

See discussions, stats, and author profiles for this publication at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277775501>

# Top down policies and bottom up practices in Urban and Periurban Agriculture: an Italian dilemma

Conference Paper · November 2014

CITATIONS

0

READS

134

2 authors:



Giuseppe Cinà

Politecnico di Torino

24 PUBLICATIONS 4 CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE



Francesco Di Iacovo

Università di Pisa

28 PUBLICATIONS 115 CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

Some of the authors of this publication are also working on these related projects:



SALSA - Small farms, small food businesses and sustainable food and nutrition security [View project](#)



conferenza Siti Unesco WHL [View project](#)

## 2.9

# Top down policies and bottom up practices in Urban and Periurban Agriculture: an Italian dilemma

Giuseppe Cinà<sup>1</sup> and Francesco Di Iacovo<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> professor of Urban Planning at the Politecnico di Torino; <sup>2</sup> professor of agricultural economics at the Università di Pisa

### Abstract

The paper deals with the issue of urban and peri-urban agriculture (UPA) in Italy, highlighting some relevant aspects of its contradictory processing in the planning perspective: the traditional exclusion of agricultural areas from the goals of territorial planning; the too sharp distinction between top-down policies and bottom-up practices; the lack of agricultural policy at the local scale, quite completely dependent on the CAP policies. Following this track the paper develops into two parts. In the first one an overview of the slow evolving relation between planning and agriculture in the Italian planning system is given. This overview shows on one hand how the current separation between agricultural and territorial policies has been reflected in the time at the various levels of government from Region to Municipality; on the other hand it shows how a gradual overcoming of this separation has been experienced with the regional legislation and its related plans, mainly resulting in two levels of regulations: one related to the aspects of farming activities, the other to the protection of landscape and the environment. In the second part the paper focuses on how, due to the lack of suitable solutions coming from regional and local planning, a large number of initiatives were started by diverse actors in autonomous but not always convergent ways. Starting from this evidence, and in order to show the limits and the great potentialities of these various approaches, three peculiar experiences based on the Milan, Turin and Pisa territories are presented. As an eloquent cross-section of the variegated Italian situation, these cases are today facing changes that require clearer choices to integrate food policies and UPA in an overall strategy of urban transition. In the concluding section the authors argue how it is just in the field of governance and inclusiveness that arises the first challenge in Italian context, i.e. to overcome the limits inherent to the tradition of the top down planning system. To this end, it is necessary that also the present distance between the spatial planning and the food planning approaches, which echoes that of the historical opposition between town and countryside, be overcome through appropriate forms of disciplinary interaction and social participation.

*Keywords: urban planning, urban and peri-urban agriculture, agricultural policies, food policy*

## Introduction

Today it is becoming clearer that the future challenges for a sustainable development will be designed into the cities. Most of the world population is and will be living in urban areas. Their capability to understand and provide suitable solutions for an uncertain future will make the difference in terms of reducing the worldwide impact on natural resources. In this regard, the research on smart cities focused on a city renaissance, mainly based on ITC technologies, innovative transportation and clean energy, provides solutions but is not free from criticism (Hollands, 2008). Thus, looking at a smart city less ITC-based, the relationship between cities, food provision and agriculture is receiving a new attention for its possible impact on social stability (Wiskerke, 2009; Morgan, Sonnino, 2008) and its possible follow up on urban planning.

In Europe, before modernisation, cities were used to consider food management as a strategic policy to ensure rights and stability to their inhabitants (Steel, 2008). After CAP intervention and market liberalisation cities started to ensure mass consumption and food provision by the way of long chains of big intermediaries, retailers and caterers (Pothukuchi, Kaufman, 1999). As a result urban interest for local production decreased and the management of agricultural land lost its relevance (Gereffi et al., 2005). In the last decades new trends in growing population, energy distribution and reduction of natural resources, are all together generating new tensions on food prices/provisions and are increasing urban food instability, starting from poor classes (Brunori, Guarino, 2012). In this new critical frame the urban and peri-urban agriculture (UPA), in its diverse forms (ordinary food producing, alternative food networks, community supported agriculture, short food chains, civic agriculture, community gardens and food planning), is receiving even more attention. A number of diverse projects are designing innovative solutions in many cities so that UPA is now a crosscutting topic, with contradictory definitions due to its multiple aspects and increasing interest.

The UPA concept incorporates issues related to urban qualification, sustainability, health, access to safe food, water and waste management, social recreation and stability, better integration among generations and cultures, city resilience but also new forms of economic engagement. UPA groups together people with diverse aims, capabilities, aspirations and initiatives for a new everyday urban life. It's also the space for the organisation of social coalitions able to redefine the policy of food - today driven by big hegemonic retailers - and a more democratic environment for sharing choices around food (Brunori, Di Iacovo, 2014). The way actors reflects on UPA is normally the outcome of a negotiation process among diverse public and private actors like municipalities, city planners, building enterprises, civil society, consumers, third sector associations, new enterprises linked to UPA (farmers and their associations, processors, caterers, trainers, traders) but also schools and families. Due to so many entries UPA receives different but not always coherent attention by public bodies as well as by different related policies (planning, agriculture, education, commerce). How to deal with such a mobile target?

Starting from this question the paper deals with the issue of UPA in Italy, highlighting some relevant aspects connected to its contradictory processing in the planning perspective. Namely, the traditional exclusion of UPA valorisation, usually performed in terms of urban growth, from the goals of territorial planning; the too sharp distinction between top-down policies and bottom-up practices in urban and rural areas; the lack of governance of the agricultural sector at the scale of

Municipality and Provinces, quite completely left to the CAP policies. As such, by introducing a reflection on the dynamic around UPA in Italian context, also related to some urban practices (in Milan, Turin, Pisa) the paper tries to draft coherent pathways for the food-UPA discourse in urban planning.

### **Planning in Italy: a harmful separation between agricultural and territorial policies**

The Italian planning system is affected by a traditional separation between urban and agricultural policies that impacts at various levels of government, from the Region to the Municipality. Until today, in the municipal planning documents UPA areas still remain a white area on the map out of planner jurisdiction. Such a contradictory relationship can be understood by shortly recalling its evolution.

In Italy the main tool of planning system consists on the municipal plan (MP) or “Piano regolatore generale”, to which the Law 1150/1942 assigns mainly the function of defining the building rights to residential areas, shifting the emphasis from those that may be used for different functions. The aim to refer the planning regulation to the "zones" and not to the "areas" for farming (Art. 7) was then confirmed by the Law 765/67 and DM.1444/68 on urban standards where agricultural areas are just classified in terms of maximum "building density". This approach consolidated a gap between the agricultural policies - focused on farming “activities” according with the CAP intervention - and the urban planning, focused on farming "zones" having three possible exits: to become urban, to remain farming zones, to become potentially buildable according to some conditions (Urbani, 2006).

At the end of the 70s, the Regions become responsible for territorial planning (Presidential Decrees 11/77 and 616/77) and introduced innovative changes in planning regulations. At that time also agricultural policies and CAP intervention started to be increasingly managed at the regional level granting a more direct consideration to productive activity. In the 80s and 90s, these developments fostered the evolution of policies overcoming the narrow field of municipal planning by involving the regional and provincial levels. In those years, Regions issued many organic laws on urban and territorial planning (Cinà, 2000), providing special regulations for agricultural activities within the planning system at different scales. At the provincial level, with the Territorial Coordination Plans the agricultural areas were identified according to their different conditions and vocations. Consequently, a discipline to be transposed into municipal plan was outlined. At the local level too, many municipalities have defined more complex analysis and proposals for agricultural sector. Among others, we can cite the MP of Giussano for its attention to the protection of cultural aspects (Paolillo, 2009), the MP of Luzzi for the proposed "minimum units of production" (Caligiuri et al., 2008), the MP of Verona, for his updated methodology of analysis (Montresor, 2012). However, these approaches still struggle to be implemented due to the weak connection between the plan's forecast and the farmers' goals.

More recently the new regional planning laws (eg.: in Tuscany, Lombardy, Liguria), having recognized to agricultural areas a major role in environmental and landscape protection, have started to rule the building rights concession only in strict connection with the farming activity. For example, in Tuscany the L.R. 1/2005 it's no longer assigning the old building ratios and the rationale for any added volume is founded on the definition of a “minimum farm area” sided by a

"business plan for agricultural and environmental improvement" (art.41). This excursus on the uncertain attempts to design agricultural areas within the territorial planning instruments would not be complete if we didn't consider also the contradictory support of landscape protection policies to the agricultural areas planning. In this context, the new conceptualisation of landscape planning related to the European Landscape Convention, and the Italian Landscape Act (D.L. 42/2004) have provided new potentials for the enhancement of landscapes and agricultural areas.

The Landscape Convention introduced a significant opening to the landscape as a product of human intervention (art. 1) connected with agricultural policies (art. 5d). The Landscape Act introduced an enlargement of landscape planning action, once limited to some categories of environmental relevance (L. 431/1985). In short, the latter establishes that each regional Landscape plan can identify also the agricultural landscape as an element to be protected, both for its natural-environmental values and as artificial man-made landscape (art. 131). Thus, rural areas become part of a purely conservative strategy for enhancing landscape, nature and cultural heritage, that still remain un-related to the complexity of the economic system within which they are included (Urbani, 2006). The new landscape plans are defined according to a structured set of principles and devices normally accompanied by wide cognitive frameworks, fervent directives, strict requirements, confident predictions and a large set of local institutions and associations supposed ready to intervene. But these overequipped plans are scarcely linked to the regional RDP-CAP (which include also policies for landscape) and aren't supported by operational conditions able to achieve their objectives. So they remain weak, just based on the reduced operational field of topdown governance. A clear example of these new generation of landscape plans are those adopted in Piedmont (2009), Liguria (2011) and Puglia (2013) where the potential of landscape policies in preserving and developing the agricultural landscape in Italy appears overestimated (Cinà, 2009, 2012). As matter of fact, to have imagined that the conservative system of landscape protection could affect the dynamics of agricultural landscape transformation, mostly depending on purely economic interests, continues to be a big misunderstanding.

In conclusion, from the beginning the municipal planning has remained limited to the classificatory function of the spatial structure. Meanwhile, the regional legislation and its related plans have attempted to discipline the agricultural areas, combining the urban issues to that of agricultural land and its relationship with the environment. Finally, two levels of regulations have been set: one related to the aspects of production activities, the other to the protection. Unfortunately, they both still remain limited in effectiveness, because not adequately checked on the basis of the real market and on the everyday changing dynamic of the actors involved. The UPA-areas have been directly affected by this uncertain approached.

### **Urban and peri-urban agriculture: asymmetric approaches in three urban contexts**

As presented in the previous chapter, in Italy there is still a large separation among planning and agricultural policies. In such a frame a project for rooting UPA in urban transition is still demanding an appropriate answer in terms of knowledge, brokerage among actors, rules and governance. Due to the lack of suitable solutions coming from spatial planning, a large number of initiatives were started by diverse actors in autonomous but not always convergent ways. In this situation, according to the transition management theory (Loorbach, Rotmans, 2006; Geels, 2004) the UPA enhancement should rest at least on the following conditions: a strong interaction among

public and private actors open to participatory approaches, a political environment able to manage multiple links between groups of interest, a greater technical competence in public and private actors, a major access to physical (land) and immaterial resources (financial and cultural), and the capacity of relevant actors to move from individual interest toward a wider social perspective.

Starting from this evidence we'll focus on three peculiar experiences based on the Milan, Turin and Pisa territories. The case of Milan is characterized by a top down approach, turned over time in both a manifest weakness of public governance and the relevant role of local actors and the third sector. By contrast, the case of Pisa is characterized by an extra institutional evolution and a gradual involvement of public actors. The Turin case is characterized by the presence of a deep-rooted culture of food linked to the Slow-food experience (Schneider, 2008) and now developing on the basis of a mix of bottom-up and top-down initiatives. As an eloquent cross-section of the varied Italian situation, these cases are today facing changes that require clearer choices to integrate food policies and UPA in an overall strategy of urban transition.

### **The case of the south agricultural park in Milan: a disconnected network of weak top-down policies and vibrant bottom-up practices**

The innovation of the project for UPA, at the level of both formal planning and bottom-up initiatives has also found a particular area of interest in the planning and design of agricultural parks (AP). AP addresses the UPA areas issues both by ruling their uses with a multifunctional strategy and by protecting the environmental and landscape assets. In a first phase isolated experiences have investigated the potential of an agricultural green belt at municipal scale. One example is the AP of Ferrara (70s) that designed the recovery of the agricultural areas along the city walls and their connection to the Po-river (Amati, 2008).

Later and gradually, the South Milan Agricultural Park (SMAP) made a leap in quality compared to previous experiences. Established in 1990 as a regional park, and forecasting the planning of a green belt extended to the neighbouring municipalities, it introduced a metropolitan strategy. The SMAP (47,000 hectares, 61 municipalities) extends eastsouthwest of Milan Province, including most of its UPA areas. Its main goals are related to two key functions: a "urban belt park" with high natural values devoted to the enjoyment leisure and an AP including urban functions. Unlike other regional parks, it has so far been managed by the Province of Milan and soon will pass under the government of the coming – and till now uncertainly defined - Metropolitan City.

Looking at 25 years of the SMAP management, the overall appraisal is disappointing at most levels. Both the operational plans, (identified by the Territorial Coordination Plan, 2000), namely the Plans of Urban Belt (PUB) and the Fruition Plan, have not been processed; the Management Plans (2003) and the Agricultural Sector Plan (2007) have not been updated; finally, also the opportunity to re-launch the SMAP into EXPO 2015 has been lost (Aquilani, 2014). The PUB are a textbook example of both the grandiloquent objectives of planning and the inconsistent ability to effect a top-down governance, mainly based on the expropriation mechanism and the equalization of development rights (so-called "perequazione"). Actually, the provincial government (center-left parties) have drawn up the PUB. The implementation forecast by the Park was founded on the expropriation/compensation of private areas strategic for the park project (Targetti et al. 2010). Privates giving their areas were compensated with the related building rights

located in urban areas. Thus, the newly acquired public areas would have been rented to farmers or other parties, provided that the respect of the landscape, the reclaiming of the natural elements, a short food chain and the possibility for citizens to benefit from the large metropolitan green areas would be guaranteed. The main objective of the SMAP was the creation of five large metropolitan parks connoted by the coexistence of agriculture, nature and public facilities. Unfortunately these plans failed to achieve the final approval and, after a political change in the government of the City and the Province of Milan (right parties), they went under the strong real estate pressures and were declassified (Vescovi, 2012). Besides the Park Authority didn't prevent large urbanization projects (areas of Cerba/Rosate/Vignate 770,000 sqm) nor the collapse of the agricultural system, resulting from the construction of the eastern ring road (Teem). Consequently in 1999-2009 the municipalities of SMAP increased by 4% the urbanized areas.

Nevertheless, it is worth to add that the SMAP has imposed fruitful limitations on the use of the land securing an institutional coverage for the urbanization containment. More, it has also facilitated the development of positive trends, but all of them emerging from the bottom. Thus, the institutional action has been joined, and sometimes replaced, by different practices on the part of numerous committees and associations, who have raised the banner of the Park to defend their territories. In several cases a partial bottom-up planning initiative took place, coming from various stakeholders and public bodies. They managed to give rise to some relevant components of the SMAP, as the Ticinello Park, "Wood in the city" Park, Quarries Park, Vettabbia Park, so highlighting the possibility to network farming and urban functions in a more transversal framework. More recently a complex set of actors has begun to spontaneously organize themselves sharing common principles and tools to improve the agricultural activities and protect the environment and the landscape. In fact, it occurred a process of self-empowering in which farmers switched from a pending state to a planning approach and a gradual restructuring of the agricultural sector. As a result new consortia and rural districts based on sustainable and multifunctional agriculture were born, such as the Milan-Agricultural-District, the Rice and Frogs, the Three Waters, the Olona Valley, as well as the establishment of the Rural District for ethic economy. All these initiatives have been able to mix together nature protection with economic aspects, and public commitment with private interests. Thereby, it's clear that the salvation of the park can only be based on the structural reinforcement of the economic role of farms as the main factor able to contrast the real estate development, as well as on a diverse set of actors including farmers, public bodies, associations and alternative food networks.

### **The Pisa experience: a growing interconnection on food initiatives in a fertile competitive environment**

In the Pisa area the debate around food, food planning and UPA has been growing in the last few years due to an increasing active interest of local communities, institutions and farmers. University has played an active role in this process by promoting public meeting and being involved in action researches on alternative food networks, civic agriculture, organic agriculture, ecosystem services and food planning in agreement with institutions, association and local food movements. In the area, a growing number of initiatives were started by privates and public institutions contributing to define a kind of food deal in the scenario of new urban policies. In Pisa since 2005 a short food chains has growth spontaneously thanks to farmer markets and since 2010

a community of private actors supporting UPA has been established. In this area a large number of ethical purchasing groups and a district for ethical economy are present. Resourceful farmers are reshaping their agricultural activity taking in high consideration the environmental and social sustainability (e.g. [www.ilmulinodipietra.it](http://www.ilmulinodipietra.it), [www.ortietici.it](http://www.ortietici.it)). As for public actors many municipalities of Pisa Province have organised community gardens (in Pisa has been also approved specific Guidelines). The same Province houses the most relevant number of social farming initiatives in Tuscany. Since 2007 the Valdera Health Society has formally included social farming into the public health plans. Public procurement in school meals was also started by local municipalities to promote a diet based on local and organic products (Galli et al., 2014). The Valdera Health Society has introduced educational activities on food as well as a support for people less empowered in accessing food. In the Valdera area some participatory initiatives for planning and programming were launched (Valdera 2020), sometime resulting in a fruitful competition with Pisa policies. In 2011, after a research-action on “carrying capacity” coordinated by Pisa University<sup>12</sup>, the “Valdera Union”<sup>13</sup> ([www.valdera2020.it](http://www.valdera2020.it)) launched a participatory planning project. This initiative, lasted one year involving about thousand stakeholders and citizens, was finalised to design the future strategies for the area based on four main thematic areas (territorial planning, institutions, economic development and environment, welfare). After an European Awareness Scenario Workshop 17 strategies and 100 actions were defined. Local residents were ranked by the way of a poll organised on a web platform. Actions regarding food, agriculture, environment and planning were introduced in the group discussion and ranked by a open poll. The best-ranked strategies and actions were taken into consideration in the “Valdera strategic plan” approved by the Valdera Union.

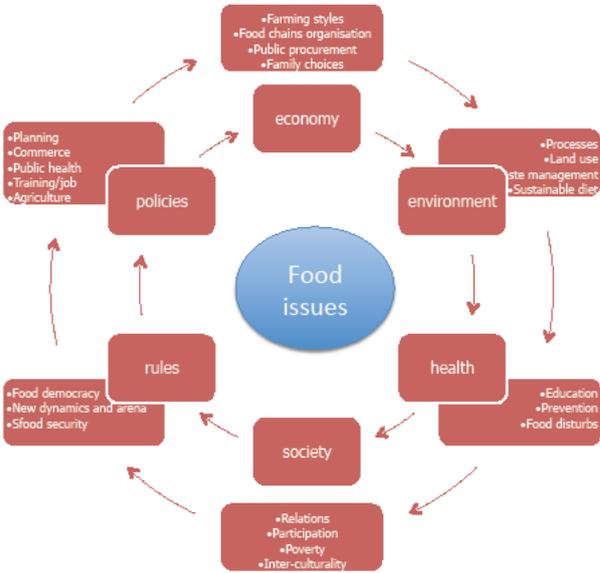


Figure 1 Pisa, Food issues

<sup>12</sup> The research provided a methodological proposal to better include ecosystem services in local planning.  
<sup>13</sup> The Valdera area includes 15 municipalities (not including Pisa) and 120.000 inhabitants located in the Arno and Era river basins. It has been established as a voluntary union of municipalities in order to better organise common public services and have a better dialogue with Pisa city administration.

In 2011, thanks to this fertile environment and the formal agreement with Pisa Province, Pisa University launched a project on “food planning” to coordinate and integrate all aspects and activities related to food issues (Brunori, Di Iacovo 2014). Diverse meetings supported with a web 2.0 platform involved municipalities and other public institutions, scholars and professionals, citizens and association, to share the idea and co-produce new knowledge around it. As a result both a map of actors and goals involved in a Food plan (Graph-1) and a Pisa Food chart and strategy were defined (Graph-2).



*Figure 2 Pisa, Urban food strategy*

The main principles introduced by the Food chart focus on sustainability, social justice and the re-organisation of a fair relationship between urban and rural areas also regarding planning activities. The Food chart was transformed into proposed practices into a Food strategy. This latter describes goals (health knowledge, equity, sustainability, innovation, and organisation) actions and actors to be involved. The Food strategy recommends municipal plans to safeguard the land devoted to agro-environmental activities as green infrastructures for the daily life. In 2012 both Food chart and the Food strategy were formally approved by the Pisa Province and by 19 municipalities including those belonging to the Valdera Union. In 2013, according with the Food strategy two main tools have been developed:

- A Program-agreement among public actors in which each subscribing actor commits itself according with its field of activity, in the direction designed by the Food strategy with specific goals and indicators.
- A Food-alliance grouping private actors (associations and citizens of Pisa city) aiming at co-planning new initiatives in agreement with public actors and monitoring the Program-agreement activities.

At the moment the institutional reorganisation of the provinces in Italy has stopped this initiative. Pisa University is leaving the leadership to the actors in the field, and the Valdera Union is willing

to take the leadership - starting a dialogue with the main Pisa area stakeholders and the Food-alliance – to re-launch the Food strategy.

### **The Turin experience: attempts of mutual learning among public and private actors**

After the progressive dismantling of the car sector and the following innovative development policies Turin is reshaping its social and economic identity as a city for tertiary services and tourism. In this scenario, one field of innovation toward a new identity is the food area. In this sense the Slow food movement, holding its bi-annual exhibition “Salone del Gusto” in the most famous FIAT plant in Turin, is a paradigmatic example. The “Salone del gusto” has given international reputation to the town as a centre of quality food and for the experimentation of innovative food production and distribution patterns. Add to this, it deserves to be cited the Porta Palazzo market, one of the biggest food markets in Europe, a traditional municipal market where one can find a huge diversity of typical products. Now it is also an important tourist destination. Turin is also the city where the headquarters and the first shop of Eataly, the biggest Italian retail for typical food, were established. In this particular environment, but not always in a coherent and connected way, different initiatives on food and UPA were started both by public and private actors. On one side the public action started to explore the food issues and its connection with city planning. Since 2000, the Turin Province and local municipalities started to support local collective purchasing groups, together with several other projects related to multifunctional agriculture in UPA areas. In 2011 The Turin municipality launched the “Turin-city-to-growth” project in the frame of “Torino-smart-city”. Its goal was to upgrade and develop UPA to increase urban sustainability. To this end a quite large amount of peri-urban and under-used land were surveyed. Besides, maps and ideas to illustrate the project were prepared by technical staff and presented to local stakeholders, in order to explore the possible use of public land around and inside the Turin boundaries. A second initiative was also established by forecasting the Villaretto Agricultural park in the Municipal plan. However, the outcome of such initiatives, though still receiving a strong communication support, was quite limited for two reasons: a weak support by the planning departments of the Turin Municipality, politically more oriented to the built-up areas implementation, and a scarce connection with the private actors.

Out of their direct effect, the value of such initiatives lies in the possibility to launch the theme of UPA on a wider attention and to legitimate new actors active in the field (Dansero, Puttilli 2013). In fact, at the operational level a large number of small but effective initiatives were carried out on a different scale by private actors – farmers and farmers associations - and by third sector companies. Such initiatives have some feature in common, like for example: to give new value to abandoned land (private or public); to be economically sustainable although providing public goods (social and relational); to involve youngsters and quite often women in innovative hybrid forms of enterprises; to be strongly connected to local communities and groups of citizen. In this perspective, deserve to be cited among others the “Venaria Orti” project, which resettled a private property in small but organised gardens rented to local citizens wanting to experience small agricultural activities; and the “Cavoli Nostri” case, a farming cooperative established on the land of some Cottolengo (a distinguished religious institution) properties, producing economic and

social values by growing organic vegetables and including people with disabilities in the agricultural initiatives.

Other projects are also developing in the small municipalities around Turin, trying to generate new opportunities of socialisation, integration and training for young or less empowered people. Some of them have the support of local municipalities that do normally offer land and some starting support for the projects, like for the “MiraOrti project” in Turin, a community garden also open to educational activities for the primary schools (Baldo, 2012) and “Orto che cura” in Collegno, especially interesting disabled people. All these projects achieved a strong mobilisation of the public and private interest but still remain on a quite small and isolated scale. However, the vitality of food discourse in Torino motivated also relevant actors in the agriculture arena fostering the change of their strategies from corporate attitudes to wider goals. It’s the case of Coldiretti, the most important farmers’ union in Italy that has given birth to “Campagna Amica”, a farmers association that clusters educational and economic activities. In the last few years in Turin many Campagna Amica markets were established by Coldiretti meeting the demand for local/quality food and creating new income opportunities for small farmers. The starting aim of the association was to represent the economic interest of its associated farmers by creating new networks and visibility in the urban context. Step by step, a different idea of city and local system came out. In this idea UPA areas may support the city resilience in a perspective of a better quality food and innovative services. To this end Coldiretti established a series of initiatives on social farming and a net of about 35 farmers, 15 social cooperatives, local health consortia and municipalities in order to provide services for citizens and less empowered people (disabled, addicted, prisoners, refugees, elders) (Di Iacovo et al.,2014). All these initiatives had a strong commitment by economic associations and civil society and gradually managed to engage local authorities in a more comprehensive project able to produce job positions for about 40 less empowered people (in the last three years), new services for hundreds of citizens, better economic position for the farms and social cooperatives involved, and a more effective public intervention on health policy. The rise of initiatives and debates have contributed to define a turning point in food and UPA discourse, generating new interest in public institutions as well as in the food-farming economy.

More recently, in the frame of its third strategic plan called ‘Turin metropolis 2025’ the city has launched the program “Turin food capital”. Within this on-going program the food issue is expected to become one of the preeminent development axes. Besides, some other initiatives, as the Food start Lab “Towards a food local agenda in Turin” and the project “Turin smile”, are working toward an overall food policy (Dansero, Toldo, 2014). The latter shows the possibility of a progressive mutual understanding of public-private actors involved in wider top-down policies and vibrant bottom-up initiatives, looking at food planning and land use through a more sensitive strategy of urban qualification and resilience. This seems to be a promising path to connect the UPA issues to urban transition, but it remains still far from overcome traditional interests and the limits of a too self-reported city planning.

## **Conclusions**

In the Italian context persists a gap between the increasing interest on UPA and food issues, specially actualized by new actors, and the still deficient public tool-box, providing strategies, regulations and technical tools. This divergence cannot be solved by laws and plans at

institutional level only. It appears more urgent to review the planning approach by reframing a brokerage among policies and practices, public and private actors, competencies and interests in a integrated perspective. In support of this hypothesis, the three experiences above mentioned prove that a reframing approach is already in progress, but in different and scarcely synergic forms, which encompasses the remarkable auto organizational resources of local actors and also the strong limits of planning and governance at the institutional level.

These cases offer more than one hint for reflection. In the South Milan Agricultural Park, face to a never consolidated public governance, innovative experiences have proceeded and developed independently, although with the stakeholders ignoring or sometimes distrusting each other. So, looking at the problem from the side of the local farmers and the third sector, while there has been some evolution in terms of consolidation of productive activities and new initiatives, it remains difficult for the farmers to overcome the new challenges of the market without a strong organizational support by the Park Authority, providing a strong and inclusive governance. In the Pisa case it emerges on one hand the relevant role of civic engagement of the University through a research-action approach; on the other, the presence of a third actor able to overcome the distances - and mediate win-win solutions - between institutions and stakeholders. Here, the actual pending situation demands the organisation of a more coherent commitment from the local institutions in terms of rules, policies, knowledge and practices. In the Turin case the progressive merging of diverse approaches among public and private actors is nowadays introducing a new phase. Here, the rich constellation of practices and the incoming of a public food policy (firstly by the Turin food plan) offers the opportunity to build a public space far more efficient to trigger a proper governance for food-UPA issues.

But governance is not a long quiet river. According with Voß and Bornemann (2011), it is part of a process of change during which transition cannot be seen as the rational activity of an external driver of social change. On the contrary, it is the outcome of a laborious process of benchmark, negotiation and understanding among diverse positions and actors on the ground, impacting at local as well as at a broader context. As such the assessment of diverse options is demanding in terms of mediation and it implies the presence of a influential public actor able to guarantee space for discussion. Now, it is just in the field of governance and inclusiveness that arises the first challenge in Italian context, i.e. to overcome the limits inherent to the tradition of the top down planning system. However, one should not rest comfortable on the idea that inclusiveness is the panacea for all evils. In fact the challenges crossing the question of UPA and food are also focused on many other goals, like for example:

- To effect an urban and territorial policy able to impact on UPA reconciling the demands of productivity and the organic farming;
- To implement urban projects - in UPA areas - able to enrich the city without reducing the agriculture to an urban furniture useful for cheap urban utopias (vertical gardens?);
- To strengthen the revolutionary impact of new food cultures, both at the local and planetary scale.

To this end, a full inclusion of UPA in urban planning is part of a process recognized as necessary but still moving its first steps. To foster its implementation two kinds of expertise are on the

ground: on the one hand, that of the planners committed to update their disciplinary approach in terms of agricultural areas planning; on the other hand, the experts and scholars coming from the disciplines (agronomists, sociologists, geographers, economists, etc.) which are helping to raise the issues of UPA in all its importance, giving significant contributions specially in terms of food planning. At this point it is necessary that the distinction between these two planning approaches, which echoes that of the historical opposition between town and countryside, be overcome through appropriate forms of disciplinary interaction and social participation.

## References

Amati, M. (Ed.) (2008) *Urban Green Belts in the Twenty-first Century*. Ashgate.

Aquilani, R. (2014) *Parco agricolo sud Milano, un bene inestimabile in cerca di governance*. Arcipelago Milano, Anno VI n°28. <http://www.arcipelagomilano.org/archives/author/renato-aquilani>.

Baldo, M. (2012) *La città nell'orto. Analisi esplorativa degli orti urbani di Mirafiori sud per un progetto di riqualificazione "dal basso"*. Master thesis, Facoltà di Scienze Politiche, Corso di Sociologia, Università degli Studi di Torino.

Brunori, G. Guarino, A. (2012) *Security for whom? Changing discourses on food in Europe in times of a global food crisis*. In: Lawrence, G., Lyons K., Wallington, T. (Eds.) *Food security, nutrition and sustainability*. London: Earthscan.

Brunori, G. Di Iacovo, F. (2014) *Urban Food Security and Landscape Change: A Demand-side Approach*, *Landscape Research* 39 (2): 141-157. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01426397.2014.891725>

Caligiuri, G.F. et al. (2008), *Piano Strutturale – Strategico del Comune di Luzzi: Relazione Agro-Pedologica*. <http://www.comunediluzzi.it/comune-di-luzzi-area.asp?Area=39>

Cinà, G. (Ed.) (2000) *Descrizione fondativa e statuto dei luoghi. Nuovi fondamenti per il piano comunale*. Firenze: Alinea.

Cinà, G. (2009) *Nuovi piani paesistici, un pò indisciplinati*. *Archivio di studi urbani e regionali* 96: 50-70.

Cinà, G. (Ed) (2012). *Paesaggi dell'Alessandrino. Piani e pratiche di sviluppo locale*. Torino: Celid.

Dansero, E., Puttilli, M. (2013) *La realtà degli alternative food networks in Piemonte. Riflessioni teoriche ed evidenze empiriche*. In: Giaccaria, P., Rota, F.S., Salone, C. (Eds), *Praticare la territorialità. Riflessioni sulle politiche per la green economy, l'agroindustria e la cultura in Piemonte*, Carocci, Roma.

Dansero, E., Toldo, A., eds. (2014) *Nutrire le città: verso una politica alimentare metropolitana. Politiche Piemonte* 27.

Di Iacovo, F., Moruzzo, R., Rossignoli, C., Scarpellini, P. (2014) *Transition management and social innovation in rural areas: lessons from social farming*. *The Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension* 20 (3).

Galli, F., Brunori, G., Di Iacovo, F., Innocenti, S. (2014) Co-Producing Sustainability: Involving Parents and Civil Society in the Governance of School Meal Services. A Case Study from Pisa, Italy. *Sustainability* 6: 1643-1666.

Geels, F. (2004) From sectoral systems of innovation to socio-technical systems insights about dynamics and change from sociology and institutional theory. *Research Policy* 33: 897-920.

Gereffi, G., Humphrey, J., Sturgeon, T. (2005) The governance of global value chains. *Review of International Political Economy* 12 (1): 78-104.

Hollands, R. G. (2008) Will the real smart city please stand up? *City: analysis of urban trends, culture, theory, policy, action*, 12:3, 303-320.

Loorbach, D., Rotmans, J. (2006) Managing transitions for sustainable development. In: Olshoorn X. and Wieczorek A.J. (Eds.) (2006) *Understanding industrial transformation: Views from different disciplines*. Dordrecht: Springer.

Montesor, E. (2012) Le dinamiche dell'agricoltura nel Comune di Verona. Piano degli Interventi Comune di Verona. [http://portale.comune.verona.it/nqcontent.cfm?a\\_id=33266](http://portale.comune.verona.it/nqcontent.cfm?a_id=33266)

Morgan, K., Sonnino, R. (2008). *The school food revolution: Public food and the challenge of sustainable development*. London: Earthscan/James & James

Paolillo, P.L. (2009) Un'applicazione avanzata in Lombardia: il piano di governo del territorio di Giussano". *Territorio* 49: 34-46.

Pothukuchi, K., Kaufman, J. L. (1999) Placing the food system on the urban agenda: The role of municipal institutions in food systems planning. *Agriculture and Human Values* 16: 213-224.

Schneider, S. (2008) Good, Clean, Fair: The Rhetoric of the Slow Food Movement. *College English* 70 (4). <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25472277>

Steel, C. (2008) *Hungry city: how food shapes our lives*. London: Chatto & Windus

Targetti, U., Longhi G., Solomatin E. (2010) *Ruolo e pianificazione delle aree agricole periurbane: L'esperienza del Parco agricolo Sud Milano*. Bologna: Maggioli

Urbani, P. (2006) La costruzione del piano paesaggistico. *Urbanistica e appalti* 4. Parma, convegno AIDU, "Urbanistica e paesaggio" 18-19 nov. 2005. <http://www.pausania.it>

Vescovi, F. (2012) *Proposte per il Parco agricolo sud Milano*. Cremona: Ronca.

Voß, J., Bornemann, B. (2011) The politics of reflexive governance: challenges for designing adaptive management and transition management. *Ecology and Society* 16 (2): 9.

<http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol16/iss2/art9/>

Wiskerke, J.S.C. (2009) On places lost and places regained: Reflections on the alternative food geography and sustainable regional development. *International Planning Studies* 14: 369-387.