



UNISECO

UNDERSTANDING & IMPROVING
THE SUSTAINABILITY OF AGRO-ECOLOGICAL
FARMING SYSTEMS IN THE EU

Multi-actor Approach in the UNISECO Project: Emerging Lessons for Future Research

AUA-HUT-ELO

Monitoring and evaluation of MAPs

13.30 - 14.30

Online Workshop, 14th of May 2020



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement N° 773901.



This presentation comprises:

- Programme of workshop on Multi-Actor Approach in UNISECO: Emerging lessons for future research: *slide 3*
- An overview of Multi-Actor Approach applied in UNISECO: *slides 4-7*
- Monitoring and evaluation of the performance of MAPs: *slides 8-15*
- Questions for discussion in break-out groups: *slides 16*

Instruction for MAP and PAG members:

- **Before the workshop, 14th May:** access the MAP-NEF for further information about the Multi-Actor Approach in UNISECO
- You are welcome to provide feedback, opinions and recommendation before the workshop

Objectives

- Present the Multi-Actor Approach adopted in the UNISECO project
- Discuss the potential benefits and impacts of such approaches with MAP and PAG members

Programme

- 13.30 - Plenary session: Introductory presentations of the overall transdisciplinary approach used in UNISECO with Q&A
- 13.45 - Parallel sessions: Discussion in 3 break-out groups
- 14.15 - Plenary session
- 14.30 – End of session

Objectives

- To develop and test new transdisciplinary methodological approaches in policy research and analysis;
- To set-up the Multi-Actor Platforms (MAPs);
- To identify and interpret societal expectations using participatory process with stakeholders and end users (practitioners, educators etc.);
- To engage end users in the process of sustainability assessment;
- To empower end users through familiarization with the use of sustainability assessment tools;
- To facilitate internal communication amongst partners concerning transdisciplinary methods.



Overall Aim

To integrate the knowledge of partners, with their different scientific backgrounds, with the experiences of stakeholder groups, and so strengthen the sustainability of EU farming systems through co-constructing practice-validated strategies and incentives for the promotion of improved agro-ecological approaches.

Multi-Actor Platforms (MAPs) pools of key actors associated with agro-ecological farming systems at European and case study levels

- Guidelines for MAP members selection
- A guide to transdisciplinarity for partners
- Design, monitor and evaluate the performance of MAPs

Management of Multi-Actor Platforms and stakeholder coordination

Guidelines for selection of MAP members

- Interest
- Availability/Commitment
- Relevance
- Appropriateness
- Representativeness
- Suitability
- Gender
- Age
- Geographical spread

EU-level MAP established: 14 members

Case study-level MAPs and Stakeholder Reference Group established: 238 members

Development of the transdisciplinary approach, training and guidance on its application

General principles for engagement:

- Respect
- Sharing
- Listening
- Attention
- Teamwork

Monitoring and assessment of tools and approaches used

Literature Review

Evaluation of transdisciplinary research is considered complex

- integration of knowledge from various disciplines
- development of dynamic methodologies that are context-specific, problem-oriented
- inclusion of non-academic societal actors with heterogeneous types of knowledge, values and interests

Development of a monitoring and evaluation framework

- Set objectives of the evaluation
- Define evaluation questions and select appropriate assessment criteria
- Systematic process for collecting, analysing and reporting feedback

Objectives

- Assess the performance of the MAPs in promoting co-learning and capacity building of key stakeholders at EU-level and in the case studies
- Focus on the “moments of engagement” in which the UNISECO partners interact with various actors through participatory processes
- Monitor and evaluate the planning, implementation and completion phases of group activities
- Adjust and improve the approach based on feedback from members of MAPs and project partners



Operational	Process	Outcome
Participant profiles	Representativeness	Network building
Design of the process	Access to resources	Capacity building/ social learning
Level of involvement	Group dynamics	

A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods

Observation and reporting/debriefing sheet

ANNEX 1: DEBRIEFING/REPORTING SHEET

(to be filled out by the UNISECO partner/organizer after the activity)

Team member/organiser	
Activity/Task	
Purpose/objective of the meeting	
Date and location of event	

Participants' profile

1. Total number of participants involved in the activity (#)

2. By gender (#, %)

Female	Male

3. By age category (#, %)

<29	30-39	40-49	50-59	>60

4. By participants' types (based on their professional background)

Farmers	Authorities	NGOs	EU, international bodies

Concerning the group dynamics, please indicate to what extent...

(1. Not at all / 2. To a small extent / 3. To a moderate extent / 4. To a great extent)

	①	②	③	④	Comments
were all views well taken into account by others?					
did participants respect opposed opinions?					
did conflict/opposition occur during the activity?					
did participants talk over each other?					
did all participants have the opportunity to communicate their opinions? (facilitator made a roundtable)					
were participants open to communicate and share their views with the project member (asking questions, providing feedback)?					
did participants collaboratively and constructively work?					
did participants start an open dialogue and discussion between them?					

A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods

Participant's questionnaire

ANNEX 2b: PARTICIPANTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Activity/Task: [.....]

Code: [.....]

Gender: Female Male

Professional background:

Origin:

Please indicate the level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements, we would really appreciate

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
<i>Based on the information that was given when I was invited...</i>					
The objective(s) of the meeting was/were clear to me.	①	②	③	④	⑤
The information was relevant to the issues raised during the meeting.	①	②	③	④	⑤
The information helped me understand the issues at stake.	①	②	③	④	⑤
<i>Considering that the [theme, objectives,...] of the meeting was/were [.....]</i>					
I think that all interests have been represented in today's meeting.	①	②	③	④	⑤
I think that there were groups, associations, persons that could contribute to the discussion today but have not been invited.	①	②	③	④	⑤
I think that all participants had a fair chance to express their opinion.	①	②	③	④	⑤

I think that there was overrepresentation of opinions, interests.	①	②	③	④	⑤
<i>During the meeting</i>					
When today's meeting started, the objectives of the meeting and my role were stated clear to me.	①	②	③	④	⑤
The content of the meeting was relevant and consistent to my needs and interests.	①	②	③	④	⑤
There was enough time allowed to express views and pose questions.	①	②	③	④	⑤
The facilitator was active in ensuring a good flow of the discussion.	①	②	③	④	⑤
I felt that I could trust the team members with whom I collaborated.	①	②	③	④	⑤
I felt comfortable in sharing my viewpoint.	①	②	③	④	⑤
I had always the opportunity to express my point of view.	①	②	③	④	⑤
I felt that all participants were open to constructive criticism.	①	②	③	④	⑤
I felt being manipulated by powerful participants to accept their views.	①	②	③	④	⑤
<i>Other comments, issues you would like to mention</i>					

At EU level

- Stakeholder workshop in Helsinki (May 2019)
11 completed questionnaires
- Stakeholder workshop in Basel (November 2019)
6 completed questionnaires

At case study level

- Social Network workshop (Task 5.2)
42 completed questionnaires
- Decision Support Tools results (Task 3.2)
22 completed questionnaires
- Barriers of transition and policy analysis of existing instruments (Task 5.3)
55 completed questionnaires

Lessons Learnt from Evaluations at EU Level

- Participants need adequate support of information in order to participate effectively
“received the agenda rather late and no (clear) indication of the meeting’s objectives” (EU-MAP, Helsinki workshop)
- Fair representation of key actors ensuring diversity of interests, knowledge and values
“scientists were the majority ... influenced the discussions” (SRG, Basel workshop)
- Create good relationships and mutual trust - equal access and capacity to participate
“some voices need extra help” (SRG, Helsinki workshop)
- Relevance and consistency with attendees’ needs and interest
“content was not easy to understand” (SRG, Helsinki workshop)
- Allow enough time and resources to support participatory processes
“there was no time to go deep enough to get to criticism” (SRG, Basel meeting)

Lessons Learnt from Evaluations at Local Level

- Only one third of the local MAPs provided written comments
- Issues of representation are considered crucial (*half the comments received*)
“more farmers could be invited” (LT), “the industrial sector is missing” (ES), “intensive farmers” (CH), “the majority of participants were agronomists”(GR)
- Need for adequate resources to deal with complexity
“It was very useful to receive the discussion questions in advance, so that we could prepare better” (SE), “tight schedule for complex topics” (DE)
- Engagement creates opportunities for interaction with local actors
“Thanks to this meeting, I had the opportunity to discuss with representatives of the biodistrict” (IT)

Questions for Discussion in Break-out Groups

Questions proposed for discussion in smaller groups, aiming to obtain information concerning experiences so far, issues of what is and/or not working well.

- Do the MAPs bring together knowledge (experiences and perspectives) from different sectors and levels?
- Do you believe the MAPs promote mutual learning among different participants and integrate feedback into the research process?
- How satisfied are you with collaboration/your role/contribution into the MAPs?
- How can we improve our learning and communication through this approach?
- Which of the UNISECO outcomes/results/products do you expect to implement in practice?
- From your perspective what defines success in a transdisciplinary project?

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