



# Orchestrating agroecological transitions

A critical reading of the DyTAES experience in Senegal

Raphael Belmin, Marc Piraux, Astou Diao Camara & Absa Mbodj

Dakar, February 2026



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This report was produced as part of a collective capitalisation process based on multi-actor workshops. The analyses, interpretations, and conclusions presented herein reflect the views expressed during this collective process and those of the authors, and do not necessarily represent the official positions of all participating organisations, public authorities, or funding institutions.

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# 1. Introduction

**Agroecology is increasingly recognized** as a credible pathway to address intertwined challenges of food security, environmental degradation, and social equity. Yet beyond broad principles, concrete evidence on how agroecological transitions are organized, governed, and sustained at national scale remains limited. Senegal offers a distinctive case in this regard.

Over the past decade, the **Dynamique pour une Transition Agroécologique au Sénégal** (DyTAES) has brought agroecology from dispersed grassroots initiatives to a coordinated national framework for action. It has progressively emerged as an influential coalition, engaging public institutions, research organizations, farmers' movements, and international partners in national debates on agricultural transition.

This report offers a **critical synthesis of the DyTAES trajectory**, situating its emergence within the longer history of agroecology in Senegal since the 1980s. It focuses on the conditions under which the coalition took shape, as well as on the strategic choices and tensions that accompanied its rapid consolidation. By revisiting key phases of its development, the analysis examines how alliances were built, how narratives and agendas were negotiated, and how agroecology was progressively framed as a legitimate object of public policy in Senegal. Rather than celebrating success uncritically, particular attention is paid to limits, trade-offs, and unresolved questions, in order to assess their concrete effects on agroecological transition processes. Addressed to an international audience, the report contributes to broader reflections on the governance of agroecological transitions and distills transferable lessons that may inform similar initiatives in other national contexts.

The structuring question for this study was : *How did DyTAES succeed, in a relatively short time, in structuring the agroecology actor network in Senegal by creating a framework for collective action focused on advocacy, awareness-raising, and the activation of territories in transition?*

The DyTAES experience has been analyzed as a situated case of **niche orchestration**<sup>1</sup>, rooted in Senegal's political and social context, yet rich in lessons that may resonate beyond national boundaries. This report builds on the conceptual framework and empirical findings developed in the referenced study, and further enriches them through a dedicated workshops involving key DyTAES actors and partners. It distills strategic insights and reference points intended to inform researchers, practitioners, donors, and policymakers engaged in supporting agroecology coalitions and long-term societal transformations.

The report first presents a methodology based on collective reflection conducted during two dedicated multi-actor workshops. It then provides a historical perspective on the emergence and evolution of agroecology in the country. The analysis proceeds with a cartography of agroecological actors, highlighting their roles, positioning, and interactions within the national landscape, before examining the current situation and the main challenges shaping future trajectories. Building on this foundation, the report analyses the processes through which the DyTAES and DyTAEL coalitions emerged and became structured, with particular attention to mechanisms of orchestration, territorialisation, and resource mobilisation. Finally, it assesses the impacts achieved to date, identifies key limitations, and discusses the conditions required to ensure the long-term sustainability of agroecological transitions in Senegal.

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<sup>1</sup> Belmin, R., Turnheim, B., Gaillard, B., Boillat, S., Bottazzi, P., Mbodj, A., & Loconto, A. (2026). Niche orchestration in fragmented ecologies of intermediation: evidence from agroecological transitions in Senegal. *Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions*, 59, 101095. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eist.2025.101095>

## 2. Objectives and methodology

The report is built on three main objectives:

1. to analyze the conditions that enabled the emergence and rapid rise of DyTAES within the Senegalese agroecological landscape;
2. to identify key achievements, modes of action, as well as limitations and challenges faced by the DyTAES–DyTAEL agroecology coalition;
3. to distill strategic lessons relevant to both national-level action and support for territorial dynamics.

This study is grounded in **two collective workshops** that structured the analytical process. A first workshop, held in August 2024, brought together a limited group of core actors and focused on reconstructing a shared timeline of agroecology in Senegal from the 1980s onwards, alongside an initial mapping of key stakeholders. This exercise laid a solid analytical foundation but remained partial, as its scope and perspectives were constrained by restricted participation. A second workshop, convened in December 2025, sought to enrich, nuance, and deepen this initial analysis by mobilizing a much broader range of experiences from across the DyTAES network, including insights from territorial dynamics within DyTAELs (departmental declinations of DyTAES). This second moment allowed for cross-validation, refinement of interpretations, and a more differentiated reading of trajectories, tensions, and turning points. The **Table 1** summarizes the methodological approach adopted during the two workshops, while the **Appendix** provides lists of participants and their institutional affiliations.

These two workshops were **co-organized by CIRAD, CGIAR, ISRA BAME and Enda Pronat**, with financial support from the CIAT Multifunctional Landscapes (MFL) project, in direct support of the DyTAES coalition. DyTAES actors and representatives of public institutions were fully involved as contributors to the analysis, engaging in a deliberate exercise of capitalization and reflexivity. The process was designed to support internal learning, strengthen governance and strategic coherence, and enhance the coalition's capacity to act and position itself. At the same time, it aimed to make the specific features of the DyTAES experience more intelligible to external partners and to actors engaged in agroecological transitions in other national contexts.

**Table 1****Methodological approach adopted during the two workshops**

Session and Focus	Main objectives	Methods and guiding questions
<b>First workshop</b>		
Historical reconstruction and situational analysis	Establish a shared analytical baseline on agroecological transition (TAE) in Senegal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collective construction of a chronology based on key events and processes related to the three components of TAE (science, practices, social movements) and the broader external context</li> <li>• Discussion of the role of external actors and international geopolitical dynamics (donors, transnational actors, regional policy dialogue frameworks)</li> <li>• Development of a periodization of agroecological dynamics since the 1980s</li> </ul>
Diagnosis of the current situation	Identify major challenges and obstacles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collective discussion on (i) the current state of agroecological transition in Senegal and (ii) key constraints and bottlenecks</li> </ul>
Stakeholder mapping	Identify key actors and configurations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mapping of major actors across the science–practice–movement triad</li> </ul>
<b>Second workshop</b>		
Consolidation of the initial analysis	Strengthen and validate the analytical foundations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Validation and refinement of the proposed periodization</li> <li>• Validation and deepening of the diagnosis of the current situation, challenges, and obstacles</li> </ul>
Emergence and resource mobilization	Analyze the formation and structuring of DyTAES and DyTAEL dynamics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of the context and processes through which DyTAES emerged</li> <li>• Examination of how the DyTAES network was orchestrated</li> <li>• Analysis of the emergence of DyTAELs and the construction of DyTAES–DyTAEL relationships</li> <li>• Exploration of resource mobilization and mutualization mechanisms linking diverse projects and actors to DyTAES/DyTAEL action plans</li> <li>• Identification of key success factors</li> </ul>
Impacts, limits, and sustainability	Assess outcomes and long-term conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment of concrete impacts in relation to DyTAES charter objectives (advocacy, awareness-raising, territorial support)</li> <li>• Analysis of the role of the three agroecology caravans in scaling up DyTAES and DyTAEL dynamics</li> <li>• Examination of changes in national policy dialogue and the evolving position of the State vis-à-vis DyTAES and agroecology</li> </ul>

## 3. Historical trajectory of agroecology in Senegal

This section synthesizes the historical trajectory of agroecology in Senegal. A more detailed analysis of this trajectory as a process of niche development is presented in Belmin et al. (2026).

### 3.1. Phase 1 (1980–1993): Fragmented emergence and early critiques of conventional agriculture

The first phase corresponds to the emergence of **scattered sustainable agriculture initiatives** in the 1980s, in a context marked by severe climatic shocks, structural adjustment policies, and the crisis of the groundnut-based agricultural model. During this period, agroecology did not yet exist as a consolidated framework. However, a plurality of alternative references was already circulating, including organic agriculture, pesticide-free agriculture, and “healthy and sustainable agriculture”. These initiatives were led by pioneering NGOs and development actors, focusing on soil fertility restoration, composting, erosion control, and, later, botanical or biological alternatives to synthetic pesticides, particularly in horticultural systems.

At the research level, **early work on composting and soil organic matter** began to appear within national research institutions, although these efforts remained marginal and weakly connected to development programmes. These initiatives were underpinned by a critical discourse on conventional agriculture, increasingly perceived as degrading soils, undermining farmer health, and deepening socio-economic vulnerabilities. Internationally, this phase coincided with growing concern over desertification and land degradation, reinforcing the legitimacy of alternative approaches, but without translating into coordinated national strategies.

### 3.2. Phase 2 (1993–2014): Alignment with family farming social movements

The second phase marks a gradual consolidation of agroecology through its **alignment with broader struggles around family farming**, food sovereignty, and farmers’ rights. The creation of the CNCR (National Council for Consultation and Cooperation with Rural Communities) in 1993 represented a turning point, as farmer organisations increasingly challenged dominant intensification policies and advocated for alternative development pathways. Supported by national NGOs and international movements such as Via Campesina, agroecology became progressively embedded in political and social claims rather than remaining a purely technical alternative.

This period also saw the emergence of **organic agriculture standards** and certification initiatives, partly in response to pesticide-related controversies. Many agroecological initiatives clustered geographically, particularly in the Groundnut Basin and the Niayes region, often around NGOs based in Thiès. Research institutions - both national and international - played a growing role in documenting practices, assessing impacts, and legitimising agroecology. Despite this increased structuring, agroecology remained weakly institutionalised. It was recognised as a legitimate alternative discourse but lacked a unified national platform capable of engaging decisively with public policy.

### 3.3. Phase 3 (2014–2019): Networking and early institutional experiments

From 2014 onwards, agroecological actors increasingly engaged in multi-partner networking, laying the foundations for a future national coalition. This period is characterised by a growing awareness among civil society organisations, farmer organisations, and researchers of the need to move beyond fragmented initiatives and towards a more coordinated and politically audible collective.

A key milestone of this phase was the organisation of the **first editions of the Agroecology Days** in 2016 and 2018. These events were initiated by the NGO Enda Pronat and a group of actors sharing a strong ambition to unite the agroecological landscape and to collectively advocate towards national decision-makers. The Agroecology Days played a crucial role in fostering inter-knowledge, building trust across organisations, and shaping a shared narrative of agroecology as both a technical and political project. They contributed significantly to the emergence of a collective identity and to the recognition of agroecology as a legitimate topic of public debate. In parallel, several coordination spaces and **multi-actor platforms emerged**, strengthening interactions between NGOs, farmer organisations, research institutions, and development partners. The creation of the National Programme for Ecological and Organic Agriculture (PNAEB), aligned with African Union frameworks, reflected early attempts to translate agroecological principles into public policy, although its operational scope and political leverage remained limited.

Despite these advances, agroecological **value chains were still embryonic**. Farmers' markets, organic labels, and niche initiatives faced structural constraints related to irregular supply, weak consumer awareness, and limited infrastructure. Some local governments began experimenting with territorial approaches to agroecology, but national political authorities and major donors remained cautious. Overall, this phase can be described as one of collective identity building and network consolidation, without yet achieving full institutional recognition or policy influence.

### 3.4. Phase 4 (2019–2025): Coalition building, territorialisation, and institutionalisation

The **creation of the DyTAES in 2019** marks a decisive shift and the beginning of a new phase characterised by coalition building, territorialisation, and entry into the national political agenda. The construction of this coalition was facilitated by an increasingly favourable national and international context. At the national level, public statements by President Macky Sall in support of the agroecological transition contributed to opening a political window of opportunity and to legitimising agroecology as a credible policy option.

At the international level, the **growing recognition of agroecology** - particularly through frameworks such as FAO's "10 Elements" - and the alignment of donor agendas with sustainability and climate objectives further strengthened this momentum. Importantly, within DyTAES, consensus was built around shared principles of agroecology rather than a fixed definition, allowing diverse organisations to align without reopening divisive conceptual debates. Donor support increased significantly during this period, providing the DyTAES with unprecedented visibility, resources, and leverage in policy dialogue arenas. As a result, agroecology became structured as a national collective project, bringing together more than 92 organisations by 2025 and articulating advocacy, territorial activation, and policy engagement. Concrete policy outcomes followed, most notably the integration of organic fertilisers into national subsidy schemes, illustrating the coalition's capacity to translate advocacy into institutional change.

Simultaneously, **agroecology was territorialised** through the creation of local DyTAEL platforms since 2021, embedding national ambitions within locally grounded transition processes. Research institutions increasingly aligned with the coalition, contributing to action-research, capitalisation, and policy-oriented knowledge production.

However, this phase also remains marked by persistent tensions. Agroecological measures coexist with strongly productivist agricultural strategies, resulting in a dual policy framework. Rather than a complete paradigm shift, Senegal has progressively moved towards a vision of coexistence between green agribusiness and agroecological systems, as reflected in recent foresight exercises such as Agro-Eco 2050<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Prudhomme, R., Ahoun, V. D., Fall, C. S., Piroux, M., & Dorin, B. (2025). Analyse prospective de l'agriculture sénégalaise en 2050: agro-industrie versus agroécologie?: Rapport sur la prospective «AgroEco2050-Sénégal». Food & Agriculture Org.

## 4. Actors of agroecology in Senegal

To analyse the agroecological landscape in Senegal, actors were categorised and positioned within a triangular analytical framework (**Figure 1**) designed to capture both their level of engagement in agroecological transition and their positioning within the science–practice–social movement triptych. Because most actors operate across multiple domains and frequently blur sectoral boundaries, it was neither possible nor desirable to assign them to a single pole. Instead, the triangular diagram was used to position actors along gradients, reflecting hybrid roles, differentiated commitments, and evolving trajectories.

### • Non-Governmental Organisations

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) play a central role in the technical support of farmers engaged in organic agriculture and agroecology. Their approaches are heterogeneous. Some organisations, such as Enda Pronat, promote a radical transformation of practices, including the complete abandonment of synthetic pesticides. Others, such as AgriSud, adopt more pragmatic transition pathways, closer to integrated or “reasoned” agriculture. Beyond technical support, NGOs are highly active within agroecological social movements, notably the DyTAES and DyTAEL. They also collaborate closely with research institutions through action-research frameworks, contributing to the testing, validation, and scientific legitimisation of agroecological practices.

### • Community-Based Organisations

Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) operate either as direct implementers or as partners in farmer support and advisory systems, often under the coordination of NGOs, producer organisations, or research projects. Their engagement with agroecology is highly uneven. Some CBOs are strongly committed and actively mobilise their members around agroecological transition. Others adopt more opportunistic strategies, engaging primarily to access project-based resources. A third group remains passive or resistant, continuing to promote conventional agriculture. As such, CBOs cannot be treated as a homogeneous category in terms of agroecological commitment.

### • Producer organisations and federations

Producer Organisations (POs) and federations primarily engage in advocacy related to conventional agriculture, with the notable exception of the National Federation for Organic Agriculture (FENAB), which promotes agroecology as a holistic societal project. POs act as spokespersons for farmers’ knowledge in interactions with the State and international institutions and serve as key intermediaries between farmers, public authorities, NGOs, and development projects. Some POs also play an active role in agricultural advisory services, although agroecology is not systematically central to their mandates.

### • Individual agricultural entrepreneurs

In recent years, a new category of agricultural entrepreneurship has emerged in Senegal, situated between family farming and large-scale agribusiness. These individual agricultural entrepreneurs are typically engaged in business-oriented, input-intensive farming systems and are rarely aligned with agroecological principles. Their growing presence represents both a structural transformation of the agricultural sector and a challenge for agroecological transition.

### • Public agricultural advisory services

Public advisory bodies such as the National Agency for Agricultural and Rural Advisory Services (ANCAR) support farmers and farmer networks in agronomic monitoring and innovation. However,

due to limited internal resources, their interventions are highly dependent on externally funded projects. As a result, their engagement with agroecology varies considerably across territories and is largely shaped by donor priorities rather than by a coherent national strategy.

- **Local governments**

Local governments play an increasingly visible role in agroecological transition. Some municipalities are organised within the Network of Green Cities and Villages of Senegal (REVES), which promotes local agroecological policies and natural resource protection. Certain communes, such as Ndiob, have developed explicit agroecological visions that provide a strategic framework for partner interventions and have translated into concrete changes in practices. Other communes and departments have integrated agroecology into their Communal or Departmental Development Plans (PDC/PDD), while some focus more narrowly on natural resource management, such as tree protection.

- **Universities**

Universities contribute primarily through training. They educate students who later integrate research-support schemes, state services, producer organisations, and NGOs. Universities thus play an indirect but essential role in sustaining the agroecological ecosystem by renewing human capital.

- **Applied research institutions**

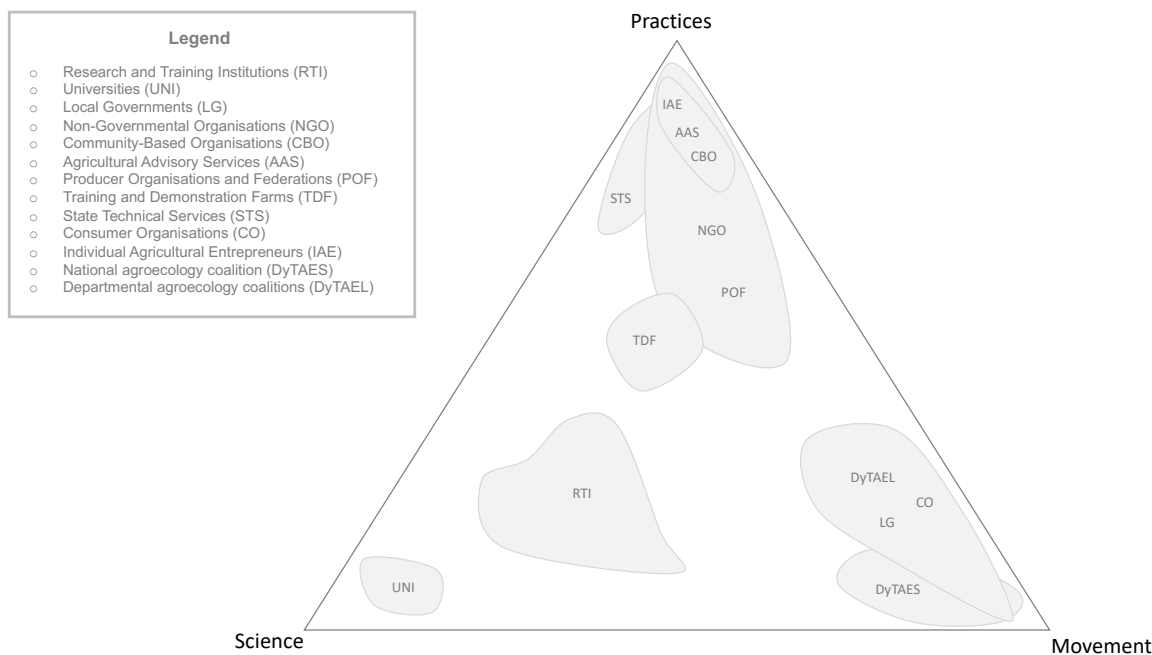
Applied research institutions (CIRAD, ISRA, IRD, IPAR) contribute to agroecological transition through the production of scientific knowledge closely connected to field realities. Their activities include laboratory research, action-research partnerships, and student training. ISRA plays a distinctive role by combining fundamental and applied research, particularly in pesticide regulation and the development of sustainable alternatives. These efforts directly support farmers by providing locally adapted solutions, thereby strengthening the resilience and sustainability of agricultural systems.

- **Training and demonstration farms**

Pedagogical farms in Senegal (e.g. Kaydara, Quatre Chemins) play a key role in practical training for young farmers, students, and agricultural entrepreneurs. These farms implement integrated and innovative systems often considered among the most advanced expressions of agroecology in the country. Serving as demonstration sites for development projects, they combine theoretical knowledge with hands-on experimentation. Their founders are generally involved in agroecological social movements such as DyTAES and DyTAEL, although they do not occupy central leadership positions.

- **State services**

State services play a mixed role in agroecological transition. Their primary mode of intervention remains the distribution of chemical fertilisers, partially substituted by organic fertilisers over the past three years. In the absence of a clear national agroecology strategy, their actions are highly dependent on local dynamics, individual actors, and project-based initiatives - particularly those driven by DyTAEL platforms. This opportunistic and donor-driven approach limits the durability and coherence of state engagement in agroecology.



**Figure 1** : Agroecology actors are positioned within a triangular diagram in order to assess their respective levels of engagement across the science–practice–social movement triptych.

## • Consumer organisations

Consumer organisations such as CICODEV Africa advocate for agroecology through the lens of healthy and sustainable food systems. They are active members of agroecological social movements at both national (DyTAES) and pan-African (AFSA) levels. Their activities include the development of Territorial Food Plans, the promotion of school gardens, the sourcing of agroecological products for school canteens, and the establishment of territorial markets, thereby strengthening demand-side dynamics of agroecological transition.

## • DyTAES and DyTAEL platforms

The DyTAES is a national coalition bringing together 92 organisations and leading agroecological advocacy at the national level. It focuses on capitalising agroecological initiatives, knowledge, and experiences, and on building synergies across actors through a shared action plan. Flagship activities such as the Agroecology Days and the Agroecology Caravans raise public awareness and strengthen multi-level dialogue from local to sub-regional scales. Through policy briefs and position papers, the DyTAES contributes to the institutionalisation of agroecology as a development model for Senegalese agriculture. DyTAEL platforms perform similar functions at the departmental level, supporting the integration of agroecology into local development plans.

## 5. Emergence and structuration of the DyTAES and DyTAEL coalitions

This section analyses the context and processes through which the DyTAES emerged and consolidated as a national agroecological coalition. It examines how a heterogeneous set of actors, initiatives, and projects were progressively orchestrated into a coherent network capable of collective action and political engagement. Particular attention is paid to the mechanisms through which the DyTAES was structured and governed, the conditions underpinning the emergence of territorial DyTAEL platforms, and the reciprocal relationships that link national and territorial levels.

### 5.1. Context and factors of emergence

DyTAES was born out of a convergence of previous dynamics bringing together NGOs, farmers' organizations, research, thematic platforms, unifying events, etc., which had reached a political glass ceiling. The pre-existing platforms (PNAEB, TAFAÉ) had enabled mutual understanding and learning, but remained too dependent on projects, insufficiently legitimate, or too sector-specific to carry out credible, unifying national advocacy. Enda Pronat, with its culture of alliances, had been working for years to bring together as many diverse actors as possible to accelerate recognition and support for the agroecological transition, notably through the organization in 2016 and 2018 of the first editions of the Agroecology Days. DyTAES thus appears to be a response to the need to structure the synergy between agroecology stakeholders in a sustainable manner in order to bring about political change.

### 5.2. Network coordination

The NGO Enda Pronat played a central role in orchestrating the establishment, structuring, coordination, and financing of the network. This role has been socially and politically legitimized by its long-standing involvement in agroecological alliances, as well as by its position as founding organization and host of the DyTAES secretariat. The orchestration process did not take the form of authoritarian centralization, but rather relied on distributed leadership, with continuous efforts to involve members in governance, communication, representation, and visible actions. The emergence and functioning of DyTAES also relies on the existence of a core group of organizations capable of reading the political and institutional context, mobilizing financial resources from existing projects without diverting them from their objectives, and creating spaces for progressive engagement for a wide range of actors. The commitment of these organizations is made possible by resource persons who are particularly committed individually to the smooth functioning and sustainability of the network. This mode of operation explains both the rapid rise of DyTAES and its ability to absorb internal tensions without breaking apart.

### 5.3. Emergence of DyTAEL

The emergence of DyTAELs cannot be understood as a mechanical or top-down extension of the DyTAES, but rather as the outcome of situated and path-dependent processes. DyTAELs arise when a specific configuration takes shape at the territorial level, combining a minimal pre-existing local base of actors already engaged around agroecological issues, a political and methodological impulse provided by one or more DyTAES actors, and the opening of a concrete window of opportunity. These windows have taken various forms, including the organisation of Agroecology Caravans, the launch of structuring projects, or moments of territorial recomposition or crisis that created demand for collective action. In this sense, DyTAELs are not created by decree, but crystallise when dispersed initiatives and actors begin to recognise themselves as part of a shared territorial dynamic under favourable conditions.

## Table 2

### Conditions for the emergence of DyTAELs

DyTAEL	Context of emergence	Construction process	Successes	Limitations
Podor	Already structured territory (OP, land consultation framework), strong presence of agroecological actors	Mapping of stakeholders, shared diagnosis, DyTAES support, dialogue with administration, structuring (regulations, charter, bodies)	First DyTAEL, rapid structuring, institutional recognition	Dependence on projects, lack of diversification in funding, lack of synergy with the creation of new platforms
Tambaounda	Existing multi-stakeholder frameworks, strong mobilization during the caravan	Caravan as a catalyst, expansion of stakeholders, vision and roadmap	Large local coalition, visibility and territorial attractiveness, low-cost meeting format, strong commitment from elected officials	Structure and momentum to be consolidated over time
Goudiry	Weak initial structure, few committed stakeholders, existence of a proven model	One-off workshop, ad hoc support from DyTAES, link with Tamba	Awareness of agroecology	No core group, lack of resources
Bignona	Rich agroecological ecosystem, recognized local leaders	Long process (diagnostics, workshops), research and project support	Robust momentum, appeal to young people, structuring projects, local agroecological initiatives and structures, involvement of training centers	High intensity of support, dependence on national projects and actors, low presence of local authorities
Fatick	Scattered initiatives, strong local leadership, strong involvement of local authorities, strong involvement of research actors	Territorial vision, mapping of actors, coaching of research actors on collective intelligence, ideotyping and foresight, shared leadership	Strong roots in producer organizations and elected officials, integration of AE into PDC, strong political recognition, strong ownership of DyTAEL by local actors	Model dependent on strong research support, difficult to replicate
Mboro	Strong agricultural pressure (market gardening, pesticides), competing platforms	Progressive learning, clarification of frameworks, exchange of experiences with other DyTAELs, recent structuring	Growing local commitment, political consideration	Inter-platform tensions and internal tensions around leadership, weak support from DyTAES
Foundougne	Caravan effect, diversity of actors already involved	Successive meetings, gradual structuring, choice of a secretariat, meetings with local authorities	Broad coalition, local recognition	Slow process, risk of conflicts of dynamics
Thiès	High density of diverse and committed actors, urban and industrial pressure, triggering effect of caravans	Long maturation, very late structuring, collective governance, thematic committees	Solid structuring, particularly collegial governance, strong links with local authorities, involvement of training centers	Complexity of coordination
Velingara	Few actors at the outset, sectoral projects as drivers	Regular meetings, project support, attempts at formalization, exchange of experiences with DyTAEL Tamba	Committed core group, minimal continuity	Lack of funding, fragile structure
Mbour	Initiatives led by a few players, support for recent projects	Shared diagnosis, inspiration from others DyTAEL	Emerging momentum, high potential	Fragile leadership, group dynamics struggling to take hold, lack of dynamism despite opportunities support
Oussouye	Research momentum, strong socio-cultural roots in agroecology (nature conservation), core group of highly dynamic actors	Territorial vision, ideotyping, incubator projects, exchange of experiences with DyTAEL Bignona	Strong cohesion, holistic approach to AE, strong support from the Departmental Council	Highly contextualized model

The first DyTAELs established in Tambacounda and Podor, initiated by Enda Pronat, provide early illustrations of this emergence process. In both territories, existing agroecological initiatives and networks were activated through project-based interventions and collective moments that made coordination both visible and meaningful. More broadly, the spatial diffusion of DyTAELs has closely followed the areas of intervention of the co-lead organisations of the DyTAES, which supported the formation of territorial platforms in regions where they already operated. **Table 2** synthesises the information collected on the eleven DyTAELs represented during the second workshop; the DyTAELs of Bambey and Gossas were unable to attend. Taken together, these trajectories highlight that DyTAEL emergence is primarily driven by opportunity structures, organisational linkages, and territorial anchorage, while their consolidation and long-term performance depend on additional factors analysed in the following section.

#### 5.4. Success factors for DyTAELs

At the heart of the most robust DyTAELs is clear leadership, embodied by a **core group of local actors** committed to the long term, capable of leading the collective, staying the course, and managing inevitable tensions. This leadership is part of a participatory and inclusive governance model that avoids capture by a dominant organization and promotes collective ownership of the coalition project.

The **DyTAELs that work best** are those that manage to mobilize grassroots agroecology actors, starting from the concrete challenges of the territories rather than abstract frameworks, while benefiting from financial and organizational support provided by one or more DyTAES member organizations. The presence of at least one driving project, often complemented by other projects dedicating funding to collective dynamics, is a decisive lever, provided that it is accompanied by strong communication between members and effective pooling of financial, material, and human resources. **Methodological support from research** reinforces these dynamics by providing tools for capitalization, territorial platform engineering, and external credibility. Successful trajectories generally follow a progressive sequence of activities (mutual awareness and networking, development of a shared vision, definition of transition paths, construction of an action plan, structuring, then operationalization) supported by the involvement of local authorities, government technical services, NGOs, and research institutes.

The ability to integrate or articulate potentially competing multi-stakeholder platforms, **build an ecosystem of complementary actors**, and demonstrate flexibility in structuring arrangements also appears to be decisive. The most successful DyTAELs develop an advocacy approach focused primarily on local authorities, particularly through revisions of municipal development plans, and rely on proactive territorial marketing, which enhances their visibility and their ability to attract technical and financial partners.

Finally, the most viable DyTAELs are those whose operating methods **reduce dependence on external projects** by minimizing the costs of meetings and workshops: provision of rooms by town halls or members, half-day working sessions without catering, transportation costs covered by each participant, online meetings, etc.

#### 5.5. DyTAES-DyTAEL relations

The relationship between the DyTAES and the DyTAELs is best understood as a **reciprocal and multi-scalar articulation**, in which national-level coordination and territorial dynamics mutually reinforce one another.

From the DyTAES towards the DyTAEL, **the national coalition plays a role of impulsion, structuring, and legitimisation**. Member organisations of the DyTAES provide financial and organisational support to territorial platforms, often by pooling resources from ongoing projects and by covering key structuring activities such as launch workshops, multi-actor meetings, and follow-up coordination. The governance bodies and charter of the DyTAES serve as a reference framework for

the structuring of DyTAEL, offering shared principles, rules, and values that can be adapted to local contexts. The Agroecology Caravans constitute a central lever in this relationship, acting as powerful triggers to initiate, consolidate, or revitalise territorial dynamics by bringing visibility, political legitimacy, and institutional recognition. In addition, policy briefs, position papers, and other documents produced by the DyTAES are actively mobilised by DyTAEL in their local advocacy efforts. Through training, peer learning, and participation in national spaces, the DyTAES also contributes to strengthening the capacities of DyTAEL members in areas such as multi-actor governance, advocacy, and project engineering.

Conversely, the **DyTAELs play a critical role in anchoring** and operationalising the DyTAES at the territorial level. They assume primary responsibility for organising the Agroecology Caravans within their respective departments, ensuring local mobilisation, coordination with territorial authorities, and appropriation of advocacy messages. DyTAELs representatives participate in DyTAES decision-making bodies and national advocacy events, enabling the systematic integration of territorial priorities and constraints into the coalition's strategic orientations. Territorial platforms also serve as receptacles - and in many cases co-designers and co-implementers - of action-research projects initiated by DyTAES member organisations, turning territories into spaces of experimentation, learning, and demonstration. Finally, by generating situated knowledge, field data, and feedback from ongoing transitions, DyTAELs provide essential inputs for DyTAES capitalisation processes and policy advocacy, ensuring that the national coalition remains grounded in empirical realities and responsive to diverse territorial trajectories.

## 5.6. Mobilization and pooling of resources

DyTAES and DyTAELs operate through mobilizing and **pooling resources of various kinds**: project funding, voluntary contributions, in-kind contributions, logistical pooling, mobilization of local authorities, and opportunistic integration of agroecological activities into existing agendas. More and more members of DyTAES and DyTAELs are including lines specifically dedicated to the implementation of action plans for these collective dynamics in the budgets of their new projects. This approach explains the resilience of the network, but also raises issues of sustainability and equity between territories with varying levels of resources, calling for greater coordination between DyTAELs and future strategic decisions.

## 5.7. Role played by caravans

The Agroecology Caravans organised in 2019, 2022, and 2025 have progressively emerged as **multifunctional political mechanisms** at the core of the DyTAES strategy. Rather than simple outreach events, they operate as moments of convergence where advocacy efforts culminate in visible and collective action on the ground. For the DyTAES, they materialise the existence of a national network, demonstrating its capacity to mobilise, coordinate, and influence across multiple territories. For the State, the caravans represent a relatively low-cost opportunity to engage with agroecology, allowing public authorities to interact with territorial actors without committing to heavy institutional reforms. The 2025 edition marked a significant shift, as it was co-led with the government, resulting in a stronger involvement of decentralized State services at territorial level.

At the local level, the caravans act as decisive **levers for the establishment, consolidation, or legitimisation of DyTAEL platforms** in the eyes of local governments and technical services. They also function as spaces for horizontal learning, both between territories and within each DyTAEL, fostering the circulation of practices, experiences, and strategic narratives. Through repeated field-based action, the caravans contribute strongly to the construction of a collective DyTAES identity rooted in practice rather than in technocratic arenas. Finally, each caravan feeds directly into **national advocacy processes** (most notably the Agroecology Days organised in their aftermath) thereby linking territorial mobilisation to concrete political outcomes at the national level.

## 6. Impacts, limitations, and conditions for sustainability

### 6.1. Concrete impacts of DyTAES and DyTAELs

What were the concrete impacts of DyTAES and DyTAELs in relation to the three objectives set out in the charter: advocacy, awareness-raising, and support for territories? A first strong result is the almost unanimous recognition of the **effectiveness of the advocacy** carried out by the DyTAES. The granting of the organic inputs subsidy is a tangible marker of this effectiveness, as it represents a change in public policy directly attributable to structured collective mobilization. This breakthrough has also had a knock-on effect, strengthening the credibility of DyTAES among local authorities and financial partners, as well as among DyTAEL members, sparking renewed enthusiasm in certain territories.

DyTAES also contributed to the **institutional and social recognition of agroecology**. The gradual integration of agroecology into territorial planning documents, national policies, financing mechanisms, and training programs reflects a shift in the dominant frame of reference. For example, the key role played in the process of revising the Agro-Sylvo-Pastoral Orientation Law, on the one hand by several DyTAES members within the ad hoc committee reviewing the law, and on the other hand by DyTAEL during consultations in the territories, leads us to believe that the principles of agroecology and sustainable food systems will be taken into account in the revised law, although the final document has not yet been adopted. We can also cite the central role played by the DyTAES secretariat and several members of its Technical Committee in the process of developing the National Agroecology Strategy. However, the overall impact remains difficult to quantify in the absence of consolidated national statistics, which has been identified as a major strategic limitation.

DyTAELs played a major role as **territorial accelerators**. In many territories, the creation of a DyTAEL has made it possible to: (i) raise the profile of previously scattered initiatives, (ii) attract new actors (young people, local authorities, consumers, the private sector), (iii) enhance the attractiveness of the region and its ability to mobilize projects, and (iv) bring to the fore local role models and raise the social status of agriculture, particularly among young people.

DyTAES and DyTAELs have also **strengthened collaboration** between research, development, and community stakeholders, who previously worked together infrequently or primarily in a top-down manner. These dynamics have fostered more horizontal forms of collaboration by impulsing collective actions in support of coalition action plans, such as the joint drafting of advocacy and policy documents and the co-organisation of Agroecology Caravans and other collective events. They have also positioned DyTAES and DyTAELs as receptacles for interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary projects, including research-action initiatives anchored in territorial platforms. Finally, the growing interest of the private sector and the media in DyTAES and DyTAELs is worth noting, particularly given their increasing capacity to influence policy.

### 6.2. Limitations and weaknesses of DyTAES and DyTAELs

Despite the significant progress achieved in structuring agroecological advocacy and action in Senegal, the workshops highlighted a number of limitations and weaknesses affecting both the DyTAES and its territorial platforms, the DyTAELs. These constraints do not call into question the relevance of the model, but rather point to structural tensions inherent in its rapid growth and increasing institutionalisation.

A first limitation relates to the **strong dependence on project-based funding**. Both DyTAES and DyTAEL dynamics remain largely driven by externally funded projects carried by member organisations. While this project ecology has enabled rapid mobilisation of resources and activities, it also

generates discontinuities, unequal territorial dynamics, and uncertainty regarding long-term sustainability. In several cases, collective activities slow down or stall when key projects end, revealing the fragility of coordination mechanisms that lack stable, autonomous funding.

A second weakness concerns **asymmetries between territories and organisations**. DyTAELs have emerged and evolved at very different paces, depending on local contexts, the presence of active organisations, and access to resources. This heterogeneity creates imbalances in visibility, influence, and capacity within the network. At the national level, some organisations play a more central role in agenda-setting and resource mobilisation, which can generate risks of over-dependency as well as perceptions of unequal participation among other members.

A third challenge is related to **governance and coordination**. As the DyTAES has expanded, maintaining inclusive, transparent, and efficient decision-making processes has become increasingly complex. The multiplication of actors, thematic priorities, and territorial demands risks overloading coordination bodies and blurring strategic orientations. At the DyTAEL level, coordination often relies on a small number of individuals, making platforms vulnerable to fatigue, turnover, or shifts in personal availability.

Another limitation concerns the **translation of advocacy into concrete and measurable impacts on practices and livelihoods**. While the DyTAES has achieved notable success in terms of political recognition and policy dialogue, participants emphasised the difficulty of demonstrating large-scale changes on the ground. The absence of shared indicators and systematic monitoring frameworks limits the ability to assess the real effects of advocacy, to compare trajectories across territories, and to strengthen evidence-based arguments.

The relationship with **state services and public policies** also remains ambivalent. Although agroecology has gained visibility and partial institutional recognition, it continues to coexist with dominant productivist paradigms. State engagement is often opportunistic and project-driven, leading to fragmented interventions rather than coherent support for agroecological transitions. This duality constrains the transformative potential of both DyTAES and DyTAELs.

Finally, risks linked to **overextension and the dilution of strategic objectives** should be considered. As the DyTAES seeks to respond simultaneously to advocacy, territorial activation, research-action, capacity building, and donor expectations, there is a risk of dispersion and loss of strategic focus. At the DyTAEL level, similar tensions arise when platforms attempt to address a wide range of issues without sufficient resources or consolidation.

## 7. Agroecology in Senegal : Current situation and future challenges

From 2019, Agroecology in Senegal has entered a new phase characterised by an unprecedented level of structuring, political recognition, and territorial anchoring. After several decades of fragmented experimentation and progressive network building, agroecology is now organised as a collective national project, articulated through the DyTAES and its territorial platforms (DyTAELs). This configuration represents a significant shift in the governance of agricultural transition, positioning agroecology not only as a set of practices but as a socio-political pathway for transforming food systems.

### 7.1. Current situation

At the national level, agroecology benefits from a **growing degree of institutional recognition**. The creation of the DyTAES has enabled the consolidation of a broad, hybrid coalition bringing together civil society organisations, farmer organisations, research institutions, and development partners. Through structured policy dialogue and advocacy, the coalition has contributed to tangible policy changes, most notably the integration of organic fertilisers into national subsidy schemes. Agroecology is increasingly referenced in strategic documents and foresight exercises, reflecting its entry into the public policy agenda.

At the territorial level, the emergence of DyTAEL platforms has played a decisive role in **translating national ambitions into locally grounded dynamics**. These platforms act as spaces for coordination, experimentation, and political engagement, bringing together diverse actors around shared territorial challenges. In several regions, DyTAELs have strengthened the visibility of agroecological initiatives, improved dialogue with local authorities, and enhanced the capacity of territories to attract projects and resources.

Research has become a central component of this ecosystem. National and international **research institutions are increasingly engaged** in action-research and capitalisation processes, contributing to the co-production of knowledge with practitioners and to the legitimisation of agroecology in policy arenas. However, despite this progress, the actual level of agroecological practice adoption remains difficult to assess due to the absence of national statistics capturing agroecological engagement, diversity of practices, and degrees of transition.

Structurally, Senegalese agricultural policies remain dual. Agroecological measures coexist with strongly productivist strategies oriented towards yield maximisation, export agriculture, and input-intensive systems. Rather than a clear paradigm shift, the current policy trajectory reflects a negotiated coexistence between contrasting agricultural models.

### 7.2. Future challenges

A first major challenge lies in **scaling up agroecology** beyond pioneering actors. Despite growing visibility and mobilisation, most farmers have not embraced the full transformative potential of agroecology. Rather than a clear shift, what we observe is a continuum of practices: hybrid configurations in which certain dimensions move towards agroecology, while others remain anchored in input-dependent models. Embedded in market structures, value chains, advisory systems and

credit arrangements that largely favour conventional agriculture, many farmers continue to reproduce established trajectories, limiting the depth and pace of systemic change.

A second challenge concerns **measurement and evidence**. Despite growing political recognition, agroecology remains largely invisible in national agricultural statistics. The absence of indicators capturing levels of engagement, diversity of practices, and degrees of transition limits the ability to assess impacts, steer public policy, and consolidate evidence-based advocacy.

A third challenge relates to the political framing of agroecology in **relation to food security** and food sovereignty. Agroecology is still frequently positioned in opposition to food security objectives, particularly in contexts emphasising yield maximisation and rapid production increases. The workshop discussions highlighted the need to explicitly move beyond this false dichotomy, by demonstrating how agroecology can contribute simultaneously to food availability, resilience, sovereignty, and nutritional quality, especially in the face of climate and economic shocks.

A fourth challenge concerns **labour, modernisation, and technological innovation**. Agroecological systems are often perceived as labour-intensive and insufficiently modern, which can undermine their attractiveness, particularly for younger generations. Addressing this challenge requires investments in appropriate mechanisation, digital tools, and technological innovations that are compatible with agroecological principles, and that improve working conditions without reintroducing input-dependent models.

Closely related is the **challenge of economic viability** and market structuring. Agroecological and organic value chains remain insufficiently developed to offer stable and remunerative outlets for producers. Although such value chains exist, they are constrained by weak market differentiation, limited consumer awareness, and a lack of public infrastructure for production, storage, processing, and distribution. Strengthening these infrastructures is essential to support the transition beyond pilot projects.

Finally, the coexistence and articulation between **agroecology and conventional agriculture** remains a defining structural issue. Current policies promote a dual model in which agroecological measures coexist with strongly productivist strategies. A key challenge for the coming years is to move from coexistence by default towards deliberate synergies, identifying complementarities, transition pathways, and hybrid arrangements capable of reducing lock-ins while maintaining national production objectives.

## 8. Conclusion

This report provides a consolidated and collectively grounded **analysis of the trajectory of the DyTAES** and its territorial platforms, the DyTAELs, highlighting both the conditions that enabled their emergence and the mechanisms that have sustained their development. A first key result is the identification of agroecology in Senegal as the outcome of a long-term process of accumulation, coordination, and political framing. The DyTAES emerged in 2019 as the crystallisation of decades of practices, social mobilisation, and learning processes, now articulated within a national coalition capable of engaging with public policy while remaining anchored in territorial dynamics and around shared principles and values.

A second major result concerns the **orchestration of a heterogeneous network** by a lead NGO, Enda Pronat, followed by a core group of organisations and individuals. The DyTAES has demonstrated the capacity to align diverse actors - civil society organisations, producer organisations, research institutions, local governments, and consumer groups - around a shared agenda without imposing a rigid model. This orchestration relies on flexible governance arrangements, shared reference frameworks, and the strategic use of collective devices such as the Agroecology Days and Caravans. The articulation between national advocacy and territorial action, materialised through the DyTAELs, constitutes a central innovation of the Senegalese experience. Importantly, this orchestration unfolds as a cyclical process structured around successive phases: territorial mobilisation and consultation through the Agroecology Caravans, the formulation of collective policy recommendations, and renewed rounds of policy dialogue at national level. Each cycle reinforces territorial dynamics while simultaneously feeding national advocacy, creating a recursive loop between local experimentation and institutional negotiation.

At the territorial level, the analysis shows that **DyTAELs emerge through situated configurations** combining local actor bases, external political and methodological impulses, and windows of opportunity. Their diversity reflects territorial specificities while contributing to a coherent national dynamic. At the same time, the report highlights structural weaknesses related to project dependency, uneven territorial capacities, and the coexistence of agroecology with dominant productivist policies.

Beyond diagnostic insights, the capitalisation process itself produced strategic lessons. For national-level action, it underscores the importance of combining advocacy with concrete territorial experimentation, of investing in knowledge production and capitalisation, and of maintaining political autonomy while engaging with the State and donors. For the DyTAES, sustaining coherence while scaling up will require continued attention to governance, resource mutualisation, and the articulation of national and territorial priorities, while preserving a clear political autonomy vis-à-vis public authorities.

More broadly, the Senegalese experience offers **transferable lessons for other agroecology coalitions**. These include the value of building coalitions progressively from existing practices and movements, using low-cost but high-visibility collective devices to create political momentum, and anchoring advocacy in territories through decentralised platforms. While highly context-dependent, the DyTAES/DyTAEL model illustrates how agroecology can be advanced simultaneously as a field of practice, a social movement, and a policy agenda, offering insights relevant well beyond the Senegalese context.

### 3. Appendice

#### Table

Participants to the 2024 workshop

Name	Gender	Organization	Origin/role
Absa Mbodj	F	Enda Pronat	DyTAES – Secretariat
Ibrahima Seck	M	FENAB	DyTAES
Raphaël Belmin	M	CIRAD	DyTAES – Technical Committee
Abdoulaye Ba	F	CICODEV Afrique	DyTAES – Technical Committee
Marc Piraux	M	CIRAD	DyTAES – Technical Committee
Sidy Tounkara	M	IPAR	DyTAES – Technical Committee
Astou Camara	F	ISRA	DyTAES – Technical Committee
Boubacar Dramé	M	ISRA / Ministry of Agriculture	State

## Table

### Participants to the 2025 workshop

Name	Gender	Organization	Origin/role
Absa Mbodj	F	Enda Pronat	DyTAES – Secretariat
Anna Veillon	F	Enda Pronat	DyTAES – Secretariat
Raphaël Belmin	M	CIRAD	DyTAES – Technical Committee - Dy-TAEL Oussouye
Fatou Diouf	F	Eclosio	DyTAES / DyTAEL Thiès
Cherif Sambou Bodian	M	IPAR	DyTAES – Technical Committee / Dy-TAEL Bignona
Sidy Tounkara	M	IPAR	DyTAES – Technical Committee
Michael Diedhiou	M	CNCR	DyTAES – Technical Committee
Baba Sy	M	Cicodev Africa	DyTAES – Technical Committee
Banna Mbaye	F	ISRA	DyTAES – Technical Committee
Tania Wade	F	IRD	DyTAES – Technical Committee
Oumar Lo	M	ISRA	DyTAES – Technical Committee
Ibrahima Abdoul Aziz Fickou	M	Bignona Agricultural High School	DyTAES / DyTAEL Bignona
El Hadji Ndiaye	M	AVSF	DyTAEL Velingara
Gaston Diatta	M	Caritas	DyTAEL Tambacounda
Abdoul Gangue	M	Enda Pronat	DyTAEL Podor
Medoune Loum	M	Local water PF / Gret	DyTAEL Mboro
Mame Birame Sène	M	Jamm Bugum	DyTAEL Fatick
Babacar Ngom	M	Environmental Ambassadors	DyTAEL Fatick
Adji Thiam	M	Eclosio	DyTAEL Foundiougne
El Hadji Niang	M	ASPAE	DyTAEL Thiès
Anaby Ndior	M	Agrécol Africa	DyTAES / DyTAEL Thiès
Ndeye Fatou Gningue	F	CDTP	DyTAEL Mbour
Abdoul Gangue	M	Enda Pronat	DyTAEL Podor
El Hadji Ndiaye	M	AVSF	DyTAEL Velingara
Fatou Kiné Gueye	F	IED Africa	DyTAES
Aida Mbene Seck	F	Agrisud International	DyTAES
Arfang M Sonko	M	Enda Pronat	DyTAES – Secretariat
Mounganga Boulingui	M	JVE Senegal	DyTAES – Technical Committee

# Orchestrating agroecological transitions

## A critical reading of the DyTAES experience in Senegal

This report provides a critical synthesis of the trajectory of DyTAES, examining the conditions that enabled its rapid institutional consolidation as well as the limits and tensions that emerged along the way. Rather than celebrating success uncritically, it revisits key moments, strategic choices, and power dynamics to assess their concrete effects on agroecological transition processes in Senegal. By grounding the analysis in a shared reading of the collective history, the report extracts transferable lessons and strategic reference points that may inform similar initiatives in other national contexts.





# Orchestrating agroecological transitions

A critical reading of the DyTAES experience in Senegal

Raphael Belmin, Marc Piraux, Astou Diao Camara & Absa Mboj

