



# INDUCTION PACK

A READER-FRIENDLY GUIDE FOR  
SCAR WORKING GROUP MEMBERS



Funded by  
the European Union

# Disclaimer

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## About RefreSCAR

RefreSCAR is a Horizon Europe funded Coordination and Support Action providing targeted support to the Working Groups (WGs) of the Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR). The WGs are the backbone of SCAR. They provide strategic policy advice, highlight priority research and innovation (R&I) topics and develop strategic R&I agendas across themes relating to agriculture, fisheries, food systems, forestry and the wider bioeconomy. RefreSCAR aims to strengthen the strategic functioning and capacities of SCAR WGs in order to facilitate the improved coordination of national and European R&I programmes. The project runs from September 2023 to August 2027 and brings together a consortium of 18 organisations from 14 European countries.

Dear colleague,

First of all, a warm welcome to this induction into the world of SCAR!

This Induction Pack is a guide for new entrants to SCAR groups, as members of one of the various Strategic Working Groups (SWGs), Collaborative Working Groups (CWGs) or Task Forces (TFs) established under the SCAR umbrella. This guide may also be useful for existing SCAR Working Group members who are eager to learn more about SCAR, the European Commission and the research/policy landscape in Europe.

As there are already clear sources of information on SCAR, this guide will introduce you to these resources (e.g. the SCAR website) and frame them in the wider context.

This Induction Pack will be published on the SCAR website and will be used as a main reference for a series of annual webinars that will be held under RefreSCAR. These webinars are dedicated to the new SCAR group members from the countries selected every year for the SCAR-Engage programme, but open also to other interested new SCAR groups members. The webinars will offer the possibility to listen to experienced SCAR members and to engage in dialogues with them about aims, history, structure, potentials and practicalities of the SCAR world.

Before starting the journey, it is worth underlying that SCAR WGs are dynamic and their mandates and membership may change over time. The information provided here reflects the state of the art when the document was issued. However, linking to the [SCAR website](#) grants access to updated information.

Happy reading!

The RefreSCAR Team



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# GLOSSARY AND ACRONYMS

<b>AC</b>	Associated Country to Horizon Europe
<b>AE</b>	Agroecology
<b>AHW</b>	Animal Health and Welfare
<b>AR</b>	Agricultural Research
<b>ARD</b>	Agricultural Research for Development
<b>BSW</b>	Bioeconomy Strategic Working Group
<b>CSA</b>	Coordination and Support Action
<b>CWG</b>	Collaborative Working Group
<b>DG AGRI</b>	Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development
<b>DG RTD</b>	Directorate-General for Research and Innovation
<b>EC</b>	European Commission
<b>ERA</b>	European Research Area
<b>ERA-NET</b>	European Research Area Network
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>F2F</b>	Farm to Fork
<b>FS</b>	Food System
<b>IP</b>	Induction Pack
<b>MS</b>	Member State
<b>RDI</b>	Research, Development and Innovation
<b>R&amp;I</b>	Research & Innovation
<b>SAP</b>	Sustainable Animal Production
<b>SCAR</b>	Standing Committee on Agricultural Research
<b>SWG</b>	Strategic Working Group
<b>TF</b>	Task Force
<b>WG</b>	Working Group



# 01

## INTRODUCING THE SCAR

**SCAR**  
Standing Committee  
on Agricultural Research



## What is the SCAR ?

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The Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR) is a comitology body of the European Commission (EC) originally established in the 1970s.

Comitology refers to a set of procedures, including meetings of representative committees, that give European Union (EU) countries a say in the implementation of EU law.

SCAR's remit lies in the area of agriculture, fisheries, food, forestry and the wider bioeconomy, with a focus on research and innovation. Its goal is to contribute to creating an integrated European Research Area (ERA) by (i) increasing connections between research & innovation (R&I), (ii) removing barriers to innovation, and (iii) stimulating co-creation between public-public & public-private sectors, towards delivering innovation & tackling challenges.

## A bit of history

# 01. Introducing the SCAR

The SCAR was established half a century ago, in 1974, through a Regulation of the Council of the European Communities (Regulation (EEC) No 1728/74 of the Council of 27 June 1974), with the aim of coordinating agricultural research among Member States (MSs). The Committee was tasked with helping and advising the EC in carrying out the tasks devolved upon it in this field, including reporting on the national organisation of agricultural research, advancements in agricultural research, measures adopted under the Regulation, and “a forward study of developments which would be desirable in agricultural research in the Member States and in the coordination of that research at Community level, with reference to the aims of the common agricultural policy”.

In 2005, the Council gave SCAR a renewed mandate to play a major role in the coordination of agricultural research efforts in Europe. The “new” SCAR included a wider and more up-to-date definition of the term ‘agricultural research’, looking beyond the narrow confines of research relating to production and embracing the so-called ‘fork-to-farm’ concept<sup>(1)</sup>. The need for research for sustainable agriculture was emphasised, including non-food uses, biodiversity, forestry and rural development within the concept of a European Knowledge-Based Bioeconomy. Collaborative Working Groups (CWGs) were established and the first of these met in September 2005. The SCAR Secretariat also moved from the EC’s Directorate-General (DG) for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI) to the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD).

A further revision took place in 2012 to widen the scope of SCAR (without a Council decision). Thus, SCAR’s mandate was extended to also include coordination in forestry, fishery and in the wider bioeconomy field, as it stands today<sup>(2)</sup>. In other words, in the new mandate, agricultural R&I remains at the core of SCAR’s business, but under the broader bioeconomy umbrella.

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<sup>(1)</sup> COM(2008)862 final: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52008DC0862&qid=1706718439634>

<sup>(2)</sup> SCAR (2015): Reflection paper on the role of the Standing Committee on Agricultural research.



Figure 1 shows some key milestones in the history of the SCAR, from its establishment in 1974 to the present (and future) time.

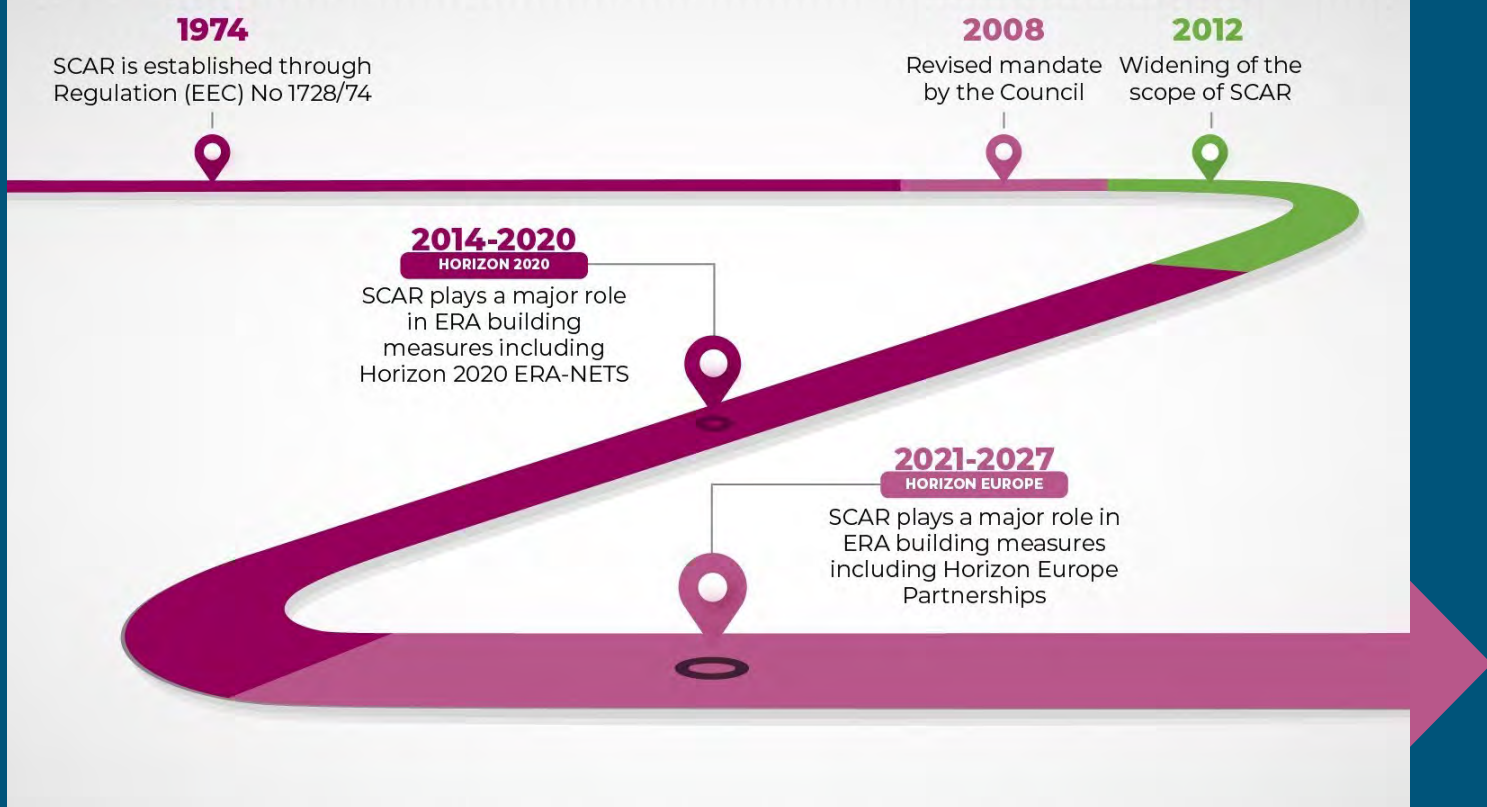


Figure 1: Key milestones of SCAR development over time  
(Adapted from an image by pikisuperstar on Freepik)

## Mission of SCAR

The [SCAR leaflet](#) and the [SCAR PPT](#), both downloadable from the SCAR website, are important sources for a clear and reader-friendly summary of the main aspects of the SCAR. These documents highlight the following four missions, or aims, of SCAR:

- **SCAR advises** the EC, EU MS and Associated Countries (AC) on R&I priorities to address Europe's challenges in agriculture, fisheries, food systems, forestry, and the wider bioeconomy.
- **SCAR co-creates** impactful R&I strategies, working closely with the EC.
- **SCAR inspires R&I** through foresight studies and by providing recommendations.
- **SCAR strengthens** the European Research Area. It is a key platform for co-creating Horizon Europe Partnerships: ambitious instruments that align EU and national R&I agendas to achieve actionable results in key Green Deal priority areas.

# The four main activities

These main SCAR aims are summarised in the main activities, or tasks, you see in *Figure 2*, with the three tasks below which all contribute to the overarching task of the Committee: delivering valuable strategic policy advice.

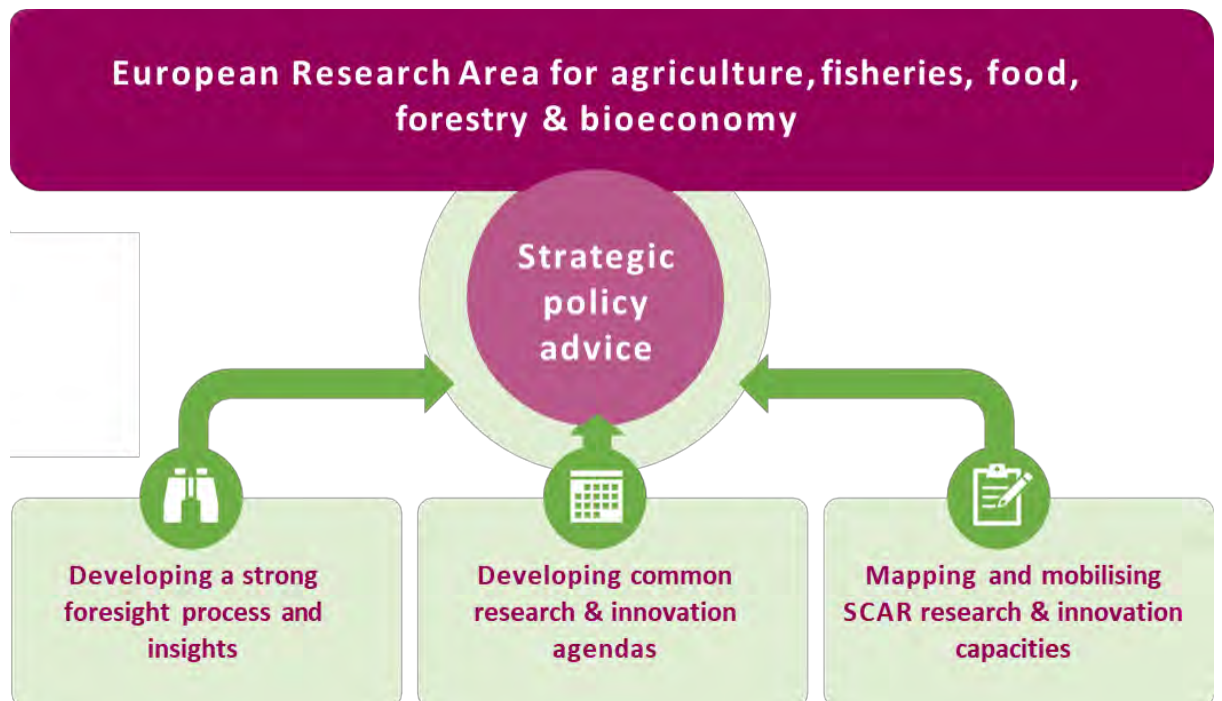
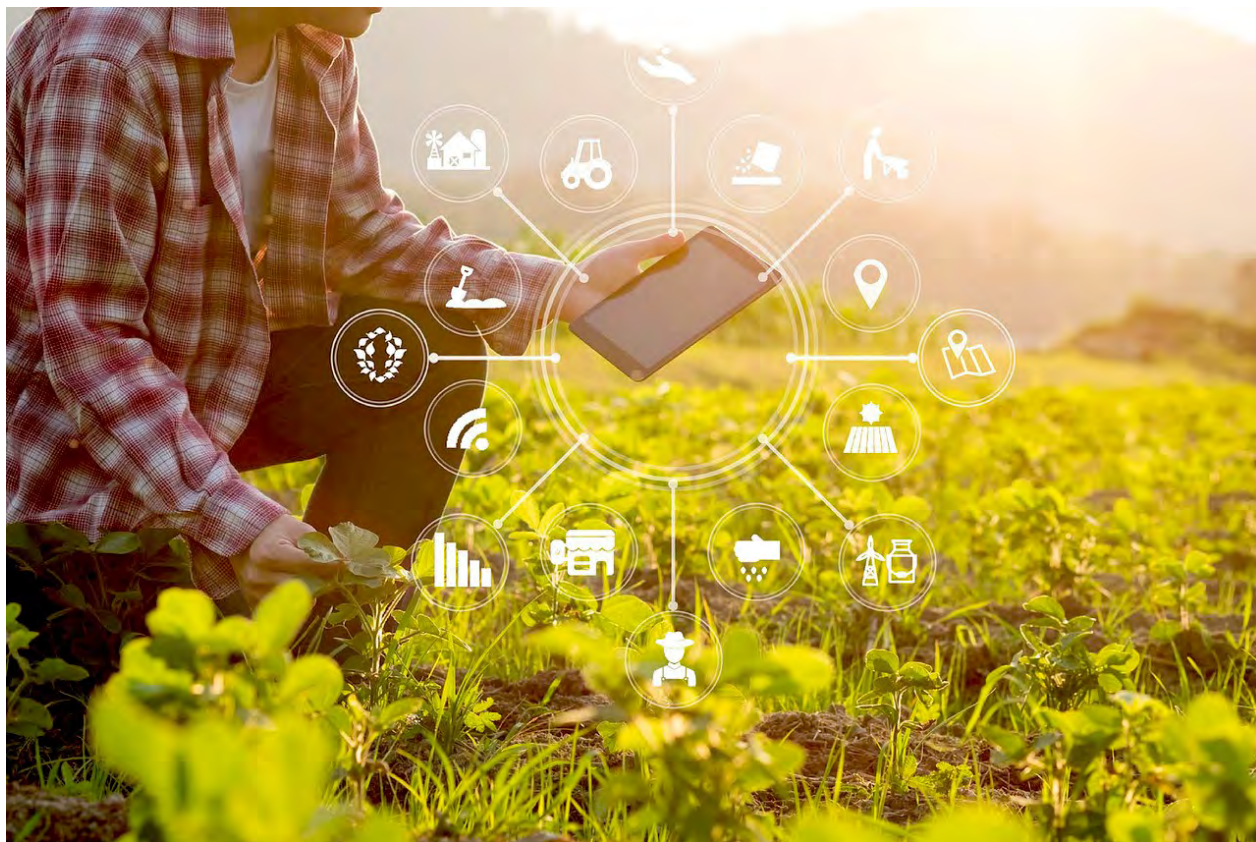


Figure 2: Main SCAR tasks represented by the three pillars (SCAR website)



## “ Participating countries

More than **35 countries** in total are represented at the SCAR. They are EU MS (represented by delegates of ministries, mainly ministries of agriculture, and by organisations such as research councils, research institutes and universities), with Candidate and Associated Countries (AC) as observers.

Figure 3 show a map of all the countries represented in the SCAR (last updated March 2022).



Figure 3: SCAR participating countries (SCAR website)

# Organisation and functioning

## 01. Introducing the SCAR

The structure of SCAR is visible in *Figure 4*. The Plenary, SCAR's governing body, is supported by the Steering Group and by the Secretariat, which is held by DG RTD and supported by DG AGRI, who chairs the Plenary meetings supported by the SCAR delegate from the country which is temporarily in charge of the rotating presidency of the Council of the EU.

The various groups active under the SCAR umbrella are gathered according to their type. There are Strategic Working Groups (SWGs), Collaborative Working Groups (CWGs), any Ad-Hoc Working Groups or Task Forces (TFs) and the SCAR Foresight Group – from now onwards (when referenced in general) referred to as '**SCAR Groups**'.

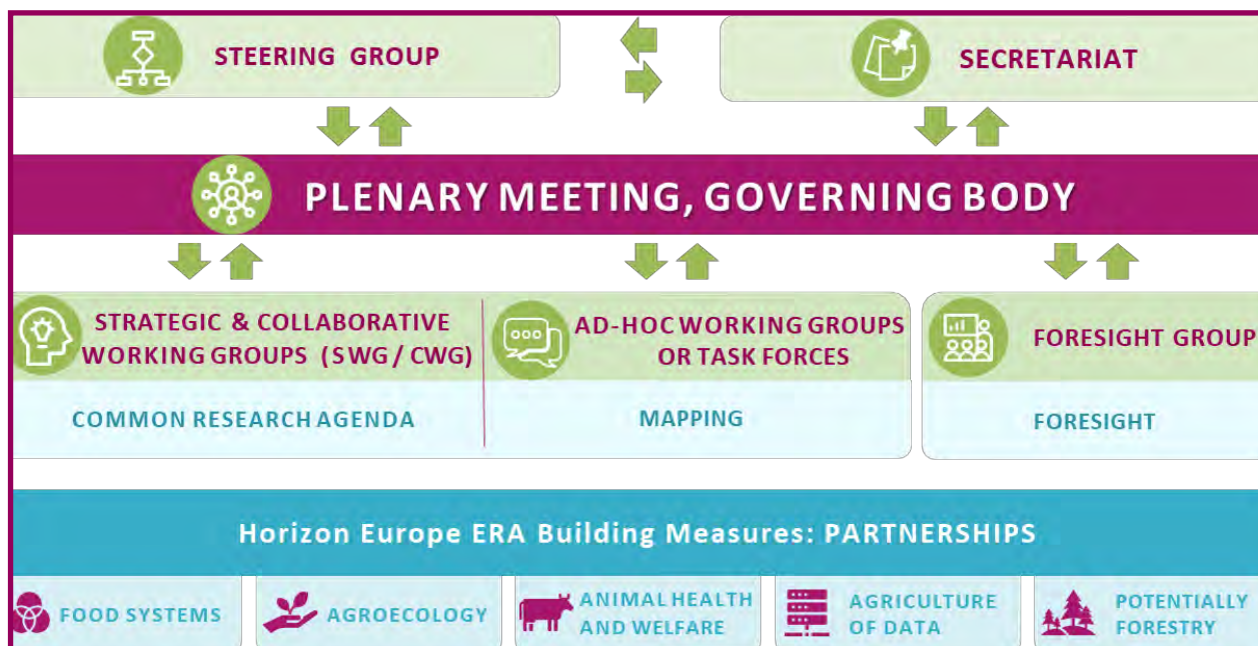


Figure 4: SCAR organisation and structure



### PLENARY MEETING, GOVERNING BODY

The Plenary Meeting acts as the SCAR's governing body. It brings together delegates representing more than 35 countries. The Plenary Meeting decides on the actions that should be taken to achieve its goals, including the creation of new SCAR Groups and the approval of SCAR Group mandates. It also discusses and advises on proposals made by SCAR Groups, and it reports to the EC and European Parliament regarding the decisions made. The Plenary Meeting is organised twice per year, the first one in late spring/early summer, and the second one is usually in December.



## STEERING GROUP

The Steering Group can be seen as the main engine of the SCAR (together with the individual Groups, in their respective remits). The Steering Group and the SCAR Secretariat prepare the Plenary meetings and align the agenda with the current EU Presidency priorities. In doing so, they ensure alignment with the Horizon programmes. The Steering Group meets, usually in online form, twice per year. Issues of concern are discussed also, as are new documents to be adopted by the SCAR Plenary (for example, the mandate for a new Group or a new mandate for an existing Group).



## SECRETARIAT

The SCAR Secretariat is hosted by DG RTD, which co-decides together with DG AGRI. The involvement of other Commission services (DGs) is also possible if needed. The SCAR Secretariat works with the SCAR Steering Group on the preparation of agenda items for the meetings of the SCAR Steering Group and the SCAR Plenary and aligns the agenda with the current EU Presidency priorities, ensuring alignment with Horizon Europe<sup>(3)</sup>, the EC's Framework Programme for R&I.

<sup>(3)</sup> Information on Horizon Europe can be found here [https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe\\_en](https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en). See also the link provided in Annex II.

## “ MANDATE

This is a document in which SCAR Groups indicate their main objectives and how they plan to achieve them, alongside an indication of the SCAR Group's planned future activities. This mandate is then presented at the SCAR Plenary for approval. The mandate is valid for a specific working period (often ~3 years).

At the end of the indicated period, the group is required to develop a new mandate for approval by the SCAR Plenary, for the continuation of its existence.



## WORKING GROUPS

The SCAR Groups (i.e. Strategic and Collaborative Working Groups and Task Forces) are the backbone of the SCAR. They are established upon a mandate endorsed by the SCAR Plenary. Focusing on specific priority areas, they provide policy advice, highlight priority R&I topics based on needs and gaps, and develop strategic R&I agendas.

The difference between a “Strategic” (SWG) and a “Collaborative” WG (CWG) is that SWGs mainly focus on strategic policy advice, whereas CWGs have a focus on thematic coordination. Some ERA-NETs (see in the next box what they are) have emerged directly from the work of CWGs in the past. Joint activities (e.g. workshops) and collaboration between SCAR Groups often occurs (e.g. collaborative workshops among two or more SCAR Groups).

All SCAR Groups are led by one or more Chairs and/or Co-Chairs, who are nominated by the SCAR Group members for a fixed period. Like the other SCAR Group members, Chairs and Co-Chairs work without remuneration on a voluntary basis. Their main task is to organise the work of their SCAR Group and to chair the group meetings.

# 01. Introducing the SCAR



## AD-HOC GROUPS OR TASK FORCES

If necessary, ad-hoc WGs or TFs can be created to tackle specific challenges. In particular, the SCAR Foresight Group oversees the foresight process, one of the three tasks of the SCAR as indicated in *Figure 4*.

SCAR TFs are another form of organisation that can be activated when deemed useful for specific activities and purposes.



## FORESIGHT GROUP

The SCAR Foresight Group is responsible for the Foresight exercises. As one of the tasks of the SCAR, this activity deserves some more words.

The SCAR Foresight Group proposes the foresight activities to the Plenary and, after approval, supports and steers the process, from the identification of the themes to be explored and of the group of experts that will carry out the exercise, to the steering of the whole process, including publication, dissemination, and valorisation of the results, in coordination with the EC and with the experts.

SCAR has issued five foresights since 2007, covering subjects including prospects for agriculture on a 20-year perspective, a better balance between economic thinking, ecological resilience and social issues, the challenge of resource scarcity, the challenge for the primary sector in the bioeconomy perspective, and the identification of key transition pathways towards a “safe and just” operating space for humanity.

The Foresight exercises, carried out by selected multidisciplinary groups of experts with the support of the SCAR Foresight Group, are among the most relevant SCAR outputs, as witnessed by the presence of the Foresight among the three main SCAR tasks. They are an important source of information and advice, and a tool to encourage research policy coordination towards relevant objectives for the future of agriculture and the wider bioeconomy. Sometimes the final Foresight Reports (*Figure 5*) lead to follow-on scientific publications and declarations, as was the case with the “Berlin Declaration” following the 5<sup>th</sup> SCAR Foresight.

It is important to underline that each SCAR Group has the possibility, and is strongly encouraged, to contribute to the Foresight process, from the scoping phase to the utilisation of the final report. This engagement takes place in various forms, for example through dedicated workshops, requests for written contributions, surveys etc.



Figure 5: SCAR Foresight reports (SCAR website)

# “ European Public-Public Partnerships

## ERA-NETs

ERA-NET stands for European Research Area Network. Under Horizon 2020, ERA-NET Cofunds were a funding instrument designed to support public-public partnerships in their preparation, establishment of networking structures, design and implementation, and coordination of joint activities. They gathered together various research funding entities that engaged in joint calls and other additional and complementary activities. The instrument provided 'top-up' funding for single joint calls and transnational actions. Other types of networks for joint research funding established under Horizon 2020 are the JPIs (Joint Programming Initiatives) and the EJPs (European Joint Programmes).

## PARTNERSHIPS

Under Horizon Europe, the variety of joint research initiatives was simplified with the creation of a new instrument called European Partnerships, covering a broad remit and with a long-term perspective. The Partnership are meant to take the role that, with different ambitions and scope, was played by the complex landscape of previous and existing ERA-NETs, JPIs and EJPs. European Partnerships bring the EC and private and/or public partners together to address some of Europe's most pressing challenges through concerted research and innovation initiatives. Several SCAR Groups have contributed to the creation of Partnerships pertinent to their remit.





# 02

## THE SCAR GROUPS ONE BY ONE

There are currently eleven groups working under SCAR umbrella, in their different structures and mandates. There are six SWGs, two CWGs, ARCH (a former SWG which has recently being restructured as an international facility group), one TF and the Foresight Group. As previously mentioned, the SCAR Groups can change over time depending on discussions within SCAR and as recommended by the SCAR Plenary.

## SWG AGROECOLOGY (AE)



The SCAR-AE, one of the most recently established SCAR Groups, was set up in the beginning of 2021 with the perspective of paving the way for the Candidate European Partnership on Agroecology, “Accelerating farming systems transition: agroecology living labs and research infrastructures”. Three

years later, the mandate was fulfilled, and the Partnership AGROECOLOGY was officially launched in February 2024. The mandate of the Group ended at the end of 2023, and now the process is ongoing for a new mandate by the SCAR and for new chairs, as a Group focusing on the key issues of a sustainable transition towards agroecology, also accompanying the Agroecology Partnership development, is still strongly needed.

## SWG AKIS



AKIS is the acronym for the **Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System**. It concerns the cooperation between different actors working on knowledge transfer and innovation. The mission of the SWG AKIS, established in 2010, is to build an EU-wide knowledge and innovation

network focusing specifically on working with and for farmers. The main objectives are: i) improving the functioning of knowledge and innovation systems in the bioeconomy, ii) pursuing the outcomes of all foresight studies to stimulate appropriate research and innovation activities, knowledge generation and knowledge exchange, iii) covering all agri-food and biomass chains, from producer to consumer, in a systemic approach. The Group’s current planned activities (mandate 2023-2024) are to:

- focus on improving the functioning of knowledge and innovation systems in the bioeconomy,
- achieve greater impact of the Multi-Actor Approach (MAA) implementation in EU AKIS,
- define the role of education in EU AKIS,
- define the role of digitisation and E-infrastructures in knowledge exchange,
- define the role of social innovation and inclusiveness in the EU AKIS.

## SWG ARCH



The SCAR ARCH was established as a SWG in 2013. When the mandate as a SWG concluded in 2019, new modalities for continuing its tasks as an “international facility group” were endorsed by SCAR. ARCH aims at improving linkages between agricultural research and agricultural research for development with attention to

collaboration with and in developing countries. Crosscutting global issues, such as climate change, food and nutrition security, sustainable and resilient food systems need to be tackled not only from a European, but also from an international perspective. Besides, the EU, as one of the biggest production and consumption area in the world, it is expected to undertake a leading role in addressing these challenges. In turn, mechanisms and processes are needed to facilitate this integration and up-take by SCAR and its thematic working groups. SCAR ARCH aims at improving linkages between European and International Agricultural Research as a contribution to SCAR reaching its objectives.

## SWG BIOECONOMY (BSW)



The SCAR SWG Bioeconomy, often referred to as “BSW”, started working in 2017. Its aims are to increase the added value for and of the bioeconomy by promoting knowledge creation and sharing, translation of science into policy, strengthening networking and collaboration integrating different scientific, technological and policy areas related to the bioeconomy sector. In this view, and within its current mandate (2023-2024), the BSW focuses on the following areas: (i) Circular and bio-based value chains; (ii) Ecosystem boundaries, security of supply and competing biomass uses; (iii) Unveiling the demand side. The SCAR BSW applies a systemic approach and cross-cutting themes to address the RDI challenges ahead.

## SWG FISH

**SCAR**  
Standing Committee  
on Agricultural Research

**FISH**  Fisheries and  
Aquaculture Research

The Strategic Working Group on Fisheries and Aquaculture Research, established in 2012, deals with all issues related to fisheries, including fresh water and aquaculture, identifying research issues, collating existing information in the areas of foresight, common research agendas and mapping EU capacities, and supporting the strengthening of a common European Research Area for fisheries and aquaculture. In doing so, it plays an important role in keeping these issues in contact with the other SCAR remits, connecting the “blue” and the “green” dimension of SCAR.

## SWG FOOD SYSTEMS (FS)



SCAR Food Systems

The SCAR FS SWG was established in 2016 with the aim of providing strategic advice to the EU R&I policy framework including Food2030 from a food and nutrition security perspective. The FS SWG takes a systems approach including

value chains in their widest form and the interactions between primary production, processing, logistics, retail, and consumers as well as ecosystem services, climate and citizens' diets and nutrition. The focus is to broaden the understanding of a FS approach to R&I to find the necessary leverage points and to future proof FS in light of the green transition of food and agriculture, while acknowledging the important interdependencies between consumer diets and Europe's land use and food production including its externalities. The FS SWG typically meets physically three times a year and is now entering its third mandate period.

## SWG FOREST



Strategic Working Group on Forests and Forestry Research and Innovation

The SCAR SWG on Forest and Forestry Research and Innovation – SCAR FOREST – was established in October 2013 to identify common needs for R&I suitable for transnational cooperation, and to address the diversity of management options depending on ownership as well as on environmental, social, and economic

conditions. Under the current 4<sup>th</sup> mandate (2023-2026), the main objective is to promote and strengthen transnational research and cooperation to meet the challenges of adaptation to and mitigation of climate changes and other disturbances, to enhance biodiversity and related ecosystem services, to develop circular bioeconomy and increase sustainability and competitiveness of the EU's forest-based sector. An important element of the SWG's work is the preparation for the future European Partnership on Forests and Forestry for a Sustainable Future.

## CWG ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE (AHW)



**European Animal Health  
& Welfare Research**  
COLLABORATIVE WORKING GROUP

The CWG AHW, is one of the two CWGs currently under the SCAR. Established in 2005, it aims to provide a forum for improved collaboration on research prioritisation and procurement, creating the necessary critical mass and focus to deliver the animal health and welfare research needs of policy makers and the European livestock industry. It is concerned with R&I relating to the health, wellbeing and welfare of farmed production animals including fish and bees. Specifically, it includes welfare, infectious and non-infectious diseases including those conditions which pose a threat to human health, food safety issues relating to livestock products, and diseases of wildlife where they act as reservoirs of infection for humans or production animals.

## CWG SUSTAINABLE ANIMAL PRODUCTION (SAP)



The SCAR CWG SAP, which firstly met on January 2014, is the second Collaborative Working Group currently within SCAR. SCAR SAP provides advice on the coordination of R&I for the development of more sustainable animal production

systems in Europe to MS, AC and to the EC. Its main objectives are:

- (i) to facilitate and stimulate collaboration and networking;
- (ii) to build an evidence-based shared perspective and common vision for the development of a more sustainable animal production in Europe;
- (iii) to support investment in R&I by translating challenges into operational instruments while avoiding overlaps with other national and international initiatives, thus optimising resource investment.

## PROTEIN Task Force

The Protein Task Force was recently established (in 2022) and focusses on R&I for alternative protein sources with aim of developing sustainable agricultural and food systems in European Countries. The Task Force aims to identify the major obstacles and opportunities for the protein transition in Europe from the R&I perspective as well as from an integrated and systemic approach. The group brings together 30 members from 11 countries. It prioritizes plant-based proteins, their value chains, and their diversification potential, but without forgetting the need for a holistic scope and extendibility to other protein sources.

## SCAR FORESIGHT Group

As mentioned, the SCAR Foresight Group is responsible for the SCAR Foresight exercises, promoting and steering the whole process, in the aim to regularly assess the future opportunities and challenges to developing an integrated R&I agenda in Europe. Its duties and activities are described in section I. The Foresight Reports, released every few years, focus on specific challenges within the bioeconomy and offer valuable insights for policymaking. The process has successfully facilitated collaboration among MS to proactively address upcoming challenges and will continue to do so in the future.



# 03

## NAVIGATING THE SCAR WEBSITE

### SCAR WEBSITE...

The best way to enter the SCAR world is to visit the website, which has been restructured a few years ago, and is now regularly updated with news, documents, and links. As mentioned, some of the materials present on the website are extensively quoted in other sections of this document, but looking for them directly is a way to get used to the SCAR website, where more detailed and more comprehensive information can be retrieved.

# 03. Navigating the SCAR website



Figure 6: SCAR website homepage

**SCAR**  
Standing Committee on Agricultural Research

Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR)  
From a joint European vision to joint action

**VISION OF THE SCAR**

The Green Deal has put Europe in a favourable position to be a ground breaker in the transition to sustainable agriculture, forestry, and food systems. European research and innovation (RI&I) in these areas play a key role in accelerating the European Green Deal agenda.

- **SCAR advises** the European Commission (EC), EU Member States and Associated Countries on R&I priorities to address Europe's challenges in agriculture, fisheries, food systems, forestry, and the wider bioeconomy.
- **SCAR co-creates** impactful R&I strategies, working closely with the European Commission.
- **SCAR inspires** R&I through foresight studies and by providing recommendations.
- **SCAR strengthens** the European Research Area. It is a key platform for co-creating five Horizon Europe Partnerships: ambitious instruments that align EU and national R&I agendas to achieve actionable results in key Green Deal priority areas.

The SCAR Working Groups form an inspiring network of motivated peers. They offer unique platforms to develop R&I agendas, co-construct European R&I partnerships, and exchange experiences and best practices. Moreover, being a member of the SCAR helps delegates and scientists implement national research priorities at the European level, and helps align national and European R&I agendas.

**ARE YOU...**

- ...already a member of the SCAR community, and interested in helping it grow? Take up an active role in the Working Groups or Plenary Meeting, motivate your research community to join the SCAR Working Groups, and disseminate the results in your country to increase the SCAR's impact.
- ...a scientist, eager to meet peers to exchange knowledge and learn from them? Contact your country's SCAR delegate and request to join one of the Working Groups.

**BECOME (MORE) ACTIVE IN THE SCAR COMMUNITY!**

**BUILD THE FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA**

The SCAR Working Groups form an inspiring network of motivated peers. They offer unique platforms to develop R&I agendas, co-construct European R&I partnerships, and exchange experiences and best practices. Moreover, being a member of the SCAR helps delegates and scientists implement national research priorities at the European level, and helps align national and European R&I agendas.

Find out more through:  
RTD-SCAR@ec.europa.eu

**NEWS**

**FUTUREFOODS EU PARTNERSHIP KICKS OFF!**  
Partnership for Sustainable Food Systems  
On June 19 2024, more than 100 research and innovation experts convened in Digne to help support the transition to sustainable food systems by sharing insights, initiatives and joining forces within the EU-co-funded FutureFood's partnership, involving 87 partners from 29 countries with the aim of accelerating the development of sustainable food systems.

**SCAR-ENGAGE PROGRAMME - FIRST CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**  
Are you a member of a national delegation to SCAR? Would you like to increase your country's representation in SCAR Groups and accelerate your country's research and innovation (RI&I) agenda in alignment with European priorities?  
If your answer is yes, the RefreSCAR SCAR-Engage Programme will be of interest to you!

**AGENDA**

**FEATURED**  
You can watch the **WEBINAR** here:  
<https://www.youtube.com/@RefreSCAR>

**EVENTS CALENDAR**  
June 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

**NEXT EVENTS**

- 11 Sep 2024  
SCAR-Engage Programme Launch Meeting
- 24 Sep 2024  
SCAR Forest SWG Meeting
- 26 Sep 2024  
RefreSCAR Governing Board Meeting
- 04 Dec 2024  
SCAR Plenary

SCAR NEWSLETTER

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<https://scar-europe.org>





The homepage presents a horizontal bar on the top (see *Figure 7*) that displays the main “SCAR” menu on the left, and then the list of SWGs and CWGs. On the extreme right, a similar shorter submenu is dedicated to the SCAR Foresight Group.

The windows opened for each of the Groups are organised with specific submenus, similar but not identical to each other, with key information and updates on their vision, activities, outcomes (e.g. reports on meetings), chairs and teams, contacts, and various other news.

Scrolling down, the homepage continues with the “vision” of the SCAR, organised in bullets and with a link to the email of the SCAR Secretariat, for contacts. A section with latest News and Agendas and, on the bottom of the page, a link to a section dedicated to the SCAR newsletters. This section can be useful to have a quick view on the activities of and around the SCAR in the last years, which give an idea on the type of activities still ongoing.

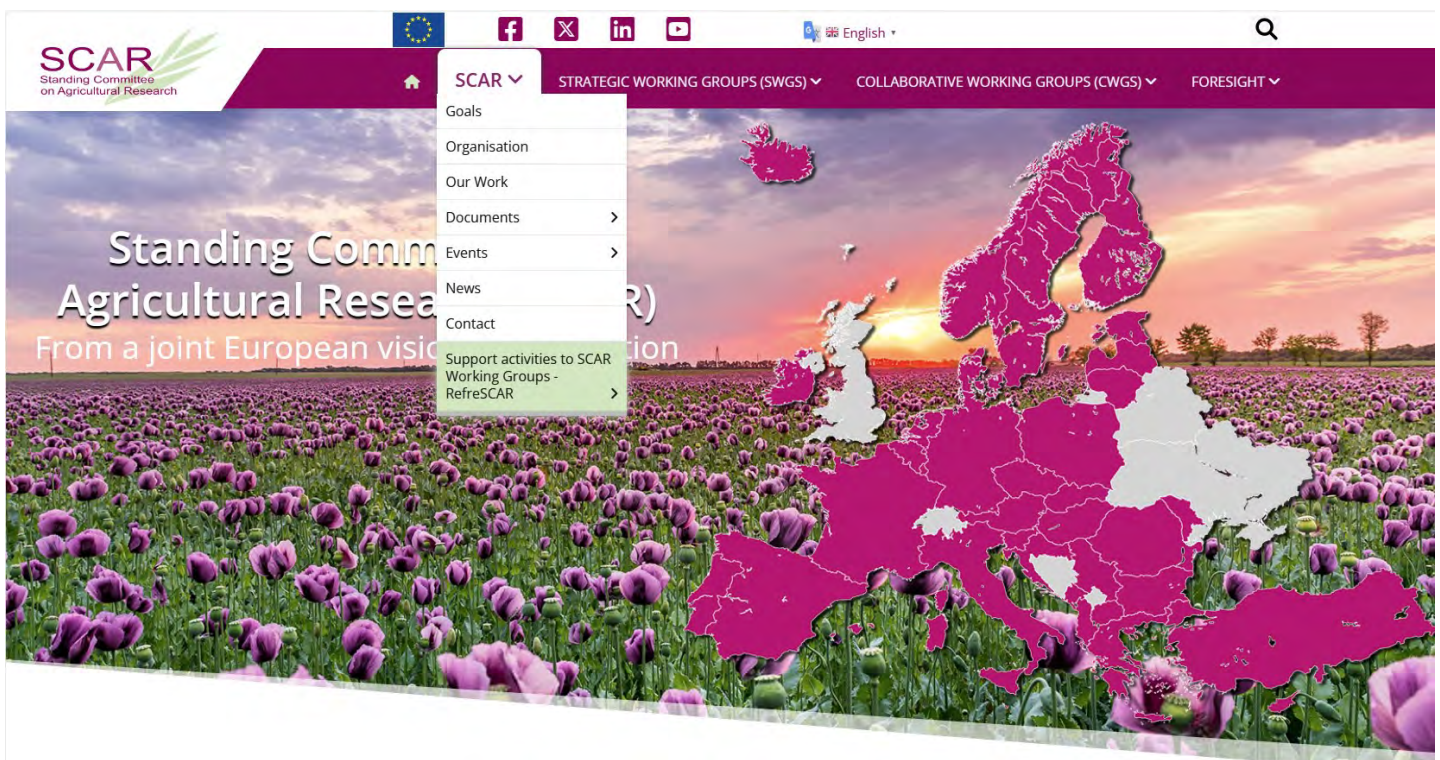


Figure 7: SCAR webpage menu (SCAR website)

Clicking on the main “SCAR” menu on the left a list of items appears as shown in *Figure 7*, which refers to how the menu appears in February 2024.

After the section where the “Goals” are listed, the “Organisation page” leads to the description of the SCAR structure (as described above), with links to the pages dedicated to each SCAR Group.

Under “Our work”, an interesting and quite detailed description of the main activities of the SCAR is presented, framed through the four main tasks of SCAR action as shown in *Figure 1*.

This description is useful to have a good overview on the SCAR functioning, without entering onto the details of each Group.

The following section “Documents” lists some key European strategic documents (different from the EC COMs listed in section 5 of this document, although there may be some overlap), and the basic SCAR communication materials in Leaflet and in Slides format. As already mentioned, you can rely on them for a quick overview on the main SCAR features and for further external communication and dissemination. Under “Archived content” there is also a link to reports and outputs generated by the action CASA. [CASA was a Coordination and Support Action \(CSA\)](#) aimed at giving support to the SCAR in the years from 2016 to 2019. You can find there many documents of interest, depending on your area of interest and on your role in the SCAR Groups.

## 03. Navigating the SCAR website

Under “Events”, alongside the calendar, two types of events are linked to (with agendas, participants, pictures) and deserve to be mentioned. The National SCAR Conferences were held during and with the support of the CSA CASA. They represented important opportunities to increase awareness and raise interest about the SCAR at national level, particularly in those countries where there was room for strengthening the engagement in the SCAR activities. The SCAR Conferences are events organised usually on annual basis, dedicated to specific items but that also provide an opportunity for strengthening the SCAR community and to collectively reflect on trends, challenges, activities. Last but not least, before “Contact”, the link to the “News” is of course important to be updated on forthcoming events that may be of direct interest for your Group, or anyway interesting for you to be aware of, from your personal and professional perspective.

### The SCAR Website is being updated!

Thanks to the support given by the CSA [RefreSCAR](#), the SCAR website is currently (summer 2024) being updated. The website description given in this IP will remain generally still valid, but some changes have been planned and will be implemented soon.

While the website structure will remain largely the same, the most important changes will be the following:

- the main menu will display the “SCAR” and “SCAR Working Groups” submenus;
- in the SCAR submenu, the item “History of SCAR” will be added to the current ones;
- in the “SCAR Working Groups” submenu, the groups under SCAR will be merged into one single submenu, without distinction between SWGs, CWGs, but adding two Task Forces - ‘Protein Task Force’ and ‘Foresight Task Force’;
- the 'Homepage' will also display a 'What is SCAR?' introduction, followed by a 'Vision';
- some of the texts in various pages will be updated.

The best way to follow these changes (and others... the SCAR website is a living object!) is to visit and make frequent use of the [SCAR website](#).

## “ THE REFRESCAR SECTION OF THE SCAR WEBSITE

An important section under the SCAR website is dedicated to [RefreSCAR](#), please access the link that will lead you to all relevant information about this important action in support of SCAR Groups and SCAR Groups Members.

The section offers basic information on the project, a description of its background and objectives, and the link to each of the Work Packages with the

related objectives. Below you see the news on activities and achievements of RefreSCAR, progressively updated, and (visited on July 2024) a space dedicated to the SCAR-Engage program.

At the bottom of this section, you can also find the contacts and the social networks accounts, and a form where you can subscribe for the Newsletter, to stay in touch with RefreSCAR developments.



Improved coordination of national and EUROPEAN BIOECONOMY RESEARCH and INNOVATION programmes in the European Research Area (ERA) through strengthened SCAR Working Groups

## PROJECT INFORMATION



Name: **RefreSCAR** - Improved coordination of national and European bioeconomy research and innovation programmes in the ERA through strengthened SCAR Working Groups

Grant agreement ID: 101060553  
 DOI: [10.3030/101060553](https://doi.org/10.3030/101060553)

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EU contribution: € 3 999 952,50

Coordinated by:  
 TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (Ireland)

[RefreSCAR Consortium](#)

## CONTEXT

The **European Research Area (ERA)** aims to build a common scientific and technological area for the EU. It supports the alignment of research policies and programmes across Europe, and facilitates cross-border cooperation, allowing countries to work more effectively together. **SCAR** has made a significant contribution to establishing an ERA built on cooperation, coordination and information exchange and has provided the foundational basis for many of the ERA-NETS, and more recently the Partnerships, in the area of **AGRICULTURE, FOOD, FISHERIES, FORESTRY** and the wider **BIOECONOMY**.

## VISION & OBJECTIVES

The vision of the RefreSCAR project is for a **strengthened SCAR within the ERA**. To support this vision, the project aims to facilitate improved coordination of national and European bioeconomy research programmes through strengthened SCAR Working Groups (WGs). Its strategic objectives are to:

- 1 Provide **scientific & administrative support** to the work of the SCAR WGs, enhancing their capacity to formulate research policy advice and collaborate on matters of common interest;
- 2 **Enhance inclusiveness** within SCAR WGs and support **active engagement** of members;
- 3 **Connect actors** across R&I, policy & practice with the aim of enabling SCAR to become a key bridging initiative across these domains;
- 4 Help SCAR WGs to reach a **broader audience of stakeholders** and **strengthen linkages** with key EU and international initiatives;
- 5 Support the development of a **strong SCAR Foresight** process, including the effective dissemination of its outcomes.



Figure 8: RefreSCAR webpage (SCAR website)



# 04

## BEING A SCAR GROUP MEMBER

### BECOME (MORE) ACTIVE IN THE SCAR COMMUNITY !...

This section outlines some additional aspects relevant to the role of an active SCAR Group member such as motivations, attitudes and approach. It also provides some suggestions on the ways in which SCAR members can engage within their SCAR Groups.

## Motivations for participation in SCAR Groups



Beyond formal mandates and tasks, there is often a level of motivation for member participation in a SCAR Group. Such motivations can be primarily personal (e.g. career, interests, values) and/or more related to the expectations of national delegations nominating SCAR WG members. During recent focus groups with SCAR Group members, carried out by RefreSCAR, some recurring themes on the motivations for members' engagement in SCAR WGs included:

- The benefits of international cooperation, particularly for smaller countries, and networking, strengthening capacities and facilitating knowledge exchange.
- Avoiding duplication of activities and creating synergies between topic areas within and outside of their institutions.
- Acquiring up-to-date information, including in relation to projects, the latest EU policies, and initiatives (e.g. European Partnerships) and science.
- Improving science-policy dialogue and enabling science to have impact at a larger scale.

## SCAR national delegates and SCAR groups' members

The SCAR Plenary brings together delegates representing the EU MS. Indeed, national delegates represent their country through the specific institution (quite often but now always, the ministries of agriculture in their various denominations) that is entitled to hold the national representation in the SCAR. Members of SCAR groups (SWGs, CWGs, Task Forces) are experts who contribute to the group activities with their personal background and competences but are nevertheless appointed by the national delegates and are expected to coordinate their action with them.

## Coordination at national level and “mirror groups”

If we look at the SCAR and at the SCAR Groups as fora for international discussion among countries and as tools for knowledge sharing and for policy suggestions, the role of SCAR delegates and SCAR group members can also be seen as a bridge between the national and the European/global level. Experts are expected to bring to SCAR groups not only their personal expertise, but also the perspective of their institutions and research communities. Exchanges between SCAR national delegates and Groups members are key in this view.

# “ National “mirror groups”

Some countries have also established national “mirror groups”, where issues of interest that are in SCAR agendas can be discussed and agreed upon before or after being addressed at SCAR group or at Plenary level. In the countries where such mirror groups are established, SCAR delegates, and Groups members can interact with each other and with other experts and stakeholders interested on the issues.

## TIPS FROM YOUR COLLEAGUES – what makes a “good” SCAR group member!

Focus Groups held by RefreSCAR in 2023 provided a forum for discussing with SCAR Group members what in their view makes a “good” SCAR member. Some key attributes identified for a ‘good’ SCAR member were:

- Experienced and competent in the WG topics,
- Self-motivated, confident, and able to push for change,
- Capable of a systemic view and open to multidisciplinary
- Capable of addressing the science-policy interface and to engage in dialogue at this interface,
- Capable of thinking at both national and EU level, open to seeing the same questions from different perspectives,
- Endowed with non-scientific skills like management, communication, negotiation and cooperation,
- A strategic thinker.

## VISION OF THE SCAR

### Become one of us...

Best of luck on your new journey with your SCAR Group!

We hope you found this induction pack useful. If you have any questions or require any further support from RefreSCAR, please feel free to reach out to your group's designated RefreSCAR contact.

# 04. Being a SCAR Group Member



*Figure 9: SCAR Conference 2017- Tallinn - ESTONIA*



*Figure 10: SCAR National Meeting 2018 - Bulgaria, Sofia*





*Figure 11: Baltic workshop on SCAR and Bioeconomy Strategies 2019 - Latvia, Riga*



*Figure 12: SCAR CONFERENCE 2022 - Paris, France*



*Figure 13: SCAR Plenary 2024 - Belgium, Brussels*



# 05

## ANNEXES



## I. List of RefreSCAR Contact Points for each SCAR Group

The table below provides the names of the RefreSCAR Contact points for each SCAR group. Details and emails are retrievable on the RefreSCAR page on the SCAR website.

	Lead	Back-Up
<b>ARCH</b>	Johannes Bender	José Matos
<b>Forest</b>	Saoirse Cummins	Marina Arnaut Stefanović
<b>Fish</b>	Hendrik De Ruyck	Olivera Stojilović Trivunić
<b>AKIS</b>	Órlaith NiChoncubhair	Anne Cobben
<b>Bioeconomy</b>	Anne Cobben	Johannes Bender
<b>Food Systems</b>	Marina Arnaut Stefanović	Carla Moita Brites
<b>Agroecology</b>	Nikki DeClercq	Órlaith NiChoncubhair
<b>Animal Health &amp;</b>	José Matos	Hendrik De Ruyck
<b>Sustainable Animal Production</b>	Olivera Stojilović Trivunić	Nikki DeClercq
<b>Protein</b>	Carla Moita Brites	Saoirse Cummins

## II. Selected links

The provided links showcase various EU initiatives, policies, and programs related to research, innovation, and agriculture.

They represent different aspects of the EU's comprehensive efforts to advance scientific knowledge, promote sustainable agriculture, and foster collaborative research and innovation across Europe. These initiatives align with the EU's overarching objectives of stimulating economic growth, addressing societal challenges, and building a competitive and sustainable knowledge-based economy.

Obviously, this list only displays some key websites, no list can be exhaustive given the variety of remits, actors, levels of initiatives, geographical areas.

1. [SCAR page on EC website](#) , which is different from the SCAR website
2. [JRC](#) The Joint Research Centre, the scientific and technical research centre of the EC
3. [CAP](#) The Common Agricultural Policy
4. [Horizon Europe with Partnerships and Mission](#), the EU's flagship research and innovation program for the period 2021-2027
5. [EC – DG RTD and DG AGRI](#), the two EC DG directly connected with SCAR's missions
6. [EU Mission Soil](#), the key mission for the SCAR remit
7. [ERA-LEARN](#), the platform that supports the implementation of the ERA
8. [EIP AGRI](#), the “European Innovation Partnerships for Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability”, whose network has recently become part of the EU CAP Network
9. [Horizon Europe - Widening participation and spreading excellence sub-programme](#) (building research and innovation capacity for countries lagging behind, in line with the policy objectives of the European Research Area), the specific sub-programme designed to address the disparities in research and innovation performance across Europe
10. [Hop-on facility](#), it allows research institutions from Widening countries to join already ongoing R&I actions under Horizon Europe Pillar 2 and EIC Pathfinder

### III. Some EC Communications

Last but not least, we highlight some key EC Communications issued in the last years, and of particular relevance for the fields of interest of SCAR and its Groups. Likewise, the previous websites list, this is far from being exhaustive. Besides, the relevancy of each Communication clearly depends on which group the expert is joining. For the same reason, some, or all of them could be well known to you, depending on your background. However, taken together, they represent a short catalogue of key strategic documents that can come to relevancy in the work of many, if not all, SCAR Groups.

They are linked to, and briefly introduced. When appropriate, we quoted few lines of presentation from websites which are relevant for SCAR environment, and worth visiting, in particular the website

<https://ec.europa.eu>.

### **EC COM(2017) 713** **The future of food and farming**

This seminal Communication on the vision for the post-2020 Common Agricultural Policy has been released by the EC in 2017. “It highlights the challenges that agriculture and rural areas are facing. It shows how cooperation on research and innovation at EU level, learning from each other will enable us to develop better knowledge and adopt innovation faster to overcome these challenges”.

(<https://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/en/news/future-food-and-farming.html>).

### **EC COM(2018) 773** **A clean planet for all**

“The strategy shows how Europe can lead the way to climate neutrality by investing into realistic technological solutions, empowering citizens, and aligning action in key areas such as industrial policy, finance, or research – while ensuring social fairness for a just transition (<https://www.europeansources.info/>). Although not specifically dedicated to SCAR remit, this Communication “A Clean Planet for all. A European strategic long-term vision for a prosperous, modern, competitive and climate neutral economy” addresses issues of relevance for SCAR, also with a section dedicated to bioeconomy and carbon sinks.

### **EC COM(2018) 841** **Regulation LULUCF**

The Regulation on LULUCF primarily focuses on addressing greenhouse gas emissions and removals associated with land use, land-use change, and forestry

activities. Within the regulation, the "no-debit rule" principle is established, whereby Member States undertake to ensure that the accounted emissions of greenhouse gases resulting from land use are entirely offset by an equivalent removal of CO<sub>2</sub> through actions implemented in the sector. Although Member States had already partially undertaken this commitment individually within the Kyoto Protocol until 2020, the regulation establishes, for the first time, the commitment in EU legislation for the period 2021-2030. Furthermore, the scope is expanded from forests alone to all land uses.

([https://climate.ec.europa.eu/eu-action/land-use-sector\\_en](https://climate.ec.europa.eu/eu-action/land-use-sector_en)).

### **EC COM(2020) 381** **From Farm to Fork (F2F)**

The F2F strategy was launched on 20 May 2020 and is part of the European Green Deal, which is a roadmap to guide the EU towards becoming the first climate-neutral region by 2050. The F2F strategy is a comprehensive 10-year strategy aiming to address the challenges of producing and consuming our food in a fair and sustainable way by reconciling what we eat within the capacity of our planet. F2F strategy and SCAR both address aspects related to agriculture and food systems but the strategy is more focused on policy proposals and initiatives, while SCAR is primarily involved in advising on scientific aspects of agricultural research.

([https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/farm-fork-strategy\\_en](https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/farm-fork-strategy_en)).

## EC COM(2020) 98 Circular Economy

This document outlines the European Commission's strategy and proposals for advancing the circular economy in the EU, focusing on sustainable resource use, waste reduction, and promoting circular business models. “The circular economy will help us decouple economic growth from resource use, protecting Europe’s natural resources while boosting sustainable growth. It will help the European Union to strive to reduce its consumption footprint and double its circular material use rate in the coming decade”.

([https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/circular-economy\\_en](https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/circular-economy_en)).

## EC COM(2021) 572 Forest Strategy for 2030

This Communication has been released in 2021 and it is seen as a flagship initiative of the European Green Deal. “The Forest Strategy sets a vision and concrete actions for increasing the quantity and quality of forests in the EU and strengthening their protection, restoration and resilience. The proposed actions will increase carbon sequestration through enhanced sinks and stocks thus contributing to climate change mitigation. ([https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_21\\_3723](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_21_3723)). The Strategy also aims at protecting and restoring forests, and at ensuring they are managed sustainably, encouraging a resource-efficient wood use in line with the cascade principle.

## EC COM(2021) 800 Sustainable Carbon Cycles

This Communication focuses on carbon farming, blue carbon farming, carbon recycling and carbon capture, storage and utilization, with significant emphasis on carbon farming monitoring, reporting

and verifying. SCAR, being involved in agricultural research and innovation, may be consulted or involved in providing scientific advice especially on carbon farming. “Farmers have a critical role in restoring ecosystems and ensuring climate resilience in agriculture. Carbon farming is paving the way to more climate-conscious practices in agriculture. According to the Communication, carbon farming can be defined as a green business model that rewards land managers for taking up improved land management practices, resulting in the increase of carbon sequestration in living biomass, dead organic matter and soils - by enhancing carbon capture and reducing the release of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere, in respect of ecological principles favourable to biodiversity”.

([https://climate.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-12/com\\_2021\\_800\\_en\\_0.pdf](https://climate.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-12/com_2021_800_en_0.pdf)).

## EC COM (2021) 699 Soil Strategy

“This strategy sets a framework with measures for the protection, restoration and sustainable use of soils, and proposes a set of voluntary and legally binding measures. It aims to increase the soil carbon in agricultural land, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, and ensure that by 2050, all soil ecosystems are in a healthy condition. The strategy calls for ensuring the same level of protection to soil that exists for water, the marine environment and air in the EU, and it also vows to mobilise societal engagement and financial resources, shared knowledge. Finally, it aims to promote sustainable soil management practices and monitoring”.

([https://environment.ec.europa.eu/document/download/EN\\_ACT\\_part1\\_v4\\_0.pdf](https://environment.ec.europa.eu/document/download/EN_ACT_part1_v4_0.pdf)).

## EC COM(2021) 82 Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change

The European Commission adopted its new EU strategy on adaptation to climate change on 24 February 2021. The new strategy sets out how the EU can adapt to the unavoidable impacts of climate change and become climate resilient by 2050. The Strategy has four principal objectives: to make adaptation smarter, swifter and more systemic, and to step up international action on adaptation to climate change.

([https://climate.ec.europa.eu/eu-action/adaptation-climate-change/eu-adaptation-strategy\\_en-2050](https://climate.ec.europa.eu/eu-action/adaptation-climate-change/eu-adaptation-strategy_en-2050)).

## EC COM(2021) 345 A long-term vision for Rural Areas

“This long-term Vision for the EU's rural areas aims to address those challenges and concerns, by building on the emerging opportunities of the EU's green and digital transitions and on the lessons learnt from the COVID 19 pandemic, and by identifying means to improve rural quality of life, achieve balanced territorial development and stimulate economic growth”.

([https://rural-vision.europa.eu/index\\_en](https://rural-vision.europa.eu/index_en)).

## EC SWD(2023) 4 Drivers of Food Security

“This EC working document aims at analysing the main drivers affecting food security from both the supply and demand sides. Relying on an evidence-based approach, this document provides a factual assessment of the key drivers and their interlinkages, to inform the ongoing debate in today's context. It looks at short and longer term horizons and linkages between the drivers”.

([https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2023-01/SWD\\_2023service\\_part1\\_v2.pdf](https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2023-01/SWD_2023service_part1_v2.pdf)).

## Biodiversity Strategy for 2030

The EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 is a comprehensive framework aimed at addressing the biodiversity crisis in the European Union. Adopted by the European Commission in May 2020, this strategy outlines ambitious targets and measures to protect and restore biodiversity over the next decade. The strategy covers various sectors, including agriculture, to ensure a holistic approach to biodiversity conservation and the SCAR may have a strong involvement, particularly regarding the impact of agricultural practices on biodiversity and the role of research in addressing biodiversity challenges.

([https://environment.ec.europa.eu/strategy/biodiversity-strategy-2030\\_en](https://environment.ec.europa.eu/strategy/biodiversity-strategy-2030_en)).







# RefreSCAR



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