

Report on the National Workshop in Slovenia

Biotechnical faculty, University of Ljubljana, Rodica, 14.6.2017

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This report presents the outcomes of the discussions at the PEGASUS WP5 national workshop in Slovenia. The workshop was separated into three parts:

- 1) Presentation of the PEGASUS project, its conceptual framework and emerging findings, illustrated extensively with the Case Study results;
- 2) External review of the project by Irma Potočnik Slavič (University of Ljubljana Faculty of Arts) and Andreja Borec (University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Agriculture and Life Sciences);
- 3) Round table with stakeholders: Alojz Lipnik (Slovenian Forest Service), Stanka Dešnik (nature park Goričko), Damijan Denac (DOPPS), Jurij Borko (Središče ob Dravi municipality), Igor Ahačevčič (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food) and Anton Jagodic (Agriculture and Forestry Chamber of Slovenia).

The list of attendees is presented in the Annex.

We first present the main points of the external reviewers, which may be useful for further project work:

- The deliverables should be simplified, shortened and made more accessible to the end-user
- It was suggested that the concepts of attractiveness and flexibility be included in the ESBO concept
- A shortened list of the criteria for the selection of the studied areas should be included in the literature review
- The project webpage should include a section with the main findings in national languages of the partners, which could help develop the relevant terminology in the respective languages
- The presence of weak links was perceived as one of the major messages of our research, as was the lack of durable and more extensive connections. The concept of rural webs (van der Ploeg and Marsden, 2008) was suggested as an explanatory concept for the different mechanisms of ESBO provision, while the life-cycle of rural areas was suggested to be applied in order to clarify success factors in rural initiatives.
- Cooperation was seen as a crucial element of our CS discussions; awareness of ESBOs and importance assigned differently among different groups of stakeholders should be taken into account.
- There should be a closer link between ESS from agricultural land and products coming from this land; mechanisms for recognition of these in the market should be used more to achieve value added; working on their recognisability in an integrated value chain with cooperating parties was confirmed as a crucial need.



Session 1 – Lessons emerging from the project so far

Questions for the discussion: *Is there any salient point that emerges as being particularly relevant/not relevant or not accurate to the situation in your country? Are there any other points specific in your country not included in the emerging findings so far?*

The main points of the discussion with stakeholders covered:

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It was pointed out (Dešnik) that cultural specificities and the historical setting must be taken into account and that time (patience) is needed: rural people cannot be moved easily or quickly, even more so if demographic indicators (age, education) are unfavourable.

In Slovenia, there is a need for a clear strategy that is followed and does not change every time the government does (Borko). Slovenia is also severely over-legislated, making it difficult to function. In addition, we tend to set much higher standards than the EU, making our own lives more difficult (bureaucratized) and shedding a bad light on the EU from the national perspective.

Session 2 – Messages for practice

Questions for the discussion:

- *How can local or thematic initiatives such as those examined in the case studies, expand their reach/impact, be replicated/transferred, and/or become more effective?*
- *What key qualities or actions/stepwise processes do participants need to adopt, to develop and achieve success? Please assess how participants' needs might differ between different groups of stakeholders, and different environmental or social goals targeted, in different contexts, etc.*
- *Who are the key people to involve, to enable long-lasting change? Why?*
- *What are participants' needs in terms of the types of maps or other basic information which would be useful in this context?*
- *What format should PEGASUS' tools and guidance take, to spread success across rural areas?*

The main points of the discussion with stakeholders covered:

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It was pointed out several times that we must be more patient and persevere when trying out a new initiative, not give up at the first sign of trouble (Borko, Lipnik). The conflict between nature conservation and other interests (incidentally, the conflict nature-farming was seen as artificial and introduced from abroad by an attendant from the audience, as farmers already consider themselves to be stewards of nature) will also be smaller if the idea is good (Lipnik). The need for good stories was corroborated by several other attendants (Ahačevčič, Denac, Borko). It is also prudent to start out with a small pilot project – not to over-invest (Lipnik), and lead with a good example (Dešnik; e.g.,



a small cheese factory was built and other producers followed suit when it turned out to be successful). Perhaps, when met with a standstill, it is good to receive help from an external organization (Lipnik, e.g. Mountain wood support by UL, which helped with the communication with higher state levels). Good **communication** was stressed as crucial by almost all participants (Jagodic, Borko, Denac, Ahačevčič), notably when communicating new rules: if farmers understand their rationale, they are much more likely to accept new restrictions. **Education**, both formal and informal, was also emphasized by several attendants (Dešnik, Lipnik), especially given the position of small farmers in a globalized world (Ahačevčič). It was also mentioned that success stories from abroad needn't necessarily be copied directly, but should be learned from instead (Denac, Lipnik). Conversely, sometimes outsiders are better able to perceive potentials than the local populace and can perhaps show how these might be better valorised. To illustrate this, a positive response of the local community to practical recommendations of the PEGASUS field study in Središče ob Dravi was pointed out (Borko).

Session 3 – Messages for policy

Questions for the discussion:

- *Do the emerging findings of the project and discussions in previous sessions imply that policy change is needed? If yes, what change (e.g. policy design, implementation/delivery, scale of action, etc.)? What types of policy measures do you feel are currently missing (please use examples if possible)?*
- *Are there serious constraints preventing the achievement of the environmental and social goals? In what areas?*
- *How has policy (in combination with other factors) contributed to success?*
- *What opportunities are there for developing public-private interactions?*

The main points of the discussion with stakeholders covered:

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On a practical level, soft communication skills for state representatives addressing farmers and good education were again pointed out by several attendants as crucial (Jagodic), manifesting in interdisciplinary knowledge as mandatory for all public employees (Stanka) and incentivization for work according to a definite purpose (Attendant).

It was pointed out that cooperation is already an element in all new European projects, which emphasize cooperation amongst actors, so this is already a direction in which the EU is going (Jagodic). This also involves knowing the research of other research groups.





Practically all roundtable attendants **confirmed the need for a paradigmatic change**, as simply refining a perhaps outdated system is no longer suitable (Denac, Ahačevčič, Borko, Lipnik, Dešnik). It was pointed out that direct payments per hectare have no effects or even negative ones from the point of view of ESBO provision, and that policy needs much stronger cross-sectoral cooperation (Lipnik; Dešnik: we have too many sectoral policies to manage only one space [landscape]). The possibility of having several thematic RDPs was pointed out as a viable option to adapt policy to specific needs (Ahačevčič, Jagodic), e.g. to those of young farmers. On the other hand, a caveat was also voiced regarding constantly changing directions – it was suggested that before changing policy, the results of the current one should be allowed to manifest (Ahačevčič).



Attendees to the PEGASUS WP5 national workshop in Slovenia		
Name	Organisation	Type of stakeholder
Ahačevčič Igor	MKGP	State (ministry)
Ambrožič Ana	BC Naklo	Education (higher)
Bedrač Matej	KIS	State (Agricultural institute)
Bojkovski Danijela	UL, BF	University
Borec Andreja	UM, Euromontana	University/NGO
Borko Jurij	Municipality Središče ob Dravi	
Cunder Tomaž	KIS	State (Agricultural institute)
Denac Damijan	DOPPS	NGO
Dešnik Stanka	JZ KP Goričko	Public institute
Domanjko Gregor	JZ KP Goričko	Public institute
Erjavec Emil	UL, BF	University
Huber Suzana	JZ KP Goričko	Public institute
Jagodić Anton	KGZS	State (Agriculture/forestry chamber)
Jože Prah	ZGS	State (Forest service)
Juvančič Luka	UL, BF	researcher/organiser
Kocjančič Tina	UL, BF	researcher/organiser
Kopač Primož	UL, BF	student
Koprivnikar Mihael	KGZS	State (Agriculture/forestry chamber)
Libertin Ariana	MKGP	State (ministry)
Lipnik Alojz	ZGS	State (Forest service)
Planina Marija	MKGP	State (ministry)
Potočnik Slavič Irma	FF, UL	University
Prijatelj Videmšek Maja	Delo	journalist
Rac Ilona	UL, BF	researcher/organiser
Šumrada Tanja	DOPPS	NGO
Turšič Vesna	UL, BF	student
Udovč Andrej	UL, BF	University
Vrisk Maja	UL, BF	student
Vurunič Suzana	ZRSVN	State (Nature conservation institute)
Zemljič Darja	Kmečki glas	journalist
Zgonec Mojca	MKGP	State (ministry)
Zgonec Uroš	MKGP	State (ministry)
Zupančič Jan	UL, BF	student

