



# Subgroup on Innovation for agricultural productivity and sustainability

16<sup>th</sup> Meeting

*10 March 2020*

**REPORT**



The Subgroup on Innovation (Sol) met for the sixteenth time in Brussels (Belgium) on 10 March 2020.

The objectives of the meeting were:

- a) to present the European Green Deal;
- b) to reflect upon achievements and challenges of the Subgroup on Innovation and discuss the experiences of the members;
- c) to present the results of the study 'Farmers of the Future' and the outcomes of the Symposium 'Spotlights on Young Farmers';
- d) to present the workplan of the EIP-AGRI Service Point for 2020, with special focus on the activities to be launched in the first half of the year;
- e) to provide feedback from recent networking activities and to present the upcoming events.

## Welcome and introduction

Kerstin Rosenow, Head of Unit DG AGRI B.2, warmly welcomed the participants and announced that this Subgroup meeting offers the occasion to look both inward and outward. A large part of the day was dedicated to the Subgroup's functioning (the 'inward' look). To start, looking outward, a short update was given on the state of affairs on CAP and Horizon Europe related matters.

Regarding the [mission in the area of Soil Health and Food](#), Kerstin Rosenow reiterated the importance of the soil topic, especially in the context of the Green Deal. The 'Soil mission' will be a broad mission and will raise awareness on the importance of soils, engage with citizens, create knowledge and develop a range of solutions for sustainable soil management across Europe. A group of 15 independent experts is working on developing ideas for one or more specific missions within the aforementioned area. It is expected that this Mission Board will have the proposals ready before summer.

Kerstin Rosenow informed the Subgroup members about the so-called "**Digital Package**" published by the European Commission on 19 February. This package comprises a Communication on the Commission's priority '[A Europe fit for the Digital Age](#)', a [White Paper on Artificial Intelligence \(AI\)](#) and a [Data Strategy](#). These three strategic documents include elements relevant for the agricultural sector, in particular for agri-related research and innovation.

As part of the next long-term EU budget the Commission has proposed the [Digital Europe programme](#), the EU's programme focused on building the strategic digital capacities of the EU and on facilitating the wide deployment of digital technologies, to be used by Europe's citizens and businesses. With a planned overall budget of €9.2 billion, it will shape and support the digital transformation of Europe's society and economy.

Under this programme the EU aims for example to create a Common Agriculture Data Space. The Commission has launched consultations on the [European data strategy](#). Feedback on the use and sharing of personal, business and public data is being collected until 31 May 2020 and Sol members are welcome to take part in the consultations.

To read more about the new digital strategy, click [here](#).

Kerstin Rosenow also provided the Subgroup members with an update on **EIP-AGRI communication activities**. She mentioned two upcoming EIP-AGRI Service Point (SP) thematic campaigns on circular

bioeconomy ([#EIPagriCircular](#)) and animal welfare ([#EIPagriAnimal](#)). The June newsletter will be dedicated to Organic Farming. Subgroup members with inspirational ideas, funding opportunities, network activities or events related to these themes can contact [newsletter@eip-agri.eu](mailto:newsletter@eip-agri.eu) to propose news items to include.

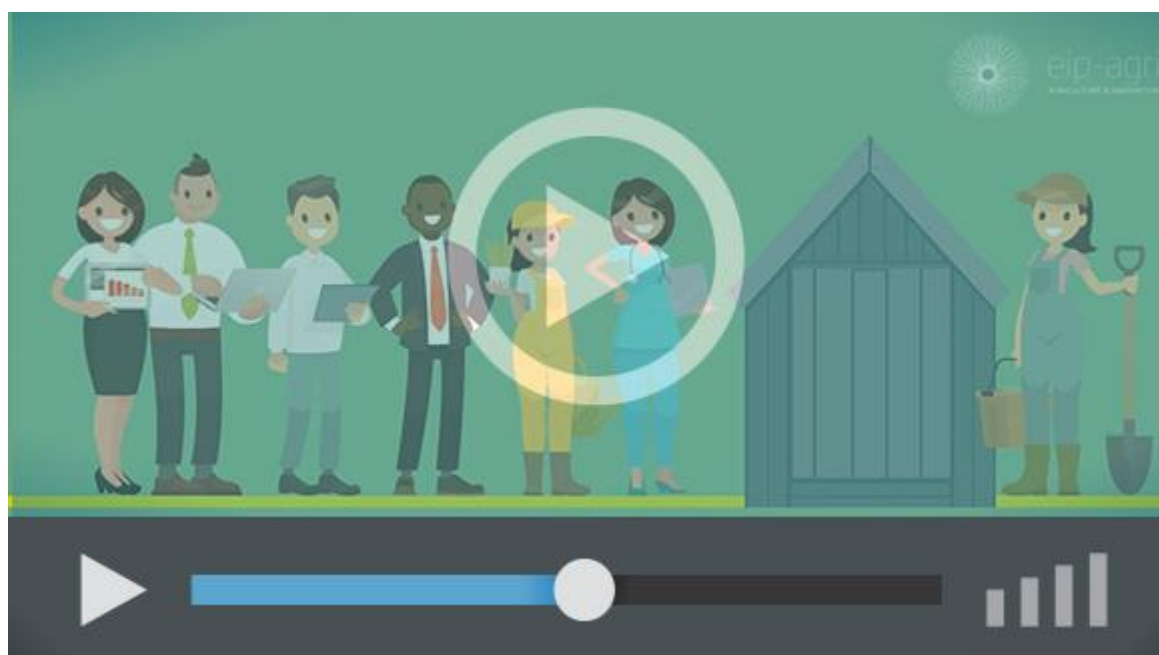
Additionally, there will be two other social media campaigns. One will be on **New farmers**. New farmers will be video-interviewed at EIP-AGRI events and short movie clips will be created, together with a link to the FG new entrants report that will be disseminated throughout the year. A second social media campaign will be on **Operational Groups**. Throughout the year Operational Groups will be highlighted (per Member State), in cooperation with the National Rural Networks.

The Agrinnovation magazine will focus on soil.

Kerstin Rosenow announced that a **video** will be made on the Subgroup. The Subgroup on Innovation has played a key role in catalysing innovation and making EU agriculture and forestry more sustainable and more productive. The video aims to raise the profile and stress the importance of this governance body as a key networking tool and show that the Subgroup is a good stakeholder involvement instrument that can concretely help to move the implementation of EIP-AGRI forward.

Kerstin Rosenow also introduced **two new members** to the DG AGRI team. Tereza Budnakova is the new Deputy Head of Unit DG AGRI B.2. She was previously at the European Commission's Research Executive Agency. A second new member is Isabelle Van Borm who has been working on Research and innovation for the past 15 years.

Finally, the introductory session was closed by showing an EIP-AGRI Service Point [animated infographic on Operational Groups](#). The animated video highlights how collaborating with different partners in Operational Group projects can help farmers find innovative solutions to challenges they are facing. It also shows how these collaborative projects can lead to new opportunities.



## Session I: the European Green Deal

In December 2019, the Commission launched the European Green Deal, the Commission's strategy to tackle challenges related to climate and environment. The [Communication on the European Green Deal](#) presents this new growth strategy for the EU, and also provides an initial roadmap with key actions for making the EU's economy sustainable by turning climate and environmental challenges into opportunities and making the transition just and inclusive for all.

Pierre Schellekens (DG AGRI) works on the agricultural aspects of the Green Deal and shared with Sol members some insights regarding this important EU flagship project. He noted that the Green Deal builds on a long experience and on the results of previous policy making. It starts with what has been achieved so far and offers a response to the many challenges ahead of us.

It is relevant to the Subgroup's work because innovation and research and development are central in the Green Deal.

The Green Deal has various elements and under each element, actions have been defined. The Green Deal is therefore also an action plan. Mr. Schellekens provided a short update on a number of actions that have been or are being taken so far:

- The Sustainable Climate Financing plan has been adopted as a first concrete measure.
- In January 2020 the [Just Transition Mechanism](#) was presented. Some regions and sectors will be more affected. The agricultural sector, among others, faces a lot of challenges. These regions and sectors will need support. The Just Transition Mechanism provides tailored financial and practical support to help workers and generate the necessary investments in regions most affected by the transition.
- To set into legislation the political ambition of being the world's first climate-neutral continent by 2050, the Commission has presented the first '[European Climate Law](#)'.
- The [European Climate Pact](#) aims to engage voluntary initiatives (citizens, industry, civil society and authorities at all levels) that complement the Green Deal. The initiative is now open for public consultation until 27 May 2020.
- On 10 March the [New Industrial Strategy](#) and [Circular Economy Action Plan](#) was adopted.
- The Farm to Fork strategy has not yet been presented. The aim is to adopt this by 25 March (now postponed to 29 April). It covers 3 pillars (production, distribution, consumption) and also looks at research, soft measures and legislative measures.

The session was concluded with a Q&A session:

- Q: Is agriculture part of the Just Transition Mechanism?  
A: Most of the sustainable investment plan is EU budget money. The Transition Fund (50-60 billions EUR) is a part of that plan but focuses mainly on industrial and mining regions. However, other aspects of the plan can involve agriculture.  
Q: It gives the impression that the topics are mainly mining, energy intensive industry etc.  
A: The energy intensive and mining regions are mainly concerned. The eligible measures include support to SMEs, to innovation, creation of enterprises. That could be in different sectors as well. But it is not a transition fund which is specific for the agricultural sector.
- Q: What about investments in forestry? What is sustainable?

A: The issue of forestry is complicated: biomass is needed for renewable energy, but on the other hand the carbon sink has to be maintained. This issue is addressed in the Biodiversity Strategy and in the Farm to Fork Strategy. It is a challenge to find the balance with a role for the use of agricultural lands: how can we use the land reaching climate-neutrality?

- Q: The climate law still has to go to the institutional process.

A: yes

- Q: How does the Farm to Fork Strategy fit in the CAP reform planning? How do you translate it into implementation measures?

A: That issue is completely essential in the next steps of implementation. Both in the Biodiversity and the Farm to Fork strategies the objectives are set at the European level. The CAP Strategic Plans should take into account the objectives set at the European level. These have to be translated into feasible measures in the CAP Strategic Plans.

- Q: How does the legislative part fit into the strategy paper?

A: DG AGRI has made an assessment on how the CAP reform fits with the Green Deal. It will be presented this month. The CAP reform already took the climate policy into account. It is not something completely new. Mainstreaming is needed for climate and eco schemes. This will be discussed in Parliament.

## Session II: Achievements and challenges of the Subgroup on Innovation: experiences of the members

Session II formed the core of this Subgroup meeting. Its morning part focused on past experiences with the Subgroup on Innovation, whilst the afternoon discussions were geared towards the future context and priorities.

### Achievements and challenges of the Subgroup on Innovation

One of the objectives of this Subgroup meeting was to reflect upon achievements and challenges of the Subgroup on Innovation and to listen to and share experiences of the members. Magdalena Mach (DG AGRI) provided a [general introduction](#) and explained that the session is linked with the one that took place in the 12<sup>th</sup> Subgroup in Spoleto where challenges and opportunities for innovation networking in the short and medium term were discussed.

Magdalena Mach presented some general information about the Subgroup: its structure, composition and objectives. Since March 2015, 15 meetings have taken place (this meeting excluded). What characterises these meetings is their interactive and innovative set-up. The average number of participants has been around 36 members. Six organisations attended 14 Subgroup meetings.

After the introduction, 6 Subgroup members presented their experience:

- **Inger Pehrson** of the **Swedish Rural Network** has been involved in the EIP-AGRI activities since November 2014 and participated in the Subgroup meetings since the first meeting. She first presented her experience in the Subgroup, valued its opportunity for networking, and then provided an [example](#) of how it inspired them to work in Sweden. You can find her presentation [here](#).

- **Anton Jagodic**, Adviser at the **Slovenian Chamber of Agriculture and Forestry**, was invited in 2015 by the Rural Development Network to work in the Subgroup. He shared the reasons for his involvement in the Subgroup, how it has benefitted him and explained the first steps for implementing EIP-AGRI in the Slovenian context. You can find his presentation [here](#).
- **Bram Moeskops** of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (**IFOAM**) shared some anecdotes on IFOAM's first steps into the Subgroup and on their involvement in the 'Organic is Operational' Workshop that took place in Hamburg in 2017. He shared his appreciation on the collaborative nature of the Subgroup and the added value of bringing together different viewpoints.
- **Lana Bačura**, of the **Ministry of Agriculture of Croatia**, explained that she was nominated as a Subgroup member in 2015. In 2018 a first call for Operational Groups was launched in Croatia and a new call for 2020 is being prepared. For the moment there are no OGs in Croatia.
- **Sonia Ramonteu** of the **French Network of Agricultural Technical Institutes (ACTA)** explained that she only recently joined the Subgroup and is now attending her third meeting. For ACTA, the Subgroup meetings are a good opportunity to get informed, to share information and to propose topics for events or FGs.
- **Marko Mäki-Hakola** shared the joint experience of the representative bodies of farmers and farmers' organisations **COPA-COGECA**. He highlighted some challenges and shared some suggestions for the future. You can find the presentation [here](#).



Katrien Dejongh (EIP-AGRI Service Point) presented the process for the interactive sessions. The main questions to be answered in the group discussions were:

*As a member of the Sol, and taking into account the Subgroup's objectives, role, composition: in your experience:*

- ✓ *What worked well?*
- ✓ *What have you learned or been able to take away from your participation in the Sol? How did your participation help to move the EIP-AGRI forward in your country?*
- ✓ *Which specific input have you been able to give (that you could not give in other meetings or platforms)?*
- ✓ *Upon hindsight, what would you do differently?*

These questions were provided to the Subgroup members a week prior to the meeting. The main elements of the group discussions were highlighted in the plenary and can be found in table 1.

**Table 1: main outputs of the group discussions**

What worked well?	What have you learned or been able to take away from your participation in the Sol?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collaborative attitude</li> <li>- Interactive methodology (cross-sector, cross-border, flexible)</li> <li>- EIP-AGRI family: diverse, and yet we manage to focus on common priorities on real issues and needs</li> <li>- The Subgroup supports the EIP-AGRI bridge between RDP and H2020</li> <li>- Without the Subgroup, we would not have had as many innovative projects</li> <li>- Service Point Team ♥</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Subgroup supported work at national level, and vice versa</li> <li>- Exchanges amongst countries and different actors</li> <li>- Motivation!</li> <li>- Innovative approaches and techniques for group work, which we subsequently tried out in other (national) events</li> <li>- Tools especially the digital tools like mentimeter, attendify-app. Some used these at home meetings</li> <li>- Bottom up, real participation of farmers and foresters. This approach was very new in some regions</li> <li>- Inspiration and ideas</li> </ul>
Which specific input have you been able to give (that you could not give in other meetings or platforms)?	Upon hindsight, what would you do differently?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sharing and exchange on EIP-AGRI implementation to improve / make it work for farmers and foresters</li> <li>- Putting topics on the agenda (Horizon, CAP, Focus groups, events)</li> <li>- Circle of ideas -&gt; programme -&gt; actions -&gt; feedback -&gt; ideas</li> <li>- Multi-level and multi-actor exchange</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Longer-term agenda for specific topics</li> <li>- Increase the inputs from farmers, foresters and advisers &gt; practical issues</li> <li>- Keep in touch in between meetings</li> <li>- Better preparation of meetings (on both sides) – receiving questions and presentations in advance would be helpful in this regard</li> <li>- More opportunity for direct input into the workplan of the EIP-AGRI SP and the Sol agenda</li> <li>- Broader involvement of different actors in Sol</li> <li>- Deeper feedback on group discussions and EIP-AGRI activities in the meeting</li> </ul>

More details on the outcomes of the discussions are summarised in [Annex 1](#).

The morning session was concluded by visualising the experiences in a **Word Cloud**. Subgroup members were invited to submit two words that in their opinion stood out from the morning discussions and that best represent the Subgroup on Innovation.

### Word Cloud: The Subgroup on Innovation: it's all about .....





## The Subgroup on Innovation in the future context

Inge Van Oost (DG AGRI) provided a [general introduction](#) to the afternoon session and explained some framing elements of the future CAP network. Continuity, being more responsive to current and future challenges, and more flexible and modern systems are key for the future CAP. The CAP of the future will both encourage increased investment in research and innovation and enable farmers and rural communities to benefit from it.

Inge Van Oost highlighted the reasons for the EIP-AGRI network success story and explained that the EIP-AGRI will continue to foster competitive and sustainable farming and forestry.

A comparison was shared between the objectives and tasks of the current regulation (2014-2020) and the new ones for the 2021-2027 period.

After this introduction, Katrien Dejongh (EIP-AGRI Service Point) presented the process for the interactive session. The main questions to be answered in the group discussions were:

*Taking into account the future context: How should a new governance body be organised to help foster innovation under the new CAP:*

- ✓ *What should be its role, objectives and main tasks?*
- ✓ *Is the current composition adequate or should other organisations be added?*

A detailed summary of the outcomes of the breakout group discussions can be found in [Annex 2](#).

In general, the future role, objectives and main tasks of the Subgroup on Innovation could be similar to the current situation. Its role would be to promote the networking among Member States on AKIS, and promote the contribution of research and innovation to the CAP objectives. Some members argued that in future, the scope should not only be limited to agriculture, but that it should be broadened to include the wider rural economy. However, others indicated that the strength of the Subgroup lies in the fact that it is focused and targeted.

A number of suggestions were made to broaden the composition, for example by including the agricultural education and training sector, or private sector umbrella organisations, ICT and/or media. An increased (female) farmer and forester representation would also be welcomed.

The current size could be maintained but it was suggested to extend some of the meetings with specific groups for whom the agenda topics would be important. Another option could be to work with (semi-permanent) thematic groups. It was suggested to investigate possibilities for remote participation options or to explore the use of ICT tools to get more inputs from and exchange with groups who may be less able to attend the meetings, such as farmers, foresters, advisers.

## Session III: Presentation of the study 'Farmers of the Future' and the 'Spotlights on Young Farmers' symposium

### 3.1. Presentation of the study 'Farmers of the Future'

Last year, DG AGRI in collaboration with the [Joint Research Centre](#), took the initiative to carry out a study on the 'Farmers of the Future'. Although the study is still ongoing, Florence Buchholzer (DG AGRI) presented its aim and shared some preliminary findings.

The study is a foresight exercise. It is based on literature (e.g. long-term trends) and behavioural insights and has a qualitative nature. It is intended to inform and guide policy e.g. future CAP or Research and Innovation policy. Through participatory workshops and interviews with farmers and other stakeholders, future trends and types of farmers were explored. Florence Buchholzer shared some of the preliminary outcomes on future farmer profiles/types of farming. The importance of innovation was stressed. In the second half of 2020 these results will be completed through workshops, further interviews and case-studies. October will be the last month to give feedback before the study is closed. A final report should be available for the Outlook Conference in December 2020.

You can find more information in Florence Buchholzer's presentation [here](#).

After the presentation there was an exchange with the Subgroup members and a Q&A session:

- A remark was made on the importance of social innovation. A reference was made to a H2020 project on Social Innovation in Marginalised Rural Areas ([SIMRA](#)), finishing at the end of this month.  
(Answer by nodding – indeed aware of SIMRA)
- Q: What about the connection between energy supply and agriculture?  
A: Energy is considered under bioeconomy. In the final study they will pay attention to that.
- Q: What about agro-ecology? Could this be added?  
A: Agro-ecology could be in several profiles. It could also be a basis for some profiles. The regenerative profile goes even beyond agro-ecology.
- Q: What about the future of advisers?  
A: In the workshop, social/professional relationships with all parties of the chain were discussed. There is a strong relationship between farmers and advisers. The speed of change enhances lifelong learning. Farming as a "second" career is an example. There are a lot of cases of people entering farming after another professional life. There will always be a need for knowledge. Farmers also need the skills to connect to all of society.
- Q: Is anything known about the number of farms in 2040?  
A: It is difficult to draw conclusions on the number and the size of farms. There might be a limit to the farms getting bigger than today. There could also be physical limits to the size. Due to demographic changes, there might be less land pressure in some areas.

### 3.2. Presentation: "Spotlights on Young Farmers Symposium: an innovative format for farmers' driven research agendas"

Alice Minichini of the European Council of Young Farmers (CEJA) presented the main outcomes of the '[Spotlights on Young Farmers](#)' symposium. The event was organised last December as a culmination of CEJA's cooperation with the Farming Systems Ecology Group of Wageningen University and Research (WUR) and the Global Network of Lighthouse Farms.

The event aimed to co-create research agendas related to sustainability based on the needs of young farmers. The format of cooperation through a multi-actor approach and the co-creation of research agendas was highlighted. There was a very positive response, with a lot of interest for the collaborative format between young farmers, Lighthouse farmers and the diversity of researchers.

The session was concluded with a short exchange on the multi-actor approach:

Inge Van Oost commented that the multi-actor approach, namely several stakeholders working together from the beginning until the end, has been part of EIP-AGRI since the start.

It was noted that in many research projects, there is a difference between the theory of the multi-actor approach and what is happening in reality. There are still a lot of researchers who do not implement this approach. It should be looked at when evaluating these projects.

Following this discussion, Tereza Budnakova offered to send a link to Subgroup members for sending applications to be research projects evaluator, as more H2020 project proposal evaluators with a thorough understanding of the multi-actor approach are needed. The members of the Subgroup were encouraged to apply or disseminate the link to relevant experts. You can find the link for external experts to assist in the evaluation of grant applications, projects and tenders, and to provide opinions and advice in specific cases [here](#).

## Session IV: EIP-AGRI SP Workplan 2020

### 4.1. EIP-AGRI SP Workplan

Pacôme Elouna (EIP-AGRI SP) presented the [annual work programme](#) that runs from 11 February 2020 until 10 February 2021.

The different activities were presented under each of the 4 priorities. The events' dates and names of their task managers were shared.

### 4.2. AKIS Seminar

Inge Van Oost (DG AGRI) presented the latest updates on the Seminar 'CAP Strategic Plans: the key role of AKIS in Member States'. The seminar is planned for 22-23 April (depending on the situation with COVID-19 which is constantly monitored) and aims to support and inspire Member States in the preparation of their CAP AKIS Strategic Plans post 2020. You can find more information on the objectives and the key areas to explore over [here](#). You can find the draft programme on the [event page](#).

## Session V: Feedback on recent activities

### 5.1. Workshop 'Small is smart'

Sergiu Didicescu (EIP-AGRI Service Point) provided the participants with some general feedback on the [workshop 'Small is smart' – Innovative solutions for small agricultural and forestry holdings](#) that took place in Bucharest (Romania) on 29 and 30 October 2019.

The event was about recognising the important role that small-scale farms play within Europe's country side. About 100 participants of 17 countries shared examples of innovative solutions

successfully adopted by small farm and forestry holdings, and discussed ways in which to improve the supportive environment for innovation uptake. Among the participants there was a strong Southern and Eastern Europe presence.

The final report should be published in April 2020. More information can be found on the [event webpage](#).

Q&A session:

- Q: What was the feeling of the participants on the future of small farmers?  
A: It was concluded that small farmers are the social fabric in the countryside. In the future more city people may go back to the countryside.

## 5.2. Seminar 'New skills for digital farming'

Fabio Cossu (DG AGRI) presented the main outcomes of the EIP-AGRI seminar '[New skills for digital farming](#)'. The event was organised in collaboration with the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture and took place in Spain on 5 and 6 February 2020. The seminar aimed to contribute to the design and implementation of approaches and tools that can help farmers and farm advisers develop the skills for the digital transition in agriculture.

Over 150 participants from 28 European countries and more than 40 speakers participated in the event. Fabio Cossu highlighted the added value of the presence of agricultural education and training sector representatives. The seminar focused on 3 questions: what skills are needed for digital farming? How to get these? What role for the future CAP?

The report will be published on the [event webpage](#).

## Next step and closing

Subgroup members were invited to evaluate the event through the EIP-AGRI Service Point app.

Tereza Budnakova, deputy Head of Unit DG AGRI B.2, thanked the participants for their valuable contributions.

The **next Subgroup meeting** is planned to take place in Brussels (Belgium) on **23 June 2020**.

**The detailed agenda of the meeting and all presentations can be found on the [EIP-AGRI website](#).**

## Annex 1:

### Main outcomes of the group discussions on achievements and challenges of the Subgroup on Innovation

The main questions to be answered in the group discussions were:

*As a member of the Subgroup on Innovation, and taking into account the Subgroup's objectives, role, composition: in your experience:*

- ✓ *What worked well?*
- ✓ *What have you learned or been able to take away from your participation in the Sol? How did your participation help to move the EIP-AGRI forward in your country?*
- ✓ *Which specific input have you been able to give (that you could not give in other meetings or platforms)?*
- ✓ *Upon hindsight, what would you do differently?*

#### What worked well?

##### Main outcomes group 1:

- EIP-AGRI family: diverse, and yet we manage to focus on common priorities on real issues and needs
- The Subgroup helped to build this family/community between stakeholders and Member States; the regularity of meetings (3 times a year) and the fact that it is a permanent group contributed positively to this
- The Subgroup supports the EIP-AGRI bridge between RDP and H2020 (conveyed in a drawing)
- If we would not have had this system, we would not have had as many innovative projects
- Service Point Team ♥
- Good balance of representatives (in terms of organisations, and topics)
- General arrangements
- Dynamics between the members
- Networking: exchange of information and good practice (in a peaceful way) between different countries contributed to understanding each other
- No idea that was proposed by the Subgroup members was lost – there was general acceptance, a safe space to share ideas, thoughts, questions
- Good organisation of events, giving time for deep discussions
- Creative methodologies, such as small groups that foster discussions
- The Subgroup on Innovation is motivating and inspiring
- Topics representing common interests and needs were addressed, and over the 5 years, these were more and more creative
- The EIP-AGRI website, where you can find all the information

##### Main outcomes group 2:

- Interactive methodology: cross-sector, cross-borders, flexible
- Collaborative attitude
- For several participants the use of the interactive methodologies for exchanging knowledge, information, experience, networks were eye openers. E.g. working in small groups. Several methods were taken over at home.
- It was very fruitful to have different disciplines in the group, different countries, different roles and involvement in EIP. Different perspectives on innovation were discussed and this enriched the debate.

- The combination of different backgrounds worked very well. It was a good combination that allowed for a lot of possibilities for networking and even friendships were born.
- There was the possibility to share ideas (to follow up by developing projects), get implementation examples to develop further.
- From a different angle, also the attitude of the participants was special. Everyone was really willing to collaborate, to share knowledge and experiences and there was a general openness to each other.
- The presentations from DG AGRI on the EU view on innovation were important for EIP implementation in MS.
- The reimbursement for SOI meetings & workshops helped participants of all kind of organisations to participate.

### What have you learned or been able to take away from your participation in the Subgroup on Innovation?

#### Main outcomes group 1:

- The Subgroup supported work at national level, and vice versa: “Without the Subgroup, there would probably not have been as many EIP-AGRI projects.”
- Exchanges amongst countries and different actors were very important, for instance to:
  - o Learn about good practices in other countries
  - o Learn about ways to implement the EIP-AGRI measure (calls, prioritising, cut off dates, lump sum, project fact sheets)
  - o Learn about agricultural innovation in other countries
- Motivation! The work on EIP-AGRI was not always easy, but the Subgroup meetings and colleagues gave a lot of encouragement
- Innovative approaches and techniques for group work, which we subsequently tried out in other (national) events
- New friends and contacts
- Broader view on European Rural Development and agricultural innovation
- Ideas for building EIP-AGRI NSU action plans, and presenting and implementing it
- The best meeting was when it was combined with a seminar and especially a study visit!
- Good cooperation with DG AGRI – would like to see it continue
- Answers to many questions on implementation in every meeting
- The Subgroup created a network for exchange of ideas and quick responses for implementation

#### Main outcomes group 2:

- Tools, especially the digital tools like mentimeter, attendify-app. Some were used in Member States' meetings.
- A lot was learned about methodologies that can be used for participatory and innovative projects. Bottom-up approaches for participation of farmers and foresters were very new in some regions. The approaches for designing activities from-bottom-up were made very concrete.
- Inspiration and ideas: different approaches of networking could be replicated into the national EIP-system, the way of choosing topic for OGs was inspiring. In several meetings there were interesting examples from MS and experiences from local level. It was good that farmers had the possibilities to participate in activities (speakers in SOI & other activities).

**Which specific input have you been able to give (that you could not give in other meetings or platforms)?**

**Main outcomes group 1:**

- Sharing and exchange on EIP-AGRI implementation to improve/ make it work for farmers and foresters.
- To give (and get) help to (and from) other countries concerning EIP-AGRI implementation
- Raise questions and identify barriers concerning EIP-AGRI implementation
- Proposals and ideas to improve the EIP-AGRI functioning, such as cooperation between OGs in different countries, and to solve farmers` problems
- Experiences of applying for and implementing EIP-AGRI projects and how EIP-AGRI is implemented in my Member State
- Presenting the functioning of the `innovation brokers` system in my country
- Examples of innovations related to farmers` needs and practical problems
- Dissemination of results
- Putting topics on the agenda (Horizon, CAP, Focus groups, events)
- Focus Group on Organic arable farming
- Workshop Organic is Operational
- Topics for Focus Groups, workshops and seminars (and there is a fast response to these proposals)
- Linking CAP to Horizon!

**Main outcomes group 2:**

- Circle from ideas → programme → actions → feedback → to ideas
- Multi-level and multi-actor exchange and bridging across EU policies
- In the beginning there was some confusion on the level on which to talk (which hat to put on), since some participants were members of several bodies under the CAP.
- A good thing of the Subgroup on Innovation was its specificity, with clear objectives from the start. The work was based on a working programme. It was possible to bring up ideas and then follow up on them. It fostered the involvement of agricultural innovation actors, implementation actors and research.
- It helped to overcome obstacles (early warning + feedback opportunities).
- Out of the rural network groups, the Subgroup on innovation is the one that worked best and was most interesting.

## Upon hindsight, what would you do differently?

### Main outcomes group 1:

- Longer-term agenda for specific topics (e.g. the series of events and other work on different aspects of digitisation in agriculture): Improve the mid-term planning of EIP-AGRI activities, creating continuity in topics, and regular reviews on what else needs to be done on these topics.
- Increase the inputs from farmers, foresters and advisers > practical issues
- More farmers in the Subgroup, in a more balanced representation.
- Organise presentations on some topics by invited experts, especially farmers, who can share practical experience.
- Keep in touch in between meetings.
- Better preparation of meetings (on both sides) – receiving questions and presentations in advance would be helpful in this regard.
- Installing a preparatory group (national pendant to the Subgroup) to better prepare for the meetings, especially the technical/subject-related inputs the SOI members are asked to provide
- Improve dissemination of Subgroup results in MS (in next CAP period)
- Subgroup members to make agreements with NRN/NSU contacts about how, when to communicate, and how and when to make translations and connect with the EIP-AGRI Service Point.
- More initiatives by Subgroup members.
- More clarity on how inputs by Subgroup members are processed, and who takes decisions, and the reasons for these decisions.
- More focused and shorter presentations by invited speakers allowing more time to discuss.
- Since many Subgroup members are arriving the evening before, create possibilities for `informal meetings` in an agreed place.
- The language issue should be better addressed, for instance ensuring that the results of activities are translated.

### Main outcomes group 2:

- Higher role for input of ideas:
  - In the early years the group had a bigger say in the working plan activities. Please be clear about this to temper expectations.
  - Members should be able to put ideas on the agenda of the Subgroup
- Broader involvement. For instance, for the development of the working programme, ideas could be gathered from a broader spectrum by inviting specific experts and/or practitioners to define topics.
- Deeper feedback: although it might be a challenge, the group discussions should appear in the report and should also be reported back to the plenary. There should also be a deeper feedback on activities (workshops, seminars, Focus Groups) with discussion. For instance, by inviting FG (coordinating) experts.
- It is important that there's clarity about the different governance structures and bodies under the CAP, their roles and tasks. These should be clearly communicated. Each body should stick to its role and it should be avoided that the same issues are discussed in different governance bodies.
- There is a need for translation of the reports (e.g. by the NRNs).



## Annex 2: Main outcomes of the group discussions on the future of the Subgroup on Innovation

The main questions to be answered in the group discussions were:

*Taking into account the future context: How should a new governance body be organised to help foster innovation under the new CAP:*

- ✓ *What should be its role, objectives and main tasks?*
- ✓ *Is the current composition adequate or should other organisations be added?*

### What should be its role, objectives and main tasks?

#### Group 1

##### Role:

- There was some discussion on the role of the new governance body for innovation under the new CAP, and the general agreement was that it would need to cover a broader remit: 'from passenger car to lorry' was how one of the participants phrased it.
- Its role would be to promote the networking among member states on AKIS, and promote the contribution of research and innovation to the CAP objectives, including innovation in eco schemes under pillar 1. Meanwhile the challenge will be to keep it sufficiently targeted to be effective.

##### Objectives and main tasks:

- Create effective innovation and promote effective innovation
- Continue to support EIP-AGRI implementation in the CAP (including AKIS, RDP, Pillar 1 eco schemes and other relevant measures) and Horizon Europe
- Identify common issues, problems and good practices, and encourage networking among EU member states to promote this EIP-AGRI implementation
- Ensure the link with advisory services and training and education
- Support and structure the networking among Operational Groups, and between Operational Groups and relevant H2020 and Horizon Europe projects.
- Note: How to include enterprises or if this should be through another channel is an open question

#### Group 2

##### Role:

- *'About the whole CAP, integrate AKIS'*
- There was some confusion on the level that the group was supposed to discuss. Should the Subgroup be a group for the whole CAP or for agricultural innovation only? What would help is to position the different groups under CAP with clearly different tasks and thematics to avoid overlap (and confusion).

##### Objectives:

- To reflect upon how research and innovation projects can contribute to the 9 objectives of the CAP
- To capitalise and articulate different levels of knowledge and experience
- To strengthen advisory services and networking

#### Tasks

This group had a discussion on how to really reach ('change') the (management of the) end user with innovations. The different elements that were discussed are:

- Can dissemination be more targeted?
- Who is supposed to implement innovations and what is needed for farmers/foresters to take over an innovation (e.g. role of innovations brokers in Poland)
- Within and cross countries
- Integration of results in education and training?

#### Group 3

- Add an objective that assures a link to Horizon Europe.
- Scope could be broadened. Innovation under the new CAP will be transversal. Subgroup can help to foster coherence. It can be the "glue", bring everything together.
- The current objective of supporting networking between EIP-AGRI Operational Groups could be broadened. The Subgroup should facilitate networking of various stakeholders, not only OG's.
- Some members argued that in future, the scope should not only be limited to agriculture, but that it should be broadened to include other rural economies. However, others indicated that the strength of the Subgroup lies in the fact that it is focused and targeted.
- The Subgroup also has a role as an "intermediary" between the EU level and the national level (+ language barrier)
- It was mentioned that the Subgroup (and EIP-AGRI) should not exclusively focus on technological innovation, but also on social innovation (like in LEADER).

#### Group 4

##### Structure:

Different scenarios have been discussed:

- In scenario A, there could exist several Subgroups next to the Assembly meeting: SG on evaluation, SG on land-based eco-schemes, SG on LEADER and RD, SG on agricultural innovation and AKIS.
- In scenario B: structure SG according to EC's CAP strategic plan regulation (e.g. cooperation, etc)

**Objective:** Adapt the objectives to the new conditions (talk about CAP, not just RD, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> pillar)

##### Tasks:

- Mix 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> pillar actors
- Work more with results of OGs and H2020
- Broaden dissemination of results to new actors

### Is the current composition adequate or should other organisations be added?

#### Group 1

- Other organisations should be added in addition to the current composition; however, the current size works well. Maybe some of the meetings could be extended with specific groups for whom the topics under discussion are especially important; for instance occasional meetings where in addition to the regular members all the National Support Units for EIP-AGRI/AKIS could be invited. Another option discussed was to alternate members, but the risk would then be to lose the `family feeling` and the trust that is built during the series of meetings.
- Additional organisations:
  - Which AKIS actors are we missing? Training, agricultural schools, ICT, media
  - (More) Young farmers; female farmers
  - (More) farmers, foresters, advisers
  - NGOs working on nature conservation – to get their inputs for the green deal/ eco schemes – and to foster discussion between them and the farming community to create new solutions (though it was noted that there are already a few NGOs in the current Subgroup)
  - Possibly retail/ agricultural processors (following the supply chain)?
- It was also suggested to explore the use of ICT tools to get more inputs from and exchange with groups who may be less able to attend the meetings, such as farmers, foresters, advisers.

#### Group 2

- More practical partners like farmers, foresters, agroforesters, owners, advisers
- Education and (practical) research
- Industry and marketing of the production chain
- If the group is on AKIS, then all actors in the AKISs + H2020 multi-actor projects
- A point of attention is the optimum size of a group: 56 members with 42 participants maximum is big enough. Maybe (semi-permanent) thematic groups could be a solution. They would coordinate better within the existing networks. However, it all depends on the structure of the new CAP and the expected governance

#### Group 3

- It is advisable to increase farmer representation. This could be done e.g. by a 1/3 MA+ NSU, 1/3 Research + advisors, 1/3 civil society, farmers and local government representation. Another possibility is to give more than 1 place per farmer organisation. It would also be good to have representatives who have experience in the field, and not only representatives that are permanently based in Brussels and are distanced from the reality. However, it was argued that the organisations themselves select the delegate and that it is difficult to impose conditions.
- It is important to keep the diversity of stakeholders.
- The possibility to include private sector umbrella organisations could be investigated. For instance, umbrella trade associations of the food industry that represent all companies producing foodstuffs and/or beverages.

#### Group 4

- Higher and lower agricultural education sector
- Stakeholders representing environmental aspects
- AKIS actors (media, policy makers others than Managing Authorities)