European Network for Rural Development

eip-agri AGRICULTURE & INNOVATION

# Report of the 6th meeting of the European Rural Networks' Steering Group

Brussels, 25 October 2016

# Table of Contents

## Morning session

| Welcome and Introduction | |
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| *9.30 – 9.45*<br>Welcome and Introduction, Aldo Longo, DG AGRI | *Note: Presentations can be directly downloaded by clicking on the link provided*<br><br>Aldo Longo (DG AGRI, Director) welcomed the Steering Group (SG) members to the 6th meeting of the SG, which was also the first after the Cork conference. Mr Longo strongly emphasised the importance of the Cork 2.0 declaration and its impact on framing the scope of today's SG meeting. As he explained, in the light of the new declaration SG members would discuss, report on their activities and their relevance on realising the declaration. In this context the meeting would specifically aim to:<br>• advance the preparations for the next meeting of the Rural Networks Assembly in December;<br>• look at the work carried out on the networks' strategic framework and also agree on the reporting template for the Assembly;<br>• reinforce the synergy and complementarity between the activities carried out by the networks.<br><br>Mr Longo also underlined elements that came out strongly in Cork which were connectivity and digitisation. Acknowledging their importance, he announced that the next assembly will be devoted to digitisation. |
| **Rural Networks' Priorities** | |
| 9.45 – 10.00<br>Update from the 5th Steering Group Meeting, and links to Cork 2.0<br><br>*Presentation:*<br>Update from the 5th Steering Group Meeting, and links to Cork 2.0<br>Matthias Langemeyer, DG AGRI | Matthias Langemeyer (DG AGRI, acting Head of Unit) gave an overview of the main activities and achievements by the two European Networks (ENRD and EIP-AGRI) since the 5th SG meeting (16/06/2016).<br><br>Mr Langemeyer also illustrated how the priorities of the networks as defined by the Assembly, are strongly linked and can contribute to the implementation of the points of the Cork 2.0 declaration. |
| **The new Cork 2.0 Declaration** | |
| 10.00 – 10.30<br>Report back by Stakeholder Group / Workshop from Cork 2.0 | Presentations were given by participants who participated in the workshops at the Cork 2.0 Conference:<br><br>• Workshop 1 – David Lamb<br>• Workshop 2 – Wolfgang Löhe<br>• Workshop 3 – Jan-Willem van der Schans |

*Presentation:* Outcomes from Cork 2.0, Paul Soto, ENRD CP.

- Workshop 4 – Paul Soto

A full summary of the workshop outcomes from Cork 2.0 can be seen here.

David Lamb from the ENRD Contact Point facilitated the workshop on jobs, growth and investment in the agri-food supply chain in Cork. This recommended developing new approaches to quality systems, using the bioeconomy, digitising agriculture, building urban-rural links and local productive networks and looking to integrate value chains.

Participants argued for breaking down the silos and redefining agricultural and rural. The lack of opportunities for young people and the need to rebuild trust in value chains were highlighted, and in establishing greater power and income for smaller producers.

Conference participants felt that the Declaration did genuinely reflect their views. They concluded that rural networks had an important role to play and that it is important to set longer term goals for rural areas, including digitisation as a means of developing the infrastructure.

Wolfgang Löhe from the German Managing Authority participated in the 2nd workshop on Rural Environment, Climate Change and Water. As in the other workshops, this looked at what was working well, the drivers and barriers, the key opportunities and where policy can deliver results.

The workshop in Cork stressed the importance of improving biodiversity and the role of cooperation, knowledge exchange and economic drivers such as financial incentives to encourage participation in environmental schemes. This necessitates the involvement of consumers and providing motivation for participation in innovative solutions, including results-based systems. The evaluation system required for this requires a focus on proportionality.

Following some intense and committed discussions, the outcomes from the workshop were reflected in Points 4,5,6 and 9 of the Declaration. Wolfgang felt that the discussions were based on a bottom-up approach and overcame scepticism, which meant that participant input was reflected in the outcomes.

Jan-Willem van der Schans of Wageningen University was the rapporteur in Cork for the Innovation workshop. He insisted that there were no drafts of the Declaration before he attended Cork, so it was genuinely viewed a bottom-up approach. There were some pre-existing themes, and these were built upon in the discussions, including food (and public health), urban-rural links and digitisation. The barriers identified including attitudes to risk and the need for innovation infrastructure. It was also raised as being important to avoid the

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| | 'fossilisation of innovation' as a result of direct payments and to ensure that there are incentives to innovate.<br><br>The main ideas that the workshop brought forward were that innovation should be at the centre of CAP reform, and that trust has to be re-established between all parties.<br><br>Paul Soto facilitated the workshop on Rural Viability and Vitality, and outlined the six key areas the workshop developed, including:<br>• Building on LEADER/CLLD<br>• Promoting rural identity<br>• Strengthening local democracy<br>• Supporting job creation<br>• Improving services, infrastructure and broadband<br>• the inclusion of young people<br><br>This workshop highlighted changing the way that rural areas are looked at, including seeing rural areas as important contributors to community, health and society. More integrated approaches should be strengthened through 'rural proofing'. This means building on the capital of 2 500 Leader Groups, and using the flexibility of financial instruments.<br><br>Gabriel Trenzado of Copa Cogeca who also participated in workshop 1 added that the Declaration gives the Rural Networks an opportunity to move forward. The process helped different stakeholders to rebuilding trust and in listen to each other.<br><br>Gerry Gunning (also Copa Cogeca) who was involved in Workshop 4. commented that the original Cork Declaration had served well for 20 years. The current focus on networking for connecting stakeholders is a means of moving forward. Encouraging ground level participation is vital. |
| Morning Workshops | |
| 10.30 – 12.00<br>Activities linked to Cork 2.0, David Lamb, ENRD CP | Three workshops in total took place. The workshops considered current activities conducted by participants, and where new activities might take place that would build on the outcomes of Cork 2.0, Workshops were organised around the same 4 themes as explored in the Rural Development Conference in Cork.<br><br>The first workshop was led by David Lamb and the topic was Jobs, Growth and Investment in the agri-food supply chain and the wider rural economy. Workshop 2 looked at the Rural Environment, Climate & Water and was led by Mike Gregory & Doris Marquardt. |

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| | Workshop 3 (Innovation) and 4 (Rural viability and vitality), led by Paul Soto, were combined in one group discussion. The participants mainly focused on Innovation and ran through the activities developed by the NRNs after Cork. The details of the discussion are outlined in Annex I. |
| 12.00 – 12.30 Feedback from Workshops | *Workshop 1: Jobs, Growth and Investment in the agri-food supply chain and the wider rural economy:*<br>Alistair Prior pointed to the four sub-topics the group had focused on: Digitisation, Food & Drink, Rural Tourism and Rural support services. Examples of ongoing activities could be found in Finland, where advisory services go beyond EIP activities. Euromontana and Copa Cogeca have established sectoral working groups and are also approaching the topic of digitisation. For the work of the Rural Parliament the working group had identified a link to the development of rural businesses.<br><br>Opportunities for activities to be carried on by the rural networks were seen as 1) working on the identification of ways for establishing infrastructure for digitisation, 2) elaborating the roles of producers and consumers along the supply chain against the background of the potential digitisation offers; 3) developing and promoting the concept of Rural Ambassadors, and in 4) developing a network of networks.<br><br>*Workshop 2: Rural Environment, Climate & Water*<br>John Place explained that the group did concentrate on environmental issues and climate, but not explicitly on water (as the discussion went in another direction), so that his reporting back would not imply that there are no activities in that area.<br><br>The group had identified topics which were regarded as of being of high interest for many rural stakeholders and for which a range of ongoing activities were identified (see Annex 1): Collective approaches to deliver environmental/ conservation services, especially in the context of the agri-environment climate measure (AECM), result-oriented AECM, simplification of AECM schemes, particularly concentrating on their verifiability and controllability, and Carbon sequestration. As a special ongoing activity he pointed to a school scheme in the UK, in which environmental education is provided.<br><br>The group had elaborated concrete proposals for issues the networks could focus on: 1) Enhancing policy delivery and simplification; 2) Considering the perspective of the beneficiary when designing AECM and 3) Strengthening the focus on forestry in the rural networks' work.<br><br>*Workshop 3: Innovation and Rural viability and vitality* |

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| | The rapporteur Talia Laffron of the EIP-Agri Service Point concentrated on the question, "what NRNs could do to further ongoing works on innovation". It is important to address the difficulty that the EAFRD has with dealing with the risk of failure associated with any innovation. Furthermore, there is a need for simplifying the support to advisory service providers involved in the implementation of EIP. The group found that the networks (and other rural stakeholders) could/ should focus more on innovation in the field of the environment.<br><br>The rapporteur also made the point that the Cork Declaration also had important implications for RDP implementation now – the declaration should not only be regarded as providing a long-term perspective.<br><br>There were other aspects discussed, particularly relating to events undertaken by the NRNs and European Organisations. These included activities undertaken in, Austria the Czech Republic, France Germany, Portugal and Spain with direct links either in general terms or specifically to thematic work. Events organised by ELARD in Estonia, the EESC-CoR joint Conference and the Eurogites Tourism and Rural Development Conference will all look to build on this activity.<br><br>Future opportunities should build on areas such as good practice in the implementation of the RDPs, creating rural business accelerators, ensuring bottom-up delivery, especially relating to environment and developing the multifunding approach further to CLLD. |

## Afternoon working session

| Framework for the Next Rural Networks' Assembly | |
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| 14.00-14.15 Outline & Reporting Template for the Assembly,<br><br>*Presentation:* Framework for the Rural Networks Assembly, Matthias Langemeyer, DG AGRI | *Note: Presentations can be directly downloaded by clicking on the link provided*<br><br>Matthias Langemeyer introduced the reporting template to be presented in the Assembly by stakeholder group, highlighting that stakeholder representatives had already been identified for the Managing Authorities and Experts on Evaluation and for the National Rural Networks. A representative should be identified for the European Organisations (and Research and Advisory Providers - these groups are considered together due to their size in the Steering Group). |
| 14.15-14.45 Proposals for progressing the strategic assessment framework<br><br>*Presentation:* Future Activities of the EU Rural Networks, Antonella Zona, DG AGRI | Antonella Zona gave some feedback on the strategic assessment framework, noting that the output indicators have been agreed but that the impact indicators have not been agreed as yet.<br><br>The assessment exercise can start in 2017 collecting the output indicators such as seminars, events, good practices and so on. For more qualitative aspects it is proposed to send a survey to all members of the Assembly to provide their feedback, such as how they use the information received. On this basis it will be possible to start a systematic self-assessment of the EU rural network in 2017, based on the common strategic framework, following the green light by the Assembly at its next meeting on 1/12/2016. There are other tools for the assessment including the feedback presented at the forthcoming Assembly. The objective of the self-assessment was highlighted as an improvement tool.<br><br>Matthias Langemeyer asked for experienced colleagues in Evaluation to meet and to discuss the self-assessment process to be started in 2017 based on the common framework prior to the Assembly meeting. It was agreed that the following members will follow the self-assessment process, starting by joining a meeting on 30/11/2016:<br>• Katarzyna Laskowska (PL)<br>• Eero Pikonen (FI)<br>• Rosa Mosquera (ES)<br>• John Place (UK)<br>• Pascal Gruselle (FR) – (to be confirmed)<br><br>Antonella Zona then presented an outline of the Rural Networks' Activities, organised into two 'blocks' – firstly, capacity building and peer-to-peer exchanges and secondly, thematic activities. These activities are organised by the three service units – The ENRD Contact Point, the EIP-Agri Service Point |

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| | and the Evaluation Helpdesk. She also pointed to forthcoming events and activities, including proposals for possible activities from the Innovation Sub-Group, which took place the previous week. |
| 14.45 – 15.00<br>Feedback on stakeholder activities<br><br>Reporting to the Rural Assembly<br>David Lamb, ENRD CP | David Lamb from the ENRD Contact Point presented the outline of the working session, where participants were divided into three groups:<br>• Managing Authorities and Experts on Evaluation<br>• National Rural Networks<br>• EU organisations, Advisory Service Providers and Research Institutes<br><br>Participants were invited to explore two aspects:<br><br>1. Past network activities – what has worked? What needs to be improved and how?<br>2. Taking account of the activities that have already been planned, what can the Members of the Assembly do strengthen future network activity? |
| Group discussions | |
| 15.00 – 16.00<br>Parallel discussions:<br><br>*Managing Authorities* | In the light of the Cork Declaration, SG members were invited to discuss and identify current and future stakeholder activities to be proposed in the Assembly.<br><br>Managing Authorities (MAs) most commonly identified points: 8 – 'Enhancing rural governance', 9 – 'Advancing policy delivery and implementation', and 10 – 'Improving performance and accountability' of the Cork Declaration as the most closely relevant and affected by their work. The group suggested that it would be useful to conduct an analysis of the Cork 2.0 conclusions in comparison to the findings of the RDPs ex-post evaluation. MAs also considered that in the context of the Declaration additional attention should be given towards simplification looked at from the perspective of both the MAs and beneficiaries. They also recommended more joint action to improve the image and identity of rural areas. Another key point raised was the need to start discussing the CAP post 2020 using stakeholders' inputs. |
| *National Rural Networks* | The discussion focused on linking the NRNs to the outcomes from Cork 2.0, and in particular to any new discussions looking at activity post 2020, so that they can present and disseminate network activity.<br><br>They were also keen to continue developing shared tools and resources, and continue networking on best practice. There was an agreement that the presentation of outcomes to the Assembly should be discussed at the forthcoming NRN meeting in Senec, Slovakia on 8th-9th November, and that a |

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| | further discussion of Cork 2.0 should be held there and also disseminated through the rural networks at Member State level. |
| *European Organisations* | The participants asked to improve the way networking is coordinated by transforming the networking events, such as the Assembly, into a real opportunity to discuss and share practical ideas that motivate them. They also proposed how to improve the networking methodology during the networking events and nominated two volunteers to support the future activities of the network.<br><br>The details of the discussion are outlined in Annex II. |
| 15.40 – 16.00 Reporting back from parallel discussions and plenary discussion | John Place, DEFRA: MAs presented two basic proposals for the next Assembly. The first one concerned providing an overview of the state of play of the implementation of the RDPs. Such an exercise could analyse a lot of concerns from the MAs' perspective on points 8, 9 and 10 of the Cork Declaration, e.g. simplification from the point of view of both the MAs and beneficiaries. Secondly, the issue of how to define and improve the image of rural areas. To this end, the group considered it might be useful to compare an area that has received EAFRD support and understand the way the area has changed over time. In order to respond to these issues MAs considered that it would be useful to take into account evaluation findings, as well as to collect views of stakeholders and NRNs.<br><br>Edgars Linde, Latvian NRN highlighted the need to incorporate the NRNs and the ground level stakeholders they represent in future discussions, as they can be an important relay for actions, and that common network tools such as good practices and how these are shared can be extremely important. He agreed to represent the NRNs at the forthcoming Assembly with support from others<br><br>Franz Thoma (CEPF) (EU organisations, Advisory services, Research Institutes) suggested improving the way networking is coordinated and how to improve the networking methodology during the networking events. They nominated two volunteer organisations (Copa Cogeca, ELARD) to support the future activities of the network. |

# Preparation of the upcoming RN Assembly Meeting and conclusions

| Upcoming RN Assembly Proposals | |
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| 16.30 – 17.00 Reporting back from parallel discussions and proposal for the RN Assembly Meeting | *Note: Presentations can be directly downloaded by clicking on the link provided*<br><br>Participants made the following points in reaction to the issues raised:<br><br>• In order to understand the impact of RDP support on a rural area, it would probably be useful to put this in the context of other EU funding in that area, rather than simply the EAFRD funding for specific areas such as rural businesses and communities.<br><br>• The European Rural Parliament will take place in the Netherlands from the 18-26 October 2017 and it is organised by PREPARE, ERCA and ELARD. It will deal with many of the issues raised by Cork II<br><br>• Common reaction from PREPARE, ERCA and ELARD on the Cork Declaration: *"We view that Cork 2.0 should be followed by fuller consultation with the participation of civil society about future policies for rural development, both narrow EAFRD funds and broader Structural Funds and rural proofing. This should include focus on the needs of millions of small farmers, socially excluded people and ethnic minorities. We seek to connect and build trust between the EU and citizens. We urge the European Institutions to do the same."*<br><br>The following representatives were nominated as rapporteurs to present the suggestions of the MAs, NRNs and EU organisations to the Assembly:<br><br>- **NRNs:** Maria Custódia Correia for Assessment; Edgars Linde, Latvian NSU & Alistair Prior, Scottish NSU for Cork II actions<br>- **MAs:** Veronica Madner, Austrian MA, supported by Wolfgang Löhe, if needed for assessment; John Place for Cork II actions<br>- **European Organisations:** A representative from the Civil Dialogue Group for Assessment; ELARD for Cork II actions.<br><br>A detailed list of proposed topics is presented in ANNEX II. |
| 17.00 – 17.30 Upcoming events and closing remarks, Matthias Langemeyer, DG AGRI | Matthias Langemeyer (DG AGRI) presented the dates for major upcoming governance meetings of the European Rural Networks:<br><br>• 3rd RN Assembly – 01/12/2016<br>• 7th Sub-Group on Innovation: 16/02/2017<br>• 6th Sub-Group on LEADER /CLLD: 21/02/2017<br>• 7th RN Steering Group: 18/05/2017 (tbc)<br><br>SG members' events and activities: |

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| | • Workshop on Innovation and Circular Economy in Mountain Forest Supply Chains by Euromontana, Skrad, Croatia, 29th of November, 2016.<br>• Conference on tourism & rural development, Eurogites 16-17/02/2017 in Bergamo, Italy. Partners to co-organise the rural development part would be welcome (Contact Klaus Erlich).<br>• Conference "Renewing LEADER/CLLD for 2020+ Celebrating 25 years of LEADER in Europe" by ELARD, Tartu, Estonia, 22-23 November 2016.<br><br>Mr Langemeyer reminded the Steering Group that recently DG AGRI had recently sent an e-mail to the members of the Assembly who are not directly part of a Ministry (e.g. researchers, advisors, etc.) asking them to register in the EC Transparency list. Not registering might mean exclusion from the activities of the Assembly and Steering group. |
| Closing remarks, Aldo Longo, DG AGRI | Mr Longo thanked participants for their active participation in the meeting. He reminded that this was a very important meeting for preparing the upcoming Assembly meeting in view of the Cork 2.0 Declaration. The first part of the meeting provided an insight to the Cork event thanks to the contribution of SG members who participated at the Conference. He underlined that it is of common interest to make the best use of the Cork Declaration either as a mandate for political debates or as an orientation for future activities.<br><br>Mr Longo insisted on the importance of rural proofing which is also an element of the Cork Declaration. This still remains a challenge not only for the European Commission but also for the Member States. Finland and the United Kingdom have already experience on it and further exchange of experience is expected. The networks could help to disseminate this knowledge.<br><br>Mr Longo remarked that the afternoon session helped achieve significant progress in the preparation of the 3rd RN Assembly. He also thanked the volunteers who will report to the Assembly from the stakeholders' perspective on networks activities and those who will contribute to self-assessment of the RN activities and present a strong strategic framework to the Assembly.<br><br>The meeting provided useful information to take into account for the RN Thematic work and will be presented to the Assembly.<br><br>Mr Longo acknowledged SG members need to learn more about Digitisation and informed that more background information will be provided before the next Assembly meeting. |

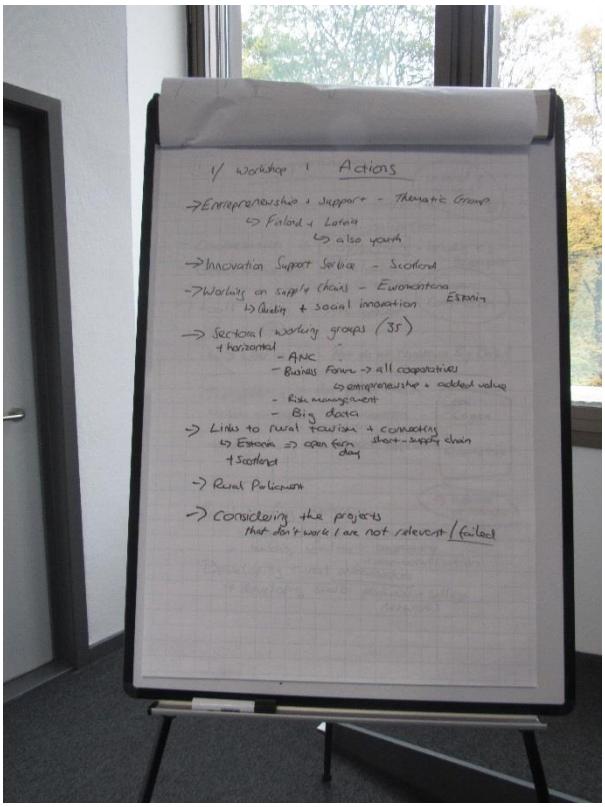
# Annexes

## Annex I – Report on the Morning Workshops – Stakeholder Activities linked to Cork 2.0

**Workshop 1: Jobs, Growth and Investment in the agri-food supply chain and the wider rural economy**

The group had identified a number of ongoing activities focused on:

- Digitisation
- Food & Drink
- Rural Tourism
- Rural support services




Euromontana and Copa Cogeca have established sectoral working groups and are also approaching the topic of digitisation. There is ongoing work in Estonia on Supply Chains and on Quality Systems in mountain areas by Euromontana.

There is work in Finland and Latvia on Entrepreneurship, and in developing an Innovation Support Service in Scotland. Copa Cogeca has over 35 sectoral and horizontal working groups on various themes linked to Cork 2.0, and these include 'Big Data', ANC, Risk Management and a cooperative business

forum which looks at entrepreneurship and added value. For the work of the European Rural Parliament the working group had identified a link to the development of rural businesses.

Opportunities for activities to be carried on by the rural networks were seen as:

a) working on the identification of ways for establishing infrastructure for digitalisation;
b) elaborating the roles of producers and consumers along the supply chain against the background of the potential digitisation offers;
c) developing and promoting the concept of Rural Ambassadors, and in
d) developing a network of networks [active in this field].

This included the themes of rural proofing and in developing greater transparency in the food and drink value chain.

Workshop 2 - Rural Environment, Climate & Water

Few participants in the group were familiar with the results of the Cork Conference. The discussion around environment and climate therefore focused on the interventions supported under the current RDPs, notably Measure 10, Agri-environment-climate Measures (AECM). Topics regarded as of being of high interest for many rural stakeholders included:

a) Collective approaches to deliver environmental/ conservation services, especially in the context of AECM;
b) Result-oriented AECM;
c) Simplification of AECM schemes, particularly concentrating on their verifiability and controllability; and
d) Carbon sequestration.

Participants mentioned a range of concrete ongoing activities in these fields: The German and the Dutch NRN are exchanging experiences on collective approaches to AECM. Sweden and the UK are working on result-oriented AECM. Some MAs (among them the German one) mentioned that they are working on AECM implementation schemes and their simplification; other participants assessed that work as very important. In this context BirdLife considered that there was a lack of ambition on the part of the programme agencies in terms of the focus on environmental benefits when programming and implementing AECM.

Copa Cogeca explained that its members are working on carbon sequestration and the reduction of GHG emissions with a special focus on the livestock sector and circular economy. The participants stated that there are several initiatives and networks working on Climate action (also at EU level).

There was particular interest in a school scheme in the UK in which environmental education is provided, for instance by organising farm visits. The group did not discuss the topic of water or try to identify any activities in this field.

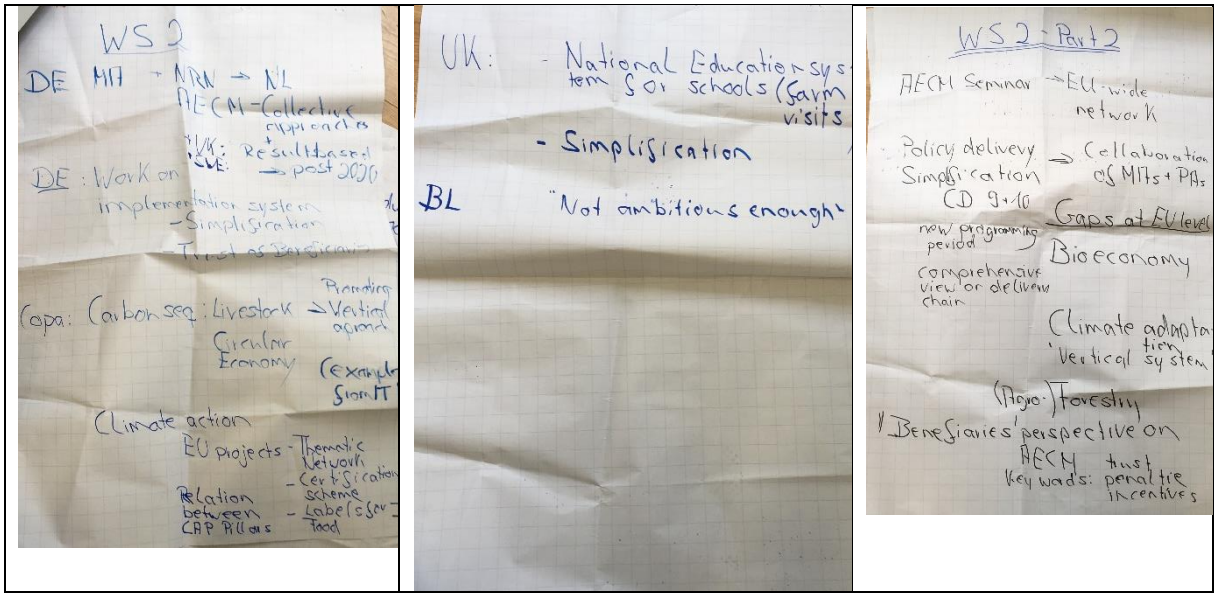
In the second part of the workshop, the group made proposals for issues the rural networks could focus on

1) Enhancing policy delivery and simplification, ideally taking a comprehensive view on the supply chain;
2) Considering the perspective of the beneficiary when designing AECM, striving for the establishment of trust, and finding solutions for proportionate penalties; and
3) Strengthening the focus on forestry in rural network activity.

One concrete suggestion was to extend the network of programme agencies established at a recent AECM Seminar in Paris.

Participants argued that activities to improve rural development in the fields of the environment and climate change should focus on both short term improvements to implementation in the current period and longer term improvements in the future.

*Table 1: Contributions by participants to the discussion in Workshop 2 (Part 1+2)*




## Workshop 3 (Innovation) and 4 (Rural viability and vitality)

Two Cork workshop topics were combined into one group discussion.

At national level, ad hoc meetings have been or will be organised to inform stakeholders on Cork's outcomes (e.g. AT, CZ, DE, ES, FR, PT). At EU level, specific events are also being organised by ELARD, the EU Rural Parliament, the Agri-Innovation Summit that will be held in Lisbon in October 2017, and the EESC conference in Brussels on the 9th of November.

Participants discussed how NRNs can strengthen the focus on innovation and they shared the problems they were facing, in relation to support for Advisory Service providers, where more simplification is needed. They also highlighted the need to better integrate businesses and environmental concern in the agricultural sector.

Participants asked for a better explanation/clarification of how to deal with the Cork Priorities, not just in the long term but also in terms of what can be done to improve implementation in the short term.

They considered that there was a requirement to explore ways to improve the image of rural areas and to make CLLD actually work.

There is also a need for more integrated approaches, less focus on single projects, and a strengthening of the bottom up approach and local democracy driven projects.

More coordinated action to support young people is also required. **The following activities linked to the Cork 2.0 outcomes were mentioned by various NRN/Organisations:**

- SPAIN NRN: it is difficult to inform stakeholders about the Cork Declaration because of the regional RDP structure in Spain, especially to reach out to policy officers and MA at both central and regional level. Four events on Cork 2.0 will be held in September and October.
- FRANCE NRN: The National Steering Group on the 25th of November will address all key RD issues with a special focus on Cork. On the 18th of November a consultation group on innovation will meet. So far, 16 national collective projects on 16 different issues, aimed at improving performance, are linked with the Cork's priorities.
- FRANCE NRN: Study on rural vitality to be launched soon, to explore how the EU funds contributed to revitalise rural areas during the previous programming period.
- CZ NRN: in October a national rural conference (CZ Rural Parliament) analysed some topics linked with the Cork Declaration in support of the upcoming position paper that the Czech RN will present next year (Sept 2017) at the European Rural Parliament in The Netherlands.
- CZ NRN: 11th-12th November, International Conference on Sharing know-how for Young farmers.
- Portugal NRN: in November three thematic working groups about innovation were organised, with a specific focus on forestry and on food chain. An ad hoc Innovation Summit is expected in November 2017 in Lisbon.
- Germany NRN: in 2017 the Berlin Annual forum on Rural Development will be organised by the Ministry of Agriculture and all key stakeholders will be involved in the discussion.
- ELARD: Estonia, Conference on the future of CLLD 2020-2027, 21st - 23rd November.
- PREPARE, ELARD: upcoming European Rural Parliament, in The Netherlands in September 2017. The agenda will draw on the Cork Declaration.
- EU FEDERATION RURAL TOURISM: a conference on Rural Development and Tourism will be organized in Bergamo (16th-17th February 2017), to explore how challenging it is to find actors from the rural development side that are also working on tourism. The leading organiser is EUROGITES.

**Participants identified the following opportunities for EU organisations or European networks to take forward the ideas expressed in the Cork Declaration:**

- German and French NRN: To clarify how all priorities set by the EAFRD, Cork 2.0 and the EU 2020 framework are linked and integrated in order to provide a coordinated message. The overall coherence of priorities is fundamental. ENRD and EIP networks should help with this.
- Dutch NRN: more participatory approach to evaluation: there is a crucial issue of trust when it comes to involving actors in innovation.
- EEB: more attention to environmental aspects (e.g. the elimination of alien species, preserving wetland) in the "Post Cork" approach. The bottom up approach only works if a more environmental approach is integrated in priority and focuses on the delivery of environmental results.
- There is a need for further support for the implementation of advisory services, and it was proposed that this should come from the ERND CP and EIP
- The Scottish NRN will provide further support for multifunding of CLLD
- The possibility of developing rural business accelerators should be looked into by the ENRD CP
- For higher risk innovation projects, pilot initiatives should be developed using measure 16 and measure 1.

## Annex II– Proposals for the upcoming RN Assembly: feedback from stakeholder groups

### National Rural Networks

The NRNs presented a range of activities. Many NRNs had not been invited to the Cork 2.0 Conference, so were not so aware of the outcomes, and some (France, Latvia) wanted to further disseminate the Declaration.

The NRNs asked to be involved in further events and activities defining how to take the activity forward. They wished to be involved in the discussion which they can then reflect back to the Member States, and create an exchange that includes ENRD and EIP activity, and ground level activities such as LAG work and thematic activities.


The need for continued communication was also highlighted, addressing innovation and working together in areas such as multi-funding, and the need to exchange ideas in this area. It was suggested that there should be a review of how Good Practices are shared This could include a common format, which included the ENRD website examples. This includes the involvement of European stakeholders, and examples of innovation in practice. A previous 'Pikse' format used by the ENRD Contact Point was suggested.

In short, European and National Networks should continue to develop common tools in collaboration

Managing Authorities

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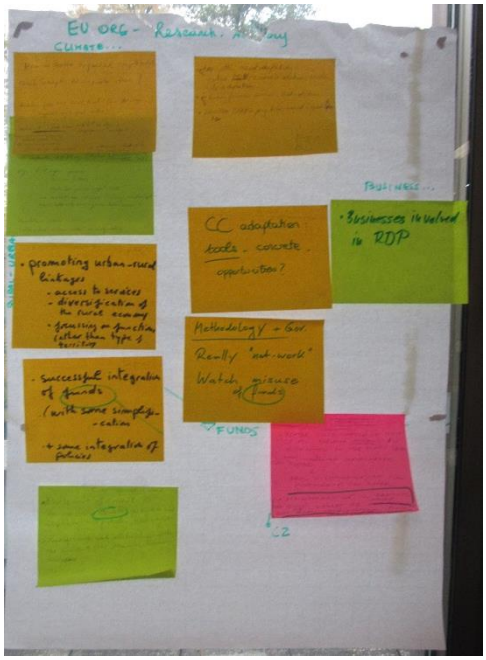
| • Improve the image of rural areas.<br>• Define rural and demonstrate issues that need to be dealt with. | • Identify examples of success.<br>• Identify examples of change, effects and contribution of the RDPs. |
| • Commence the discussion about CAP post 2020 with inputs from stakeholders. | • Short term - look at the procedures.<br>• Long term – decide on the goals and consider the findings of the mid-term evaluation.<br>• Streamline data availability. |
| • Look at the state of play of the Programmes implementation from the stakeholders and MAs point of view, including bottlenecks, how measures work etc.<br>• The ex-post evaluation could be used to draw conclusions on Points 8, 9 and 10 of the Cork 2.0 declaration. Get an insight on preliminary results and see how it fits with the Declaration.<br>• Key issue to be examined is simplification from the perspective of more effective implementation and communication again from both stakeholders and MAs perspective. | • Improve public awareness on the results of the ex-post evaluation<br>• Thematic Groups could be more specific in order to enable the engagement of MAs at a more concrete / technical level.<br>• Both stakeholders and MAs should be supported in simplification, e.g. by looking at measure 16 – Cooperation.<br>• Examine eligibility issues – also in relation to simplification.<br>  |

EU organisations –




Participants asked to improve the way networking is coordinated by transforming networking events, such as the Assembly, into a real opportunity to discuss and share practical ideas that motivate them. They also prosed to improve the networking methodology during the networking events and nominated two volunteers to support the future activities of the network.

Suggested improvements:

- Climate change adaptation/mitigation to be integrated as a topic in the next Assembly
- To asses Rural Development in relation to climate mitigation priorities as outlined at COP21.
- To explore ecosystem based adaptation and nature based solutions.
- Multi-funding: strong need for simplification. Simplification was mentioned in relation to funds but as a key need in general.
- To strengthen the farmers-consumer link across the food supply chain.
- To increase the involvement of business in Rural Development.
- To improve the transfer of knowledge within the network in relation to RD measures.

How to be involved in the upcoming Assembly and in future activities of the network:

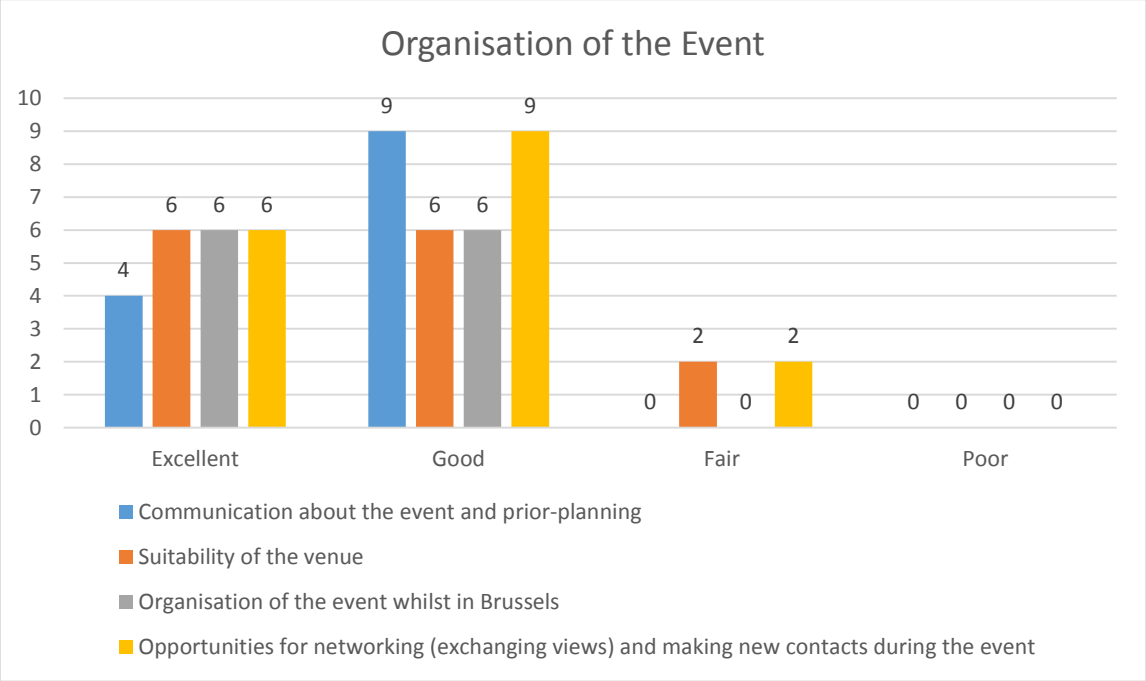
- 'More interactive sessions, fewer presentations' approach at rural network events.
- To involve farmers during networking events to share their "narrative", to make the topics more attractive and inspiring and an incentive to develop new ideas.
- Assembly: it should look like a social event to engage participants and to motivate them so that they can feel inspired to work as network, among themselves.

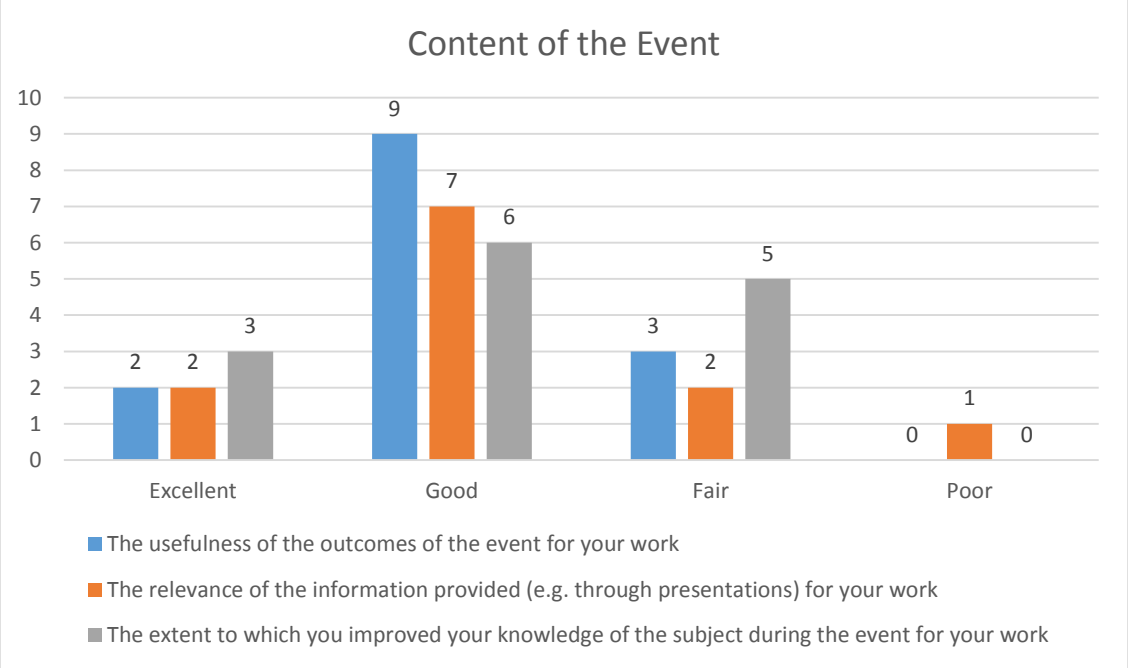
Who should be involved?

- A suggestion to invite Commissioner Hogan at the next Assembly, to share his ideas on what his expectations are from the network.
- Two volunteers were nominated to support the preparatory work of the Assembly: a representative from COPA/COGECA and from ELARD.

## Annex III - Participants' feedback form

Feedback was sought from participants on the organisation and the content of the event. In total 14 feedback forms were completed. The overview of the responses is highlighted in the charts below:



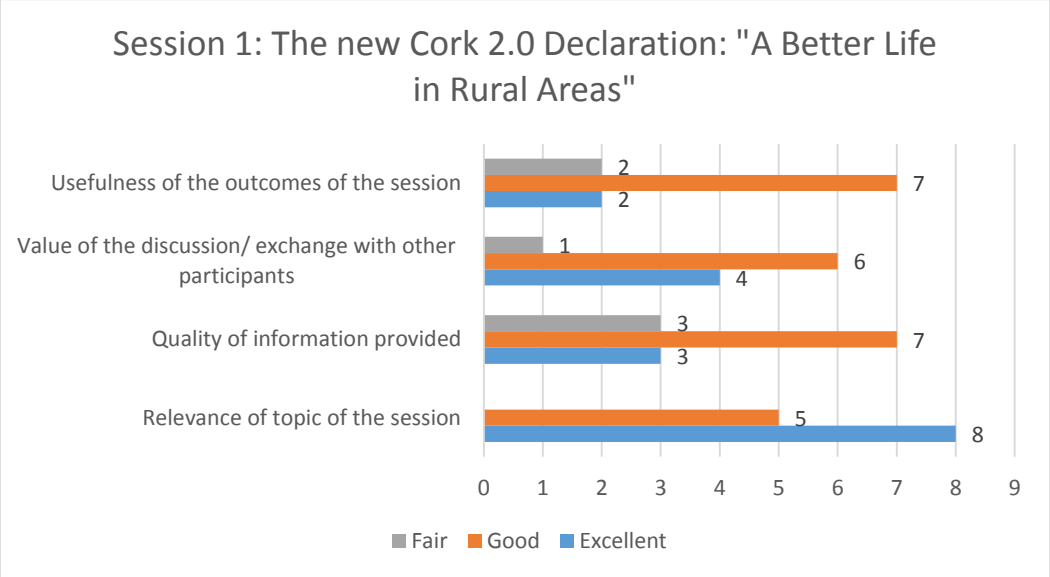
Some comments on the organisation were:

- The network needs more private sector organisation
- I would welcome better and clearer use of the 'My ENRD Portal'. Anything should be easily accessible (results from previous Steering Group, supporting documents…)
- The venue is very good, easily accessible, but doesn't lend itself well to working as a group
- I understand difficulties, but the room is too formal
- Agenda should be sent earlier

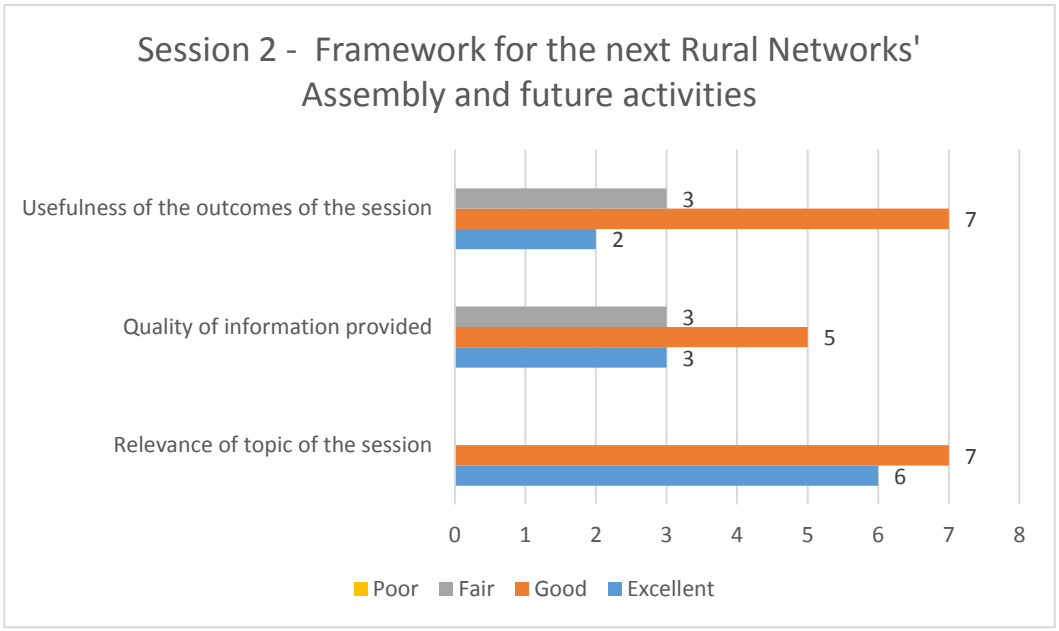
Some comments on the content were:

- The exchange of views with other stakeholders was very interesting. Private sector representatives should be included
- Please put the PPT on the website very quickly to inform other colleagues
- It could all be covered in half a day

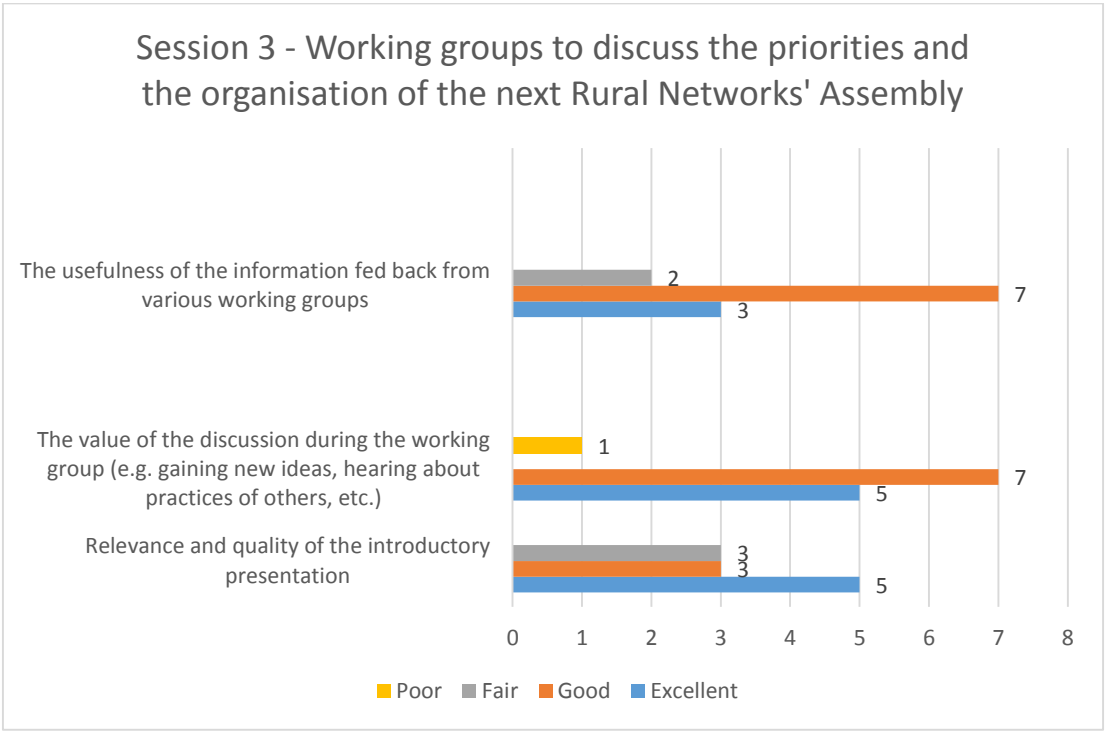
The feedback on the 1st Session which focused on the outcomes from Cork 2.0 and subsequent Rural Network Actions were as follows, with a total of 11 recorded feedback forms:




The 2nd session had a total of 13 responses with the summary as follows:




The 3rd session had a total of 12 responses:




Key messages that participants will take away from the Steering Group are as follows:

- It would be wise to plan a series of presentations held by private sector representatives figuring out good practices of vertical approaches relating to the Cork 2.0 fundamentals
- As a National Network, we need to get Cork 2.0 information in advance to share it with colleagues and partners