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Actual submission Date:



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- Marceline Bonneau

Excused:

- Prof. Olivier De Schutter
- Prof. Erik Mathijs
- Cordelia Orfinger – ECORES

1) Agenda

1) **Introduction:** round table participants

2) **Presentation of the project:**

Key ideas and diagnosis

Why transdisciplinarity,

Why bottom up agri-food transition initiatives,

Research plan,

Focus on 5 cities/regions

3) **Discussion/Q&A with focus on the following issues:**

- Where are overlaps with stakeholders: explain own initiatives
- What would you expect from this project?
- Where do you see synergies with your own projects?

2) Presentation of the project

In the presentation given by different members of the consortium the overall **framework** was explained and the different **deliverables** were summarized. Next, the future research phases and the proposed methodology were presented. Finally the **stakeholder involvement** and **multidisciplinarity** of the project were discussed.

3) Discussion and Q&A

The current, unsustainable, system sits in a lock in; therefore alongside technological solutions learning processes are needed to get out of this lock in. Changes of values and beliefs are deemed to be necessary to escape the lock in.

Questions:

Claire Collin: *How is the sustainable food system defined? Are GASAC's per se sustainable?*

TD: This is of course not the case, but we are interested in the beliefs of the actors in this alternative food system. The following questions are therefore part of the research. Why do these actors think they are sustainable? Where do they get the knowledge regarding the food system and sustainability? Where do these learning processes originate and how are they linked to higher learning organizations?

Sustainability is seen in its broad sense, not limited to carbon reduction practices. Therefore sustainability is seen on the long term, supported by motivated individuals.

Marion Courtois: *Is the (social) origin of the actors taken into account?*

TD: In the first phase, the network is the unit of analysis and therefore no focus has been put on this interesting variable. In later phases, individuals of different origin can be taken into account and analyzed regarding their beliefs and practices regarding food and agriculture. Questions in this phase could be directed at assessing why some people don't participate in the local food system and why some are leaving the system. Since upscaling can only work when everybody is included, this is a mayor point of concern.

Why is there a focus on Etterbeek and Ixelles? (Richer regions of Brussels)

This is due to density reasons in the network mapping. The same methodology can be therefore used in all regions and we maximize the chance of interactions taken place. This could be broadened in phase 2 however.

Gert Engelen: *Why the initial choice of the 6 clusters (urban gardens, complementary currency, sustainable catering ...)?*

We started off with a different framework, which is been refined and altered over the last couple of months to integrate the different research interests and fields of expertise. It was also noticed during the first stakeholder workshop that people felt more part of a transition movement than of a single pre-defined category. Therefore now the focus is shifted to local food communities for sustainability.

Dirk Vervloet: *Question about social learning: will errors also be included? With which organizations did people connect in the past? Can we learn from things that did not work in the past?*

The question of mistrust can be asked complementary to the trust related questions.

This question will be taken up in the questionnaire.

Marion Courtois: *question related to the first stakeholder workshop. How can research be conducted which is usefull for the actors? How can long-term partnerships be developed?*

TD: we think of sitting together for half a day with actors and discuss how we can mutually benefit without doing consultancy work. How can we develop a long-term interaction and deal with concrete questions coming from the actors.

Since there is almost no tradition of direct partnerships with social actors we have to find out how we can deal with this.

4) Synergies with own initiatives/projects?

Nele Bossuyt: **Involvement in public procurement procedure for the food banks (POD Maatschappelijke interegratie/Integration Sociale). Since 1 year increased focus on sustainability related concerns and influencing the behavior of the beneficiaries (addition of recipes and changes in the product list).**

TD: This is related to our interest in sustainable catering.

HJ: Also interesting since local producers (especially in Wallonia) are looking for a market to sell their products since supply is currently higher than demand. This could open new ways of selling their products.

Gert Engelen: **Involvement in different projects with Vredeseilanden which can be related to the Food4Sustainability project.**

A) Different organizations in Flanders work together regarding farming, agro-ecology and other food and agricultural related topics. These organizations include Wervel, EVA, Oxfam, Natuurpunt, Velt and Voedselteams. Synergies between them are needed since initiatives of non-state actors tend to be weak.

B) Transformation project:

Promoting increased sustainability in the supply chain by food chain actors. A system analysis is finalized and action labs are being created. The 1st strategies for

actors in the chain have been developed. Prof Erik Mathijs is part of the academic board and could channel info from the Food4Sustainability project into the list of strategies.

C) Sustainable Catering project by Vredeseilanden:

Government restaurants, social catering in companies and big catering companies (Compass, Sodexo) are involved to introduce more sustainable practices and food in catering.

D) Supermarkets:

Active work, on the field with Colruyt and all other retailers are involved. Some of the questions asked right now: What are they doing now? How do they relate to farmers?

Maarten Crivits: Different projects and interest related to Food4Sustainability.

A) Involvement in an earlier BELSPO project, CONSENSUS This project studied the local food system with a focus on consumption practices. Voedselteams and GASAP's were studied as well. There they noticed two groups of people were present, active engaged people and consumers with other motivations. Some of the recommendations of this project could be used and incorporated.

B) Policy Tools: also look at political and policy processes besides the focus on the tools themselves.

C) Stakeholder engagement processes at ILVO

How to learn from each other's work? ILVO is enrolling a project to have farmers learn to frame research questions.

D) Member of the local agriculture council in the city of Gent.

Lucette Landroy:

A) What will happen after observation? Will solutions be developed?

Interest in how people can be involved in the long-term for the right reasons (not for facility means). How to have people stay and for the right reason?

B) Political aspect.

Is the aim to develop of a complementary mix of tools? What tools is good at what place? Influence interactions with regional colleagues for a more sustainable food system.

- This is the aim of the project, to develop context specific tools for initiatives in the local food system.

In a later phase, the Valley Drôme will be analyzed since it is a good example of how coherence is created between different actors and the focus of different actors is directed at one goal, namely a sustainable transition. We will assess the frameworks and processes used in this example.

Marion Courtois: Will only existing tools be assessed? And who is the final client of the recommendations?

- NO, new and adapted tools will also be assessed.
- Local authorities are the clearest client, with a focus on the regional level rather than the federal level.

Suggestion: The importance of the motivation of entrepreneurs. Importance of clustering SME's, so they don't only see their point of view, but promote to collaboration with others.

Social groceries might be an interesting category.

Claire Collin: Interest in policy recommendations for the federal level.

- **Links with low carbon society initiatives. Scenarios are being developed for a low CO2 Belgium in 2050. Agriculture is one sector in these scenarios.**

Luc Vanoirbeek

Internal discussions about what sustainability is and what the implications for farmers are have been underway the last couple of years. How will products be supplied and sold in the future? The mentality in these discussions has changed from an only growth oriented discourse to a more tolerant view and incorporation of smaller scale projects. Boerenbond is therefore looking to find synergies with others to use the combined expertise and learn from each other in order to reach the same goal. They have specific expertise in larger scales, big corporations, logistics and auctions. These are actors which are different than the set of actors under investigation in the Food4Sustainability project.

Currently a hostile environment exists between big corporations and engaged citizens. Couldn't there be a complementary system? How can we bring the systems together?

TD: Policy beliefs might overlap between big corporations and local initiatives without them knowing. Therefore it is interesting to see who networks with whom and how suggestions could be made to bridging organizations to bring both extremes to the same table. Therefore to be successful we believe it is important that beliefs are explored and shared.

Dirk Vervloet: Policy recommendations AND network bridging recommendations should be developed.

Multidisciplinary is a challenge and on itself should be assessed and reported on, so triple loop learning can take place. What have you learned through this process?

Gert Engelen: commitment to stakeholders.

Something concrete should be offered to different initiatives which are quite weak. A return is needed for them. They have to become stronger through the process.

TD: research funding is one of the things that have to change to have a stronger degree of multidisciplinary.

Strategies could be developed for some initiatives if we see this is needed. Therefore the idea is to sit together with social learning experts and social actors to discuss on how everybody can maximally benefit from cooperating with each other.

During the in depth interview contributions to the specific initiative could be taken into account.

To conclude, Maarten Crivits shared one of the outcomes of CONSENSUS project:

Beliefs farmers often diverge from the beliefs of consumers. What are the ideas to bring them together into a social learning process? Can learning sessions be developed and can a change in beliefs arise?