

EURAGRI WORKSHOP (by invitation only, 20 persons)

4 July 2013, 10.30 – 17.00

Kowi, Rue du Trône 98, 1050 Brussels, Belgium

Conditions that support the use of knowledge for innovation and application

Knowledge and innovation are regarded as the absolutely essential prerequisites to solve the challenges European and global agricultural systems are facing within the next few decades. We have to identify several different functions in this regard that are the product of (1) specific new research elements, (2) synthesis overviews, (3) knowledge aimed at innovation and (4) innovation outcome, policy overview and transfer to other actors.

Often publicly funded research is not accessible to a broader audience partly due to immense quantity and partly because of restrained circulation in specialised circles. Research results are held back and/or are published in scientific journals which are often not open access sources. Research results in scientific articles often appear fragmented to a broader audience and not synthesised in a form relevant for application. Furthermore the implicit assumptions made and the language used by a scientist socialised in his/her professional environment are not necessarily evident and comprehensible by persons outside is another more subtle but strong access barrier.

Agricultural research programmes are mainly applied driven. Their outcomes are meant to support agricultural and regional policy making and foster innovation in the broader KBBE context. Therefore many knowledge users need synthesised, structured and tailored research. They need it depending on their respective intended use, for example in education, to transfer it into an application or for research programme owners to assess the impact of research they financed and/or to make informed decisions on what to fund in the future.

There are initiatives which try to open up the system. Concerning basic research one example is the “Berlin declaration”. This declaration promotes the internet as a functional instrument for a global scientific knowledge base and human reflection. It should help to specify measures which research policy makers, research institutions, funding agencies, libraries, archives and museums need to consider and implement. For users of applied research there is the specific need to get tailored access to the results at the earliest stage. An example for this is the “inception report” from in the ESPON 2013 programme implemented by DG Regio. The Inception report should consist of max. 20 pages (plus annexes if relevant), based on the approach outlined in the project proposal, and to be submitted twelve weeks after the Kick-off Meeting. In its content part it should provide a more detailed overview of the research approach to be applied, the methodology and hypothesis for further investigation, as well as the main literature, data sources, etc.

It is compulsory together with open access to research results and their dissemination and implementation.

These measures are meant to support the mission of the ESPON 2013 programme:

“Support policy development in relation to the aim of territorial cohesion and a harmonious development of the European territory by (1) providing comparable information, evidence, analyses and scenarios on territorial dynamics and (2) revealing territorial capital and potentials for development of regions and larger territories contributing to European competitiveness, territorial cooperation and a sustainable and balanced development”.

During this one day workshop we discuss ways to build on the “Berlin declaration” concerning agricultural research in a broad context, to clarify barriers for open access and to discuss possible incentives to knowledge creators to deliver synthesised, structured and tailored research results. National cases will be used to exemplify how national research programmes organise knowledge cooperation with different users of the knowledge chain.

Main questions to be discussed:

- What instruments, standards, quantities and qualities are used now and are useful to be extended?
- How could schemes be organised to ensure international standards and open access?
- How can they support knowledge flow to users and special user groups?
- How can they be used to externalise ex post assessment of public research?