Boosting carbon initiatives in livestock farms

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Introduction / Background
To meet the objectives of the Paris Agreement, the French livestock sector have taken steps to reduce the carbon impact of their products by 15 to 20%. These approaches are based on training for stakeholders involved in the sector, environmental and carbon assessment on farms, the development of action plans and support for livestock farmers. An Monitoring Reporting Verification CAP’2ER & CARBON AGRI approach has been developed to ensure the certification of carbon gains. Based on a global approach to the farm, it makes it possible to ensure consistency between all productions of a farm and thus to optimise the carbon cycle, the nitrogen cycle, forage and protein autonomy, and the use of animal waste... This multi-criteria farm approach provides a new technical angle for agricultural advisory services in boosting decarbonation of the agriculture sector.

Methods / Approach
In order to remove the obstacles to changing practices and certify the emission reductions and additional carbon storage allowed by the low carbon programs, the Institut de l'Elevage, the interprofessions (CNIEL, INTERBEV) and the Confédération Nationale de l'Elevage have developed the CARBON AGRI methodology. Approved by the Ministry in charge of the Environment, the methodology benefits from the French Low Carbon Label (decree n°2018-1043 and order of 28 November 2018) which guarantees the quality, transparency and certification of GHG emission reductions.

References / Links

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2. I4CE for their support in writing the CARBON AGRI methodology

Results
For its implementation within the framework of projects, this MRV method offers a monitoring framework based on carrying out CAP’2ER® carbon audits on farms in parallel with the implementation of support measures for farmers and the verification and certification of carbon gains. It is a multi-lever approach to livestock and feed management, reduction of input and energy use, and cropland - grassland management. Thanks to the implementation of 3 or 4 levers on a farm, the GHG emission reduction potential is between 15 and 20% and represent a CO2 reduction in a range of 300 to 500 tons on a five years period. To date, 2 collective projects bringing together 1 300 farmers has been certified by the Ministry of Environment for a total reduction of 700 000 tons CO2.

Figure 1 : Implementation of carbon initiative in farms

Conclusions / Significance
The implementation of the CARBON AGRI method and the related projects help to boost the low carbon approaches. This voluntary low carbon policy creates a ripple effect mobilising a significant number of stakeholders (farmers, territories, external buyers and civil society) with a common collective goal of fighting climate change. Experience acquired (i.e. methods, carbon finance mechanisms, contracting procedure) will outline a common framework for the replication of an EU carbon farming strategy across Europe.