Famous for their summer cauliflower, the Audomarois marshes are an excellent place for vegetable production and grassland, thanks to the ever-present water and the agronomic quality of its peat-rich yet sensitive soil. The Programme for the Maintenance of Agriculture in Wetlands (PMAZH) aims to find a balance between viable, profitable farming activities and crucial conservation of the wetland area and its various ecological functions.

The programme provides support to market gardeners, for example, to reduce their use of insecticides, and teach them to make their own farm machinery, which boosts productivity and improves working conditions, while minimising the financial investment. As the techniques developed are based on local understanding, the aim is not to standardise practices, but to develop hyperlocal skills and knowledge in line with each farmer’s needs.

By joining the pastoral land association, property owners add value to their land by making it available to livestock farmers who do not have sufficient grazing land. Stimulating agricultural activities and sheep production helps open up the sector and is a step towards conserving typical landscapes, which earned the Vézère Valley a listing as a ‘Grand Site de France’ in 2020.

Leasing land across the region helps maintain pastoralism, reduce external feed dependence and diversify producers’ activities (i.e. cheese and meat production). Support provided by local authorities, the Dordogne Chamber of Agriculture and other associations includes a range of awareness-raising events, such as transhumance open to the public and guided nature walks.

With its local knowledge, the age-old civilisation living in the Oasis du Sud Marocain Biosphere Reserve has always worked the land sustainably. Although fragile, the oasis’s system of production enables the local population to meet its needs. Date palm cultivation is iconic in the area. Several projects have been carried out with the local populations in Oasis du Sud Marocain Biosphere Reserve to boost sustainable development whilst conserving the environment. One of these involved developing agroecology.