



EURAGRI Members Conference 2006, 28-29 September, Rome

Chairs conclusions of the break-out sessions

Working Session III

CHANGES in the RURAL SOCIETY: NEW PERSPECTIVES for AGRICULTURE (Peter Keet (in cooperation with Sören Mikkelsen and Kristin Danielsen))

1. striking observations

large variation in the EU regional situation

- variation in role of agriculture in the regional economy
 - agriculture as an industry and a driving force of the rural economy;
 - agriculture not a driving force but needed for the management of natural resources or as an enabler for other economic activities in the region (e.g. tourism)
- variation in regional situations, e.g. land prices may range from €1.000/hectare to more than € 100.000/hectare
- variation in the kind of public goods at stake

2. food for thought

- how to organise interactions?
 - between farmers and non-farmers in a region (keeping in mind that farmers are major land-owners or users, but in number a small minority. How to cope with potential conflicts?
 - between the urban and the rural population;
 - between researchers and local population: researchers should connect to farmers and the local population
- there is a role for research here: socio-economic studies and interdisciplinary research is needed;
- new technologies should be explored to assess their potential for regional development (farm of the future?)

3. common conclusions

- policy and planning issues are
 - right of access
 - 'life stile' farmers + urban people with land and a few animals
 - summer houses / second houses
- the need for new non linear innovation systems, role of sme's
- speed of change, are we able to analyse what's going on and translate this into actions.

4. open questions

are we going towards diversification or towards integration of functions

- urban vs. rural areas
- production areas vs. leisure areas

ECONOMY and TRADE Kristin Danielsen (in cooperation with Sören Mikkelsen and Peter Keet)

1. striking observations

- a. Enormous reliance on the MARKET – claiming sustainability is what will survive...

b. Public regulations ARE stronger than private ones and WE are not giving up !

2. food for thought

- Global market vs. Local market

We, as consumers, do not agree with the development towards getting the same food everywhere. As the Danes say; we do not want “travel tired food”

Who will win in the long run and what is sustainable ?

- The trend of outsourcing (eg. pig production in Russia) is both good and bad (pollution, responsibility etc.)

3. common conclusions

- Enormous speed of globalization – Does the public sector has a role ?, and can we keep up? YES; both research and making regulations:
 - Research: Most important is private involvement
...but public research for policy development is still important

4. open questions

- Who is the trendsetter in the food chain ? marketing departments or Jamie Olivier (famous cook)
- Who is the consumer vs the citizen? We act differently as consumers...

CLIMATE CHANGE (Søren A. Mikkelsen (in cooperation with Kristin Danielsen and Peter Keet)

Chair’s conclusion of the break out session:

1. Striking observations

- North-South cooperation, global perspective (incl. EU-Africa)
- Variation in agriculture & effects on agriculture through EU

2. Food for thought

- Need for more disciplinary research (“sustainability science”)
- Mitigation and adaptation
 - and opportunities!
 - (wine)
 - (maize)

3. Common conclusions

- Yes – climate change is a fact (but how much?)

4. Open questions

- How to give the message of agricultural research in a proactive role to the rest of society?
- How to promote interaction research society/practice.