



## EU CAP Network seminar

Support Facility for Innovation and Knowledge exchange including  
EIP-AGRI

## EU CAP Network Seminar 'Smart circular farming to address high energy and fertiliser prices'

### Speaker and facilitator bios

### Plenary speakers (in order of the programme)

Version – pre-event



#### Wolfgang Burtscher

**European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development**

Wolfgang Burtscher has been Director-General of DG Agriculture and Rural Development since April 2020.

From 2009 to 2020 he was Deputy Director-General in the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation of the European Commission and in that function he was responsible for wide range of research and innovation policy development and implementation issues including research and innovation in the fields of agriculture, food and health.

From 2000 to 2009, Mr Burtscher was Director in the European Commission's Directorate-General for Agriculture where he was responsible for the provision of legal support to the CAP and quality policy and for the control of agricultural expenditure.

Wolfgang Burtscher is an Austrian citizen and before joining the European Commission in 2000, he was a representative of the federal states in the permanent representation of Austria to the EU.

From 1992 to 1996, Mr Burtscher was a head of department for European affairs in the public administration of Vorarlberg state. From 1990 to 1992, he was a legal advisor for questions relating to the European Economic Area at the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in Geneva. Between 1983 and 1990, Wolfgang Burtscher was a university assistant and lecturer in public international and European law at the University of Innsbruck.

Wolfgang Burtscher holds a doctorate in law and a qualification from the Institut Européen des Hautes Etudes Internationales in Nice.



Funded by  
the European Union



**Michael Wolf**

**European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development**

Michael Wolf is a research policy officer in the European Commission. In this position, he contributes to DG AGRI's research and innovation agenda in the areas of bioeconomy and forestry. Before joining the European Commission in 2019, he worked in different positions for the Austrian Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, inter alia as Deputy Head of Unit for plant production and as Attaché for Agriculture and Forestry in the Permanent Representation of Austria to the EU in Brussels. Michael has an academic background in natural resources management and ecological engineering.



**Konstantinos Vaiopoulos**

**Institute for Bio-economy and Agri-technology (iBO) – Greece  
Project Manager of the H2020 project AGROFOSSILFREE**

Research associate at CERTH/iBO, Electrical and Computer Engineer, MSc. Konstantinos graduated in 2017 as an Electrical and Computer Engineer from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH) in Greece and in 2021 he was granted an MSc in Artificial Intelligence (AUTH). He has 3 years of experience in European and National projects. From 2020 he has begun his collaboration with the Institute for Bio-Economy and Agri-Technology (iBO) of the Centre for Research and Technology Hellas (CERTH) as Research Associate. From October 2020 until today he acts as Project Manager of the H2020 project AGROFOSSILFREE "Strategies and technologies to achieve a European Fossil-energy-free agriculture" and at the same time works for RES4LIVE "Energy Smart Livestock Farming towards Zero Fossil Fuel Consumption". In addition, he has long experience on a wide range of agricultural activities due to his active involvement with his family's open-field cultivation. He has contributed as a co-author in the book chapter Advanced Crop Protection Techniques and Technologies of the book Modeling for Sustainable Management in Agriculture, Food and the Environment (2021) and in another 4 Journal articles and also co-authored a publication named CityVeg: A robotic platform for urban vegetable production, awarded with the EurAgeng Young Engineers Best Paper Award (AgEng2021). Among his research interests are: Energy Efficiency and Production Systems, RES, Non-Intrusive Load Monitoring, Deep learning and Robotics."





**Wouter Merckx**  
**KU Leuven - Belgium**  
**HyPERFarm project**

Director of KULeuven, TRANSfarm

Wouter Merckx graduated as a veterinarian in 1998 at the UGent, Belgium. In 2000 he obtained his master after master in laboratory animal science.

In 1998, Wouter founded the veterinary practice 'dierenartsenpraktijk Merckx' in Flanders, Belgium. He continued working there until 2019. In 2000 he took over the family farm 'Billighouthoeve', adopted the mixed farm principles of his grandparents and changed genetics from Belgium White Blue cattle to Aberdeen Angus.

From 2005 up to 2013 he joined as an independent veterinarian the animal ethics comité of KU Leuven, Belgium.

In 2013 Wouter started as the manager of the Zoötechnical center of KU Leuven, Belgium. He transformed the university farm to TRANSfarm, the pilot center for circular biobased technologies. Since 2019 he is the director of this upscale facility embedded in KU Leuven.



**María Rosa Mosquera-Losada**  
**University of Santiago de Compostela – Spain**  
**GO-GRASS project**

María Rosa Mosquera-Losada: She is a Distinguished Professor and Coordinator of the Doctoral Programme in Agricultural and Forestry Research at the University of Santiago de Compostela (USC), with a research focus on grasslands, crops and forestry and integrated land use systems including agroforestry and agroecology. Her research projects include agroforestry demonstration plots and extension teaching with commercial companies. She has been leading several regional, national and international projects, being the coordinator of the Thematic Networks AFINET (H2020) and the new AF4EU (HEuropa) to foster knowledge exchange between scientists and practitioners on agroforestry. She has/had several contracts with the Regional Administration leading silvopasture innovation implementation in real farms but also silvoarable. She has already established three research driven networks of agroforestry in Galicia through AGFORWARD project using multicipatory approach techniques. She is chair of the Arable Crop working group of the Global Research Alliance (official IPPC observer) and the "Enabling Environment Working Group" of the Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture (FAO). She is a member of the Executive Committee of the Spanish Agroforestry Association (AGFE) and the European Agroforestry Federation (EURAF).







### **Elisa Pellegrino**

**Crop Science Research Center, Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna (SSSUP) – Italy**

Elisa Pellegrino graduated in Agricultural Science and obtained a PhD in Crop Science at the University of Pisa, Italy. She is Assistant Professor in Agronomy and Field Crops at the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna of Pisa, Italy. Her studies focus on soil quality and microbial diversity and functionality in different agro-ecosystems using morphological, chemical, biochemical and molecular approaches. He has extensive experience in the development and application of microbial biostimulants at lab and field scales in herbaceous crops and vegetables. She has a line of research on the isolation, molecular characterization and assessment of functionality of native/local microbes (bacteria and fungi) collected from different climatic zones for developing efficient microbial consortia targeted to the enhancement of nutrient cycling and plant health under the context of climate change. She has large competences on arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi (AMF) and on their application to enhance yield, nutritional (micro- and macronutrients) and nutraceutical quality of the productions. She is also studying the issues of conservation agriculture and soil organic matter dynamics in different climatic zones and she applies meta-analytic approaches for agro-ecological syntheses. She has extensive experience in data analysis using multivariate and bioinformatics. She is the evaluator of international research projects, reviewer of scientific journals and member of the Editorial Board of *Frontiers in Plant Pathogen Interactions*, *Frontiers in Plant Symbiotic Interactions*, and *MDPI Agriculture*. She is the author of about 120 publications, including 41 articles in indexed journal, having an impact factor (HI) of 20 and 1493 citations.



### **Stamatia Petridou**

**ANATOLIKI SA - Organization For Local Development Since-AFC**

Stamatia is an Agronomist, graduated from Agriculture School of University of Thessaly with expertise in aquatic environment's rearing organisms and water quality management. She strongly advocates the promotion of local development that respects nature, while drawing on environmental ecosystem – based approaches for a sustainable future over local communities. Her educational background included postgraduate studies in Ecological Engineering that qualified her to participate in Project Implementation, with special interest in the detection of CE innovative solutions, targeted to Agrifood production.





## DG Agriculture and Rural Development



**Magdalena Mach**

**European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development**

Magdalena Mach is a Policy Officer at the European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development, Rural Areas & Networks Unit. She holds a Master's degree in International Relations. Before joining the EC she worked for the Agriculture and Fisheries Section of the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Poland to the European Union and Polish Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development where for 6 years she was responsible for the implementation of LEADER approach under Rural Development Programme.



**Anikó Seregélyi**

**European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development**

Anikó Seregélyi joined the European Commission in 2007. Since March 2015, she works as Policy officer for the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development, EIP-AGRI team. In the past seven years, she was involved in numerous EIP-AGRI workshops, seminars and Focus Groups mainly related to the sustainable management of natural resources and capacity building activities. Prior to joining the Commission, she worked as EU project manager in Hungary responsible for research supporting projects in the 5th and 6th RTD Framework Programme and for researchers' mobility issues. She studied geography, European studies and science management in Budapest, Freiburg, Aachen and Speyer.





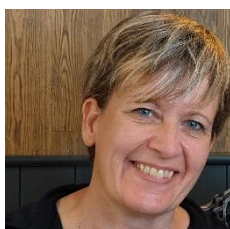
## Support Facility 'Innovation and knowledge exchange | EIP-AGRI' team



**Remco Schreuder**  
Task manager

From 2013-2021 he was a member of the EIP-AGRI Service Point, he continues his role as farm practices officer in the Support Facility team on the topic of smart and resilient agricultural sector and food security. Since 2014 working for the Dutch Agency for Entrepreneurs as an (policy) advisor on Agricultural issues, mainly rural development (agro environment and climate) and CAP. Spend 20 years at several Applied Research units of Wageningen University focusing on farm economics and sustainable farm development.

Experienced in applied research on dairy farming, arable farming, bulb production and flowers, ornamental trees and fruit. Touching economics, entrepreneurship, manure treatment, crop protection, feeding, grassland management and many others.



**Sarah Watson**  
Lead Facilitator

Sarah believes in the power of community and has over 20 years' experience as a facilitator bringing people together to share, explore and create innovative solutions. She works across Europe with a focus on rural areas, their challenges and the opportunities they bring. Her early career included working as a researcher for Bournemouth University's Centre for Land Based Studies whose focus included organic farming. She has also managed two LEADER programme and has had the pleasure of working in a European context ever since. She now runs her own facilitation and innovation consultancy, working with communities to aspire and realise change.



**Friedrich Leitgeb**  
Coordinating Expert

Friedrich Leitgeb is currently employed as research assistant at the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture FiBL in Austria. Before that, he was working in organic inspection for an Austrian control body. Since 2009 he is giving lectures on organic farming at BOKU university and holds seminars and workshops. His fields of expertise include knowledge systems and innovations in organic farming, civic and alternative food networks, food sovereignty, short food supply chains, policy advice, extension and sustainability assessment. Since 2010 he is living and working part time on a certified organic livestock





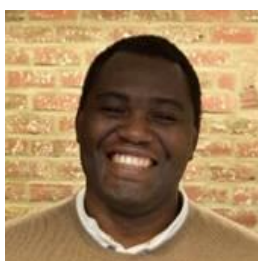


and vegetable farm, keeping an endangered sheep breed and producing organic plantlets. He has been involved with alternative farming practices since almost 25 years in his professional and personal life and is committed to sustainable and small-scale peasant farming.



**Martin Jamrich**  
**Co-Task Manager**

Martin is a Smart Farm Practices & Rural Development Officer at the EIP-AGRI Support Facility team. He has a Master's degree in Quantitative Methods in Economics and a PhD degree in Economics and Management of Agriculture and Food Processing. His research was focused on household consumption and unfair trading practices in the dairy supply chain in Slovakia. Martin has experience with the analysis of data in agriculture, forestry, food and rural development. Since 2021 he has been a project and public manager focusing on coordination, enhancing communication and cooperation between farmers, foresters, researchers, advisors, national networks, organisations, administrations and rural innovation actors.



**Pacôme Elouna Eyenga**  
**Team leader**

Pacôme Elouna Eyenga is Belgian and was born in Yaoundé, Cameroon. He graduated as agronomist in the field of rural economy and sociology, at Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech / Université de Liège in Belgium. Since July 2021, he is the Team Leader of the Support Facility for 'Innovation & Knowledge Exchange | EIP-AGRI. From 2013 until May 2021, he has been Deputy Team Leader and then Team Leader of the EIP-AGRI Service Point established by the European Commission - DG AGRI.



**Szabolcs Biró**  
**Facilitator**

Szabolcs Biró is a Research & Innovation Officer and Head of Division B: Fostering a smart and resilient agricultural sector and food security. His main task is to monitor and evaluate innovation development related to farmer's income and resilience, competitiveness and their position in the food value chain. He holds PhD degree in Management and Business Administration Sciences. Before joining EIP-AGRI he worked as Senior Advisor for Institute of Agricultural Economics in Hungary directing and participating research in the fields of Agricultural Policy Analysis, evaluation of CAP Direct and Rural Development support, strategy and analysis of effects and impacts. Other research fields are agricultural innovation, modernization and investment in agriculture, and farm structural change.





**Sergiu Didicescu**  
**Facilitator**

Sergiu has a background in oenology and agri-environmental economics. He started professional life as an oenologist in the 'Dealul Mare' area, one of Romania's largest wine producing regions. Later, he joined Romania's Rural Development Managing Authority where he was responsible for programming the agrienvironmental measures for Romania's first RDP. Since 2013 Sergiu works for the EIP-AGRI Support Facility currently as Head of Division C "Environment and Climate".



**Xurxo Loureiro Veira**  
**Facilitator**

Xurxo is research and innovation officer at the EIP-AGRI Support Facility. He studied forest engineer at Santiago de Compostela University (USC) with a postgraduate course in agri-food business management from A Coruña University and a master degree in land planning (USC). He is working in Land Laboratory (USC) on food security, forest resilience, biogovernance, ecosystem services and rural development.



**Carla Brites**  
**Facilitator**

Carla Brites is a researcher and innovation officer at the EIP-AGRI Innovation and knowledge exchange support facility. She is working as a senior researcher at the National Institute for Agricultural and Veterinarian Research (INIAV, Portugal), holds a PhD in Food Science and Technology and their research activity is focused on holistic approach to enhance the quality and marketability of cereals and grain legumes.

Carla has been former member of Programme Committee of H2020 SC2, currently is an expert for Bioeconomy in Horizon Europe and member of Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR).



**Ana Pires da Silva**  
**Facilitator**

Ana is a Smart Farm Practices & Rural Development Officer in the EIP-AGRI Support Facility Team. She studied Agricultural Engineering at the Technical University of Lisbon and has a Master degree in Organic farming and Integrated Pest Management. Worked for 10 years at the National Support Unit of the Portuguese National Rural Network (NRN) having been responsible for LEADER and Rural Development at national and international level. She is currently working at the Portuguese National Institute for Agricultural and Veterinary Research.







**Sarah Beigel**  
**Communications**

As part of the Support Facility's communication team, Sarah coordinates the EU CAP Network Innovation and Knowledge exchange newsletter. She works on publications, contributes to the content of the website and offers support for events. Between 2013-2021, Sarah was also Communications officer for the EIP-AGRI Service Point. Sarah is British, currently living and working in France. She has a master's in international project management, and experience in international cooperation projects aimed at knowledge exchange and she had organised a number of international meetings and events within her role in EIP-AGRI and also as European project officer for AC3A (French Chambers of Agriculture).

