

# THE REVIEW

of the French Rural network

n°13 1<sup>er</sup> semestre 2018



**COOPERATION IN ACTIONS**

The first semester of 2018 was punctuated by the publication of the proposals of the European Commission on the future budget of the Union and the proposed regulation of future European funding for the period 2021-2027. The choices made will have a major impact on the direction and manner in which rural development and our agriculture will be supported.

On 2nd May, the Commission produced its budget proposals, which France still hopes to be able to influence as regards the budget allocated to agriculture and rural development. On 1st June, the Commission made known its legislative proposals for the next CAP: strategic objectives, common to all the Member States will be fixed at the European level, leaving the Member States more subsidiarity in the design of services. In order to ensure the consistency of their actions, the Members States will be required to draw up a strategic plan linked to two pillars. Thus, the Rural Network will be extended to become a "CAP Network", which will have the same objectives as currently, in particular the dissemination of information, capitalisation on good practice and networking.

At the same time, the proposals concerning the cohesion policy have also been communicated. For France and the rural regions, the challenge is to maintain a European policy of ambitious cohesion, simpler to implement and closer to the regions. This is the purport of the cohesion report, a joint product between the State and the different community associations, presented at the Conférence nationale des territoires, the National Conference of the Regions last July. This paints the portrait of a new regional France and of the challenges which we have to deal with collectively to consolidate social and economic cohesion. The national agency for regional cohesion, the Agence nationale de la cohésion des territoires, a commitment made by the President of the Republic, which will see the light in the months to come, will constitute a precious tool to provide even more support for all the regions in their development projects.

The beginning of the year has also been marked by the start of work on the Loi EGAlim, the law on France's National Food Conference (États Généraux de l'Alimentation). Following the National Food Conference, which was held in 2017, a White Paper "for a balance in commercial relations in the agricultural and food industry and healthy and sustainable nutrition" was presented by Stéphane Travert on 31st January 2018. This proposes improving the balance in commercial relations in the agriculture and food industries in order to ensure that the farmers are fairly remunerated. It also translates the government's desire to implement a food policy which preserves the health capital and the economic capital of everyone. To allow each person to have access to safe, healthy, sustainable nutrition, among other things, it promotes mass catering comprising at least 50% of products from local, organic farming or bearing quality labels.

Finally and more specifically in the context of the Rural Network, the award winners of the second call for the "Collective mobilisation for rural development" project have now been published. Their projects, which aim to produce, capitalise and disseminate work for improving the implementation of the rural development policy have begun and will extend over three years. The discussed themes are varied, including agro-ecology, public services, the territorialisation of food policies and the development of regional cooperations.

The challenge for the cooperation groups working on rural development - which they are implementing through LEADER, the European Partnership for Innovation and other procedures and programmes - is at the heart of the dossier in this review. We hope, of course, that while enjoying a pleasant read, you will find opportunities to cooperate and to network!



**Valérie METRICH-HECQUET**

Director General for economic and environmental performance of enterprises (DGPE)



**Serge MORVAN**

Commissioner General for the equality of the territories (CGET)



**Gilles MERGY**

Director General of Régions de France





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## COOPERATION IN ACTIONS

Whether locally, regionally, inter-territorially or transnationally within the EU or with third countries, cooperation plays a key role in European rural development programmes. It promotes openness, cohesion, innovation, the sharing of tools and good practice, etc. Implemented by local action groups (LAG) within the LEADER Programme or by operational groups (OG) within the European Innovation Partnership (EIP), this strategic lever is at the heart of numerous projects implemented by the stakeholders in the Rural Network and their partners on various topics: oyster farming, tourism, silver economy, living arts, digital technologies, agro-ecology, etc. Challenges and illustrations.





Plenary session during the national LEADER meeting at Grau-du-Roi.

## Sharing tools and experience to advance projects

On 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> December 2017, the first national meetings for the LEADER cooperation 2014-2020 were organised and held by the Rural Network of Grau-du-Roi (Gard). This seminar brought together some 200 persons from all over France: coordinators of local action groups (LAG); representatives of the Regional Rural Networks, of management authorities and of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food; project providers. Several participants also made the journey from Belgium, Turkey and Bulgaria to meet the French LAG.

Plenary sessions shed light on the cooperation between the French and European LAG, and also with third countries. This cooperation favours implementing innovative projects, with the idea that the transfer of good practice between regions represents a real lever for rural development.

The thematic and technical workshops allowed the participants to share their experiences and to acquire the tools for cooperation: methodology of finding a partner, aid in drafting a cooperation agreement. Among the projects presented was a participative mapping application developed simultaneously by the LAG from Garrigues in Costières, Vidourle-Camargue and Cornwall, and by the Parc naturel des plaines de L'Escaut (Belgium). "This seminar has been the opportunity for a first work session with our Walloon partner," reported Frédéric Cambessedes, a local development officer.

In parallel, the 'cooperation fair' allowed the LAG to identify potential partnerships and to form relationships with stakeholders involved in themes close to their own. "We have been able to find a LAG partner which is working like us on the silver economy, a very specific subject," said a delighted Mathilde Sire, from the Pays Dignois LAG.

Finally, visits to enterprises and institutions in the Petite Camargue provided the opportunity to discover local activities supported by the LEADER and EMFF funds in Grau-du-Roi: renovation of the lighthouse, tourist development of fishing professions, among others.

### "Cooperation, a resource for our local projects"

Amélie Perraudeau, representative for the Marennes-Oléron LFAAG\*, stressed the benefits of cooperation: "In April 2017, we developed exchanges with a Senegalese delegation from the Sine Saloum delta, where the oyster farming industry is emerging. Formerly, we had organised study visits with stakeholders in the Bassin d'Arcachon, because the regions and the industries have similarities. Currently, we meet with the three other LFAAG in Nouvelle-Aquitaine to exchange on questions of circular economy (management and exploitation of shell and organic waste). Finally, the seminar at Grau-du Roi has allowed us to resume contact with the Vidourle-Camargue LAG to discuss the topic of tourism, with a view to a possible future partnership. These exchanges and experiences are very enriching!"

\*Local Fishing and Aquaculture Action Group

Key figures...

**340**

LAG in France, or 80% of the national territory covered.

**93%**

of the French LAG were involved in at least one cooperation project during the programme LEADER 2007-2013.

## Studying the roots of cooperation

InsTerCoop (Institute of cooperative territories), a new member of the National Rural Network, is studying cooperation from a new angle, analysing its implicit mechanisms. Some insights offered by the co-founders of this action-research-transmission centre.

InsTerCoop (Institute of cooperative territories), the new member of the National Rural Network, focuses on studying cooperation in all its dimensions and on producing knowledge to put it into action. Founded in 2015 by Patrick and Anne Beauvillard, InsTerCoop is an **action-research-transmission centre devoted to one question: how should we cooperate?** Responding to this represents a huge challenge: *"Cooperation is an indispensable lever for transitions, for transition is necessarily transverse,"* says Patrick Beauvillard. *"Ecological transition, for example, is at the same time democratic, social, economic, etc. But the large majority of research on cooperation is limited to the visible portion (the tools, the methods of governance, the decision process, etc.) and does not study its implicit portion, its roots."* For the co-founders of InsTerCoop, however, it is these "roots" - representations, beliefs, cognitive strategies, history and geography of a territory, etc. - which allow us to understand what generates or destroys cooperation. InsTerCoop is also studying cooperation from a systematic angle through which *"the territory, the action matrix, the stakeholders as social communities and the persons as individuals are woven together"*.

**"Cooperation is an indispensable lever for transition, for transition is necessarily transverse"**

*"Being a member of the National Rural Network allows us initially to observe closely the dynamics of territorial cooperation in the network,"* suggests Patrick Beauvillard. Observation has moreover been the first stage in the action-research of InsTerCoop. In 2016,

Anne and Patrick Beauvillard actually covered 1,500 kilometres on foot to make the acquaintance of 36 cooperative collectives in the Pays de la Loire, Drôme, Ardèche and Lot-et-Garonne. *"The idea was to identify on the ground the implicit mechanisms of cooperation."* For this, the couple put in place a scientific report, entitled the Observatory of the Implicit, notably based on exchanges with the stakeholders in the territories and the direct analysis of their experiences. The knowledge acquired allowed them to bring to light 12 "Principles of Cooperation Action". *"They form the concept of 'cooperative maturity', that is to say, the capacity to develop sustainable cooperative skills, whatever the situation and the persons involved,"* explains Patrick Beauvillard. More than a sum of knowledge, InsTerCoop's work is intended to become a real organisational and territorial development tool. In order to pursue its research and to try out its principles on the ground, the Institut des territoires coopératifs responded to the last call for MCDR projects.

For more information on InsTerCoop, the Observatory of the Implicit, the Principles of Cooperation Action or the concept of 'cooperative maturity', please visit the Institut des territoires coopératifs website.

<http://institut-territoires-cooperatifs.fr>



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## LEADER: driving force for "working together"

LEADER is the first European programme to acquire a fund dedicated to developing and implementing cooperation projects, and an historic pillar in European cooperation. Katalin Kolosy, the France correspondent for ENRD, summaries the evolution and principles of the LEADER cooperation.

*"This type of meeting is ideal for discovering how cooperation projects are implemented and especially the pitfalls encountered by the stakeholders."* Katalin Kolosy, France correspondent for the ENRD, relates her experience of the Cooperation Forum organised on 23rd November 2017 at Brive-la-Gaillarde (19) by the Regional Council of Nouvelle-Aquitaine. Intended for the territories and stakeholders involved in LEADER, the event brought together 150 participants, with the objectives of simplifying exchanges and generating cooperation projects. But what is a LEADER cooperation, exactly? *"It is 'working together', participating in a common action,"* summarises Katalin Kolosy. *"Cooperation offers numerous benefits: it allows the territories to boost their development strategy (by testing new ideas, for example), their cohesion, identity and image, to exploit what is produced locally or else to discover new ways of thinking and acting, while benefiting from financial support."*

LEADER cooperation projects can be organised at **different levels**: inter-regional, national and international, with a Member country or a country outside Europe. The presentations on 23rd November provide good illustrations. In the Massif central, for example, seven cultural partners from four different regions are jointly undertaking actions intended to boost the role of the living arts as a dynamic for innovation and territorial development. Mention should also be made of the cooperation put in place between the Nouvelle-Aquitaine region and Quebec in order to exchange good practice on ways of organising social, interdependent entrepreneurship.

*"In Europe, LEADER has always been a driving force for cooperation, which itself is the foundation of the European Union,"* recalls Katalin Kolosy. *"It was under the influence of the first LAG that LEADER II (1995-2000) was provided with a fund dedicated to implementing cooperation projects. It was the first European programme to do so, with the exception of INTERREG, which at that time solely envisaged cross-border cooperation."* Over the course of time, the cooperation part has evolved. Thus, with the current programme, it is not only possible to obtain financial



Katalin Kolosy, France correspondent for the ENRD

support for making cooperation projects work and implementing them, it is also possible to **sustain the costs linked to establishing a partnership** (feasibility studies, exploratory visits and so on), even if nothing comes of this. *"This is a good thing,"* believes Katalin Kolosy. *"Too often we forget that initiating a cooperation procedure means to taking a risk; it does not always succeed."*

What does the future hold for the next programme? *"That is really uncertain with the budgetary restrictions on the horizon,"* explains the ENRD correspondent. *"However, in the face of the lack of unity in Europe, if there is one thing worth preserving, it is cooperation!"* Katalin Kolosy thinks that it would be necessary to **tighten up the LEADER programme around the cooperation theme**, which is optional at the moment, and to simplify its terms and conditions: *"It is very complicated for the stakeholders to obtain their funding, because they each have to mobilise their own regional and/or national administrative circuits. We should rather have confidence in them and entrust the financial management to the leader on behalf of all the cooperation partners."*

### 3 resources to take it further

#### EU Rural Review No. 11: LEADER and cooperation

<https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/enrd/files/8C9DF7E2-0F3D-B371-FBE4-C01C9989F6EF.pdf>

#### LEADER Transnational Cooperation Guidance (Revised version – October 2017)

[https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/enrd/files/leader\\_tnc-guidance.pdf](https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/enrd/files/leader_tnc-guidance.pdf)

#### Rural Connections – Printemps 2016

<https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/enrd/files/publi-enrd-magazine04-2016-fr.pdf>



Cooperation Forum organised on 23rd November 2017 at Brive-la-Gaillarde

## Smart Villages: promoting cooperation and innovation in rural regions

The recognition of the innovative and development potential in the rural territories is making itself felt nowadays as a major European challenge. At the heart of the discussions is the setting up of political and operational frameworks in favour of Smart Villages, a concept in which cooperation plays a central role.

It is known that the rural territories, by virtue of the diversity of their activities (services, tourism, technological and industrial industries, etc.) and stakeholders and their capacity to cooperate, possess considerable potential for innovation and creativity. *"However, current European policies do not allow us to exploit this potential to the full,"* believes Gérard Peltre, President of the RED association (Rurality, Environment, Development). *"The rural territories are almost uniquely considered as annexes to the urban centres and places of agricultural production."* This is why a dynamic of defence and promotion of the rural territories as centres of development and innovation is being organised at RED's initiative with the support of the organisations of the European Countryside Movement and the European Committee of the Regions. Its code name: Smart Villages. Its imperative: **a European rural agenda for after 2020**, in other words, a political and operational framework to carry forward the European political ambition to develop the rural territories. *"We believe in fact that it is only with a strategic vision, identified financial resources and the terms and conditions to access it and very high speed Internet access that it will be possible to develop Smart Villages: municipalities or groups of municipalities in the project rural territories, where cooperation and networking, digital technologies and social, economic and environmental innovation stimulate the economic and residential attractiveness by offering efficient, modern services to the populations and entrepreneurs."*

### "Setting up community cooperations to progress better and faster"

Today, the Directorate-General for Agriculture at the European Commission is fully aware of this challenge. It is focussing on the LEADER programme and the mobilisation of cohesion policies to attain this objective. Due to the Cork Declaration, A Better Life in Rural Areas, it launched the EU Action Plan for Smart Villages.

This comprises **16 actions for the promotion of Smart Villages**. Among these are the creation of a working party within the ENRD (European Network for Rural Development) and the launching of a definition and feasibility study for Smart Eco-social Villages, in which the RED association is one of the parties involved. *"The objective is to bring forward examples of digital, social or other territorial innovation and to capitalise on them to arrive at a strategic framework recommendation for implementation. The subjects include: health, quality of life, economic innovation, culture, energy; mobility and the environment,"* explains Gérard Peltre. Although the results of the study will not be published until the end of the year, a large number of initiatives are already in existence in Europe. Some of them were moreover applauded on 22nd May in Brussels, at a seminar organised by ENRD, with the participation of the NRN. An example in France is Rezo Pouce, an organised, secured hitch-hiking network, created by local communities in Tarn-et-Garonne and Haute-Garonne. It now exists in more than 900 municipalities, mainly in the South-West.

With the development of the Smart Villages and the recognition of the added value of the rural territories, a real **cooperation between urban, rural and peri-urban zones is maintained**. *"The towns are not the only driving forces for development; each territory has its own characteristics and its assets. Defending the recognition of the diversity of the rural and even peri-urban territories does not mean opposing the territories; on the contrary, it creates optimum conditions for intelligent cooperation projects between them,"* maintains Gérard Peltre. *"For example, it is impossible to deal with the challenges of COP 21 (reduction of greenhouse gases, energy transition, biodiversity, etc.) or of feeding the population without mobilising the rural areas. We must therefore set up local cooperations to deal with shared concerns to progress better and faster."*

More information...

[https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/smart-and-competitive-rural-areas/smart-villages/smart-villages-portal\\_fr](https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/smart-and-competitive-rural-areas/smart-villages/smart-villages-portal_fr)

[www.ruraleurope.ovh](http://www.ruraleurope.ovh)



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## Bringing together researchers and farmers to encourage innovation

Financed under the EIP-AGRI scheme, Inno4Grass is an information exchange network on innovation in the European grasslands, launched in February 2017. Arno Krause, the coordinator of the project based in Germany, highlights the challenges and the new methods of cooperation implemented by the partners involved.



### What are the challenges for the Inno4Grass project?

**Arno Krause:** Inno4Grass means 'shared innovation space for sustainable production on the grasslands in Europe'. Our aim is to circulate as widely as possible scientific innovations and farmers' knowledge of innovative practices, in order to increase grassland productivity and the profitability of livestock farming, while

preserving the environment. To do this, we are creating **synergies between the new practices in the agricultural world and the recent results of basic research**. Our network brings together around twenty very varied partners (farmers' organisations, research institutes, Chambers of Agriculture, agricultural training establishments, etc.) from eight European countries: Germany, France, Italy, Ireland, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, Belgium. In these States, grasslands form a large part of agricultural land and the production of milk and meat represent a major economic sector.

### In practice, how is information collected by the network?

The project extends over three years. In total, we will carry out 85 case studies and conduct 170 interviews with farmers in order to identify the best innovations at the international level. We will also generate innovations thanks to close cooperation

between the stakeholders in research and those on the ground. The information produced will be centralised in a database. In addition, physical meetings and exchanges on social networks will be encouraged. In total, at least 144 workshops will be organised. Once they have been summarised and reformulated to allow them to be widely circulated, these elements will be reorganised into a **large grasslands knowledge base**. We are developing a management information system (MIS), intended to allow the data to be easily consulted, depending, for example, on specific local climate features. In parallel, we are organising meetings and events in all the participating countries.

### Which innovative working methods do you implement?

To circulate the innovative ideas developed on the farms, we are going to produce about a hundred summary sheets describing these innovations, as well as videos. We are also going to launch a Wikimedia, a participative system for creating and managing contents. The final objective consists in **making the information accessible to a maximum number of persons**, including after completion of the project, in order that students can benefit from it and that farmers can appropriate the innovations, which have been tried out on other farms.

More information...

[www.inno4grass.eu/fr/](http://www.inno4grass.eu/fr/)

# COLLECTIVE MOBILISATION INITIATIVES FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

## MOOC for cooperation in agriculture

Thanks to the MOOC agricultural cooperation, initiated by Services Coop de France, 9,000 persons have been able to learn about the characteristics of a scarcely known type of enterprise linked to social economy: farming cooperatives. Three online training sessions have been organised between April 2016 and April 2018.

How does a farming cooperative work? What are its principles? What careers are possible in this sector? These questions were at the heart of the MOOC\* farming cooperative. This MCDR project has registered not less than 9,000 subscribers. Students, professionals, the simply curious, French nationals or French-speaking foreigners (45% of the audience) have followed the course on line to find out about the farming cooperative system. **"The objective of MOOC was to introduce the cooperative model to the largest possible number of people,"** explains Adrien Nicey, the Project Manager. *"This model is in fact scarcely known to the public at large. In addition, it is still hardly taught in comparison with the capitalist model. Similarly, the cooperatives are often obliged to train their new employees in this model."* The third and last MOOC training session ended last April. The two previous sessions took place in 2016 and 2017. Supported by Services Coop de France, the project has also brought together five other partners: AgroParisTech, Coop de France Rhône-Alpes-Auvergne, Coop de France, Haut Conseil de la Coopération Agricole and Agreenium.

Each MOOC session was organised around five training weeks and some ten or so teaching sequences. Approached via **video presentations from stakeholders and experts in agricultural**

## Promoting the farming cooperative model



**cooperation**, the subjects in the programme were varied: the birth and emergence of the cooperative movement, specific governance of farming cooperatives, their economic weight, the careers possible within them, etc. This offers the opportunity, for example, to discover that farming cooperatives represent a market of 95 billion euros, that one food brand out of three originates from a farming cooperative or else that there exist 650 professions (from marketing to production via R&D) in agricultural cooperation. *"MOOC has also allowed us to tackle the interesting points about this model,"* adds Adrien Nicey. *"In particular, that it promotes employment in rural areas - 90% of the registered offices remain in their region of origin - and that a cooperative belongs to its members, who are at one and the same time customers and suppliers."* An original feature of the MOOC is that the trainees can test their knowledge via a serious game. *"They put themselves in the place of a co-operator: what are the conditions needed to start up a cooperative? How do you make it grow?"* A new course on line is being looked at for the future. *"An enhanced MOOC, which will award a real diploma,"* reveals Adrien Nicey.

\* Massive open online course

More information...

[www.fun-mooc.fr/courses/course-v1:AgroParisTech+32002+session03/about](http://www.fun-mooc.fr/courses/course-v1:AgroParisTech+32002+session03/about)





## AGIS

### Opening up agriculture to society to promote setting up and passing on agricultural businesses

*"Agriculture is not just a technical issue, it is also a social issue. Our objective is to develop public policies to encourage the next generations to take it up and to integrate into the world of agriculture persons who do not come from it."*

This is how Vincent Jannot, the Director of the Terre de Liens national association summarises the ambition of AGIS (agriculture and social innovation). The purpose of this MCDR project, which he has been leading since 2015, is **to broaden the panel of stakeholders working within agriculture**, especially making a case for setting up and passing on agricultural businesses. His association and his partners (Reneta, Relier, Fadear and FNCivam) organise their work around five themed axes: giving 'non-traditional' and 'non-specialist' stakeholders, in particular the citizens and inhabitants of the territories, the skills to act upon agricultural and agri-rural issues; supporting social innovation to give access to farming as a profession; making the link between agriculture and territorial development more obvious; creating a resource centre for the governance of agricultural land

organised jointly between stakeholders in the territory (farmers, civil society, communities, etc.) and finally developing tools to promote access to the land and the development of agricultural enterprises.

In order to encourage dialogue and the sharing of experiences and practice, the AGIS project has organised various elements: seminars, videos, a methodological guide on collective social access to the land, an enquiry on agricultural housing, the *Arpenter* and *Chemin de Terre* reviews. *"Collectively led, these projects bring together researchers, citizens, institutions and associations,"* clarifies Vincent Jannot. *"In particular, they shed a new light on the citizens who are involved in agriculture, on what interests them and why."* The last event organised within the AGIS framework: a conference on 15 May brought together many organisations dedicated to the issue of "Ways of setting up and passing on agricultural businesses: to what extent are new generations and careers involved?" as well as project providers.

More information...

<https://terredeliens.org/MCDR-AGIS.html>

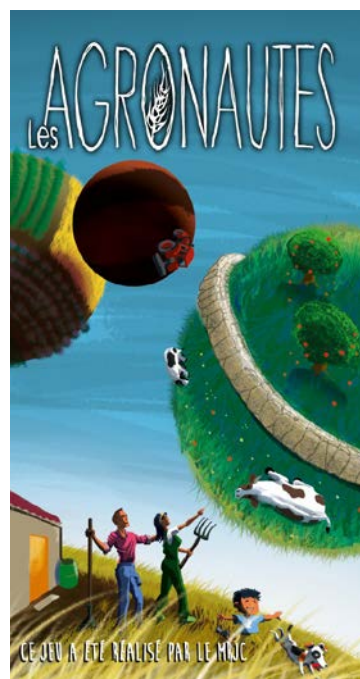


## JEUNES

### Helping young people to enter the world of agriculture

I am at the head of an operation, I earn 1,500 euros per month and I work 50 hours a week. Like all my colleagues, I regularly have to make professional and family choices, but I also have to deal with the unexpected, such as an epidemic in a herd. This scenario is proposed by the **Les Agronautes card game**, one of the teaching tools created by the Mouvement Rural de Jeunesse Chrétienne (MRJC) as part of the JEUNES project. It uses games to tackle the issues encountered by farmers throughout their career and invites us to become aware of the realities of this profession. *"How does one find a balance between family life, a social life and life on the farm? When you are a farmer you are regularly faced with these questions,"* emphasises Simon Coutand, an MRJC member and the manager of this MCDR, which aims to facilitate knowledge and the integration of young people in the world of agriculture. In association with rural development and agricultural education partners, such as CNEAP,

the CIVAM network and InterAFOCG, the MRJC has carried out a large number of projects. Among these is a **survey conducted with 600 students in private schools and Maisons Familiales Rurales (MFR) agricultural vocational training schools** at the end of 2015 and then repeated in 2018. *"The results in 2015 showed in particular that agro-ecology was a concept scarcely known to the students at that time,"* explains Simon Coutand. The association has also organised exchange days in France and Germany, as well as courses, entitled 'Rêves d'installation' (Dreams of setting up): *"They allow the young people to reflect on setting up a business in the rural environment by discussing among themselves and by finding out about operations."* Furthermore, the MRJC has published a guide for those organising stays supplying themselves with quality, local products: *"Nutrition is an interesting way for approaching agricultural issues,"* maintains the project provider.



Les Agronautes  
card game

# COLLECTIVE MOBILISATION INITIATIVES FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

## Altérité

The partners in the MCDR Altérité project have been working for three years to identify, improve and circulate experience and innovations for the development of agro-ecology and for better territorial food governance.

Supported by the Union nationale des centres permanents d'initiatives pour l'environnement (UNCPIE), Altérité involves stakeholders in the sectors of agriculture, environment, territorial development, research, collective and institutional catering\*. *"The main objective was to bring together all these organisations, in order to identify, improve and circulate experience and innovation concerning two major challenges for agriculture and the rural territories: agro-ecology and food governance,"* summarises Ludovic Serin, the Project Manager and representative at UNCPIE. To achieve this, the project partners have organised a large number of meetings between 2015 and 2018, in particular a seminar for getting started and sharing experiences, two Agriculture & Environment meetings and three seminars on the tools for food stakeholders in collective catering, in order to change their practices and the determining factors in food behaviour.

### Transmission and appropriation of agro-ecological practices

How do we take up the challenge of agro-ecology and release the brakes on its development? How do we encourage the mobilisation of the stakeholders and in particular, the farmers? These questions provided the theme for the two Agriculture & Environment meetings organised by UNCPIE and its partners. The first meeting was held on 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> November 2016 in Azay-le-Ferron (Indre). *"It allowed us to highlight a multi-dimensional blockage – economic, social, cognitive and regulatory – to the deployment of agro-ecology,"* pointed out Ludovic Serin. *"The event also provided the opportunity, from the viewpoint of passing*

## Uniting to take up the challenges of agro-ecology and food governance

*on and appropriating the philosophy, to find out about the project providers' experiences, which makes it possible to unlock the blockage."* The appraisal of this meeting has been published on line. The second meeting was held on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> June 2018 in Morlaix (Finistère). Its theme: how farmers can become involved in the Trame verte et bleue (Green and Blue Corridor), national policy which *"makes it possible to integrate the issues of biodiversity, a factor in agro-ecology, in territorial projects"*.

### Revealing the capacity of the stakeholders in collective catering

To tackle the social, economic, environmental and territorial challenges for food governance, the providers of Altérité chose the community angle, and more particularly, that of collective catering. *"In its national dimension and its connections with the food stakeholders, collective catering is a central lever for the development of sustainable responsible nutrition,"* explains Ludovic Serin. For this reason, Altérité has organised three seminars on the subject of food governance. The contributions and discussions have been capitalised on in a 32-page booklet. *"These meetings have also allowed us to work on the link between the mechanisms provided by the members of Altérité."* This is the case, notably in the MIAMM and Mon Restau Responsable projects. *"The first brings a connected methodology to the needs of the territories to support changes in practice in collective catering and the second, a self-assessment tool to identify the ways for improvement."*

\* Assemblée permanente des Chambres d'agriculture (APCA), Association Groupe ruralités, éducation, politiques (GREP - Revue POUR), Association nationale des Pôles territoriaux et des Pays, Fédération des conservatoires d'espaces naturels, Fondation pour la nature et l'homme, Inra, Muséum d'Histoire naturelle, Union nationale des CPIE, Direction générale de l'enseignement et de la recherche (DGER – Ministère de l'agriculture et de l'alimentation), Caisse des dépôts, Fédération des parcs naturels régionaux.

Agriculture & Environment meeting  
Rencontre in Azay-le-Ferron.

More information...

[www.cpie.fr](http://www.cpie.fr)





## INTERVIEW

### "LEADER: a lever for animating the regions for the Regional Natural Parks"

Michaël Weber, President of the Federation des Parcs naturels régionaux de France, reconsiders the particular relationship which unites the parks in the LEADER programme.



#### To what extent is your federation involved in the LEADER programme?

**Michaël Weber:** The Regional Natural Parks are extremely interested in the LEADER programme. Since it was launched in 1991, we have been committed to a huge extent. Currently, 24 Parks are involved in LEADER 2014-2020 as organisations supporting Local Action Groups, which includes almost 10% of the LAG in France. This figure has remained constant since the start of the programme. This strong involvement derives from the fact that the remit of the Parks and the objectives of the programme are the same. We share the same goal: the economic, social and cultural development of our territories as well as innovation and experimentation.

#### What assets do the Parks possess for implementing LEADER?

We have two main strengths. The first is the territorial consistency of the Parks. In fact, a Park can exist only by virtue of its charter, which determines the objectives, together with the guidelines on protection, exploitation and development. It is subject to a public enquiry and then is approved by the municipalities, the Regions, the Departments and the socio-professional and associative partners, which make up the territory of the Park. Renewed every fifteen years, the charters make it possible to preserve a real balance between the objectives of the Parks and the needs of their territory. Our second strength is the support from our teams, who bring to the project providers a thoughtful approach, analysis and overall strategic monitoring, in order to consolidate their projects and to adapt them as best as possible to the needs of the territories.

#### How is LEADER integrated into the Parks' regional policies?

Apart from the project funding, which promotes the development of fragile territories, the programme also represents a lever for territorial leadership for the Parks. This reliance on the initiatives supplied by the local stakeholders allows us to aggregate the latter around the Parks' territorial projects. LEADER thus promotes or supports new relationships between the Parks and the institutional, private and associative stakeholders. The programme also allows us to become involved in less traditional actions, such as supporting the creation of activities and enterprises. However, there is room to regret the administrative and financial difficulties surrounding the LEADER programme. These are a source of concern for the Parks and the project providers.

#### Can you give us examples of actions supported in this context?

LEADER is a flexible programme. It makes it just as possible to finance a cultural event as an economic project for the development of natural resources, or even a sales network for local produce. From among the many initiatives undertaken, we may cite that of the Parc du Haut-Jura. Its objective is to promote the setting up of a network of public and private stakeholders, in order to cross-reference their needs, resources and knowledge. The ambition is to trigger economic, social cooperation initiatives, which respond to the issues of local development in the rural environment.

More information...

[www.parc-naturels-regionaux.fr](http://www.parc-naturels-regionaux.fr)

## Fifth international LEADER / CLLD conference

## What does the future hold for LEADER?



During the first Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the town of Albena hosted the 5<sup>th</sup> international LEADER / CLLD conference from 4<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> June. At the heart of the discussion was the future of the LEADER programme. Testimony from one of the participants, François Galabrun, administrator at LEADER France.

Representatives from the European Commission, from the European Committee of the Regions, the European, Economic and Social Committee, payment agencies, management authorities and the LAG from 22 countries. There were more than 300 delegates attending the 5<sup>th</sup> international LEADER/CLLD conference in the resort of Albena, on the coast of the Black Sea. Organised by the Bulgarian Ministry for Agriculture, the Bulgarian National Rural Network and the European LEADER Association for Rural Development (ELARD\*), the objective of the event was to reflect on the future of the LEADER programme post 2020. At this meeting François Galabrun, the coordinator of the Est-Audois LAG, represented the National Rural Network under Collège 4 "Integrated Territorial Development" and LEADER France as an administrator and coordinator of the "Expert" group. *"The conference coincided with the 2021-2027 budget proposals from the European Commission,"* he points out. **"We are entering a pivotal period, in which the stakeholders in the programme must make their voice heard: the voice of budgetary negotiation. We are at the beginning of a long process."**

The event started with a presentation of the **Commission proposals**. Two of these in particular should be recalled: LEADER would continue to be funded to the amount of 5% of the EAFRD budget, *"but, since the latter is reduced in the first budget*

*presented, it is estimated that the LEADER budget would be reduced by about 20%".* The opening up of community-led local development (CLLD) to other structural funds (EAFRD, ESF and EMFF) would be facilitated. *"For the sake of simplification in the context of providing CLLD multi funds, the Commission proposes to choose one single regulatory system among those of the funds mobilised. This is a good thing, because currently it is very difficult to implement because of the plethora of regulations to be complied with."*



The rest of the conference revolved around the future prospects desired by the various countries for the LEADER programme. *"It is regrettable that there was no real common consultation on the recommendations to be made nor any evolution of the latter*

\* European LEADER Association for Rural Development



following the Commission's proposals," thinks François Galabrun. "For the last two years ELARD has been requesting the same thing: that the CLLD budget be awarded 15% of all the funds. At LEADER France we find this unrealistic." What is the proposal from the French association? **That LEADER 2021-2027 should have the same financial budget as the current programme**, that is to say, about 6 to 7% of the EAFRD budget, as it is envisaged for post 2020 and that the Commission should concentrate above all on the basics of the programme.

Another recommendation from LEADER France, this time supported by all the participants: **that the programme be simplified and also made more flexible**. "Its administrative complexity is one of the main reasons for its delay in France," explains François Galabrun. "The programme requires engineering skills often difficult to access for the small project providers. In addition, it is very rigid at the financial level: you have to anticipate expenses to the last cent. How do you innovate in these conditions, when innovating implies the unexpected? However, this is one of the basic principles of LEADER." Another complexity of LEADER, which must be simplified: its plethora of controls.

"LEADER is a flagship programme of the European Union. It is the **concrete presence of Europe in the rural territories**. It must be kept and improved," insists François Galabrun. "There must be more concentration on the objectives of the projects than on their management, the LAG should be officially involved in the development of the regulations and the objectives of the programme should be clarified," he concludes.



**More information...**

<http://elard-eu.voog.zplus.zone.eu/what-s-going-on/news/the-future-of-leader-clld-approach-2020>

## Cooperation one click away for the LAG

"Comparative survey on the revitalisation of town centres", "Agricultural diversification: support and development of new brewery groups", "Development of hiking paths for tourism"... These are some of the 93 cooperation tenders published to date on the ENRD site under its heading, 'Search for CLLD partners'. This new interactive tool is grouping together cooperation tenders. Its purpose: to assist the LAG all over Europe to find potential project partners. The large number of search criteria offered make it possible, for example, to select tenders by country, by type of partnership (transnational, national or maritime cross-border), by funds mobilised (EAFRD, EMFF, ERDF, ESF), as well as by themes: innovation, marketing, agriculture, new technologies, fishing and aquaculture, urban-rural links, etc. The description of each cooperation tender specifies the idea behind the project, its objectives, its context, the types of environments concerned (lakes, mountains, grasslands), etc. A tender arouses your interest? In a few clicks you can contact the LAG responsible with the aid of a form. You also have a cooperation project to propose? Publish it with the aid of your profile on line.

European Network for Rural Development

Connecting Rural Territories

European Commission - The European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) - LEADER/CLLD - CLLD Partner Search

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Total results: 93

Country	Offer name	Offering LAG	Project type	Expiry date
France	Services and social cohesion	GAL Durance Provence	Cooperation within the country; Transnational cooperation	31/01/2020
France	Tourism "culture-nature" - highlighting local environmental and cultural resources	GAL Durance Provence	Cooperation within the country; Transnational cooperation	30/01/2020
France	Environment and sustainable economic development	GAL Durance Provence	Cooperation within the country; Transnational cooperation	30/01/2020
Poland	Cooperation with Fisheries	Rybacka Lokalna Grupa	Transnational cooperation	01/01/2020

Country

- Austria
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Finland

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Topic of the proj

- Knowledge trans
- training activities
- Tourism / Territo
- Culture & Cultural
- Innovation
- Natural environm
- Landscape
- Agriculture & Fari
- Built environment
- Community devel
- Social Inclusion/ P
- Business develop

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[https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/leader-clld/clld-partner-search\\_fr](https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/leader-clld/clld-partner-search_fr)

## Agro-ecology and transfer at the heart of the EIP Consultative Committee

The European Innovation Partnership for Productive and Sustainable Agriculture (EIP AGRI) is an acknowledged mechanism and a precious asset for the implementation of agro-ecological transition coordination. It is an instrument which contributes to making innovation the priority in the French regions. It stresses the importance of bringing basic research and innovation on the ground into dialogue, with the stakeholders being directly involved in creating knowledge. The dissemination of innovations within and between the Member States represents the other principal challenge for EIP.



At the Consultative Committee meeting on 6th June in Paris, the evidence from project providers, operational groups and the regions highlighted the EIP actions which contribute in particular to agro-ecology on specific issues: forage autonomy, health of the soil, climate change, etc. These projects are led in accordance with a collaborative, interdisciplinary procedure, in a spirit of sharing good practice at the regional, national and European level.

The Committee meeting also provided the opportunity to review the current position of EIP, which was set up since the 2014-2020 programme, and its prospects in the future CAP. One of the challenges for this tool is its simplification, both for those benefiting from it and for those managing it. Subsidiarity, proposed for the next CAP, ought to contribute to this and should assist all the regions and the States to strengthen their role in the Partnership.

Finally, the afternoon was devoted to work in themed workshops, which allowed the participants, based on levers and brakes, jointly to identify actions to improve the development and transfer of knowledge or innovations produced by the EIP projects.

### Voting on agro-ecology in the projects in the regions

The Consultative Committee gave the floor to the representatives from a large number of the French regions. Although the projects provided cover a large variety of subjects (management of water and the forests, use of phytosanitary products, digital agriculture, etc.), all are focussed on performance on three levels: the

environmental, the economic and the social level. This procedure was well summed up by Angela Maubert, who represented Normandy: *"Agro-ecology is spreading through our territories like some sort of common denominator of our actions."*

### Workshops for sharing experiences

Three workshops tackled specific subjects based on a common question: how do we best develop and disseminate the work performed within the EIP framework? Transferring the knowledge, breaking down the boundaries and setting up networks of stakeholders on the ground are responses to this serious issue. The participants mentioned their good practice and the tools they use to achieve this. For example, it is a question of increasing the places and times when stakeholders can meet, of using all the digital resources (platforms and databases, MOOC, social networks, etc.) and also linking up sustainable partnership between organisations.

### Key figures...

On 1st May 2018, 128 operational EIP groups had already been selected in France and 71 were in the course of selection. From now until 2020, thanks to EAFRD, the regions anticipate supporting projects from 300 operational groups in France. At the European level, a total of 3,000 groups will be supported over the same period. In parallel the Horizon 2020 programme will support 120 multi-stakeholder EIP projects from at least three Member States.



## Testimony of innovative multi-stakeholder project providers at the local and European level

The objective of the European Innovation Partnership project providers is to develop collectively original solutions to the new environmental and socio-economic challenges. Evidence of five of these projects was presented to the Committee.

**Cédric Boussof, Director of Operations at the Agricultural Vocational Training School in Rochefort Montagne (63) – Operational group project: "From well-being on the farm to well-being of the farmer through an agro-ecological approach"**



"Our vocational technical college joined the Éleveurs Autrement collective and VetAgro Sup within an operational group, which had been active for two years. The objective was to draw up feeding recommendations for the herds and to analyse the associated agro-economic developments. We worked in mixed groups,

which included students, teachers, and researchers with a view to demystifying the image each group had of the others. The idea was to include agro-ecology in our training courses by experimenting with new apprenticeship methods. The teachers abandoned their posture of the holders of knowledge and they also became learners and the students were able to participate in the joint construction of directly operational know-how. As for the researchers, they were able to validate the agro-ecological practices tried out on the college farm by using the traditional zoo-technical criteria, in order to be able to

compare the data with those obtained in the laboratory. At the end of the project we halved the quantities of concentrate consumed by our cows and had thus increased the gross margin by litre of milk."



© Tsaag Valren / Wikimedia

**More information...**

[www.lyceeagricolerochefortmontagne.fr](http://www.lyceeagricolerochefortmontagne.fr)

**Philippe Hinsinger, Head of the Environment and Agronomy Department at Inra, coordinator of the European SolACE\* project**



"Our project, which was begun in 2017 for a period of five years, aims to improve the use of water and nutrients in the agro-ecosystem. It groups together 25 partners, of which 14 are academic and 11 are non-academic. SolACE focuses on the adaptation of certain crops (soft wheat, durum wheat, potatoes) to

a combination of water stress and nutritional stress. In an effort to reduce the inputs, we needed to find innovative solutions for the better use of the resources available in the face of more intense, more frequent droughts linked to climate change and also to compensate for nitrogen and phosphorus deficiencies in plants. This has to be achieved using both organic and conventional farming methods. To do this, we have both agro-ecological levers (e.g. crop rotation, mixture of varieties) and genetic levers, such as selection strategies based on root characteristics. SolACE relies on the farmers' field trials, conducted in different European territories. The farmers

involved participate in the evaluation of the performance of the innovations used."

\* Solutions for improving Agroecosystem and Crop Efficiency for water and nutrient use



**More information...**

[www.solace-eu.net](http://www.solace-eu.net)

## Vianney Le Pichon, Head of European partnership at ITAB, the Technical Institute for Organic Agriculture and Director of the Organic Agriculture Research Group (GRAB)



"We are involved in several European projects intended to circulate information in organic farming. For example, OKNet Arable has made it possible to set up networks of operational groups operating in several Member States for the purpose of exchanging information and views about their innovations, their needs and their good practice in field crops. One of the results is an Internet platform, Farmknowledge.org, which allows us to share files and videos on line, which are useful for our farms (quality of the soils, pest and disease management, etc.). In Auvergne Rhône-Alpes, ClimArbo is an operational group which brings together partners from different spheres (researchers, technicians, meteorologists, farmers) to deal

with the management of strains of parasitic fungi, which proliferate because of climate change. The project proposes to contribute to the modelling, the anticipation and the control of new fungal diseases. In all these projects we work according to an interactive, multi-stakeholder procedure."



More information...

[www.itab.asso.fr/programmes/ok-netarable.php](http://www.itab.asso.fr/programmes/ok-netarable.php)

## Philippe Fleury, ASTER (Agriculture, Food Systems and Regions) Department of ISARA (Higher Education Institution for Agriculture and Agribusiness of the Rhône-Alpes) – European UNISECO\* project



"Initiated in May 2018 for three years, our project aims to test scenarios by means of 15 case studies, in order to understand how to remove the barriers and to activate the levers with a view to speeding up the agro-ecological transition. The project involves 18 partners from 16 countries, so that it can tackle the different themes, which affect ecological transition: the farmer on his farm; farmers' groups such as the farm machine cooperative CUMA, and

the economic and environmental interest group, GIEE in France; local development and environmental preservation projects; and finally, the marketing of the products. In all these areas our initial diagnosis takes account of the social, economic and ecological aspects, in the knowledge that the European territories studied offer us a great variety of situations. We also anticipate disseminating the case studies in an educational way via story maps, to make them accessible to all the stakeholders."

\* Understanding and improving the sustainability of agroecological farming systems in the EU (Projet de recherche horizon 2020)

More information...

[www.cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/215949\\_en.html](http://www.cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/215949_en.html)

## Lise Watier, representative from the DECO AGROECO\* project at Acta technical agricultural institutes



"Started in 2015, our MCDR project is reaching its end. Its objective is to identify innovative agro-ecological practice, the technical and leadership tools and resources (reference retrieval) mobilised on the ground and at the national level by advisors and coordinators of farmers' groups involved in agro-ecology. To do this, we have conducted semi-directive interviews and an online survey with a very wide panel of advisors and coordinators of farmers' groups, which belong to different organisations: Chambers of Agriculture, COOP de France, CUMA, etc. The collectives coordinated by these stakeholders are of different types: operational groups, EIP, GIEE, informal groups, etc. They all work on all the agro-ecological issues, from food autonomy to crop diversification and soil preservation. The results of our study have been presented and discussed at the closing seminar for the project on 5<sup>th</sup> July. At present, we are continuing

to process the results obtained from the interviewed stakeholders and we are publishing the project deliverables for the coordinators, advisors and public authorities."

\*De-compartmentalising and contextualising agro-ecology in the territories



More information...

[www.diagagroeco.org](http://www.diagagroeco.org)



## Agro-ecological transition: the contribution from EIP

The cooperation and creation of networks of stakeholders in innovation and research is one of the pillars of agro-ecological transition. This increased process of collaboration among farmers, engineers and researchers is continuing to develop, notably through the European Innovation Partnership (EIP). Focus.

*"In the context of the agro-ecological transition, the EIP is a precious tool,"* observes Aline Boy, the Deputy Project Manager for the Agro-ecological Project at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. *"It responds to the challenges of capitalising on and disseminating knowledge at the regional, national and international levels, principally via platforms and themed events."* In fact, **the agro-ecological procedure involves the setting up of networks of providers of innovative projects and scientific institutions**, which is also one of the main objectives of the EIP. The latter aims to detect and to bring forward pioneering initiatives on the ground (for example, as regards reducing the use of phytosanitary products) and to put them in touch with programmes of applied, academic research. *"We are in a period of transition, in which new solutions are being collectively tested on the ground, with collaborative methods. Thanks to setting up networks, the innovations developed by the farmers fuel the work of the researchers, who can then validate them scientifically,"* explains Cyril Kao, Deputy Director of Research, Innovation and International Cooperation at the Directorate General for Education and Research at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

### A lever for agro-ecological transition

In the French regions we are currently seeing increasing power in the work of multi-stakeholders and in the network developed by means of the EIP. The local stakeholders work more in harmony with European partners, who share similar issues, by disseminating methods and good practice, which can be transposed to similar contexts. *"For example, operational groups working on viticulture in the South of France converse with their Italian and Spanish counterparts, who also take account of climatic conditions in the Mediterranean area,"* explains Cyril Kao.

Globally, innovation is more than ever present in European policies, to **promote impetus in intelligent, sustainable agriculture, which will be resilient in the face of climate and socio-economic changes**. *"A farmer is a businessman who has to be competitive to survive,"* comments Inge Van Oost (DG AGRI, European Commission). *"He must be able to participate in efficient knowledge and digital innovation systems, which link all the stakeholders affected by the agro-ecological transition (researchers, teachers, advisors, farming organisations, journalists, etc.). The EIP contributes to this, just as it contributes to all the other objectives of the CAP."* It must also be noted that on these topics, the European Union has been inspired by certain mechanisms developed in France, such as the Mixed Technological Networks (MTN), financed by the Special Accounts Allocated to Agricultural and Rural Development (CASDAR) in the context of the National Programme for Agricultural and Rural Development (PNDR).



Aline Boy. |



Cyril Kao. |



Inge Van Oost. |



More information...

[www.reseaurural.fr/le-partenariat-europeen-pour-linnovation-agri/comite-consultatif-du-pei](http://www.reseaurural.fr/le-partenariat-europeen-pour-linnovation-agri/comite-consultatif-du-pei)

# NEWS FROM THE REGIONAL RURAL NETWORKS

## Brittany

Eight new ways to provide a service in the rural environment. This is the essence of the Rural'idées overview. The purpose of this programme provided by the Breton Rural Network is to support innovative initiatives in the areas of services to the general public. The providers of award-winning projects currently benefit from methodological and financial support to bring their innovation to fruition.

The Bistrot Lab, the Fauteuil à Ressort (Armchair with Springs), Vélo sprint (Cycle sprint). Behind these strange names lurk some of the award-winners in the call for Rural'idées projects. Launched at the end of 2017 by the Breton Rural Network, this procedure aims to **support innovative initiatives which respond to the issues in the rural territories**. It focuses in particular on services to the population implemented by the population: associations, self-organised groups of stakeholders, partnerships between public and private stakeholders, etc. Provided by a residents' association in Coësmes (35), the Bistrot Lab, for example, decided on the objective of continuing to run the last bar and tobacconist shop in the municipality and adding to it socio-cultural activities. In Berhet (22), the youth section of the festival committee wants to recreate a meeting place, where young and old could enjoy themselves.

The eight award-winning projects were selected from 55 candidates by a committee composed of representatives of the State, the Region, members of the Network, the Agrocampus Ouest, the Mouvement associatif de Bretagne (Associative Movement for Brittany), among others. From the stage of the idea having to prove itself to the more advanced stage of being able to create a ripple effect, the initiatives retained all present a group element and respond to a need in the territory on **themes as varied as catering, culture, digital technology, mobility, integration**. Their providers currently benefit from collective methodological support and individual counselling for a period of one year from the leadership cell of the Breton Rural Network. They can also obtain financial aid to a maximum of 10,000 euros for works,

## Rural'idées: eight new services by and for the general public



purchase of materials or premises, communication expenses, advisory services, etc.

Apart from being put in touch with advisors and partners from the Rural Network, the project providers are invited to attend meetings on days of exchange. The first was held on 20th April in Saint-Brieuc: *"Its objective was to find out about each project and to promote meetings, mutual aid and the sharing of experiences and collaborative practices,"* explains Camille Menec, a service provider for the Rural Network. In the course of that day each award-winner was also invited to take part in themed workshops, in order to benefit from outside opinions to assist it in realising and deploying its project. On 4<sup>th</sup> July, at the second group meeting, the award-winners participated in two visits on the ground. The first was at the Café des Possibles, in Guipel (35). This société coopérative d'intérêt collectif (SCIC), or cooperative community-oriented enterprise, offers catering services, a grocer's shop and cultural entertainment in order to promote local products and initiatives. The second visit took place at one of the eight award-winners from Rural'idées: Terra Phoenix, a project provided by the local residents. Grouped into a purchasing association, they intend to develop an associative grocer's shop and in the long term, to offer rural caretaker services. The award winners from Rural'idées will meet again at the end of the year for a day, during which they will benefit from expert advice to explain to them, for example, about the mobilisation of funding and the choice of legal status.





# NEWS FROM THE REGIONAL RURAL NETWORKS

## La Réunion

## A LEADER guarantee fund to support the project providers



Intended to facilitate the funding of projects submitted to Local Action Groups from the Hauts de La Réunion, the LEADER 2014-2020 Guarantee Fund makes it possible to obtain an advance on the EAFRD grant. Financed by the Region and Department of La Réunion, this original mechanism was initiated in February 2018.

To give a financial boost to the LEADER project provided in the Hauts de La Réunion was the objective of the LEADER 2014-2020 Guarantee Fund supported by the Region and Department of La Réunion since the beginning of the year and provided with one million euros. "The mechanism was initiated following the appraisal of the LEADER 2007-2013 programme," explains Bruno Oudard, Secretary General of the Hauts. "This appraisal stressed that a certain number of small project providers had **neither the cash flow nor sufficient capacity to finance the start of their projects.**" Why? LEADER funding is obtained a posteriori, via reimbursements and on the presentation of invoices. "Therefore, for persons with limited income or without access to bank credits, for example, the initial investment poses problems," concludes Philippe Clain, the Head of the Development and Coordination Cluster at the SGH1.

### A mechanism unique in France

By providing a surety to the enterprises, associations, farmers or craftspeople providing

the project, the new Guarantee Fund allows the latter to obtain an advance on the LEADER grant (to the extent of 50% of the amount of the European aid), as provided by the EAFRD regulations. Unique in France because it is **topped up to 100% by the local authorities**, the mechanism represents a strong economic lever for the Hauts de La Réunion. "This is territorial development, pure and simple," confirms the Secretary General of the Hauts. "The Guarantee Fund allows us to realise projects, which would not see the light of day without it. In addition, it is a tool for the communities. The associated financial risks are very limited and the balance of the amount invested is paid back at the end of the programme." As the fund serves as a surety it is not in fact mobilised unless the project provider is in default. "The latter reimburses the EAFRD if the grants are not used as stipulated, which is rarely the case." About 70 requests for a security bond are currently being studied by the fund manager, the SOciété de Financement pour le DEveloppement de La Réunion (SOFIDER, a BRED Group company).

<sup>1</sup> The Secretariat General des Hauts is a shared governance structure (State, Region, Department) intended to provide for the Strategic Shared Framework to promote the rural dynamic in the Hauts de La Réunion.

<sup>2</sup> Departmental Council: 650,000 euros (65%) and Regional Council: 350,000 euros (35%)

### A simple, accessible procedure

To mobilise the Guarantee Fund it is sufficient to apply to one of the four LAG in the territory by completing the request form for a LEADER grant. The LAG remains the only contact point for the project provider. Based on an appraisal report from the LAG, the inspection by the management of the Fund concentrates mainly on verifying the absence of any ban on holding a bank account and/or suspension of payments.

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# NEWS FROM THE REGIONAL RURAL NETWORKS

## Normandy

At the end of 2017, the Norman Rural Network organised a day on the theme, 'Exchange for innovation in our rural territories'. On the programme: theoretical contributions and examples of Innovative LEADER projects.

Representatives of town halls, of the communities of communes, of LAG, of associations - almost 150 persons participated in the Norman Rural Network's first event. Organised on 8th December in Bourg-Achard (27), the meeting was devoted to social and territorial innovation in the rural territories. *"For this first day of exchanges, we asked the Norman LAG what subject they wished to tackle. It was the issue of innovation - its definition, its process, specific examples of innovative projects, etc. - which emerged,"* stresses Martha Métais, the coordinator of the Norman Rural Network. After a presentation on the LEADER programme in Normandy, in France and in Europe, the morning was punctuated by theoretical contributions on social and territorial innovation. The contributors made it clear that an innovation *"may exist elsewhere and be appropriated locally"* and that *"it does not have to be linked to technology"*.

The afternoon was organised around four workshops on housing, town centres, bridges between generations and cultural venues. It was an opportunity to find out about nine initiatives co-financed by LEADER, including the Enerterre project. Triggered by the Parc naturel régional des Marais du Cotentin et du Bessin, its aim is to **assist owners to renovate their traditional house**, especially by refurbishing earth coatings. The originality of Enerterre: the sites are participative and are places for exchange and training in restoration techniques. *"This project promotes ecological*

## Encouraging social and regional innovation

*renovation with local, renewable materials, improves social links, provides training and develops the built heritage of the territory,"* summarises Martha Métais.



*Matin glacé (Crisp morning), 1st prize in the competition: "For some, leaving in the morning to go to work is noisy and hectic. When living in a rural area, you can instead enjoy this wonderful spectacle. Is there a better way to start the day?"*

*"What is your vision for rural Normandy?"* The question was asked as part of the photographic competition, entitled "My corner of rural Normandy", organised by the Norman Rural Network. The fifteen photographers selected saw their work exhibited at the meeting on 8th December 2017. From a selfie of a dairy cow to fairy-tale landscapes, all the photos express the attachment of the Normans to their region. Among the winners, three were awarded a prize. For example, the pupils who took the photograph *My village seen from the heights* won a mini camera, which will enrich their future educational projects.



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# NEWS FROM THE REGIONAL RURAL NETWORKS

## Greater Est

## The LAG exchange their experiences and views on cooperation



On 20th February, the Rural Network Grand Est invited the representatives of the Local Action Groups (LAG) from its territory to a technical day of exchange and work on cooperation. This was an opportunity to share experiences, to take stock, to envisage new paths for cooperation and to identify the efforts of the LAG from Alsace, Lorraine and Champagne-Ardenne.

The ambition for the day was to bring together the technicians of the 32 Local Action Groups from the Grand Est Region to allow them to find out about each others' strategies and projects, in order to **initiate mutual actions and collaborative projects**. In the morning the 60 participants were welcomed to Tomblaine (54) for a plenary session in the course of which the European, National and Grand Est Rural Networks presented their respective roles and missions, together with the tools available to support the LAG in their cooperation projects, such as GESCOD (Grand Est Solidarités et Coopérations pour le Développement) and the support possible from the European and International Partnerships of the Grand Est Region. This was also an opportunity to recall the synergies between the European, national and regional stakeholders: the Regional Rural Network relays the action of the European and National Rural Networks and in exchange contributes with feedback on experiences, tools, documents and guides.

In the afternoon, a 'cooperation fair' allowed the LAG to work on finding partnerships and to ask the experts from the NRN, the ENRD, the services from the Region and the GESCOD questions about their projects and dossier. Workshops were then organised around four themes: tourism, energy and economic circular transition, short circuits and local products and finally, services to the general public. The object of these workshops was to exchange, get to know one another better, present cooperation projects in

progress or envisaged at the inter-regional, intra-regional or cross-border level or with other countries inside or outside the EU. These workshops allowed them to complete and enrich a **map of the Grand Est region giving tangible form to the project ideas and prospects for cooperation** for each LAG.

The appraisal of the day was positive: the technicians got to know one another, the cooperation map demonstrated the actual situation on the ground and the exchanges allowed them to identify the LAGs' efforts in terms of tools, support and the next issues for meetings of the Rural Network Grand Est. Among the needs mentioned were: **a training course on regulations on EAFRD and LEADER, State aid in rural areas and the agricultural, agri-food and forestry industries**. Since that day, 70 technicians from the LAG and the region have been trained on this subject with the Rural Network Grand Est.

## Two new regional correspondents

Piloted by the Collectivité Territoriale de Guyane (CTG), Rural Network in Guyane, is now coordinated by Delphine Pinault. She supports and evaluates the project of the five LAG on her territory: LAG North-West Guyane, LAG of the Savanes, LAG of the East, LAG South Guyane and Agglo'GAL.  
[delphine.pinault@ctguyane.fr](mailto:delphine.pinault@ctguyane.fr) - 05 94 27 12 08

Attached to the Regional Council of Nouvelle-Aquitaine, Cécile Bonnefoy-Claudet coordinates the Rural Network of Nouvelle-Aquitaine, a merger of the Rural Networks of Aquitaine, Limousin and Poitou-Charentes.  
[cecile.bonnefoy-claudet@nouvelle-aquitaine.fr](mailto:cecile.bonnefoy-claudet@nouvelle-aquitaine.fr) - 05 55 45 00 33

The French Rural Network brings together all the stakeholders in the rural world at the national and regional level to enable them to exchange and work together. The objective is to facilitate the implementation of projects linking agriculture, forestry, trade and commerce, tourism, the environment, services, etc. In the course of its work, the Rural Network offers tools, methods, analyses and recommendations.

## SELECTION OF PUBLICATIONS



### Vingt et une nuances de féminité à la ferme (Twenty-one nuances of femininity on the farm)

This work from the Group for agricultural study and development (GEDA) from the 7 Valleys bears witness to the evolution of the role of women in the world of agriculture.

[www.delavoixauchapitre.fr/index.php/parutions/parutions-2016/87-vingt-et-une-nuances-de-feminite-a-la-ferme-2016](http://www.delavoixauchapitre.fr/index.php/parutions/parutions-2016/87-vingt-et-une-nuances-de-feminite-a-la-ferme-2016)



### Capitaliser son expérience : un atout pour les organisations (Capitalising on one's experience: a skill for organisations)

A work by Anne Carton (Cap Rural), Blandine Le Bourgeois and Ana Maria Oliveira (CIEDEL) on the professionalisation of stakeholders working in local development.

[www.chroniquesociale.com/index.php?ID=1011992&detailObjID=3007256&detailResults=1012241&dataType=cata&keyWords=atout%20precoce](http://www.chroniquesociale.com/index.php?ID=1011992&detailObjID=3007256&detailResults=1012241&dataType=cata&keyWords=atout%20precoce)



### Les fonds européens structurels et d'investissement 2014-2020 : histoire, mise en œuvre et projets (European structural and investment funds 2014 - 2020: history, implementation and projects)

Edited by the European affairs mission of the CGET, this 170-page publication revisits the foundations, the major characteristics and the terms and conditions for implementing European Structural Funds (ESF).

[www.cget.gouv.fr/ressources/publications/en-somme-les-fonds-europeens-structurels-et-d-investissement-2014-2020](http://www.cget.gouv.fr/ressources/publications/en-somme-les-fonds-europeens-structurels-et-d-investissement-2014-2020)



### Rapport sur la cohésion des territoires (Report on the cohesion of the regions)

Developed jointly with association of elected councillors, this CGET report takes stock of France and its territories after a decade of crisis and identifies the factors for the cohesion of the territories.

[www.cget.gouv.fr/dossiers/rapport-cohesion-territoires](http://www.cget.gouv.fr/dossiers/rapport-cohesion-territoires)

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