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# Co-creation in partnerships contributing to sustainability

*Insights from 52 case studies in Europe*

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In cooperation with FoodDrinkEurope, ANIA, FIAB, Confagricoltura, ICLEI, Cariplo, Philea, FZK, EFFoST, SEAMK, and ERIAFF as contributors to the case studies



# Presentation of WP2 “support the development of the prototype partnership”



## Different tasks:

- Mapping and analysing co-creation concepts in food domains
- Development of the Food Systems (FS) Approaches and Observatory
- Experimenting with a new *Modus Operandi* and KPI's
- Design of the Governance model to guide the future Partnership

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- Mapping and analysing co-creation concepts in food domains → Publication\*
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**Co-creation concept:** considered as a joint and collaborative process of producing new value (Galvagno and Dalli, 2014\*\*)

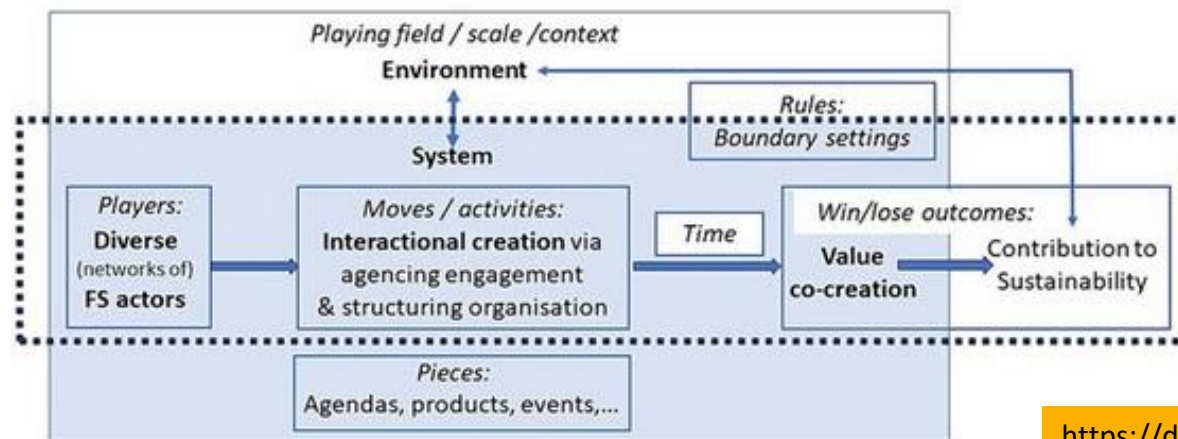
\*<https://doi.org/10.3389/fsufs.2024.1399275>

\*\*<https://doi.org/10.1108/MSQ-09-2013-0187>

# Objectives of this study

- Un-raveling the variety of co-creation cases for their contribution to the sustainability of food systems
- Understanding how actors collaborate to reach common sustainability objectives
- Developing a **co-creation concept for partnerships in real life**

**Figure 2:** Co-creation is at the core of partnerships that contribute to sustainability in food systems taking into account the seven building blocks of a game.



# Methodology



52 cases of partnerships contributing to the sustainability of food systems collected

→ Described thanks to the game structure developed by de Vries et al. (2022)

→ Analysed in a recent publication (de Vries et al. 2024)

Name of the food systems co-creation case / Country  
 One or two key features:  
 Status (starting, running, on-hold, stopped):

DESCRIPTION of the case  
 History of co-creation between actors: ..  
 Which ambitions and objectives: ..  
 Evolution of their governance model and organisation: ..  
 What external input and output: ..

Illustrations

The seven Food System building blocks (like in a GAME):

Food context (playing field)	Food Actors (players)	Products (pieces)	Food / handling activities (moves)	Boundary conditions (rules & incentives)	Results (outcomes regarding sustainability)	Timing of actions (duration)

FOOD ACTORS: what are their roles, how do they interact, and what are then their common objectives (max 3)

Actor's strength (what specific skills, or competences, or assets or are provided?)	Flexibility of actor (is an actor adapting to others in this case and how?)	Interactions between diverse actors (do actors form a cluster, network?)	Common focus as 'cluster' of actors (do actors jointly define a goal(s)?)	Joint objectives with other 'clusters / FS' (do clusters work with others?)

Some words about the sustainability behaviour of actors): ..  
 Main sources: ..  
 Contact person: ..

Figure 1: An impression of the used template, based on the building blocks of a game

## References:

de Vries, H., Donner, M., Axelos, M., 2022. Sustainable food systems science based on physics' principles. Trends in Food Science & Technology 123. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tifs.2022.03.027>

# Many inspiring cases, like

- Milan Food Waste Hubs, 
- Echt Schwarzwald, a regional initiative & brand to preserve the landscape and its products, Germany 
- Organic Public Procurement, Denmark, since 2001 
- Ecotrophelia Europe ‘The Student Awards of Food Innovation’ 
- Pôle Mer Méditerranée for the blue economy 
- ....



**Figure 2:** Pictures of a Milan Food Waste Hubs workshop and a Pôle Mer Méditerranée event (sources: cases websites)



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Name of the food systems co-creation case / Country: **Pôle Mer Méditerranée/France**  
 One or two key features: **Innovation platform**  
 Status (starting, running, on-hold, stopped): **running**



**DESCRIPTION**

**History of co-creation between actors:** Launched in 2000 by the Marine & Submarine Network to stimulate collaboration between smalls and big firms, research actors around one precise theme. Pole Mer Méditerranée also interacts with his brother site Pôle Mer Bretagne Atlantique in order to exchange their skills and experiences.

**Which ambitions and objectives:** The main objective is to sustainably develop blue economy, including fisheries, through innovation. It is first created to stimulate competitiveness but sustainability is on top of the agenda.

**Evolution of their governance model and organisation:** Implemented together with research centres (such as Ifremer, Marseille Oceanology Centre) and regional firms. Public actors have been integrated in the partnership after having been labelled “Pôle de compétitivité”.

**What external input and output:** call for regional sustainable projects via public funds, services for supporting firms growth.

The seven Food System building blocks (like in a GAME):

Food context (playing field)	Food Actors (players)	Products (pieces)	Food handling actions (moves)	Boundary conditions (rules & incentives)	Results (outcomes regarding sustainability)	Timing of actions (duration)
Région Sud	Small firms, groups	Regional economic development projects	Calling for projects	Market laws, language (French)	Support Research and development projects	Financing sustainability-oriented projects 2000 : creation of Toulon Var Technologies
Blue Economy	Research centre	Services for enhancing businesses' growth	Supporting regional blue economy business		Supporting the development of small regional business	2005 : labelled "pôle de compétitivité"
	Ecosystem (professional associations, banks, consultants...)				Financial sustainability of the region via innovation and competitiveness	2013 : Pôle PACA become Pôle Méditerranée because of its new international ambitions

# Main outcomes

## Development of a co-creation concept

- **Diversity of actors in the 52 mainly private sector-driven cases:**

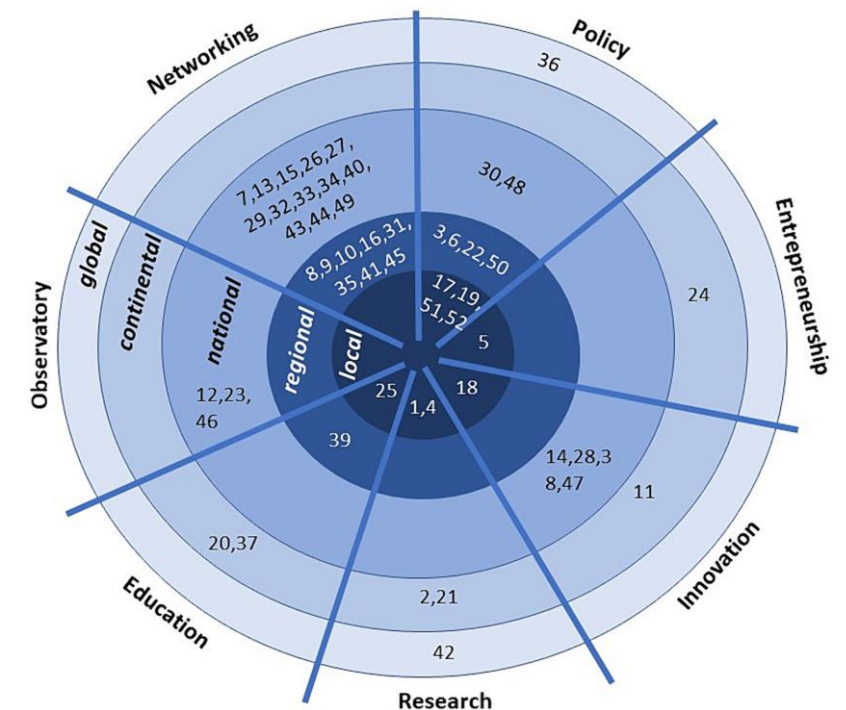
→ multiple interacting actors: they can work together in different configuration in FS

→ co-creation concept seen as an **open innovation process** (innovating beyond the scope of a single actor), **mostly between in industry and academy**

- **Types of partnership- orientations and their operating scales**

→ importance of **diversity & kinds of interactions between actors** in different environments resulting in **different forms of partnerships**

→ most dominant partnership types: **networking-oriented (40%)**, at national/regional scales (42%) followed by **policy-oriented** partnership at local and regional scales





# Main outcomes

## *Development of a co-creation concept*



- **Joint objectives and strategies**

- 'inclusiveness' correlates with a high diversity of partners & their objectives in all the cases
- **innovation and economic competitiveness** remains the dominant orientation for the private sector
- **co-creation** activities often focus **on the organization of the partnership itself** (operational and organizational challenges), rather than on joint activities.

- **Contribution to the sustainability of food systems**

- main aim of networking is still to **increase competitiveness** (economic dimension of sustainability, 15 cases)
- first examples of FS cases in which three dimensions are integrally considered are emerging: most clearly in the **observatory-oriented partnerships** but also **networking and policy-oriented partnerships**

# Conclusion

food|paths



Our scientific contribution underlines how important **co-creation and interactions between diverse actors in different partnerships result in a common defined sustainable value creation.**



**Thank you very much for your attention!**

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# Sources

