

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

**Directorate H: General aspects of rural development and research**  
**The Director**

Brussels, 25.11.2014  
AZ/nm/h.3(2014)4226410-3922459

To the 29 NGOs who are member of the civil dialogue group on rural development

Dear Sir/Madam,

The new European rural development policy<sup>1</sup> further developed the European Rural Development Network (ENRD) and created the European Innovation Partnership network (EIP). According to this legal framework, the Commission shall set out organisational structures and operations for both networks replacing the current ENRD Coordination Committee and Leader Sub-committee.

Commission Implementing Decision 2014/825/EU of 21/11/2014<sup>2</sup> sets up a new joint organisational structure for both, the ENRD and the EIP network consisting of:

- a) a Networks' Assembly endorsing the overall networks' activity comprising all relevant stakeholders (approx. 200 members, thus more inclusive than the current ENRD Coordination committee);
- b) a smaller Steering Group (maximum 48 members) for the operational management of the networks;
- c) sub-groups for thematic work such as agricultural innovation, Leader and Community led local development, evaluation of rural development policy or any other rural development topics to be identified by the Networks' Assembly.

***Rural Networks' Assembly***

The Assembly will operate as Commission Expert Group. Its members will be public and private entities active in rural development and innovation for agricultural productivity and sustainability, and not individuals in their personal capacity. It will be convened at least once a year under the chairmanship of the Commission. The first meeting is expected to take place 26 January 2015. Details will be sent to the members.

According to article 4 of the Decision, the Assembly's membership includes EU-wide non-governmental organisations who are members of the civil dialogue group on rural development pursuant to Decision 2013/767/EU and who have expressed their interest in participating in the Assembly. I therefore hereby kindly ask you to express the interest of your organisation in being a member of the Rural Networks' Assembly and, if this is the case, to nominate your permanent representative, via the link indicated below.

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Commission Implementing Decision setting up the organisational structure and operation for the European network for rural development and for the European Innovation Partnership network and repealing Decision 2008/168/EC, OJ L 334 of 21/11/2014.

### ***Rural Networks' Steering Group***

The Networks' Steering Group set up by article 7 of Commission Implementing Decision 2014/xxx/EU will be composed of members of the Networks' Assembly. Steering Group members will be proposed by the Networks' Assembly based on the voluntary commitment of the proposed members. Steering Group members are expected to be ready and capable to carry out a significant amount of work for preparing, implementing and following up the activities of the ENRD and the EIP network. A minimum of 3 meetings per year is expected as well as regular exchanges and contributions all over the year.

In order to prepare the proposal of the Assembly, it is appropriate to identify as soon as possible the Assembly members who volunteer for being a member of the Steering Group. If your organisation is interested in being a member of the Assembly, I hereby kindly ask you to indicate whether it also volunteers for being part of the Steering Group by ticking the appropriate box in the on-line form.

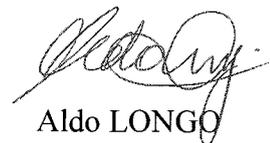
### ***How to express your interest in being member of the Assembly and of the Steering Group***

Please express the interest of your organisation in being a member of the Rural Networks' Assembly and Steering Group via the following on-line form **by the 5 December 2014**: [Rural Networks' Assembly](#).

The details of your organisation and of its representative in the Civil Dialogue Group on Rural development are already included in the form. Please update them if necessary.

For further guidance or questions, please contact Ms Antonella Zona, DG AGRI.H3, by e-mail: [agri-networks-assembly@ec.europa.eu](mailto:agri-networks-assembly@ec.europa.eu)

Yours faithfully,



Aldo LONGO