

Session 1: Introduction to Project Management (PM) in Agroforestry (09:30–10:30)

Objective

Understand what defines a project and how general project management principles apply to agroforestry initiatives. Recognize the unique challenges but also the barriers of agroforestry projects and the importance of a structured approach.

Key Topics

What is a Project?

Distinguish projects from routine work (a project is a temporary endeavor with specific objectives). Use an agroforestry example, such as establishing a new plot or farm silvopasture pilot, to illustrate the definition. Emphasize that projects have a lifecycle (start and end) and milestones and deliverables at the end.

Project Management Basics

Introduce the concept of managing knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to meet project objectives. Outline key phases (initiation, planning, execution, monitoring, closure) which will be explored in depth later.

Why Project Management in Agroforestry?

Discuss how agroforestry projects benefit from good management:

- **Long timelines** (woody perennials (trees/shrubs) growth meaning ecological frame change) that requires sustained and sustainable planning and adaptation from the beginning to the end.
- **Multi-disciplinary scope** (ecosystem services delivery, agriculture, community) needs coordination of expertise.
- **Multiple stakeholders** (farmers, researchers, policymakers, retailers, processors, community groups, etc..) must collaborate over time.
- **Funding** often comes from competitive grants or public programs, requiring clear proposals and accountability, but also from private funds.

In short, applying Agroforestry Project Management (PM) frameworks improves efficiency, minimizes risks, and increases impact of agroforestry in the farm business.

Challenges Unique to Agroforestry: Brainstorm or present common challenges

- Long project horizons (woody perennials including trees and shrubs take years to mature) implying managing time over time.
- Multiple-goals (productive, ecosystem services, social outcomes) that can lead to scope creep if not clearly defined.
- Environmental uncertainties (weather variability, climate change, pests) and policy changes that can derail plans.
- Stakeholder cooperation– e.g., balancing farmer needs with conservation goals and regulations.

- **Common PM Methodologies:** Briefly mention that there are established methodologies like **Waterfall (linear stages)**, **Agile (iterative cycles)**, and **Hybrid approaches**, as well as formal frameworks like **PRINCE2** or **PM²** (used in EU institutions). Assure participants that the training will touch on the best of each, without heavy theory.



CASE STUDY: Upfront Planning & Support – Silvopasture Establishment (France)

See AF4EU Factsheet: Archambaud, C. (2025). Presentation Of Silvopasture Systems. AF4EU. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19235008>

This AF4EU factsheet presents silvopastoral systems where livestock (cattle, sheep, poultry) are integrated with trees and hedgerows. The success of these systems depends heavily on early planning decisions, including tree placement, livestock rotation, and harvest timing. For example, farmers must plan grazing exclusion periods to prevent damage to fruit or soil and coordinate rotations across multiple plots to maintain productivity. The system also requires aligning species choice, soil conditions, and farm objectives from the outset.

Project Management Aspects:

- Detailed upfront system design (tree–livestock interactions, rotation schedules)
- Planning for seasonal constraints (grazing vs. harvest timing)
- Integration with farm operations and long-term productivity goals
- Advisory support to guide complex system setup

Key Takeaway:

Silvopasture systems succeed when carefully planned from the beginning. **Upfront design and advisory support** reduce **management conflicts** and ensure **long-term productivity and sustainability**.

Ask participants if they have seen similar initiatives or what initial impressions they have on why some projects succeed versus fail.

Interactive Exercise – Past Project Reflections (15 min): Each participant (or small groups) reflects on a previous agroforestry, agricultural or forest project they were involved in and identifies **one key challenge** they faced. It could be unclear goals, stakeholder conflict, delays, etc. Invite a few to share. Prompt the group to consider “*What project management tools or practices might have helped address those challenges?*”. Got some answers on a flipchart (e.g., “clearer objectives,” “better task planning,” “risk planning”). This creates a needs awareness that the upcoming sessions will tackle.

Tip for Success: “*Well-defined objectives prevent scope creep.*” – Reinforce that a project without clear goals can easily drift off-course. Throughout the training, we will emphasize setting and sticking to clear objectives.