

NEWS FROM SCAR GROUPS

BIOECONOMY

On 1st February 2019, a meeting of the Bioeconomy Strategic Working Group (BSW) has been held in Brussels. The meeting's objectives were twofold: 1) to exchange about different workshops being in a planning phase, i.e. a series of three workshops aiming to support the Policy Support Facility (PSF) as proposed by the European Commission in its updated Bioeconomy Strategy and Action Plan, and one joint workshop with the BBI States Representatives Group on the creation of bioeconomy clusters; 2) to work out main lines for the group's third mandate. Topics for a potential new mandate were developed in working groups. It was decided that the new mandate to be proposed to the SCAR Plenary should focus on knowledge creation and science to policy issues. A draft for the new Terms of References is currently under development.



Dear reader,

Welcome to the fifth SCAR-Newsletter

The SCAR-Newsletter provides information about on-going SCAR activities, about the workshops of the different SCAR Collaborative and Strategic Working Groups, CASA activities and Bioeconomy- and SCAR-related events in Europe.

Please feel free to share it with everyone...

The first workshop on the PSF, co-organised by the European Commission (DG RTD.F.1), the BSW and the BIOEAST Initiative, was held on 13th March in DG RTD's premises in Brussels. The scope of the workshop was to foster an open dialogue between the EC and Member States (MS) representatives (members of the SCAR-BSW and BIOEAST) in order to learn from existing knowledge and instruments and provide policy advice and recommendations to the Commission on possible options for a Policy Support Facility for Bioeconomy. The overall aim of a PSF for bioeconomy would be to assist MS in developing and implementing national/regional bioeconomy strategies across Europe. The workshop included presentations by the Head of Unit DG RTD.F.1, Waldemar Kütt, and Policy Officer Marta Truco Calbet from DG RTD.A.4. These were followed by facilitated discussions, which will be continued in the second and third workshop in May and June. The presentations will be made available at: <https://www.scar-swg-sbgb.eu/documents>.

The joint workshop of BBI States Representatives Group (SRG) and BSW on the creation of bioeconomy clusters took place on 14th March in the White Atrium in Brussels. The specific aim of the workshop was to stimulate interest in creating regional bioeconomy clusters in regions and countries that are less active in the bioeconomy and bio-based sectors via an exchange of knowledge and experiences in developing such clusters. Approximately 70 experts and representatives of bioeconomy related clusters, the BBI SRG, SCAR BSW, BIOEAST members and policy makers at national and regional level discussed the key elements for cluster development and their role in supporting the bioeconomy. Participants included representatives from countries which are currently less active. A report with the main outcomes and lessons learnt will be published at: <https://www.scar-swg-sbgb.eu/documents>.



Plenary meeting of the CWG Animal Health and Welfare, Thessaloniki, April 4th, 2019



Marina Bagni (IT), resigning chair

Dominique Vandekerchove (BE), new chair

ANIMAL HEALTH & WELFARE RESEARCH

After the light-touch evaluation by the SCAR Steering Group, the CWG Animal Health and Welfare Research continues its mandate to improve collaboration on research prioritisation and procurement. Its aim is to join forces to make cutting-edge research and innovation possible, in order to allow livestock production with respect for animal health and welfare.

A Cofund Animal Health ERA-NET proposal was submitted in January; the Commission's decision is expected by the end of June.

On April 3rd and 4th, the group convened in Thessaloniki, Greece for a meeting of its Strategic and Foresight Unit (SFU) and its Animal Welfare (AW) subgroup, as well as its spring plenary meeting.

In the meeting the SFU focused primarily on preparing a CWG AHW perspective to wider EU policies such as the EU Bioeconomy Strategy and the EU Food 2030 strategy, with the goal to better align CWG outputs with SCAR activities. Andrea Gyorffy from the SCAR SWG Food Systems presented an overview on related ongoing initiatives and methodologies used within the SWG. This was followed by a presentation by Ioannis Sakaridis (VRI, DEMETER) on "Valuing and Protecting the Food Chain". An SFU Ad Hoc Working Group for preparing a CWG AHW input to both strategies was created.

On the subject of data usage and utilization in animal health, Hermann Schobesberger presented an overview of Austrian activities and highlighted examples of risks regarding potential future data security issues.

The AW subgroup exchanged information about the respective domestic research activities, national priorities and new issues about AW. Grete Jørgensen (Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research) presented projects using Precision Livestock Farming to improve AW in Norway. Chiara Fabris (EFSA) gave an update on the activities of the AW network of EFSA.

The agenda of the plenary meeting included a presentation of the CWG Sustainable Animal Production by Babette Breuer (BLE, Germany), a call for experts for the 5th SCAR Foresight Exercise, a progress report on the global animal health network STAR-IDAZ IRC, as well as scientific presentations on the reduction of AMU by use of vaccines (Stefano Messori, OIE), on emerging vectors and pathogens (Michele Dottori, IZS LER Brescia, Italy), and on mastitis vaccines (Charalambos Kotzamanidis, – Hellenic Agricultural Organization DEMETER, Greece).

After a mandate of 4 years as Chair, Marina Bagni decided to step down, and takes on the part of senior co-chair, together with Hermann Schobesberger who continues as before. The Executive Committee elected junior co-chair Dominique Vandekerchove as the new chair. Loukia Ekateriniadou has gracefully accepted the role of new junior co-chair.

FOREST

SCAR Forest mission is to be a source of advice on European forest-based research and innovation (R&I), thus contributing to the development of a coherent and ambitious forest-based research area. Despite the fact that approximately 40% of the land surface of Europe is covered with forest, R&I in the forest-based sector is still very fragmented. SCAR Forest has involved members from 19 countries (AT, BE, CZ, DE, EE, ES, FI, FR, GR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, NO, PL, SE, SK, UK) and the European Forest Institute (EFI), the Forest Technology Platform (FTP), Innovawood and the EC (DG RTD) act as observers to the SWG Forest. Meetings take place on a regular basis, approximately twice per year. The last meeting was on 5th February in Brussels.

Thanks to the funding scheme of CASA, it was possible to organize a workshop on "International cooperation in research and innovation for the future European forest-based sector" in February 2019 in Brussels. 32 experts of the forest-based sector from all over Europe met to participate. The overall aim of the workshop was to create an opportunity for open discussions on the topic of international cooperation on forest research and innovation and its possibilities to help the forest-based sector responding to increasing environmental challenges and societal demands. Results include for example that transnational partnerships such as ERA-Nets are well suited to sectors with many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as it is the case in the forest-based sector, but it does need an EC support in order to compensate for evaluation, negotiation and other transaction costs. Also, there is a great need for instruments that work in the long-term perspective to achieve goals which require action over time and on the basis of continuous improvement.

At present, the study "Research and innovation on digitalisation and automation in the forest-based sector" funded by CASA funding scheme is conducted. The main objective of this study is to provide a first comprehensive overview of the state of the art of digitalisation and automation in the forest-based sector, as well as an initial assessment of needs and challenges ahead for research and innovation. This will provide key guidance for further EU policy development. Results are expected at the end of June 2019.

SCAR Forest is currently preparing to renew their mandate, as the current mandate will end in June 2019.

Members of the SCAR Forest or its local members participated in various events:

- 8th April 2019: "SCAR Workshop – strengthening linkages between SCAR Groups and Directorates-General of the European Commission and international organisations", Brussels;
- 13th and 14th May 2019: SCAR Foresight Task Force Workshop on "Targets, trends and expectations in Natural Resources and Food Systems", Brussels;
- SCAR Baltic Workshop on 4-5 April 2019;
- SCAR francophone meeting on 17th April 2019;
- SCAR SG meeting 15th May 2019, where the draft ToR for the new mandate were presented.

More information on SCAR Forest can be found here:

<https://scar-europe.org/index.php/forest>

Chair: Jean-Luc Peyron, Ecofor, France (jean-luc.peyron@gip-ecofor.org)

Workshop on "International cooperation in research and innovation for the future European forest-based sector", February 2019, in Brussels



FOOD SYSTEMS

In the first half of the year, the SCAR FOOD SYSTEMS SWG was working on “diversification in food systems”, which is one of the action planned of the actual mandate. The purpose of this activity is to raise awareness of member states on all aspects and impacts of decreasing/ increasing diversity across whole food systems.

Three workshops have been already held on “Diversifying Food Systems in the Pursuit of Sustainable Food Production and Healthy Diets”, two in Paris and one in Brussels.

These events brought together representatives of public and private sector, various stakeholders and external experts working in this area.

Based on the discussions and lessons learnt during the three workshops, the FOOD SYSTEMS SWG is currently developing policy recommendations on the role of the diversification in food systems and how to promote interaction between all stakeholders in order to increase diversity in food systems at national, regional and European level.

In addition to this activity, the FOOD SYSTEMS SWG is planning the next step and will start preparing the Terms of References (TOR) for its new mandate during the meeting in June. The new TOR should be presented at the SCAR Plenary in December 2019.



NEWS FROM CASA

Wp3: OVERVIEW

The overall aim of Workpackage 3 (Wp3) is to strengthen strategic advice for SCAR. This will be achieved by supporting SCAR’s internal and external work – especially by exploring new opportunities for alignment, collaboration and strategic action associated with relevant recommendations.

A desk study on “SCAR and alignment” is performed within T3.4 (Support SCAR on better alignment of research and innovation policies), in order to provide a basis for future workshops on alignment. Furthermore, T3.6 is supporting the SCAR Foresight group by creating a structure for future SCAR Foresight processes and helps with the ongoing actions, for example by organizing expert workshops. Task 3.7 is dealing with the development of an Impact Assessment Framework (IAF). Work for preparing the implementation of this task is moving towards the conclusion. Target areas and evaluation questions have been discussed with the SCAR Working Groups at the end of 2018. The revised work has been then shared with SCAR delegates and Working groups Chairs in spring 2019 for a second and last round of feedbacks. Under Task 3.8 (the sustainability of CASA work) a survey is developed to assess the priorities of the SCAR SG as well as SWGs and CWGs for possible future activities once CASA has ended.

All finalized public documents are provided on the SCAR website.

CONTACT FOR CASA Wp3: Vera Steinberg, vera.steinberg@ble.de



Wp4: COMMUNICATION

Wp4 has been contributing to the SCAR Baltic event, organised the Workshop on "THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN STRATEGY FOR THE BIOECONOMY" in Carcavelos in Portugal the 20th May 2019 (see article).

The remaining activities focused on preparing the SCAR conference to be held in Bruxelles on June 12th and the related communication material including this newsletter.

As usual, several documents have been uploaded on the SCAR website which can be found at: <https://scar-europe.org>

Wp5: COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT

CASA is coordinated by the Project Management Jülich division of the Forschungszentrum Jülich GmbH. Project coordinator Rolf Stratmann is supported by Hanna Steffens (deputy) and Sergi Costa.

In the period from December 2018 to June 2019 the coordinator provided two update documents to the SCAR Secretariat with information on actual CASA activities. In frame of the CASA agenda slots during the 85th and 86th SCAR SG meetings on 12th February and 15th May 2019, upcoming CASA SCAR topics and activities were presented to the SCAR SG members and discussed, such as the preparation of the SCAR conference 2019 and the status overviews of the expert studies.

The final CASA General Assembly meeting is scheduled for 2nd July and in preparation. This meeting will be about the CASA activities still to be finalised, for example the Impact Assessment Framework and directions for the final reporting and accounting. CASA will end on 31st August 2019.



CONTACT FOR CASA Wp5: Rolf Stratmann, rstratmann@fz-juelich.de

Additional article for the common workshop between T2.4 and T3.4:

SCAR links up with EC Directorates-General and international organisations

On April 8th, a dedicated SCAR workshop was organised in Brussels for invited Directorates-General of the European Commission and international organisations. The aim of the workshop was to inform about SCAR and SCAR Groups. The focus was on presentation of objectives, core activities and outcomes relevant to the Directorates-General and the international organisations and on allowing for establishment of new relationships between partners. As SCAR Secretary Liutauras Guobys noted: it is 'timely and critical to link different actors'. In a half-day session, SCAR and its Working Group, the Foresight Group and the EC's Bioeconomy Knowledge Centre presented their work. Representatives of various DGs, including DG RTD, DG AGRI, DG GROWTH, DG SANTE and DG ENV, and international organisations, among which the United Nations World Food Programme, The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and International Council for the Exploration of the Sea, were present. In total, around forty people attended the workshop.

This workshop was organised, in frame of the SCAR support action CASA, by Vivi Hunnicke Nielsen (Aarhus University) and Sylvia Burssens (ILVO), with input from Vera Steinberg (BLE) and Dorri te Boekhorst. It is part of the work to support alignment between SCAR Working Groups, the EC DGs (task 2.4) and European and international organisations (task 3.4).

Additional article:

SCAR Baltic event

The Latvian Academy of Sciences, in collaboration with the Latvian Ministry of Agriculture, Lithuanian Ministry of Agriculture, and Estonian Ministry of Rural Affairs, supported by SCAR CASA Coordination and Support Action, organised jointly a Baltic SCAR Workshop. The overall aim of the meeting: to promote the outcomes of SCAR, increase its visibility and the engagement of national stakeholders. The meeting was held on 4-5 April 2019 in Riga.

The Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR) is recognized by the European Commission and Member States as valuable coordination and advisory body on agricultural research and bioeconomy development. The CASA SCAR meeting gave the opportunity to bring together SCAR members and experts, representatives of the European Commission, representatives of relevant institutions, research centres, business sector and other stakeholders from all three Baltic countries to discuss about agriculture research and bioeconomy issues and to participate into and benefit from SCAR activities.



<https://scar-europe.org/index.php/casa-events/scar-casa-meetings/baltic-scar-meeting-in-riga>

Additional article:

SCAR Portugese Event

A SCAR Workshop on the "Implementation of the European strategy for the bioeconomy" was held in Carcavelos, Portugal on May the 20th 2019.

This event gathered participants and speakers from several Member States such as Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Germany, Turkey and Belgium, from both private and public institutions who shared experiences of different Member States and delivered recommendations for the organization and implementation of national Bioeconomy strategies.

The FAO's work on Bioeconomy and the role of Forest, Food systems, Oceans, Agriculture and other sectors in the Bioeconomy were discussed in lively and interactive discussions. All presentations can be found in this site following the link:

<https://scar-europe.org/index.php/casa-events/workshop-on-bioeconomy>

