



# Subgroup on Innovation for agricultural productivity and sustainability

13<sup>th</sup> Meeting

*7 March 2019*

**REPORT**



The Subgroup on Innovation met for the thirteenth time in Brussels, Belgium on 7 March 2019. The [programme of the meeting](#) was designed to achieve the following objectives:

- a) To summarise recent EIP-AGRI networking activities and present the work programme of the EIP-AGRI network for 2019 with special focus on the activities to be launched in the first half of the year
- b) To present the assessment study on Operational Groups (OGs) and discuss the possibilities to use its results for better functioning of OGs in the future
- c) To discuss the possibilities of strengthening the role of the EIP-AGRI network and of the future CAP network of bridging the CAP and Horizon 2020/Horizon Europe, in particular with respect to past and future EIP-AGRI Focus Groups (both at the EU and national levels) and other networking activities linking OGs projects with Horizon 2020 projects

## Welcome and introduction

Kerstin Rosenow, Head of Unit DG AGRI B2, welcomed the participants and presented Magdalena Mach as new member of the DG AGRI team. Then she set the scene by listing the main challenges to be addressed in 2019 when it comes to negotiating the 2021-2027 programming period, at the same time confirming that EIP-AGRI will be strengthened and enhanced under the new CAP and Horizon Europe.

Afterwards, Ina Van Hove (EIP-AGRI Service Point) presented the new EIP-AGRI event application stressing the evaluation capabilities of the app.

## Session I: “Recent and future networking activities”

This session started with two presentations summarising the most recent networking activities.

First, Antonella Zona (DG AGRI) [presented](#) the Seminar “Multi-level strategies for digitising agriculture and rural areas” that was held in December 2018 in Antwerp, Belgium. Digitisation is crucial for agriculture and rural areas and that is why supporting digital transformation of agriculture and forestry is one of the main priorities of the EIP-AGRI network. It is also an essential element of the future CAP proposal which aims at driving digitisation at farm level and finding new digital solutions adapted to the specific needs of the sector. The seminar gathered more than 150 participants representing farmers’ and foresters’ organisations, researchers, rural networks, Local Action Groups, educational organisations, environment organisations and administrations dealing with digitisation. There was a general sense of urgency in supporting the digital revolution and the importance of cooperation to reach this goal.

Then Sergiu Didicescu (EIP-AGRI Service Point) [summarised](#) the outcomes of the workshop “Opportunities for farm diversification in the circular bio-economy” that took place in February 2019 in Vilnius, Lithuania. The workshop allowed the participants to discuss different types of circular bio-economy products that could be developed, and the most appropriate business

models associated with them that could enable diversification of economic activities in rural areas and increase in farm income. The [report](#) of the workshop can be found on the website.

Afterwards, Pacôme Elouna Eyenga (EIP-AGRI Service Point) [presented](#) the EIP-AGRI network Annual Work Programme for 2019 with its five priorities.

Then, 3 speakers provided information on the networking activities to be launched in the first half of the year.

Pascale Riccoboni (French NRN) [presented](#) the Agri-Innovation Summit which will be held on 25 and 26 June 2019 in Lisieux, France. The summit will bring together different actors such as representatives of OGs and Horizon 2020 projects, around the concept of agroecology.

David Lamb (ENRD Contact Point) [informed](#) about the preparation of the ENRD event “NetworX: Inspiring Rural Europe”. He stressed the fact that it is not a conference but a networking event. The registration has been open since December 2018 and resulted in more than 750 applications for 400 available places. He explained the general outline of the event with six working strands and a marketplace and shortly explained some of the workshops that will be held.

Magdalena Mach (DG AGRI) presented in detail the organisation of the innovation strand at the NetworX event and explained the content of the two sessions on innovation, and she informed about the EIP-AGRI presence at the marketplace.

A round of questions from members of the Subgroup on Innovation and comments regarding the presentations of session I followed:

- Q: Who will be the Task Managers organising the events in 2019?  
A: The Task Managers are Beatriz Guimarey Fernandez for the FG “Bee health and sustainable beekeeping”, Céline Karasinski for the FG “Diversification through plant-based medicinal and aromatic products”, Andres Manuel Garcia Lamparte for the FG “Soil salinisation”, Liisa Kübarsepp for the FG “Protecting agricultural soils from contamination”, Emilie Gaetje for the FG “Reducing antimicrobial use in poultry farming”, Margarida Ambar for the workshop on “Cropping for the future: networking for crop rotation and crop diversification”, Sergiu Didicescu for the workshop on Innovative solutions for small farms and Alexandre Morin for the Agri-Innovation Summit 2019.
- The suggestion was raised to keep into account, while preparing the Agri-Innovation Summit in June, that agroecology is a complicated and complex concept, and as such should be properly explained to ensure common understanding. That is extremely important as agroecology has a huge potential to help European farmers to become more sustainable, produce more quality food for growing population and use more renewable energy.

## Session II: “Assessment study on OGs and its implications for the future”

### Presentation of the assessment study on Operational Groups

Margarida Ambar (EIP-AGRI Service Point) introduced Steven Knotter from Idea Consult and shortly recalled the main steps of the [assessment study on Operational Groups](#) that was carried out in 2018.

Steven Knotter (Idea Consult) [presented](#) the final report of the study. The presentation was split into three parts, each followed by a Q&A session.

#### 1. [The OG database and clustering exercise](#)

It was stressed that the information the OGs provided was sometimes limited and that some OGs could fit into multiple groups of the clustering analysis.

#### Question & Answer part 1:

- Q: Is there a possible bias in the cluster ‘socio-economic sustainability/competitiveness’ since income is not part of this cluster? Adding income in this cluster might make it one of the main challenges faced.  
A: Income is not really a direct objective of OGs and it is seldom mentioned by the OGs (the clustering is based on the information provided by the OGs).
- Q: What is the concept/definition of circular agriculture?  
A: Circular agriculture aims at maximally revalorising agricultural side streams in order to optimise the use of all biomass. By integrating different supply chains the waste streams of one supply chain can feed into another.
- Q: What are the SFC keywords?  
A: The categorisation tool of the European Commission to label funded projects.
- Q: Has there been a comparison between the subjects taken up by the OGs and the themes of calls in different countries (calls can be open or specific)?  
A: This was not taken into account in the assessment study
- Q: Did the clustering exercise look at the aim of the project and whether the solution to the challenges faced included innovative aspects?  
A: The clustering analysis did not specifically look at this level of detail. These aspects were more the object of the analysis in the case studies.

#### 2. [Results of the survey to ongoing OGs](#)

The survey showed a lot of interesting facts concerning the OGs. Getting the structure of the partnerships right from the beginning appeared to be the most difficult task for the OGs. 78% of the partnerships are newly formed specifically for the OG project. However, only 14% of the OGs developed collaboration with H2020 projects and much still needs to be done to connect OGs to other relevant European initiatives and actors.

#### Question & Answer part 2:

- Q: Who were the respondents to the survey: were these the coordinators of the OGs and was there a bias towards some countries?  
A: In the majority of the cases the lead coordinating partner responded. There is no bias in favour of the countries. Member States were rather equally represented and the spread of respondents reflected that in the OGs database.

### 3. The case studies of 9 OGs and conclusions

The case studies, which constituted the last step of the assessment and covered the key types of OGs, as identified in the clustering exercise, enriched the insight into the diversity and commitment of the OGs in the EIP-network.

#### Question & Answer part 3:

- Q: Can the results of the study be used to formulate guidelines for creating the partnerships? Many of the lead partners of the OGs appear to be research institutes, is there a worry that OGs would become Horizon 2020 projects?  
A: Giving explicit guidelines on how to form the partnerships would not necessarily be a good thing as each case is specific and needs an individual approach. There appears to be no risk of OGs becoming Horizon 2020 projects because many of the lead partners are research institutes. The strength of OGs lies in their flexibility to compile partnerships in a free way to address the farmers' needs.
- Q: What about the intellectual property rights or confidentiality clause and the fear to spread the results too early, was this mentioned in the survey or case studies?  
A: Yes, this was mentioned in a few cases. It was an issue in the preparation phases so it had to be dealt with at that stage among the partners.
- One of the members remarked that the administrative burden is quite large, which should be taken into account in the coming programming period.
- Inge van Oost reminded that in Ireland there was a specific thematic call launched in view of preparation for future CAP and that this could be the way to go for the next programming period.

After the presentation Steven Knotter gave some short information on AGROPOL which is a project aimed at identifying key factors for successful interregional agrifood cooperation boosting the regional economy.

### Interactive session

The objective of the interactive session was to discuss how to use and disseminate the results of the assessment study report to improve the functioning of OGs in the future. There were five breakout groups and each worked on the following questions:

1. Which specific recommendations would you take home that would help your country to better implement OGs?
2. For whom would the results of this report be useful and how would you share these results with them?
3. How can you further build up on the results of the report? (if time allowed)

The groups were asked to provide two to three keywords or ideas about the results of their discussion.

## Results:

In general a need for strengthening the links between OGs was emphasised. The Sol members would also like the EIP-AGRI network to continue sharing the results of its work (social media, newsletters, Focus Groups...).

In view of the future CAP, the participants emphasised the need for specific networking on agricultural innovation.

A policy check was mentioned as a way to harmonise policy implementation between EU countries/regions, to harmonise calls in RDPs and to improve programming.

Managing Authorities could help OGs with more facilitation, more information and support on how to write applications.

The need for simplification was expressed. The administrative burden should be diminished and pre-financing could be an option to help in the first difficult phase of project proposal preparation.

The raw data about the OGs is helpful. It could be complemented with data showing the broader impact of OG results.

The EIP-AGRI database should be enriched and include the categories and classification from the clustering analysis of the assessment study on OGs.

Other issues mentioned were:

- the language issue (English is often a limiting factor for farmers, translation of materials by Managing Authorities is needed)
- more farmer leadership (farmers should be encouraged to take more leadership in OGs)
- encourage participation of other industries (cross-fertilisation of ideas)
- guidelines regarding intellectual property

A more elaborate overview of the breakout session can be found in [annex 1](#).

Alberto D'Avino (DG AGRI) concluded the session by stressing the importance of using the richness of information that this report provides. As it has just been published, time is needed to reflect well on the gathered data and the best ways of using it for the future.

## Session III: “Strengthening the links between CAP and Horizon through the EIP Network: today and tomorrow”

### Introduction

This session started with a [presentation](#) by Alberto D’Avino (DG AGRI) on the Horizon Europe Proposal and state of play of inter-institutional negotiations. The proposal for Horizon Europe, i.e. a research and innovation programme that will succeed Horizon 2020, has gone through an intensive process of negotiations with the participation of more than 600 stakeholders. During the presentation it was stressed that in terms of measures, Horizon Europe is not a revolution but rather evolution. The idea is to do more and better of what has been offered under Horizon 2020, e.g. EIP-AGRI, multi-actor approach etc. However, there will be some important novelties (for example European innovation Council and R&I missions). Horizon Europe will have three main pillars: the first pillar, Open Science, will deal with excellent science; the second pillar with Global Challenges and Industrial Competitiveness; the third pillar, titled Open Innovation, will focus on innovation, especially breakthrough innovation. The second pillar will be organised in 5 clusters and R&I activities will take place as part of Cluster 5 “Food and Natural Resources”. The contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals is very important and thus the clusters are built around these SDGs. Cluster 5 contributes especially to the following goals: zero hunger, clean water and sanitation, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production, climate action, life below water and life on land. The proposed budget for Horizon Europe is €100 billion, out of which €10 billion is planned for Cluster 5. This is an increase in funding of the research and innovation programme in comparison to the period 2014-2020 (one of few policies with a proposal for budget increase). The speed of the negotiations for the agricultural policy is slower than for the research policy and it is not expected that there will be an agreement before the parliament goes into recess for the elections.

### Question & Answer:

- Regarding the SDGs, the remark was made that in the presentation there is no link with the goal connected to good health and well-being although this is very related to food. We should emphasize the relation between food and health.

At the end of his intervention Alberto D’Avino explained the rationale of session III that was to reinforce the link between the agriculture and research & innovation policy through the EIP-AGRI network. The session was organised in three rounds: 1) presentation of experience with FGs; 2) examples of links OGS-H2020 at national level; 3) discussion based on the presentations in 1st and 2nd rounds.

### Concept and achievements of Focus Groups

Willemine Brinkman (EIP-AGRI Service Point) [presented](#) the concept and achievements of Focus Groups and how they bridge research and practice. She stressed the importance of the factsheets summarising the results of FGs work. These can help people looking for information to rapidly assess if it will be worth reading the report. She also stated the importance of the translation of these factsheets done by courtesy of the National Rural Networks and if Member States want to translate factsheets or reports and disseminate these in their network, they can contact Ina Van Hoyer (EIP-AGRI Service Point) for lay out. She also presented the results of the survey/questionnaire on the usefulness of FGs results for identifying research needs that had been sent out to the members of the Subgroup prior to the meeting.

## EIP-AGRI Focus Groups: experience gained and areas for improvement | Panel discussion

In this panel discussion two Focus Group experts (Agnes Papone – Focus Group on New Entrants and Christine Watson – Focus Group on Mixed Farming) and two representatives of national institutional organisations (Maria de São Luis Centeno from Portugal and Vesna Miličić from Slovenia) answered following questions:

Questions for FG experts:

- What were the products of your Focus Groups?
- How did you bring forward the research needs?
- What are areas for improvement?

Questions for Sol members from national institutional organisations:

- How did you use the results of Focus Groups in your country?
- What are areas for improvement?

Christine Watson, a scientist from the United Kingdom, found the 'Mixed Farming Systems' Focus Group an interesting collection of people. She specifically mentioned one of the Focus Group products, the minipapers, one of which turned into a book chapter. Many members of the Focus Group also worked in Horizon 2020 projects and were very interested in several specific calls that were launched in 2019. The Focus Group process stimulated research projects and communication. The FG members were not prepared for the amount of work that had to be done for the second meeting of the FG since the first meeting was more about networking and getting to know each other. It might be good to shift the balance of work slightly forward and more spread out. Concerning the language issue she mentioned that short videos are good for dissemination of information since language is less important in videos.

Agnes Papone, a French farmer, found the Focus Group 'New entrants into farming' very lively and very interesting. There was a good balanced mixture of members, both researchers and farmers, including many young farmers. The need for identifying patterns characterising new entrants in farming together with potential business and organisational models is very important, since the newcomers have strong willingness to adapt their practices (because they did not take over an existing farm or did not inherit a farm). The FG developed a long list of research needs. There are not a lot of statistics about new entrants and the concept is quite difficult to define. The Focus Group didn't know about the existence of a thematic network concerning new entrants so there is a need for better links. The Focus Group built good linkages between the members and they stayed close as a group. It also gave a lot of opportunities for other projects that they would not have encountered without the FG and it had a lot of positive outcomes. As areas for improvement she mentioned the constitution of networks, translation of the results and dissemination. Also videos would be very powerful and could be used as possible bridge between different programmes. Storytelling is a very powerful instrument.

Maria de São Luis Centeno explained how the Ministry of Agriculture used the results of the Focus Groups in Portugal. They met with the members of the Focus Groups and prepared short videos with interviews about their work in FGs. She stressed the importance of translations of the FG results. Factsheets are a good starting point for these translations. They also used the results of the Focus Groups to develop their forest, soil and horticulture agenda. A better linkage to Horizon 2020 projects is very important. There were 30 Portuguese participants involved in 20 Focus Groups. Concerning the



type of participants, researchers are important and farmers are amazing, they are very available for what the Ministry organises.

Vesna Miličić gave the policy maker point of view from Slovenia. There are some areas for improvement in using the results of the Focus Groups. Slovenia has 10 Slovenian members in 15 Focus Groups. One of them was a farmer, who was also leading an Operational Group and is thus a good example for other farmers. The results of the FGs can help to prepare national legislation and rules governing some measures of rural development programmes (e.g. better selection criteria for RDP calls). They will translate reports and factsheets because not everyone reads English. The factsheets' graphical structure is important and if done well can be very powerful and encourage people to read the information provided in the factsheet. The visual aspect of communication is crucial.

Question & Answer for the panel members:

- The French NRN thought to make a video with French FG members but they did not have time to prepare the call. It might be a good idea to do it at the last day of the second meeting of the Focus Group. They are also thinking about a one day training for OGs so that they could make videos themselves.
- The remark was made that it is important to communicate clearly about how OG projects and participants are selected. It is not because someone was in a FG that they should be automatically selected for OGs. Be careful to avoid overestimation of linkages.

Agnes answered that she thinks it would be a pity to lose the potential of FG members. Their experience and participation in the FGs could be used to identify new topics or encourage new members for other projects, especially farmers. Since farmers find the application process of the projects often too difficult, knowing people who have already attended events can help to convince them to join.

- It was mentioned that clustering of OGs might be useful to find topics for further research and further Focus Groups as a bottom-up approach.

As a response to the mentioning of videos as a communication tool, Ina Van Hoye (SP) mentioned the newly launched EIP-AGRI YouTube channel (look at 'videos' for EIP-AGRI videos and at 'playlists' for videos of NRNs and OGs).

## Presentation of recent and planned activities at national level (including national Focus Groups) to reinforce the links between CAP and Horizon 2020

- Natascha Orthen (Germany) **presented** the German experience in organising thematic workshops for OGs and Horizon 2020 projects. She explained that in Germany they have events with different target groups who have different needs and so they address them through different formats to get them together to exchange information and experience.
- Helena Pärenson (Estonia) **presented** the Estonian experience in bringing OGs together, also internationally by working with Finland, and future plans for connecting OGs and relevant research projects. There are two aspects: across borders (she stressed the importance of communication to enable cooperation) and linking OGs to other applied research projects.
- Pascale Riccoboni (France) **presented** the French experience in reinforcing links between CAP and Horizon 2020. She explained that in France multilevel coordination is necessary because of the regional division of the country.
- Rocío Wojski Pérez (Spain) **presented** the Spanish experience with national Focus Groups. The three different national Focus Groups focused on the same objectives with similar methodology and characteristics but all had different outcomes because of different contexts. The list of contacts and list of experts in each area of innovation received from the FGs appeared to be very useful. National Focus Groups are a very healthy exercise to do from an administrative point of view because, among other, they raises awareness about the important role play by different actors.

## Interactive session

The objective of the interactive part of session III was to discuss the possible toolkit of future Networking (in the context of the future policies). The participants worked in small groups on the following questions:

1. In your opinion, what current networking tools/activities have been the most successful to link research (Horizon) and practice (CAP)? Why? (not only FG and the national activities presented, but possibly any relevant tool)?
2. Based on your experience, what other tools/activities can be used in the future to improve such links?

The groups were asked to provide two to three keywords or ideas about the results of their discussion.

### Results:

A long list of activities and tools were mentioned, addressed to all different actors of our networks: DG AGRI, EIP AGRI Service Point, managing authorities and NSU's, actors themselves.

### **Successful existing activities**

Strategic planning (take advantage of current structure of AKIS)

Existing platforms/meeting points

FGs and thematic networks; Horizon 2020 Multi-Actor projects

### Possible future activities

- Strengthen the existing

Make more use of existing platforms, networks, Horizon etc. and strengthen them (Multi-Actor approach, cross visits, thematic networks, demonstration activities). Extending the work process of Focus Groups with more meetings. Add an alumni network for FG members.

- Objectives

Farmer-oriented interaction remains very important. This can be on the internet (e.g. videos, peer consult, social media) but meetings face to face are also important (e.g. meet ups, farm and field visits). The role of farmers in EIP-AGRI projects should increase.

- Information

Make use of databases, provide lists of contacts

- Facilitation of projects

Training stakeholders to set up projects (capacity building), early involvement of other categories of actors apart from researchers (new platforms, cross-sectoral cooperation), funding criteria to reinforce partnerships (more demand driven), provide money for networking activities (ex. platform meetings)

- Focus

Base network activities on good practices and make them more demand driven.  
Give more importance to demonstrations and co-creation projects.

- Methods and dissemination

Provide large scale and small scale events, local-regional-national-international with different traveling hours.

Use internet for interactive development and elaboration of projects from start until dissemination of their results.

Use the most effective dissemination channels to reach farmers, e.g. popular farmer newspapers, tv shows. Take care to collect and process reactions digitally.

Look at improvement of dissemination tools (videos, presentations of factsheets...).

Offer opportunities to enhance visibility on the internet and social media, which is important for advisers and researchers.

Playful facilitation during events (having fun together, ice-breaking), organise competitions (such as "the best of").

A more elaborate overview of the breakout session can be found in [annex 2](#).

### Closing

Alberto D'Avino (DG AGRI) concluded the 13<sup>th</sup> Subgroup on Innovation by stating that there was a rich and fruitful discussion and that its results will help the European Commission to reflect on future pathways.

The next meeting of the Subgroup on Innovation is planned for 14<sup>th</sup> of June 2019.

**The detailed agenda of the meeting and all presentations can be found on the EIP-AGRI website.**

## Annex 1

### Session II: "Assessment study on OGs and its implications for the future"

Outcomes of the discussions of the breakout groups on how to use and disseminate the results of the report for better functioning of OGs in the future

Questions that were asked to the members:

1. Which specific recommendations would you take home that would help your country to better implement OG's?
2. For whom would the results of this report be useful and how would you share these results with them?
3. How can you further build up on the results of the report? (if time allowed)

#### Group 1:

Q1: Specific recommendations

- How to improve the quality of the information concerning the OGs  
Establish a model how to gather and submit information into the databases  
A training for people responsible for inserting data and information in the different systems  
The feeding of basic information should be mandatory for OGs  
Practice abstract could be updated including the same concepts from the clustering  
Individual contacts to get in touch with them  
Convince regions to introduce common format in each OG  
Convince regions to aggregate information on OGs (in France)  
Propose help for valorisation and for connection
- How to decrease the administrative burden for the participants  
Farmers as lead partner: less administration in regions, more support
- How to better involve farmers in the OGs  
Be more proactive for OGs  
Share tools (ex. which partnerships, dissemination, involving farmers)  
Reinforce regional working groups
- How to take into account the aspect of intellectual property rights  
Write guidelines or rules for the OGs concerning IP
- Next steps after project, what is the future of the projects
- Researchers as lead partner: so it must be possible for all universities
- Many organic projects, encourage also conventional projects
- It is proof we need innovation networks in the future

Q2: For whom

- Management authorities: monitoring and updating assumptions
- OGs: to find other people working on the same issue
- Farmers
- Researchers
- AKIS: advisers and others
- Policy makers

**Group 2:**

Slovakia

Any document is useful to forward to help our Ministry to put the policy into practice. Certainly the clustering. Today farmers get no support from the government. The feedback from farmers and good examples are helpful.

Finland

Shows that good examples are there. Shows what an OG could be doing

How to arrange it in a simple way so that individual or groups of farmers are less reluctant to be lead partner. New cooperations through OGs

Thematic groups: let our OGs see what's going on to avoid reinventing the wheel.

Interested in both best and worst practices of OGs, what can be learned from that?

Denmark

As in Denmark a good cooperation between farmers and research exists, good dialogue, the government decided not to add OGs to this.

There is cooperation of Denmark with Nordic countries on this region related themes

Advisers and researchers are well represented in Focus Groups and Horizon2020, not farmers

Spain

Collecting bad practices would be useful to present (anonymous) do's and don'ts at open workshops before a new call. The Spanish profile is quite good. Needed: Follow up of successful innovations: what happens in the end with the results (impact)

Austria

Farm practices as topic of OG's. Our 4th call with 100% public money

Competition rules are complicated; what to do with companies outside annex I

More time needed to develop a project: rather 2 years than 1 year.

Keywords:

- Data are useful and more is needed
- Innovation needs new friends

### Group 3:

#### Q1: Specific recommendations

- Support and create connections between OGs, both within the country or region and abroad
- Encourage and share testimonies from OGs all over the EU (videos)
- Facilitate connections with OGs by developing a good and user-friendly database with partners
- OG application process:
  - o More user-friendly and easy > more simplification
  - o Make it faster (paying agency)
  - o Make it simple (conditions for state aid)
  - o Clear definition of innovation (national law)
  - o Make farmer participation mandatory
- Prefinancing for OGs, and budget flexibility (general expenses, indirect costs)
- Innovation support units/offices recommended

#### Q2: For whom

- Useful for all types of partners, including potential OGs:
  - o Advisers
  - o Farmer associations
  - o Innovation support
  - o Evaluators units
  - o Managing Authorities
  - o Regulator (Ministry)
  - o NRN
  - o OG members (NB provide feedback to the OGs who replied to the survey!)
- Short presentation at the next OG meeting (comment by member of an OG)
- OG members draw attention to the report with their authorities
- Summarise report results with educational video – post on social network or newsletter
- For colleagues at MA, present results in meetings
- For innovation support services – emails
- Summary sheet of the report in local language
- Spread results via NRN

#### Q3: How to further build up on the results

- The report should feed into the preparation process of the MS CAP strategic plans (including the SWOT analysis), and be taken into account when designing the future cooperation measure
- Enhance national dissemination of results and improve the English version of the national website
- Enhance cooperation between OGs
- Big interest in innovation for sustainability (Organic, agroecology, circular, IPM)
- Request to EC to improve the connections between H2020/Horizon Europe and OGs in the future network

**Group 4:**

Q1: Specific recommendations

- Continued support, including facilitation
- Continue to allocate budget for EIP OG's and improve programming in the next wave of RDP's
- Increase simplification efforts, in particular use of simplified costs
- Improved ranking/scoring systems for project selection
- Availability of prefinancing for OGs
- Map types of calls across EU

Q2: For whom

- Managing Authorities
- Ministries
- NRN's

Q3: How to further build up on the results

- Celebrate 1000 innovations (event idea)
- Invest more in preparation of the calls
- Videos introducing OGs

**Group 5:**

Q1: Specific recommendations

- Databases need to be updated on time – this needs improvement; OGs are not comfortable with the feedback format file (too complicated) → MA do not make all info available → info is not updated at EU level
- Projects need to be well categorised (clusters and sub clusters) in databases so that search becomes easier
- Databases have the need for quality check (it takes time, of course)
- Competitiveness should be a keyword in databases
- Look for solutions: language will always be an issue (e.g. a Slovenian farmer who doesn't speak EN won't be able to get info about OGs in other countries through existing databases)
- Administrative burden in EIP implementation needs to become lighter, there's a need for more simplification although it's improving
- Collaboration cross-borders needs further support and facilitation

Q2: For whom

- Managing Authorities
- NRNs

Q3: How to further build up on the results

- Make a summary of the report and send it, together with the link to webpage in EIP website, to the MA and other public authorities (Poland)
- Encourage farmers to become OG leaders

## Annex 2

### Session III: “Strengthening the links between CAP and Horizon through the EIP Network: today and tomorrow”

#### Outcomes of the discussions of the breakout groups on a possible toolkit of future Networking

Questions addressed by the breakout groups:

1. In your opinion, what current networking tools/activities have been the most successful to link research (Horizon) and practice (CAP)? Why? (not only FG and the national activities presented, but possibly any relevant tool)?
2. Based on your experience, what other tools/activities can be used in the future to improve such link?

#### Group 1:

Q1: current tools/activities

- Horizon 2020
- Multi-Actor projects
- Focus Groups (cfr. Longer term projects RMT France)
- Thematic Networks

Q2: future tools/activities

- Field visits (also across borders)
- Demonstration
- Fairs
- Workshops
- Training experts, tools to join projects
- Database for all kind of projects
- List of contacts
- Co-creation workshops
- Innovation camps
- Network to identify needs for different sectors concerning research

Capacity building, sense of ownership and early involvement of farmers are crucial elements. Involve practitioners earlier in the process of setting up projects to avoid the imbalance between the scientific part and the practical part.

#### Group 2:

Denmark

University of Agriculture and Ministry of Agriculture are closely associated.

Also, different industries have to set money aside which will be partly invested in research,



once a year there is a big meeting with all kinds of participants/ actors to discuss research needs on different subjects. Both researchers, advisers and farmers give input, besides there are committees meeting more regularly, depending on the issues they are working on.  
From these two activities concrete research projects evolve.

#### Hungary

One research institute organises Open Days to show research and research results.  
It also collects questions to see how they can help farmers on that day.  
Other research institutions have contracts with local companies, food/Industrial to fund research.  
Apart from that they receive some limited national funding.

#### Slovakia

Make research visible through the internet and social media. We get feedback from farmers with which we can make good research proposals.

#### Finland

The best way to reach farmers is by a traditional (paper) newspaper on the future of rural areas.  
Many farmers subscribe to this and read the info about research and research results.

#### Q2: future tools/activities

Ask farmers(organisations) and advisors to join Horizon projects

#### Digitisation:

Everyone uses Google as a first step to find solutions for any problems. Be visible there!  
Advisers should use LinkedIn and Facebook to be visible but also to spread information  
Also YouTube is a feasible tool: you can publish videos and podcasts.  
The point is to first give information and then attract farmers to join a project or ask for further advice.

#### F2F remains important

For sharing: demonstrations on the farm, experience groups, peer groups  
Let the farmer speak him/herself

Another idea is to have videos from the whole project to be published in the Farmers` association Newsletter

Videos will be made and published at different stages of the projects. Watchers may react on them and the feedback will be used for the further development of the project. This way also farms of different sizes would be involved.

F2F F advises F tool in AKIS

#### Key words

- Digital visibility and sharing
- Farmer2farmer is key, could be on video but also Face2Face and field visits are important

**Group 3:**

Q1: current tools/activities

- List of experts, contacts and innovations required for each FG area (Spanish example of national FGs)
- Advisory group (at national level) discussing both CAP (OGs and other innovative projects) and research projects, including research projects funded by ERA-NETs (Estonian example)
- German example of (thematic) seminars bringing together H2020 projects and OGs, based on OG requests (demand-driven), and including practice examples
- Irish food strategy which looked at University merit systems and reinforced the impact component in these systems – this was linked to an important question posed: How to encourage researchers to work with farmers?
- NOTE by one of the participants: At present, the only connection between H2020 and the CAP is through the RUR programme and ERA-NET calls – if we look at the H2020 side (And of course the EIP-AGRI network creates connections through FGs, workshops, seminars)
- FG dissemination tools:
  - o Videos
  - o PPTs
- Practical tools to link:
  - o Existing types of practical events such as field trips, farm visits, `field academy` - taking a bus to visit different fields and farms
  - o Timing is important when involving farmers – half days may be better than whole days
  - o Events should address the real needs of farmers
  - o Regional platforms – peer to peer exchange

Q2: future tools/activities

- Funding criteria to reinforce true partnerships between farmers and researchers and to focus on impact
- Ensure the relevance of research: (Research) funding for projects that must answer questions from practice/ be based on farmers` needs
- Matching bottom-up and top-down
- Stronger bargaining power for farmers by working with farmers` cooperatives/organisations – Swedish example: regional groups of good farmers to help identify (research)questions
- FG `ambassador` network
- Review FG results, for instance after 5 years – what happened, what worked, what was taken up?
- Magazine/video 5 years after the event
- Competition `the best of`
- NOTE: Continuity also has value, even for innovation

**Group 4:**

Q1: current tools/activities

- Use existing platforms
- Motivate existing structures for cross-sectorial cooperation

Q2: future tools/activities

- Multimedia tools (videos)
- Match-making events farmer-researcher
- More story telling
- Website where exchange of ideas can be organised
- Map social media and make better use of its channels
- Focus Groups should start with dinner and benefit from playful facilitation and icebreakers

**Group 5:**

Q1: current tools/activities

- H2020 TN are a good tool to connect both policies, to connect to OGs
- Participation of Civil Dialogue Groups in events related to other issues as a way to put in contact the economic sector with the research
- Events bringing together OGs and H2020 projects, even events that are not thematic
- 'Translation' of projects' results so they become ready-to-use by practitioners - 'Dissemination doesn't end until somebody uses it...'
- YouTube is a good dissemination channel
- There's too much information (general), there's the need to help people to find what they are looking for
- The multi-actor approach 'forces' to think about dissemination and this is good

Q2: future tools/activities

- Have smaller H2020 projects, closer to OGs
- Cross-visits – short in time, to show what farmers are doing; something similar to ERASMUS, but where farmers can share their knowledge with other farmers (peer to peer learning)
- Demonstration projects (to show the real production in the field)
- Evaluation of the impact of H2020 and EIP (like a FG of experts, evaluating the impact of the two policies)
- National strategic AKIS plans (add all types of projects)
- Create fora to share experiences / knowledge (activities are there but 'just' focusing on OGs, there should be a mix)