



UNE RICHESSE À CULTIVER

# Mobilising Citizens to develop local, organic agriculture in France



Demeter Conference Land Sharing versus Land Grabbing

16 October 2012, Brussels

# French Background: land and agriculture (1)

## A country where agriculture is still important

First agricultural country of the EU:

- 3,5% of the GDP, 65 M € (incl. agrofood business)
- agriculture : 53% of the UAA
- 500 000 farms, 3,4% of the active population

## A regulated land market

> Planning by local authorities (at different levels)

> SAFER : private bodies with a mission of general interest: regulating the agricultural land market and promoting the setting up of farmers.

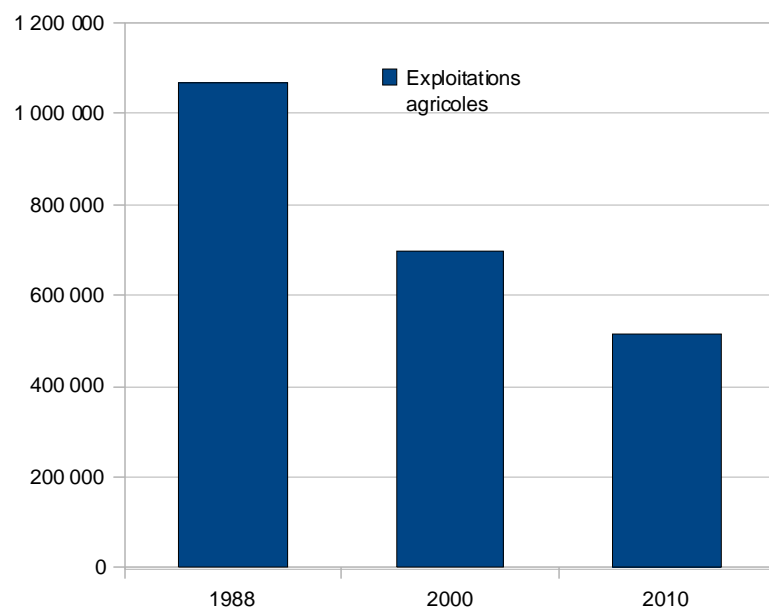
> Legal body protecting farmers' rights

**But difficulties...**



# French Background: land and agriculture (2)

## Decreasing farm number and agricultural area



**- 50% in 22 years**



**-75 000 ha/year on average (1988-2010),  
with an acceleration in 2000- 2010**



# French Background: land and agriculture (3)

## Pressure on agricultural land

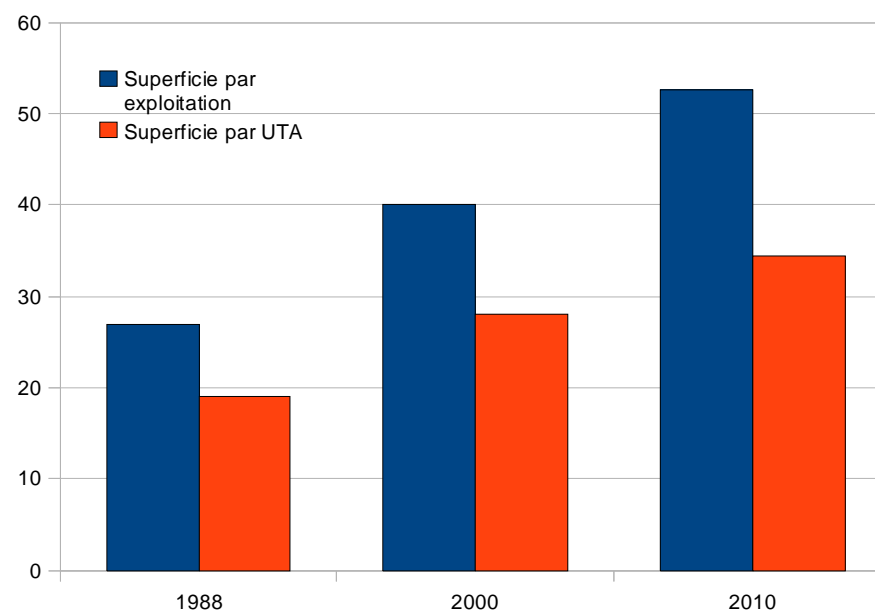
➤ An increase in farm size:

+ 50% in 22 years

➤ An increase in land prices:

+ 75% in 14 years

(3030 €/ha in 1997, 5360 €/ha in 2011)



# French Background: organic agriculture is under-developed

> **Almost 40% of organic products are imported**

French agriculture does not meet increasing consumers' demand

> **Only 3,5 % of the UAA are organic**, while the government took a commitment to develop it to 20% within 10 years.

> **Access to land** is a major obstacle to the development of organic agriculture, in particular for **new entrants** (with no agricultural family background)



# Terre de liens (1): a citizen movement

Alliance of citizens and farmers to set up or maintain local, organic farmers, by supporting their access to land



## Terre de liens (2): finalities

- **Preserving agricultural land and ensuring good land stewardship (land = common good)**

Changing the relationship with the land, with individual property. Freeing the land from speculation.

- **Building collective responsibility**

Enabling all citizens and stakeholders to get involved in land management, creating solidarities, changing agricultural models.

- **Contributing to the development of local, organic/ peasant agriculture**



# Terre de liens (3): ways of working

> Raising awareness and mobilising citizens

> Raising savings and donations, and acquiring land/buildings

\* *Foncière* (ethical, solidarity-based investment fund): savings collected from citizens, consumers, inhabitants...

\* *Fond* ( $\cong$  foundation): donations in cash and kind (farms)

> **Setting up and supporting collective, multi-stakeholders territorial dynamics**, in order to facilitate the setting up of a young farmer, creating a green belt, monitoring the land situation, etc..

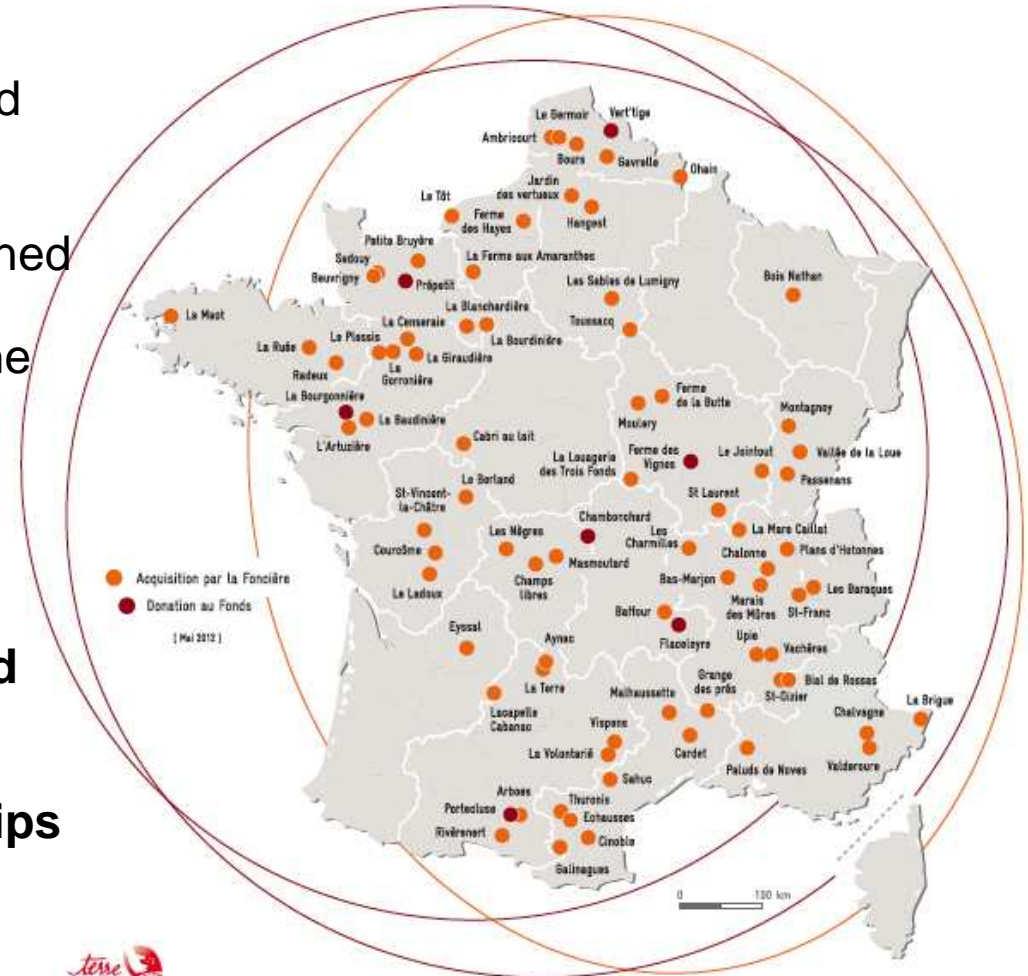




# Terre de liens (4): some results...

Since 2003 :

- > About **10 000 citizens** mobilised and active in Terre de liens
- > Over **150 farmers** set up or maintained
- **A hundred farms acquired**, or in the process of being acquired
- Over **2200 hectares** dedicated to organic and peasant farming
- Over **200 future farmers supported every year**
- > An increasing number of **partnerships with local authorities**



# Terre de liens (5): a tool for land stewardship

## Preserving agricultural use of the land

- Preserving land directly (through acquisition) and indirectly (by supporting the set-up of collective ownership models, and citizen-private partnerships with local authorities)
- Mobilising citizens in the debate about land use and land planning

## Promoting sustainable use of the land

- Supporting organic, biodynamic and peasant farmers
- Signing Environmental Lease with farmers, comprising legally binding environmental clauses



## Terre de liens (6): a tool for citizens' participation in agriculture

- Promoting farms engaged in short supply chains and direct consumers-farmers relations
- Promoting farms producing public goods (preservation of rare breeds, incubators, pedagogical and cultural activities..)
- Raising citizens' money and creating new solidarities (old/ young, urban/ rural..)
- Building local groups to support farmers
- Involving citizens in land use and land planning

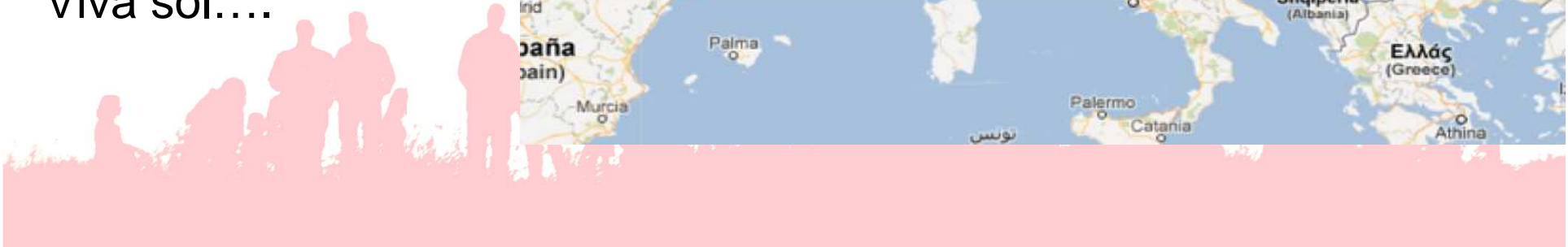
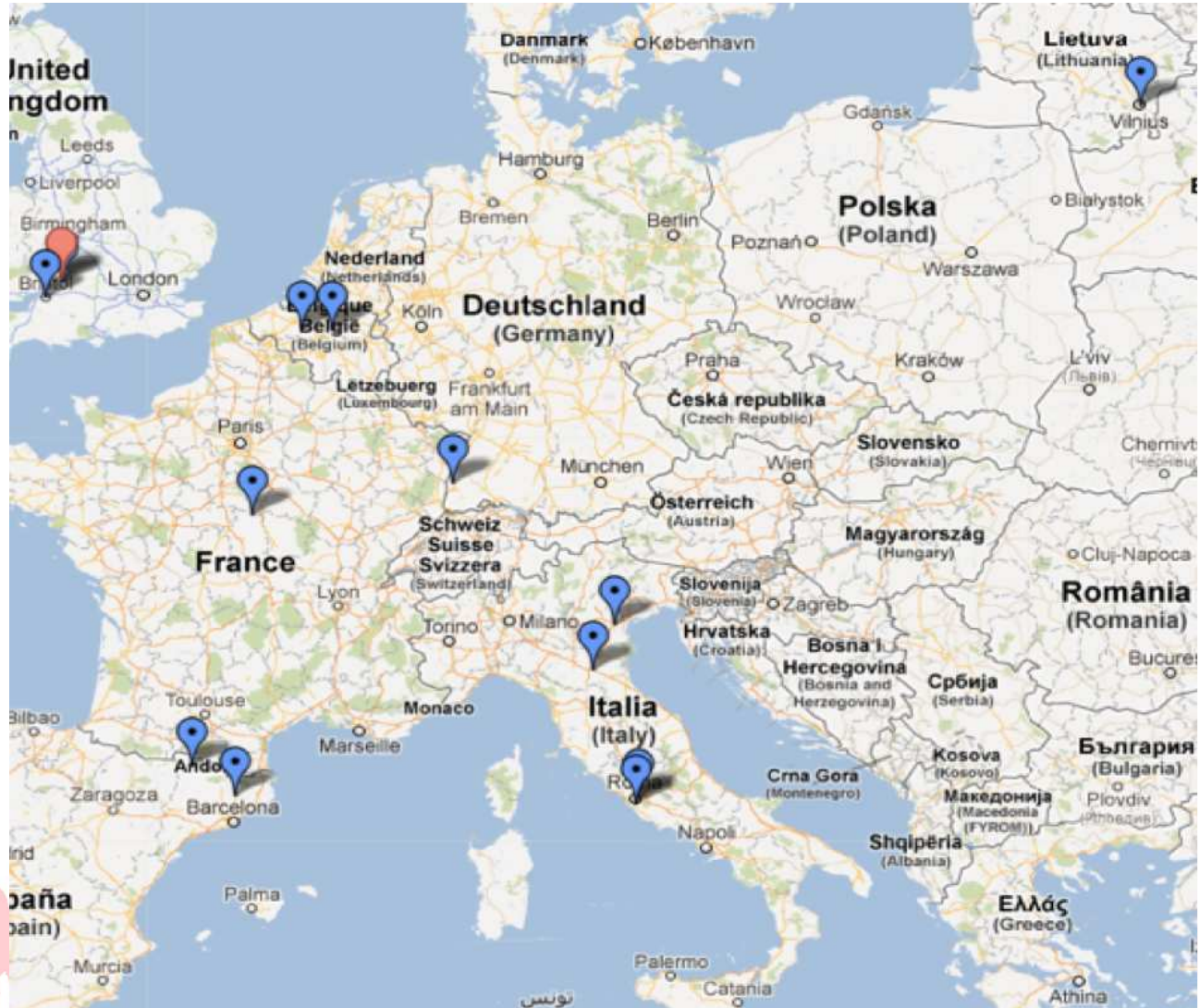


# European Network on Access to land (1)

**An informal network of civic organisations**

> About twelve organisations, mostly from Western Europe

> Including: Soil Association Land Trust, Regionalwert AG, AIAB, Rurbans/ Escola de Pastors, XCT, Terre de liens, Viva sol....



# European Network on Access to land (2)

## Main features of member organisations:

- ✓ Supporting local, sustainable agriculture
- ✓ Focusing mostly on setting up and supporting young and future farmers
- ✓ Citizen-based and involving diverse stakeholders (municipalities, consumers, ethical banks, environmental organisations...)
- ✓ **New solidarities** (urban/ rural, inter-generational) and use of solidarity-based financial tools
- ✓ **Often multidimensional** : access to land, but also training, technical support, support for marketing in short supply-chains, etc.



# European Network on Access to land (3): main learnings

**> Need to act specifically and voluntarily on land access**

Growing consensus for local, civic agriculture... but on which land?  
And with which farmers?

**> Citizens' enthusiasm and commitment to get involved**, including financially, in order to maintain specific forms of agriculture on their territory

**> Opportunity to promote agricultural models which have benefits for local territories**, whether economic, social and environmental: a key challenge at the time of a large generation renewal of farmers

