

Preparing the CAP Strategic Plans – the role of innovation networking in the Member States

*Final Report from a series of DG AGRI webinars with the
Member States*

July 2021

Contents

- Introduction to the webinars 3
 - About the webinars 5
- The innovation strand of the CAP Networks 6
- THEMATIC SESSION 1: What is the role of the innovation strand of CAP Networks in the AKIS Strategic Approach? 8
 - Setting the Scene 8
 - Inspiring Example from Austria 10
 - Points for Attention 11
 - Feedback and Comment from the Member States 12
- THEMATIC SESSION 2: How can CAP Networks help facilitate the effective integration of all advisors (public and private) into the national AKIS? 15
 - Setting the Scene 15
 - Inspiring Example from Poland 17
 - Points for Attention 18
 - Feedback and Comment from the Member States 19
- THEMATIC SESSION 3: What can the innovation strand of CAP Networks do to create and strengthen linkages with research? 21
 - Setting the Scene 21
 - Inspiring Example from Spain 23
 - Points for Attention 24
 - Feedback and Comment from the Member States 25
- Annex 1: List of Webinar Participants 28

This report presents a summary of the webinars, together with the main messages and outcomes of the online discussions. It broadly follows the structure of the webinars and includes **links to all presentations that were made** (including video recordings) plus links to other external resources where appropriate. Important points for attention that Member States need to take into consideration are listed in each Discussion Theme section, together with feedback and comment (including good examples and relevant ideas) collected during the webinars and online discussion. Links to the **Q&A sessions** associated with each Discussion Theme are available on the events page [here](#).

Introduction to the webinars

*Kerstin
Rosenow,
Head of Unit
B2 –
Research and
Innovation,
DG AGRI,
European
Commission*



Click here for Kerstin's [presentation](#) and [video](#)

It is an important time for agriculture as farmers and other rural businesses are asked to step up their efforts to fulfil the objectives of the new post-2020 Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and help achieve the ambitious EU policy agenda of the Farm to Fork Strategy and European Green Deal.

Research and innovation are key enablers of the changes needed in agriculture to accelerate the necessary transition to a sustainable food system by 2030. The EIP-AGRI has already made impressive steps in this respect by helping to develop and test innovative new solutions for overcoming practical on-farm challenges and uncovering new market opportunities. However, even greater efforts are now needed to improve knowledge exchange and the sharing of results from innovation projects and multi-actor projects funded by the CAP and Horizon 2020 / Europe.

And time is short – there are only 9 growing seasons until 2030!

Member States are currently preparing their CAP Strategic Plans and they will have to submit them formally to the Commission by 1 January 2022. The Commission addressed a [number of recommendations](#) to the Member States in December 2020 that included highlighting the crucial role of the so-called **“innovation strand” of the new CAP Networks** (at both EU and national level) in contributing to achieving the

post-2020 CAP **Cross-Cutting objective** of modernising agriculture and rural areas through increased knowledge exchange and innovation.

The change in the name (from "rural" to "CAP") reflects the objective to **extend the added-value of networking** beyond rural development to the whole of the new CAP. This includes the intensification of knowledge exchange, innovation and digitalisation that is needed to help farmers, foresters and rural communities to address the diverse range of challenges and opportunities they face.

The current innovation building blocks, in particular the EIP-AGRI, will continue to be key pillars of the new CAP Networks but the role of the networks will be **greatly expanded** to support both a) the strengthening of national Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKISs) and b) the development of links with the research and innovation policy under Horizon Europe and other national instruments.

[See the presentation of Inge Van Oost for more explanation of the innovation strand of the CAP Networks.](#)

Not surprisingly the situation is very varied throughout the EU. Some Member States are already well advanced and have active networks operating within a well-integrated AKIS where EIP-AGRI Operational Groups have been in place for many years already. Other Member States have less experience in networking, a rather fragmented AKIS and are lagging behind in launching Operational Group projects– but nonetheless show a keen interest in building up capacity for interactive innovation and in exchanging experiences with other countries.

Furthermore, the large, regionalised Member States also have specific issues linked to their regional set up, such as the AKIS fragmentation between the national and the different regional levels and the shift from regional programmes to a single national CAP Strategic Plan.

In the light of this diverse context, the overall aim of the recent series of EIP-AGRI webinars was to promote a **common understanding of the innovation strand of the national CAP Networks** and how exactly it can contribute to the new CAP cross-cutting objective. Three practical themes were chosen as the main focus of discussions:

1. What is the **role of the CAP Networks and their innovation strand in AKIS co-ordination**, including the interaction with the AKIS co-ordination bodies?
2. How can CAP Networks and their innovation strand help facilitate the **effective integration of all advisors (public and private)** into the national AKIS?
3. What can CAP Networks and their innovation strand do to **create and strengthen linkages between Horizon Europe and EIP implementation** at national level?

These themes were intended to build upon discussions in the EIP-AGRI seminar '[CAP Strategic Plans: the key role of AKIS in Member States](#)' held in September 2020 as well as the [19th National Rural Networks \(NRN\) meeting](#) organised by the ENRD in February 2021.

About the webinars

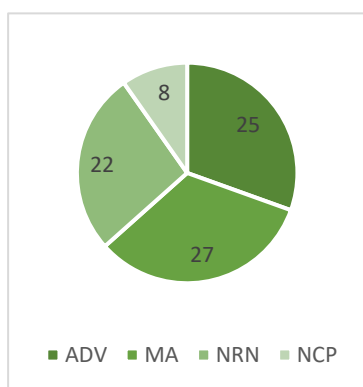
The webinars were organised by DG AGRI with the **specific objectives** of:

1. **Raising awareness and developing common understanding** of the crucial role of the innovation strand of the national CAP Networks in pursuing and achieving the new CAP cross cutting objective of modernising agriculture and rural areas through the fostering, sharing and uptake of knowledge and innovation;
2. **Helping build the capacity** of the national CAP Networks to fulfil this crucial role by **presenting relevant experiences** and **facilitating a comprehensive exchange / discussion** (mutual learning) between the key actors that will be involved with the innovation strand of the CAP Networks in each Member State, and;
3. **'Harvesting' this practical experience** and presenting it in the form of a report that will be made available for all key actors of relevance in the Member States.

The webinars were organised using a 'blended' approach of:

- a **series of three one-day online webinars** on 3, 8 and 10 June 2021 each involving a pre-selected cluster of 9 Member States that corresponded roughly to the regions of Northern, Central / Eastern and Southern Europe, and;
- a **facilitated online discussion** that was launched prior to the webinars on 18 May 2021 and structured around 15 questions in 'Google Doc' format relating directly to the practical themes listed above.

A total of **82 participants from 25 countries** (see [Annex 1](#)) accepted the invitation from the European Commission to attend one of the webinars. Emphasis was put upon inviting representatives from Managing Authorities, NRNs and advisors, notably those individuals who are actively engaged with development of the innovation and knowledge exchange section (Chapter 8) of their National CAP Strategic Plan. In addition, a representative of the Horizon 2020 / Europe National Contact Point (NCP) was invited from each Member State. The final composition of this diverse mix of participants is shown in the figure below.



Composition of the total number (83) of invited participants in the online webinars:

ADV = advisory representative

MA = Managing Authority

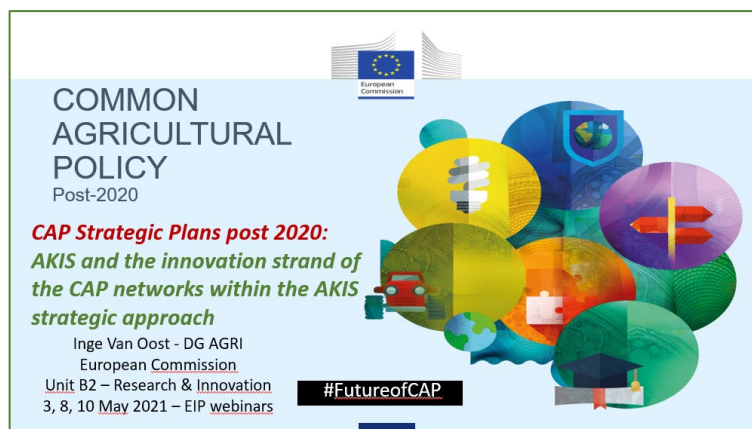
NRN = National Rural Network

NCP = National Contact Point

Just under 50% of the webinar participants took part in the preceding online discussion and 205 responses were gathered from 21 countries. The online discussion gave participants the opportunity to present themselves and to begin building a dialogue about the innovation strand of the CAP Networks whilst also sharing a number of good implementation examples amongst themselves – many of which were also fed into the webinar discussions.

The innovation strand of the CAP Networks

Inge Van Oost, Unit B2
– Research and Innovation,
DG AGRI,
European Commission



Click here for Inge's [presentation](#) and [video](#)

As already explained, the **new CAP Cross-Cutting objective** calls for the intensification of knowledge exchange and the speeding-up of innovation in order to help farmers, foresters and other rural businesses to meet the economic, environmental and social challenges they face in their transition towards more productive, profitable and sustainable production systems. Fortunately there are already many good examples of how this can be achieved using the well-established principles and practices of innovation networking.

EU and National Rural Networks (NRNs) have accompanied the implementation of Rural Development Programmes (RDPs) in all Member States since the 2007-2013 programming period and for the last 10+ years have clearly demonstrated their added value in rural development policy.

The current EIP networks will now be **expanded and strengthened in the form of the innovation strand of the CAP Networks** to play an even more important role in the post-2020 CAP that will involve them bringing together and connecting an even larger number of CAP stakeholders, including with the specific objective of responding to the need for knowledge exchange and the fostering of innovation. This ambitious new role is clearly indicated in Article (Art.) 126 of the CAP Strategic Plans Regulation¹ and is described as the **“innovation strand”** of the EU and national CAP Networks. Innovation network activities planned and undertaken as part of the innovation strand should be synergetic and complementary with the interventions programmed under

¹ In the meantime adopted as REGULATION (EU) 2021/2115 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 2 December 2021 establishing rules on support for strategic plans to be drawn up by Member States under the common agricultural policy (CAP Strategic Plans) and financed by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1305/2013 and (EU) No 1307/2013

Arts. 78 (Knowledge exchange and information) and 127 (EIP-AGRI Operational Group projects) – plus any relevant sectoral interventions under other articles.

A good understanding of the major role of the innovation strand of the CAP Networks is **essential for planning future network structures** in the Member States and for **managing the “continuation and change” of EIP-AGRI and innovation oriented rural networking activities** into the 2021-2027 programme period. Member States should describe in their CAP Strategic Plans (Section 4.5 of the draft Strategic Plan template) how they **intend to structure and organise the innovation strand** of their national CAP Network and how they will contribute to the intensification of knowledge exchange and the co-creation of innovation. This should include specific actions such as:

- Organizing a **wide variety of sectoral, regional and/or national-level knowledge events** for bringing together relevant AKIS actors involved in knowledge-exchange and knowledge-building processes
- Facilitating more **learning** (filtering, translating and summarizing results) from the results of EIP-AGRI Operational Groups and multi-actor projects available on the EU-level EIP website
- Fostering innovation through **support for the preparation and implementation of EIP-AGRI Operational Group projects** both within the Member State and across borders
- Actively developing **new linkages** between EIP-AGRI Operational Groups in the Member State and Horizon Europe projects at international level
- Creating online knowledge platforms / digital knowledge reservoirs
- Engaging directly with researchers to share their results in easy-to-understand language and via **trusted channels** for farmers
- Establishing **national thematic networks**, compiling existing knowledge in an easy readable and attractive format for practitioners
- Producing **educational materials** on the innovative results from Operational Groups and other researchers
- Involving educators and young people in **Operational Group projects**
- Building upon **existing experiences of innovation networking** in order to connect AKIS actors in the many fields that are interrelated with farming and rural areas, such as environment, climate, biodiversity, water, landscape, consumers and citizens, food and non-food systems including processing and distribution chains, etc.

Regions can also take co-ordinated initiatives in support of the innovation strand of the CAP Network and may use Technical Assistance to do so.

There are numerous **sources of inspiration** available for developing the innovation strand of the new CAP Networks. For example, see the comprehensive outcomes of the online EIP-AGRI seminar on [AKIS Strategies in CAP Strategic Plans](#) that was held in September 2020.

The Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR) AKIS no. 4 report on [‘Preparing for Future AKIS in Europe’](#) also contains much relevant information, see especially:

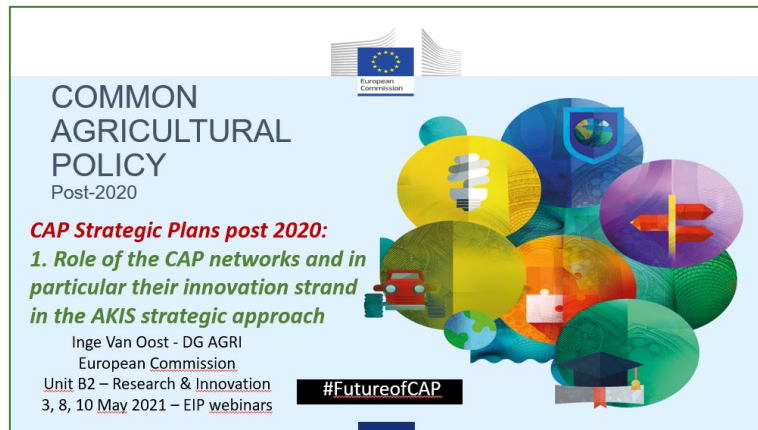
- Chapter 1** – AKIS in Europe, especially sections:
- 1.2 What is AKIS?
 - 1.3 Multi-actor projects
 - 1.4 National thematic networks
 - 1.5 Possible actions for CAP AKIS Strategic Plans
- Chapter 4** – Advisory Services post-2020

Investment in the innovation strand of the new CAP Networks is a key investment in a stronger AKIS and in the necessary transition towards more knowledge-intensive sustainable agriculture, forestry and rural businesses in Europe.

THEMATIC SESSION 1: What is the role of the innovation strand of CAP Networks in the AKIS Strategic Approach?

Setting the Scene

Inge Van Oost, Unit B2 – Research and Innovation, DG AGRI, European Commission



Click here for Inge’s [presentation](#) and [video](#)

New combinations of knowledge, actors, technology and related investments drive innovation. In order to ensure this occurs, the post-2020 CAP is encouraging the creation of flexible national / regional **“agricultural innovation ecosystems”** in all Member States based upon the existence of a well-functioning **AKIS**.

A well-functioning AKIS should enhance knowledge flows within the national / regional “innovation ecosystem” by **systematically and intensively connecting** all people and organisations that generate, share, and use knowledge and innovation for agriculture and all interrelated fields (value chains, environment, society, consumers, etc.). Very importantly, this includes the **strengthening of links between research and practice**.

Unfortunately, many existing AKISs are **not sufficiently up to this challenge**. Their performance varies greatly from one Member State to another and often from one region to another within the same Member State.

This situation must now be addressed and Member States are **required to develop and implement an AKIS Strategic Approach** at national level for ensuring better, more regular, coordinated and effective knowledge flows between relevant AKIS actors including farmers/foresters, advisors, researchers, (farmer) organisations, cooperatives, NGOs, networks, retailers, media, services, etc.

The innovation strand in the post-2020 CAP Networks (at both EU and national level) are **crucially important for helping to pursue this Strategic AKIS Approach** and specific network activities will need to be designed and implemented to achieve the desired outcomes. Their activities should be an **integral part** of the AKIS Strategic Approach presented in the CAP Strategic Plan of each Member State.

Design of the innovation strand must keep in mind that a good AKIS strategy should bring actors together on a **structured and regular basis, creating continuous interaction** to speed up knowledge exchange, knowledge flows, innovation and most of all the implementation of knowledge in practice. Since the **existing EIP-AGRI networks and innovation oriented NRNs already work with these key principles** they simply need to be expanded and applied in a new context to develop the innovation strand of the CAP Networks.

This is a process of evolution not revolution!

The starting point for elaboration of an AKIS Strategic Approach, including the innovation strand of the national CAP Network, is the **development of an intervention strategy based upon the SWOT analysis of the existing AKIS and assessment of future needs** (Articles 104, 107, 108(b), 109 and 115(2)).

Member States should not overlook that information from the SWOT analysis and needs assessment may be of **direct relevance** to description of *both* the AKIS Strategic Approach (Section 8.1 of the draft Strategic Plan template) *and* the innovation strand of the CAP Network (Section 4.5 of the draft template).

The objectives and tasks of the new CAP Networks Art. 126 of the CAP Regulation (EU) 2021/2115, the so called CAP Plan Regulation. No present many opportunities and many challenges. The scope of their activity is broad and careful strategic planning of AKIS networking activities will be needed for activities relating to the innovation strand. Typical activities that might be included in the innovation strand are listed in the [previous section](#).

In addition to new networking activities, it is also likely that **new arrangements for the structure, governance and operation** of the national CAP Networks will be needed. These arrangements are likely to involve:

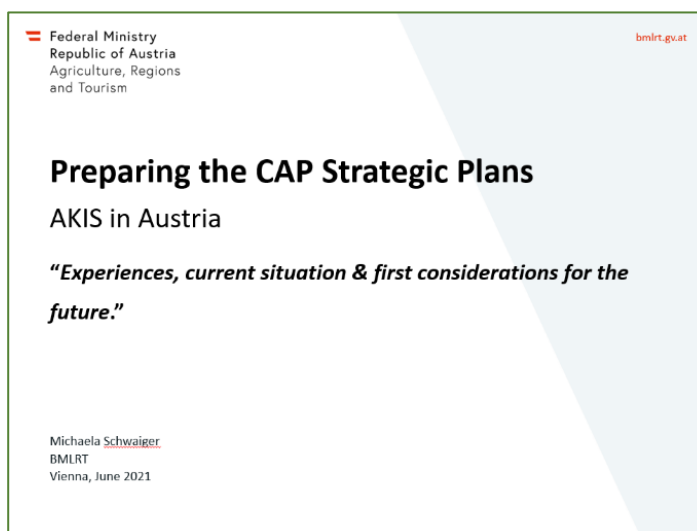
- a) Working more closely with relevant AKIS actors (including in particular advisors and researchers, as well as other AKIS actors) in the **planning and organisation of network activities**, including the preparation of annual work programmes;
- b) Interaction between the network support unit and the **AKIS Co-ordination Body** (Section 7.1 of the draft Strategic Plan template). This body will be established at **national level** and be the contact point for all AKIS related issues towards the

European Commission. The AKIS coordination body is responsible for organizing advice within the Member State and should detect any AKIS issue to be discussed if useful. This can be helped through connecting with various AKIS platforms or networks which keep the finger at the pulse within the country and help to follow up how AKIS is performing. It will also support **communication and cooperation** between AKIS actors across the various sectors and geographical levels in the country (regions, provinces, counties etc.). It should follow day-to-day AKIS actions / interactions / interventions and monitor the progress foreseen in the AKIS Strategic Approach of the CAP Strategic Plan. The way the various AKIS organisations and authorities are connected to the AKIS Coordination Body will depend to a large extent upon how the Member State AKIS is organised around national / regional competences and on how the way forward in the AKIS strategic approach is set out.

The current EIP networks and innovation oriented NRNs will continue their work in supporting Member States and stakeholders in the interim until the new national CAP Networks can be launched. According to Art. 126 each Member State should ensure their new national CAP Network is **established at the latest 12 months after** the Commission's approval of the CAP Strategic Plan.

Inspiring Example from Austria

*Michaela Schwaiger,
Director,
Ministry of
Agriculture,
Regions and
Tourism,
Austria*



Click here for Michaela's [presentation](#) and [video](#)

Michaela Schwaiger (Director in the Ministry of Agriculture, Regions and Tourism) provided insights into the current situation with the Austrian AKIS and the initial considerations regarding preparation of the CAP Strategic Plan. She highlighted the importance of the SWOT analysis and needs assessment as the starting point for planning interventions under Articles 77 and 78 relating to the cross-cutting objective and AKIS. Ms. Schwaiger explained that no final decision had been made to date (June 2021) on how the CAP Network will be set up in Austria and that consultation with key stakeholders and actors is ongoing to gather ideas / views from multiple perspectives.

Points for Attention

There are several important points that Member States should take into account when **planning the role of the innovation strand of the CAP Network** in implementing their AKIS Strategic Approach:

- What **high level agreements** between Ministries of Agriculture, Research, Education, Innovation, Environment etc. are being planned / developed to ensure the necessary collaboration for strengthening knowledge flows within the national AKIS during the coming 7 years? What concrete actions are proposed to facilitate better bridging between research and practice, a key issue in Austria? What is the expected role of the CAP Network?
- How exactly will be the relationship between the **AKIS Coordination Body** and the innovation network unit of the CAP network? The AKIS Coordination Body is the person / unit / body / entity that will give feedback to the European Commission regarding all AKIS related issues. It should support coordination of the national AKIS and follow progress with all related actions. This will include all types of existing and new networking as well as the AKIS related interventions and national measures.
- Will the current **governance arrangements** of the existing National Rural Network need to be modified for the new CAP Network to provide the necessary support for innovation and enhanced knowledge flows within the national AKIS? How will AKIS-related tasks be planned, managed and implemented as part of the CAP Network's annual work plan? Is continuous interaction with the AKIS co-ordination body anticipated?
- How will the CAP Network - in accordance with Art. 102(a)(ii) - **work together with advisors and researchers** in the framework of the national AKIS? What **specific networking structures, tools and/or actions** are proposed to facilitate this interaction?
- What **networking tools / activities** are foreseen for the innovation strand of the CAP Network to fulfil – in accordance with Art. 126(3)(e) - its objective to *“foster innovation and support the inclusion of all stakeholders in the knowledge exchange and knowledge-building processes”*?
- In order to effectively support the strengthening of the national AKIS it will be necessary for the CAP Network to **accelerate the dissemination of the practical results and innovative solutions from EIP Operational Groups**. How will this be planned and managed?
- What changes will be needed in the structure and day-to-day management of the current network support unit (NSU) in order for the new CAP Network to fulfil its role in **supporting the AKIS strategic approach**, to speed up innovation and sharing of knowledge?
- How will it be ensured that the NSU has the **necessary capacity** to implement the AKIS knowledge exchange actions / interventions discussed above? How will

additional capacity be provided / developed? Are there some specific services that will need to be outsourced?

- **Comprehensive budget calculations** will be needed to support the integration of the innovation strand into the work plan of the CAP Network in order to ensure that the network actions relating to innovation support and knowledge exchange are adequately financed.

Feedback and Comment from the Member States²

The feedback and comment received from the webinar participants (including responses via the Google Docs) can be summarised as follows:

- Existing NRNs should be **proactive and begin orientation towards their new role** for innovation under the CAP Networks as soon as possible. Also between Member States it is useful to network and exchange experiences.
- An example is the close involvement of the Dutch NRN with a national programme in The Netherlands called "*innovatie op het boeren erf*" (farmyard innovation) which aims to bridge the gap between research and practice. The programme has several components and the NRN innovation unit is working specially to support development of a national online "green" knowledge platform. It is anticipated that this platform for innovation will play an important role in strengthening the AKIS in The Netherlands by addressing the fragmented knowledge flow that has been observed between the 12 provinces. The platform will continue to be maintained by the innovation strand of the new CAP Network unit.
- Progress with the development of high-level agreements between Ministries to ensure the **necessary collaboration for implementing the AKIS Strategic Approach** and to speed up innovation and knowledge flows is variable. Agreements have already been established in some Member States, but are still at the early stages of discussion in others. For example, in Slovakia it is already agreed that AKIS coordination will be the joint responsibility of 3 ministries: Agriculture and Rural Development; Education, Science, Research and Sport, and; Environment.
- Not surprisingly, most Member States represented in the webinar were planning to assign their AKIS Coordination Body to the national level Ministry of Agriculture. Already a few (e.g. Slovakia, Spain and Romania) had decided where exactly it would be located in the Ministry.

Participants explained they were considering **numerous factors** relating to the **specificities of their national context and institutional structures**, including how to develop / manage an effective coordination mechanism, which both **builds upon the strengths and addresses the weaknesses** of what already exists.

Regionalised Member States are inevitably finding it difficult to choose one

² The views and comments expressed in this part do not necessarily reflect the position of DG AGRI.

national body because of:

- a) the **number and variety of regional AKISs** which exist because of the diverse range of administrative structures, climatic conditions and production systems found in the different regions, and;
 - b) the **complex relationships which can exist between regional and national AKISs**. In Italy, for example, there are *both* regional AKISs related to specific AKIS elements (e.g. regional research facilities) *and* non-regional AKISs related to specific productive sectors of national significance (e.g. organic agriculture).
- EIP Networks and innovation oriented NRNs currently work to facilitate the exchange of information, practices, experiences and ideas **among all relevant actors in rural areas** and this clearly provides a **solid basis for development of the innovation strand** of the enlarged CAP Networks.

However, the EIP Evaluation Study revealed that existing experience of NRNs with the EIP-AGRI is variable - some NRNs have engaged very effectively with EIP-AGRI Operational Groups, with very good innovation levels as result, whilst others have provided only very general support. Regardless of the starting point, development of the innovation strand and the effective incorporation of all innovation actions required by Art. 126 on CAP networks will now **require careful strategic planning by Managing Authorities and the allocation of additional resources** to network support units (whether these are in-house or outsourced).

- The CAP Networks will need to pay **special attention to initiating interaction** with advisors and researchers since they have not been usual participants in previous NRN activities without focus on innovation. This important new obligation is discussed in more detail in the following sections. Participants in the webinar agreed on the need to organize as soon as possible thematic or cross-cutting meetings / events with advisors and researchers in order to develop common understanding about the AKIS concept, the strategic AKIS approach to be taken in the CAP Strategic Plans and the role the innovation strand of the CAP Networks can play to support this.
- The innovation strand of the CAP Networks will have a very broad scope of activity supporting all nine specific objectives of the CAP and encompassing several new elements (e.g. new conditionality and eco-schemes). Facilitation of the relevant knowledge flows will be a major challenge and will require a **dedicated financial envelope** within the overall budget of the CAP Strategic Plan.

Whilst generally accepted that the budget for the CAP Networks will need to be higher than for the existing NRNs, participants in the webinar stressed that they **could not yet discuss indicative budgets** for the innovation strand until more detailed planning of network activities begins.

- The EIP-AGRI will continue to be the key building block of innovation in rural development policy with the CAP Strategic Plans. The formation of cross-border EIP-AGRI Operational Groups can learn from existing NRN experiences of transnational cooperation between LEADER Local Action Groups. The innovation

strand of CAP networks can see what potential obstacles are and what are good incentives to put in place.

It is widely acknowledged that also **small farms have an important contribution** to make to achieving the objectives of the new CAP post 2020 and the ambitious EU policy agenda of the Farm to Fork Strategy and European Green Deal. The CAP Networks in some Member States will therefore have a key role to play in **connecting small-scale farmers with their national / regional AKIS**, including their increased involvement in EIP-AGRI Operational Groups. However, due consideration must be given to the **different types of small farms, their contrasting needs and diverse motivations**. This will be particularly important in those Member States with large numbers of small farms with very contrasting production systems and socio-economic circumstances (e.g. semi-subsistence pastoralism vs. protected cropping). Innovation support to capture and develop grassroots innovative ideas will be essential (and obligatory) in this regard.

- If Managing Authorities are planning to outsource the CAP Network support units for the 2023-2027 period, they should **begin planning the tendering process as soon as possible**. A lot of new information about the function of the new networks will need to be communicated to potential contractors and time may also need to be allowed for capacity building of network support unit staff.

THEMATIC SESSION 2: How can CAP Networks help facilitate the effective integration of all advisors (public and private) into the national AKIS?

Setting the Scene

Inge Van Oost, Unit B2
– Research and Innovation,
DG AGRI,
European Commission



COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY
Post-2020

CAP Strategic Plans post 2020:
2 How can CAP networks facilitate the integration of all advisors (public & private) into the AKIS ?

Inge Van Oost - DG AGRI
European Commission
Unit B2 – Research & Innovation
3, 8, 10 May 2021 – EIP webinars

#FutureofCAP

Click here for Inge's [presentation](#) and [video](#)

With a few exceptions, advisors have been usual actors in the previous activities of the EIP Networks, but much less in NRNs. This **now changes** with the innovation strand of the CAP Networks in the new programme period.

First, according to Art. 15 of the CAP Strategic Plan Regulation, all Member States must include “*services for advising farmers and other beneficiaries of CAP support*” into their national CAP Strategic Plans. These ‘farm advisory services’ must be an **integral part of the AKIS Strategic Approach** (described in Section 8.1 of the draft Strategic Plan template) in order to ensure that advisors stay up to date with new knowledge and new developments, including the innovative solutions generated within the EIP-AGRI.

Furthermore, interventions supporting farm advisors should aim to:

- encompass all advisers (public and private), especially those who are **most trusted** and have the greatest potential to impact upon farmers’ behaviour;
- provide **impartial advice** and ensure that advisors have no conflict of interest;
- cover **all relevant economic, environmental and social dimensions** of land and farm management, including all requirements, conditions and management commitments applying to beneficiaries of the support schemes set out in the CAP Strategic Plans;
- deliver qualitative advice, meaning **up to date technological and scientific information** developed by research and innovation and

- encourage advisors to adopt a more interactive role and **function as innovation support services**, particularly for helping to prepare and implement the projects of EIP-AGRI Operational Groups.

Further context, suggestions and potential interventions are listed in the presentation of Inge Van Oost, including info to understand what exactly is meant with “innovation support services”. The linked result indicators are also illustrated. It is important to note that the new Regulation no longer includes obligatory conditions for advisors as in previous periods. Certification or approval of advisors is no longer needed. The organisation and criteria chosen for advisors by the AKIS Coordination Body should **not limit** the provision of sufficient and adequate advice / knowledge provision in any area or fields where the necessity exists, nor exclude any impartial public or private advisor. Only regular, focused and sufficient training of advisors is obligatory all along the period, as challenges are constantly emerging and changing.

There are numerous examples and ideas for the strengthening of farm advisory services within the AKIS contained in the SCAR AKIS 4th report on [‘Preparing for Future AKIS in Europe’](#). Many different kinds of knowledge exchange and information interventions can be supported.

In accordance with point (a)(ii) of Art. 114 the innovation strand of the CAP Networks should work together with advisors to **ensure that all advisors are fully integrated within the AKIS** – primarily with the objective of enhancing their competence and quality through **more effective interactions and connections with other AKIS actors**.

There are many different ways that the CAP Networks can specifically support the integration of farm advisors within the AKIS. These might include:

- Organising **peer-to-peer** knowledge exchange workshops or discussion groups for advisers to share newly acquired / generated knowledge (e.g. from innovation projects they are involved with or from visits abroad). These events might be further developed into regional / country-wide knowledge exchange networks for promoting the continuous professional development of advisors. Also the EU advisory networks funded under Horizon Europe will bring in good innovative practices from abroad;
- Establishing **contact and regular bilateral interactions** (e.g. frequent workshops) between advisers and agricultural researchers to discuss the on-going development, interpretation and application of applied research work, and to inform researchers about the most pressing needs and opportunities to be developed for farmers. This interaction could usefully encourage more practice oriented research and development of new advisory materials and tools or on-farm demonstration facilities – all delivered in easy-to-understand language;
- Facilitating active linkages and exchanges between advisors and EIP-AGRI Operational Groups. These could have the **dual function** of advisors giving practical input or **learning from and disseminating the innovative results** of the Operational Groups whilst also **developing their understanding of the interactive**

innovation process and building their capacity to provide on-going support for the formation and operation of new Operational Groups;

- Collaboration between specialist advisors and the CAP Network support unit. Such specialist advisors working in a **“back-office” should be supported to provide robust and reliable information to advisors in the field** thanks to the CAP network’s filtering, interpreting and summarizing of new sources of knowledge which they find available at national and international level (e.g. relevant Operational Group projects, Horizon Europe projects). The CAP networks should help advisors to find this information. The back-office might usefully have cross-cutting thematic focuses (e.g. innovation, climate adaptation, diversification, digitalization, short supply chains, etc.) to complement the sectoral expertise existing elsewhere in the national AKIS. It might also be integrated with the creation of online knowledge platforms / digital knowledge reservoirs or the production of **new advisory or educational materials**.

Inspiring Example from Poland

*Krzysztof
Janiak,
Deputy
Director,
Agricultural
Advisory
Centre in
Brwinów,
Poland*



The role of innovation networking in CAP Strategic Plan in Poland

Krzysztof Janiak
Deputy Director
Agricultural Advisory Centre in Brwinów, Poland
ph. +48 573 313 246
k.janiak@cdr.gov.pl



Click here for Krzysztof's [presentation](#) and [video](#)

Krzysztof Janiak, Deputy Director of the Agricultural Advisory Centre in Brwinów, explained that there are two inter-related policy networks in Poland - the EIP-AGRI innovation network and the Polish Rural Network. Both are coordinated by the Agricultural Advisory Centre (CDR) in Brwinów and supported by a further network of Regional Agricultural Advisory Centres (WODR) and Branches in the 16 provinces (voivodeships) of the country. There are 3.000 public advisors and around 20 innovation brokers working alongside the advisors, covering each voivodeship with innovation support. The EIP-AGRI Innovation network is focused on assistance in building partnerships and starting up national innovation projects, and in the creation of Operational Group projects;

The advisory service plays an important role in facilitating networking among farmers, researchers, cooperative and rural communities. In general, the advice is free of charge.

The public advisory service is thus already well integrated with the existing networks that will form the basis of the future CAP Network, but further improvement of the current organisational structure is required to ensure that the innovation strand of the new CAP network fully and effectively supports the AKIS Strategic Approach that will be proposed in the CAP Strategic Plan for Poland.

Key challenges identified for further integration of advisors into the AKIS include the broad range of issues to be covered by advisors (innovation, rural development and direct payments); how best to build upon the strengths of the existing AKIS related networks; finding a balance between public and private advisors whilst maintaining impartiality; motivating advisors to actively participate in networking, and; how to capitalise upon involvement in international projects.

Points for Attention

Specific points that Member States should consider when **planning the role of the innovation strand of the CAP Network** in facilitating the effective integration of advisors into the national AKIS are:

- What are the **specific challenges / opportunities** that the CAP Network needs to address for encouraging as many advisors as possible to engage with the CAP Network in accordance with Art. 114(a)(ii)?
- What **practical actions** will need to be included in the innovation strand of the CAP Network to facilitate / support integration of **all advisors (both public and private)** into the AKIS?
- Which **specific action** needs to be taken to ensure that – in accordance with Art. 15(2) CAP plan Regulation– the advisors integrated into the national AKIS will **cover all requirements** relating to *“the economic, environmental and social dimensions and the implementation of up to date technological and scientific information developed by research and innovation”*?
- Is the CAP Network **promoting innovation support services** provided by advisors?
- How can the CAP network connect the advisors with other knowledgeable AKIS actors in the many fields to be covered?
- How can the innovation strand of the CAP Network contribute to the on-going **capacity development** of advisors? For example, to improve their skills for innovation support in accordance with Art. 15(4)(e) of the said Regulation?

Feedback and Comment from the Member States³

The feedback and comment received from the webinar participants (including responses via the Google Docs) can be summarised as follows:

- Many more activities will need to be planned and implemented with / for advisors as part of the innovation strand of the CAP Networks. For example, thematic events for advisors and researchers to exchange and connect knowledge; innovation round-table meetings with multiple audiences; network newsletters for advisors; an interactive web platform; thematic training activities; peer-to-peer events for advisors etc. However, be realistic and prioritise. Focus on facilitating better connections!
- Concern was expressed about the challenge of connecting advisors with the national AKIS in those Member States where the **advisory services are highly fragmented**. In order to be effective at meeting the expectations of Art. 114 CAP Plan Regulation it was stressed that the CAP Networks are likely to **have to offer significant benefits** to advisors in order to attract them, especially to those that are most commercially orientated and have tended not to benefit from public support in the past. Advisors with existing experience of public support will be much easier to identify and connect with, but may not have the same impact on farmers to encourage the necessary transitions.
- There is no longer any need for the certification or designation of advisors. **Avoid copying existing FAS registers as they could be an obstacle to include the less known advisors which influence farmers most**. A transparent register of advisors on the website of the CAP Network and of the Ministry could therefore be a useful tool to establish (keeping in mind impartiality obligations and the obligation for minimum and adequate training for advisors).
- Many participants asked for **greater clarity and guidance** regarding the definition of “impartial” advice. In this regard, an agreement / contract between the Ministry and the advisor may be sufficient, possibly including a potential sanction in case of non-compliance.
- The challenge of ensuring that advisors can fulfil the requirements set put in the EU legislation for advisory services was another cause of concern for webinar participants, as the advisors have to cover more topics than in the past. In this context, it was mentioned that the CAP Network should concentrate on those capacity development activities, **which are not carried out by other actors**. For example, organisation of a thematic event for bringing together advisors and researchers is clearly an important activity to include in the innovation strand of the CAP Network – whereas a specialist training event on e.g. pesticide use would be better undertaken by the specific and impartial pesticide experts.

³ The views and comments expressed in this part do not necessarily reflect the position of DG AGRI.

- There are a lot of **existing training materials and guidance documents** produced by EU level Horizon 2020 projects, which have been specifically developed for – or are of direct relevance to - advisors. These are very relevant to the enhanced integration of advisors into the AKIS and should be disseminated by the innovation strand of the CAP Network (including appropriate filtering adapted to the Member State / region and translation support).

For example, relevant resources are available via the following project websites:

[i2connect](#) (*Connecting advisors to boost interactive innovation in agriculture and forestry*)

[FAIRshare](#) (*Digital Tools for Farm Advisors*)

The CAP Networks should keep in mind also the **Horizon 2020 / Europe funded Thematic Networks**. These are a particular form of EU level multi-actor project that aim to synthesize and present best practices and research results with a focus on themes and issues that are close to being put into practice, but are not known yet by practitioners. The publications and audio-visual materials from Thematic Networks are user-friendly and easy-to-understand and often produced in multiple languages. Consequently, they are an excellent resource for advisors to be shared by the innovation strand of the CAP network.

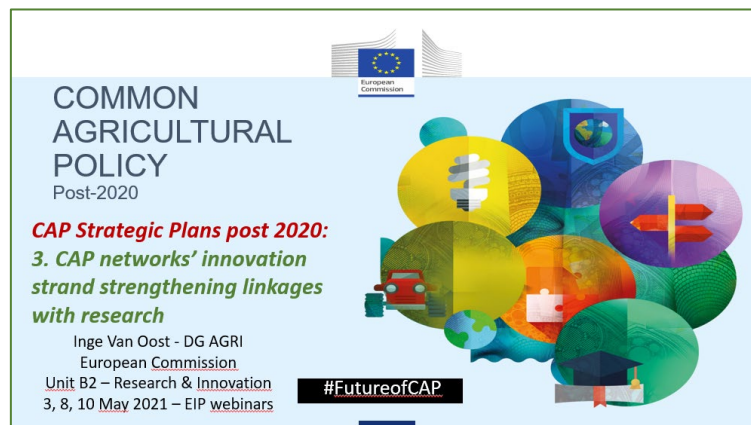
A newly developed project format in Horizon Europe that the CAP Networks should also aim to connect with are the **Advisory Networks**, which will interconnect advisors across Europe on dedicated themes.

See the [next section](#) for more information and ideas on connecting the innovation strand of the CAP Networks with research.

THEMATIC SESSION 3: What can the innovation strand of CAP Networks do to create and strengthen linkages with research?

Setting the Scene

Inge Van Oost, Unit B2 – Research and Innovation, DG AGRI, European Commission



Click here for Inge's [presentation](#) and [video](#)

The EIP-AGRI was launched by the European Commission in 2012 and was designed to connect and create synergy between two 2014-2020 policy frameworks, namely the EU's rural development policy as implemented via Pillar II of the CAP and the EU research and innovation policy known as Horizon 2020.

The **achievements so-far are impressive**. A total of 190 (status July 2021) multi-actor projects (including 39 Thematic Networks) have been funded under Horizon 2020 and over 2,000 EIP-AGRI Operational Groups set-up and running interactive innovation projects with the support of national and regional Rural Development Programmes.

There is a growing and thriving network (an 'innovation ecosystem') connecting these projects and an increasing volume of practice-orientated knowledge and innovations is being shared. However, there is still scope for:

- a) making this knowledge and innovation **better known and more available** in a well-structured and accessible format in all Member States and regions;
- b) **speeding up and intensifying** the dissemination and practical application of new knowledge and innovation, whether through direct transfer to farmers, foresters and other rural businesses or indirectly via advisors, trainers and educators etc.;
- c) **enriching and reinforcing** the interactive innovation and multi-actor approach by making projects **more inclusive** (co-creating with more diverse actors, such as young people and educators, not normally involved in such projects) and **better inter-connected**. This includes **very importantly** the connection of EIP-AGRI Operational Groups with practice-orientated multi-actor Horizon Europe projects

The AKIS Strategic Approach, by means of the innovation strand of the CAP Networks, is **key for unlocking this potential**. Relevant innovation network actions include:

- Bringing together researchers, advisors and farmers on a **structured and regular basis** in order to create continuous interaction in the interests of all, to accelerate the transfer and embedding of existing best practice and research findings *and* to identify the opportunities for future cooperation (e.g. new EIP-AGRI Operational Groups) to create new knowledge around solutions to practical on-farm needs.
- Creating **online knowledge platforms at national level** to help address the information needs of all AKIS actors. As a minimum these platforms should make the events known, and the practical results of the EIP-AGRI Operational Groups in the country more accessible. They should be expanded to include many other sources of knowledge, including connection to the **open-source knowledge exchange platform** being established at EU level and which will eventually replace and complement the current EIP-AGRI database (for more information, see the feasibility study being undertaken by the [EUREKA](#) project). If aiming to make a national knowledge platforms interoperable with the EU platform, then careful attention must be given to the use of specific common IT standards and IT language to ensure a working interface. Discussion about this should begin as soon as possible.
- Facilitating **wider learning** from the results of EIP-AGRI Operational Groups (in the same country and other countries) and EU-level multi-actor projects (Horizon 2020 / Horizon Europe) by **filtering, translating and summarizing** their outputs into easily accessible information / educational materials. Such activities go beyond a knowledge exchange platform (see above) and might extend to the development of a “back-office for advisors” with a group of specialist advisors working to interpret and disseminate innovation and research results according to specific sectoral and – importantly – cross-sectoral issues etc.
- Encouraging the **involvement of a wide range of actors** in EIP-AGRI Operational Groups. For example, the CAP Networks can play a key role in promoting advisors as innovation support services. This can be done by maintaining an up-to-date register of advisors with profiles, suitable for helping Operational Groups to prepare and implement their projects and/or to disseminate their results.
- Encouraging cross-border cooperation and knowledge exchange between **existing EIP-AGRI Operational Groups**. This is potentially very valuable for inter-connecting different AKISs and includes *both* the networking of Operational Groups in different regions of the regionalised Member States, as well as networking between Groups in different countries. The innovation strand of the CAP networks now has the possibility to support cooperation projects between existing Operational Groups (Art. 126), which is new compared with the former period.
- Facilitating the **formation of new cross-border Operational Groups** (between regions or countries) through exchange of relevant information (selection, criteria, timing of calls etc.) and co-ordination of partner searches and match-making activities with other CAP Networks around innovative ideas. Further, relevant mechanisms currently used for facilitating trans-national cooperation projects

between LEADER Local Action Groups can bring inspiration, provided they are well functioning.

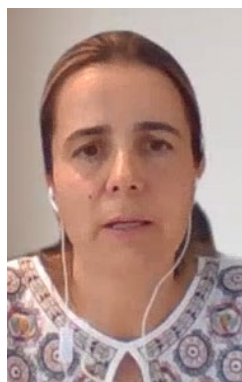
- Setting up national or regional thematic networks on specific themes of local interest to collect and communicate existing research results and scientific knowledge, which are **close to being put into practice, but not yet sufficiently ready for farmers and foresters to implement.**

In addition to accelerating knowledge exchange, such networks can also usefully function as incubators for new interactive innovation or multi-actor project proposals at national or EU level. They can also provide important recognition for those researchers making the effort to connect effectively with and address the real practical needs farmers, foresters, advisers and others.

- Establishing and maintaining **regularly contact** with the designated [Horizon Europe Contact Point](#) (NCP) in the Member State. The NCPs are a very important “bridge” to the Horizon Europe programme and can keep the CAP Network informed of forthcoming calls of interest / relevance, as well as actively promoting Operational Groups and other potential national partners to international consortia that are looking for them.

Inspiring Example from Spain

*Marta Conde,
Horizon Europe
National
Contact Point
Cluster 6,
Directorate of
European
Programmes
and Regional
Cooperation
(CDTI), Spain*



#innovacion
#ayudascdti
#asesoramiento
#internacionalizacion

ESPAÑA PUEDE.

CDTI
@CDTIoficial

Promoting synergies
H2020 and Rural Development Policy through EIP-AGRI
June 2021

Marta Conde
Horizon Europe – Cluster 6 – Spanish NCP
marta.conde@cdti.es

HORIZONTE EUROPA
@HorizonteEuropa

Click here for Marta's [presentation](#) and [video](#)

Marta Conde was the Spanish National Contact Point (NCP) for Horizon 2020 Societal Challenge 2 and will be the NCP for Cluster 6 of Horizon Europe. She spoke about her practical experiences promoting synergies between Horizon 2020 and rural development policy in Spain and provided valuable feedback on how the future EIP-AGRI might benefit from the lessons learnt. Marta stressed her appreciation of the great progress made by the EIP-AGRI and illustrated the rich and interesting content that can be found on the EIP website. The EIP website has become a reference for the research community, with its events, focus groups, multi-actor projects and thematic networks in various fields, its brochures, leaflets, videos etc. However, Marta also found that the EIP is not sufficiently known by NCPs and applicants for Horizon projects.

From her perspective as an NCP she highlighted some areas for continued improvement:

- NCPs need more training on the EIP-AGRI, including any forthcoming novelties with the innovation strand of the CAP Networks, the AKIS and the EIP-AGRI. This training could be provided by the NCP network of Cluster 6;
- EIP-AGRI Operational Groups must be easily findable by the research community, which was difficult in the early years (2014-2018);
- More joint events for Operational Groups and potential multi-actor consortia are needed (especially prior to Cluster 6 calls) to create opportunities for exchanging ideas and building projects together;
- Questions need to be asked about the value of currently produced Practice Abstracts – NCPs could help with their improvement and researchers need to correctly reply to what is expected, which is practice oriented and concise info. Collaboration between Ministries need to be strengthened in this regard, for instance, advisors could help in translating the outcomes into easy understandable practical information

Overall, Marta explained that the Spanish experience of Ministries who are “joining forces” and connecting policies is working very well with potential for even stronger collaboration in the future.

Points for Attention

When **planning the innovation strand of the CAP Network**, there are several points that Member States should take into account regarding the creation and strengthening of linkages with research:

- What are the **specific challenges / opportunities** observed in the Member State regarding linkages between research and practice? Are these clearly identified in the SWOT analysis / needs assessment and comprehensively addressed in the AKIS Strategic Approach?
- What practical actions are planned in the innovation strand of the CAP Network to **bridge the specific gaps** identified between research and practice? How exactly is it proposed to facilitate meaningful collaboration activities and network connections between research bodies / universities in the Member State and more practiced-orientated AKIS actors, notably farmers, foresters and advisors?
- How will the innovation strand of the CAP Network **connect with the increasing number of EIP-AGRI Operational Groups** in the Member State, also after the Operational Group project has ended, and support the effective and continued dissemination of their project results to relevant AKIS actors within their country, including policy-makers?
- Does the CAP Network innovation unit aim to **establish a database system** at national level for the EIP-AGRI Operational Groups? Will this database system also function as a knowledge platform for disseminating the practical results and innovative solutions from the Operational Group projects?

- Is it planned for such a national platform to be linked to the **open-source knowledge exchange platform** (see the [EUREKA](#) project) being developed at EU level?
- How will the CAP Network follow active **Horizon 2020 / Europe multi-actor research projects** that are running at EU-level? Will the innovation strand of the network aim to disseminate results of practical interest from these projects?
- Will the CAP Network **actively encourage the participation** of its advisors and EIP-AGRI Operational Groups in all Horizon Europe multi-actor projects, including Thematic Networks and the new advisory networks? How will the on-going call for multi-actor projects be followed and the necessary contacts between advisors and Operational Groups in the Member State with the international project consortia be brokered?
- Will the CAP Network support unit have the **necessary skills and capacity to undertake** the tasks outlined above? How will this capacity be provided / developed?
- Is it proposed for the CAP Network to engage directly and frequently with the **Horizon Europe NCP(s)** in the Member State? What specific activities will be included in the innovation strand for exchanging information with the NCP(s)?

Feedback and Comment from the Member States⁴

The feedback and comment received from the webinar participants (including responses via the Google Docs) can be summarised as follows:

- For the innovation strand of the CAP Networks in Member States to **play an effective role** in creating and strengthening linkages with research the network innovation units **must be viewed as credible and respected entities** by researchers, NCPs and all key institutional decision-makers.
- **Resources and capacity will always be an issue** – as one participant said “We are all aware of the things we could do to improve, but the limitation of resources is always a problem”. Make the best use of available resources and capacities through collaboration – to achieve the ambition of a stronger AKIS, the agricultural authorities must collaborate with their research counterparts.
- Some **straightforward practical actions** for CAP Networks to include in their innovation strand for creating and strengthening linkages between research and practice at national level include:
 - Collection of results, case studies and good practices from research and practice for dissemination in **easy-to-understand language** for practitioners

⁴ The views and comments expressed in this part do not necessarily reflect the position of DG AGRI.

- Involving researchers in meetings with farmers so that researchers can find out about their needs and learn to understand their context
 - Specific seminars for researchers on principles and practice of interactive innovation and good example multi-actor projects
 - Organizing on-farm demonstrations in which Operational Groups or researchers present the results of their projects and researchers can make informal exchanges to find out about the needs of farmers
 - Integrating all of the above into the development of national thematic networks compiling knowledge for practice for ensuring **sustained and creative engagement** of researchers and practitioners – including the continued exploration of “clever combinations” of new and existing initiatives
 - Listing of all Operational Group projects on the network website – whether they are finished or still running –, plus regular promotion of their projects (and results) through the website, newsletters and social media accounts.
- Several national level knowledge platforms **already exist and more are under development** or proposed.
 - The **role of the Universities** in closing the gap between research and practice should not be forgotten.
 - For example *Wageningen* University created the [Green Knowledge Network](#) (GKN) several years ago as a portal to make research results and associated learning materials more available to agricultural entrepreneurs, teachers and students. The Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV) now proposes to broaden the scope of this existing digital knowledge platform for researchers to address the information needs of the whole AKIS in the Netherlands. In such a scenario, it will be of utmost importance to adapt the language to make it attractive and understandable for non-researchers and people from practice.
 - Actions at national level **must be supported at EU level**. For the innovation strand of the CAP Networks to effectively engage with the Horizon Europe NCPs at national level it is essential for the NCPs to also be **updated** at EU level by the relevant EC services.
 - It will be easiest for the CAP Networks to connect with Operational Groups in their own country, but relevant Groups in other countries can be **identified and contacted via the EU EIP-AGRI website**.

Horizon 2020 / EUROPE multi-actor projects of interest can be also identified via the EU EIP-AGRI database and will normally have websites in English with contact details. It was suggested that the CAP Network innovation units should check whether multi-actor projects include partners from their own country - if so they can help greatly to interpret and communicate the project’s results in the national context. They may also have materials that are already translated.

The DG RTD [CORDIS database](#) of EU research results has a filter function and it is possible to **generate very broad lists of projects** with partners in specified countries and short summaries of the project objectives (e.g. there are a total of 56 H2020 projects in the domain of 'Food and Natural Resources' with partners in Romania). More refined searches are not possible.

- Sometimes the interests of EIP-AGRI Operational Groups and Horizon Europe multi-actor projects will simply be too far away from each other and a realistic approach is needed. **Focus on areas / issues of national priority** and build capacity for exchange between research and practice in these areas – do not spread efforts overly wide. **Build upon** existing knowledge transfer programmes (e.g. national mechanisms for linking universities and specific agri-food sectors) where they exist and diversify with input from Operational Groups, relevant EU-level multi-actor projects and cross-sectoral platforms.
- It is important to understand that the career pathway of many researchers is dependent upon scientific publications and less upon engagement with practice. Consequently, there is little specific motivation / incentive for researchers to engage with the CAP Networks and the EIP-AGRI. However, this is changing and there are already countries where researchers are very enthusiastic to be involved in Operational Groups and to engage in interactive innovation and multi-actor research. Some research institutes even request impact in practice from their researchers and measure it in a quantitative way. Make the effort to connect with these researchers!
- As already noted, there are several AKIS oriented Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe projects that have been working to optimise specific processes within the AKIS. These include all thematic networks, EU advisory networks, and also the [LIAISON](#) project that aims to help optimise the process of co-creation through “working in partnership”. Many of these projects are of direct relevance to the challenge of engaging more researchers directly with practitioners and interactive innovation projects.

Annex 1: List of Webinar Participants

Country	Family Name	First Name	Organisation	Participant Type ⁵
Austria	Leitner	Martin	Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Regions & Tourism	MA
Austria	Pichler	Robert	Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Regions & Tourism	MA
Austria	Rosenwirth	Christian	Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Regions & Tourism	MA
Austria	Schwaiger	Michaela	Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Regions & Tourism	MA
Austria	Steininger	Birgit	Austrian Research Promotion Agency	NCP
Belgium	Cavillot	Valérie	Union Wallonne des Entreprises (UWE)	NCP
Belgium	Deneffe	Claire	Service public de Wallonie	MA
Belgium	Ensch	Dominique		MA
Belgium	López Dávila	Edelbis		ADV
Bulgaria	Vanev	Dimitar	National Agricultural Advisory Service	ADV
Croatia	Cetinić	Zorana	Ministry of Agriculture	NRN
Croatia	Sabol	Tea	Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes	NCP
Croatia	Simon	Silvio	Croatian Centre for Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs	ADV
Cyprus	Charalambous-Snow	Eftychia	Department of Agriculture	ADV
Cyprus	Papanikolas	Flourentzos	Ministry of Agriculture (MOU)	NRN
Czech Republic	Dvořáková	Zuzana	Ministry of Agriculture of Czech Republic	NRN
Czech Republic	Formáčková	Aneta		NRN
Czech Republic	Llupi Vlasáková	Veronika	Ministry of Agriculture	MA
Czech Republic	Pražan	Jaroslav	Ministry of Agriculture	MA
Denmark	Stendal Sørensen	Jesper		ADV
Estonia	Pärenson	Helena	Ministry of Rural Affairs	MA
Estonia	Tamsalu	Hanna	Agricultural Research Center/ Estonia	NRN
Estonia	Verk	Leho	Rural Development Foundation	ADV
Finland	Anttila	Leena		MA
Finland	Hauhia	Teemu	Finnish Food Agency/NRN	NRN
Finland	Juhola	Jussi	ProAgria	ADV
Finland	Metsäniemi	Tuomas		NRN
Germany	Ehret	Miriam	Federal Ministry for Food and Agriculture	MA
Germany	Ellermann Kuegler	Karin	Association of Chambers of Agriculture	ADV
Germany	Münc	Teresa	Federal Ministry for Food and Agriculture	MA
Germany	Swoboda	Jan	National Rural Network (NRN/RRN)	NRN
Greece	Koutsouris	Alexandos	Ministry of Agriculture (MOU)	ADV
Greece	Michail	Gabriela	Network Support Unit Greek NRN	NRN
Greece	Theodoropoulos	Athanasios	Ministry of Agriculture (MOU)	ADV
Greece	Tzoumaka	Evangelia	Ministry of Agriculture (MOU)	MA
Hungary	Hollósi	Krisztina	National Research, Development and Innovation Office	NCP

⁵ Participant Type: MA Managing Authority NCP National Contact Point, NRN National Rural Network, ADV Advisory service, EC European Commission

Country	Family Name	First Name	Organisation	Participant Type ⁵
Hungary	Juhász	Anikó	Ministry of Agriculture	MA
Hungary	Reszketó	Tímea	Hungarian Chamber of Agriculture	ADV
Hungary	Vágó	Szabolcs	Research Institute of Agricultural Economics	NRN
Ireland	Barrett	Patrick	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	MA
Ireland	Farrell	Maura	NUI Galway / Irish NRN	NRN
Ireland	Gibson	Mark	Teagasc	ADV
Italy	Cristiano	Simona	CREA – Center for Politics and Bioeconomy	NRN
Italy	Frattarelli	Antonio	CREA – Center for Politics and Bioeconomy	ADV
Italy	Vagnozzi	Anna		NRN
Latvia	Saulīte-Liniņa	Aiva	Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre	ADV
Latvia	Silicka	Natalja	Ministry of Agriculture	MA
Latvia	Virza	Sandra	Ministry of Agriculture	MA
Latvia	Zurins	Kaspars	Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre	ADV
Lithuania	Jucaitytė	Žaneta	Ministry of Agriculture	ADV
Luxembourg	Betz	Charles	Luxinnovation GIE	NCP
Luxembourg	Entringer	Josiane	Ministry of Agriculture, Viticulture and Rural Development	MA
Luxembourg	Medinger	Serge		ADV
Luxembourg	Zangerle	Anne	Ministry of Agriculture, Viticulture and Rural Development	MA
Malta	Agius	Bradley		NRN
Netherlands	Frankhuizen	Erika	Dutch Rural Network	NRN
Netherlands	Kok	Thamar	Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality	MA
Netherlands	Paree	Peter	Southern Agriculture and Horticulture Organization (ZLTO)	ADV
Poland	Grodzka	Ewa	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	MA
Poland	Janiak	Krzysztof	Agricultural Advisory Center	ADV
Poland	Kirowska	Kamila	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	MA
Poland	Krzeczunowicz	Paweł	Agricultural Advisory Center in Brwinów Warsaw branch office	NRN
Poland	Podlaska	Bożena	IPPT PAN	NCP
Romania	Samargiu	Nancy	Romanian Rural Network	NRN
Romania	Voinescu	Cristian	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	ADV
Romania	Zaharescu	Beatrice	Romanian Rural Network	NRN
Slovakia	Hronček	Stanislav	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	ADV
Slovakia	Hurtova	Natasa	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	NCP
Slovakia	Košíková	Anna		NRN
Slovenia	Bidovec	Boštjan		ADV
Slovenia	Jagodici	Anton	Chamber of Agriculture and Forestry of Slovenia	ADV
Slovenia	Štepec	Matej	Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry and Food	NRN
Slovenia	Trunkelj	Barbara	Agricultural Chamber	ADV
Spain	Conde Vidal	Marta	Centre for the Development of Industrial Technology	NCP
Spain	Diaz Molist	Raquel	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food	MA
Spain	Garcia	Eva	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food	MA
Spain	Gutiérrez	Carolina	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food	NRN

Country	Family Name	First Name	Organisation	Participant Type ⁵
Spain	Pascual	Begona	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food	MA
Spain	Wojski	Rocio	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food	MA
Sweden	Ascard	Johan		NRN
Sweden	Ivarsson	Kjell	Federation of Swedish Farmers and Copa-Cogeca	ADV
Sweden	Wolgast Broberg	Åsa	Ministry of Enterprise & Innovation	MA

Commission	Budnakova	Tereza	AGRI B2 - Research and Innovation	EC
Commission	Ghahramanloo	Samira	AGRI B2 - Research and Innovation	EC
Commission	Mach	Magda	AGRI B2 - Research and Innovation	EC
Commission	Rosenow	Kerstin	AGRI B2 - Research and Innovation	EC
Commission	Seregelyi	Aniko	AGRI B2 - Research and Innovation	EC
Commission	Van Borm	Isabelle	AGRI B2 - Research and Innovation	EC
Commission	Van Oost	Inge	AGRI B2 - Research and Innovation	EC
Commission	Zona	Antonella	AGRI B2 - Research and Innovation	EC
Commission	Borbás	Tatjana	AGRI E2 - Rural development programmes	EC
Commission	Williams	Helen	AGRI E2 - Rural development programmes	EC
Commission	Dankova	Miriama	AGRI E4 - Rural development programmes	EC
Independent	Kránitz	Livia		MOD
Independent	Redman	Mark		MOD