

**Final Minutes of the Civil Dialogue Group on Quality and Promotion
09/12/2015**

The meeting was chaired by Mr Jochum.

Approval of the agenda and minutes of the last meeting:

The agenda and the minutes of the last meeting were adopted without further comments.

Election of Chairman and Vice-chairmen:

According to the Commission Decision, a president and two vice-presidents shall be elected. The Commission Representative informed the members of the CDG about the names of the candidates:

- Mr Christian Jochum (Copa, AT): candidate to the position of chairman
- Mr Luciano Trentini (SACAR, IT): candidate to the position of vice-chair
- Mr Jaime Palafox (FoodDrinkEurope, ES): candidate to the position of vice-chair

Elections were held and all the candidates were officially elected by unanimity. A member of the group abstained from the candidacy of Mr Trentini and Mr Palafox.

Promotion

1. The new EU promotion policy – Presentation and exchange of views on:

a) the global context of the new promotion policy

b) the annual work programme for 2016 and where to find relevant information

- A Commission representative informed that the legislative acts were applicable since the 1st December. It was also explained that the call for applications would be open between the beginning of February and the end of April of 2016.

The CDG was also informed that an Info Day in Brussels to reply to general questions that organisations may have regarding the submission of promotion programmes would be organised on 26 February.

The Commission was currently working on all the preparatory work related to the delegation of tasks to the Executive Agency in Luxembourg.

The Commission reminded the characteristics of the new system and the new expenditure that will be increased up to 200 M. Operators will also have to explain what it was achieved through more targeted monitoring. In future, the Agency will have someone working on the technical support service.

It was also highlighted the importance of high level missions. The Commission is currently planning Mexico, Colombia, China and Japan.

Regarding the Annual Work Programme, the Commission representative reminded that it was a new tool based on a strategy with several objectives identified.

Following the advice of the Court of Auditors to set up a strategy, the Commission will look at market opportunities every year.

Priority was given to markets with the highest growth potential following a macroeconomic analysis. The analysis unit in DG AGRI looked also at the political context and possible trade agreements.

Regarding the selection criteria, they will look at the financial and operational capacity of the organisation. Following this, they will also look at the quality of the proposal and its cost-effectiveness.

Following the call for proposals, three independent experts will look at the proposals and there will be a ranking. If all the money was not spent, it will be redistributed. If two proposals have the same mark, diversification will be looked at (for instance products or markets that were not targeted).

- The chair thanked the Commission for its presentation and asked for clarification regarding the election of experts.

- The Commission reminded that they will try to cluster the experts per topic or action to have the same group of experts looking at the same programmes to ensure that there is a fair and balanced redistribution. Once the independent experts did the assessment there will be a Committee with a representative from CHAFEA and a representative from DG AGRI to ensure coherence between the different topics

- A FoodDrinkEurope representative asked for clarification regarding the small budget for multi-country programmes and how this was going to be distributed in 2017. More information regarding the Info days that were organised in some Member States was also asked.

- A CELCAA representative asked if the total amount of 111 million was going to be for projects selected in 2016 or also for projects that were selected in the past. It was also asked if voluntary levies collected by the Industry could be considered as the industry contribution required.

- A SACAR representative asked if the list of countries defining the different actions was exclusive or could include other countries from the same geographical area. Regarding the functioning of the system, clarification was asked regarding the possibility to carry out specific actions by the organisation directly.

- A Copa representative asked for clarification regarding India that was not mentioned in the action covering South East Asia. It was also raised the importance of the technical support and the need to develop it as soon as possible. It is important to have contact details and a telephone number in case of doubts.

- A Cogeca representative stressed the importance of clear information and instructions to implement the new system. Some practical information is still

missing, this is why for instance, a letter from the Italian Ministry was sent to ask for information and to clarify the role of the coordinator.

- The Commission representative said that although the budget foreseen for multi-country programmes may look modest it was based on the amount of multi-country programmes adopted in the past. In future calls, more money for simple programmes in the internal market and multi-country programmes will be allocated. It was also clarified that the budget was for new programmes.

Regarding the financing and the industry contribution, the Commission reminded the basic principles established in the basic regulation. The kind of financing is to be decided by the sector. The Commission also reminded that there was going to be a helpdesk at the Agency.

Regarding advance payments, the operator will have to submit a guarantee. It was also explained that actions cover countries that are quoted. The rest will be covered under other geographical areas.

On the parts to be implemented, it was reminded that it will only apply for simple programmes. The legislator did not fix the percentage which gives certain flexibility.

- A Copa representative thanked again the Commission because the reform was carried out very quickly. It is important now to specify things more in detail and give clear guidelines to operators.

- The chair reminded the importance of working all together to present multi-country promotion programmes.

c) CHAFEA – implementing the new promotion policy and presentation of reference documents

- The CHAFEA representative explained the Agency and its functioning. The Agency will be publishing the call for proposals in cooperation with the Commission.

The submission of promotion programmes will be done online by a participant portal. The tool is similar to the one developed in the field of research. To submit it, it will be necessary to create a user account and then to register the proposing organisation.

The submission form of the proposal is divided into two parts. One that will refer to administrative data or declarations that will refer to the eligibility criteria. The second part will be more focused on the project itself including a detailed description and budgets per activity.

CHAFEA is also intending to provide a template to facilitate the drafting of the proposal and the presentation of the project. There should be a strong link with the awards criteria.

Additional templates should be provided to prove representativeness, budget or information on the financial capacity. Guidance documents will explain the submission and instructions on how to submit our proposal online. There will also be a frequently questions and answers Platform regarding the practice.

CHAFEA intends to provide translations into all languages of the EU. For simple programmes, the proposal will be submitted in the language of the Member States unless the Member State says that they are willing to sign contracts in English. An English translation of the technical proposal will be asked. The quality will be assessed by external experts and this is why a translation will be necessary.

The three independent experts will look at the award criteria and there will also be consensus meetings. The Commission will look at possible conflicts of interest when selecting experts.

It was highlighted that there will be closer guidance on how to draft the proposals. Compared to the past, programmes cannot be improved once they have been submitted. Projects will be evaluated with the information provided at the moment of the submission and best quality will get the founding.

After the evaluation, the applicants will be informed. For multi-country programmes, CHAFEA will invite beneficiaries to sign the contract. In the case of simple programmes, following the Commission decision, the contract will be signed by national authorities.

- A CELCAA representative asked for clarification regarding the capacity of the online system, for instance if pictures should be sent in a specific format.

- A Cogeca representative stressed the importance of the guidelines and asked when they were going to be available to help the organisations with the submission.

- A FoodDrinkEurope representative thanked the Commission for its work in terms of guidelines. More information was asked regarding representativeness and financial capacity.

- A Copa representative asked if it was possible to include graphic information in the dossier. Information was also asked regarding the checks to the visual material and the way this was going to be assessed. It was also asked if it was necessary to have a scientific background to apply.

- The Commission Representative said that the proposal would have to be sent in a pdf format. Visuals will not be mandatory at the moment of the submission but operators need to comply with the rules.

Guidance documents will be finalised soon but the Commission needs to translate them so, they will be available in the coming weeks.

- A FoodDrinkEurope representative asked for more details regarding representativeness.

- The Commission representative said that the relevant market data and arguments will have to be presented. Then, it will be assessed on a case per case basis.

Regarding the way to present the proposals, the Commission is planning to limit the maximum number of pages to 70 for simple programmes and 80 for multi-country. Graphs can be included, in particular for market information.

- The chair concluded reminding the importance of submitting a good proposal bearing in mind that, once submitted, proposals cannot be amended. Therefore, it is necessary that the sector gets support in advance.

2. Information on the High Level Missions

a) State of play of the Promotion Campaign on Geographical Indications in China

- A Commission Representative explained the campaign currently on-going in China (please see the power point for more detailed information) that is focusing on Geographical Indications. On 6th May the event was launched in China together with several consumer roadshows in several Shopping malls and different products tasting events. Good press coverage of the event was got. The Campaign lasted over 7 months (grouping the products in six categories).

- The chair thanked the Commission for the presentation and the initiative and encouraged the experts to take an active role on these campaigns.

b) Information on the preparation of the next High Level Missions in Mexico, Colombia, China and Japan

- The Commission representative explained that the delegation to Mexico and Canada was going to be composed by 35 delegates. Different sectors will be represented. The Commission received more than 50 applications from 12 Member States. They will also be looking at parallel events to create some synergies.

The group was also informed that between the 16th and 22nd April a mission to China and Japan was going to be organised.

- A CELCAA representative asked for more information regarding other events organised in the past and its impact. It was also highlighted the importance of looking at possible events organised in parallel.

- A Copa representative asked when the candidates were going to be informed if they were selected.

- A FoodDrinkEurope representative asked for more information regarding the programme of the mission. It was also asked if the Commission was planning to organise a preparatory meeting with the delegation.

- The chair highlighted as well the importance to coordinate EU actions with national ones and the need to eliminate possible barriers to trade.

- The Commission explained that the programme was not yet known. Participants will be informed before Christmas and there will be a preparatory meeting in Mexico. The Commission explained that they try to coordinate as much as possible.

Quality

1. Presentation and exchange of views on the preliminary findings on the possibility for further simplification in the area of quality policy

- The Commission representative explained that the Commission was currently examining the contributions that they received with suggestions to simplify the quality policy. There is now an internal discussion on-going. The Commission explained that it was too early to present concrete proposals with regards to simplification of the GIs system for the moment.

Considering that the single CMO requires to update the existing implementing rules for wine, the Commission has already started working on the implementing and delegated act with regards to wine. A first meeting with Member States already took place.

The main idea was to introduce as far as possible amendments for oppositions, cancellations, etc by aligning them to the current procedure in the food sector because it was recently simplified.

PDO and PGI procedures in the wine sector are more burdensome than in the food sector. For example, for opposition and cancellation procedures in the wine sector, a good option would be to bring in the system developed in the regulation 1151/2012.

The Commission reflects about introducing the concept of minor amendments that already exists in the food sector, or amendments in the case of temporary modifications like for instance, natural disasters.

The intention is to have the texts adopted in the third quarter of next year 2016.

- The chair thanked the Commission and asked if a new regulation including some changes to the basic regulation was still a possibility. Then, the floor was open for questions/comments.

- The Commission representative explained that on the basis of the single CMO the Commission is obliged to replace some legislative texts for the wine sector to align them with Lisbon. Considering that the basic regulations are difficult to be amended, a possible approach is to simplify the administrative procedures as much as possible focusing on its implementation.

- A CELCAA representative reminded the importance of an efficient system to tackle for instance minor variations linked to animal feed, maturation, etc.

- An EFOW representative thanked the Commission for involving Member States and stakeholders in the simplification discussion and asked for the documents to provide more concrete output.

- A Copa representative stressed the difficulty to tackle simplification (that can mean a lot of things). It was highlighted that administrative procedures could be simplified if beneficial for producers. More harmonised procedures would be fine if the principles and the specificities of the different sectors are not affected. Clarification regarding the possibility to transfer the tasks to an Agency was also asked.

- The Commission reminded that the basic regulations are different. For example, regarding minor amendments for wine the Commission does not have

much margin of manoeuvre while in the case of food the Commission has more possibilities. This is why they are looking at the possibility to have a simplified procedure.

A non-paper prepared by the Commission is the basis for on-ongoing discussions. They have already received input from some Member States. The Commission is open to the ideas of the sector.

The idea of transferring the handling of registrations to an Agency is still being considered. Last October the European Parliament called upon the Commission to draft legislation on GIs for non-agricultural products and to give handling powers to an Agency.

- A Cogeca representative asked, considering its importance, to reassess the work that was done on local farming and short food supply chains. Many GIs are exclusively local and there should be some opportunities to highlight local production in a small area. The Commission was asked to come back on this. It is necessary to have an instrument to value local farming which is more and more successful on the market rather than direct sales.

- The chair agreed with the importance of this discussion on instruments to value local products and short food supply chains.

- An ERPA representative reminded the difficulties regarding definitions of short food supply chains, local farming or direct sales. It was agreed the interest to look at this topic again due to the importance for the sector.

- The Commission representative reminded that in 2014 they looked at direct sales and published a report. This report was presented to the European Parliament and Council and they did not show an interest in further action at EU level. Therefore, the discussion under this angle was closed by the European Parliament and Council. Regions in the EU have the option to include support for measures in their regional programmes.

- A Copa representative reminded the EU best practice guidelines for voluntary certification schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs. It was suggested to look at this further and reflect on the share of quality products in the market and how this can be increased to give prominence to these guidelines.

- A FoodDrinkEurope representative reminded as well the importance of these private initiatives and its success in the market.

- The Commission Representative explained that the Commission did not receive feedback regarding the guidelines.

- A representative from Copa stressed that the functionality of these guidelines should be expanded.

2. Debriefing on the outcome of the meetings organised at EXPO Milan on:

a) "Geographical Indications in a globalised world: a win-win for producers and consumers"

b) "A common control culture for geographical indications: a multi-level and multidisciplinary approach, best practice, public and private enforcement and the help of science"

- A Commission representative explained that two events on quality policy were organised on the occasion of EXPO Milan (please see power point presentation for more details).

The first one called "Geographical indications in a globalised world: a win-win for producers and consumers" brought together producers of Geographical Indications from within and outside the European Union to share their experience and to have and exchange of best practices.

The second event titled "A common control culture for geographical indications" examined the potential for a multidisciplinary approach to stop infringements and to make the IP enforcement with respect to PDO/PGI more powerful. Public authorities, private sector specialists and scientists responsible for legislating, detecting and preventing fraud were invited to the Seminar.

- The chair thanked the Commission for its presentation and the organisation of both events that were very interesting

3. Implementation of Regulation No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers:

a) Update and discussion on the implementation of voluntary origin labelling of foods (Art. 26.3)

b) State of play of the discussion on the COOL Study on unprocessed foods, single ingredient products and ingredients that represent more than 50% of a food (Art. 26.5)

- To conclude, the chair regretted that point 3 was not presented. The implementation of article 26 of regulation No 1169/2011 is very important for the Civil Dialogue Group. Indeed, implementation of article 26.3 is still missing and the CDG should be properly informed.

- A Cogeca representative highlighted the legal uncertainty regarding the implementation of article 26.3 and DG SANTE was asked to solve the situation.

- A CELCAA representative agreed with the previous comment and DG SANTE was again called to bring legal certainty.

For points 4 and 5 of the agenda, members were informed via written contributions.

Disclaimer

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