Knowledge, innovation and skills for sustainable horizons

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Kristina Blennow is a professor of landscape analysis at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences. Her current research interests lie in risk analysis and 'science and proven experience.' She examines the interplay between individuals and their environment, supporting communication, planning, and decision-making under uncertain and changing conditions, particularly regarding climate change and biodiversity. She employs interdisciplinary strategies, utilizing empirical methods and computer simulations, often in international collaborations and close contact with stakeholders.
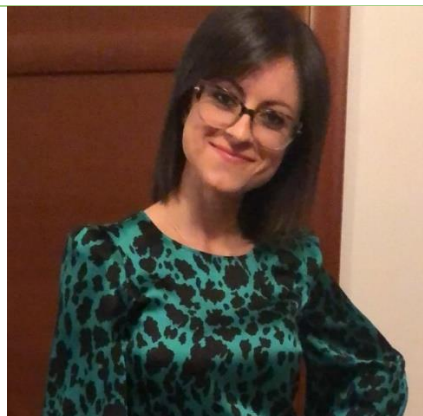
Maria Rosaria Coduti works as Policy Officer at the data and innovation unit of DG CNECT, European Commission, where she contributed to the elaboration of the data strategy and to the work on the Data Governance Act and the Data Act.

Carlos das Neves is EFSA's Chief Scientist and has been a member of EFSA's senior management team since November 2022. A Portuguese and Norwegian national, Carlos was Director of Research and Internationalisation at the Norwegian Veterinary Institute (NVI) before joining EFSA. He is also a Full Professor at the Faculty of Health Sciences at The Arctic University of Norway (UiT). Carlos is a veterinarian and holds a PhD in veterinary sciences. He also has a Postgraduate Certificate in Public Health from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and a Certificate in Public Policy Analysis from the London School of Economics and Political Science. His areas of research and teaching include animal health, biodiversity, emerging threats, and One Health.

Kevin Doolin has worked across industry, state and academia for over 30 years. In his current role, as Executive Director of the Walton Institute in South East Technological University, Ireland, Kevin is responsible for management of multiple research programmes spanning basic, applied and commercial research in the field of ICT. In parallel to this Kevin currently coordinates the H2020 DEMETER project which has a specific focus on interoperability across the agrifood supply chain. Kevin's expertise includes pervasive systems, internet of things, and data interoperability.

Spyros Fountas is Professor at Agricultural University of Athens, Greece. He holds a BSc in Agricultural Sciences from Greece, an MSc in Management Information Systems from Cranfield University in the UK and a PhD in Precision Agriculture from Copenhagen University, Denmark, while he was Scholar at Purdue University in the USA. He is Coordinator of FUTURAL Horizon Europe project, "Empowering the future through innovative smart solutions for rural areas".

Claudia Fusco is the Head of Unit responsible for Green Knowledge and Research Hub, LIFE in the Directorate-General for the Environment of the European Commission. In this role she is responsible for improving the environmental knowledge and evidence base for EU Environment Policies, including by closely working with the European Environment Agency and other knowledge providers. Claudia Fusco joined the European Commission at the end of 2002 and has since then worked in several Directorates-General developing and coordinating different policy areas, such as competition, transport, energy and industry. Ms. Fusco holds a Law degree, has studied European Union Law and has a PhD in Public Finance.

Anikó Juhász is the deputy state secretary of Ministry of Agriculture from 2018. She was the general director of AKI (Research Institute of Agricultural Economics, Budapest, Hungary) between 2015 and 2018. Master's degree in Horticultural Engineering (1997) and PhD in Management and Business Administration (2010). Seventeen years of experience in food supply chains and related policy research. Project and programme evaluator of FP7 and H2020 calls since 2012. Co-chair of the European Union's Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR) Strategic Working Group on Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS SWG) (2018-). Founder of Bioeast Initiative. Responsible for coordinating the development of the Hungarian CAP Strategic Plan and the development of the national bioeconomy strategy.

Dr. Petri Kahila is Director of the Karelian Institute at the University of Eastern Finland. He is specialized in regional and local governance, territorial cohesion and rural policy. Petri Kahila has a long-standing experience on working and leading Horizon and ESPON projects. He has also been involved in several national and European evaluation tasks.

Martin Kováč has been the State Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic since January 2022. In 2021, he served as Chairman and member of the Board of Advisors to Minister at the same Ministry. Previously, he worked for The Association of Towns and Communities of Slovakia (ZMOS) and also at the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, where he was the General Director of Cultural heritage section and the Director of the Department of Structural Funds and Financial Instruments. As a water management engineer he has been working on cross-cutting topics land-water-climate for a long time.

Nike Krajnc is the director of the Slovenian Forestry Institute. She joined the Institute in 1996 as a researcher. Until recently, she was the head of the Department for Forestry Technique and Economics. Her research and professional work activities are focused on the area of production, processing and efficient use of wood biomass. Since 2001, she has led national and international research projects, focusing on collaboration with industry and other end users of knowledge. She was coordinator of an international project: "Forests in Women's Hands".

Frédéric Leroy graduated as a Bioengineer (Ghent University, 1998) and obtained a PhD in Applied Biological Sciences at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (2002), where he now holds a professorship in food science and (bio)technology. His research deals with animal source foods, food processing and fermentation, human nutrition, and interdisciplinary 'food studies'. He is a member of academic non-profit societies, i.e., the Belgian Association of Meat Science and Technology (BAMST, president), Belgian Society for Food Microbiology (BSFM, president), and Belgian Nutrition Society (BNS). On a non-remunerated basis, he serves on the Scientific Board of the World Farmers' Organization (WFO) and FAO/COAG Sub-Committee on Livestock.

Patrick Majcen is Head of the Legal and Environmental Policy Unit at the Austrian Chamber of Agriculture and specialized in the field of data regulation. Since last year he has been a member of the EC-Expert Group on B2B data sharing and cloud computing contracts which assists the European Commission in developing model contracts related to the Data Act. He is also a lecturer in European technology law at the University of Applied Sciences - Austria.

Bertin Martens is a Visiting fellow at Bruegel. He has been working on digital economy issues, including e-commerce, geo-blocking, digital copyright and media, online platforms and data markets and regulation, as senior economist at the Joint Research Centre (Seville) of the European Commission, for more than a decade until April 2022. Prior to that, he was deputy chief economist for trade policy at the European Commission, and held various other assignments in the international economic policy domain. He is currently a non-resident research fellow at the Tilburg Law & Economics Centre (TILEC) at Tilburg University (Netherlands).

Robert Mavsar is the Deputy Director of the European Forest Institute. In this role he is responsible for the development and coordination of EFI's research activities, and for the operational development and management of the institute. His main research interests are in the fields of the development of forest research in Europe, bioeconomy, economic valuation of ecosystem services and innovative business models for the marketing of non-wood forest products. He holds a PhD in economics and a MSc in forestry

Anna Osann is Co-Founder and Executive Co-Director for Innovation in AgriSat Iberia, S.L. and Honorary Fellow at Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha. Over 15 years coordinating or co-coordinating EU projects of various sizes spanning 5 continents, working with multi-stakeholder communities to achieve sustainable water management and agriculture, increasingly emphasizing regenerative agriculture and climate-change adaptation. Putting in practice the nexus view of interconnected water, food, energy, ecosystems, climate, health, socio-economy, politics, and culture.

Dr. Florence Pendrill works as a senior research officer at Formas - A Swedish Research Council for Sustainable Development, where she focuses on sustainable land use and forests. She has a background in physical geography, with a PhD focused on tropical deforestation drivers, including the role of international trade, and her research has been published in several prominent scientific journals, including Science.

Davide Pettenella is full professor at the University of Padova (Italy) where is teaching Forest economics. His professional focus is on forest products and services economics, with a special interest on the new markets for forest services and the related ESG and ethical aspects in regulating the forestry sector and in creating new responsible markets.

Dr. Liisa Pietola, adjunct professor at the University of Helsinki in soil sciences (1998-), served in R&D for fertilizer industry (2006-11) and in the Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owner in Finland MTK (2011-22) as head of environmental affairs, and chaired the environment working group of European farmers at the Copa-Cogeca (2014-18). Currently she is leading specialist on sustainability solutions in transition of agriculture and forestry sectors in the Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra (www.sitra.fi/en), and an expert member of EU Mission Board Soil Deal for Europe. She has her feet on the ground as an active farmer.

Dr. Guy Richard is senior scientist at the French National Research Institute for agriculture, food and environment (INRAE). He is at the moment the Director of collective scientific assessment, advanced studies and foresight for INRAE. Until April 2018, Guy Richard was the Director of one of the 13 scientific divisions of INRA, the Agronomy and Environment Division with 40 research laboratories among France. He has particularly developed research facilities for agroecology (for experimentation and modelling). His scientific career was dedicated to soil quality as a function of cropping systems with more than 100 scientific papers in international journals.

Marta G. Rivera Ferre is research professor of the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) at INGENIO. With a Phd in Animal Sciences and one in Sociology., she has a multidisciplinary profile in the analysis of the society and environment interactions within agri-food systems, and a particular interest in alternative agri-food systems following the food sovereignty paradigm and more recently, in the analysis of feminists and commons theories as to be adopted in agri-food research. She is also interested in the way different mental models and discourses co-exist in agricultural research and management. She has been lead author of the UN-assessments of IAASTD, IPCC and IPBES, and expert for the UN-Women.

Dr. Daniel Rossi is a Statistician and Economist. He's the Managing Director for Research & Innovation in the Confederation of Farmers (Confagricoltura), the Senior Economist of the Italian Presidency of the Council of Ministers, the Secretary General of the AgroNetwork Foundation (Confagricoltura, Nomisma and Luiss University Founders), the Chairman of the Copa-Cogeca Research & Innovation W.P. in Bruxelles, the past Director General of Confindustria – Federalimentare (the Food and Drink Industry Federation) and EU Coordinator of the 36 National Food Technology Platforms "Food for Life" in Bruxelles, the EU Senior Expert Evaluator of R&I Agrifood projects, the Professor in charge of Food & Wine Business at the University of Rome LUISS, the Coordinator of the Recovery Plan Experts in Umbria Region.
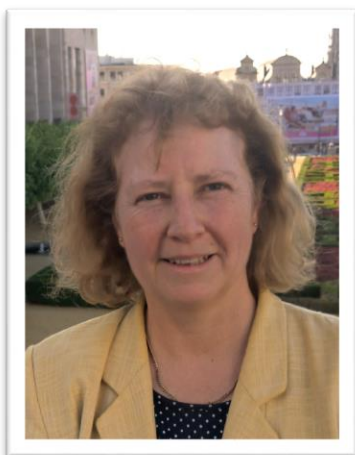
Dr. Elke Saggau is Head of the Division "European Research Affairs" at the Federal Office for Agriculture and Food (BLE) in Bonn, Germany. Before she started as project manager for research and innovation at BLE she studied agriculture science at the University of Kiel and received her doctorate degree in animal nutrition. On European level she is an active member of the SCAR (Standing Committee on Agriculture Research) and the chair of the SCAR Foresight group. In addition, she is coordinator of the ERA-NET SusAn and member of the SCAR CWG SAP (Sustainable Animal Production).

Dr. Emilia Schmitt is a Swiss environmental scientist with a research experience in sustainability and resilience of food systems. She has worked in many projects around these topics, including two European research project tackling sustainability through value chains from the local to global level. Currently, Emilia Schmitt works at the University of Cordoba in Spain and serves as the scientific coordinator of the H2020 project MOVING, which focuses on the resilience of European mountain regions.

Benjamin Sánchez Gimeno has a PhD in Biology. He has 26-year research experience on the environmental risks and impacts related to the interactions of reactive N and agricultural and forestry management practices at different geographical scales. (CIEMAT & INIA-CSIC Spanish research centres). From 2009 to 2019, he work at the Ministry of Science and Innovation, as Associated- and Deputy Director General for Large International Infrastructures and European Programmes and Senior Advisor for science and innovation policies. Since January 2021, he is Co-Chair of SCAR's Strategic Working Group on Agroecology (SCAR-AE). Since May 2022 he is Coordinator of activities related to the development of the AGROECOLOGY partnership at the Spanish funding agency for research and innovation (Agencia Estatal de Investigación – AEI).

Dr. Wim H.M. van der Poel, DVM is Professor of Emerging and Zoonotic Viruses at Wageningen University and Research, and also coordinator of the EPIZONE European Research Group, the network on epizootic animal diseases research. He is involved in the management of several One Health research networks (incl. NCOH, EJPOH, GOHRP), and he chairs the scientific committee of the International Consortium for Animal Health Research, Formerly known as the STAR IDAZ group.

Inge Van Oost initiated in DG AGRI the agricultural European Innovation Partnership (EIP-AGRI) in the TaskForce Research and Innovation, which supports innovation projects strengthening linkages between research and rural development practice. She designed and is implementing the CAP policy on Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) 2023-2027. Before working at the Commission Inge Van Oost was coordinator of demonstration projects, drafted rural development programmes and designed the Flemish Farm Advisory System. She served the Belgian Secretary-General as coordinator of the Horticultural Chain, dealing with chain management, food traceability and safety, sustainable production, etc. She also worked as advisory team coordinator, based in an applied research institute, advising farmers, and also brokering for innovation and implementing multi-actor projects and on-farm demonstrations.

Marta Vasconcelos is Assistant Professor at Universidade Católica Portuguesa (UCP) and Deputy Director of the Center for Biotechnology and Fine Chemistry (CBQF). She leads the Group on Environment and Resources and the PlanTech Laboratory (Plant Nutrition and Biotechnology for Sustainability. Her group works on the interface between plant and human nutrition and promotes nutritionally rich plant-based foods for more sustainable agrifood systems. She has a long track record in coordination and participation in projects dealing with crop diversification, value chains, plant nutrition, and genetic resources.

Dr. Susanne von Muenchhausen is an agricultural economist working with Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development in the unit 'Policy and Markets in the Agri-Food Sector'. She coordinated the Horizon2020 Research and Innovation project LIAISON, which delivered practice recommendations for multi-actor partnerships and policy briefs for the further development of the EIP-AGRI (2018-2022). Currently, she coordinates the Horizon Europe project "PREMIERE – Preparing Multi-Actor Projects in a Co-Creative Way" that provides support and training for better multi-actor co-creation during proposal writing. Moreover, Susanne is the EU-FarmBook Ambassador for Germany, and she studies female-led innovation as partner of the Horizon Europe FLIARA project.