



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Directorate I. Legal, institutional and procedural matters
The Director

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MINUTES

Stocktaking of Civil Dialogue Groups

Date: 1 February 2019

Chair: Mr Michael Niejahr (MN), Director AGRI.I

Participants: Secretaries-General of CDG member organisations and Chairs of the 13 CDG groups; Commission services DG AGRI, SG, TF 50, SANTE, TAXUD (cf. list of participants).

The agenda focussed on two main topics, namely Brexit and the functioning of CDG groups.

1. BREXIT: PRESENTATION OF THE DRAFT WITHDRAWAL AGREEMENT AND THE COMMISSION PREPAREDNESS ACTIVITIES

The Commission services (AGRI, TF 50 and SG) presented the draft Withdrawal Agreement and the Commission Preparedness Activities (information available in the ppt presentations: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/farming/eu-agriculture-and-brexite#documents>). An exchange of views followed.

2. FUNCTIONING OF CDG GROUPS

2.1. One year of AGM (“Advanced Gateway for Meetings”)

[redacted] summarised the first year experience with AGM. She reminded the workflow and advantages of this online system for organising meetings. IT also provided information about AGM correspondents, participants’ registrations and reimbursements. IT suggested contacting the CDG secretariat team via FMB [redacted] about the above-mentioned topics, and for technical queries on AGM - the EC AGM Support team [redacted]. She provided links to useful pages on the AGM portal as well.

Main issues raised by the CDG representatives and comments/replies by the Commission services:

2.1.1. Transmission of documents

- It is not possible to send meetings documents via AGM. CIRCABC remains the main communication platform with the member organisations. Works are ongoing to make more formats of documents possible for upload in AGM.
- DG AGRI has caught up with the minutes' backlog for the 2017-2018 meetings. The procedure for finalizing minutes has been improved and further efforts will be made to approve the minutes as soon as possible after the meeting.
- As a general rule, DG AGRI sends the meeting invitations to the organisations (via AGM and CIRCABC) 20 working days before the meeting, as required by Art 5.3 of the Commission Decision 2013/767/EU.
- DG Interpretation (SCIC) confirms room/interpretation reservation only 8 weeks before the meeting. Invitations cannot be sent earlier as they imply a financial commitment.

2.1.2. Scheduling of meetings

- The dates of the meetings are agreed between the chairs and operational units when the annual DG AGRI meetings calendar is prepared (autumn each year).
- The provisional calendar of CDG meetings is published on the Europa website: https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/civil-dialogue-groups_en
- Whilst scheduling dates for CDG meetings, more use should be made of Mondays and Fridays. In fact, on these weekdays more resources, in terms of language interpretation and rooms, are available (N.B.: DG AGRI is bound to give priority to comitology and expert groups meetings; DG SCIC guarantees only one meeting per DG per day; if CDG meeting is scheduled on the day a Committee is to take place, the CDG meeting will be given 2nd priority when attribution of resources is handled at DG SCIC level 8 weeks before the meeting).

2.1.3. Representativeness

- In accordance with the Commission Decision setting up a framework for civil dialogue in matters covered by the common agricultural policy, the Director-General of DG AGRI decided in July 2014 on the composition of the CDG groups on the basis of a call for applications. In accordance with the aforementioned Decision, member organisations are appointed for seven years. No changes are foreseen before the end of this time period.

2.1.4. AGM

- The Front Office of AGM will shortly be translated from English into other languages (works ongoing). Manuals, however, are already available in other languages for download on the AGM Portal.

- Currently documents can only be sent in PDF via AGM. Discussions ongoing so that, in the coming months, it should be possible to send other types of documents (e.g. minutes) via AGM after the meetings.
- Registration to meetings - experts shall fill in their personal details in AGM ahead of the meeting (e-pass is generated by AGM).
- The AGM closes after 30 days following the meeting – it is no longer possible to claim reimbursement.

2.1.5. Experts in CDG meetings

- It is not allowed to send two different experts to the same CDG, even when it is divided into two meetings that treat different topics. There is no possibility to send two experts while reimbursing only one of them either.

2.1.6. Elections

- The member organisations are reminded to send the applications by email to the Functional Mailbox: [REDACTED] within the deadline mentioned in the invitation to the meeting.

2.2. Study on CDG

[REDACTED] presented the *Study on Civil Dialogue Groups for the CAP – Analysis of EU Policy Consultation* (see the presentation in attachment). She explained the steps related to the preparation of the study, including the kick-off meeting, which took place on 10.01.2019. [REDACTED] went on to speak about the methodology, the case studies and the timetable of the study. She also invited stakeholders to actively collaborate, e.g. with an online questionnaire, interviews and workshops.

Main issues raised by the CDG representatives and comments/replies by the Commission services:

- The term ‘indirect participation’ refers to the involvement of local NGOs via their umbrella organisations. Indirect participant = the lower-level member of (higher-level) European-wide umbrella organisation (=Civil Dialogue Group Member Organisation)
- The results of the study will fuel into the Commission internal discussions. N.B.: the Commission is not committed by the conclusions of the study but the latter may provide useful ideas for the future of the CDGs.
- The online-questionnaire is not only addressed to main organisations, but also to national stakeholders. The individual experts and the Commission policy officers will also be addressed. The contractor counts on a substantial data input from the Member organisations to have a solid basis for the analysis of the results of the questionnaire.

- Volunteering for interviews is welcome. The Commission will address the request to the study contractor. The selection criteria for case studies were established by a Steering Group composed of representatives of officials from DG AGRI and many other DGs.

Michael NIEJAHR

Enclosure: Ppt presentations made at the Stock-taking meeting
List of participants

List of participants– Minutes

*Stocktaking of Civil Dialogue Groups – Exchange of Views
1 February 2019*

MEMBER ORGANISATION	NAME OF REPRESENTATIVE
AnimalhealthEurope (formerly known as IFAH-Europe)	
Association des régions européennes des produits d'origine (AREPO)	
CEMA - European Agricultural Machinery Industry Association (CEMA)	
COGECA (Chair of the CDG on Forestry and Cork)	
Confédération Européenne de la Production de Maïs (C.E.P.M)	
Confédération Européenne des Entrepreneurs de Travaux Techniques Agricoles, Ruraux et Forestiers/European Organisation of Agricultural, Rural and Forestry Contractors (CEETTAR)	
Confédération Européenne des Propriétaires Forestiers (CEPF)	
COPA	
COPA (Chair of the CDG on Environment and Climate change)	
COPA-COGECA (Chair of the CDG on Animal Products)	
COPA-COGECA (Chair of the CDG on Arable Crops)	
COPA-COGECA (Chair of the CDG on International Aspects of Agriculture)	
COPA-COGECA (Chair of the CDG on Organic Farming)	
COPA-COGECA (Chair of the CDG on Rural Development)	
COPA-COGECA (Chair of the CDG on Wine)	
EU Association of Specialty Feed Ingredients and their Mixtures (FEFANA)	
EuroCommerce	
Euromontana	
European agri-cooperatives (COGECA)	

European Alcohol Policy Alliance (Eurocare)
European Confederation of Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois)
European Confederation of Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois)
European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC)
European Council of Young farmers (CEJA)
European Environmental Bureau (EEB)
European farmers (COPA)
European Federation of Rural Tourism (Eurogites)
European LEADER Association for Rural Development (ELARD)
European Liaison Committee for Agriculture and agri-food trade (CELCAA)
European Milk Board (EMB)
European Organisation of Tomato Industries
European Rural Community Alliance (ERCA)
Farmhouse and Artisan Cheese and dairy producers' European network (FACEnetwork)
Fédération Européenne pour la Santé Animale et la Sécurité Sanitaire (FESASS)
Fertilizers Europe
FoodDrinkEurope (Chair of the CDG on Horticulture, olive and spirits)
FoodDrinkEurope
International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements EU Regional Group (IFOAM EU Group)
PREPARE Partnership for Rural Europe
Ruralité-Environnement-Développement (RED)
Slow Food
Union De Selvicultores Del Sur De Europa, AEIE (USSE)

SMEUnited (formerly known as UEAPME)	
Union of European Foresters (UEF)	

European Commission:

Representatives of different policy units in DG AGRI, including: Michael NIEJAHR,	
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