

Notes from EU COST Action SACURIMA Meeting with EU Officials 14th and 15th October 2019

COST ACTION SACURIMA Meeting with COPA*COGECA Tuesday 14th COPA*COGECA HQ.

COPA*COGECA representatives: Ms Oana Neagu - Director with responsibility for Commodities, Environment, Climate Change, Food and Feed. Ms Marta Rosa, Senior Policy Advisor; Mr Tobia Capuzzo - Project Officer for Research, Innovation, Horizon 2020, Pesticides, Antimicrobial Resistance and Digitization.

EU COST Action SACURIMA representatives: *Risto Rautiainen (Action Chair): John McNamara (Action Vice Chair) Pat Griffin (Action Communication Manager) Anne Marie Heiberg (WG5 Chair) José Rato Nunes (WG2) Petya Stavreva (WG5 Member & former MEP) Helle Birk Domino (WG5 Vice Chair)*

SACURIMA representatives provided a Power Point presentation on the establishment and current work of the 5 Working Groups in the COST Action, (now representing 32 countries and over 90 subject matter experts) and provided a copy of their WG 5 (Dissemination) Draft Policy Recommendations.

Ms Neagu stated that COPA*COGECA have 60 member organizations and have an interpretation team for 6 languages. They have 45 working groups that develop policy and they liaises with the EU Commission and the EU Parliament on all policy matters. She also stated that they had recently got involved in R&D projects as a 'test' and it found working with researchers/universities rewarding.

The discussion was generally around the budget for the Action, duration, sectors covered, farmer involvement, papers published, the fact that it was a "science exchange network" with no funding for actual research. The rationale for the Draft Policy Recommendations were set out by various Action members etc..

Ms Neagu indicated that her organization would like to have an 'on-going working relationship' with the COST Action and its member organizations to ensure farmers get 'on-board' rather than being asked to support or meet proposals at short notice. SACURIMA representatives agreed and asked for support for the COST Action Network.

Ms Rosa advised that COPA*COGECA worked with employers organizations and could be involved with OHS promotion within this role.

- She instanced participation in the EU OSHA Seminar in Brussels on 16th October.
- She spoke about having social dialogue with farmer member organizations and EU organizations.
- She mentioned EFAT report on OHS which was supported by DG Employment

Regarding Sacrum Policy Recommendation 4. – CPD for Farmers linked to CAP

José Rato Nunes; outlined the policy recommendation and how OHS Training worked and was beneficial in Portugal.

Ms Neagu spoke about the following:

- ERASMUS+ operated by DG Agri and Employment. Each year there is a call for 4 Sectors for 4 Topics (called Blueprints) for 4 year projects.

- The major issue of generational renewal with high proportions of farmers over 55.
- A project on Robotics/Artificial Intelligence where Training is needed and they were working very closely with CEMA (Farm Machinery Organization) and Young Farmers Organization.

Regarding Sacurima Policy Recommendation 5. – Improvements needed in OSH Statistics

Ms Neagu was surprised at the estimated scale of farm fatalities and injuries set out by SACURIMA. *Risto Rautiainen*; indicated that the data is accurate based on Finnish Insurance data. Mr Tobia Capuzzo, indicated that they would be prepared to consider best OHS prevention practice, discuss it with its members and then make proposals to EU Commission.

Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

Regarding current CAP, COPA*COGECA felt that most details have been agreed. If EU Parliament were to reopen discussions, they would look at the 3 most important 'political' issues, that said making changes is in the hands of Member States.

In Conclusion. Petya Stavreva indicated that the COST Action wished to have a Long Term collaboration with COPA*COGECA. Ms Neagu indicated that COPA*COGECA was interested in the Action Proposal, would share any proposals with its member organizations, undertake Internal Reflection and also discuss reports from Trade unions.

Notes from SACURIMA COST Action meeting with EU Commissioner Ms Mariya Gabriel and DG Agri and Rural Affairs Cabinet Member (Mr Kevin Keary) - 15th October 2019

Ms Gabriel was accompanied by **Mr Kevin Keary**; Cabinet Member of current Commissioner Phil Hogan, Agriculture and Rural Affairs Commissioner. Ms Gabriel is currently Commissioner for 'Digital Economy and Society' and now nominated to be the next Commissioner for 'Innovation and Youth'.

COST Action SACURIMA participants: Risto Rautiainen (RR) – (Action Chair): John McNamara (JM) – (Action Vice Chair) Pat Griffin (PG) – (Action Communication Manager) Anne Marie Heiberg (AMH)-(WG5 Chair) José Rato Nunes (JRN)- (WG2) Petya Stavreva (PS)- (WG5 Member & former MEP) Helle Birk Domino (HBD) – (WG5 Vice Chair)
(Note; Text in Italics refers to contributions of SACURIMA participants)

Petya Stavreva introduced the EU COST Action SACURIMA Delegation and described the work of the Action. She stated that it is a long-term project, which will have a Visible Impact. SACURIMA representatives provided a Power Point presentation, on the establishment and current work of the 5 Working Groups in the COST Action, (now representing 32 countries and over 90 subject matter experts) and provided a copy of their WG 5 (Dissemination) Draft Policy Recommendations. 2 DVD's produced by the Action were also viewed. Recommendation 1 (PG); 2 & 3 (RR), 4 (JRN); 5 (PG).

Commissioner Gabriel stated that €10 billion was allocated to the Agriculture Directorate under Horizon Europe and as incoming Commissioner for Innovation and Youth she would be sympathetic to research in OSH in Agriculture. She stated that a lot can be done in the areas for vocational and lifelong learning but that university education could be more

difficult to achieve. She also stated that the challenge will be how to mobilise the Agriculture sector to occupational health and safety (OHS) issues.

(PG) Stressed that farmers needed more training, needed CPD to be better farm managers in all aspects of farming including farm OHS Management to help them meet the challenges within the new CAP.

Mr Keary complimented the SACURIMA delegation on the Draft EU Policy recommendations.

Mr Keary stated that it is helpful to have Commissioner Gabriel's support in her role as Commissioned for Innovation and Youth. He also stated that the incoming Commissioner for Agriculture **Mr Janusz Wojciechowski (Poland) (Biography in Appendix 2)** has a particular interest in OSH and that he had included a reference to the issue of suicide among farmers in a recent address to the parliament. Mr Keary felt that SACURIMA raising the farmer OSH issue now was extremely timely and that 'Farmer Welfare' is currently receiving considerable prominence. This includes farmer health, including mental health, in association with safety issues. He commended the prominence given to these issues in the SACURIMA documents and DVD's.

Mr Keary also stated that the current CAP has 9 Key Objectives encompassing economic, environmental and social objectives. He felt that OSH fits into all CAP Strategic Plans and modernisation of the CAP but that it possibly fits best within the social objective. e.g. in Generation Renewal, Knowledge Transfer, Farmer Welfare etc. where OSH could be incorporated. National Governments have responsibility of implementing the CAP. Regarding Generation Renewal, he noted that about 12 member states require a level of training for a career in agriculture raising the possibility of a requirement for more generous incentives to gain more training inclusion.

(PG) raised the issue of Specific dedicated farmer OSH training which has the capacity to 'switch a farmer on to OSH' and to 'change the farmer mind-set towards OSH'. He stated that farmers do not go to OHS training without an incentive and that Training was a critical component of many aspects of the CAP. e.g. Biodiversity, Climate Change Amelioration.

Commissioner Gabriel stated that 6 missions have been set up related to Horizon Europe, with one for Agriculture and she suggested that SACURIMA make contact with the Agriculture Mission Board regarding possible inclusion of farmer OSH.

(HBD) stated that OSH is part of Sustainability. If the industry continues to be perceived as dangerous, young people will not take up a farming career.

(PG) The perception of farming has changed to being an 'unrewarding and unsafe' career. Improvements in the overall Quality of Life of Farmer and having farming recognised as a professional career was needed.

(PS) informed the Commissioner and Mr Keary of the SACURIMA delegation programme of meetings in Brussels.

Commissioner Gabriel suggested that SACURIMA contact French MEP Eric Andrieu who has spoken about rural suicides (**Biography in Appendix 2**).

Commissioner Gabriel suggested the next steps be taken.

- Need to come-up with sustainable solutions rather than short term unworkable ones.

- Commissioner Gabriel committed her support, but the real power to implement measures is with the Agriculture Commissioner. So seek to meet Commissioner for Agriculture once next Commission is established.
- Make contact with the Missions Board for Agriculture for Horizon Europe.
- The Commissioner requested more information about current farmer education/training.
- Commissioner Gabriel also advised SACURIMA to make contact directly with Eurostat to discuss deficiencies in data collection.

(PG) Stated that up to 75% of MS's did not record or report fatalities and injuries to self-employed farmers or persons not having a contract of employment. He also advised that First Vice President Mairead McGuinness MEP has proposed a regulation relating to accident data collection.

(AMH) Stated that in many countries, accidents to family members are not included in Statistics.

(RR) Stated that detailed non-fatal accident data is available in countries with Social Insurance Schemes.

Commissioner Gabriel indicated that it often takes 2/3 years for statistical data collection. She also suggested that SACURIMA contact the EU Commission Directorate for Health, while Mr Kevin Geary suggested that D.G.s for Employment Affairs and Education would also be interested.

Prior to the meeting conclusion (RR) and (JM) gave an overview of planned outputs of the COST Action SACURIMA between now and its conclusion in March 2021.

Similar 30 minute meetings were with;

- **Ann Marie O'Brian** on behalf of Mrs MAIREAD McGuinness, First Vice President of the European Parliament and member of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development.
- **Dr Miriam Dalli MEP**, Member of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety.
- **Daniel Buda MEP**, Vice-Chair of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development
- **Dr Alfred Sant**, Member of the Committee on the Economic and Monetary Affairs and Committee on Budgets.

Appendix 1.

Incoming Commissioner for Agriculture: Janusz Wojciechowski

The Polish Government confirmed former MEP Janusz Wojciechowski as their pick for their Commissioner nomination. Following confirmation, concluding talks on CAP reform would be his main task. MEPs were nonplussed with his performance at the 1 October hearing and they decided on 7 October to schedule another hearing the following day with the candidate. Wojciechowski chose to speak in his native language that time and his extra commitment to detail eventually won him approval.

Appendix 2.

Mr Éric Andrieu MEP is a French politician who has been a member of the European Parliament since 2012 and a member of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development. In 2018, he also served on the Special Committee on the Union's authorization procedure for pesticides.

