

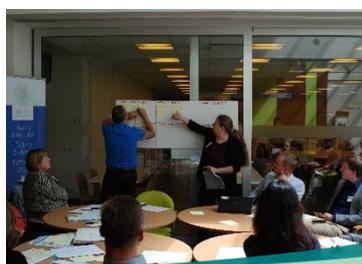


# Subgroup on Innovation for agricultural productivity and sustainability

2nd Meeting

*23 June 2015*

**REPORT**



The Subgroup on Innovation met for the second time in Brussels on 23 June 2015. The **programme of the meeting** was focused on four topics:

- I. State of play Rural Development Programmes and EIP-AGRI programming, first experiences with EIP-AGRI implementation
- II. Further elaborating the EIP-AGRI Work plan 2nd half of 2015
- III. Horizon 2020 and EIP-AGRI interactions, first multi actor projects and thematic networks
- IV. First steps for preparing the 2016 EIP-AGRI Work plan

## I. State of play Rural Development Programmes and EIP-AGRI programming, first experiences with EIP-AGRI implementation

The meeting was opened by Mr Rob Peters, Head of Unit DG AGRI H5 (Research and innovation). Following the opening words, Inge Van Oost presented the **state of play of the EIP-AGRI programming in the Rural Development Programmes** and gave an indicative overview about the number of Operational Groups planned in the programming period 2014-2020.

After the overview presentation, Ms Carola Ketelhodt from the Innovationsbüro Schleswig-Holstein presented the **first practical experiences gained in implementing the EIP-AGRI** in the German Bundesland Schleswig-Holstein. Since Schleswig-Holstein is the most advanced region implementing EIP-AGRI in the EU (call for Operational Groups published in 2015, selected 17 projects in 2015, first projects started in June 2015) Ms Ketelhodt presentation was followed with great interest by the audience.

## II. Further elaborating the EIP-AGRI Work plan 2nd half of 2015

The second part of the morning session concentrated on the EIP-AGRI activities in 2015.

Mr Rob Peters and Ms Anikó Seregélyi (DG AGRI, H5) gave an **overview about the EIP-AGRI activities** taken place between the first and second meeting of the Subgroup on innovation and presented the participants the main questions and proposed list of tasks of the of three new Focus Groups. The call for experts of these Focus Groups was published on 7 July 2015.

The presentation was followed by interactive session 1 where participants further discussed / listed ideas for the three EIP-AGRI events taking place in the second half of 2015:

1. Workshop on "Circular economy"
2. Workshop on "First experiences of Operational Groups"
3. Seminar on "Knowledge systems and interactive innovation".

## II.1 Report on the Interactive session 1

For the first interactive session of the day participants were invited to choose one of the three breakout rooms corresponding to the three upcoming EIP-AGRI events: Workshop on “learning from the first experiences of Operational Groups”, the Workshop on “Circular Economy” and the Seminar on “Knowledge Systems”. The subgroup members were invited to suggest:

- What should be the event main objective?
- Who should be invited (categories of participants)?
- What should be discussed?
- Who should be invited as speakers?
- What outputs should we expect?
- Ideas for follow-up actions

### Group 1: **Workshop on Operational Groups**

Scheduled for January 2016 this workshop aims to gather and learn from the first lessons of the Operational Groups. It will be centred on stakeholders and their experiences in implementation. The break-out group participants made the following suggestions:

#### **Objectives:**

- Sharing experience and information between different MS and regions
- Specific objective: Share experience with involving farmers in the OG's

#### **Topics for discussion:**

- Open calls vs pilot calls, experiences with the two approaches
- Selection - Who and how? Which selection criteria are used for the partnership and which selection criteria are used for the projects?
- How to form a selection jury that can cover all OG themes and avoids conflict of interest?
- How are Innovation funding agencies involved in the selection process in different MS?
- Relation with H2020 and complementarity, how to avoid double funding, cross-border projects
- What is the role of NSU's in setting-up OG's?
- How to use networking tool to motivate the stakeholders?
- How to gather all data from projects and make it available?
- How to evaluate the results and impact of OG's? Including failure

#### **Who to invite:**

- MA's
- Farmers
- Advisors
- Innovation Services

**Ideas for speakers:**

- France (Burgundy)
- Italy (Toscana, Veneto, Emilia Romagna)
- Someone from an innovation agency which is running calls

**What outputs and follow-up actions?**

- Outputs should be linked to objectives.
- A map of Operational Groups in the EU would be useful.

## Group 2: Seminar on knowledge systems

The seminar will take place in December 2015 and will look into issues related to agricultural innovation and knowledge systems. The break-out group participants made the following suggestions:

- Not only the follow up actions are important:
  - Also the pre-work is very important: Collecting questions (MS)
  - Pre-work, good understanding, examples from MS
- Speed dating during the seminar --> see follow up section
- "There are very different situations in different countries. It would be good to lift the biggest challenges from them before the seminar."

**Objectives:**

- How to deal with the language (this concerns the language of the different countries but also between the different stakeholder groups)
- Farmers (represent) language
- To find ways how farmers, forest owners and advisors could learn from each other
- To find out best tools in knowledge transfer
- Intellectual Property; When and how to establish it? Database
- To create a common understanding of interactive innovation methods + processes
- Rising awareness of interactive innovation
- Presentation of very concrete examples of good knowledge transfer

**Topics for discussion:**

- Life-long learning system
- Participation approach
- Easy to handle funding for innovation according to the rules
- What kind of problems do farmers have? Do farmers in other countries have the same problems? Are there already solutions?
- Bridging gaps between research and rural development; funding activities
- New channels for communication (you tube)
- How to involve education of farmers
- What is interactive innovation: a) examples; b) criteria for OG
- Innovation through networks (industry – farmer – advisor – research)
- Farmer Discussion graphs
- Role of media in PR
- Information flow in AKIS

#### Who to invite:

- People that are really involved in the topic
- Innovators of social media
- Advisory services/advisors
- Farmers
- Farmers, esp. young farmers!
- FG new entrance
- Researchers / Universities / Teacher
- MA
- Communication / Exchange experts
- Good mixture of member states
- Other industries: → How do they do it?
- Social media
- MA
- Farm organisations
- Policy makers

#### Ideas for speakers:

- Speakers from the SWG AKIS (SCAR)
- Speakers from a special cluster on a sector
- Someone from **FiBI** (who is specialised in videos for youtube)
- Farmers
- Advisers
- Teacher
- Presentation of success stories, e. g. videos which are very popular
- Presentation of a video in several European languages: English, French, German + other languages
- Farmer organisations
- Monitoring Comm

#### What outputs:

- Need driven knowledge transfer / practical knowledge
- Tools for interactive knowledge exchange
- Toolbox of good examples
- State of play /info THEMATIC NETWORKS
- Information on innovation process from H2020
- Innovation stories
- New methods
- Understanding
- Ownership



**What follow-up actions:**

- Couple 2-3 people with the same problems (~same MS) → Follow up: peer to peer exchange (speed dating during the seminar)
- Good examples
- Knowledge transfer
- Field trips
- Translation
- Short films
- How to measure interactivity?

underlined = this issue was mentioned several times

## Group 3: **WS Circular Economy**

The workshop on Circular Economy will take place in October 2015 and aims to:

1. raise awareness on the possibilities for agriculture and forestry withing circular economy & how EIP can offer help to test things on the ground
2. build partnerships and networks among key players across Europe
3. create exchange of knowledge and experiences among key players across Europe
4. generate innovative ideas which could be tested on the ground (e.g. through the setting-up of Operational Groups within the Rural Development Programs or multi-actor projects and thematic networks withing Horizon 2020)
5. identify actions that can be taken up in the EIP AGRI network

The break-out group participants made the following suggestions:

**Objectives and outputs:**

To discuss the role of agriculture and forestry in the circular economy. How can principles like 'minimizing waste' and the 'cascading principle' be used while closing the loops at farm level. Although the farm level is the starting point, a holistic approach should be followed. Such approach should look at the possible synergies between different food & feed production systems (how can they benefit from each other) as well as interfaces with other value / waste streams (e.g. use of residue products or water from other non-farming activities):

Main outputs could include:

1. Based on the state of play identification of gaps: assess actions / projects (LIFE, Horizon 2020, Intelligent Energy, ...) related to practice and research
2. Develop and disseminate concrete examples and define other actions to be applied in practice (related to RDP, EIP, ...)

**Topics for discussion:**

A short brainstorm on possible topics and principles to be discussed led to a distinction at three levels of implementation.

*Level 1 - How to better use waste – how to close loops at farm level ?*

- Nutrient recycling: manure = valuable coproduct (energy production, fertiliser), waste forestry sector & paper industry, compost, -> mineralisation (how nutrients are released)
- Renewable energy (sun, biomass ): anaerobic digestion (farm & forestry products)

- Keep in mind:
  - N - emissions
  - Cascading principle
  - Sustainability
  - Economic viability
  - Efficiency (big data, distances)

#### *Level 2 - Broader circular approach*

This concerns the synergy between cycles at farm level and other value stream cycles.

- Agro-industrial co-products
- Use of sewage sludge in e.g. acid soils in forests
- Optimising land use, skills needed, ... in a cross-sectoral approach
- Industrial/territorial ecology

#### *Level 3 - How to avoid food waste?*

Avoiding or re-using of food waste is an important issue. It is however considered to be on another (more consumer) level which may have relations with the farm level but is not fitting properly in the focus of this workshop.

#### **Who to invite:**

A start was made with identifying participants;

- European Commission: relevant DG's (ENV, ...)
- Players close to practice (e.g. producers or representatives from relevant other sectors)
- Government and non-governmental organisations
- Agro-industry (e.g. combination with aquaculture, ...)
- Anaerobic digestion sector
- Biobased industry consortium (BIC)
- ...

#### **Speakers:**

Time was too short to finalise the brainstorm.

- Speakers may include representatives of municipalities or cooperatives already active in the field

## III. Horizon 2020 and EIP-AGRI interactions, first multi-actor projects and thematic networks

The afternoon session of the meeting concentrated on two main topics:

- the linkages between Horizon 2020 and EIP-AGRI, and
- the first ideas for the EIP-AGRI work plan 2016.

In the first part of the afternoon session, Ms Inge Van Oost presented the [multi-actor approach and the aim of the thematic networks funded under the Horizon 2020 research programme](#) and highlighted the links to the EIP-AGRI network. The presentation was followed by a practical example of the [thematic network "AgriSpin"](#).

Two presentations followed by plenary discussions rounded up this section of the meeting :

- [Tools and possibilities for interaction between EIP-AGRI and H2020](#) (Iman Boot (DG AGRI, H5) and Willemine Brinkman (EIP-AGRI Service Point)
- [Embedding EIP-AGRI Focus Group outcomes in the broader network activities](#) (Iman Boot, DG AGRI H5)

## IV. First steps for preparing the 2016 EIP-AGRI Work plan

The second part of the afternoon session was dedicated to start collecting first ideas for the EIP-AGRI work plan 2016 which was introduced by a [presentation](#) giving the broad frame of the year 2016 (Iman Boot, DG AGRI, H5).

The presentation was followed by the second interactive session where participants discussed the first ideas for the networking activities around 10 topics:

1. Social innovation, market innovation
2. Sustainable intensification
3. Post-harvest losses
4. Short supply chains and rural-urban partnerships
5. Precision farming
6. Forestry
7. Collective approaches
8. Focus on sectors (such as wine, olives etc.)
9. Food quality, food safety and healthy diet
10. Biodiversity, ecosystem services, soil functionality and sustainable water management

### III.1 Report on the Interactive session 2

**During interactive session 2** participants were invited to divide in breakout groups in order to discuss the first ideas for the 2016 work plan. Each breakout group voted three of the ten proposed themes. For each of the top three themes a discussion followed in order to lay down the specific challenges. The outcomes of this work are presented below:

#### Breakout Group 1

**Topic 1: Biodiversity, ecosystem services, soil functionality and sustainable water management combined with Sustainable intensification**

- Less farms + bigger farms
- Extensive x intensive production
- Small / medium farms
- Obtain more with less inputs
- Precision farming
- Combine production with the provision of ecosystem services
- How to pay for these services?
- Agriculture and forestry

- New farming systems with the purpose of mixing services
- Event - to narrow down from 'how to market biodiversity / ecosystem services' – then, a FG

### Topic 2: Short supply chains and rural-urban partnerships

- Mainstreaming short supply chains
- Structure of the processing industry
- Perspective from cities (needs, interests, strategies x investment); what's the role of the cities?

Event – co-organise a conference with the 'city guys'

### Topic 3: Forestry

- Biomass production
- Edible forests (mushrooms, fruits/berry from woods, etc.)
- Preservation of forests: wild fires, sustainability
- Multifunctional use of forests
- Mobilisation of wood (related to accessibility, logistics)

FG - Multifunctional use of forests

The topics most voted were: (1) Biodiversity, ecosystem services, soil functionality and sustainable water management combined with Sustainable intensification, (2) Short supply chains and rural-urban partnerships and (3) Forestry.

Within the first topic, referred issues included the balance between farming intensification and extensification in relation to the size of farms, precision farming and the combination of production and the provision of ecosystem services.

In relation to the second topic, main aspects discussed were related the mainstreaming of short supply chains and the inclusion of the perspective from urban actors.

For the third topic, issues addressed included the multifunctional use of forests, biomass production and forests' preservation and sustainability (particularly in relation to wild fires).

## Breakout Group 2

Most voted topics: Biodiversity, ecosystem services, soil functionality and sustainable water management, Short supply chains and rural-urban partnerships, Precision farming

### Topic 1: Biodiversity, ecosystem services, soil functionality and sustainable water management

- Measure impact of agri-environment schemes
- Soil biodiversity – use of micro-organisms to mobilize nutrients – support plant health
- Climate smart agriculture
- Systemic approach of cropping and farming system at farm level
- How to measure water savings in irrigation systems
- Regulation of moisture in soil

## Topic 2: Short supply chains and rural-urban partnerships

- Analyze and classify methods for organization of short supply chains
- Quality identification
- Connectivity with local systems
- How to use technology to link different sectors – better work with each-other
- Social farming
- How to use short supply chains to reduce food waste
- New logistic and transport platforms

## Topic 3: Precision farming

- Use of precision farming to save resources and cut costs
- Large scale pilots
- Training
- How to use precision farming to manage small fields – intercropping machinery
- Data issues – availability, processing, use for decision making, standardization
- Use of machinery for physical pest prevention and control

## Break-out Groups 3 and 4 (merged)

### Topic 1: Food quality, food safety and healthy diet (8 points out of 27)

- Integration along the chain → consumers → process → agriculture
- Quality management along the chain → different advisory services
- Polite approach → integrate different approaches
- Urban farming education; awareness raising food quality
- Honest labeling
- How to reward food quality
- Education on healthy diet

### Topic 2: Biodiversity, ecosystem services, soil functionality and sustainable water management (5 out of 27)

- Improve soil quality indicators
- More attention to soil: too heavy machines, C declining,
- Sustainable water management, focus on sectors: e. g. olives, wine
- Fertilisers in relation to water quality → new regulation
- Give economic value to eco system services to create awareness on how many eco system services they provide

### Topic 3: Focus on sectors (such as wine, olives etc.) (3 points out of 27)

- Pest and diseases
- Genetic diversity e. g. wine, olives

### Proposed New Topic - Methods for innovation process (3 points out of 27)

- Analysis

How innovation support systems creating acceptance between partners

## Breakout Group 5

The following three topics were selected:

### Topic 1: Sustainable intensification

Keywords / questions: producing more with less, how to balance food / non-food production, erosion control (avoid that intensification causes more erosion, link between emissions and production, availability of water

### Topic 2: Forestry

Keywords / questions: how to mobilise people not used to forest management, how to make logistics more efficient (access to plots and transport), how to optimise / combine agriculture and forestry by making smart combinations

### Topic 3: Biobased economy (was mentioned as a new topic and voted in top three)

Keywords / questions: providing info on the topic to increase production, awareness raising, business models for smaller producers

## V. Summary of the outcome of the breakout sessions with a view to the 2016 priority themes and next meeting preliminary draft agenda

The discussion in the breakout sessions provided ideas for priority topics to focus on in the EIP-AGRI 2016 work plan.

- a) Biodiversity, ecosystem services, soil functionality and sustainable water management.
- b) Forestry
- c) Short supply chain and rural-urban partnerships

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

The next meeting of the Subgroup on Innovation will take place on **17 November** 2015 in Brussels.