

# CountrySide

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**Regional Forum for  
the Future of Agriculture:  
Can France Remain  
a Global Agricultural  
Player?**

**Christoph BÜREN**

*ELO President*





# Editorial

Thierry de l'ESCAILLE, *Secretary General*

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### *Tomorrow is still a better place*

*These days, there seems to be no end to bad news and pessimism; every day, we are faced with news of crisis and political upheaval. However, if we look at a greater time frame, we would see that our European project has brought, and continues to bring, extraordinary progress and optimism.*

*Had we told the youth of the 1950s that one day they would be able to cross borders without papers, use the same currency everywhere, be able to work and live anywhere they chose, they would have said you were mad. Had we predicted that a war-ravaged Europe would one day be awash in so much high quality, cheap food that we could throw out 100 million tons of it, it would not have been believed.*

*Increasing the application of knowledge and machinery to our fields has meant that France, for example, no longer needs to send around 30% of its workforce to the fields. They are now free to study, to develop themselves in the ways they wish, or even to return to the farm – but to do so as a choice, not as a necessity.*

*These are extraordinary shifts; it represents a degree of freedom that could not have been imagined a century ago. While we should not underestimate our troubles, nor bury ourselves in an imagined, rose-tinted past, we should also face our future with hope and optimism. The empirical evidence for a better tomorrow remains all around us.*





D. TARDIT, M. PORTIER, S. ABIS, C. VAUTRIN, P.O. DREGÉ

## Regional Forum for the Future of Agriculture: Can France Remain a Global Agricultural Player?

*The Regional Forum for the Future of Agriculture took place in Reims last January and discussed global competitiveness, the future of the CAP and the integration of the circular economy into agricultural processes.*

William de GRUNNE, ELO



The FFA kicked off with an introductory speech from ELO's President, Christoph BÜREN. His speech introduced the topics of the day; food and environmental security being central to our survival and one cannot be achieved without the other. He also explained that even if the discussions in Brussels are vital, the essential initiatives can only take place locally in all regions of Europe. These will create the changes needed, and local stakeholders are the ones who must drive progress in the countryside.

During his short introduction to the first panel, Pierre-Olivier DRÈGE noted that the region of Champagne-Ardenne is an ideal region to talk about future of agri-

culture which is its major economic activity. Here, local agriculture also plays a role on a global scale with exclusive products such as champagne. The panellists then highlighted three major goals that are key for the development of French and European agricultural regions to allow them to strengthen their position on the global market. There is a need for ecologic, economic and social development which can be driven by innovation.

The panellists insisted that farmer should produce for the global marketplace; France has many advantages for that type of production such as well-educated farmers, agronomists and researchers, an ideal climate and a strong sectorial struc-

ture through cooperatives. Soil fertility is abundant and France has well-developed and efficient logistics systems that make the country globally competitive. However, the panel also warned that the loss of even one of these advantages would be enough to weaken France's position.

Together with education, innovation can build a new form of agriculture that is more adaptable to swift changes. Should climate change, for example, force the production of certain products to new regions, world markets could quickly be destabilised. If France managed create a flexible agricultural system, such crises could be avoided. According to the panel, this meant that 21st century farmers





P. LECOUEVEY, J.M. CHAUVET, P. BORDES, D. CAUSSE, J.P. BORDES

need to be prepared to change their production models.

A crucial instrument that allows for a flexible, competitive and sustainable agriculture is the Common Agricultural Policy. The reform of this policy, which has just gotten underway, will be form the new direction of Europe, according to Achim IRIMESCU, Minister Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representation of Romania to Europe. Starting the second panel, he explained that the CAP is the most integrated common policy for EU Member States. However, he also noted that it is not sufficiently adapted for global developments, and that its scale and complexity could hinder the need for drastic changes.

The two other participants of the panel, Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE, Director General of the French Ministry of Agriculture and Céline CHARVERIAT, Executive Director of IEEP, supported the need for CAP change and simplification. The panel concluded that the CAP should promote sustainability and reshape the ecological footprint of agriculture, as the environment and the agriculture are fundamentally linked.

The panel also concluded that risk management is not well developed within the CAP; the current safety nets are either insufficient or not well balanced – according to the panel, these tools unequally divide support to different European regions. Last year showed us that European agriculture is also susceptible to crises and lacks the tools that allow policy makers and farmers to cushion the blow. This

lack, the panel warned, weakens the long-term position of Europe on the global marketplace and depending on the available funds in the CAP crisis budget remains insufficient.

Further complicating the future of agriculture is the lack of understanding of modern agriculture at both the individual consumer as well as global level. Too often, the sector finds itself underrepresented or ignored, leading to the need for a more integrated CAP that projects a global political reach.

“Mission Innovation 2025” was the headline of the day’s third event. Containing 30 innovative projects, the report develops three priorities for a new agricultural revolution. The first is to develop a systematic agricultural approach to combat climate change, with the second looking at new technologies and tools for agriculture. The third priority is to empower different stakeholders to generate experimental research that can develop Europe’s competitive edge.

This report was presented to the French Ministry of Agriculture at the event, and serves to bring new ideas in French agriculture. Underpinning the three priorities are key elements such as technological advancement, developing France’s agricultural knowledge base and improving life-long learning for farmers and other stakeholders.

After the short introduction the panel brought forward a series of examples of innovation, such as the bio-refinery of

Bazancourt; a large complex of scientific research, industry, education and innovation. These four elements come together at Bazancourt to work hand in hand to achieve a maximum efficiency, reusing as much waste as possible by reusing it again as resource for another process within the complex. Other examples included fertilizers and machinery, which are becoming more and more intertwined as technology advances; more efficient fertilizers can be spread by ICT-adapted machinery to apply precise dosages which avoid the current issue environmental damage through over-application.

Christoph BÜREN summarised the day’s conference by noting that tomorrow’s agriculture needs not just innovation, flexibility and a new CAP, but mainly a renewed commitment from Europe and its land managers. The role of agriculture, he said, was no longer a local affair; it is a global enterprise and France has all the tools needed to be a leader. Like nature, agriculture should adapt and evolve to make sure that food and environmental security are met.

These discussions will continue at the FFA2017 in Brussels on March 28th.

For more information and free registration, please check [www.forumforagriculture.com](http://www.forumforagriculture.com), and follow @ForumforAg. Use #FFA2017 to share your thoughts and join us on the day.



Josef Heger (1801–1877), detail from: "View of Palais Rasumotzky from the garden pavilion," after 1837  
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## Experts suggest structural changes to CAP



Julianna NAGY, ELO



The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) accounts for nearly 40% of the total EU budget and is a crucial support mechanism for agriculture and the rural environment in Europe. When designed and managed effectively, it can have a real impact on how European agriculture addresses climate change (both through reduced emissions and adaptation), manages land and the countryside to optimise provision of food, energy, biomaterial and ecosystem services and supports the economic development of rural areas.

However, if the CAP is to maintain its large share of the EU budgetary allocation (just under 40%), it has to show policy makers, stakeholders and European citizens that it is fit for purpose and good value for money.

Well-known academics Allan BUCKWELL, Allan MATTHEWS, David BALDOCK and Erik MATHIJS, all experts in the CAP, discussed the value proposition of the

CAP at an event hosted by the President of the Intergroup on Biodiversity Hunting and the Countryside, Karl-Heinz FLORENZ and co-organized by ELO and the RISE Foundation at the European Parliament this January. The event represented part of the search for new ideas as the CAP reform season is upon Brussels. The EU, faced with continued financial problems, a refugee crisis and the departure of the United Kingdom, is under pressure to reduce what many perceive as lavish farm subsidies.

In order to re-define the CAP the day's speakers are all part of a group of experts brought together by the RISE Foundation. The report, titled 'CAP: Thinking out of the box' considers the fundamental nature of the CAP. It asks why changes are imperative, what reforms should look like (including land and risk management) and how structural changes to the governance of the CAP could assist the policy. A crucial part of the work of the Foundation is

to consult regularly with a wide range of interested stakeholders, therefore the views and opinions expressed during the Parliamentary debate will be integrated into the further development of the project. The final report will be launched on 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2017 in the frame of a pre-FFA event in Brussels.

In his opening speech Janez POTOČNIK, Chairman of the RISE Foundation, explained that the 21<sup>st</sup> century is characterised by resource use acceleration, unprecedented population growth and widening inequalities. The planet, he noted, had dangerously passed through at least 4 of its 9 identified planetary boundaries, including genetic diversity and nitrogen and phosphorus emissions - all clearly linked to food production. With regards to biodiversity, 60% of ecosystems are already degraded or used unsustainably, and there are increasingly severe impacts and acceleration of climate change. To answer these challenges, the EU has signed two impor-



Karl-Heinz FLORENZ opens the discussion



## CAP Consultation

On the 2nd of February, the European Commission announced a three-month public consultation on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The three-month public consultation is part of the first phase of the modernisation and simplification of the CAP.

Two different sets of unforeseen developments explain why we are looking at modernising and simplifying the CAP so soon after the 2013 reform. First, there was a clear realisation that, partly as a result of the co-decision process, the complexity of the final legislation left all parties involved unsatisfied with the final result – thus the need for CAP simplification. Second, the rapid changes in the broader policy environment surrounding EU agriculture – from markets and trade to climate change and environmental challenges – have necessitated the need for CAP modernisation.

Farmers have faced unprecedented challenges in these past two years. It is time to assess and improve the policy tools to support farmers in times of such crises and to make them more resilient in a globalised world.

While most of the consultation is composed of multiple choice questions, it includes some open-ended questions:

- What are the main problems/obstacles preventing the current policy from successfully delivering on its objectives? What are the drivers behind these problems?
- Which elements of the current CAP are the most burdensome or complex and why?
- Do you see the need to add objectives for a modernised CAP; if yes, which ones?
- Do you have concrete ideas for simplifying the CAP and reducing the administrative burden for farmers, beneficiaries (or public administrations)? Please specify and explain the reasons behind your suggestions.
- Do you have more ideas for modernising the CAP?

The consultation runs until the second of May, and the ELO is drafting its response. Members are invited to participate in the discussion and send their contributions. The results of the public consultation will be published online and presented by Commissioner Hogan at a conference in Brussels in July 2017.

Ana ROCHA, ELO

tant international agreements a little over a year ago: The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the COP21 Paris Agreement on Climate Change. According to the chairman; *“If we are to reach the SDGs, it is imperative that we have a CAP that supports them to realise their potential as critical agents of change in the transformation of current consumption and production systems.”*

However Professor Allan BUCKWELL, the report Director, said: *“The constellations of the EU stars are not well aligned for a further significant reform after the mandate for the current CAP runs out in 2020, but our analysis shows it is essential that the next reform is more meaningful than the 2013 reform and thus we must do what we can to engineer the conditions to enable such reform to take place.”*

In her feedback, MEP Mairead MCGUINNESS urged all those involved in any discussions on the future evolution of the CAP to leave their baggage outside the door and come to the debate with an open mind, and said: *“To date, efforts to green the CAP have resulted in more complexity and criticism from both farmers and environmental organisations. Environmental sustainability has to be at the heart of day to day farm management, but the CAP is also needed to guarantee economic sustainability and on this, it is found wanting. Tackling volatility, imbalances in the food supply chain and long term sustainability will require everyone to think outside the box, but the challenge of funding this new dynamic CAP may ultimately be the greatest one.”*

In his response, Marco CONTEIRO, EU Policy Director on Agriculture for Greenpeace, argued that facts, data and clear analysis of these complex issues are central to this debate if we are to move away from arguments motivated by emotion. Phasing out the entitlement culture and discussing a new system of contracts would allow Eu-

rope to talk about a bottom up approach. Farmers, he said, deserve to be rewarded for what they do, but whether or not direct payments are the best ways remains to be seen.

In his closing remarks MEP Karl-Heinz FLORENZ, said: *“Nobody is happy with the current European agricultural policy for different reasons. The RISE Foundation presented us today a way forward, ‘thinking out of the box’. I believe that our biggest problems are the failure to be sustainable and halt biodiversity loss and the failure to talk to farmers and include them in the decision-making. We should make more use of farmers’ experience and knowledge as to what might be the best and most appropriate measures to take. In my opinion, it is the right moment to start the debate now in order to be ready for the CAP reform in 2020 and to be able to actively engage in the discussions of the future.”*

The new lobbying season for the CAP is now fully in swing. As part of the first phase of this modernisation effort, DG Agriculture recently opened its three-month public consultation, with the deadline set at the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May 2017. The results will be published on its website and with a public conference in July 2017.

For the full report of EP meeting visit [www.europeanlandowners.org/inter-group](http://www.europeanlandowners.org/inter-group)

As part of the public consultation Commissioner HOGAN will speak at the Forum for the Future of Agriculture on 28<sup>th</sup> of March and discuss with the participants whether the CAP fit for delivering the SDGs?!

Registration is available at [www.forumforagriculture.com](http://www.forumforagriculture.com)

## Exchange of views on the access and use of farmland

*Karl-Heinz FLORENZ, MEP and chairman of the European Parliament Intergroup on Biodiversity, Hunting and Countryside, introduced this conference on the crucial topic of land access and concentration. This panel, chaired by Annie SCHREIJER-PIERIK MEP and member of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, gathered high-level speakers coming from both the political and scientific world.*

Johnathan GOFFIOL, EHHA - Emmanuele Mikosz, ELO



As MEP and Shadow Rapporteur on the Parliament's own-initiative report entitled "State of play of farmland concentration in the EU: how to facilitate the access to land for farmers", Vladimir URUTCHEV introduced the report and shared his concerns and proposals regarding land concentration and land access in Europe. He first highlighted that this document has one primary objective; to highlight that farmlands –the wellspring of food production in Europe– are under strong pressures. Given current developments, it is crucial to more closely monitor farmland acquisitions and prevent speculative market behaviors. The MEP's report calls for the collection of comprehensive up-to-date data on national land markets. Furthermore, the European Commission should issue guidelines to Member States to ensure that rules comply with the internal market rules and, more importantly, with the general interest.

This last idea was echoed by Dr. Thomas WIEDMANN, legal officer for the European Commission's DG for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Market Union. He stressed the importance of guaranteeing internal market freedoms to all the EU citizens (including free movements of capital) at a time when

certain European countries are adopting special measures to restrict acquisition of farmlands from foreign investors. He emphasized that the Commission strongly believes that tackling land speculation should not interfere with internal market freedoms. Disproportionate and discriminatory national measures thus need to be taken off the table, as they go against the core principles of the common market. Nevertheless, he also noted that we should never lose sight of the public interest; some restrictions imposed by the Member states being seen as more than justified given the scale of the challenges these states are facing.

After these political presentations, the two other speakers provided a scientific basis to the conversation by sharing relevant data and figures. As Professor at the Catholic University of Leuven, Liesbet VRANKEN gave a very clear overview of the land markets and their regulations in Europe. Jan NOVOPACKY, Secretary general of the Czech and Moravian Agricultural Union, complemented this analysis with the Czech Republic's example.

These presentations were followed by a lively Q&A session with the audience and the discussion led to some very interesting exchanges. Two civil servants from

the Commission took the floor to defend Commission's position. Ricard RAMON, from the DG AGRI, stressed the necessity to improve the definition of 'active farmer' and to get better data regarding the average farmers' age. His colleague from the DG ENVI, Nick HANLEY, then raised the sensitive issue of the environmental standards that need to be fulfilled by farmers.

ELO Secretary General Thierry de l'ESCAILLE emphasised that too many restrictions on land markets leads to a decrease in land lease contracts as land-owners become reluctant to engage – a phenomenon taking places all over the EU. He stated that it is crucial that farmers, like all other SME sectors of Europe, are allowed to grow in order to remain competitive. This is especially vital, he argued, as taking care of the environment is only sustainable for profitable land managers.

The ELO will continue this vital debate and bring solutions as well as well-founded examples in order to ensure land access for the next generation of Europe's farmers, and to improve access to innovative tools for those already farming.



V. URUTCHEV, K.H. FLORENZ, A.SCHREIJER-PIERIK



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## 2017 European Tree of the Year

*16 countries take part this year in the 7th edition of the prestigious environmental contest European Tree of the Year. During the month of February everyone can choose their favourite trees through online voting at [www.treeoftheyear.org](http://www.treeoftheyear.org). More than 250,000 people voted last year.*

Ana CANOMANUEL, Communication officer

The European Tree of the Year is a contest highlighting the importance that trees have in our daily lives, as well as their significance for the European Natural and Cultural heritage. Among the stories of this year, one of the oldest trees of Europe – the Stelmužė oak in Lithuania; trees that grow together with school children – Scottish and German finalists; survivors of urban development – the Welsh Brimmon Oak; and a very cinematographic tree in England. Head to the European Tree of the Year website to read the full stories of the finalist’s trees.

The European Tree of the Year is supported by Karmenu VELLA, European Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries. “In our increasingly urban world trees need celebration. I’m happy to see this contest pay tribute to their history and to the special relationship we share” he said last year at the occasion of the Award Ceremony.

The winners will be honoured at the Award Ceremony hosted by MEPs Pavel POC from Czech Republic and Bronis ROPĖ from Lithuania at the European Parliament in Brussels. Join us to celebrate trees on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017, International Day of Forests, in the presence of Daniel CALLEJA CRESPO, Director-General for Environment of the European Commission.

### FACTS & FIGURES

- 7<sup>th</sup> edition
- 16 trees from 16 countries
- 2017 new country: Lithuania
- More than 200,000 unique votes every year
- More than 600,000 unique visits to the website every year
  - 200 attendees to the Award Ceremony in Brussels

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The **European Tree of the Year** is a contest that highlights the significance of trees in the natural and cultural heritage of Europe and the importance of the ecosystem services trees provide. The contest is not looking for the most beautiful tree, but for a tree with a story, a tree rooted in the lives and work of the people and the community that surrounds it.

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



# The CIC supports the World Hunting and Nature Expo in 2021



The International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC) has already started the preparation for the 2021 World Hunting and Nature Expo. At the Fishing, Hunting and Arms International Exhibition (FeHoVa) in Budapest, which took place from February 9 until February 12, 2017, the CIC showcased the African spirit with an interactive stand with the theme *Keep Calm and Let Africa Speak!*



G. AMAN, CIC President

The aim of the chosen topic was to bring the African continent closer to the visitors, to raise awareness about wildlife conservation issues, and to highlight the CIC's work in the field of the sustainable use of wildlife and wild lands, mainly in those African countries where the consumptive use of wildlife provides vital income for the survival and expansion of conservation efforts. Until the World Expo in 2021, every year the CIC will introduce hunting and wildlife conservation around the world.

At the opening ceremony, Deputy Prime Minister of Hungary, Dr. Zsolt SEMJÉN indicated that the World Hunting and Nature Expo 2021 is the first exhibition in Hungary celebrating the 50th anniversary of the World Hunting Exhibition which was held in 1971. Count József KÁROLYI was appointed as Commissioner for the World Hunting and Nature Expo 2021, thus he will be the responsible for the organization of the Expo 2021. It is already known that the event is planned to take place in three different venues, at the Hungexpo (Budapest's Fair Center), at the Hatvan Hunting Museum, and at the renewed Budapest Zoo.

George AMAN, President of the CIC, greeted the guests and participants of the FeHoVa, underlined the importance of unifying the hunting community, and

invited the audience to visit the CIC's stand. *"Each year, from now until the 2021 World Exhibition, [the CIC stand] will focus on another continent. It has been said many times before, but Dr. SEMJÉN and*

*Commissioner Count KÁROLYI, you can be rest assured that the CIC is at your service as we prepare for 2021!"*

## World Hunting Exhibition in 1971

The largest hunting exhibition of all time was the first World Hunting Exhibition in 1971, which was held in Hungary. The World Exhibition was organized from August 27 to September 30, 1971 in Budapest. The success and high international standards of the exhibition was proven by the presence of 52 countries from four continents' (Europe, Africa, Americas and Asia), and the organization of national demonstrations in 35 countries. The "Hunting the world" event hosted representatives from 34 countries.

Furthermore, the trophy presentation, where 118 of 18 different wild species from 19 countries were displayed 18. The 35-day event attracted more than 2 million visitors, of which more than 200,000 were foreign hunters and other guests.

## Agriculture and Climate. Wheat in All Times.

Sébastien ABIS, Mohammed SADIKI  
IRIS Editions/Max Milo



A vital activity because of its nutritive function, agriculture also fulfils economic, social and environmental roles. It continues to be a determinant of stability and peace, but population growth and the increase of climate change effects pose a double imperative. Agriculture remains highly vulnerable to weather shocks and natural disasters, but must also increase its productivity while reducing its environmental footprint. Simultaneously, its land management aspects also offer vast scope for climate change mitigation.

This permanent interaction between climate, food and geopolitics finds a major echo in the Mediterranean basin, a true barometer of global agricultural tensions. Water and land management, improving living conditions in rural areas and the need to use international markets to meet food needs are some of the major challenges explored in this book.

## Will Europe have access to 21<sup>st</sup> century plant breeding?

*We are only two or three generations away from having to feed 9 billion people, many of whom are rising to the middle classes and demanding more food and variety. They have every right to expect that demand to be met, and to insist that the food chain will do so sustainably. However, climate change, environmental problems and inefficient resource use are chipping away at our ability to do so.*

Robert de GRAEFF, ELO



**W**e therefore need new tools that allow us to meet future challenges, and the novel technique of plant genome editing, with its extraordinary ability to turn off or improve existing genes, might just be part of the answer.

Currently, the breeding of new plant species that are suitable to modern farming takes thousands of trial plants, several years, and heavy capital investment. However, the next generation of New Breeding Techniques (NBTs) will allow for earlier and faster identification of desirable plant traits, and can alter these to make rapid advances possible. Arguably the most powerful and adaptable tool for genome editing is currently a method called 'CRISPRCas9'. In only a few years, this NBT has allowed researchers to routinely enable or disable DNA sequences that are already part of plant DNA. Near-future applications include the ability to enhance or repress specific parts of the genetic makeup of plants, which will be able to increase plant mutation only in those regions – eliminating damage at off-site sites or unwanted mutations.

For farmers and consumers alike, the po-

tential advantages could be extraordinary. Commodity crops such as wheat, soy beans, rice and others could be swiftly developed to provide better yields, resist droughts, or have greater disease resistance. It could even be used to make food more nutritious, and 'switch' off those DNA sequences that cause allergies in humans. Given global changes, this will not just be good for farm business, but may even be essential to support humanity.

These techniques fundamentally differ from previous gene editing tools – the famous GM plants – which relied on inserting genetic material, usually from foreign species, into the plant. With NBT tools, the effects created are already latently present in the plant's DNA, but are now being 'woken up'. In April of last year, the US Department of Agriculture has already determined that a mushroom modified with CRISPRCas9 does not fall under its traditional GM legislation, as the changes created are internal to the mushroom, not introduced from outside sources.

The European Union is assessing how to regulate plants and animals developed through these techniques. The European Commission is currently sitting on the

vital legal analysis that will say whether these new tools will fall under its unbelievably restrictive GMO legislation. Currently, the EC defines GMOs as organisms with alterations that cannot occur naturally, but Swedish authorities have already concluded that CRISPR-edited plants (as long as they do not contain foreign DNA) should not be defined as GMOs. For farmers, what is needed above all is clarity and certainty. We strongly urge the European Commission to not include NBTs into its GMO legislation, which would kill this technology in Europe before it got off the ground. However, worse than bad news is no news; while we understand that this will be a file with political weight and many headaches, that cannot be a reason to not deliver conclusions when the potential of NBTs is so extraordinary.

NBTs and other farm technologies will be discussed on March 27 at the ELO's conference **New technologies for farmers: Food Safety and Security in 2050**. Please register at: [preffa2017.eventbrite.com](http://preffa2017.eventbrite.com)

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## YFCS Plans for 2017

*The Young Friends of the Countryside are looking back to what has been a very exciting year in 2016.*

Marie-Christine SCHONBORN, YFCS



It started with a very interesting Forum for the Countryside Entrepreneurship (FCE), which addressed the topic of marketing as a keystone for entrepreneurship. Moreover, the Young Friends awarded the FAMIGRO Award 2016, which selects the best entrepreneurial project submitted to the jury, to Edouard de MERODE and his project WIGNAC. WIGNAC produces cider from the Ardennes in France and we are excited to hear all about its developments in 2017! The Board would like to particularly thank Agnès de LIEDEKERKE-BEAUFORT, Geoffroy DE CANNIERE and Francesco KINSKY DAL BORGO for hosting another fantastic FCE!

In April the Young Friends were very fortunate to be invited to the second seminar about "Sharing Entrepreneurship Experiences" in Geneva. The topics of succession and the transfer of family businesses deeply touched the audience and the Young Friends, as the new generation, feel very privileged to have been part of this very interesting seminar.

In June the Young Friends joined the Friends of the Countryside (FCS) for their General Assembly (GA) in Wolfsburg,

Germany. As always, the GA of the FCS proved to be an amazing weekend with many different fascinating insights into family businesses.

Furthermore, the Young Friends hosted their General Assembly in Vienna, Austria, which gave really interesting insights into the business of managing a golf club as well as into the different aspects of the food chain, such as the production of mushrooms and the breeding of fishes. We were also very lucky to listen to Felix MONTECUCCOLI, who introduced us to the concept of sustainability and how it is implemented in Austria. Ana ROCHA, liaison between the ELO and the British landowner organization, gave the Young Friends a first-hand update about the Brexit. In addition, YFCS ambassador Alix HEIM DE BALSAC introduced us to the youth organization "FORUM FORËT", which she founded and which is designed to answer more forestry specific questions to young people in France. The Board would like to particularly thank again our hosts Ferdinand TRAUTMANNSDORFF, Venzel CZERNIN, the EDLINGER Family and Alexander VILSMEIER who helped us to organize this year's GA!

In 2017 exciting projects will be imple-

mented by the Board! Firstly, YFCS invites the Young Friends to France in order to discover the beautiful region of Anjou and to also discuss some topics about which we are passionate about, such as countryside sustainability and estate management with proven European entrepreneurial landowners. The FCE will take place on the **31<sup>st</sup> March to the 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2017**. Please Save the Date!

Moreover, this year the Young Friends will hold, for the first time, its General Assembly together with the General Assembly of the Friends of the Countryside in Maastricht, Belgium, in the **end of May 2017**. We are tremendously looking forward to a great weekend and to collaborate even more with the Friends of the Countryside!

Finally, we are also planning to visit the UK Game Fair on the weekend of the **29<sup>th</sup> of July!**

Last, but not least, please do not hesitate to contact us regarding the FAMIGRO AWARD. Should you start your own start-up, please do not hesitate to apply for the FAMIGRO AWARD! The FAMIGRO AWARD awards € 5,000 to the best project as well as financial advice. We would love to hear from you and your project!

## LULUCF in the EU 2030 Climate and Energy Framework

Europe has a strong leadership tradition in combatting climate change. Even before the Paris Agreement, the 2014 the European Council and the European Commission set the **2030 climate and energy policy framework and blueprint for tackling global climate change beyond 2020, and mandated the European Commission to include Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) into this framework.**

In addition, the Kyoto Protocol places constraints on the EU and each of its Member States, as they need to ensure that the LULUCF sector does **not yield extra emissions.** As this Protocol will expire at the end of 2020, the EU has launched its proposal on the inclusion of greenhouse gas emissions and removals from LULUCF into the 2030 climate and energy framework, including the mechanism for monitoring and reporting the greenhouse gas emissions. It will contribute to climate change mitigation by **reducing emissions, and maintaining and enhancing sinks and carbon stocks, at national level.**

The new proposal includes some flexibility with regards to emissions from natural disturbances, as well as the possibility of compensating emissions from one land category by removing in another. It further includes the possibility to accumulate net removals over the period of the legislation, as well as emission trading among Member States.

However, the ELO and Member States also have certain concerns. The current proposal only includes harvest control, not forest management or growth. Furthermore, the forest reference level, which the harvest controls are based on, need to be taken into consideration. This was confirmed at the last Agriculture Council, where Member States were positive overall, but also stressed the importance of sustainable forest management, and criticised the proposal for not recognizing existing forests; currently only newly planted trees are given emission credits.

The Parliament's Environment committee will be the formally dealing with the proposal, with the AGRI committee only being able to express an opinion. This surprising move, given that the proposal could have a considerable impact on European agriculture, was suggested by the Parliament's Conference of Committee Chairs.

Clara MORENO , ELO



## Helping farmers learn from their peers – The AgriDemo-F2F project begins

Peer-to-peer learning in the farming community needs both increasing and expansion; getting land managers to learn from each other has proven to be one of the most effective tools. In order to expand such learning, the AgriDemo-F2F Horizon 2020 project was kicked off in Ghent this January.

The project will boost learning by helping the commercial farming community understand the role that demonstration farms can have in applying scientific findings, spreading best practice, and delivering innovative farming approaches to the broader community. Building on the evidence gathered at these demonstration farms, it will organize more effective farmer-to-farmer learning to not just spread knowledge, but also intensify the how-to of peer learning.

This study, which gathers 14 partners from Greece to Sweden will run for 30 months and is carried out in collaboration with the PLAID project. By combining efforts and creating synergies, the two projects will maximise efficiency and impact.

During the three days of kick-off meeting, the partners examined the synergies between both projects and worked on the general management, financial requirements and communication tools of each project. Further sessions were dedicated to defining what a 'demonstration farm' is, so that both projects could go forward with the same understanding. Finally, initial thoughts were put into the creation of the knowledge hub, which will increase peer-to-peer learning.

The next meeting will take place in Aberdeen in June 2017.

For more information please contact Servane MORAND at [servane.morand@elo.org](mailto:servane.morand@elo.org)  
Grant Agreement number: 728061 – AgriDemo-F2F  
H2020-RUR-2016-2017/H2020-RUR-2016-1

### Announcement of the sad demise of our friend Nicholas EFSTATHIADIS

We sadly inform you that we have suffered the loss of an outstanding colleague of ours, from the Forest Owners Association of Greece. He died last month of a sudden cerebral haemorrhage. We are sad that we have lost such a fine person, he will be greatly missed.

On behalf of the ELO, we would like to extend our sincere condolences to his friends and family. Nicholas EFSTATHIADIS was highly respected as a chairman of the Forestry Policy Group and as a representative from the Greek Forest Owners Association. Those of us who had the chance to work with him witnessed his commitment and kindness.

ELO Secretariat



## Diary dates

### 2 February - 2 May, online public consultation

The public consultation on the shape of the future CAP. Results of this questionnaire will be published on DG AGRI webpage and communicated in a public conference in July 2017.

<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/FutureCAP>

### 7 - 10 March, Bonn, Germany

5th Plenary session of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services.

[www.ipbes.net/plenary/ipbes-5](http://www.ipbes.net/plenary/ipbes-5)

### 21 March, Brussels

The Award Ceremony of the European Tree of the Year organised at the FAO International Day of Forests

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

### 27 March, Residence Palace, Brussels

"Pre-FFA event", including RISE Foundation presentation of the study: "Further discussion on the CAP", and ELO workshops "Risk mitigation and Management for Agricultural Investment" and "Opportunities and give access to New Technologies for Farmers"

[preffa2017.eventbrite.com](http://preffa2017.eventbrite.com)

### 28 March, Square, Brussels

10<sup>th</sup> Forum for the Future of Agriculture - Where Agriculture and Environment meet.

[www.forumforagriculture.com](http://www.forumforagriculture.com)

### 31 March - 2 April, France

Forum for the Countryside Entrepreneurship (FCE).

[www.yfcs.eu](http://www.yfcs.eu)

### 3 - 4 April, Brussels

REVAB: 4th Project meeting

[www.revab-erasmus.eu](http://www.revab-erasmus.eu)

### 10 - 11 April, Munich, Germany

FORBIO: meeting of the consortium partners

[www.forbio-project.eu](http://www.forbio-project.eu)



## FFA recognized as a 'Brussels Ambassador'

This year visit.brussels (the official Brussels' tourism platform) presented the 'Brussels Ambassador' honours to groups and events who have made an exceptional contribution to supporting Brussels as a global MICE destination. The Forum for the Future of Agriculture was honoured as a city ambassador at the annual gala dinner.

In front of academics, doctors, European Commissioners, deans of universities, chairmen plus board members of international organizations based in Brussels, scientists, hospital company directors and other destination partners, the thirty seven new ambassadors were praised for efforts and help in bringing admitted events to Brussels. Besides the FFA, the award ceremony also honoured the EU's *Green Week* and *EU Week of Regions and Cities*.

Source: <http://ftnnews.com/mice/31540-visit-brussels-presents-37-ambassador-awards.html>

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Register now at [www.forumforagriculture.com](http://www.forumforagriculture.com)

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