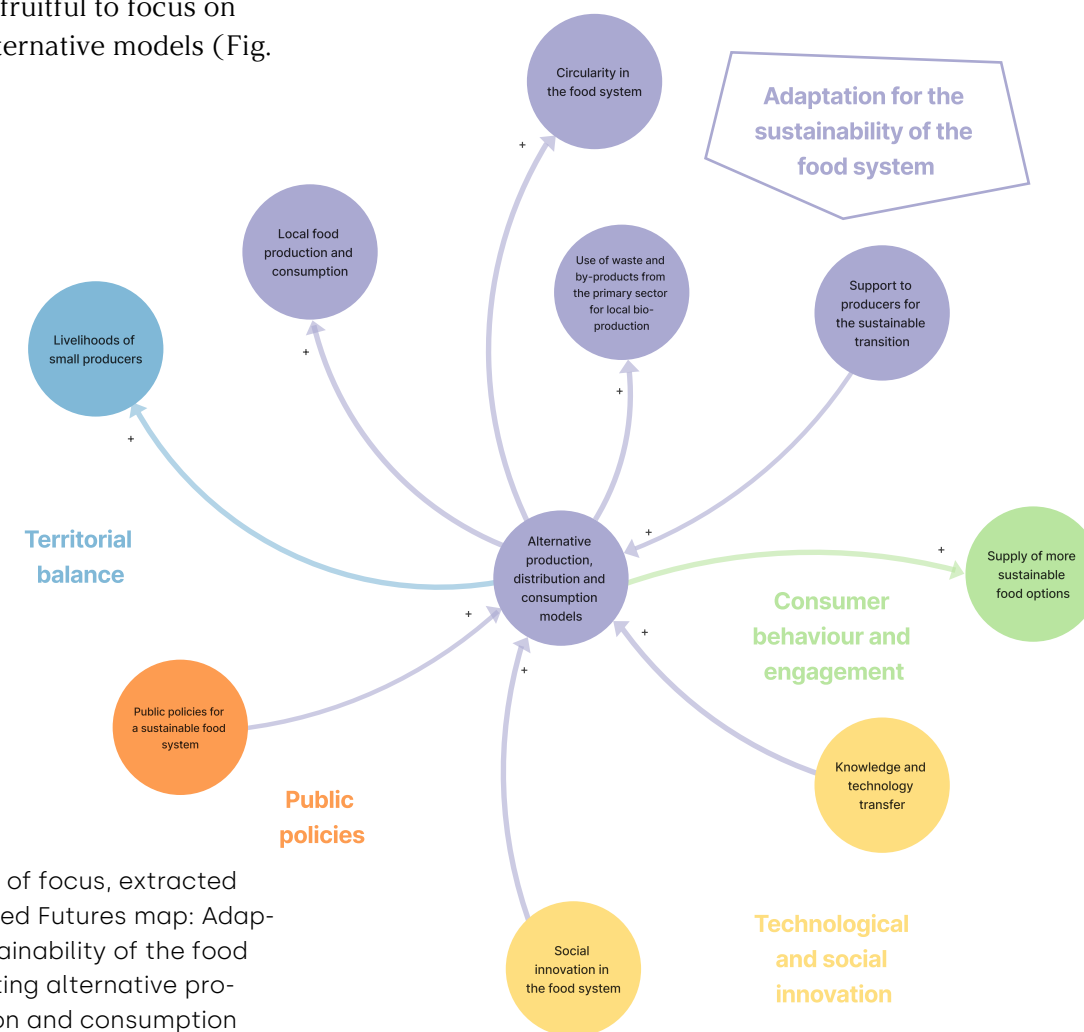


Fig. 23: Subsystem of focus, extracted from the Relmaged Futures map: Adaptation for the sustainability of the food system by supporting alternative production, distribution and consumption models.

FRAMING #2

What if we support farmers who have the drive to lead and advocate for change?



Reflection on the project's approach

Secondary research showed that most initiatives promoting alternative models are initiated by and rooted in a strong local community. While this is a valuable insight, it posed a challenge for this project, as it was not promoted by a member of the communities aiming to work with - neither a farmer nor from the rural areas where research was implemented.

Furthermore, in two conversations with system stakeholders with relevant experience in the field, they highlighted the difficulties of accessing these communities - As a scientist, in sharing scientific knowledge, and as a designer, in using design tools to engage with audiences.

Thus, the priority at this point was identifying an accessible leverage point, considering the project was not rooted in the local community, its area of expertise was service design, and it aimed to facilitate solutions coming from the communities (Fig. 24).

PROJECT'S ROLE

The goal of the service designed is to enable communities to initiate new projects from their personal experiences and what they know works better, rather than a service designed by an external stakeholder determining what is best for those communities.

Selected Design Justice Network Principles:

5 We see the role of the **designer as a facilitator rather than an expert.**

6 We believe that **everyone is an expert based on their own lived experience**, and that we all have unique and brilliant contributions to bring to a design process.

10 Before seeking new design solutions, **we look for what is already working** at the community level. We honor and uplift traditional, indigenous, and local knowledge and practices.

(Design Justice Network, 2018)

“It all starts with a very strong local community because then you help each other.”

Jeroen Spoelstra

Founder of Life-Centered Design School and Designer in the Spanish Pyrenees

“Farmer groups work because they rather hear about what others do than what I might have to say. If one of the farmers in the group is pushing the boundaries, then the rest might follow.”

Felicity Crotty

Doctor in Soil Ecology at Royal Agriculture University (UK)

(left to right)

Fig. 24: Reflections on the project role to guide decision-making through the Design Justice Network's principles (three highlighted).

Fig. 25: Views of local rural communities. These captions were taken during this project's field research in Albesa, Lleida (two above pictures) and Sant Joan de les Abadeses, Camprodon (one below).



#2 Look at the adjacent systems

Adjacent systems manifest co-dependence qualities (Tonkinwise, 2023). Thus, the most co-dependent adjacent subsystems to the system of focus, 'Adaptation for the sustainability of the food system', were analysed to discover if there was a point of better access for the project.

The adjacent sub-system with the most co-dependencies was 'Technological and social innovation' (Fig. 26), a system where a service design project could have more impact and where the

project had an existing network as a session on Futures Visioning was already being co-designed with REVOLVE, a communication agency working on 7 EU-funded regenerative farming projects.

This analysis facilitated a third and final project framing: Instead of working directly with farmer communities, the project will support an organisation with an already established network of farmers and access to funding.

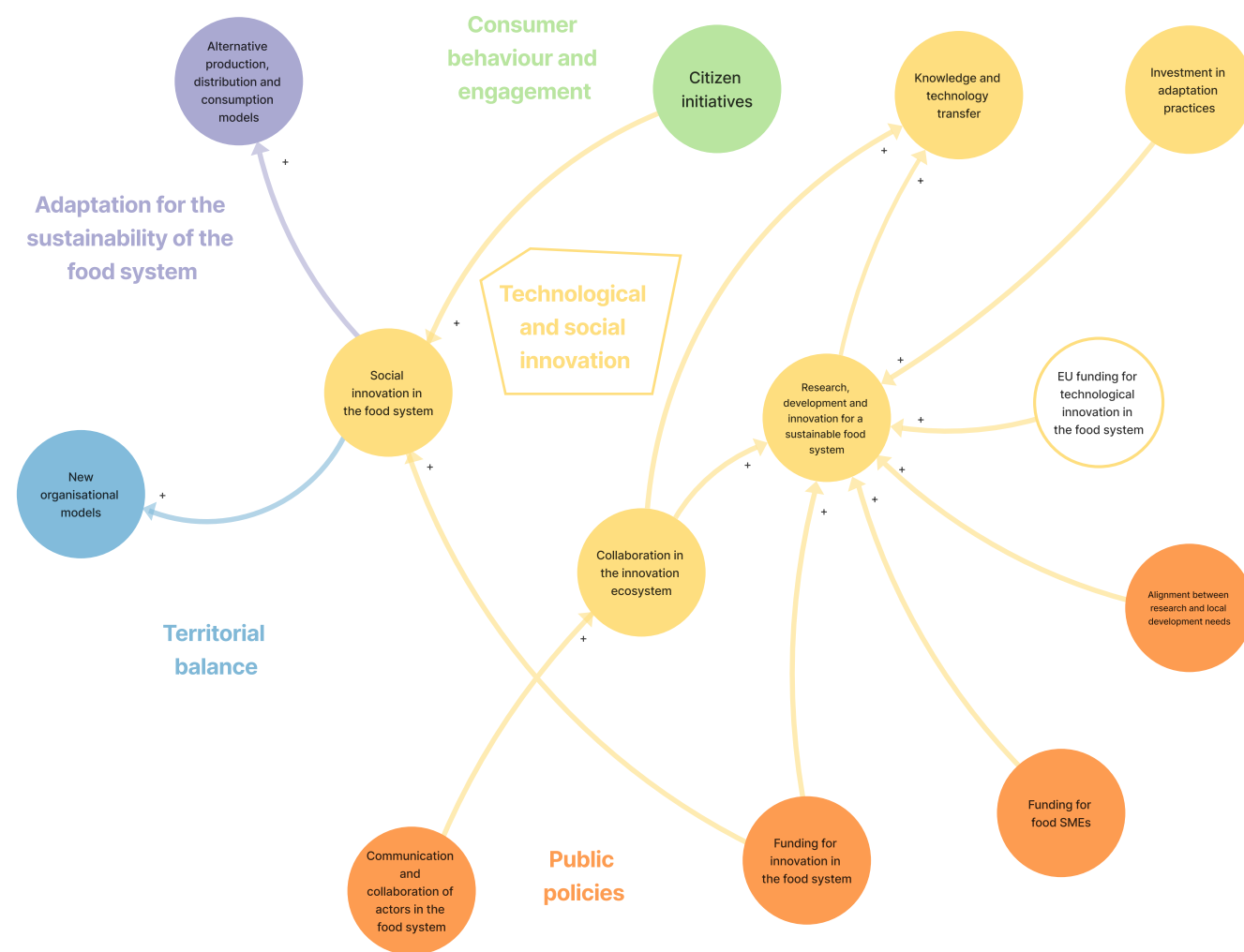


Fig. 26: Subsystem of focus, extracted from the Reimagined Futures map: Technological and social innovation, enabled by EU funding, by supporting collaboration and social innovation in the food system, research, development and innovation for a sustainable food system.

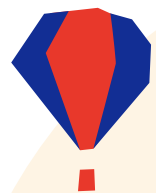
FRAMING #3

What if we work with a key stakeholder, with available funding and access to farmers, and equip them with the skills needed to set up and facilitate these support spaces?

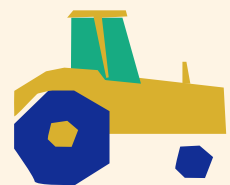


OPPORTUNITY SPACE

The three framings define an opportunity space for the service, considering a need identified in the farming community (#1), a group more inclined to lead the transition (#2) and a place where all this could be enabled (#3).



#1 Enhancing futures visioning capabilities among farmers so that they can imagine alternative preferable futures of farming



#2 Supporting changemaker farmers who have the drive to lead and advocate for change



#3 Using service design skills to enable organisations with access to farmers and funding

How might we equip **organisations** supporting **farmers and other regenerative agriculture changemakers** with the tools to facilitate spaces where they can **envision alternative preferable futures of farming?**



*Re*generate
CULTIVATING
THE FUTURE

04 BUILDING A PARTNERSHIP

“How wonderful is seeing the evolution from our first conversation and how it has been taking shape to bring about this creative and interactive composition. It has been a big learning for me.”

Patricia Carbonell

Head of REVOLVE Mediterráneo, project partner

This project’s success depended equally on the final output, that is, the service delivered, and the quality of the partnership-building process, that is, the impacts of the collaboration in the partner organisation, including the learnings acquired throughout the different participatory activities.

The following pages delve into the project partner, REVOLVE, and their motivations to collaborate on this project.



About REVOLVE

REVOLVE is a sustainability communication agency. As their main venture, they participate in EU-funded projects as communication partners and are currently involved in seven projects on regenerative farming (Fig. 29).

As part of its 2024 strategy, REVOLVE seeks to shift from communicating sustainability to fostering and advocating for cultures of sustainability. They plan to move from a project-focused approach, where they act as communicators, to a purpose-focused one, actively engaging with diverse stakeholders by holding and facilitating multistakeholder spaces.

Why is REVOLVE shifting its strategy?

Through communication, REVOLVE has the power to amplify stories that are relevant to the future. However, they strive to have a more profound impact on the communities they communicate about by having more direct community engagement.

Aligning with GreenComp

REVOLVE bases its new strategy success indicators on the EU Green Competencies framework (GreenComp) to promote learning in sustainability in different contexts. This project has considered the GreenComp framework in the design of the service, focusing on the third area, ‘Envisioning sustainable futures’ (Fig. 27).

AREA	COMPETENCE	DESCRIPTOR
3. Envisioning sustainable futures	3.1 Futures literacy	To envision alternative sustainable futures by imagining and developing alternative scenarios and identifying the steps needed to achieve a preferred sustainable future.
	3.2 Adaptability	To manage transitions and challenges in complex sustainability situations and make decisions related to the future in the face of uncertainty, ambiguity and risk.
	3.3 Exploratory thinking	To adopt a relational way of thinking by exploring and linking different disciplines, using creativity and experimentation with novel ideas or methods.

“Journalists are in the perfect position to initiate social transformation processes, accompany them critically, and moderate sustainable solutions.”

(Uwe H. Martin - Transition Journalism)

Fig. 27: Detail of the third area of the GreenComp (Bianchi et al., 2022)

Partnership alignment

After an alignment session (Fig. 28), the partnership was established, culminating in a Creative Futures Visioning workshop with the REVOLVE team in Barcelona and Brussels that aimed to have an impact both internally, through the workshop (1), and externally, through the implementation of the service with farmers and other farming stakeholders (2):

(1) Capacity building: Provide REVOLVE employees with tools for visioning, integrating reflections about their potential assumptions and biases and supporting them to find new ways to communicate from a future-oriented lens.

(1) Team building: Amplify the potential of cross-pollination across projects in the organisation by providing a space for multidisciplinary exchange.

(2) Be more local: Get closer to the local realities of farmers so that they are reflected in the organisation’s communication actions.

(2) Engage with stakeholders: Engage in shared visioning of alternative futures with farmers and other farming stakeholders, making sure these alternative futures feeding into EU-funded projects are preferable for farmers.

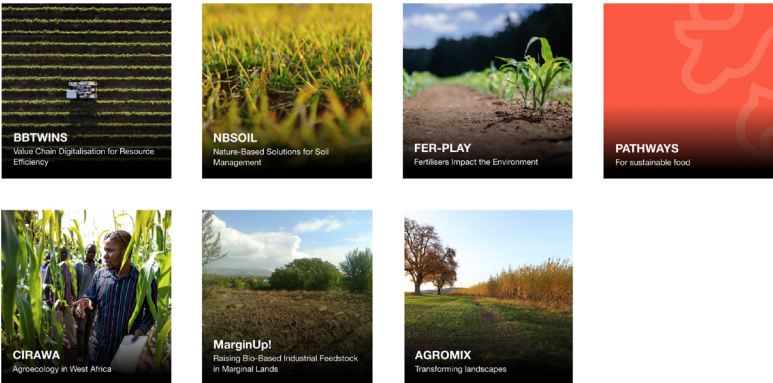
(2) Support farmers: Strengthen farmers’ capability of visioning, allowing them to overcome feelings of hopelessness about their future.



(left to right)

Fig. 28: Interactions between this project and REVOLVE

Fig. 29: EU-funded regenerative farming projects where REVOLVE participates



05 BUILDING A SERVICE

The initial service concept proposed was to create a shared space for farmers and other agriculture changemakers to imagine alternative farming futures together, with its main touchpoint being a workshop facilitated by REVOLVE (Fig. 30). Three approaches were taken to design and test this concept:

- Understanding how the service looks in practical terms by studying theoretical frameworks and reviewing benchmarks.
- Adapting the tools proposed for the main touchpoint, the workshop, through a co-design process with REVOLVE and multiple tests.
- Culminating in a workshop for REVOLVE employees to both test the tools and do capacity building.

The process involved co-design, tests, and continuous iteration to refine the workshop and its tools. The following pages explain the process followed and highlight its key learnings. Although the approaches appear in this order, the process was more organic, especially the review of use cases and theories, which was enriched throughout the process.

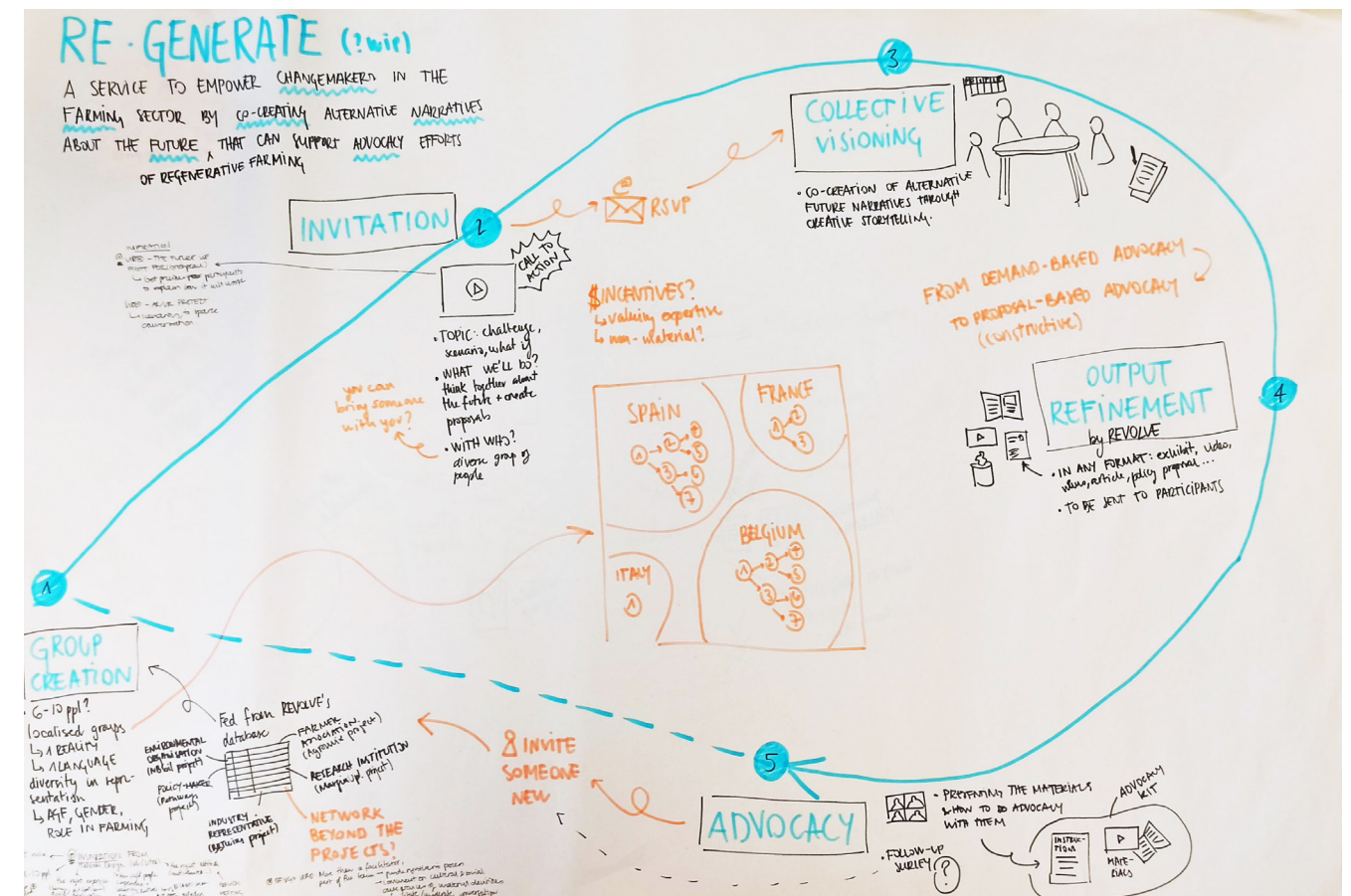


Fig. 30: Rapid sketching of the service around the collective visioning workshop

Theoretical framework

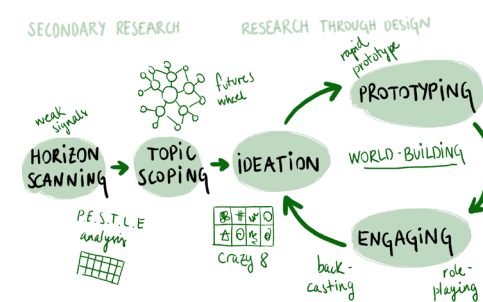


Fig. 31: Initial proposed methodology, based on previous experience in Design Futures

The initial service concept conceived a workshop integrating most steps typically followed in Futures Foresight (UK Government Office for Science, 2017) and Design Futures methodologies (Fig. 31). Nevertheless, enriched by further secondary research and co-design with REVOLVE, the workshop methodology was reduced and simplified. The final version used for formal testing contained four broken-down phases (Fig. 32) corresponding to the steps 'Ideation' and 'Prototyping' in Fig. 31.

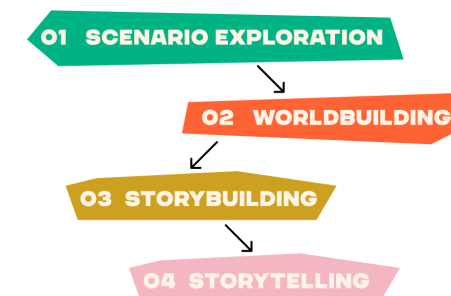


Fig. 32: Final version of the methodology

Furthermore, the methodology was denominated Creative Futures Visioning for the self-explanatory character of the term and to avoid terms like 'design', which can be perceived as technical by a broader audience.

A series of core values emerged from the research, deeply influenced by Design Futures, the Transition Movement's work on imagination, and the use of narrative and fictional storytelling as a prototyping tool:

CATALYSING IMAGINATION THROUGH CREATIVITY

Imagination is vital to envisioning alternative futures. This service differs from other Futures Visioning approaches, which focus on what is there but not on what could be there (Tonkinwise, 2015). It is a common belief that not all people are creative (Sanders, 2008, p. 9). This service aims to break with this belief, promoting divergent thinking and cultivating the collective imaginative capacity of participants (Shorter, 2021) by creating a safe space for imagination through different approaches, like creativity icebreakers or sensorial time-travelling exercises (Hopkins, 2020).

STORYTELLING AS PROTOTYPING

As Futures Visioning can be abstract, this service will leverage Design Futures and Fiction to generate futures by making (Tonkinwise, 2015). The service will focus on fictional storytelling as a making tool by using elements such as future characters and plotlines. The service aims at developing outputs such as Patricia Dopazo’s and Gustavo Duch’s fictional stories through different formats like news articles (Fig. 34), personal diaries, or comic strips (Soberanía Alimentaria, 2022).

PROMOTING LOCAL COLLABORATION

The need targeted through this service - improving visioning capabilities among farmers - was uncovered through a deep insight analysis process and is not necessarily identified as a direct need by farmers. Thus, to appeal for farmers to join, the service should emphasise a valuable aspect they explicitly mentioned, such as collaboration (pp. 32-33). Furthermore, the ultimate aim of the service is that the spaces it creates help promote deeper change in communities to enable a transition. Therefore, the service should be a space of shared understanding and a spark to establish partnerships that enable system-wide collaboration within a bioregion (Boumans et al., 2022). Thus, the service will be linked to a specific territory to promote the formation of social alliances beyond the workshop.

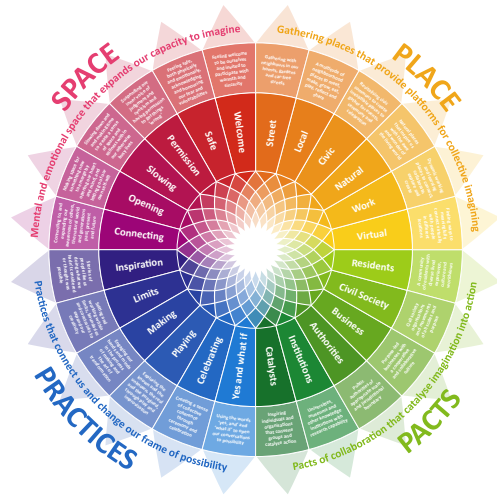


Fig. 33: Imagination Sundial by Rob Shorter CC BY-SA 4.0, which was of deep inspiration to this project.

“Futures work provides tools for bringing imagination to narrative in productive and tangible ways.”

(Ted Fickes, Narrative Initiative, 2020)



Fig. 34: Fictional article in Aliment magazine (Duch and Dopazo, 2023)

Benchmarking: Two relevant case studies

FARMERS OF THE FUTURE WORKSHOPS

Spain, Poland, Germany, Romania and Latvia, 2020

WHAT IS IT: A series of half-day workshops with 15 farmers each to discuss the implications of selected megatrends and acquire a deeper insight into their perceptions on the future. These workshops were conducted as part of the European Commission's 'Farmers of the Future' study (2020).

METHODOLOGY USED: Foresight and participatory design.

LIMITATIONS: Farmers were invited to validate but were not involved in the worldbuilding.

RELEVANCE: The tools used (Hopes and Fears, fictional personas, future design objects) have been tested with farmers and exhibit potential use for the Creative Futures Visioning workshop.

(Krzysztofowicz et al., 2020)

(European Commission, 2020)

(U School, 2018)

FOR TOMORROW'S HARVEST

The Netherlands, 2018 - 2020

WHAT IS IT: 10 workshops engaging 80 relevant stakeholders from over 25 landscape restoration organisations (policymakers, NGOs, banks, farmers, researchers and consultants) to learn how to address root causes of landscape degradation and collaboratively develop strategies for landscape restoration.

METHODOLOGY USED: Theory U (Presencing Institute) and 4 Returns framework (Commonland).

LIMITATIONS: Time intensive.

RELEVANCE: Interesting framework (4 Returns) that could inform the legacy and impact beyond the Creative Futures Visioning workshops.

(Boumans et al., 2022)

Co-design

The service was co-designed with the project partner. This participatory approach sought to integrate REVOLVE's needs and expertise in interacting with farmers into the design and increase their ownership over the resulting service. The co-design was executed with Patricia Carbonell, Head of REVOLVE Mediterráneo, culminating in the Creative Futures Visioning workshop with the

REVOLVE team. This workshop became a practical case to test the format of the final service, defining an agenda (Fig. 35), implementing a collaborative horizon scanning (Fig. 36) and streamlining the contents and tools to ensure they were accessible to a broader audience unfamiliar with Futures Visioning.

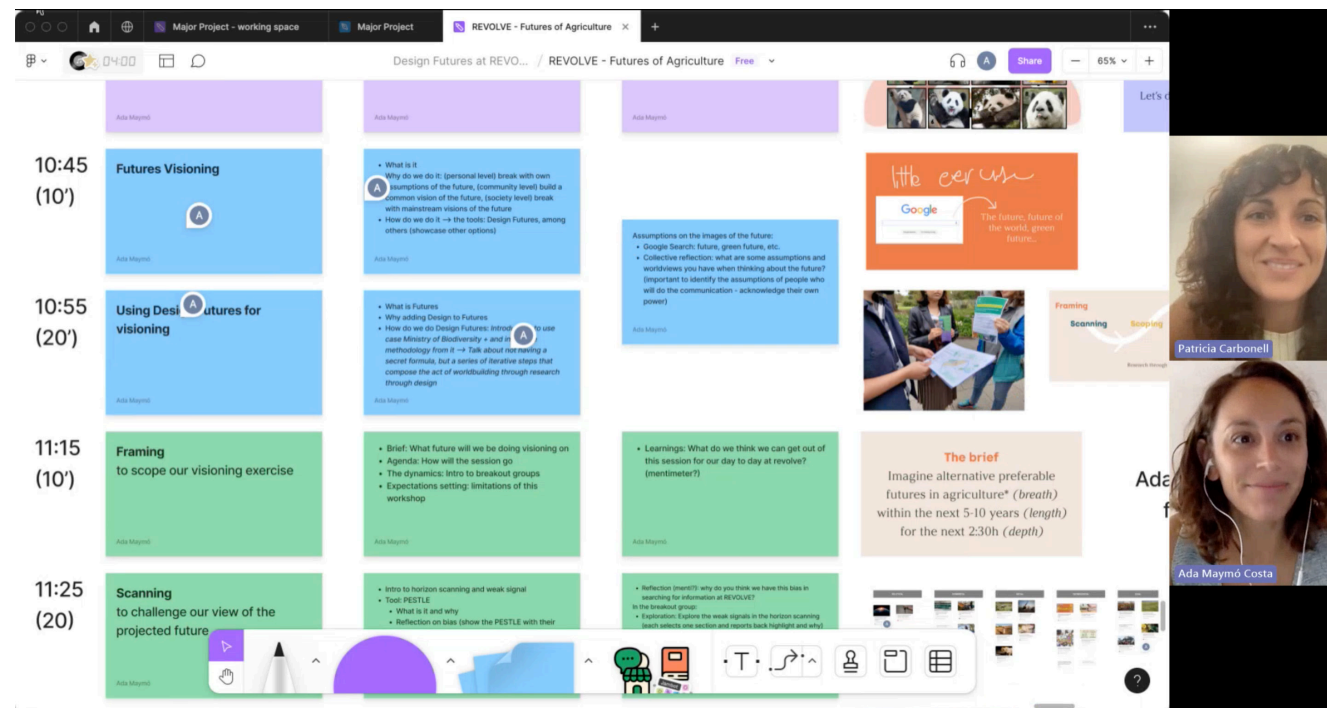


Fig. 35: Agenda review session

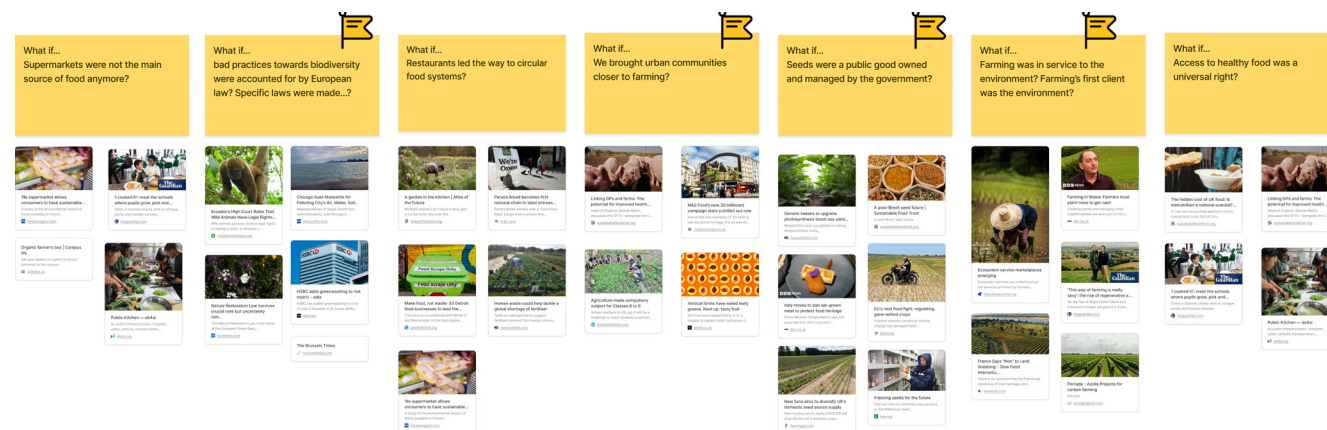


Fig. 36: REVOLVE employees contributed to the collecting of weak signals of change. This caption showcases the voting session of 'What If' questions for the workshop, integrating a selection of weak signals of change.

Testings

The service's main touchpoint - the workshop - was tested with designers already acquainted with Futures methodologies to evaluate and improve the mechanics of the designed tools (Fig. 37 and 38).

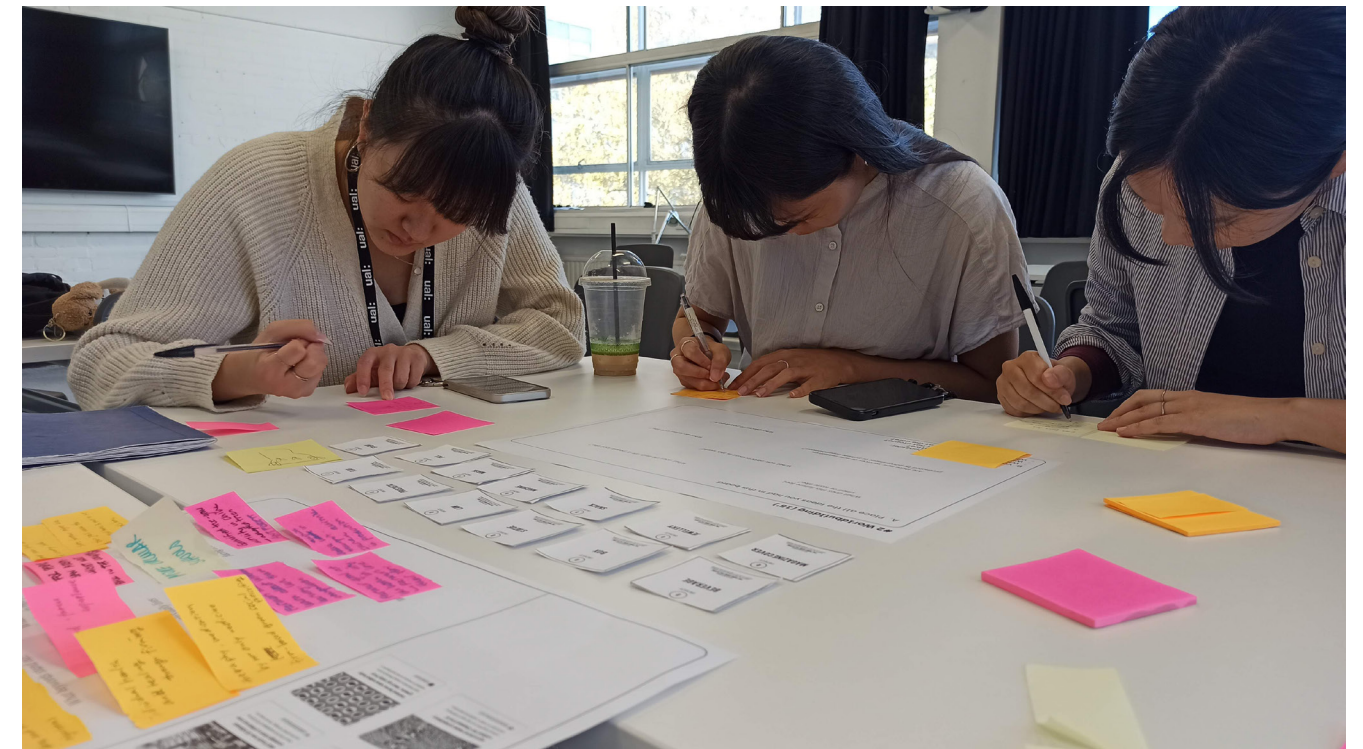
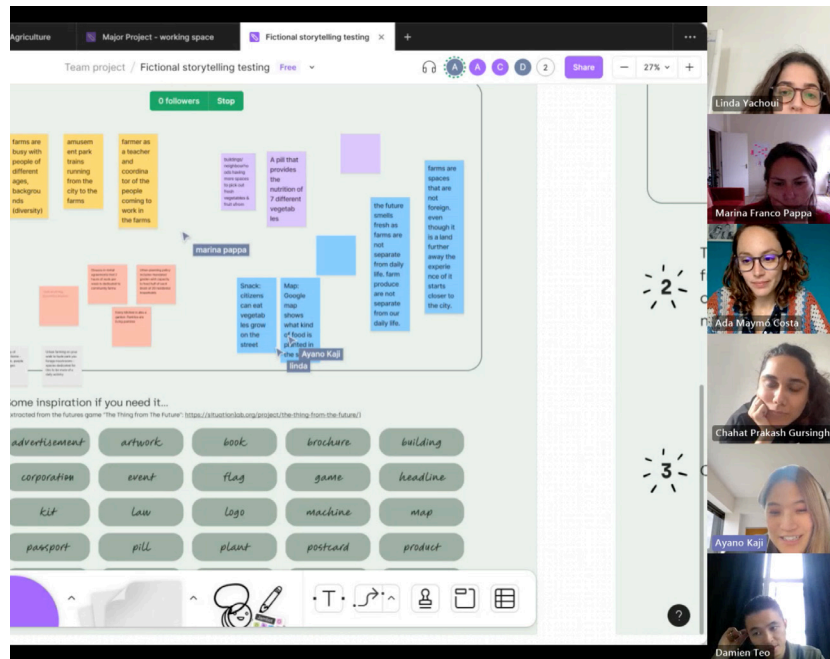


Fig. 37: Pictures of the first testing where Scenario exploration and Worldbuilding were tested

(continuation) Research activity • Testings, 29th September and 4th October, 2023



4/10/2023.

I was appointed security of garden today. I did not want to take that role. Me? Securing? I'd rather plant. But as the mayor of the community said, roles rotate, and unfortunately the time has come for me to guard our livelihood. The day started off quite well. I see the neighbouring community hard at work. They do not know how to harvest their crops. Our garden is growing. It has tomatoes, cucumbers, potatoes, and so many other vegetables that are too fancy for me. But I like them. They make my salad taste nice. I also like this space. It made me learn so much. Did you know that tomatoes were fruits? Well, I didn't. Did you know that children are actually capable of teaching us some skills? Adults are not everything here, thank god. Anyway, back to my security role. I hated it. The cat was growing crazy. We had a rat infestation and we wanted Carl the cat to save the day. Instead Carl the cat runs to join our enemies, the RCA garden. He has fallen in love with Carlita. What do we do now? We have no cats left. I raise the issue to the mayor, but he's too busy going to the motherland farm to meet with Ada, the farming consultant. I decide to have a community meeting, after all, it is a community garden. The meeting went wonderfully well. We were able to steal Carlita and poison her with one of our spices, Linola. We've been growing Linola for two years. It made us win community garden of the year. And now it saved our community from rats. I hated the security role. It was stressful. But so is growing a community garden. Anyway I love the UAL garden still. See u tomorrow

Fig. 38: Pictures of the second testing, where *Storybuilding* and *Storytelling* were tested. On the right, a picture of one of the stories written by a participant

Participants understood the activity's aims and were engaged. They especially enjoyed its playfulness, the combination of group and individual activities and the overall structure.

However, they mentioned a lack of time and found some activities challenging, such as *Futures Exploration*, where they proposed to make more granular the narration with closed eyes that was prepared to ease participants into the future more granular, and *Storytelling*, where they suggested providing examples and guidance. Furthermore, facilitation was perceived as key.

“Prompting structure for writing the story might be helpful. Compared with starting from scratch, filling in the blanks makes me feel more at ease.”

“It would be easier to immerse ourselves if when closing our eyes, you'd bring more details to what we are imagining. Who we are in the story, what it smells like, who is with us, and what is around us.”

“I think more support is needed for people who have not done Futures Visioning, related to creative confidence but also support for blank page paralysis.”

Summary of key improvements

#1 Remove complexity

The Futures Visioning theory is integrated into the practical exercise, and the language used avoids technical terms. Examples of the workshop results are provided to help participants visualise (Fig. 39).

#2 Less is more

The activities are targeted and do not attempt to cover all steps of the Futures Visioning methodology. Some activities are prepared beforehand, like the Horizon Scanning.

#3 Give more time

The workshop is longer than one hour, especially considering target participants have never engaged in Futures Visioning before.

#4 Guide more the activities

Activities include more guidance. For instance, the *Storytelling* activity should provide examples and references of possible structures (Fig. 40).

#5 Help facilitators

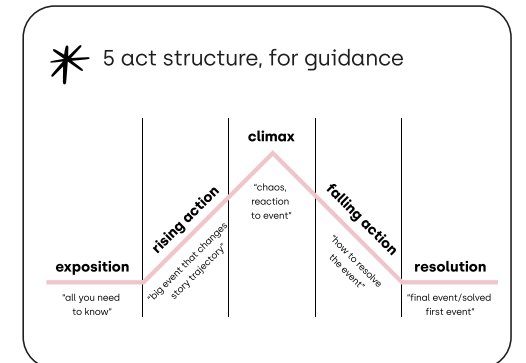
Facilitators are provided with support. Beyond the activity mechanics, they have access to recommendations and best practices (Fig. 41).

(top to bottom)

Fig. 39: Fictional newspaper article from the *Aliment* magazine (2023), adapted and translated to English for the workshop with REVOLVE.

Fig. 40: One of the suggested structures included in the *Storytelling* activity.

Fig. 41: Excerpts of the facilitation guide developed to support the facilitators at the workshop with REVOLVE.



Research activity · Workshop with REVOLVE,
16th October, 2023

Workshop with REVOLVE

The service development culminated on October 16th with a three-hour online workshop with 24 REVOLVE employees from Barcelona and Brussels (Fig. 42 and 43). The aim was to test the tools with an audience unfamiliar with Futures Visioning and to kickstart the service deployment through capacity building.

The workshop was split into four breakout groups working on different *What if* questions informed by the collaborative horizon scanning done previously (Fig. 44). The breakout group facilitators were prepped in a run-through session and provided with a facilitation guide.

(top to bottom)

Fig. 42: Workshop agenda

Fig. 43: Caption of the workshop participants saying goodbye

IN BREAKOUT GROUPS

WORKSHOP AGENDA

9:30h

Welcome: introductions and icebreaker

9:45h

Background: What is creative futures visioning?

10:10h

Briefing: About today's activity

10:20h

Introductions

10:35h

Scenario exploration: Journey into the future and quick exploration of today's trends

10:55h

Break

11:10h

Storybuilding: Imagination of a story happening in this future and collective building of the plot

11:25h

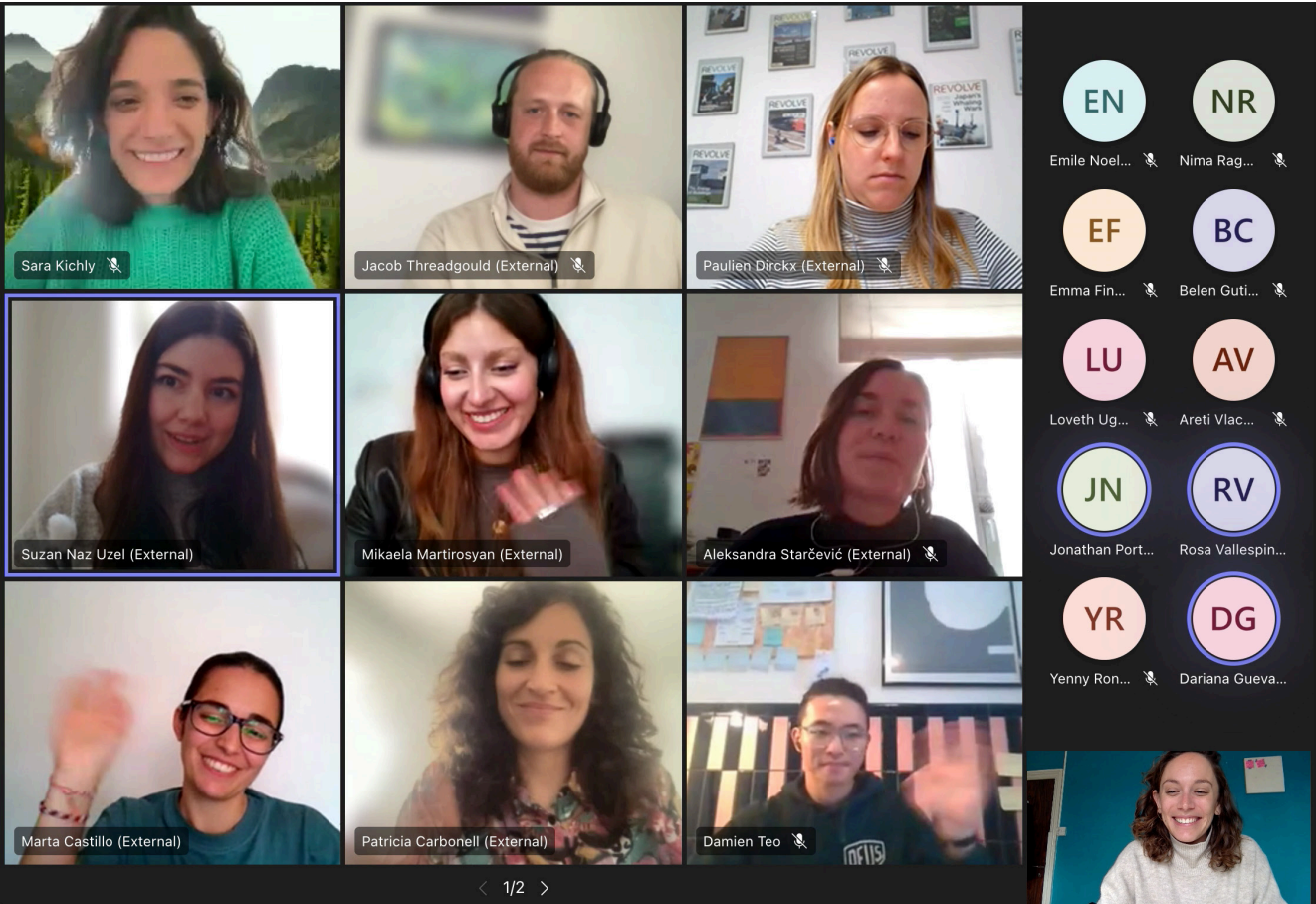
Storytelling: Individual writing of the story, based on the ideas of the group

11:50h

Sharing: Group sharing of some selected stories

12:10h

Final reflection: Thoughts on the activity and next steps




Newspaper - Community landmark: District 4's community farm has reached a new peak consecutive of volunteers.

Local youth Pau has successfully led an initiative to push popularity of communal farm leading to a further decoupling of dependance on supermarkets and readily available foods.

A sight to behold in Brusselona's District 4 as a new record of volunteers has been reached this Friday. An up-and-coming figure by the name of Pau has taken the lead in inspiring a major revival in interest in local agricultural practices. In an outstanding turnout District 4's local high school was able to rally over 700 students to volunteer in the end of the month crop yield. Pau lead a campaign focusing on the importance of these structures moving forward as resource scarcity is having major effects on food security.

I woke up and I saw the sun.
I woke up and I saw the sun, the sky and the green.
The green and yellow and orange and red and pink and brown and purple and black.
I woke up and I saw the rainbow of colours.
I woke up and I saw the rainbow of colours dirtying my hands like every Friday.
Nature was back.
Nature was awake.
Nature was kicking.
I woke up and I saw nature alive. Nature was alive and breathing and I was breathing with her.
HER?
Yes, her, because she was giving life back.
Se was giving life back to all of us.
I remember I woke up ten years ago. I remember I woke up and I couldn't breath, I couldn't see the sun, I couldn't see the sky, I couldn't see the rainbow.
I remember I woke up and I saw the lack of air. I saw the lack of water. I saw the lack of colour.
I remember I woke up and I saw the need for change.



In a not-so-distant future, a new approach to education and farming had emerged. Young people were required to volunteer for at least three months to graduate, connecting with nature, learning farming, and helping their communities while focusing on ethical practices.

Meet Sarah, a city girl who ventured into the countryside. She joined a program called "Harvesters of Change" and arrived in Greenleaf Valley, a farming community.

Here, she learned to farm the right way, focusing on sustainability and organic methods. She planted seeds, witnessed the harmony of nature, and embraced ethical farming. This program helped her appreciate the environment.

More than just farming, Sarah became part of a tight-knit community. People from various backgrounds worked together for a common purpose – to protect their environment and create a better future.

After three months, Sarah left with a mission to bring change to her own community. She and her peers were the future of agriculture, sowing the seeds of hope for a healthier planet through sustainable farming practices and stronger communities.

(top to bottom)

Fig. 44: What if scenarios prepared beforehand, informed by a Horizon Scanning.

Fig. 45: Results stories written by one of the teams, working on the topic of farming and urban communities.

Research activity • Qualitative survey with REVOLVE employees, 16th October, 2023

Qualitative survey with REVOLVE employees

Four REVOLVE employees provided thorough feedback on the workshop through a qualitative survey.

They enjoyed exploring weak signals of change, listening to others, and imagining the future using prompts and rapid thinking. As experts in communication, they appreciated prototyping the imagined futures through stories.

Nevertheless, they struggled with the lack of time and the tension between fiction and reality, striving for a balance between open-mindedness and radical ideas and the barriers and challenges of implementing the imagined futures today.

Finally, they suggested improvements for its use with farming stakeholders, such as providing more time and examples and including spaces to share their lived experiences and reflect on how to make the imagined futures happen.

About the workshop

“I enjoyed having to think quickly so imagination flows better and with fewer prejudices.”

About using the workshop with farmers

“At the beginning of the exercise, you could ask to hear some of their own experiences of the changes they see happening around them. From there, they might be able to channel their imagination more directly into something realistic and tangible.”

“I enjoyed the freedom to be creative.”

“I enjoyed seeing that there might be hope for change happening.”

“I would emphasise how to make that future we envisioned happen. I imagine this exercise taking place within the projects we work with at REVOLVE to discuss the potential for replicability and impact of the project. Sometimes, in those projects where these stakeholders are involved, we lack the power of imagination to envision that future and how to make it happen at a larger scale.”

Key improvements for use with farmers

#1 Give more time

At least three hours are available for the activity, without considering the introduction and closing (Fig. 47).

#2 Share lived experience

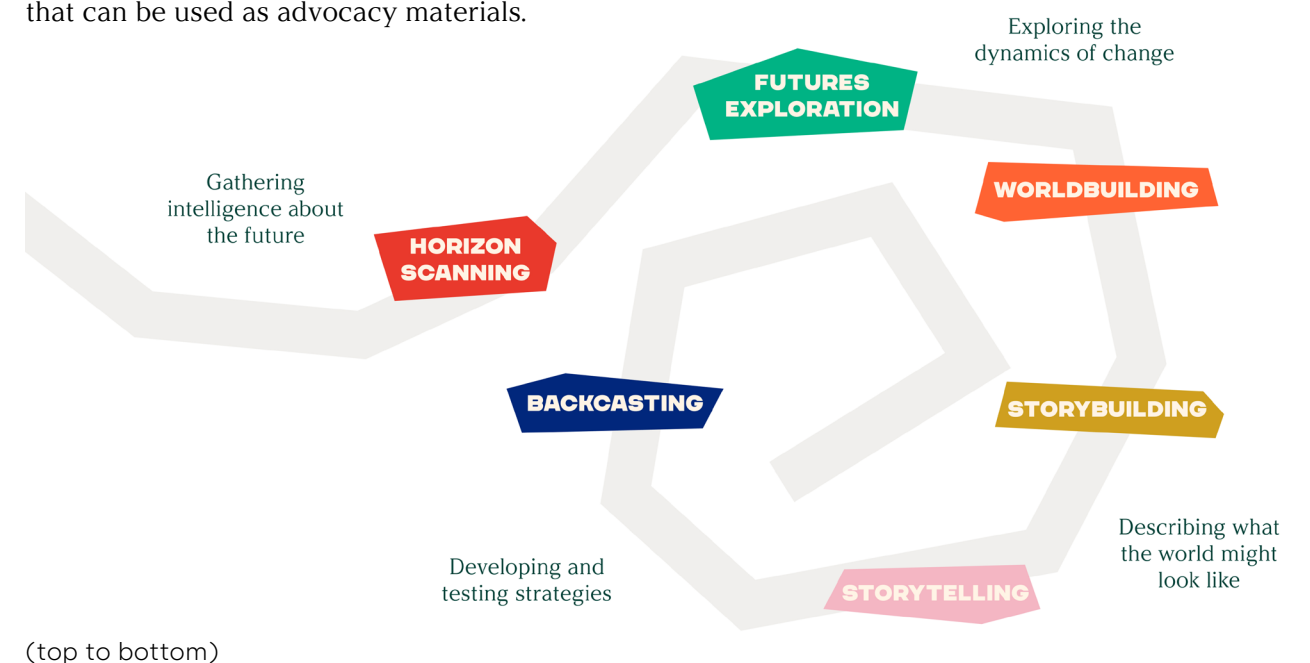
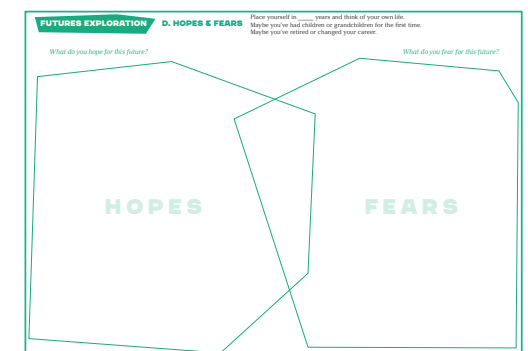
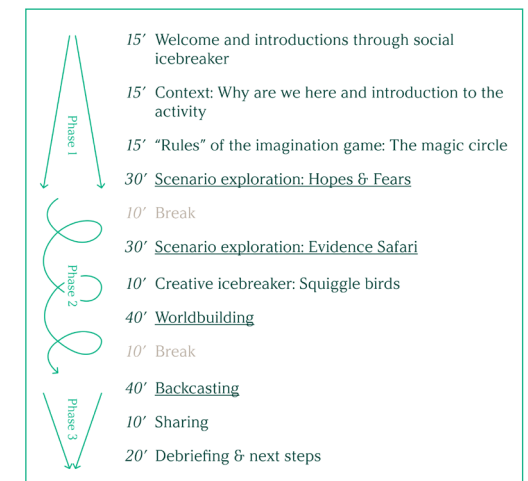
Participants start by sharing their experiences through hopes and fears about the future (Fig. 48).

#3 End with actionable results

Participants end with a backcasting activity to bring in more criticality and conclude the session with actionable next steps.

#4 Write after the workshop

The future fictional stories are written by REVOLVE employees and shared posteriorly as tangible workshop outputs that can be used as advocacy materials.



(top to bottom)

Fig. 47: Agenda example drafted for the final service support guides.

Fig. 48: Workshop printable template for the proposed 'Hopes and fears' activity.

Fig. 49: Creative Futures Visioning through Storytelling methodology, crafted after this workshop. Not all the steps showcased in it are part of the workshop.

06 THE SERVICE

Regenerate: Cultivating the Future is a service to facilitate shared spaces for imagining alternative narratives about the future of farming.

This service is enabled by REVOLVE, a communication agency collaborating with stakeholders in the regenerative farming landscape, such as farmers, policymakers, research institutions, industry representatives and environmental organisations. REVOLVE seeks to increase the impact of its projects by fostering more stakeholder engagement.

WHAT IS THE AIM OF THE SERVICE?

The service aims to bring together farmers and other regenerative agriculture changemakers striving to change the farming practice but who struggle to imagine a preferable future to work towards.

WHAT DOES IT PROVIDE?

The service provides capacity training for the service enabler, as well as a series of support materials, including the *Creative Futures Visioning through Storytelling* methodology, guides and tools adaptable to the specific context, with relevant examples in the farming sector and considering its use in a futures non-expert context.

WHEN AND WHERE WILL IT BE IMPLEMENTED?

The service can be used in existing projects the service provider is carrying out or as a one-off event, and it takes place at in-person gatherings in local contexts within the Mediterranean bioregion.

HOW WILL IT BE DEPLOYED?

Before its final delivery in 2025, the service will go through a development phase with a first pilot at the EURAF 2024 Congress in the context of the Agromix project, an ongoing regenerative farming project where REVOLVE, the service enabler, is involved. The pilot will engage Agromix stakeholders, such as farmers, produce retailers or researchers.



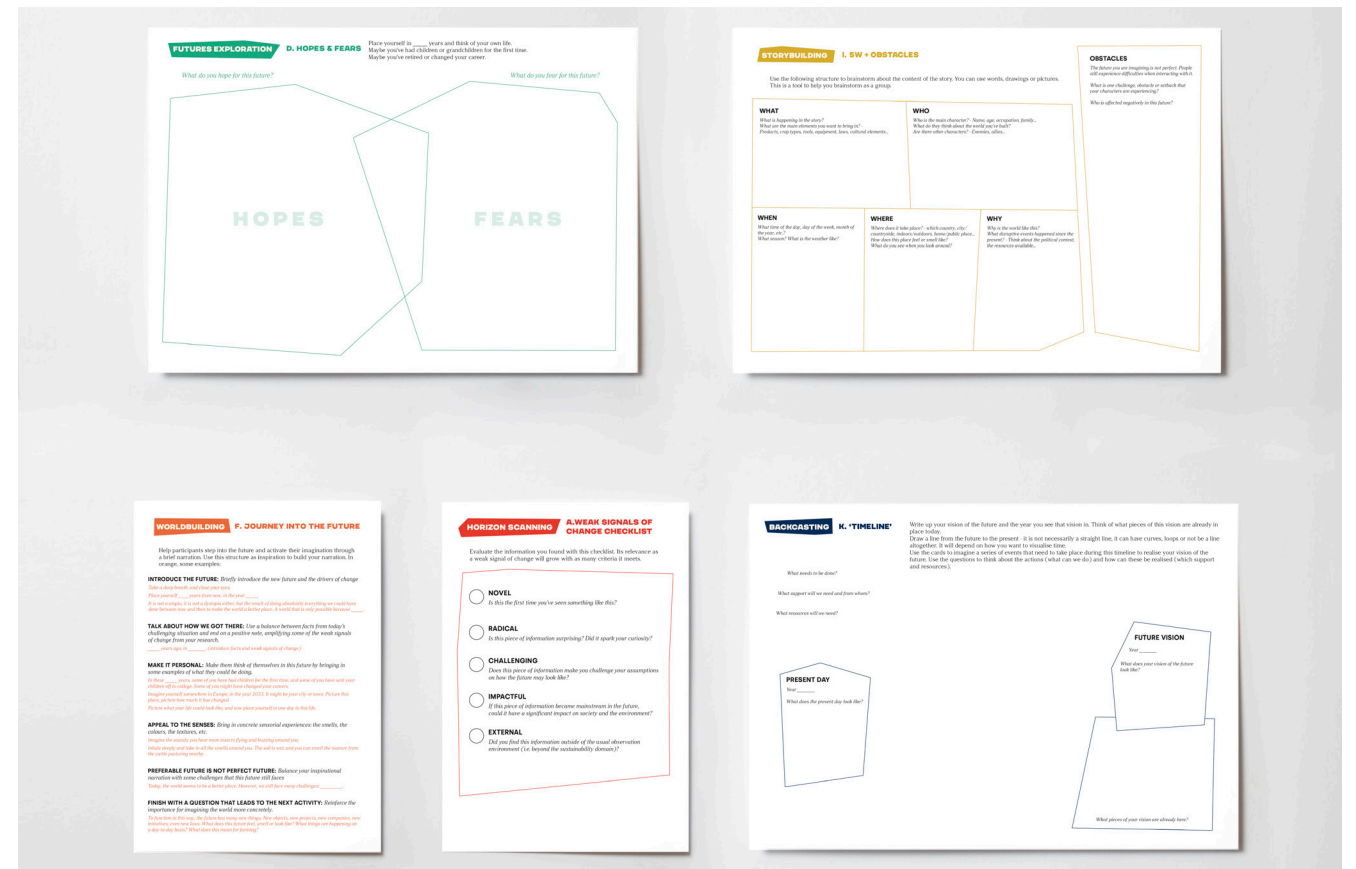
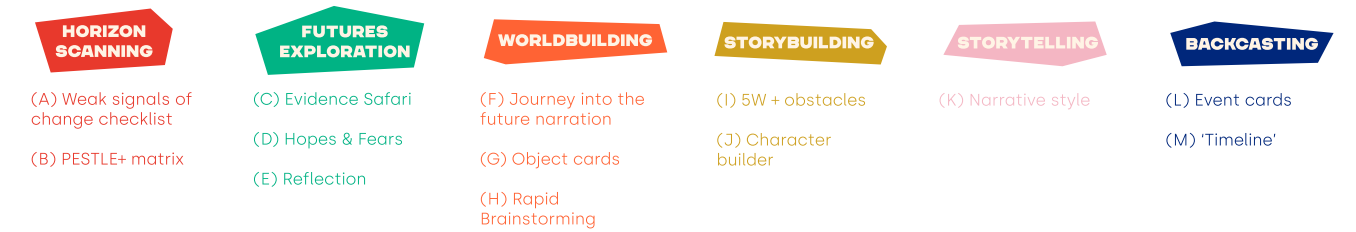
SERVICE ENABLER TOUCHPOINTS: SUPPORT MATERIALS

Methodology and tools: The *Creative Futures Visioning through Storytelling* methodology (Fig. 50) includes six activities, and it utilises the four categories proposed by the Futures Toolkit (UK Government Office for Science, 2017) as a

framework. Furthermore, it includes thirteen tools (Fig. 51), for which a printable version is provided (Fig. 52), ready to use for the workshops. Nevertheless, all activities can be done with pen and paper, using the tools merely for reference.



Fig. 50: *Creative Futures Visioning through Storytelling* methodology (top), translated to Spanish (lower left) and Catalan (lower right) for local implementation (mock-up image by lcd2020 on Freepik).



(top to bottom)

Fig. 51: Tools (A to M) available for each activity of the methodology.

Fig. 52: Some of the printable tools available. See Appendix 4 for the rest (mock-up image by lcd2020 on Freepik).

Capacity training: A training session is provided for the service enabler including all activities of the *Creative Futures Visioning through Storytelling* methodology. The capacity training consists of an asynchronous Horizon Scanning and a sped-up version of the workshop for participants to experience the rest of the activities.

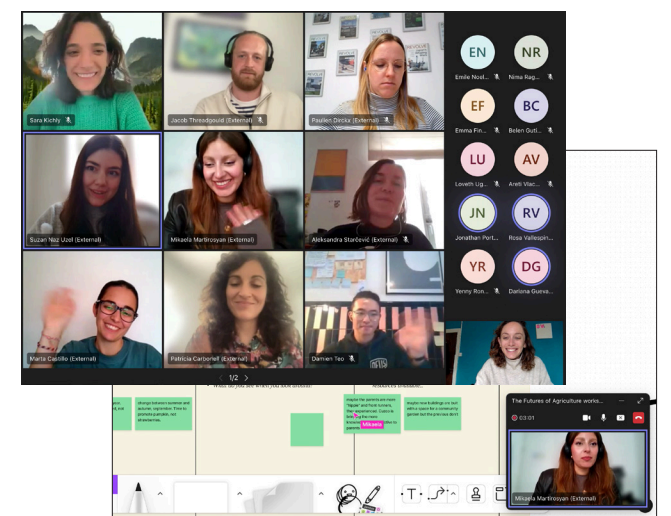


Fig. 53: Captions extracted from the first capacity training with REVOLVE employees.

Guides: The service includes three different guides that aim at scaffolding the complexity of the methodology and tools into digestible pieces:

- Guide *A. Methodology and Tools* provides an overview of the methodology, activities and tools.

- Guide *B. Workshop Design and Evaluation* supports those aiming to design and adapt the workshop to a specific context.
- Guide *C. Workshop Facilitation* provides instructions and recommendations for the facilitators.

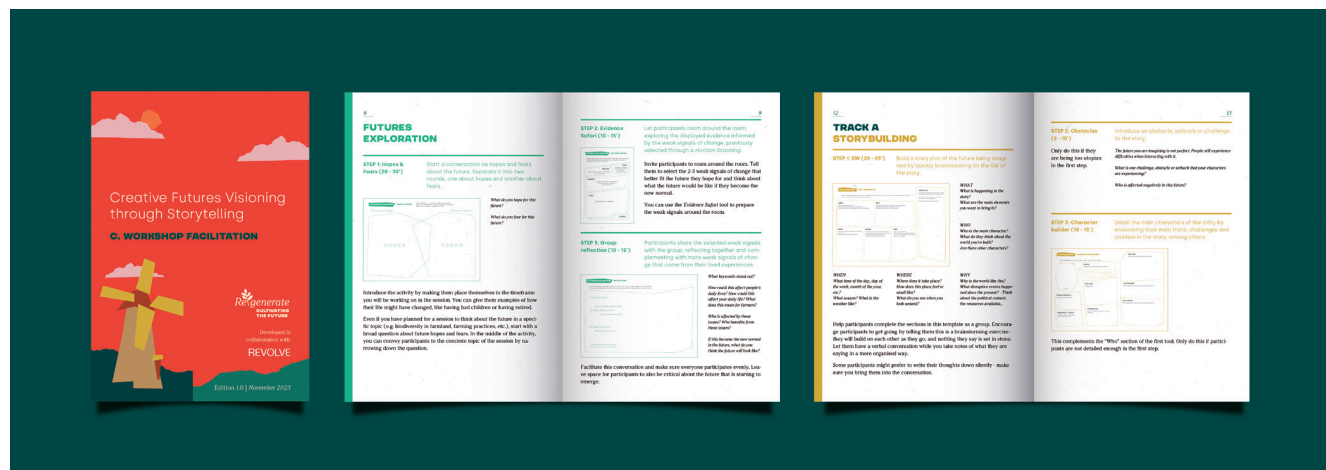
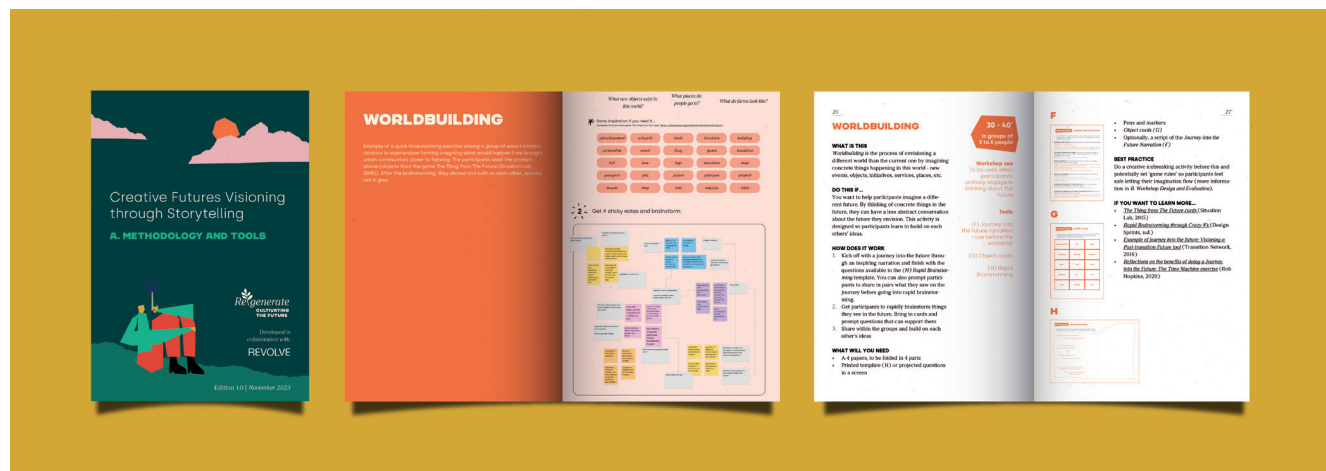


Fig. 54: Extracts of the three guides. Complete guides in Appendix 3 (mock-up image by pikisuperstar on Freepik).

FINAL SERVICE TOUCHPOINTS

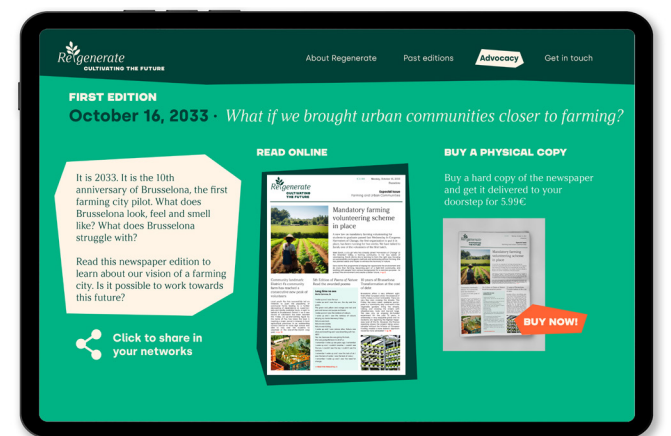
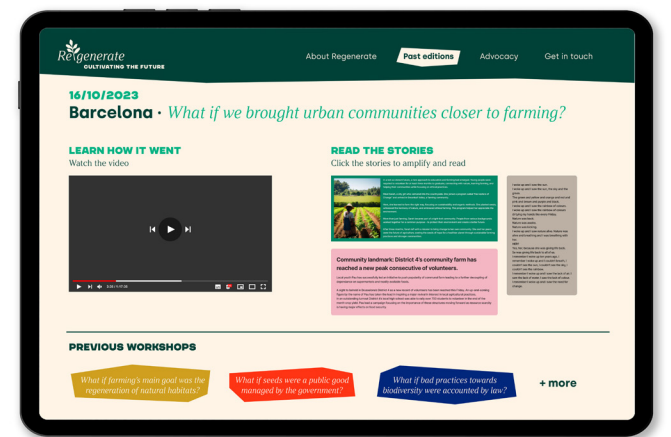
Besides the support for the enabler, the service also includes touchpoints to facilitate interactions with workshop participants. The main touchpoints include:

Website: Through the website, participants can look at past editions and understand what will happen in the workshop before joining. They can also access and share the outputs of the workshop they participated in (Fig. 55).

Fictional stories: They are written by the service enabler after the workshop and include the futures envisioned by participants. They aim to serve as provocative communication artefacts to advocate for alternative futures by participants and the service enabler (Fig. 56).

WhatsApp support group: It aims at incentivising participants' interaction before the workshop, to meet each other and ask questions.

Working groups: They are optional for those participants who want to keep working on the futures they envisioned after the workshop with the support of guide *A. Methodology and Tools*.



(top to bottom)

Fig. 55: Website pages (mock-up image by zlatko_plamenov on Freepik)

Fig. 56: Fictional stories resulting from the workshop with REVOLVE employees (mock-up image by Vectonauta on Freepik)

Service development

To deliver the desired service experience, it is essential to define how the service is developed and deployed by the enabling organisation: REVOLVE.

Regenerate is still in its service development life-cycle (Miller, 2016). Therefore, a series of actions

need to be in place, such as capacity building, familiarisation with the tools, and testing via pilots to gather feedback and iterate. A scaffolded strategy for the deployment of the service has been established for 2023, 2024 and 2025 (Fig. 57).

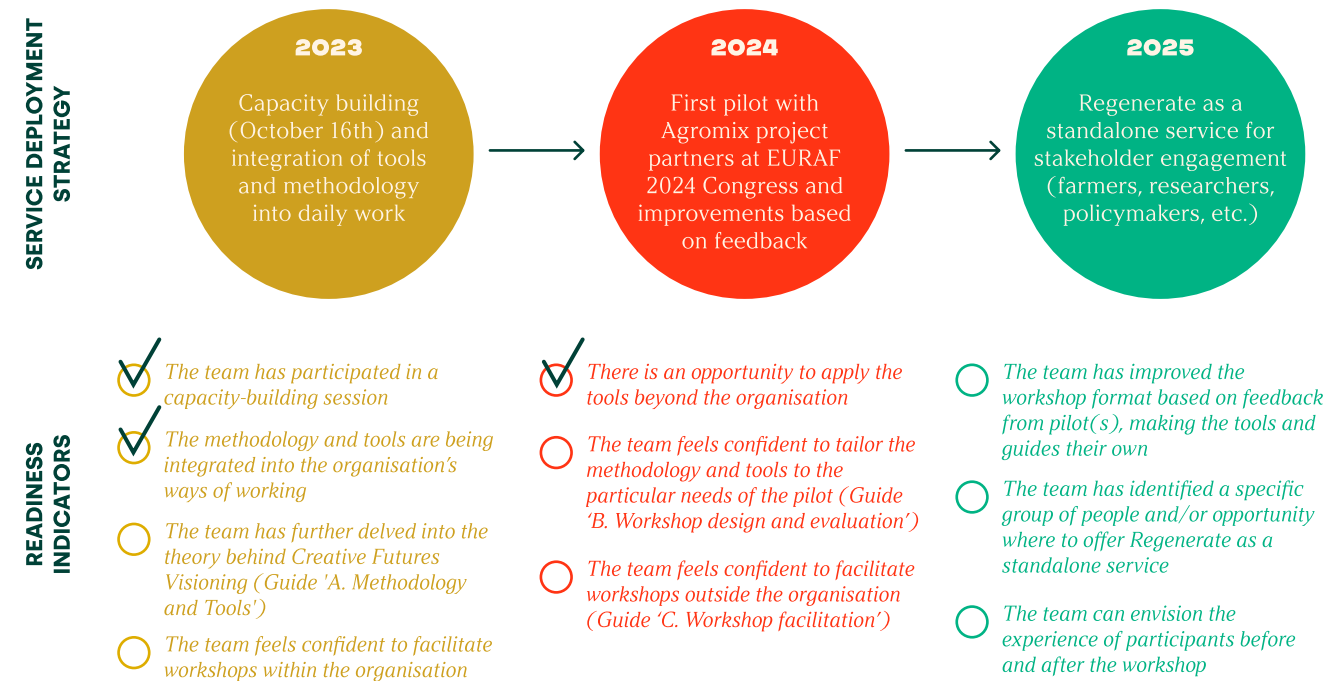


Fig. 57: Scaffolded strategy for the deployment of Regenerate by REVOLVE, with readiness indicators.

"Some employees need new tools for their personal development. Those are the ones leading change, and they are very necessary in a community."

Patricia Carbonell

Head of REVOLVE Mediterráneo, partner of this project

The Barcelona team will lead the service deployment, with a focus on the Mediterranean bioregion. Currently, the team is already utilising the tools in two projects: RESIST, a project to make regions in Europe more resilient to climate change, and CIRAWA, a project that works with West African small-holder farmers to improve their livelihoods and the ecosystem's health.

For now, the team is using the Horizon Scanning tool and P.E.S.T.L.E. framework to ensure their communication actions include political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental perspectives without being overly biased toward the latter.

Service value and possible journeys

The following pages explain the value of the service by the different stakeholders (Fig. 58) and the potential experiences of both the service enabler and the service receiver.

REVOLVE's service development journey in 2023 and 2024 (pp. 70-71). The vignettes in this journey are outlined in different colours to explain

which parts of the service development have already been accomplished, which are in progress, and which are yet to happen (legend in p. 71).

Farmer service experience journey (pp. 72-73). This journey narrates a possible experience of a regenerative farmer participating in the service in 2025.



Fig. 58: Service value for each of the key stakeholders needed to enable this service.

REVOLVE SERVICE DEVELOPMENT JOURNEY (2023 - 2024)



Laia, a communication project manager at REVOLVE, is exploring with her team how to engage more with regenerative agriculture stakeholders in their projects.



REVOLVE organises the workshop "Creative Futures Visioning through Storytelling", where Laia imagines alternative futures in farming and develops fictional future stories.



She leaves the workshop thinking about how the tools could be used to engage with stakeholders. She keeps exploring the resources through the *A. Methodology and Tools* guide.



Together with other interested colleagues, they start a working group to apply the methodology and tools in their ongoing projects.



After successfully applying the tools internally, they try them out in a workshop at the EURAF 2024 agroecology conference with the Agromix project partners, including farmers, among others.



They use the *B. Workshop Design and Evaluation* guide to define an agenda and adapt the tools. The working group meets weekly to review the work and support each other.



They inform participants through an email with a brief and a link to the website to learn more. Simultaneously, they rehearse the facilitation among themselves.



It is the day of the workshop. Laia leads the session, and her colleagues facilitate the groups with the support of the *C. Workshop Facilitation* guide.



A group of participants wants to keep working into the futures imagined in the workshop, so Laia proposes creating a working group that she also joins.



Laia and her colleagues turn the workshop results into a provocative story about the future. They share it with participants and encourage them to advocate for these preferable futures with their networks.



They kick off the working group, presenting the story and some adapted tools from their toolkit to continue working on the imagined futures.



Laia uses the *B. Workshop Design and Evaluation* guide to prepare a debrief session with the team. They now feel ready to deliver this workshop as a standalone service next year!

Legend (vignette colour):

Done

In progress

To be done

FARMER SERVICE EXPERIENCE JOURNEY (2025)



Albert is a regenerative farmer. He strives to transform farming but often feels discouraged about the future. He wants to collaborate on larger-scale projects for a better future.



He gets an email from REVOLVE, a former partner in a regenerative farming project, about a workshop organised nearby to envision a better future.



On the website, he can see what they did in past sessions with farmers and other participants like policymakers and researchers. He can also bring a plus one.



He attends an info session to know what previous knowledge he needs to join. They say his lived experience as a farmer is what counts and that they will do exercises to feel more comfortable.



He asks his friend Alba from a neighbouring farm to join him. They confirm their assistance through an online form with additional questions on accessibility and food allergies.



He joins a WhatsApp support group, where he meets other participants and inspiring information and practical indications are shared before the event. They can also interact and ask questions.



He attends the workshop with Alba, both nervous about their creative skills. The session begins slowly with creative confidence exercises and a future hopes and fears discussion.



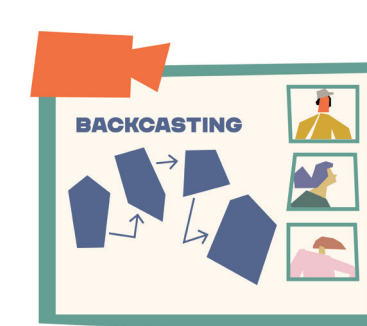
At the end of the workshop, he joins a working group with other participants from different backgrounds to stay connected and continue working on the future they envisioned.



After two weeks, they receive a survey for feedback and a story written by REVOLVE based on the futures imagined in the workshop to share in their networks. They also set a date for the working group kick-off.



In the working group kick-off, they share their impressions of the future stories and set expectations for the working group.



They meet every month and use the tools provided by REVOLVE to develop more tangible actions today to accomplish the future they imagined.



After six months, Albert receives a message from REVOLVE explaining the impact of the stories in the media. Although the working group has not taken concrete actions yet, Albert values this space and feels more positive about the future.

Business Model Canvas

KEY PARTNERSHIPS

- Service enabler: REVOLVE.
- Participant recruitment via REVOLVE's network in EU-funded regenerative farming projects.
- Workshop catering provider.
- Potential local authority collaboration for workshop venue.

KEY RESOURCES

- Human resources: project manager, facilitators, and support staff.
- Physical: on-site venue in the local community.
- Infrastructure: online conference platforms, email, messaging platforms, and online survey tools.
- Materials: Facilitation guides and printables.

COST STRUCTURE

- Catering expenses.
- Venue costs (if not provided free of charge).
- Infrastructure expenses (if using subscription-based software).
- Human resources - team salaries for the activities listed above.
- Workshop printables and materials (e.g., sticky notes).

KEY ACTIVITIES

- Capacity Building: Participating in training and integrating tools into daily work.
- Workshop Design: Defining format, content, and audience.
- Rehearsal: Conducting internal run-throughs for content and facilitation improvement.
- Support Materials: Developing communications, surveys, and workshop materials.
- Participant Engagement: Supporting via email, website, info sessions, and a WhatsApp group.
- Workshop Set-up: Hiring venue and catering services.
- Facilitation: Leading the workshop and initiating working groups.
- Output Refinement: Transforming workshop outputs into fictional future stories.
- Advocacy: Disseminating fictional stories throughout networks.
- Iteration: Holding debrief sessions to improve guides and materials.

VALUE PROPOSITION

Providing farmers with a shared space in their local context where they can meet other regenerative agriculture changemakers and imagine together alternative narratives for the future of farming, increasing their ability to forge pathways toward a preferable future.

The service holds a multi-stakeholder engagement space for farmers, policymakers, environmental organisations, industry representatives and research institutions, allowing farmers to widen their local network.

Lastly, at the end of the workshop farmers can join working groups and access the tools (open-source) to further work on the concepts sparked during the workshop.

CHANNELS

- Service awareness within REVOLVE's existing network (e.g. email, LinkedIn groups).
- Service awareness outside of their existing network (e.g. community noticeboards, public speaker announcements in rural areas).
- Communications during the service through email and WhatsApp group.

REVENUE STREAMS

- Current revenue stream: EU funding.
- Potential future revenue stream: Paid capacity building for external organisations.

CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS

- Pre-workshop: Assistance with the sign-up and addressing any additional needs.
- During the Workshop: Providing facilitation and potential engagement of REVOLVE employees as participants.
- Post-workshop: Presenting workshop outputs and initiating working groups that can be joined by REVOLVE employees.

*Most participants have previously collaborated with REVOLVE.

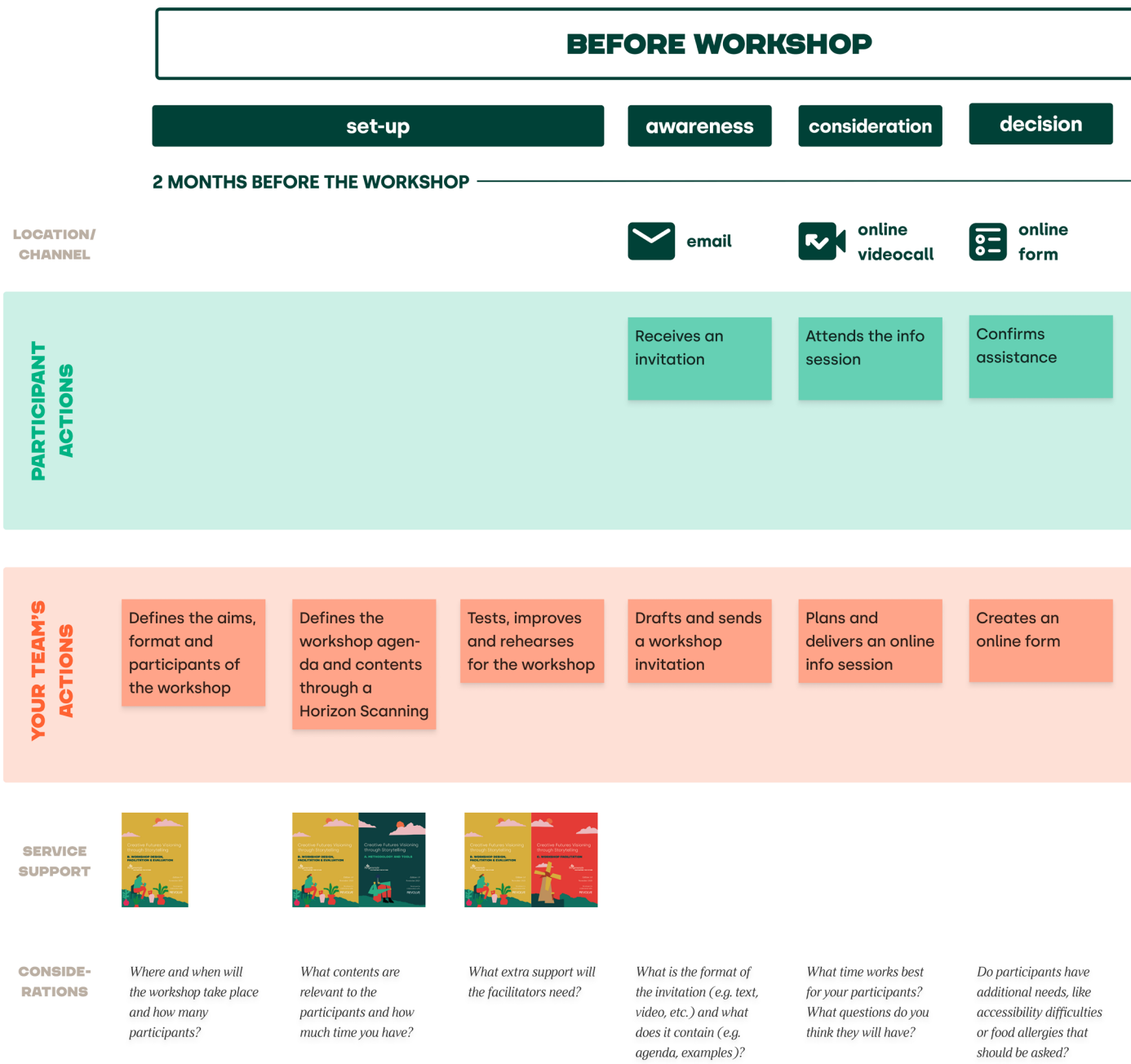
CUSTOMER SEGMENT

- Primary users: Farmer changemakers.
- Secondary users: Other regenerative agriculture changemakers, such as policymakers, industry representatives, research institutions, and environmental organisations.

Future-state service blueprint (1/2)

While service blueprints are utilised to evaluate the user experience of an existing service, future-state blueprints are used when creating a new service experience, both for the client and for the organisation (Miller, 2018). Regenerate is still in its service development lifecycle (Miller, 2016), involving capacity building (2023), piloting with

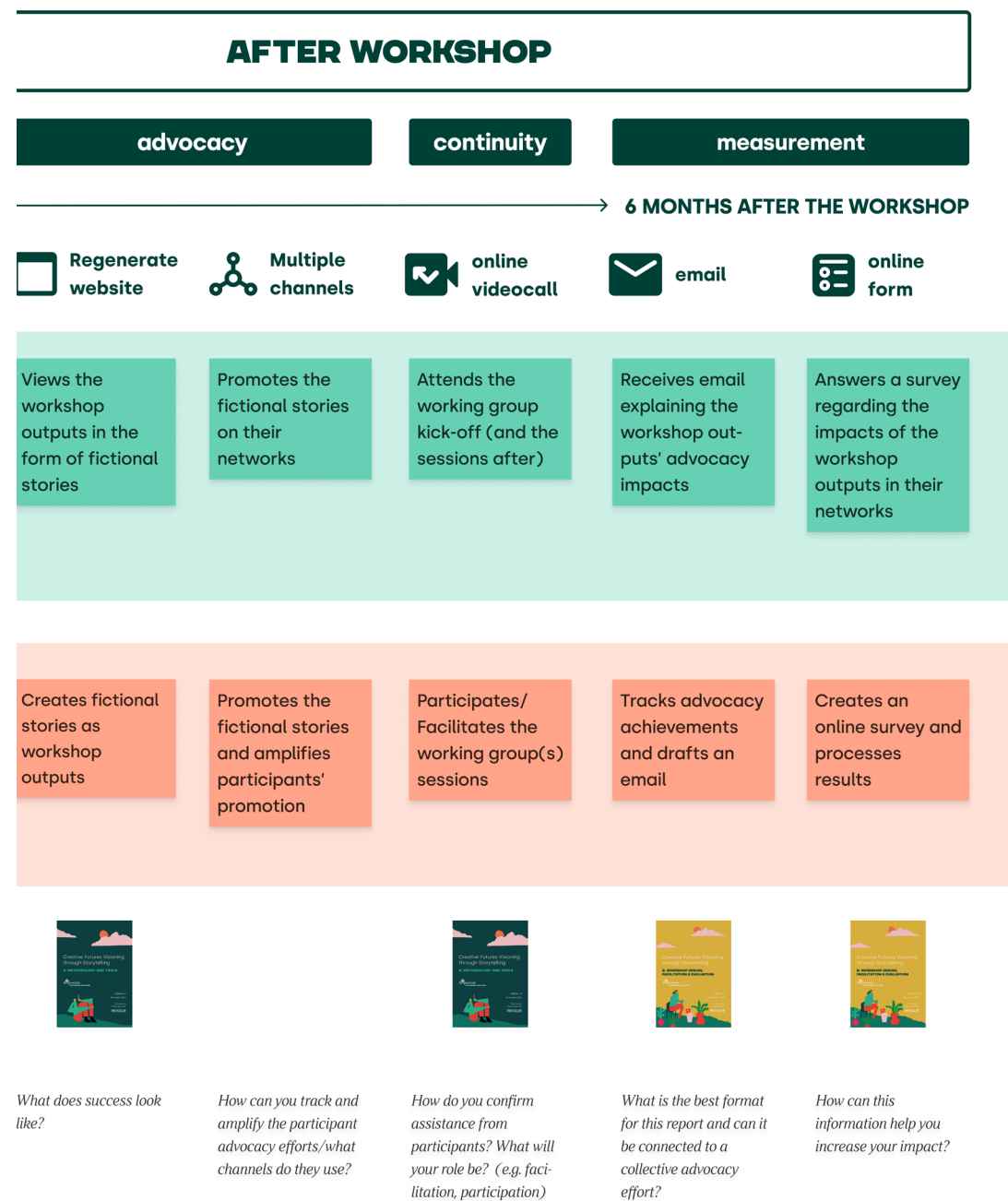
project partners (2024), and implementing a standalone service (2025). This service blueprint showcases the latter and has been simplified compared to a traditional service blueprint (Service Design Tools, n.d.) to become accessible for non-service designers, as



it aims to support the service enabler, REVOLVE during the service development. It can work as a checklist for the service implementation or to evaluate how well the desired participant experience matches the available capabilities of the organisation (Miller, 2018).



Future-state service blueprint (2/2)



Service SWOT analysis

A SWOT analysis has been used to evaluate the service. The assessment was done through the list of comprehensive questions in the book *Business Model Generation* to analyse the Business Model Canvas from the perspective of a SWOT analysis (Osterwalder and Pigneur, 2010, pp. 216-223).

STRENGTHS

Multi-stakeholder engagement: Fosters collaboration by bringing diverse stakeholders together.

Flexible format: Adaptable to the local context.

Powerful network effect: It allows participants to invite trusted regenerative agriculture change-makers from their networks.

Organisation alignment: It has synergies with the rest of REVOLVE's initiatives, facilitating participant recruitment.

Strong facilitation support: It provides guidance to support independent implementation.

Cost-effective: It has a low-cost implementation and infrastructure.

WEAKNESSES

Hidden Need: Improving futures visioning capabilities was not directly identified as a need by farmers. Emphasising other benefits directly valued by the farmers such as collaboration can mitigate this issue.

Accessibility: Participants may feel they need previous knowledge to participate, which can be addressed by paying extra attention to the wording.

Delayed impact: Futures visioning benefits are hard to measure in the short term, which can discourage participants and be a barrier to funding.

Funding dependency: It relies on EU funding.

Demanding service deployment: It requires capacity building and further testing to adapt to the organisation's specific needs.

OPPORTUNITIES

Enhanced impact: Workshop results are transformed into fictional future stories to support advocacy efforts.

Service Legacy: Tools are open source for participants to use in the working groups and potentially seed new initiatives.

Cross-pollination: Potential new partnerships for REVOLVE emerging from the workshops, feeding into ongoing projects or becoming new joint initiatives.

Potential revenue stream: Possibility to provide paid capacity building to external organisations.

THREATS

Legitimacy: As a communication partner in climate action projects, REVOLVE is not the primary choice for a community engagement service.

Employee reliance: The service's success depends on specific employees leading the project and could falter if they leave the organisation.

Interdependence: Participant recruitment relies on the amount of Regenerative Farming EU-funded projects REVOLVE participates in.

Service impacts

This service measures its impact through the 4 Returns framework, designed by Commonland, an organisation working on participatory landscape restoration initiatives (Commonland, n.d.). The framework has been specifically designed to ensure the success of landscape restoration initiatives that rely on a wide range of stakeholders, aspects at the core of the service proposed in this report.

Short, medium and long-term targets have been established based on the 4 Returns framework (Fig. 59) and are further showcased in an impact map including the stakeholders (Fig. 60).

In the short term, the service aims to provide a return of inspiration for farmers through the Creative Futures Visioning workshops, amplifying its range of impact locally by allowing farmers to bring other trusted farmers from their networks.

In the medium term, the service aims to incentivise the creation of bio-regional alliances that can begin working towards realising the envisioned futures in the workshops, providing social and natural returns. This will be enabled through the working groups.

In the long term, the service aims to promote a wider impact through the communication power of the workshop outputs: the fictional stories depicting the envisioned futures. These aim to reach institutions with the decision-making power to promote a financial return to communities.

Ultimately, this service hopes that by accomplishing these different layers of impact, another layer can be unlocked: involving conventional agriculture stakeholders in the envisioning of a better future.

SHORT-TERM IMPACTS:

The workshop



Return of Inspiration

Opening people's eyes to the possibility of a better future

MEDIUM-TERM IMPACTS:

The working groups



Social Returns

Creating jobs, businesses, networks, and social prosperity



Natural Returns

Restoring the health, resilience and prosperity of landscapes

LONG-TERM IMPACTS:

The advocacy accomplishments



Financial Returns

Realising long-term, sustainable, and local income

Fig. 59: 4 Returns framework (Commonland, n.d.), including the impact layers of this service proposition.

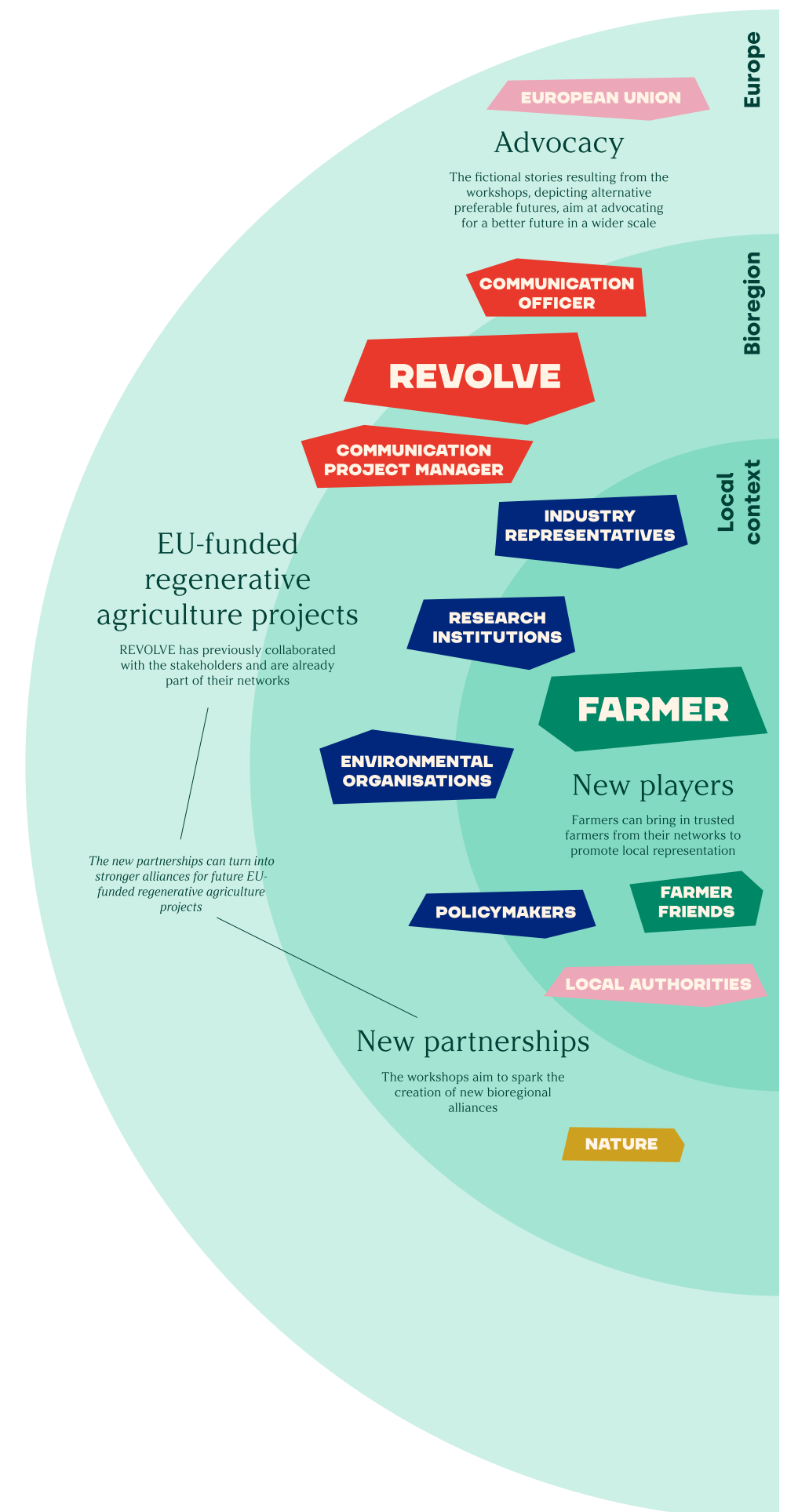


Fig. 60: Service impact map

CONCLUSION

This project aims to support a transition towards regenerative agriculture to address the impacts of the agricultural sector on the climate crisis. However, a transition in farming will only occur if its key stakeholder is involved: The farmer.

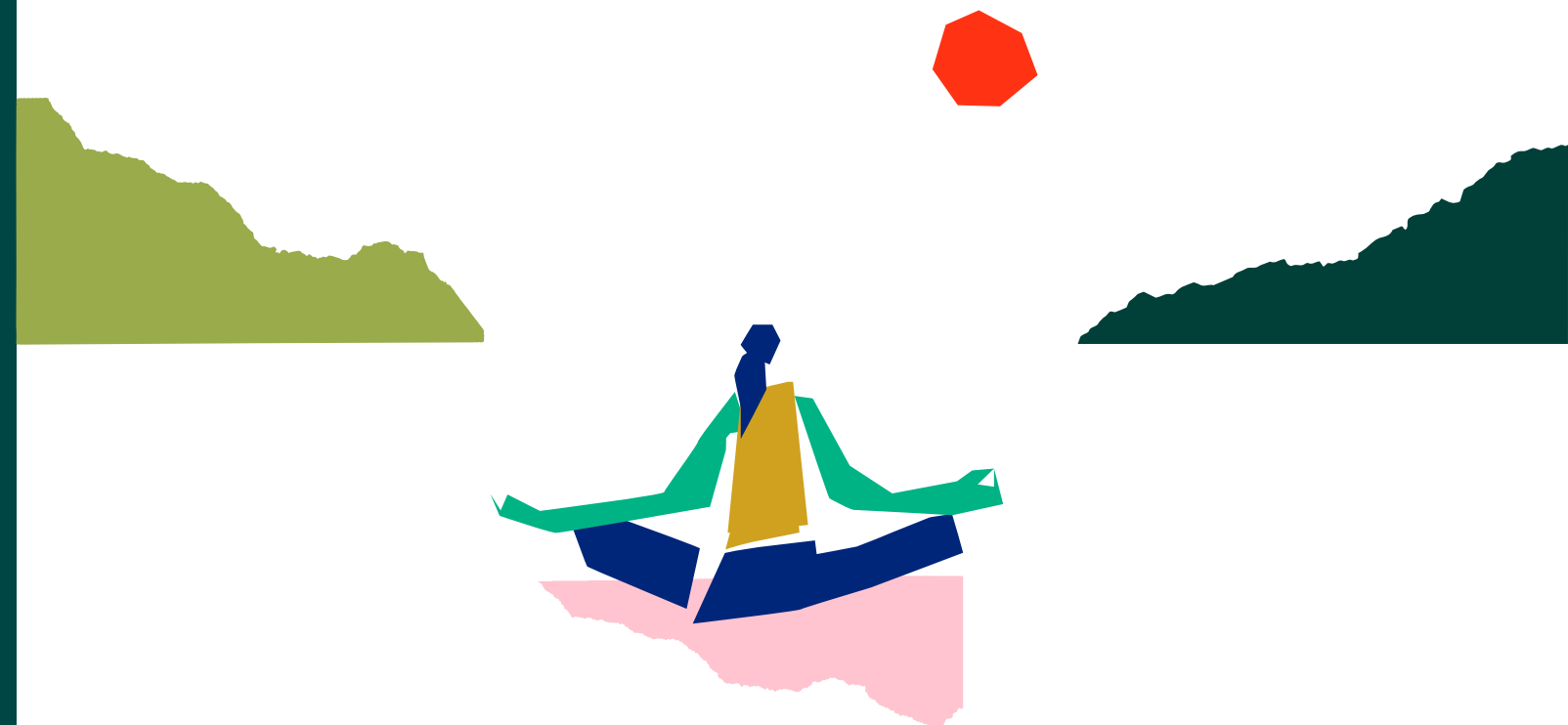
Behind an environmental crisis, there is always a social one. Farmers deal with numerous challenges at the social level, preventing them from changing their ways of farming towards a regenerative model. That is why this project has taken a rather social approach - In the problem exploration, interacting with farmers to understand the underlying social issues they face, and in the service proposition, promoting spaces where together, different stakeholders of the agriculture community can think of alternative futures.

This service acknowledges the need to cultivate imagination in communities so that solutions emerge from within, providing them with skills to build their own versions of a better future. It also acknowledges the need for spaces that can spark future collaborations linked to a specific bio-region where local knowledge is relevant for solutions that truly create an impact.

Beyond the service proposition, the project has had a deep impact on REVOLVE, the project partner and service enabler. REVOLVE is currently integrating Regenerate's tools in their ways of communication, piloting and implementing the service proposition with their regenerative agriculture networks, and seeking to adapt the tools and use them in other climate action contexts.

Likewise, beyond the service proposition, the project also recognises its true first prototype: the interviews with farmers. Conventional farmers mentioned feeling heard and empowered by the fact that their contributions were of value to inform this project. Regenerative farmers noted feeling prompted and challenged to think on a systems level and reflect on the role of agriculture in society.

Setting up spaces for imagination and collaboration will not create a direct impact in the short term. However, like the conversations with farmers, these spaces, and the stories of the future resulting from them, aim to be the seeds that inspire and support a transition towards a regenerative future.



REFLECTION

This project has been one of the most fulfilling - but challenging - learning journeys of my life. I want to highlight three realisations that materialised throughout this project that have not only impacted my ways of knowing but also my ways of being.

The power of care

Working in a participatory way has been the key to this project. However, before this project, participation had always been hard to accomplish. This project has taught me the power of caring for your participants, which not only means acknowledging them for their time but also making them feel that being themselves is all they need to participate.

Sometimes, we take for granted that people know the value they have to offer. However, in this project, I realised that this is often untrue. Many farmers I talked to were surprised that their testimonials were relevant to a research project. Care was key to dignifying their participation, both through gratefulness and empathy.

The power of imagination

Imagination is what has brought us here. Progress is fueled by imagination. However, in a time where we are questioning even the word progress as we have always understood it, it is when we need imagination more than ever to transform its meaning and imagine a better future.

Imagination is the driver of my project, in terms of the service proposed, but also of the process that got me there. Imagination has helped me see without judgment, allowing me to have the courage to tackle a wicked problem like the current agricultural system. We need imagination in our solutions, but also in our processes.

The power of storytelling

This project has integrated storytelling at its core. While I was designing the storytelling tools for the service, I realised I was also learning a very powerful skill as a service designer: telling stories.

Many times, we have relevant things to say. However, without the ability to tell stories, it is hard to connect with whoever is receiving our message. This project has been a breakthrough in this aspect. Not only because it has leveraged storytelling in its solution, but because it is told as a story.

These learnings are what I take for my journey forward as a service designer - With care to bring people together, imagination to open spaces of possibility, and storytelling to materialise the magic of projects, experiences, and services.

Thank you for this wonderful service design journey.



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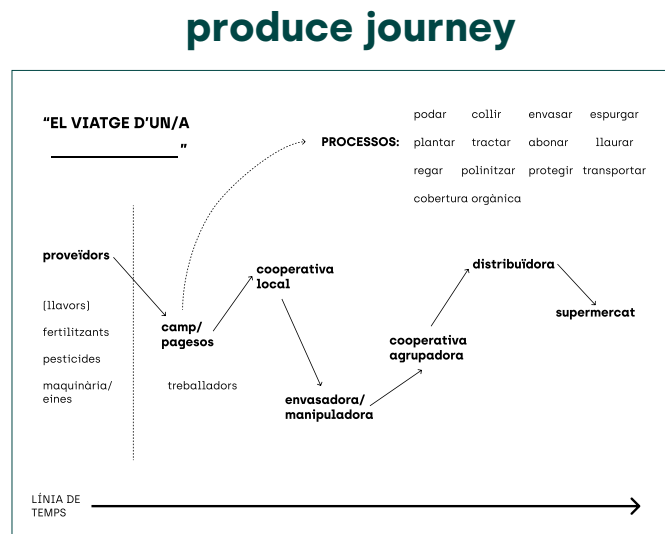
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APPENDIX 1: CO-DISCOVERY TOOLS (IN CATALAN)



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Incentius del Govern per a la transició ecològica

Davant la nova normativa de la UE en matèria de recuperació de la natura, el Govern espanyol desplega un seguit de mesures d'ajuda per a pàgesos.

El Govern proposa un seguit de trams amb diferents nivells d'ajudes per a reacciar a la pagament cap a la transició ecològica. Des de la integració de llanques vegetals fins a la transformació de zones agrícoles a zones agrícoles de base impacte reduïda, el Govern es compromet a proporcionar un paquet d'ajudes personalitzat entre 3 i 4 anys. >> p. 2

Camps i granges de testeig: la nova proposta de Nufri per als petits productors

L'ús de tecnologies d'agricultura regenerativa per a l'increment de la salut del sòl és popularment conegut entre els grans productors de l'Ebre. No obstant, les tecnologies són notablement dependents del context. Davant la nova normativa europea, la qual exigeix a implementar pràctiques regeneratives, empreses com Nufri busquen subvencionar petits productors per al testeig d'aquestes mesures abans d'implementar-les a les seves grans produccions. >> p. 13

Taxes a la fruita i verdura fora de temporada

El Govern també pensarà si les practiques insostenibles, com el consum fora de temporada, per a incrementar canals de distribució més curts. >> p.10

Multes de fins a 36.000€ per a pàgesos que no respectin les restriccions d'aigua

Tot i les dificultats per part dels pàgesos a reduir l'ús de l'aigua, el Departament d'Agricultura vigilarà més d'esporgar l'ús no autoritzat d'aigua pel regadiu. En contrapartida, obtenirà subvencions per a la consorciació d'optimització de l'aigua amb empreses locals com Joana Balasch a La Granja, dedicada al Disney Kayline per a l'aprofitament de l'aigua de la pluja. >> p.5

Aliances per a la circularitat agrícola a Llaureia

En Manel, ramader, ens explica com utilitza els camps de pomes d'en Josep per pasturar les seves ovelles i la merna per a alimentar-les mentre que així fertilitza la terra. En Josep també ens explica com comparteix maquinària especialitzada (troncs) per al control de plagues amb els seus veïns. El grup de ramaders i agricultors s'ha facilitat des de la cooperativa local Collruss. >> p.11

Què has de saber sobre la nova llei Europea de Restauració de la Natura?

La nova llei, una peça clau del Pacte Vert Europeu, estableix objectius legítimament vinculants per a rehabilitar hàbitats degradats i espècies perilloses amb l'objectiu final de restaurar un 20% de la terra i reduir el 50% l'ús de pesticides al 2035. L'enginyer més per entendre com afectarà a les explotacions agrícoles >> p.15

APPENDIX 2: CATALAN FOOD SYSTEMS MAP

Scan the code



Copy and paste the link

<https://reimagined-futures.kumu.io/food-systems-map-of-catalonia>

MÓN

AGRÍCOLA

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Noves assegurances agrícoles en línia amb la UE

Nou pacte entre Agroseguro i el govern espanyol per a la creació d'eco-assegurances*

Les assegurances agrícoles començaran a donar descomptes per a pàganes que facin us de tècniques d'agricultura regenerativa a

les seves explotacions, com per exemple les rangelands de fiers silvostres, la pastura llura, les cobertes vegetals i el no llaurar. / p. 23

Protestes setmanals sota el lema "Divendres pel camp"

El nou moviment de protesta agrícola va ser iniciat per un grup de pagesos. Unidat i recollit per altres sectors de la ciutadania. El grup reclama més atenció de les administracions a les necessitats del camp. / p. 12

El Govern pren mesures per a revertir l'abandonament rural

Les ajudes públiques al moviment neorural promocionaran la compra de terra per part de joves fins a 35 anys que vulguin tornar a les zones rurals. Detectors de la nova balantament que les ajudes no estiguin localitzades. / p. 4

Les noves campanyes de restauració de zones agrícoles seran lliberades per pàganes i pàganes joves connectats amb la zona, que rebran una retribució i a canvi ajudaran a altres pàganes a entrar al dia amb la nova normativa europea sobre la restauració de la natura. / p. 6

RICARD ABELA
Fundador de "Del Camp a l'Hospital"

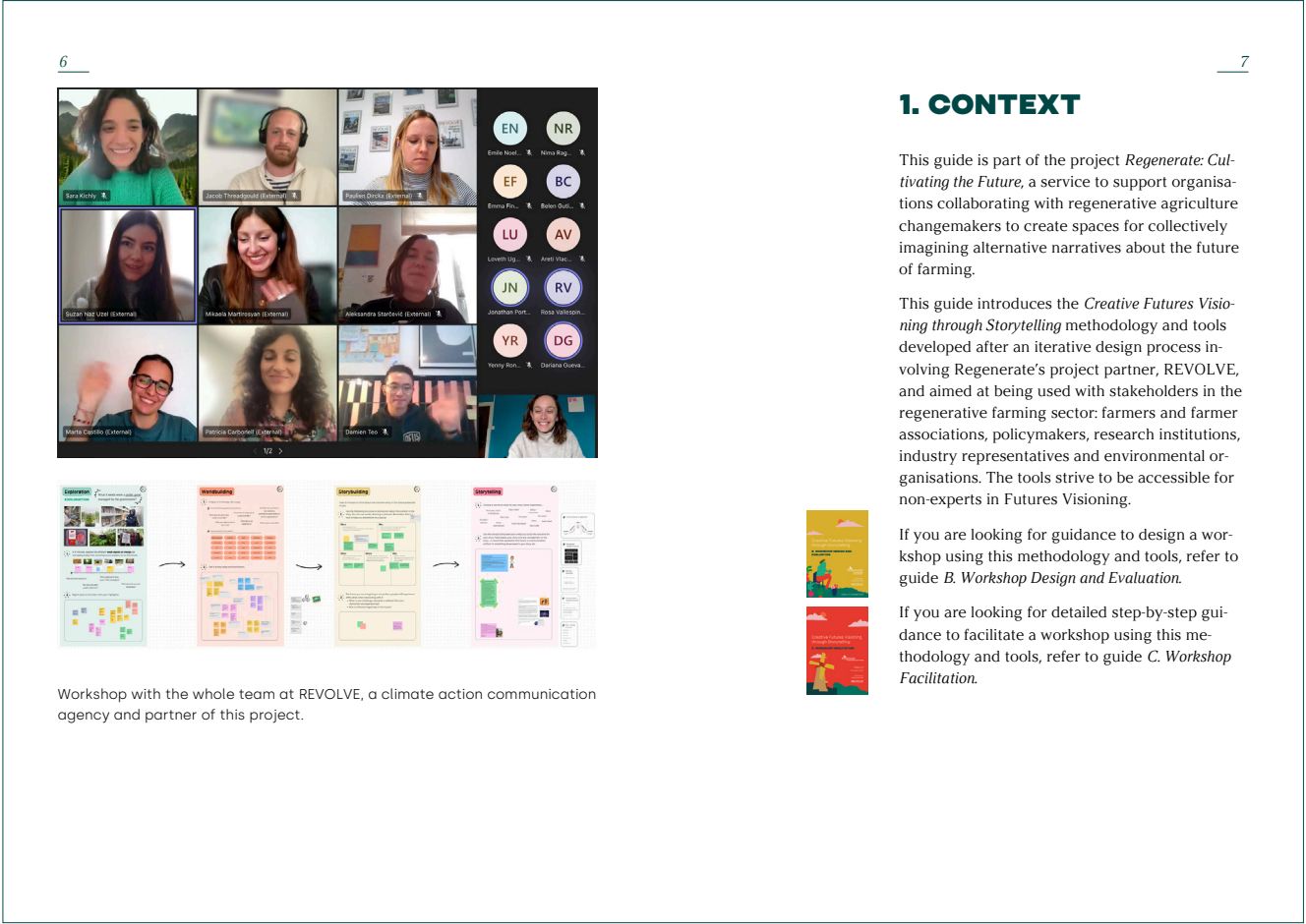
"La venda directa a hospitals, escoles i menjadors locals pot ser l'alternativa al model de distribució agrícola actual" / p. 20

Convertir-se en un camp de testatge: què vol dir per a la teva producció?

La UE està finançant petits i mitjans pàganes que vulguin convertir la seva explotació en un camp de testatge del noues pràctiques d'agricultura regenerativa a canvi dels resultats reben. I el seu discip. L'Almaduro, amb una petita producció a Seixó, ens explica els pros i contres de la seva experiència després del primer any, així com els resultats dels testatges que té en marxa i les afliccions en la seva pròpia producció. / p. 24

APPENDIX 3: SUPPORT GUIDES

A. Methodology and tools



2. INTRODUCTION TO FUTURES VISIONING

SEEING THE FUTURE

‘Futures studies aim to build understanding about the forces shaping the future, what surprises could be on the horizon and what actions could be taken today to deal with them’ (Nesta, n.d.).

MULTIPLE FUTURES

We talk about Futures in plural because we do not study a ‘single, predictable, fixed future’ (Gidley, p.26, 2017) but multiple possibilities. Among these possibilities, we aim to identify alternative futures to the ones portrayed by governments, media, movies and corporations, deeply ingrained in our collective imagination. The objective of envisioning alternative futures is to identify a future that might be preferable for those neglected by the present. For instance, communities excluded today or non-human stakeholders, like the planet.

DOING FUTURES VISIONING

Futures Visioning is the act of creating transformed images of the future. Although Futures Visioning is mainly associated with the corporate world to ‘create powerful strategies, experiments and innovations’ (Ramos, 2017), envisioning and longing for different futures has been a human practice for centuries; From prophets and utopian myths to Futures through art, literature and science fiction (Gidley, p.48-67, 2017).



Futures is the study of three main classes of futures: possible, probable and preferable (Voros, 2017).

For thousands of years we have struggled to predict, control, manage, and understand the future (Gidley, p.29, 2017).



We center the voices of those who are directly impacted by the outcomes of the design process. (Principle 2 - Design Justice Network, 2018)



WHEN AND WHERE TO DO IT?

Future Visioning can focus on different time horizons and is preferably done in a group setting with diverse stakeholders, including those impacted by the future we want to collectively envision.

Futures Visioning can be done in many situations. These are three examples of context in which it can be done using the tools presented in this guide:

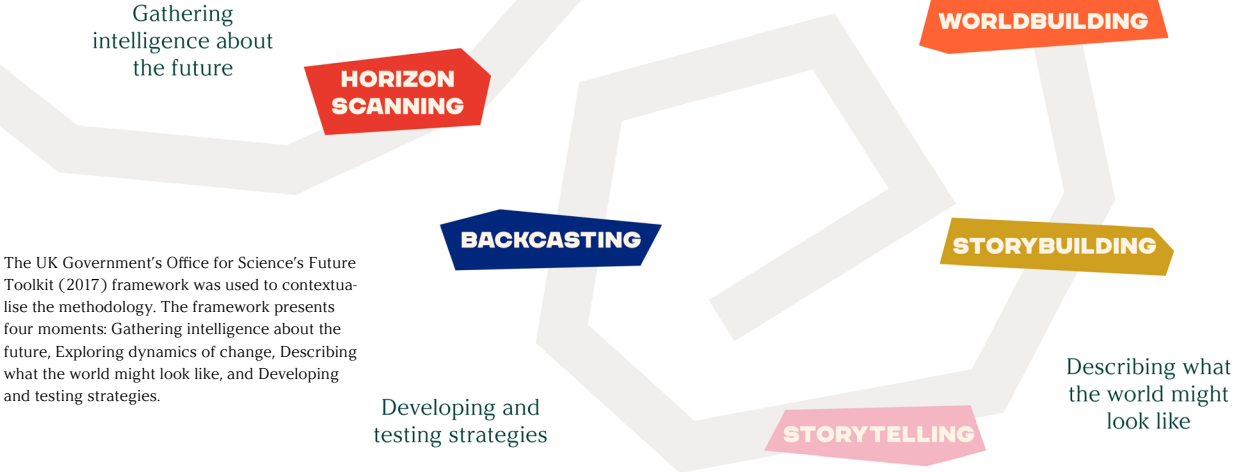
- At the beginning of a project, to set a shared vision among different stakeholders.
- At the end of the project, to envision what is the legacy of the project.
- At any given point, to spark new visions of the future among a particular group of people.

WHY DO FUTURES VISIONING?

‘The futures we create through our actions today will impact the entire future of humanity for thousands, if not millions of years to come’ (Gidley, p.26, 2017). In this context, it becomes essential that we not only create spaces to envision the future but that we involve diverse stakeholders that represent different groups in our societies and ecosystems to do so.

4. METHODOLOGY AND TOOLS

Although there is not a single recipe for how to do Futures Visioning, we have developed the *Creative Futures Visioning through Storytelling* methodology, specially tailored to the context of this project, aiming to provide guidance but also flexibility. We have chosen to visualise it in a spiral, showcasing the iterative nature of Futures Visioning and the fact that tools can be selected or used in different order and for different purposes.



The UK Government’s Office for Science’s Future Toolkit (2017) framework was used to contextualise the methodology. The framework presents four moments: Gathering intelligence about the future, Exploring dynamics of change, Describing what the world might look like, and Developing and testing strategies.

3. CREATIVE FUTURES VISIONING THROUGH STORYTELLING

Imagination is vital to envisioning alternative futures. The approach to Futures Visioning presented in this guide differs from other approaches that focus on what is there but not on what could be there (Tonkinwise, 2015).

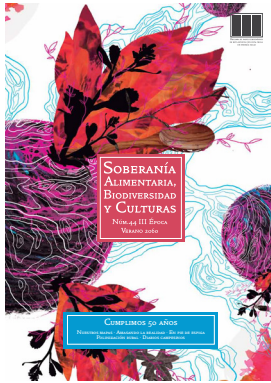
To imagine, it is necessary to use creativity. It is a common belief that not all people are creative (Sanders, 2008, p.9). The approach presented in this guide aims to break with this belief, promoting divergent thinking and cultivating the collective imaginative capacity of participants (Shorter, 2021) by creating a safe space for imagination through different approaches, like creativity icebreakers or sensorial time-travelling exercises (Hopkins, 2020).

Furthermore, as Futures Visioning can be abstract, this guide presents tools to generate the future imagined through making (Tonkinwise, 2015), concretely fictional storytelling as a making tool, using elements such as future characters and plotlines.

In summary, we propose building alternative worlds through brainstorming and bringing them to life through stories that delve into these alternative futures.

Many examples inspired the development of this rationale and helped inform the development of the activities and tools showcased in this guide. On the following page are some examples.

We need to be able to imagine positive, feasible, delightful versions of the future before we can create them. Not utopias, but futures where things turned out OK. (Hopkins, 2019).



A fictional edition of the magazine ‘Soberanía Alimentaria, Biodiversidad y Culturas’, written in the summer of 2060. It contains collaborations from many writers and across genres (articles, comic strips, poetry, novels, etc.).

[Access the magazine](#) (in Spanish)



The Ministry of Biodiversity 2035 project developed fictional policies that questioned what would happen if the UK Government took a more proactive approach towards biodiversity and transformed them into communication artefacts, such as advertisements, public announcements or newspapers to engage London residents in the conversations.

[Read more about it](#)

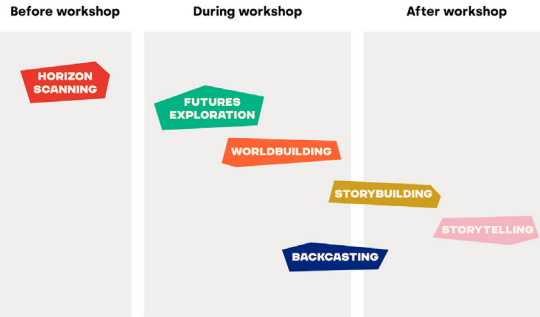
In the following pages, we describe the key activities and tools included in this methodology. We call *Activities* the different steps to be followed and *Tools* the resources available to complete each of these steps.

The activities and tools take inspiration from other practitioners and organisations and integrate the learnings of this project’s research with stakeholders in the farming ecosystem.

Below is an overview of the activities and tools:



Although this methodology is meant to be used in a participatory way, some of the activities proposed are used before and after stakeholder participation (see image on next page).



Note: Make this your own

There is no one way of facilitating a workshop using the resources available in this guide. Consider the following to tailor them to your needs:

CONTEXT-DEPENDENT: Each group of participants will come from different contexts. During the development of this methodology, we found the importance of localising a Futures Visioning exercise in a specific context. Therefore, the weak signals of change should be tailored and take into account local peculiarities.

PROJECT-DEPENDENT: Each project that uses these resources with stakeholders will have different objectives and goals. Furthermore, it is not the same using these tools at the beginning or end of a project. Therefore, the tools used in each workshop, as well as the level of openness of the visioning exercise, will depend heavily on the project goal. For instance, we could be imagining the future of farming in general or targeting the exercise to imagine the future of soil education among farmers.

You can find further assistance in guide *B. Workshop Design and Evaluation*, which contains tips on how to tailor the methodology and tools to your needs and how to create a safe space for imagination for participants.

HORIZON SCANNING

An example of a *Horizon Scanning* developed to test the tools presented in this guide. The weak signals of change were placed in a PESTLE+ matrix, considering rural and urban to ensure balanced representation, and were mostly extracted from articles and projects, although they can be found anywhere: 'policy and grey literature, newspapers, pop culture, annotations from direct observation and briefings from experts' (Salinas, 2022).

SCANNING THE FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE

FUTURES EXPLORATION

Example of a quick 15-minute *Futures Exploration* exercise. Participants were prompted to explore some weak signals of change in a specific topic and share them back with the group, which brought some reflections such as the role of farmers and potential threats, potential shifts in the rural exodus trend, or use of technology for farming.

#1 Scenario exploration (15')

HORIZON SCANNING

2-3 weeks
In small teams

WHAT IS THIS
Horizon Scanning is the process of looking for early hints of change in a certain topic that could become more relevant in the future (Dufva, 2019).

DO THIS IF...
By bringing in evidence of things happening today on a small scale or in a niche space, this tool helps us ground the future we are envisioning by creating connections with today's world; Things that might be small today could amplify in the future.

HOW DOES IT WORK

1. Identify weak signals of change with the support of the (A) *Weak Signals of Change Checklist* that will help you identify if the information you are looking at is a weak signal of change.
2. Place the weak signals of change in the (B) *PESTLE+ matrix*, which includes in its horizontal axis a set of different lenses (e.g. political, social, or environmental) and in its vertical one the possibility to include categories that ensure diverse representation (e.g. Global South vs. Global North, or urban vs. rural). To personalise depending on the project.

WHAT WILL YOU NEED

- Physical or online visual repository of the weak signals of change
- PESTLE+ matrix template

GOOD PRACTICE
Crowdsource the weak signals of change through a wider audience engagement (e.g. social media campaign) or from the workshop participants beforehand to increase the diversity of perspectives.

IF YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE...

- *What is a weak signal* (Sitra, 2019)
- *Signal spotter starter kit* (Futures Centre, 2023)
- *What is Horizon Scanning and why using PESTLE* (New Zealand Dept. of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2023)

Tools

(A) Weak signals of change checklist

(B) PESTLE+ matrix

FUTURES EXPLORATION

60 - 70'
In groups of 3 to 5 people

WHAT IS THIS
Futures Exploration helps participants start a conversation about the future by sharing their future hopes and fears and connecting their experiences to data and evidence of today that points to potential shifts in the future.

DO THIS IF...
You want to help participants ease into the future. First, this tool will help them bring their own experiences through sharing their hopes and fears about the future. This is especially relevant when involving key system stakeholders in the workshop. For instance, farmers reimagining the future of farming. This tool will also help unveil similarities and differences in perception among participants. For instance, what might be a fear for one farmer, might be a hope for a farmer in a different context.

HOW DOES IT WORK

1. Start a conversation on future hopes and fears. Separate into two rounds, one about hopes and another about fears.
2. Let participants roam around the room, exploring the displayed evidence informed by the weak signals of change, previously selected through a *Horizon Scanning*.
3. Participants share 2-3 highlights with their group, reflecting together and complementing with more weak signals of change that come from their lived experiences.

WHAT WILL YOU NEED

- Weak signals of change, displayed through an *Evidence Safari* (C)
- Printed templates (D, E) or blank pieces of paper
- Pens, markers and sticky notes

BEST PRACTICE
Decide the level of concreteness of the topics of conversation beforehand. For instance, it is not the same to talk about the future of farming in general as that of the microbiology of the soil.

Display the weak signals of change in a format that can be more visual and accessible so that participants stay engaged. You can build an *Evidence Safari* (Open Policy Making toolkit, 2017): 'a visual database of relevant data evidence, which is compiled as a collection of visual cards that contain nuggets of evidence such as extracts from scientific studies, policies, services, and everyday life practices' (Salinas, 2022). You can present it in visual homogeneous cards or use a more flexible format, for instance, resembling a notice board.

IF YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE...

- *Hopes & Fears* (Open Policy Making toolkit, 2017)
- *Evidence Safari* (Policy Lab, 2016)

Tools

(C) Evidence Safari - use beforehand, to prepare the workshop

(D) Hopes & Fears

(E) Reflection

STORYTELLING

Initial story drafts, developed by expert communicators in regenerative farming after imagining what would happen if we brought urban communities closer to farming. The participants explored different concepts, like community farms or mandatory farming training, and developed different formats, like a news piece, a poem, and a newspaper report.

Newspaper - Community landmark: District 4's community farm has reached a new peak consecutive of volunteers.

Local youth Pau has successfully led an initiative to push popularity of communal farm leading to a further decoupling of dependence on supermarkets and readily available foods.

A sight to behold in Brusselona's District 4 as a new record of volunteers has been reached this Friday. An up-and-coming figure by the name of Pau has taken the lead in inspiring a major revival in interest in local agricultural practices. In an outstanding turnout District 4's local high school was able to rally over 700 students to volunteer in the end of the month crop yield. Pau lead a campaign focusing on the importance of these structures moving forward as resource scarcity is having major effects on food security.

I woke up and I saw the sun.
I woke up and I saw the sun, the sky and the green.
The green and yellow and orange and red and pink and brown and purple and black.
I woke up and I saw the rainbow of colours.
I woke up and I saw the rainbow of colours dirtying my hands like every Friday.
Nature was back.
Nature was awake.
Nature was kicking.
I woke up and I saw nature alive. Nature was alive and breathing and I was breathing with her.
HER?
Yes, her, because she was giving life back. Se was giving life back to all of us.
I remember I woke up ten years ago. I remember I woke up and I couldn't breath, I couldn't see the sun, I couldn't see the sky, I couldn't see the rainbow.
I remember I woke up and I saw the lack of air, I saw the lack of water. I saw the lack of colour. I remember I woke up and I saw the need for change.



In a not-so-distant future, a new approach to education and farming had emerged. Young people were required to volunteer for at least three months to graduate, connecting with nature, learning farming, and helping their communities while focusing on ethical practices.

Meet Sarah, a city girl who ventured into the countryside. She joined a program called "Harvesters of Change" and arrived in Greenleaf Valley, a farming community.

Here, she learned to farm the right way, focusing on sustainability and organic methods. She planted seeds, witnessed the harmony of nature, and embraced ethical farming. This program helped her appreciate the environment.

More than just farming, Sarah became part of a tight-knit community. People from various backgrounds worked together for a common purpose - to protect their environment and create a better future.

After three months, Sarah left with a mission to bring change to her own community. She and her peers were the future of agriculture, sowing the seeds of hope for a healthier planet through sustainable farming practices and stronger communities.

BACKCASTING

Timeline built for the project Ministry of Biodiversity 2035 (Maymó Costa et al., 2023). The vision of the future was the creation of a Ministry of Biodiversity in the UK government to take a more proactive approach towards biodiversity conversation and regeneration. This timeline was looking at potential disruptions and events happening from 2020 to 2035, based on the

weak signals of change that informed the project. This backcasting exercise aimed to illustrate a potential trajectory towards this future for a storytelling purpose, rather than setting milestones of things that need to happen to realise the proposed vision of the future.



STORYTELLING

WHAT IS THIS

Storytelling is the process of telling or writing stories, in this case, stories of the future. Here, you will write a first draft of the stories emerging from the workshop.

DO THIS IF...

You want to extract fictional stories that translate the insights from the workshop into compelling stories that can be accessible to an audience or serve any other goal, for instance, advocacy materials like manifestos or campaigns.

These tools will help you cope with blank page paralysis by giving choices in the writing format and structure.

HOW DOES IT WORK

1. Think of a narrative style and a basic structure. Use the tool (K) Narrative Style for guidance.
2. Start writing and welcome whatever comes out of your pen. Change or restructure later.

WHAT WILL YOU NEED

- Paper and pen or computer
- Additional prototyping materials or graphics software for the development of accompanying artefacts (e.g. poster, brochure, logo, object in this future, etc.)

30 - 40'
Individually

Post-workshop use
To be used after the workshop

Tools

(K) Narrative style

K



BEST PRACTICE

After a first draft is developed in no more than 40', share it with your team and get feedback. Repeat as many times as needed and involve other stakeholders, such as workshop attendants or other practitioners. Remember, the future is built collectively!

IF YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE...

- *5 Act Structure: All you need to know* (Nashville Film Institute, n.d.)
- *Futures Headline tool* (Reimaginary: Cultivating Cultures of Sustainability, 2020)
- *Background: Storytelling shapes the future* (McDowell, 2019)

BACKCASTING

WHAT IS THIS

Backcasting is the process of identifying a preferred future and working backwards to map potential actions to be taken to achieve this future. Backcasting brings the new paradigms into the present and asks what are steps toward these new ways of living, working, playing, etc. 'Backcasting is concerned not with what futures are likely to manifest (forecasting) but with how particular desirable futures can be attained' (Transition Design Seminar, 2023).

USE THIS TOOL IF...

You want to get participants back into reality, grounding and converging all you have been previously brainstorming into tangible actions. It can help set goals and milestones at the end of the workshop.

This exercise is particularly useful if you consider using the results of the workshop to inform or influence policymaking.

HOW TO USE IT

1. Define your vision of the future in one sentence. You can vote on the ideas from the worldbuilding if it is hard to reach a consensus naturally.
2. Brainstorm things that can be done now to move towards that vision of the future and what support you need from others. Use the *Event Cards* (L) to support your thinking.

40 - 50'
In groups of 3 to 5 people

Workshop use
To be used at the end of the workshop

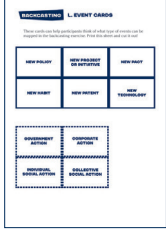
Post-workshop use
to deepen and ground what has come up in the workshop (additional 2-3h)

Tools

(L) Event cards

(M) 'Timeline'

L



WHAT WILL YOU NEED

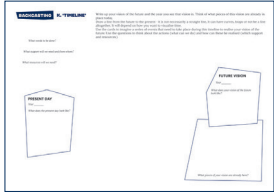
- Printed template (M) or blank piece of paper
- Pens and markers

BEST PRACTICE

Backcasting is an exercise that makes use of convergent thinking. However, in certain settings, you want to still use it in an imaginative format, like the example showcased on the previous page. Adapt depending on the objectives of the workshop and the needs of the participants.

Furthermore, doing a complete backcasting exercise can take up to 5 hours. This exercise is intended to spark thinking and leave possibilities open, rather than create a fixed and thorough plan for implementation.

M



IF YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE...

- *What is backcasting* (New Zealand Dept. of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2023)
- *How to do backcasting* (Transition Network, 2016)
- *Questions to guide backcasting - worksheet* (Narrative Initiative, n.d.)
- *Examples of a creative backcasting exercise* (ARUP, 2019)

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B. Workshop Design and Evaluation



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DISCLAIMER

The design decisions and approaches proposed in this guide are the result of a design and testing process of the *Creative Futures Visioning through Storytelling* methodology carried out with the support of REVOLVE.



8

WORKSHOP DESIGN

FIRST OF ALL... WHO IS THE CORE TEAM?

We suggest you put together a team of 3 to 5 people for the workshop design. Ideally, the workshop facilitators are also part of the design team. You might meet once a week and work asynchronously and/or in smaller breakouts.

WHAT ARE THE 5W OF THIS WORKSHOP?

The first thing to do, before deep diving into the activities and topics, is to define the bigger picture of the workshop: its aims and who will be participating. We recommend doing the 5W exercise in the order suggested on the right, preferably as a team. Some key questions are provided to support the thinking.

WHAT IS THE BREADTH, LENGTH AND DEPTH?

Once the questions are answered, we recommend you summarise the workshop by defining its breadth, length and depth. For instance:

Imagine alternative preferable futures
in agriculture (breadth)
within the next 5-10 years (length)
for the next 4h (depth)

This is an example of a considerably broad workshop, looking at a short-term future, and that will have the just time to spark creativity but not to go into details.

Finally, you can start thinking of the structure and activities (format), and the topics that will be discussed in the workshop (content). As format and content are interrelated, we recommend defining them parallelly.

9

1. WHY

- In what context are you doing this workshop? Is it part of an existing project, or is it a standalone event?
- What are you trying to achieve?

2. WHO

- Is the group of assistants already defined (e.g. partners within an existing project)?
- Will people in your team be participating? What will be their role?
- If the group of assistants is already defined: Who are they? How many people are there? What is their motivation to participate?
- If the group of assistants is not yet defined, we recommend you invite a diverse group of people. Consider a balance between demographics (e.g. age and gender) and relationship to farming (e.g. farmers, policymakers, environmental organisations, industry representatives, and research institutions). We recommend a group localised within a region, as they will share the same language, local knowledge and relatable lived experiences.

3. WHAT

- What topics would you like the workshop to address?
- How open do you want the visioning exercise to be (e.g. the future of farming, or the future of one aspect of farming, such as farming practices, or produce distribution channels)?

4. WHERE

- Where will the workshop take place? How is it connected to the topics you will address in the workshop?
- How close are the participants to the venue? How do they get there?

5. WHEN

- In terms of availability, what is the best time for your stakeholders (e.g. consider farming seasons)?
- How long will your workshop be?

6

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide aims to support the design of Creative Futures Visioning workshops with stakeholders in the farming sector.

The guide provides recommendations on how to design the workshop and the overall experience of participants. Furthermore, it includes guidance on how to evaluate its success afterwards.

We recommend you also review guide *A. Methodology and Tools* to learn more about the methodology and tools.

If you are looking for detailed step-by-step guidance to facilitate a workshop using this methodology and tools, refer to guide *C. Workshop Facilitation*.

WORKSHOP TRACKS

The *Creative Futures Visioning through Storytelling* methodology includes six activities. Although all activities can be done participatorily with external stakeholders, our research shows that the most suitable activities for engagement are: *Futures Exploration*, *Worldbuilding*, *Storybuilding* and *Backcasting*.

Furthermore, our research indicates it can be too intense to do the four activities in one session. Therefore, we propose two different tracks including three activities each for at the very least a half-day workshop (p. 7):

7

A. CREATING STORIES ABOUT THE FUTURE

(Futures Exploration, Worldbuilding, Storybuilding)

Use this track if you want to transform the imagined visions of the future by participants into fictional stories ensuring their voices are represented in these stories. This is the recommended format if you want to engage stakeholders in an inspiring new space where new projects can emerge, or if you want to create materials that can afterwards be used for advocacy.

B. CREATING PATHWAYS TO THE FUTURE

(Futures Exploration, Worldbuilding, Backcasting)

Use this format if you want to engage participants into thinking about how they can get to a preferable future, ensuring they not only envision it but also reflect on what they need to get there. This is the recommended format in the context of an existing project, to build a shared vision at the beginning of a project or to define a legacy at the end of it.

The diagram illustrates two workshop tracks, A and B, and their relationship to pre and post-workshop activities.

- Before workshop:** Includes 'HORIZON SCANNING'.
- During workshop:**
 - Track A:** Consists of 'FUTURES EXPLORATION' (aim: enhance advocacy efforts and inspire new projects to emerge), 'WORLDBUILDING', 'STORYBUILDING', and 'STORYTELLING'. The output is 'Visions transformed into stories'.
 - Track B:** Consists of 'FUTURES EXPLORATION', 'WORLDBUILDING', and 'BACKCASTING' (aim: build shared visions and foster enhanced collaboration within existing projects). The output is 'Visions transformed into plans'.
- After workshop:** Includes 'STORYTELLING'.

10

WHAT IS THE FORMAT?

We propose to first decide which workshop track is more suitable for your context (p. 7). Roughly, we recommend track B for sessions within concrete projects and a predefined group of participants and track A for standalone events and to-be-defined groups of people. You can also decide on another combination depending on your context (e.g. only including *Futures Exploration* and *Worldbuilding*, or including the four steps).

After defining the track, you can think of a more granular agenda. The workshop aims to bring participants into a state of future thinking and imagination, but participants will need some time to enter this state and leave it. We propose you consider these phases and design your workshop with this structure: easing into the future (phase 1), the future (phase 2), and coming back to the present (phase 3).

The diagram shows a horizontal flow from 'the present' to 'the future' and back to 'the present'.

- Phase 1:** 'the present' - represented by a triangle pointing right.
- Phase 2:** 'the future' - represented by a series of loops, indicating a state of future thinking and imagination.
- Phase 3:** 'the present' - represented by a triangle pointing left.

We propose you consider at least one hour for Phase 1, half an hour for Phase 3, and the remaining time for Phase 2 (but no less than two hours).

Phase 1 is crucial, especially if you are doing the workshop with people unfamiliar with Futures Visioning and who do not consider themselves creative. Although the activity *Futures Exploration* helps transition from Phase 1 to 2 smoothly, we still recommend you complement it with other activities (p.16).

11

Phase 1

Phase 2

Phase 3

15' Welcome and introductions through social icebreaker

15' Context: Why are we here and introduction to the activity

15' "Rules" of the imagination game: The magic circle

30' Scenario exploration: Hopes & Fears

10' Break

30' Scenario exploration: Evidence Safari

10' Creative icebreaker: Squiggle birds

40' Worldbuilding

10' Break

40' Backcasting

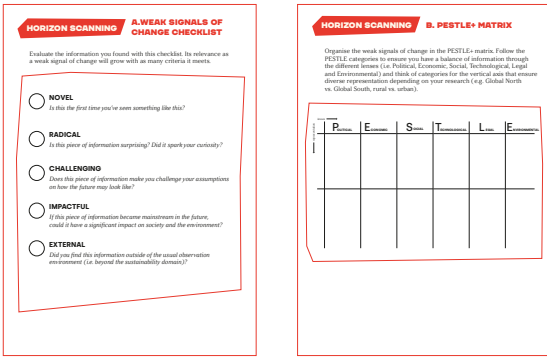
10' Sharing

20' Debriefing & next steps

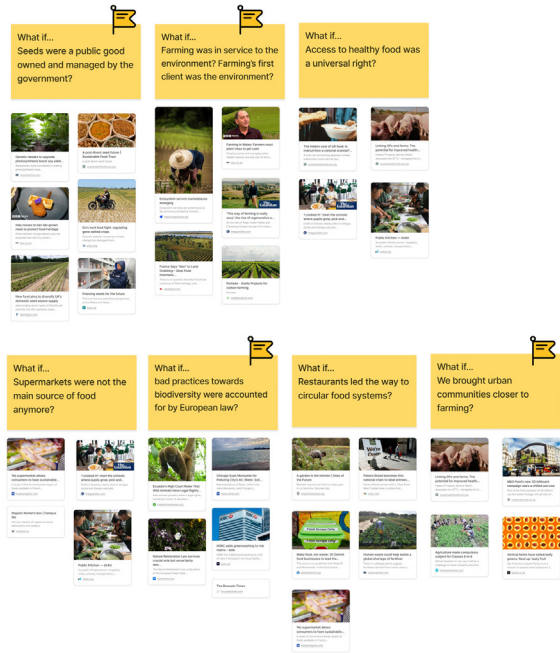
Example of a four-hour track B workshop agenda

WHAT IS THE CONTENT?

The content refers to the topics of discussion in the workshop. Preparing the content requires a research process, which can be done by following the steps of a *Horizon Scanning* activity, detailed in guide *A. Methodology and Tools* (p. 16).



The two tools that are available for the *Horizon Scanning* activity.

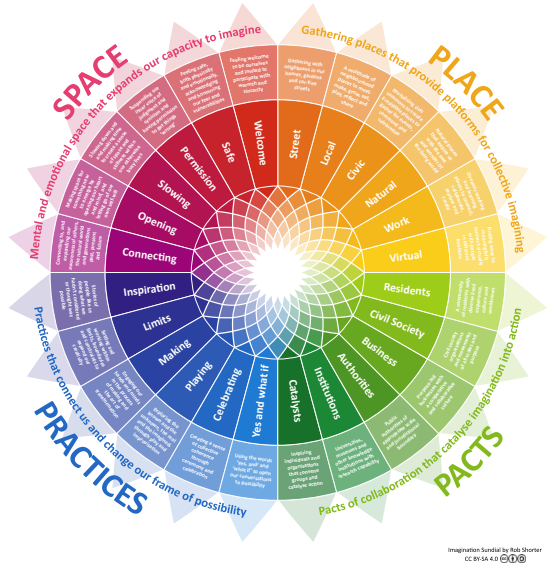


Example of topic scoping for a Creative Visioning workshop on the future of farming. We rearranged the *Horizon Scanning* into topics and brainstormed possible futures through 'What if' questions

CREATING A CONDUCTIVE SPACE FOR IMAGINATION

'The Imagination Sundial is a design tool for those who wish to intentionally cultivate the collective imaginative capacity of people, organisations or nations' (Shorter, 2021).

Likewise, the *Creative Futures Visioning through Storytelling* methodology aims at cultivating this imaginative capacity in a participative way. Although the tools it provides have been streamlined so they can be used with participants unfamiliar with Futures Visioning and not from the creative industry, it is still challenging to bring people into a state where they can feel safe exploring these skills. That is why we propose a series of good practices across the four lenses of the Imagination Sundial (spaces, places, practices and pacts) to create a conducive environment, where participants can collectively break with their constraints and open a new space of possibility.

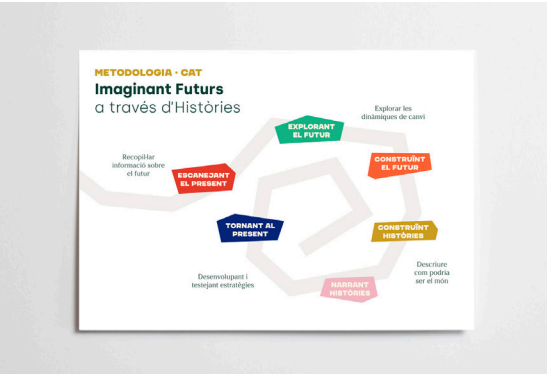


The *Imagination Sundial* is a design tool that aims to help cultivate collective imagination. It analyses the Doughnut economy framework, a concept first used by Kate Raworth in 2012 in an Oxfam report (Shorter, 2021), from a collective imagination lens.

WHO IS YOUR AUDIENCE?

Finally, you must consider who the workshop participants are at all times, especially if they have never participated in a Futures Visioning session before.

- Language:** You should use plain language. If you are delivering the workshop in another language, avoid using English terms. We also recommend you translate the names of the activities. See examples on the right of the translated methodology to Spanish and Catalan.
- 'Designed look':** Consider the look and feel of the tools. Overly designed materials can feel intimidating. You can draw the templates by hand on paper or just provide blank papers and project the instructions and prompt questions on a screen.
- Creativity:** With participants not from the creative industry you must give them space and emotional safety to be imaginative (Hopkins, 2019, p. 104). There is more detail on this aspect in the next section *Creating a Conducive Space for Imagination* (p. 16).



1. SET UP THE SPACE

Make sure the space is not constraining and invites participants to freely roam. For creativity to spark, the space should feel safe at both an emotional and physical level (Hopkins, 2019, p.104).

You might have defined working spaces or let participants find their own. We also recommend you populate the space with prompts and visuals that stimulate their creativity and make them stand up during the workshop, thus taking a more active role. For instance, the *Evidence Safari* in the *Futures Exploration* activity can be placed around the room and contain visual inputs.

If possible, find a space that can feel more familiar to your participants. For instance, in a farm that has adequate space, or a local community centre.

2. SPARK THEIR THINKING BEFORE THE WORKSHOP

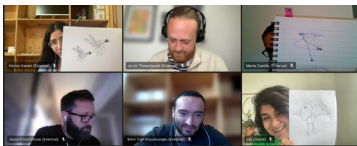
If possible, prompt participants to think about the future before the workshop. If it is appropriate for the group of people, you can create and facilitate a WhatsApp group. Here are some examples:

- Share some inspiration through the weak signals of change you identified in the *Horizon Scanning*. Invite participants to share other examples from their local communities
- Ask participants easy questions that make them reflect and connect the present and the future. For example, *What did you experience today that you want/don't want to keep experiencing in 10 years?*

3. INCLUDE ICEBREAKERS: SOCIAL AND CREATIVE

Breaking the ice is essential in a workshop. Beyond breaking the ice in the social layer, as participants need to get to know each other, we strongly recommend it is also done in the creative layer. Here are two examples of icebreakers, but you can use any icebreaker that has worked for you in the past:

Social Icebreaker: *Two Truths and a Lie* (Klaxoon, n.d.)
Creativity icebreaker: *Squiggle Birds* (Gray, 2015)



Example of the 'squiggle bird' icebreaker done during an online session of this workshop

4. BUILD A MAGIC CIRCLE

The magic circle is the invisible line that separates a game from ordinary life, providing limits of time and space (Huizinga, 1938, p.22-23). This workshop, on some level, is a game or space of play, where participants will imagine and dream, where judgement is suspended and everything is possible. Demarcate this space for participants, and encourage them to design the space themselves. In practical terms, you can:

- Bring in a set of game rules or decalogue (see image on the right). You can make it participative by asking participants to complete it. For instance, you can ask them to write down what *imagination* means to them, collect the papers, and arrange them as rules of the game.
- You can make the circle tangible by representing it in the space, making stepping in and out of the circle an embodied experience. You can create a door or portal that they have to cross or a line on the floor.

DURING THE NEXT THREE HOURS, IN THIS ROOM...

We are not yet searching for solutions

We imagine for the sake of imagining

We only start questions with 'what if'

All ideas are welcome in the future we are imagining

The only wrong answer is no answer

We act freely

Example of 'rules of the game'

5. EMPOWER THEIR ALREADY CREATIVE MINDS

Help them realise they are, in fact, already creative in their daily lives. When bringing in examples of creativity, make sure you draw into the daily work of your participants. For example, regenerative farmers are very resourceful and constantly prototyping new ways of farming.

6. MAKE IT RELATABLE

It is easier to imagine when we have familiar references. That is why it is important to contextualise the workshop in a localised environment where you can bring in references known by all participants, who, although from diverse backgrounds, will share the same language, relatable knowledge and lived experiences. Make sure at least 30% of the signals of change you bring into the workshop are happening in the local context so participants will be inspired to think of alternative futures they can relate to.

7. GIVE BACK

Finish the workshop with a pact on how to bring their imaginations forward. This will bring respect and value to the work they did during the workshop. You can write a manifesto, or stories about the futures they imagined, which can be used to advocate for change in institutions (see the *Storytelling* activity in the guide *A. Methodology and tools*, p.32).

FACILITATION

TESTING

It is essential to test before the workshop with participants and implement improvements. You can test the whole activity or just the parts you believe will be more challenging. If the facilitators are not involved in the workshop design, we recommend doing the testing with them and improving based on their feedback, which can increase their sense of ownership. By experiencing the workshop themselves, facilitators will also become more familiarised with the content and tools.

BRIEFING FACILITATORS

If the workshop facilitators are not involved in the design, share a brief and have a live session before the workshop with participants, where you can do a dry run and let facilitators ask questions, get familiarised with the materials and adapt it to their facilitation style if needed. As a brief, you can share the 5W and agenda developed during the workshop design, together with guide *A. Methodology and Tools* and guide *C. Workshop Facilitation*.

REHEARSING

Ideally, facilitators will practice the facilitation of the workshop beforehand. They can rehearse among themselves.

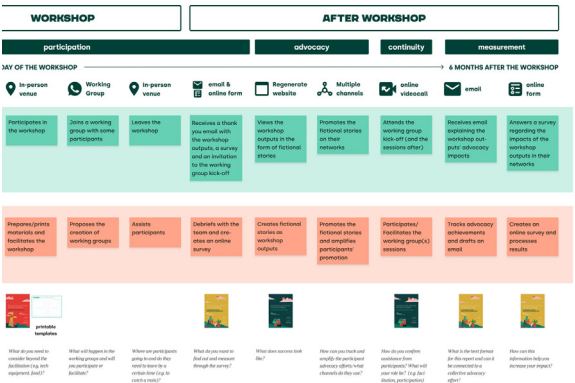
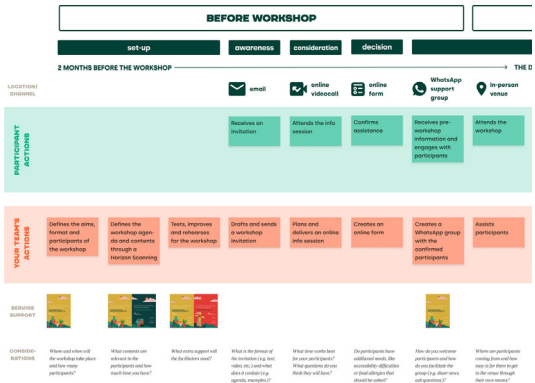
FACILITATION ROLES

Consider the facilitation needs of the workshop and assign roles to the facilitators (see table on the right). Although some roles can be shared by the same person, consider stress levels during the session. For example, past facilitators of this workshop have mentioned struggling with time-keeping while engaging with the groups.

POSSIBLE FACILITATION ROLES

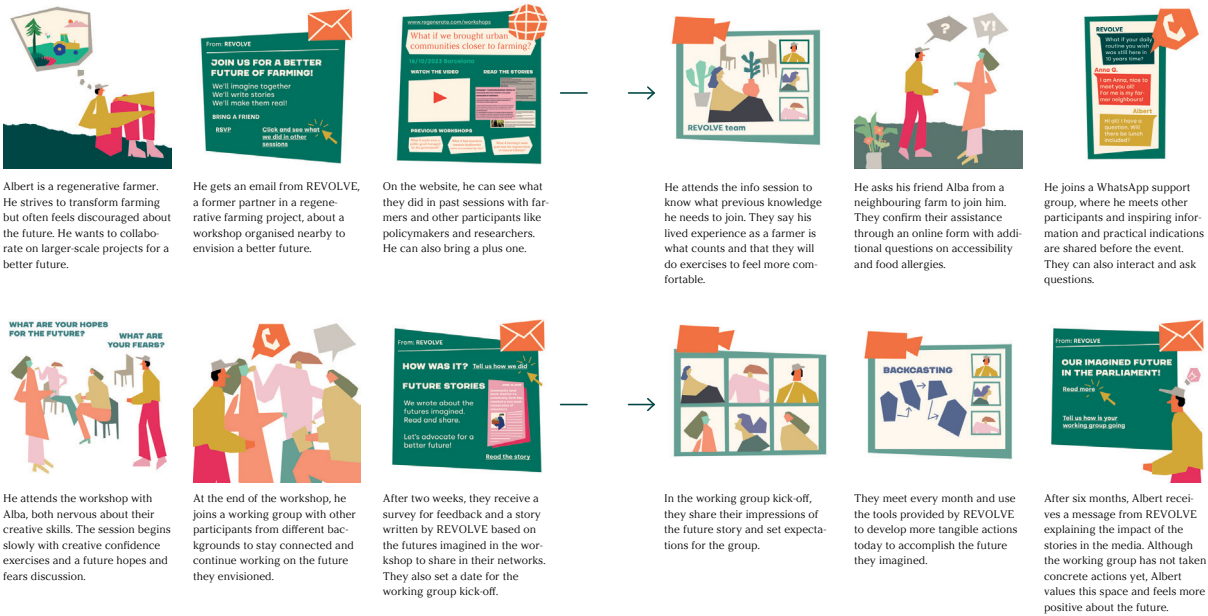
Master of ceremonies
Group facilitator
Time keeper
Technical support (screens, catering, etc.)
Documentation (photos, videos and note taking)

To support the design of this wider experience, we have created a simplified version of a service blueprint, a tool used by designers to help identify different stages of engagement with their users and list all that needs to be in place for them to be delivered (Service Design Tools, n.d.). Here is the blueprint corresponding to the example in the previous page that you can take and adapt.



THE BEFORE AND AFTER EXPERIENCE

To successfully run a workshop and ensure participation, you should consider the participant engagement and support before and after the workshop. We recommend that you plan for all those actions in advance and consider them in your design.



DEBRIEF: EVALUATE AND IMPROVE

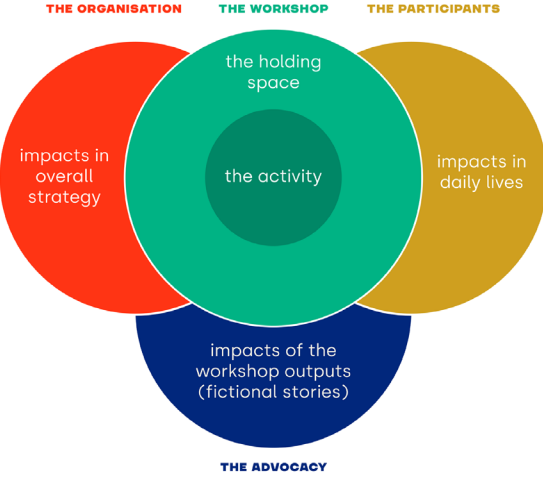
Continuous improvement is key if you want to adapt this methodology to your participants' needs and design a workshop truly aligned with your goals. That is why we propose that as part of the design, you also plan for a debrief session to evaluate the workshop results and plan for improvements. We propose you consider the following three elements for a thorough evaluation:

1. EVALUATE DIFFERENT ASPECTS (image p. 27)

- The activity itself:** How were the exercises received? Did the mechanics and timing work? How satisfied are you with the outputs of the workshop? The tool *Start-Stop-Continue* can help evaluate this aspect.
- The holding space:** How comfortable did participants feel? How conducive was the space for imagination? Was there a lack of hospitality or clarity, and was it safe enough? How much can this space spark collaboration beyond the workshop through working groups?
- The impacts on your overall strategy:** Have you accomplished what you were trying to accomplish? What are the impacts of this workshop on your team? How does it align with other projects?
- The impacts on the daily lives of the workshop participants:** What did participants learn as individuals? How can they apply it in their daily lives? Are participants more hopeful about the future after the workshop? Are they changing anything in their daily lives?
- The advocacy impact of the workshop outputs (i.e. fictional stories):** Where were the fictional stories showcased? How much impact did it have on the participants' networks? How much impact did it have at policy decision-making levels?

2. MEASURE IN DIFFERENT MOMENTS

- During the workshop
- After the workshop
- We also suggest evaluating after six months, especially to learn about the impacts, which might take more time to materialise.



3. CONSIDER DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

It is important that you not only reflect on your experience but the one of those working with you (McKercher, 2023).

- Facilitators
- Participants

These evaluation elements can be translated into specific actions to gather feedback and reflect. Here are some suggestions for actions you can take:

	IN THE WORKSHOP	AFTER THE WORKSHOP	AFTER 6 MONTHS
YOUR TEAM		design team debrief session facilitator team debrief session	impact evaluation session
WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS	quick debrief at the end of the workshop informal chats during breaks	post-workshop survey	6-month impact survey

REFERENCE LIST

Gray, D. (2015) *Squiggle Birds*. Gamestorming. Available at: <https://gamestorming.com/squiggle-birds/> (Accessed: 25 October 2023).

Klaxoon (n.d.) *Two Truths and a Lie*. Available at: <https://klaxoon.com/insight/two-truths-and-a-lie-more-great-lies-ideas-to-play-as-a-team> (Accessed: 25 October 2023).

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McKercher, KA. (2023) *About the Model of Care for Co-design*. Available at: <https://www.loom.com/share/1370ed33bbef450a82326d77411952de> (Accessed: 1 November 2023).

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Shorter, R. (2021) 'The Imagination Sundial', *Doughnut Economics Action Lab*, 15 April. Available at: <https://doughnuteconomics.org/tools/101> (Accessed: 29 October 2023).

C. Workshop Facilitation



FUTURES EXPLORATION

C. EVIDENCE SAFARI

Design a prototype for the evidence safari to make sure you are adding all the information needed. You can later use this format or any other to display the information. Get creative!

HEADLINE

It should contain an overview of information.
Max. 20 characters

TOPIC

Define topic categories of information based on the previous Horizon Scanning

SUMMARY

Expand on the headline by summarising the most relevant information.
Max. 80 characters

VISUAL

A graph, a picture or an illustration

SOURCE

FUTURES EXPLORATION

E. REFLECTION

Choose 2-3 pieces of information and report back to your group with the highlights. Write them here. Think about the following questions when you are exploring the information placed around the room.

What keywords stand out?

How could this affect people's daily lives?

How could this affect your daily life?

What does this mean for farmers?

Who is affected by these issues?

Who benefits from these issues?

If this became the new normal in the future, what do you think the future will look like?

FUTURES EXPLORATION

D. HOPES & FEARS

Place yourself in ____ years and think of your own life. Maybe you've had children or grandchildren for the first time. Maybe you've retired or changed your career.

What do you hope for this future?

What do you fear for this future?

HOPES

FEARS

WORLDBUILDING

F. JOURNEY INTO THE FUTURE

Help participants step into the future and activate their imagination through a brief narration. Use this structure as inspiration to build your narration. In orange, some examples:

INTRODUCE THE FUTURE: Briefly introduce the new future and the drivers of change
Take a deep breath, and close your eyes.
Place yourself ____ years from now, in the year ____.
It is not a utopia, it is not a dystopia either, but the result of doing absolutely everything we could have done between now and then to make the world a better place. A world that is only possible because ____.

TALK ABOUT HOW WE GOT THERE: Use a balance between facts from today's challenging situation and end on a positive note, amplifying some of the weak signals of change from your research.
____ years ago, in ____, (introduce facts and weak signals of change)

MAKE IT PERSONAL: Make them think of themselves in this future by bringing in some examples of what they could be doing.
In these ____ years, some of you have had children for the first time, and some of you have sent your children off to college. Some of you might have changed your careers.
Imagine yourself somewhere in Europe, in the year 2033. It might be your city or town. Picture this place, picture how much it has changed.
Picture what your life could look like, and now place yourself in one day in this life.

APPEAL TO THE SENSES: Bring in concrete sensorial experiences: the smells, the colours, the textures, etc.
Imagine the sounds: you hear more insects flying and buzzing around you.
Inhale deeply and take in all the smells around you. The soil is wet, and you can smell the manure from the cattle pasturing nearby.

PREFERABLE FUTURE IS NOT PERFECT FUTURE: Balance your inspirational narration with some challenges that this future still faces
Today, the world seems to be a better place. However, we still face many challenges: ____.

FINISH WITH A QUESTION THAT LEADS TO THE NEXT ACTIVITY: Reinforce the importance for imagining the world more concretely.
To function in this way, the future has many new things. New objects, new projects, new companies, new initiatives, even new laws. What does this future feel, smell or look like? What things are happening on a day-to-day basis? What does this mean for farming?

WORLDBUILDING G. OBJECT CARDS (1/2)

This is a selection and adaptation of object cards from the game The Thing from The Future (Situation Lab, 2015), selected to support rapid brainstorming. Print these sheets and cut them out!

ADVERTISEMENT	ART	BOOK
BROCHURE	BUILDING	COMPANY
EVENT	FLAG	GAME
HEADLINE	KIT	LAW
LOGO	MACHINE	MAP

G. OBJECT CARDS (2/2)

PASSPORT	PILL	PLANT
POSTCARD	PRODUCT	FOOD
SONG	TOOL	VEHICLE
DEVICE	VIDEO	BEVERAGE
CLOTHES	FESTIVAL	GIFT
POSTER	SLOGAN	MASK

WORLDBUILDING H. RAPID BRAINSTORMING

Get a piece of paper and fold it in 4 parts to write or draw an idea in each one of the folds. Use the cards placed on the table for inspiration and the following questions for guidance.

What does the daily life of people look like?

What does your daily life look like?

What do farms look like?

What does your town or city look like?

What new places do people go to?

What new objects exist in this world?

Are there new services or new initiatives, promoted by the government or private organisations?

Do you see yourself doing a new project?
What does it look like?

STORYBUILDING I. 5W + OBSTACLES

Use the following structure to brainstorm about the content of the story. You can use words, drawings or pictures. This is a tool to help you brainstorm as a group.

WHAT

What is happening in the story?
What are the main elements you want to bring in? -
Products, crop types, tools, equipment, laws, cultural elements...

WHO

Who is the main character? - Name, age, occupation, family...
What do they think about the world you've built?
Are there other characters? - Enemies, allies...

WHEN

What time of the day, day of the week, month of the year, etc.?
What season? What is the weather like?

WHERE

Where does it take place? - which country, city/ countryside, indoors/outdoors, home/public place...
How does this place feel or smell like?
What do you see when you look around?

WHY

Why is the world like this?
What disruptive events happened since the present? - Think about the political context, the resources available...

OBSTACLES

The future you are imagining is not perfect. People still experience difficulties when interacting with it.

What is one challenge, obstacle or setback that your characters are experiencing?

Who is affected negatively in this future?

STORYBUILDING

J. CHARACTER BUILDER

Use the following structure to help you craft a person in your story.

Draw!

CHARACTERISTICS

Name, age, occupation, family, etc.

PERSONALITY TRAITS

Extrovert vs. introvert, adventurous vs. safe, empathetic, creative, etc.

SAYING

A traditional refrain you imagine them using often

DAILY LIFE

Routines and habits

POSSESSIONS

Things that always bring with them or cherished belongings

POSITION

What do they think about the world you've built?

'SUPERPOWER'

Most valuable skill, that potentially can be leveraged in the story

CHALLENGES

Main barriers faced in their personal and/or professional life

BACKCASTING

L. EVENT CARDS

These cards can help participants think of what type of events can be mapped in the backcasting exercise. Print this sheet and cut it out!

NEW POLICY	NEW PROJECT OR INITIATIVE	NEW PACT
NEW HABIT	NEW PATENT	NEW TECHNOLOGY

GOVERNMENT ACTION	CORPORATE ACTION
INDIVIDUAL SOCIAL ACTION	COLLECTIVE SOCIAL ACTION

BACKCASTING

K. 'TIMELINE'

Write up your vision of the future and the year you see that vision in. Think of what pieces of this vision are already in place today.
Draw a line from the future to the present - it is not necessarily a straight line, it can have curves, loops or not be a line altogether. It will depend on how you want to visualise time.
Use the cards to imagine a series of events that need to take place during this timeline to realise your vision of the future. Use the questions to think about the actions (what can we do) and how can these be realised (which support and resources).

What needs to be done?

What support will we need and from whom?

What resources will we need?

PRESENT DAY

Year _____

What does the present day look like?

FUTURE VISION

Year _____

What does your vision of the future look like?

What pieces of your vision are already here?

STORYTELLING

M. NARRATIVE STYLE

Choose a narrative style for your story. Some formats for inspiration and suggested structures:

Novel style, in first or third person

Video/Trailer

Letter/email

Diary entry

Pamphlet/Brochure

Newspaper

Poem

Debate/conversation

Comic/storyboard

Descriptive text

Meme

Tale/fable

5 act structure, for guidance

exposition

rising action

climax

falling action

resolution

Newspaper - sample structure

newspaper name

headline

abstract

picture

small headline

small headline

small headline

Settings - examples

"This is Channel 1 reporting on..."

"The Rogers 2033 Global Conference is about to start..."

"Welcome back to Farmer of the Week. This week, we are speaking with..."

Personal letter - sample structure

Address, name, date

Dear ...

I was so happy to receive your letter...

Here things have been hard/easy/exciting/...

I am really struggling with... But I feel very grateful for...

I hope hear from your trip...

Love,

Tale - sample structure

Once there was...

And every day...

Until one day...

And because of that...

Until finally...

And ever since then...



*Re*generate
**CULTIVATING
THE FUTURE**

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2023