Policies for procurement, food quality and short food supply chains: implications for sustainability

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Sustainable Food Systems as Virtuous Cycles

- Vibrant, prosperous rural areas
- Ecological production & supply practices
- High quality, nutritious food

Connected, committed municipalities & citizens

Environmental
Economic
Social
Nutritional
Public Procurement

Food Quality
- Organic Farming Support
- Protected Food Names

Public Procurement
- School Food Scheme
- Directive 2014/24

Short Food Supply Chains
- Rural Development Programme (Measure 16)
- EIP-AGRI Operational Groups
Examples of what policies are delivering...

- **School Food Scheme**
  - 300k tonnes dairy products to 19m children & 67k tonnes of fruit and veg to 10m children, in 66k schools

- **Organic Farming Support**
  - 11.1m hectares across EU, almost 272k farms, c.6.2% of total agricultural land

- **Protected Food Names**
  - 1377 registered products, average premium of 1.55

So what are sustainability challenges and opportunities?
Protected Food Names

• Convincing evidence of social and economic gains...
• CHALLENGES:
  ➢ leverage depends on context (infrastructure, human and social capital...)
  ➢ Environmental gains implicit, at best
Short Food Supply Chains: RDP Measure 16, EIP-AGRI Operational Groups

- Policies support (local) stakeholder collaboration and mobilisation of effort to innovate
- Multiple case evidence of sustainability contributions
- CHALLENGES:
  - Slow, painstaking process to create enduring, trustful partnerships
  - Problematic environmental impacts of supply chain localisation
Public Food Procurement: Directive 2014/24

• Can PFP drive short supply chains and sustainability gains? Under 2014/24...
  ➢ Provisions to encourage new suppliers esp. SMEs
  ➢ Respect principle of “most economically advantageous tender”, but can include social and environmental aspects of goods/services
  ➢ Tenders can specify certification schemes, production processes, full life cycle costings..
  ➢ Certain tenders reserveable for social enterprises, employers of disadvantaged workers
Directive 2014/24: Reflections

- PFP *can* be powerful contributor to sustainability
- CHALLENGES
  - Transposition variations across Member States
  - Procurement only one part of public food service activity...
  - ... for social/educational gains, combine with ‘whole settings’ programmes
  - ... for nutritional gains, combine with national public food standards/regulations
  - ... for environmental gains, focus on meat in menus
Summing up – how might agrifood policies advance on sustainability?

• Consider how existing measures may incorporate broader range of sustainability gains
• Focus on development of favourable contexts (infrastructure, human/social capital...) – opportunities for stronger alignment with other ESIF policies?
• Critically reflect on the ‘virtuous cycle’ concept of sustainable food systems...
  ... in practice, where do greatest gaps, barriers, etc. occur?
  ... where in the cycle do sustainability goals not align with each other?
And finally...

• Policy support often targets supply side innovation/change...what role for *citizens/consumers*?

• Behaviour change for sustainability can require seismic shifts in lives, lifestyles, skills, domestic labour arrangements, preoccupations...

➢ How can policy support better help this constituency?
Thank you for your attention!

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