There is a general consensus of the global character that should now drive the governance of AF ecosystems, which requires, simultaneously, the satisfaction of the demands of local people that are more affected by conservation policies and the mitigation, at a tolerable cost to current generations, of the irreversible destruction of the unique natural and cultural heritage of the AF ecosystems. Hence, we need to explore new modes of governance that can facilitate the transition to multifunctional systems. Current design and evaluation of agri-environment schemes and Rural Development Plans are often criticized for the difficulties for identifying the most effective schemes or “best practice examples”, since they are always adapted to regional characteristics and needs.

More flexible governance structures could contribute to the design of better and more effective policy measures aimed at the preservation and expansion of agro-ecosystem services. Assessing sustainability in different economic, social and natural contexts, also can contribute to the assessment of the sustainability of high-nature value agricultural systems themselves. Appropriate implementation processes for agro-environmental measures to be applied by stakeholders at the operative (farm) level; Bottom-up methodologies for the integration of stakeholders in innovative processes and supporting the development of research agendas including integrative perspectives.

Consequently, an important effort should be made to put together trans-disciplinary knowledge towards a common objective of sustainable agricultural systems which provide multiple agroecosystem goods and services. Also, to make the respective scientific knowledge effective, it will be essential to downscale it to the farm-level in order to fit the real needs for rural societies