

STANDING COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH (SCAR)
81st Plenary Meeting
Brussels, 1-2 December 2005, CCAB – Room 0B

Summary Report

Chairman: *Christian Patermann*, Director DG RTD/E
Secretary: *François Constantin*, DG RTD/E¹

1. Opening of meeting

2. Approval of draft agenda

3. Approval of draft minutes from the meeting 2-3 February 2005

4. Agriculture research structures and perspectives in Member States

Presentations from PL, FR, IL, IE and CZ delegations on agriculture research structures and perspectives in these countries.

5. Reporting overview from SCAR Working Group meetings

The representative of UK Presidency gave an overview of the work done by the SCAR Working Group (SCAR-WG), which met three times since the last plenary meeting on 9-10 June (6 July – 29 September – 10 November).

6. Process for SCAR input to FP7

UK presented a draft paper on SCAR recommendations related to the Specific Programme of Theme 2 "Food, Agriculture, Biotechnology" (SP "FAB"). The paper had been discussed at SCAR-WG meeting level and following further discussion in plenary, it was agreed that, once refined, it would be transmitted to appropriate recipients.

7. Priority topics for a Common Research Agenda

EC presented an overview on the establishment of 11 collaborative working groups (CWG) on specific research topics, which are now all accompanied by a descriptive fiche. Discussion also focussed on the need for a mechanism for interaction between CWGs, ERA-Nets and TPs and on possible initiatives to bring together the coordinators of the CWGs to share experiences and good practice. SCAR should continue its role to monitor the comprehensive fabric among these initiatives as an important part of the Common Research Agenda.

8. Long-term strategic reflections for future SCAR activities

- Foresight activities – EU outlook agriculture 2020: Discussion followed presentations from SE on preliminary reflections on possible foresight activities to be addressed by SCAR in the

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future and from EC - DG RTD-K Directorate K "Social sciences and humanities; foresight" and DG JRC-IPTS on on-going and expected foresight activities carried out at EU level - DG RTD-E and DG AGRI on SSP-5 call work programme. It has been agreed that the SCAR-WG will prepare the ground for a European agricultural research agenda on future foresight initiatives undertaken by SCAR, based on national and EU-wide foresight initiatives, in collaboration with DG RTD-K, DG JRC-IPTS and DG AGRI, and will make practical proposals for a solid coordination among these various activities. Consensus also emerged upon a more substantial foresight item on the agenda of the next SCAR meeting.

- International dimension: Representatives from international organisations and consortia in charge of agricultural research for development (CGIAR – EIARD – CIHEAM, ERA-Net "Agricultural Research for Development – ARD") were invited to give a presentation on their respective institution. SCAR will consider whether SCAR and EIARD and/or other bodies should increase interaction and suggest closer coordination and, if so, propose the ways of doing so.

9. Mapping of activities and infrastructures in the field of agricultural research

- Mapping activities: The coordinator from the 2-year project EU AGRI MAPPING (Specific support action funded under SSP-4 call) gave a presentation on the main objectives of the project, including the type of support required from SCAR. Identified SCAR-WG contact points will monitor this process and attend the kick-off meeting of the project which will take place in Paris on 13 January 2006.
- Mapping infrastructures: The SCAR paper on infrastructures was sent to ESFRI on 15 September for consideration of the Biology and Medical Sciences (BMS) Steering Group. No relevant follow-up actions were taken so far in that respect. Discussion on the possible role of SCAR in supporting the EC policy in terms of infrastructures for agricultural research was postponed to the next SCAR meeting, taking also into account further developments in ESFRI.

10. Development of a prototype for a SCAR web portal

EC made a demonstration on the SCAR web portal, which is now accessible to the public at the following address <http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/scar.html>. The website is still "under construction" and an "official" announcement launching the site will be made end January, when most "country web pages" will be uploaded. The site will be open at least for one week and, should there be no major reason for denying open access, will be kept accessible in the future. Any remarks or observations to improve its operation should be communicated as soon as possible. In the meantime, EC will gradually upload the "country web pages", complete and refine the "general information web pages" and prepare the ground for an access to the "restricted area" through CIRCA tool.

11. Conclusions

- Possible report from SCAR activities by AT Presidency at Agriculture Council Meeting on 23-24 January 2006 (to be confirmed by AT Presidency) and/or at Presidency Informal Meeting on 28-29 May 2006
- 2 options for the next SCAR meeting: 18-19 May 2006 or 15-16 June 2006, to be confirmed by AT Presidency
- Next SCAR-WG meeting: 27 January 2006
- Croatia, who signed up as an Associated Candidate Country to FP6 with effect from 1st January, will be invited to become member observer of SCAR