



The transition in action : agroecological initiatives around Montpellier and Nîmes



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Diapositive 1

PS2

Pascale Scheromm; 24/05/2017

Context: The ABEILLE Project

ABEILLE = an action-research project
on the creation of **agroecological initiatives** by **local public actors** in
periurban areas

...created in partnership with three institutional actors:



1. **Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole (Hérault):**
Public Policy on Food and Agroecology



2. **Municipality of Saint-Denis (Gard):**
Plans to reintroduce agricultural activities near the community and
facilitate the sale of local agricultural products



3. **Syndicat Intercommunal des Etangs Littoraux (SIEL):** responsible for
the sustainable management of natural areas, in connection with
agricultural activities

The ABEILLE Project

Document and contribute to local agroecological initiatives

Action – research

→ Scientific studies that respond to the questions posed by project partners



Build a wider knowledge community around agroecological initiatives

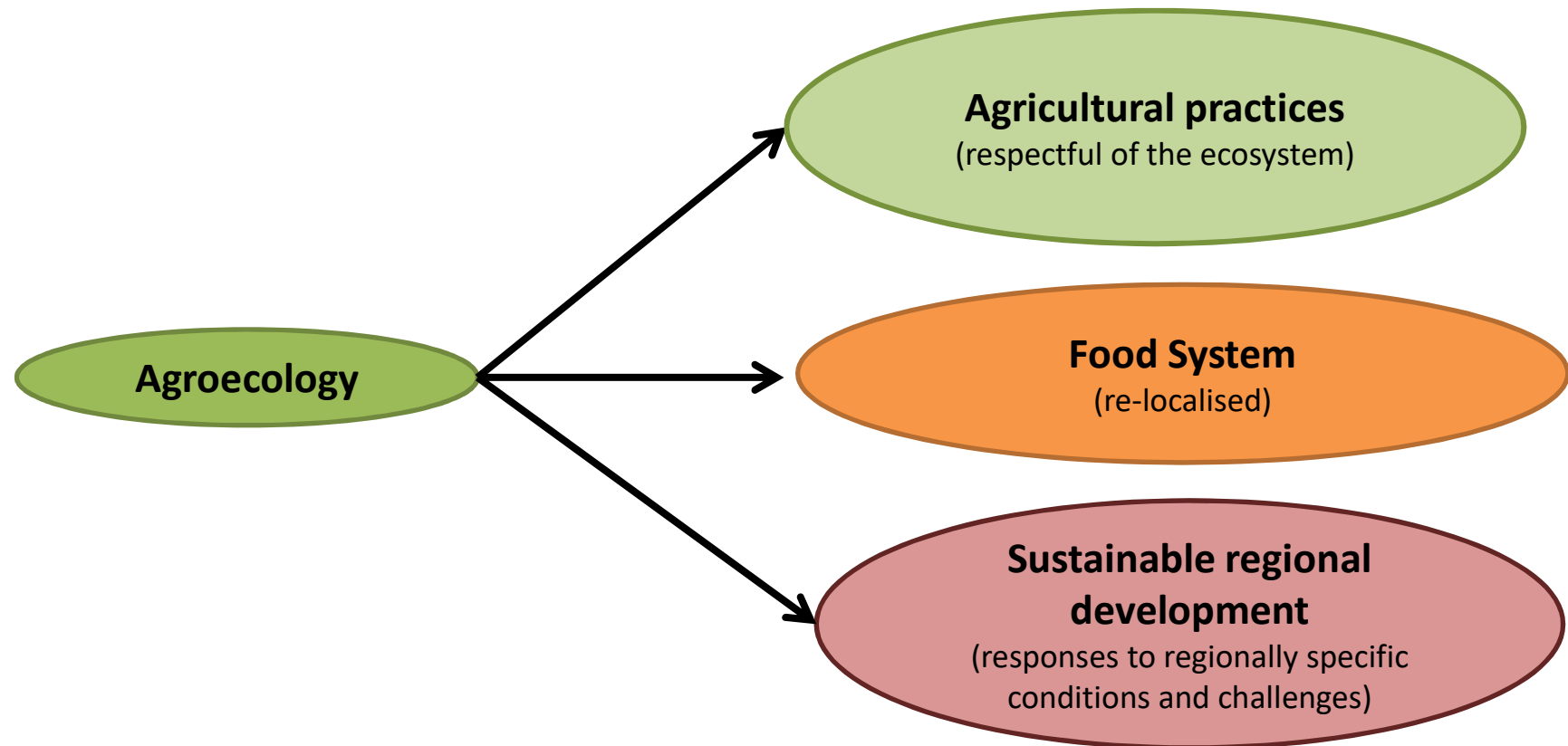
Networking and communication

→ Topic-specific workshops that bring together institutional actors and scientific researchers



Analysis of institutional agroecological initiatives in periurban areas

The agroecological transition



The agroecological transition near cities : specific challenges for periurban areas (Hérault and Gard)

- Rapid urbanisation
- Decline of the farm sector, proliferation of unused farmlands, land speculation
- Increasing importance of environmental protection measures (Natura 2000, ZNIEFF)



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... a difficult context for the emergence of agricultural projects

- How do agroecological initiatives in periurban areas emerge ?
- Who are the actors behind these agroecological initiatives and how do they interact ?



Diapositive 5

PS1

on travaille uniquement sur le Gard et l'Hérault

Ce serait mieux de mettre une carte de France avec l'emplacement de ces départements et de situer Montpellier, Villeneuve et St Dio sur la carte, ou la carte qui vient après et que je viens de voir

Pascale Scheromm; 24/05/2017

Study sites



Four agroecological initiatives

- Tool for the study of the initiatives : **Chronological Analysis**

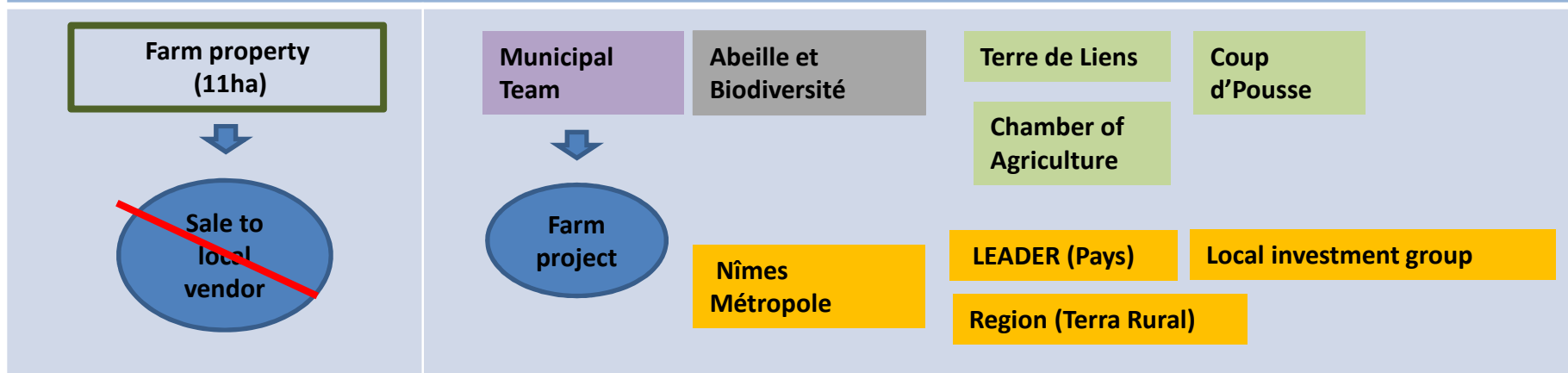
= a detailed history of the **actors** involved,
the **actions** taken,
the effects of **context** (municipal politics, environmental
protection measures, etc.)

Four Agroecological Initiatives: Main actors

Time



Saint-Dionisy: Settlement of organic farmers; construction of storage spaces and a local farm shop



Villeneuve-les- Maguelone: Creation of farmland clusters and settlement of farmers on coastal lands

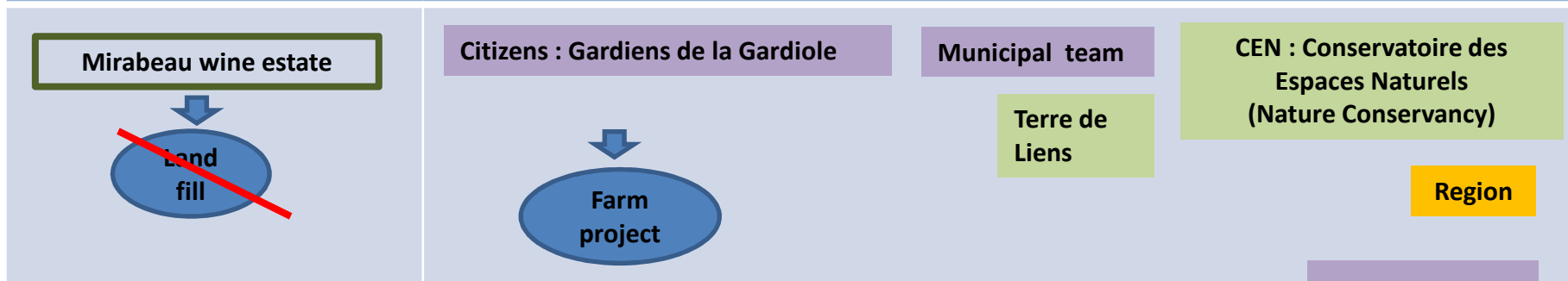


Four Agroecological Initiatives: Main actors

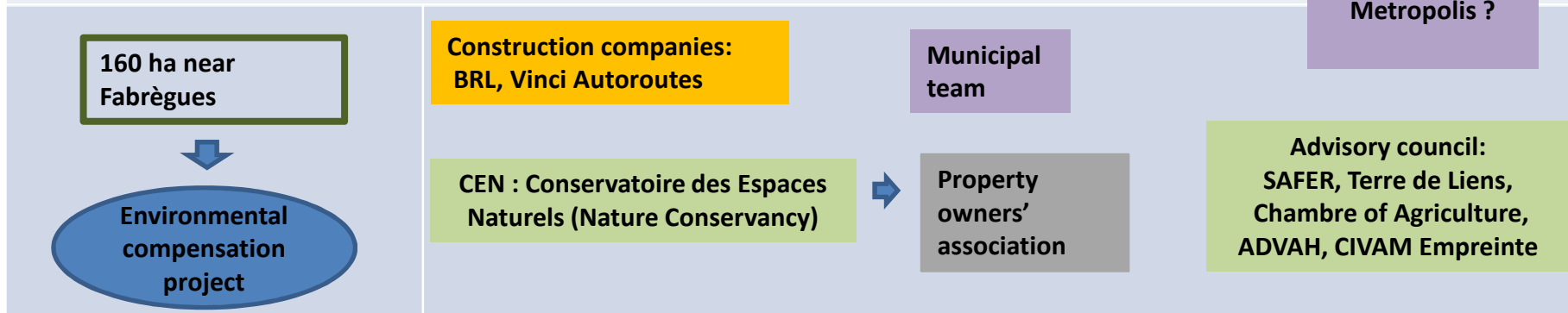
Time



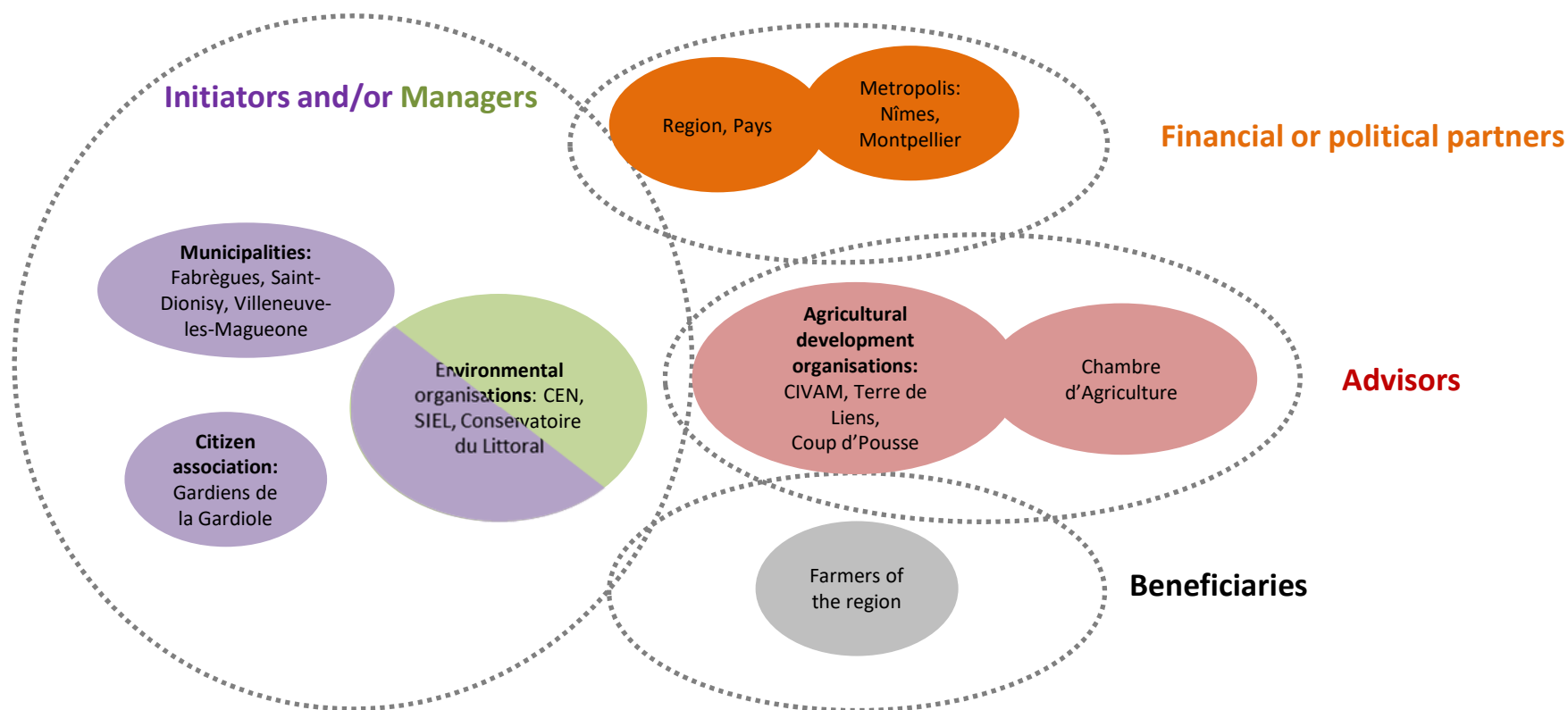
Fabrègues : Preservation of a local wine estate and creation of an agroecological farm



Fabrègues : Re-introduction of open-range sheep farming on degraded pastureland



Key Actors behind Peri-Urban Agroecological Initiatives: local actors can take on a diversity of roles



Different agroecologies as a function of the actors who lead the initiatives :

- **Municipality of Saint-Dionisy and Fabrègues:** « organic agriculture, locally commercialised »
- **SIEL / CEN:** « biodiversity-restoring agriculture » (Natura 2000)
 - Primary criterium: Control of shrubs and weeds (overgrowth)
 - Secondary criteria : organic production or respect of environmental standards; local sale of farm products; small or medium-sized farm

First conclusions

- The agroecological initiatives documented in the ABEILLE project engage **actors whose function is not principally in the field of agriculture** :
 - urban public actors (municipalities, Metropolis)
 - Civil society: citizen associations
 - environmental managers
- **Farmers** are integrated into **decision-making processes**, but usually in the later project stages:
 - definition of the project by institutional actors → collaboration with partner institutions → proposal to farm candidates

- In order to put into place an agroecological initiative, local public actors must resolve a certain number of challenges related to agricultural development:
 - How can local public actors **secure access to farmland for agroecological projects** ?
 - **How can they** favor the **commercialisation of local products** ?
 - What types of **environmental standards** should be proposed to farmers in relation to the local context ?
 - How can **urban conglomerations** support them?

→ There is a strong demand for an accompaniment that will strengthen the operational knowledge of local public actors in the sphere of agricultural development

Thank you for your attention



ABEILLE

Document and contribute to local agroecological initiatives

Action – research

- Scientific studies that respond to the questions posed by project partners
- Workshops that bring together diverse local actors on each study site



Build a wider knowledge community around agroecological initiatives

Networking and communication

- **Topic-specific workshops** that bring together institutional actors, farmers and scientific researchers



In order to facilitate agroecological initiatives, we propose...

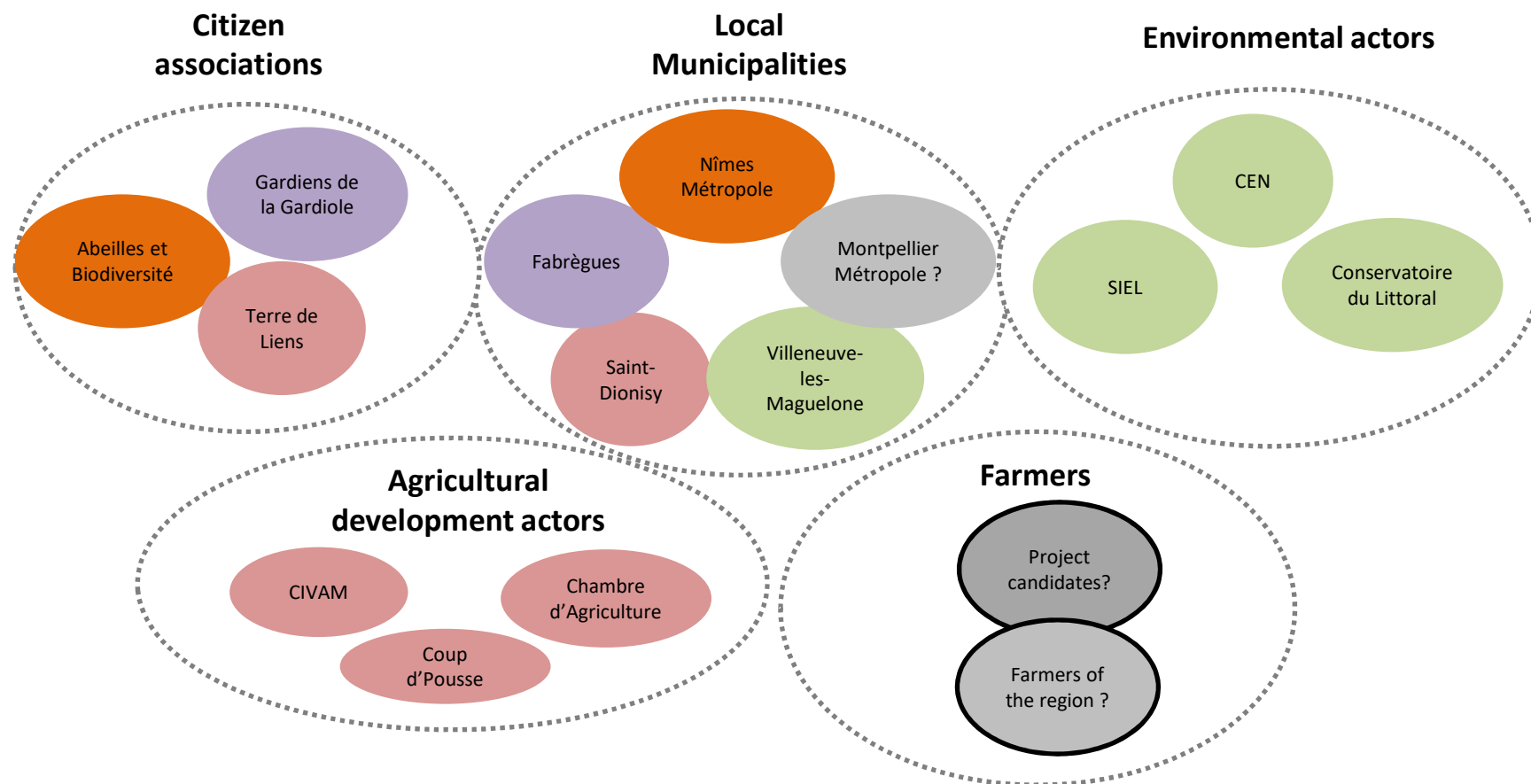
- A more profound **integration of farmers** into decisional processes, even in the early planning stages
- The **creation of resources** (research results, planning guides for agricultural development....) that respond to the **specific needs of local institutional actors**



ABEILLE Web site

- **Links, videos, and tutorials** on specific topics relevant to local agroecological initiatives (effective land use planning, environmental standards, local value chains...)
- **ABEILLE mailing list**

Key Actors behind Peri-Urban Agroecological Initiatives:



- **Local actors can take on a diversity of roles :**
 - **Initiators:** municipalities, environmental actors, environmental citizen associations
 - **Co-managers :** environmental actors, municipalities
 - **Advisors:** agricultural development organisations, agricultural citizen associations
 - **Financial partners:** municipality, public grants (Metropolis, Region), citizens
- **Actors may play multiple roles, change roles, or disappear from the initiatives at certain stages**
- **Open question :** what role for farmers and Metropolitan regions as project partners ?

La P2A (Politique Agroécologique et Alimentaire) de Montpellier Métropole:

- 1) Consolider le tissu des **fermes agro-écologiques en vente directe**
- 2) Favoriser l'**approvisionnement local** de la ville (restauration collective)
- 3) Mobiliser **les citoyens** autour de l'alimentation et du lien producteur – consommateur
- 4) Promouvoir la diversité des **produits emblématiques** du territoire ; développer l'**agro/l'oenotourisme**
- 5) Soutenir les **entreprises innovantes** dans le domaine de l'agroalimentaire
- 6) Reconquérir des **terres agricoles**