



Brussels,
AGRI.F/DCF

MINUTES

Meeting of the CIVIL DIALOGUE GROUP “QUALITY AND PROMOTION”

25 June 2024

Chair: Diego CANGA FANO, Director, DG AGRI Outreach, Research & Geographical Indications

All organisations were present (see the enclosed list), except: AREFLH, CEJA, ECVC, EEB, EFA, EMB, EPHA, ERPA, EUCOFEL, Europatat, EuroCommerce, FESSAS, PFP, Slow Food, and WWF.

1. Approval of the agenda and of the minutes of previous meeting

2. Nature of the meeting

The meeting was not public.

PROMOTION 9:30-12:30

0. Welcome the participants

The Chair welcomed the participants to the first meeting of the new Civil Dialogue Group.

List of points discussed

1. Exchange of views on the draft 2025 Annual Work Programme

The Commission representative informed that at this stage, the total available budget for the 2025 AWP is EUR 92 million (compared to EUR 185.9 million in 2024). The EUR 92 million will be allocated for Simple promotion programmes (same budget for Simple as in 2024). It is currently not possible to indicate an amount to be allocated to Multi programmes (EUR 84,4 million in 2024), to Commission own-initiatives (EUR 9 million in 2024), and to other actions or expenditure (EUR 0,5 million in 2024). If later in the year additional budget becomes available for Multi programmes, own-initiatives, and/or other actions or expenditure, an amendment of the AWP 2025 will be proposed for adoption.

The reduction in the budget of promotion programmes is a result of the revision of the multi-annual financial framework 2021-2027, which was endorsed by the Heads

of State on 1 February 2024. This reallocated resources within the EU budget and resulted in an overall reduction in the budget of agricultural promotion programmes. The draft budget 2025 proposed by the Commission reflects that situation and is currently discussed for adoption within the Council and the European Parliament.

A draft outline of the proposed topics and budget allocations for the 2025 AWP for Simple programmes was presented. The topics are the same as last year. For programmes in the internal market, the allocation to organic is reduced by EUR 4 million, of which EUR 2 million will go to quality schemes in the internal market, and EUR 2 million to simple programs in other third countries due to increase in applications in these topics. Currently, the budget for Multi programmes is 0, but if budget becomes available later in the year, the topics proposed will be the same as last year.

The representative from SAFE EUROPE remarked that when the funding for organic production promotion is reduced this would impact the sustainability of food systems and expressed concern about this.

The Commission representative highlighted that the funding for organics in the internal market was reduced slightly due to a low number of applications and little competition, while the funding for organic in third countries remained unchanged. He remarked that this funding was reallocated to a category where there is a lot of competition.

The representative from FRESHFEL expressed concern over the zero budget for Multi programmes. He reminded that the Commission encouraged applications for Multi programmes and that data showed strong interest and strong increase in applications for these programmes. He also remarked that the move to only Simple programmes could exclude from participating smaller stakeholders who depend on cooperation with other stakeholders. He highlighted that there will be much stronger competition for Simple programmes and many quality programmes might not be funded. He reminded that the sector is very affected by rising costs and increased competition and that the US has a large budget for agricultural promotion programs. He also noted the potential impact on REA of a reduced budget.

The Commission representative responded that now it is up to the Budgetary Committee of the Council and the Budgetary Committee of the Parliament to take decisions if to amend the draft budget 2025.

The representative from COGECA also expressed concern about the budget reduction. He highlighted the impact of Europe's increased support to Ukraine on EU Member States and the increased pressure on EU agriculture. He noted that this is to be considered in the context of Ukraine's agricultural market which has very large holdings. He remarked that opening the EU market to Ukrainian products already constitutes significant help to Ukraine and the scope of aid provided by the US to Ukraine is different.

The representative from FOOD DRINK EUROPE expressed concern about the reduced budget and noted that Multi programmes have strong added value and support exchange of experiences and more efficiency.

The representative from AVEC agreed with previous speakers. He noted that they are investing a lot in sustainability and that if they do not have the tools to

communicate why food will become more expensive in the future because of this, they will become more vulnerable to competition, including from Ukraine as in the EU the farming model is different. He highlighted that promotion support is ever more important, that these programmes reflect the spirit of the EU and funding for them is key.

The representative from IFOAM regretted the reduction of budget for organic and highlighted that IFOAM promoted the programme among their membership. She noted that there is no lack of willingness from stakeholders to apply, but rather that it is the specificities in the organic supply chain (such as the size of organic companies and the budget they can put forward at the beginning of programmes) that prevent access. She asked the Commission to consider the specificities of organic production.

The Commission representative thanked IFOAM for their support in promoting the programme, also together with the Commission, and reminded that there are sufficient applications for organics for third countries, but the challenge is with the number of applications in the single market. The Commission highlighted that there is no minimum amount for a programme in case stakeholders wish to put forward proposals for smaller programmes. The Commission also reassured that they are doing everything possible in case there is additional budget for Multi programmes to put this forward in the Call for Proposals alongside Simple programmes without delay in order to minimise uncertainty.

2. Submission statistics of the calls for proposals 2024 for SIMPLE and MULTI programmes

The Research Executive Agency presented the submission statistics from the Call for proposals for 2024 for Simple and Multi programmes: including the number of proposals received, the requested grant amounts, and comparison with the available budget. The Commission thanked stakeholders for their close cooperation with the Commission to develop outreach activities, which led to an increase in applications in comparison with the Call 2023. The overall number of proposals received is 36% higher than last year. Applications were received from 20 Member States.

The number of proposals submitted for the 2024 Multi call has increased by 52% compared to last year. The sum of grants requested is EUR 86.9 million, which is 109% of the available budget. The oversubscribed categories are internal market, internal market sustainable, and third countries all, while internal market fresh fruit and vegetables, internal market organic, and third countries organic sustainable are undersubscribed.

The number of proposals submitted for the 2024 Simple call increased by 32% compared to last year. The sum of grants requested is EUR 204 million, which is 234% of the available budget. All categories are oversubscribed except internal market organic.

3. Improvements to the implementation of the promotion policy (information on outreach activities and amendment of secondary legislation)

- Information on outreach activities during 2024

To counter the decreasing number of applications, the Commission increased outreach efforts to Member States in cooperation with authorities and stakeholders. Specific outreach activities during 2024 included the Info Day in Brussels, National Info days in FR, FI, SK, CZ, ES, and DE, and seminars with stakeholders (COPA-COGECA, IFOAM, OriGIn EU, and Confagricoltura). Moreover, the Commission services presented to the Council and the Committee of the Regions and led a social media campaign.

Due to collective efforts from DG AGRI, REA, national authorities, and stakeholders, the decline in applications was reversed for the 2024 call, notably for Multi programmes. These efforts will continue going forward.

- Amendment of secondary legislation - Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1829

The Commission noted the scope of the amendment to the Delegated Regulation includes:

- Clarification of the eligibility criteria under which proposing organisations may submit a proposal, in particular the ‘continuations rule’;
- Modernisation of financial management of programmes, in particular to include ‘lump sums’; and
- Strengthening the commitment to ensure the absence of any conflict of interest.

The Commission services informed about the indicative timeline for the adoption Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1829, which is as follows:

- Consultation of 1st draft with Member State experts [March]
- Consideration on the input received in the Expert Group [April]
- Formal consultation of Commission services [June/July]
- Written consultation of Member State experts on 2nd draft [July]
- 4-week publication at Have your say Portal for public feedback [August]
- Adoption by the European Commission [Autumn 2024]
- 2-months [+2-month long scrutiny period] of the EU Council and the European Parliament
- Publication

Once work on the amendment of the Delegated Regulation is finalised, the Commission plans to start work on the amendment of the Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1831.

The representative from COGECA noted they were glad that the procedure for the amendment of secondary legislation has started and that the consultation is underway because there will probably be a number of comments. He noted that he is hopeful that the legislation can be improved to provide more flexibility and that as a result the resources available can be used in a more targeted way.

The Commission representative reiterated that the Commission is doing their best to enhance flexibility within the current rules, as the basic act cannot be changed at this stage.

4. Own initiatives from the Commission: state of play

The Commission services gave a comprehensive presentation covering their own initiative actions on promotion. This covered:

1. Outcome of the High-Level Missions led by Commissioner Janusz Wojciechowski to India in December 2023, China in April 2024 and Kazakhstan in May 2024.
2. The EU pavilion at Foodex Tokyo in March 2024.
3. Ongoing promotion campaigns in Japan, the Republic of Korea, India, China, the United States of America and the United Kingdom.
4. Market Entry Handbooks: India (update, published 15/11/2023), China (update, published 29/11/2023), USA (update, published 18/01/2024), Kazakhstan (new, published 25/03/2024), Brazil (new, published 03/05/2024). To be published by September 2024: Argentina (new), Australia (update), Thailand (Update).

QUALITY 14:00-17:00

1. New Regulation on Geographical Indications (GI): state of play of secondary legislation

Presentation by the European Commission, AGRI F3.

The basic act entered into force on the 13th of May, the name is Regulation (EU) 2024/1143, and it concerns the three sectors of the Geographical Indications (GIs) Wine, Spirit Drinks and Agricultural Products, and the Traditional Specialities Guaranteed (TSG).

The architecture of the secondary legislation:

- 3 delegated acts
- 1 implementing act with its annexes.

The reason is that there is an inter-institutional agreement that prevents from adopting secondary legislation, using empowerments taken from different basic acts.

Therefore, the Commission will adopt two delegated Regulations on the basis of the empowerment in the Spirit Drinks Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2019/787) and in the Common Market Organization Regulation – so called CMO (Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013) to delete the provisions that will be obsolete in the current secondary legislation for wine and spirit drinks. There will also be one Delegated Regulation, which is the most important, to provide all the provisions necessary to have the procedures correctly working for all the sectors.

So, there are three delegated acts (two just functional and one being the main one) and one implementing act (laying down all the implementing rules for the three sectors) and its annexes.

The Commission started discussing secondary legislation immediately after the text of the Regulation was stabilised, beginning 2024. The Commission called three meetings of the competent Group of Expert and Committee to discuss the drafts with the Member States, in February, in April and in June.

In June the Commission called the first meeting of the new committee, the “Quality Policy Committee for agricultural products, wine and spirit drinks”, the “GI” committee in short.

The new implementing act is scheduled for vote in the GI Committee meeting of the 7th of October. The delegated act should then be adopted and sent for the scrutiny procedure for 60 days to the Council and European Parliament. If no objection during this period, the Commission will proceed to the publication in the Official Journal. The regulations are supposed to enter into force end of 2024, beginning 2025.

The four regulations should be published and enter into force on the same day because they are interlinked. There are provisions that work in connection with the provisions of the other regulations.

Concerning the substance, the future delegated and implementing regulations will contain basically technical provisions necessary to help the system properly functioning.

The delegated acts and the implementing act are essentially focused on the procedures and, in particular, on Union and Standard amendments, and some provisions on oppositions.

In general, compared to the current delegated and implementing acts, the provisions concerning the steps of the procedures have been further detailed to identify exhaustively the required actions and documents and to facilitate the practical application.

In the framework of this approach, the article on the Union Register of the GIs, listing the information to be recorded, has been radically changed, to identify the smallest details of the content of the Register.

COGECA thanks the Commission to give visibility on the next phases of secondary legislation and asks how operators are going to be consulted on the secondary acts. Commission was talking about implementing act, which should clarify a certain number of points, but COPA-COGECA is wondering about the implementation of the rules as regards to ingredients. There are certain other terms used in the legislation, which are not entirely clear. The regulation talks about sufficient quantities, about writing on the packaging which operators have been involved in the process. When it comes to avoiding problems when placing products on the market, COGECA wonders how they are going to be consulted in the thinking process around the implementing act.

CELCAA envisages guidelines because there are many questions on the interpretation of operators, under Article 37 §5, and other practicalities. CELCAA is also asking whether there is a possibility of being consulted.

The Commission explains how to intervene on the drafting of the secondary legislation. The draft delegated regulations have been discussed in the meetings of the group of experts, the draft implementing regulation and the annexes have been discussed in the meetings of the GI Committee. Therefore, they have been published in the respective Registers ‘Register of Commission Expert Groups and Other Similar Entities’ and the ‘Comitology Register’. The drafts are public and may be consulted. To convey the comments and reflexions, the CDG members could have expressed opinions either to the authorities of the MS or even directly to the Commission. Now the Commission is at the end of the process, so it is difficult to take into account further comments, but they are always welcome.

The general public will be consulted after the conclusion of the internal interservice consultation in the Commission so stakeholders will have one month to express their view in the “Have your say” system (Feedback Mechanism within the Better Regulation Portal of the European Commission), which is another transparency tool for the general public to have an eye on the legislation at Commission level.

The content of the secondary legislation, the delegated acts, and the implementing act, depends on the power that the legislator has given to the Commission. The Commission cannot decide on its own to legislate on any subject. For instance, in accordance to the new GI Regulation, the Commission has no power to further develop the definition of operator. The Commission is very limited in the empowerment to the procedure and to the implementing acts.

For article 27, the Commission has been empowered to adopt a delegated act. Article 27: “The Commission is empowered to adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article 87 supplementing this Regulation by laying down additional rules on the use of comparable products as ingredients and the criteria of conferring essential characteristics on the processed products referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article.” For the moment, the Commission considers that it is not necessary to legislate on this part because the article is self-applicable, and the Commission intends to adopt as a priority the procedural rules which will allow the system functioning as soon as possible. The Commission considers that reflecting and debating with MS possible rules on comparable products as ingredients and criteria of conferring essential characteristics on the processed products

could be done later on. It is very sensitive and complex issue. For the moment, Article 27 is sufficient and self-applicable for this kind of interpretation.

COPA supports what **COGECA** said regarding ingredients rules in the new Regulation 2024/1143. It would be interesting to know to which extent the CDG members will be involved in a further drawing up of the rules. **COPA** would like to share initial experience regarding ingredient rules in Article 27. It spoke with producers in Austria, about PGI and PDO agricultural products and they were all very happy that there are now clear rules in the EU regulations, not only recommendations and Commission guidelines. There is a legal certainty now but of course there are still open points and **COPA** is very much looking forward to seeing how everything is dealt with in the secondary legislation and how these rules will be used in practice.

The COMMISSION answered referring to what was said before on the said Registers and the Feedback Mechanism.

Since the Regulation has entered into force on 13th of May, the Commission has received questions of interpretation. The questions come from the Member States, as well as from private operators. The Commission is reflecting on how to have more transparency and how to help the operators in a smooth application of the new regulation.

2. Proposal for Regulation on packaging and packaging waste: state of play Presentation by the European Commission, ENV B3.

The regulation is a big package of measures. The packaging regulation has been approved. The final adoption is still to come by the end of the year, after the conclusion of the legal revision procedure. Considering all the work done, the Commission is pleased that a compromise has been reached, even though there are remaining concerns. The approval of the text was achieved with different levels of support. Some regretted the reduction in ambition, others expressed concerns about the reuse target or the impact of the mirror clause on international trade.

The regulation is now going through several stages. It was endorsed by the Council representatives and by the Parliament. There was a strong majority in the Parliament plenary vote in April (476 votes in favour, 129 against, and 24 abstentions).

It is now undergoing translation into all languages and revision by lawyer linguists to ensure the legal consistency. This process takes a few months.

The political agreement is still provisional, and both the Council and the Parliament need to adopt the text by the end of 2024. After this it will enter into force after publication, and it will become applicable 18 months later.

The Commission still has a lot of work. The regulation will be complemented by the secondary legislation. Standards will need to be developed in different domains, such as sustainability criteria for reuse and recycling, home, or industrial composting, labelling and digital marking technology, packaging minimisation, recycle content, certification.

This will involve technical work and consultations, so the Commission welcomes all involvement from stakeholders.

Considering GIs in the regulation, it was considered in Article 10 about packaging minimisation. This measure is proposed so that packaging is designed with minimum weight and volume. It will be based on performance criteria and there will be prohibition of misleading packages. The performance criteria will come in the secondary legislation. The Commission proposes exemption for packaging design subject to GIs because GIs

are key for consumer protection, fairness in the markets, brand integrity and cultural heritage. We can also say that marketing and consumer acceptance is important for packaging design, but it cannot be the main criteria to justify additional packaging weight and volume. This is why the Commission proposes measures on packaging minimisation. The Commission also takes into account that the regulation should not compromise the product specification, especially in food and agricultural products, when packaging is registered and protected under GIs. The exemption is for packaging design for GIs. It must not be confused with packaging of products protected by a GI.

The chair asks to elaborate more in details on the exemption of packaging for the GIs before giving the floor to the CDG members.

The Commission cannot provide more detail for the time being because most of the work on that subject is still to be done during consultations in the next phase for the secondary legislation. The main part of GIs will come in delegated and implementing acts. There is only one sentence giving an exemption in Article 10. Article 10 is about packaging minimisation. It says that every packaging will have to be reduced at its minimal weight and volume for its function, but considering GIs, it is only a sentence offering an exemption. Most of the performance criteria and the exemptions will come in the secondary legislation.

FRESHFEL intervenes to remind that the fruit and vegetable sector is the only sector with specific rules in the Annex 5. This sector is committed not to use packaging. 50% of the fruit and vegetable across Europe are already sold loose, with variation between MS.

(Part not translated – machine translation from audio recording)

There are huge elements of subsidiarity. The first element is the fact that a list of products that could be exempted from the phase-out of packaging now needs to be drawn up. A European list and criteria established at Commission level are needed to allow MS to draw up their own list. Otherwise, this will create a huge distortion of the functioning of the internal market, and it is likely to generate more packaging waste if it is necessary to remove such packaging for certain destinations.

The second element, on which FRESHFEL works with DG AGRI, is how to justify certain exemptions. It is something extremely complex, for example, it cannot be said that kiwi should be exempted because there are differences between green kiwi, yellow kiwi, baby kiwi or red kiwi. The latter two are probably products that would deserve an exemption.

Nobody puts packaging for pleasure, it has a cost, so it must have an added value. The added value is the preservation of quality, avoiding losses, and all this will be reflected in another obligation of the sector, which is the calculation of footprint.

Good marketing and labelling of products are necessary in order to be able to promote them. If products are not allowed to be packaged, there will certainly be a disadvantage for the sector.

There is a need for information and understanding of the new rules to know the types of investment that need to be made, which are long-term investments.

There is no single market for recycling costs, nor recycling targets. Some packaging has a very high recycling cost. Incentives should be put in place to make the most of the impact of regulation.

The Commission confirms that FRESHFEL's concerns are important for the Commission and replies to FRESHFEL with two points that should be taken into account.

First, the list of fruit and vegetables subject to packaging restrictions or exemption was discussed. The example of the kiwi is a good one, and there, once again, the Commission is in listening mode when it is working on these types of lists. The partners as FRESHFEL are key for the Commission, they have a great deal of expertise, and the Commission looks forward for their feedback on the constraints that they have.

The same for training and awareness raising, as well as the link to investment for industry. There again, the Commission understands that the industry needs to hear what is happening, they need support for sustainability, but they need to have a necessary time in order to make sure that the supply chain is running smoothly and can be renewed.

The Commission also has to devote time to working on the secondary legislation. While industry is speaking with us, they can also work within their own organisations and try to do their own awareness raising work.

Looking forward to the future, 2025 is around the corner, but 2030 is further away. The Commission has chosen regulation to see as much harmonisation as possible.

And once again, the Commission wants to do all this hand in hand with stakeholders. And of course, the Commission is going to be discussing all of this with MS at the same time. The more harmonisation and organisation there is at European level, the more straight forward all this this is going to be for operators to implement the rules.

Also, it is true, no one creates packaging for the fun of it, it has got a purpose and the Commission realises that. The Commission always starts from the point of view that packaging is necessary to transport products, to guarantee the safety during transport but there is the question of packaging waste. That is the problem and that is where we have to do more, and that is the whole point of this regulation.

The Commission wants to work across the entire value chain. And here we are picking up on the comment that was made on recycling because recycling is at the end of the chain and it is linked to its initial stage, that is why we promote ecodesign. Often, we put too much burden on the end of the chain, recycling, whereas it is very difficult sometimes for organisations to recycle packaging, which has been initially conceived in such a way that it makes them difficult to recycle. That is true for lots of different plastics and multilayers, where the whole polymerisation process is involved. So that is something that need to be incorporated from the very initial stage, all the way through the value chain, to avoid unnecessary packaging and waste. There has been some sensitive discussion on how you define packaging for fruit and vegetable as necessary or unnecessary. That is where the Commission needs to be in a listening mode to really know what the stakeholders have to say. That is the whole point of this dialogue. The Commission is always in the spirit of dialogue, particularly in the work phase on secondary legislation, knowing that the text has been provisionally approved and will be adopted by the Council and the EP without any other substantive modification.

3. Sustainable practices for GIs: interventions from the sectors

The chair introduces the presentations from stakeholders on how they are applying sustainability.

a. Sustainable approach for PDO dairy products under the new GI Regulation (CNAOL)

See PPT – Dairy sector

b. Examples of actions undertaken by wine PDOs in terms of sustainability (EFOW)

See PPT – Wine sector

c. Introduction to the GI SMART Project (AREPO in collaboration with Euromontana)

See PPT

The chair has a question for CNAOL and for EFOW. Sustainability has an history and the speakers explained that work has been going on for years, but since the entry into force of the Regulation a month ago, the chair asks whether CNAOL has noticed more interest for the affiliate on sustainability, and whether the implementation of the regulation has accelerated the work on sustainability that was already ongoing.

CNAOL answers that the GI Regulation is a further move in the direction of the work that was already going on. As the Commission has made it possible to introduce sustainability into the specification, CNAOL is expecting a lot from this regulation in France and looks in the way how it is going to be integrated and applied by the authorities in France, particularly the INAO to enable producers to have access to this sustainability dimension. There are numbers of PDOs, whose specifications have been reopened with a view to making them more sustainable. So, this work in a sense was done before the reopening of the specifications in several different cases and the GI Regulation is making it possible. It is a way of reassuring that everyone is moving in the sustainable direction.

EFOW put the question to their members and carried out a study before the reform to try to understand what the situation was and what the needs were.

(Part not translated – machine translation from audio recording)

[...] not only at the level of the ODG, but at the level of individual producers. As part of the preparatory work for the reform of GIs, various ODGs realised the work they had to carry out to enable operators to integrate more sustainability into their practice. Ultimately, the Commission has focused on the importance of sustainability issues and operators have taken advantage of this opportunity. What is clear to everyone is that climate change is there, operators need to adapt, they have concerns about inputs in agriculture, even organic farming, they do not have enough trained professionals, there is a lack of young people returning to the profession. If they want their organisation to survive, they must be more attractive not only for consumers but also for new entrants. The reform has therefore helped to raise this awareness and the fact that the Commission has focused on sustainability on the three pillars and launched the GI SMART project, ensures that operators continue to ask questions and try to see what they can do. What EFOW sees above all is that there is a lack of leadership and some parts, for certain names and countries, of funding. The objective for EFOW and GI SMART, which is interesting for all operators under the name is to find guides on funding to implement these practices.

Safe Food Advocacy Europe intervenes to say that it is part of the GI SMART project. As a consumer organisation, they try to have some results to explain what sustainability in food to the consumer is really. They are pleased to participate to this project and show the results to the consumers.

COPA asks what is going to happen with the results of that study and if it is going to be applied at small scale by producers. For example, in Austria, there are companies who are producing artisanal cheeses. Can the guidelines be applied at that small scale by individual producers?

COGECA asks whether sustainability in the GIs has an economic impact and what are the sustainability indicators. In the GIs, there are 3rd country GIs, which are recognised in the European Union. COGECA would like to know if this is reflected in the study.

GI SMART project representative explains that the GI SMART project has a multiple level approach. It is based on a scientific approach to identify different types of sustainability indicators based on previous studies. This GI SMART project is the continuation of the STRENGTH2FOOD project that already identified several sustainability indicators. It also aims to develop what is already going on in France, a kind of a sustainability observatory, which include environmental, economic, and social dimensions. That is the research part of the project. The second level is the platform, based on the collective groups that are supporting GIs in different countries. Depending on the EU countries, GI producers do not have the same support. In some countries it is very strong, such as in France where there is institutional support. In some other countries it is not that well organised. One of the key questions addressed by the GI SMART project is also to identify the nature of eco-system and the nature of support that is needed to address this question of sustainability with local producer groups. It will be the first step to identify the needs of the small producer groups.

In some countries like in France for example, CNAOL is supporting small producers by giving advice and one of the objectives of the GI SMART is to see in other countries how to help the small producer groups at a local level. GI SMART is to be inclusive and to disseminate the information that could be helpful for producer groups.

For the question of COGECA, there are several levels of sustainability indicators. The first approach is the scientific literature review. In the EU call project, the first step is to have the sustainability assessment for all the 3000 GIs in Europe. That means that you cannot have a very detailed sustainability indicators, you need to have macro-indicators. One part of the project will be to identify quantitative sustainability indicators that are simple enough to be monitored and defined, and that are collected at EU level.

The other part of the approach to adopt is a participatory approach to sustainability indicators. That means that in some cases, you can have a local approach, where producers are defining their own sustainability indicators, depending on a specific production system, specific environment. It is an approach that can be very useful if we consider sustainability as dynamic, not only quantitative sustainability indicators but also managed at local level by producers. That is why there is this comparative project to identify what is done in different countries and how we can try to find a common shared basis for these sustainability indicators.

Behind that very strong methodology issues, the scientific level, the GI SMART project will help to consolidate the type of indicators that seem to be useful, implementable and that can help producers to improve their own production system.

CNAOL answers for the question referring to the economic impact of sustainability in the GIs. On financial feedback, for various actors and several years now, CNAOL has seen a difference in milk price of traditional and protected milk. In early 2024, the difference of the two prices was around 100 EUR for a thousand litres between the two types of milk. Of course, financial questions are a sticking point where organisations need to be supported because CNAOL does not have specific data on geographic origin in the sectors in question. For that reason, CNAOL tried to help organisations providing them with information and tools, which will allow them to set up a financial monitoring centre for their organisation or at least within their regional sector. CNAOL has seen very good return on investment for this project with respect to sustainability, certainly as reflected in the difference in milk prices, which has been seen for a number of years now.

That price difference has not decreased. In fact, it seems to be on the rise. But in any case, that is also allowed operators to create value and to share it over their territory.

EFOW adds that, because there is a big difference in prices and in return on investment, not only between different appellations but also between different operators with the same designation of origin.

(Part not translated – machine translation from audio recording)

There has never been a real challenge to sustainability, it is an investment that is needed. Operators use sustainability to differentiate themselves from other operators. In winegrowing, three-quarters of the wines are covered by a geographical indication or designation. Operators who have invested in certification schemes are those who believe that sustainability is fundamental to getting closer to the consumer and to remain competitive in the market.

4. Results of the OQT Mountain Product Study (AREPO in collaboration with Euromontana)

See PDF file

Question of the floor on quality terms

For the time being, the Commission is following the works of the project that was concluded, the Commission was very interested in the report and is following what Euromontana is doing. There was absolutely no request from stakeholder when the Commission did its impact assessment on the review of the GI regulation concerning optional quality terms, in particular mountain products, so the Commission has delegated this to the MS and it is up to them to implement and take it on. There is nothing that is planned by the Commission, but it is always listening.

5. AOB

The Commission takes the floor for an information point on where it stands with the working arrangements on who could assist the Commission administratively as part of the joint declaration of the co-legislators during the reform of the GI regulation.

The Commission has an administrative agreement with the EUIPO. It covers several points, and it is a sub-part of a big memorandum of understanding, which the Commission has with the EUIPO. It covers many aspects, not just agricultural policy, and GIs.

Based on the new regulation, which gives specific roles to EUIPO as regard the register for GIs and a domain name alert system, the Commission must completely rework this administrative agreement. The EUIPO has changed its executive director. He has his own point of view on our working relationship, he has recently reorganised the EUIPO.

EUIPO is taking over the non-AGRI GIs, it is a lot of work on their side on this, they are going to have to manage the whole process for that, whereas the Commission is managing the whole process for AGRI GIs. The Commission is discussing with them how to have some synergies because they will do a lot of communication on non-AGRI GIs.

The Commission wants to share the text with the stakeholders to be coherent. It mostly needs to agree on how the relationship will work for the register, which EUIPO now must manage and keep up to date and on the domain name alert system.

There might be something agreed this year, which the Commission will present to the CDG. The Commission has first a duty of transparency towards the MS and the co-legislator and the Parliament, which are very clear on what we could and could not do. The Commission hopes to have the discussion in autumn, but the timing is not in its hands, the two sides have to agree.

The chair concludes the meeting and thanks all the participants and the interpreters.

3. List of participants

Disclaimer "The opinions expressed in this report represent the point of view of the meeting participants from agriculturally related NGOs at community level. These opinions cannot, under any circumstances, be attributed to the European Commission. Neither the European Commission nor any person acting on behalf of the Commission is responsible for the use which might be made of the here above information."

List of participants– Minutes
Meeting of the CIVIL DIALOGUE GROUP “Quality and Promotion”
25 June 2024

ORGANISATIONS
AREPO - ASSOCIATION DES RÉGIONS EUROPÉENNES DES PRODUITS D'ORIGINE
BEUC - BUREAU EUROPÉEN DES UNIONS DE CONSOMMATEURS
COPA - "EUROPEAN FARMERS / COMMITTEE OF PROFESSIONAL AGRICULTURAL ORGANISATIONS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
AVEC - ASSOCIATION OF POULTRY PROCESSORS AND POULTRY TRADE IN THE EU COUNTRIES
CELCAA - EUROPEAN LIAISON COMMITTEE FOR THE AGRICULTURAL AND AGRI-FOOD TRADE
CEPM - EUROPEAN CONFEDERATION OF MAIZE PRODUCERS
EFOW - EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF ORIGIN WINES
ELARD - EUROPEAN LEADER ASSOCIATION FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT
EUROMONTANA
EAPF - EUROPEAN ALLIANCE FOR PLANT-BASED FOODS
FACENETWORK - FARMHOUSE AND ARTISAN CHEESE AND DAIRY PRODUCERS' EUROPEAN NETWORK
COGECA - EUROPEAN AGRI-COOPERATIVES / GENERAL CONFEDERATION OF AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATIVES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
FOODDRINKEUROPE
FRESHFEL EUROPE
IFOAM - INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE MOVEMENTS EUROPEAN REGIONAL GROUP
ORIGINEU - ORGANISATION POUR UN RÉSEAU INTERNATIONAL D'INDICATIONS GÉOGRAPHIQUES
SAFE EUROPE - SAFE FOOD ADVOCACY EUROPE
TPE - TRADE PROMOTION EUROPE
OBSERVERS
EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE
AD-HOC EXPERT
INRAE - UNIVERSITÉ PARIS SACLAY