



scar-europe.org/refrescar

The INDUCTION PACKAGE for new SCAR Group members

An overview

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The Induction Package for new SCAR Group members



- It is a document downloadable from the SCAR website
- General introduction to the SCAR and its activities
- Yearly updates
- SCAR website as the main and updated source of information
- **Where you can find it and main contents' overview**

Where you find the Induction Package



The screenshot shows the SCAR website interface. At the top, there are social media icons for X, Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube, along with a language selector set to 'English'. The main navigation bar includes a home icon, 'SCAR', 'SCAR Working Groups', 'News', 'Events', and 'Contact'. A search bar is located on the right. Below the navigation bar, the main content area is titled 'Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR)'. It features six columns of information:

- SCAR HISTORY:** A timeline showing the establishment of SCAR in 1974 and its evolution over time.
- GOALS:** A target icon with the text 'BUILD THE FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA...' and 'BECOME (MORE) ACTIVE IN THE SCAR COMMUNITY!'. A yellow arrow points to the 'SCAR' menu item in the navigation bar.
- ORGANISATION:** A diagram showing the organizational structure, including the Steering Group, Secretary, Plenary Meeting, and various working groups.
- OUR WORK:** A diagram showing the flow from 'Strategic policy advice' to 'Developing advisory bodies', 'Developing research & innovation agendas', and 'Adopting and reviewing SCAR research & innovation activities'.
- DOCUMENTS:** A list of documents including the SCAR Newsletter, SCAR communication material (Leaflet, SCAR General PPT), and Archived Content (European Strategies Documents, Reports and outputs of studies funded through CISA, SCAR communication material).
- SUPPORT ACTIVITIES TO SCAR WORKING GROUPS:** A section titled 'RefreSCAR' with a list of activities: RefreSCAR, Consortium, SCAR Engage Programme, Documents, and Calendar events. A red arrow points to this section.

At the bottom of the page, there is a map of Europe with the text 'on Agricultural Research' partially visible.

Cover and Contents



INDUCTION PACK

A READER-FRIENDLY GUIDE FOR
SCAR WORKING GROUP MEMBERS



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The Induction Package for new SCAR Group members



Introducing the SCAR



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.

Introducing the SCAR

01. Introducing the SCAR

Organisation and functioning

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.

Introducing the SCAR

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STEERING GROUP

The Steering Group can be seen as the main engine of the SCAR (together with the individual Groups, in their respective merits). 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⁽¹⁾, the EC's Framework Programme for R&I.

⁽¹⁾ Information on Horizon Europe can be found here: https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/industrial-revolution/european-union-research-programme-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.

SCAR Groups work autonomously; however, they often engage in joint activities (for ex: workshops) that are an important aspect of their work. The SCAR is one community!

The Induction Package for new SCAR Group members



The SCAR Groups one by one

Induction Pack

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)

Bioeconomy Strategic Working Group

The SCAR SWG Bioeconomy, sometimes referred to as "BSW", started working in 2017 and, from January 2025, entered its fourth mandate. Its aims are to contribute to a forward-looking bioeconomy transition in tight collaboration with other SCAR Working Groups, partnerships (eg. CBE JU) and networks (eg. BIOEAST), providing strategic advice and orientation on specific challenges and barriers to this transformative process. Activities are organised along two main lines of action, which include the organization of workshops and thematic studies, with the following scopes: (i) knowledge collection and liaison with other SCAR Working Groups, partnerships and networks; (ii) analysis of research, development and innovation gaps and needs with related recommendations.

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.

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The SCAR Groups one by one

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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

The CWG SAP, established in 2014, is working with a holistic view on the sustainability of livestock farming. A common reference is the UN SDGs from 2015. This perspective not only requires an integration of different research areas like animal nutrition, breeding and genetics, housing, and health & welfare. It is also characterised by a systems approach, interrelating with topics like food security, resource utilisation, GHG emissions, biodiversity, and farm economy. The CWG SAP's 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.

PROTEIN Task Force

PROTEIN Task Force

This Task Force has worked for a 3-years period until March 2026, focussing on R&I for alternative proteins sources for sustainable agricultural and food systems development. The group joined 22 members from 10 countries and worked to identify the major obstacles and opportunities for the protein transition in Europe from an R&I perspective. The group performed a protein value chain analysis with a holistic approach, addressing protein sources for food and feed in a coexistence and diversification perspective. The conclusions have been published in a Policy Review "R&I for alternative protein sources towards strategic autonomy and sustainability in EU protein production", available on the SCAR Website.

STARTUP & SCALEUP Task Force

The SCAR Startup & Scaleup Task Force has been established in January 2026 until June 2026, with possible extension if needed. It is a short-term initiative established to support the European Commission in strengthening the valorisation of research and innovation into business creation across agriculture, forestry, rural areas and food systems. Bringing together Member States and associated countries, the Task Force provides a collaborative space to share experiences, identify practical examples, and highlight key challenges and opportunities. Its focused work delivers concise, evidence-based insights to inform upcoming EU research and innovation strategies and support more effective pathways from research to market.

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Navigating the SCAR website

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The SCAR website was redesigned at the beginning of 2025, to make it more attractive, modern and communicative. The homepage presents a navigation bar (see Figure 7), right above a fascinating night photo of Europe, and below the link to the RefreSCAR social media channels on X, Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube. The bar displays five available submenus after the home page, starting on the left with "SCAR", followed by the items "SCAR Working Groups", "News", "Events" and "Contact". We will come back to these submenus after a short description of the rest of the homepage.

Scrolling down, the homepage continues with general information on the SCAR and its Groups, a section with latest News, the Agenda with recent and forthcoming events, and the link to the SCAR newsletters, which are an important periodic source of information for the SCAR community. The link to the previous newsletters can be useful to have a quick view on the activities of and around the SCAR in the last years, which give also an idea of the type of activities still ongoing.

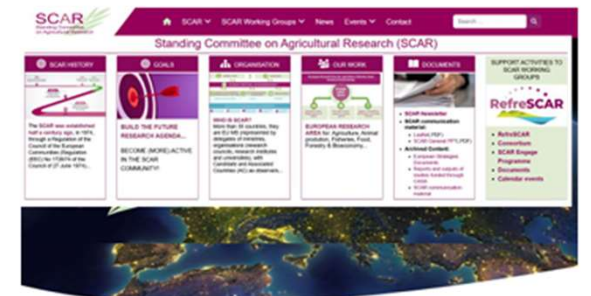


Figure 7. SCAR webpage menu (SCAR website)

Clicking on the main "SCAR" menu on the left of the navigation bar, a group of small windows appears, leading to pages with all the basic information on the SCAR. SCAR history, goals, organisation are consultable by clicking on each of the windows (but also moving directly from one to another, after accessing one of them).

The fourth window (moving from left to right) is under the header "Our work", and it offers an interesting and quite detailed description of the main activities and achievements of the SCAR, framed through the four main tasks of SCAR action as shown in Figure 1.

Still under the "SCAR" menu on the navigation bar, the fifth window leads to the SCAR "Documents". This section provides great introductory material on SCAR, in the form of a leaflet and deck of slides. 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 Horizon 2020 funded action **CASA**. **CASA was a Coordination and Support Action (CSA)** aimed at giving support to the SCAR in the years from 2016 to 2019.

From the "Documents", you can also link to the Newsletter section. This is the same section accessible from the bottom of the homepage. Indeed, the possibility to access the same content from different pathways is quite frequent in the SCAR website, in the aim of facilitating easy navigation.

On the extreme right of the "SCAR" menu, you see the link to the section dedicated to the **CSA RefreSCAR**, the action now supporting the SCAR Groups which also supported the creation of this Induction Pack.

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The Induction Package for new SCAR Group members



Being a SCAR Group member

Valorisation at national level

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 focus groups with SCAR Group members, carried out by RefreSCAR, some recurring themes on the motivations for members' engagement in SCAR WGs included:

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

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 not 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

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.

Being a SCAR Group member

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“ National “mirror groups”

Some countries have 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.

A SCAR Group member could be expected to...

SCAR Group members work on a voluntary basis, so there are no “contracts” binding participants to perform specific duties. However, they are expected to actively participate in the Groups' activities. It is not possible to list all activities, as they depend on the Group in question and their Mandates. Just as examples, members could be expected to contribute to:

- 1 Participation in periodic meetings (online and/or in presence);
- 2 Update on national level news (events, documents, policy decisions, etc.);
- 3 Organisation of workshops, even jointly with other SCAR Groups;
- 4 Identification of topics for mapping, studies, or gap analyses;
- 5 Participation in sub-groups dedicated to specific themes or initiatives;
- 6 Communication activities, support to the SCAR Foresight Exercises, update of the SCAR website;
- 7 Coordination with the SCAR national delegate of their country.

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 were:

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

Annexes – List of EC COM

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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_par1_v2.pdf

EC COM(2024) 137 Building the future with nature

As its subtitle highlights, this Communication aims at “boosting biotechnology and biomufacturing in the EU”. These sectors are seen as key for competitiveness and modernisation due to their high growth potential and increased labour productivity. Challenges and opportunities to move forward are described.

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52024DC0137>

EC COM(2025) 75 A Vision for Agriculture and Food.

With this Communication, the EC proposes a vision and a roadmap for the future of agriculture and food in Europe, ideally looking towards 2040 in a perspective of economic, social and environmental sustainability. The aim is to develop an attractive, competitive, sustainable and fair agri-food system for current and future generations of farmers and operators in the sector.

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0075>

EC COM(2025) 525 Strategy for European Life Sciences

Life sciences have the potential to strengthen competitiveness and support progress in areas such as healthcare, agriculture, energy, food, and biotechnology. The strategy “Choose Europe for life sciences” outlines actions aimed to give Europe a leading role in life sciences, fostering innovation, economic growth, and job creation.

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0525&qid=1762330863739>

EC COM(2025) 872 Strategy for Generational Renewal in Agriculture

The strategy provides a policy framework designed to make farming more accessible, competitive, and resilient. It aligns with the CAP and other EU or national initiatives, to coordinate actions across agricultural, rural, social, fiscal, and innovation policies, ensuring that young and new farmers benefit from consistent and long-term support. Though not directly focused on R&I, it includes interesting elements for consideration.

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0872>

EC COM(2025) 960 New Bioeconomy strategy

The bioeconomy plays a vital role in helping the EU meet its climate and energy targets, while addressing biodiversity loss and pollution. This new strategy “for a Competitive and Sustainable EU Bioeconomy”, following the 2012 Strategy and its 2018 update that already delivered notable advancements, seeks to harness the opportunities offered by the biotech revolution.

https://myr.pment.ec.europa.eu/publications/bioeconomy-strategy_en

THANK YOU

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RefreSCAR



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