

# SCAR SWG AKIS 4 mandate proposal

## ***Background and context:***

The SCAR SWG AKIS since its very first mandate has provided insights for a better understanding and development of AKIS systems in the EU. The different mandates have allowed to develop a narrative for the strategic development of AKIS systems in the political and socio-economical context of the EU (Member States and regions) and globally. The successful activities of this very participatory group, supported by external expertise and dedicated studies has provided the EC and the EU Member States and all interested actors a set of ideas, tools, best practices and recommendations for reflections on their AKIS and an efficient and coherent use of the different instruments which can contribute to the implementation of the EIP-AGRI (European Innovation Partnership) in the EU.

The SCAR SWG AKIS, mainly during the second and partially the third mandate, has evolved in parallel to the setting up and first steps of the EIP-AGRI. The current governance structure for the EIP-AGRI under the umbrella of the European network for rural development (ENRD) includes the setting up of a Subgroup on Innovation (decided by the Rural Assembly during its meeting of 26 January 2015) whose missions are to support the DG AGRI and the EIP-AGRI Service Point for the overall EIP animation.

The SWG AKIS has significantly incentivized fostering innovation through linking existing policies and instruments, which is a main aim of European Innovation partnerships as set out in the 2010 Commission Communication Innovation Union. The SWG AKIS developed dedicated Horizon 2020 formats for incentivizing interactive innovation (multi-actor projects and thematic networks). These formats are now in place, consortia have started their works and it will be useful to follow-up the new formats to see if they deliver to their objectives.

Moreover, from its start the SCAR SWG AKIS had an international dimension. The project JOLISAA (Joint learning in and about Innovation Systems in African Agriculture) was among those providing early input. Until now, the dynamic development of the EIP concept in the EU kept the focus on Europe. In the High Level Policy Dialogue EU – Africa on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture a long-term research and innovation partnership is envisaged. Sharing experiences on AKIS, multi-actor approaches, stakeholder engagement and the right policy incentive structure would help to further target the initiative.

## ***AKIS 3 mandate***

The third AKIS mandate identified four main topics to be addressed:

- Supporting the implementation of the EIP through a number of different topics and activities
- Co-learning on interactive innovation with countries beyond Europe
- Foresight as regards matters of relevance to the EU and national AKIS
- Exploration of the possibilities of open data for agriculture

All topics have been addressed and the mandate will close with the publication of the final report on an AKIS Foresight in autumn 2015. Next to this report, the SWG AKIS 3 has published a policy brief “Best strategies for intercontinental research and innovation partnerships - towards greater impact on global challenges” together with the SWG ARCH and is preparing a policy brief on “Agricultural research and ICT” together with the ERA-NET ICT-AGRI, both to be included in the end report. The member states have furthermore gained valuable insights in the process of EIP implementation through the presentations and discussions in the workshops and are reflecting further how to connect rural development groups into a broader AKIS system beyond the rural development framework. During the SWG AKIS mandates ideas have been emerging on how to better support and monitor the AKIS at national and regional level in the EU.

## ***Proposal of activities for the SCAR AKIS4***

Although many topics and issues have been addressed in the first three AKIS mandates, the groups' dynamics, newly emerging topics and the further development of the EIP and a European AKIS structure advocate for a continuation of the SWG AKIS under a fourth mandate.. In this context 6 specific activities are proposed for SCAR AKIS4

- 1. Improve the integrated approach within the European AKIS and the Implementation of the EIP.** Emphasize on the connections/links between H2020 projects and OGs (and among H2020 project - especially Thematic Networks - and among OGs) and the regional and national dimension. Incentivize implementation of the interactive innovation model of the EIP AGRI through other funding mechanisms and programs at national and regional level.

A. Complementarity and synergies among funds (H2020-EAFRD-EFRD-ESF-Education). Identify good examples with experiences in the MS and Regions as well as bottlenecks and barriers. Develop pathways to improve the governance and its communication/Implementation. Small study and a few experts. (With DG REGIO & DG R&I).

Deliverable: Best practices /policy recommendation for a synergistic approach of the EU and national funds within the EU AKIS.

B. Thematic interconnection and collection of expertise of interactive innovation projects at different levels

Deliverable: Inventory and communication about similar processes and groups (themes, approaches) at national and regional level.

C. AKIS supporting Infrastructures (Synergies between research infrastructure and facilities). Explore possible infrastructures and bottom-up initiatives which improve knowledge exchange between innovation projects within the food/non-food supply chain and linking to practice. Search for connections and interlinkages beyond borders.

Deliverable: Policy recommendation for a more efficient use of infrastructures (including ERDF and other opportunities) in the Agri-food/bioeconomy sectors including ICT and Open Data Bases Infrs.

D. Further development of the EIP approach through mechanisms to collect practice needs, broaden communication of relevant info towards practitioners, design of peer review, stimulating interaction with EUFRAS, civil society and stakeholder engagement, etc.

Deliverable: Communication on EIP (education/training content) to be communicated through the EIP-AGRI Service Point.

2. **Learning and feedback from interactive projects approaches (multi-actors projects, thematic networks, operational groups).** Analysis and potential further development of the projects scheme/paradigms. Based on the previous experiences (arisen through the first H2020 projects) and AKIS group discussions, greater synergies and complementarities with other funds should be foreseen for boosting interactive approach and its potential evolution (rewarding mechanisms).

Deliverable: Insights for potential developments of these projects approaches (should be finalized before mid- 2017). Seek for interactions with the H2020 mid-term evaluation.

3. **Better address the knowledge flows along the whole production/value/supply chain** in the AKIS for the future. Better address the vertical and horizontal relations through e.g. the application of the concept of Net Chain Analysis (Agrifood sector - Small chains – Food City - Urban farming policies). In cooperation with the “Food Systems” SWG.

Deliverable: Reflection on more “integrated” approach along the value chain.

4. **Cross- fertilization with other EIPs and sectors:** identification and evaluation of experiences from other EIPs (Water, Raw materials, Bio-Economies, ICT, Health, Aeronautics ....) and other sectors not related for boosting and improving the AKIS.

Deliverable: Improved methodology (tools) fostering and boosting the Innovation processes.

5. Analyzing **the perspective of AKIS in Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture across developing countries.** Based on the interactive innovation approach, explore (successful) experiences from other countries that could be scaled up and investigate how to influence the research agendas. Small study and expertise needed, jointly with SCAR SWG ARCH and GFRAS.

Deliverable: mobilize the SCAR CSA to produce a paper on Multi-actor approach and dynamics in developing countries. Develop the interactive innovation model in this context through (pilot) activities and explore synergies with e.g. PRIMA, ARIM-NET II and H2020 - SFS-42-2016 Topic.

6. **Monitoring interactive innovation policies and benchmarking for sustainability:** relevant input is expected in the coming period from MS EIP implementation and monitoring processes, from the **OECD country reports**, from the EIP evaluation study, from the FG benchmarking and from big data initiatives. This material can be collected and structured in a small study. On the basis of this, the SWG AKIS can analyze and discuss trends and evaluation systems and Try to formulate indicators for interactive innovation in collaboration with OECD.

Deliverable: policy recommendations to monitoring innovation processes and instruments.