

Speaker bios (in order of the programme)



José Manuel Fernandes
Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, Portugal

José Manuel Fernandes has a degree in Systems and Computer Engineering from the University of Minho. He was president of Vila Verde City Council between 1997 and 2009. Between 2009-2024 he was a member of the European Parliament where he was the coordinator of the European People's Party in the Budgets Committee (between 2014-2024). He was also a member of the Agriculture Committee and rapporteur for the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. He was President of the EU-Brazil Parliamentary delegation, member of the negotiating team for the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021/2027 and the Recovery and Resilience Mechanism. He has been on the negotiating team for the EU's annual budgets since 2009, having been the main rapporteur for the 2015 budget. He was permanent co-rapporteur of the EU's own resources and negotiator of programs such as the Juncker Plan, InvestEU, STEP.



Roberto Berutti
European Commission, Member of Cabinet of the Commissioner for Agriculture

Roberto Berutti has 30 years of experience in the agri-food sector with agricultural and economic background. He is a true believer in the European project, and this has accompanied all his professional choices. Along his working track, he has been serving many Italian Public Administrations always in charge of European affairs hence dealing with European subjects like EURES, Structural Funds, Twinning programs, representation offices to the EU (both at regional and national level).

Since January 2020, he has been serving the European Commission as a Cabinet Member in the Cabinet of Commissioner for Agriculture, Commissioner Wojciechowski, working on files related to the Green Deal like F2F/Biodiversity Strategies, R&I, Financial instruments in agriculture and many others. Notably his Portfolio tasks in the cabinet are: Stakeholders- Relations with IFIs (including EIB) – Horizon Europe/Research - Promotion (EU) - Relations with FAO – SDGs, and for the non-portfolio tasks: Sustainable - Europe Investment Plan - European Semester - Research, Science and Innovation (JRC-RTD) - Relations with other IOs (non-IFIs) - G7/G20/OECD.





Hugo Almeida

European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development, D.1 Rural areas and networks

Hugo Almeida is Deputy Head of Unit D.1 Rural areas and networks at the European Commission Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development. Among others, he is leading horizontal management and implementation of the European Innovation Partnership for productive and sustainable agriculture, EIP-AGRI.

After completing studies in economics in 1997, he worked in the private sector in Portugal before embarking on an international career. In 2000, Hugo started as a trainee in the Council of the European Union during the Portuguese Presidency and later joined the United Nations Mission Interim in Kosovo (UNMIK) as a Budget and Finance Officer until end of 2002.

In 2003, he joined the European Commission, starting in the Budget unit of DG AGRI and then moved to the Direct Aids unit in 2010, where he served as Head of the Single Payment Scheme sector. In 2013, Hugo Almeida was appointed Deputy Head of the Unit responsible for the Rural development programs of Spain and Portugal.

Since 2021, Hugo is Deputy Head in the unit “Rural areas and Networks,” overseeing the implementation of EU’s Long-term vision for rural areas, networking activities related to CAP strategic plans, innovation and knowledge exchange, as well as horizontal coordination within DG AGRI in the area of broadband.



Giorgia Robbiati

OG ‘Agroecological innovations to increase the resilience and sustainability of mountain livestock farms’, Italy

I’m working as project manager for the **Consortium of Municipalities** of the Sarca-Mincio-Garda Mountain Catchment Basin on the **H2020 IMPETUS Project**, on adaptation pathways to climate change. I also work as organic auditor for the **Institute for Ethical and Environmental Certification (ICEA)**. I support **livestock farmers** in improving profitability in rotationally grazed pasture systems and farm sustainability, in line with an **agroecological approach**. I’ve been Innovation broker and Project manager of the **EIP-AGRI INVERSION Project**, promoted by the mountain farm **Agriturismo Fattoria Athabaska** where I used to live and work, in the **Autonomous Province of Trento**. I have a **double master degree** in environmental management of Mountain Areas. Before coming back to my mountain areas, I



used to work in **West Africa** in the framework of international cooperation projects in agriculture. My experience in Africa in community and farmer engagement has been fundamental to stimulate bottom-up initiatives in the Trentino province.



Łukasz Ignasiak

OG ‘An original method realization of control activities of beehive with use automatic technical means to improving health condition of honey bee’, Poland

Łukasz Ignasiak is an engineer in the field of mechatronics and is employed at Łukasiewicz Research Network - Poznań Institute of Technology as Chief Food Machine Development Specialist. He obtained his PhD in 2018, performing research in the field of mechanical engineering. The main area of his professional activities is designing various types of machines and devices for food industry with the use of CAD programmes, structural analysis FEA (Finite Element Method) including statics and dynamics, CFD analysis (Computational Fluid Dynamics), installing mechanical systems with commissioning and leading research and development projects. He is also the manager of the project of Beehive Control System where he has been in charge of the group of engineers developing various systems, for example: varroa annihilating, visual previews and remote data transmission.



Jean-Marc Gautier

OG ‘ROBUSTAGNO’, France / Institut de l’Elevage (Idele)

Jean-Marc work at the French Livestock Institut (Idele) since 1999 first as project manager and then as team manager for “Sensors-Equipment-Facilities”. Those, he has 28-years experienced as project manager and he has been involved in many projects either in small ruminants and cattle on topics related to health, welfare and sensors. He was also coordinator of the H2020 thematic Network SheepNet and innovating broker of the OG Robustagno.

Panel discussions



Jacopo Goracci

Tenuta di Paganico Farm, Italy

Jacopo Goracci, with a background in animal science, has been living and working on the Tenuta di Paganico farm in Tuscany (Italy) for 20 years, trying to develop a sustainable silvopastoral farming system. Thanks to his participation in national ([OG NEWTON](#)) and international ([H2020 AGROMIX](#)) projects, in recent years he has focused on the transfer of



innovations and the creation of a lasting network between farms, advisors and research institutions. He is a member of the permanent group of Expert Group for Technical Advice on Organic Production (EGTOP) of DGAGRI, and he is involved in the board of the Italian Agroforestry Federation ([AIAF](#)).



Maria Rosa Mosquera Losada
University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain

María Rosa Mosquera Losada is full professor of the Crop Production and Project Engineering Department of the University of Santiago de Compostela. Coordinator for the EU Projects AFINET a CSA linked to the development of innovations associated with agroforestry as agroecosystem, AF4EU associated with the development of agroforestry value chains and SUS-SOIL a mission soil project related to the development of a methodology to measure soil carbon to be accounted as a carbon credit. Expert on Agroforestry, Agroecology and policy with over 100 JCR papers dealing with land management and land use. She is the current co-chair of the Global Research Alliance cropland research group and the co-chair of the Enabling Working Group of the Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture (FAO). She was the former president of the European Agroforestry Federation and a funder member of the International Union of Agroforestry.



Donal Sheehan
Dairy farmer, Co. Cork, Ireland

I am a full-time dairy farmer from Castlelyons in Co. Cork in the south of Ireland. As a farmer, it was becoming increasingly obvious that we were losing biodiversity, especially on intensive farmland and no one seemed to be doing anything about it. Along with 2 friends we set about designing a farmer-friendly pilot project that would reverse the trends in biodiversity loss. Thus was born The BRIDE "Farming With Nature" Project. The project designed biodiversity improvement plans for 43 farmers from all farming sectors in the Bride valley and also designed scorecards that could determine the quantity and quality of biodiversity on any farm. The end result was the Farmland Biodiversity Index which could determine a payment to each farmer based on the quantity and quality of habitats (biodiversity) on their farms. It was, in essence a project that gave higher payments for higher quantity and quality. The project has just finished and it is hoped to take the learnings and roll them out to other farmers.





Patrick Pasgang
Boerenbond, Belgium

Patrick Pasgang holds an Economic Degree and MBA in Marketing and International Business. He is a Senior Innovation Consultant for Short food supply chains, multifunctional agriculture & new business development for Belgian farmers. After more than 22 years of management experience within the food retail business, he currently works at Boerenbond Projects. Boerenbond is the biggest farmers union in Flanders/Belgium representing 16.000 member farmers. He helps regional nonprofit organisations & cooperations in establishing Local Food Hubs, organizes and facilitates external advisory committees to help farmers with independent business advice and helps start-ups with the development of their new business-concepts. Patrick Pasgang represents Boerenbond in different Strategic Platforms and was an expert in the EIP Agri Focus Group on SFSC Management and the ENRD network on accelerator programs dedicated to farmers. Patrick Pasgang was involved in building The COREnet project. He was also involved in Farmwell, SKIN and other projects like Newbie and Cocoreado.



Catherine Geslain-Laneelle
European Commission, DG AGRI, Strategy and policy analysis

Since 1 January 2023, Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle has been Director Strategy and policy analysis at DG AGRI (European Commission). From 1 September 2020 to 31 December 2022, she was Director at the General Secretariat of the Council, responsible for Veterinary and Plant Health Questions, Food and Forestry. Between December 2019 and August 2020, she was Deputy Head of Cabinet of the EU Commissioner responsible for agriculture and rural development. Between 2013 and 2018, she was responsible for the implementation of the CAP in France, in her capacity as Director general for Economic and Environmental Performance of Enterprises. Between 2006 and 2013, she was Executive Director of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). Prior to that, she was Director General of the Food Department within the French Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. She also worked at the European Commission from 1991 to 1993.





Eduardo Diniz
**‘Planning, Policies and General Administration Office’,
Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Portugal**

Agronomist (Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology), Instituto Superior de Agronomia, Universidade Técnica de Lisboa 1994.

General Director of the Office of Planning, Policies and General Administration (GPP) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries since 2012.

He has held various positions in the technical coordination of the ministry's strategic activities, international affairs and monitoring agri-food markets, as well as in coordinating the budget programme and advising cabinet members.

Long experience in representing Portugal at the European Union and at multilateral level, namely in the areas of negotiation, technical coordination and evaluation of the rules of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), and in drawing up the Portuguese Rural Development Programme and CAP Strategic Plan, in addition to coordinating the Portuguese Presidency of the EU 2021 in the field of agriculture.



Gábor Vicze
SOIL-X-CHANGE

Dr. Gabor Vicze is an innovation ecosystem driver, an international business strategist for highly complex R&D and innovation projects. His focus is on digital technologies and digital transformation; he has gained special expertise to set up new international innovation value chains. At **innomine** Gabor is leading group strategy, development of digital innovation services and focuses on international business development. Gabor is leader of **innomine** Digital Innovation Hub, drives strategy and leads implementation since 2016 on the field of digital manufacturing and agri-food innovation.

Gabor has 20+ years of working experience, held several leadership positions in innovation and project management, international business development, marketing and sales. Prior to **innomine** Gábor worked at FundingBox (co-founder) and econet consultants, Microsoft, KPMG IT Consulting and Arthur Andersen Business Consulting.

Gabor has an MSc in Economics and holds a PhD degree in innovation management. He publishes on innovation strategy, startups, management consulting and business strategy and is a frequent speaker at international conferences. His professional commitments are Board Member of the ICT Association of Hungary, Public Body member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and mentor for several



startups/innovators. Earlier Gábor was President of the Hungarian Spinoff and Startup Association and member of DIGITALEUROPE's Executive Board. Gabor spends most of his spare time with his wife, daughter and son.



Leonie Göbel

German CAP Network (Deutsche Vernetzungsstelle Ländliche Räume – für die Gemeinsame Agrarpolitik der EU)

At the German CAP Network Leonie is responsible for EIP-AGRI and AKIS. She has a broad overview of the 430 operational groups and management/ supporting structures in Germany and their current challenges and solutions. Leonie is enthusiastic in bringing together the right projects and people at regional, national and international level.

After her studies in biology and agriculture, she pursued her PhD in temperate agroforestry and worked as a science manager and communicator before joining the Federal Agency of Food and Agriculture (base of German CAP network).



Begoña Pérez Villareal

EIT Food

Begoña Pérez-Villarreal is the Director of the [EIT Food for Southern Europe](#). She enjoys driving innovation, boosting the entrepreneurial spirit and engaging stakeholders from the Mediterranean area to develop products and services that contribute to a healthy lifestyle and a sustainable circular bioeconomy. Trained as a Pharmacist specialized in food microbiology and in Business Management of Food companies, she has worked for 25 years with food SMEs in innovation related to food safety, product development, and sustainability of food systems. The last years she has focused in scaling regenerative farming practices and raise consumer awareness about its environmental and health benefits, working in these key areas: Farmer capacity building, Ecosystem measurement, Research, and Public engagement.



Orsolya Frizon Somogyi

European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development, F.2 'Research and Innovation'

Orsolya Frizon Somogyi is deputy head of unit in the European Commission, DG AGRI F2, unit responsible for programming R&I in the field of agriculture, forestry and rural areas. Before joining DG AGRI in 2005, she was working in the Ministry of



Agriculture in Budapest and dealt with agricultural cooperatives. In DG AGRI, she subsequently worked on rice market management, rural development, social inclusion and data governance.



Mario Milouchev
European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development, Directorate D ‘CAP Strategic Plans II’

Mario Milouchev is Director of Directorate D ‘CAP Strategic Plans II’ in DG Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Commission. He has worked as a Director in DG AGRI for more than 15 years, first in the area of inter-institutional relations and communication, followed by rural development and pre-accession assistance; and since January 2022 – the CAP Strategic Plans. Before joining the Commission in May 2009, he worked almost 20 years as European Affairs diplomat: he was, among others, a member of the team negotiating the accession of Bulgaria to the EU, European director in the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and COREPER I Ambassador (Deputy Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the EU). He has a Master's degree in International Relations and is ENA graduate.



Carlotta Valli
COGEA / Bip Group

Carlotta Valli specialises in economic analysis of agri-food sectors and markets, and evaluation of EU agricultural and rural development policy. With a degree in Statistics and Economics and a PhD in Agricultural Economics, she combines analytical skills established through academic research with the expertise acquired in management consulting, which she applies to the evaluation of EU agricultural and rural development policies and to the provision of Technical Assistance to Public Administrations for the implementation of European Structural and Investment Funds programmes (EAFRD, ESF, ERDF). Employed by COGEA since 2009, she has contributed to numerous evaluation studies covering both pillars of the CAP and various agricultural sectors. Prior to joining COGEA, she worked at the Italian National Institute of Agricultural Economics (INEA - today CREA-PB), where she acquired in-depth knowledge of EU-FADN.



Parallel workshop 1 – ‘Starting from an innovative idea: developing it into an Operational Group project proposal’ (‘START’)



Carmen Landuyt

OG ‘From handyman to manufacturer: professionalization of self-made mechanisation in Flanders’, Belgium

Since my studies I have been passionate about organic and agroecological farming. I studied bio-engineering in Ghent (BE) and also have a teacher's degree. I began working at CCBT (Coordination centre for applied research and advice on organic agriculture) in 2010, as a coordinator of small scale practical research projects for organic farming in Flanders. CCBT is a network of local research centres and is funded by the Flemish government, to organise and finance demand driven research and advice for organic farming in Flanders. One of our cornerstones is tailored communication to farmers. During the years we expanded the tasks of CCBT and are active in different projects. One of my favourite projects is our operational group ‘Boer Bricoleur, together with farmers who build their own machines for market gardening, in which we organize learn-and-do training courses. Recently, we also take part in EU calls.

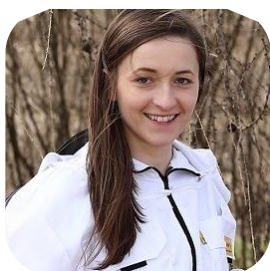


Patrizia Proietti
ATTRACTISS

Patrizia Proietti is a researcher at CREA-PB (Council for Agricultural Research and Economics – Research Centre for Agricultural Policies and Bioeconomy). She has more than 20 years of experience in the field of programming, monitoring and evaluating European and National Policies. Her main domain of expertise is rural development policy with a focus on agricultural knowledge and innovation systems, advisory services, innovation dynamics. She is scientific coordinator of the project ATTRACTISS and is involved in the projects modernAKIS, EU-FarmBook, i2connect, as well.



Parallel workshop 2 – ‘Facilitating: ensuring a smooth-running Operational Group project’ (‘FACILITATE’)



Lidia Moroń-Morawska

OG ‘Cooperation for the creation of an innovative local market’, Poland

Lidia Moroń-Morawska graduated from Nursing at the Collegium Medicum of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków and from Horticulture, specializing in Garden Art at the University of Agriculture in Kraków. She has been running an apiary for 16 years, and since 2016 she has held an organic certificate. She is a co-author of the "Great Encyclopedia of Beekeeping" and is a member of the Kraków Beekeepers' Association. Currently, she is involved in a number of innovations in the agricultural sector. She is a member of 2 Operational Groups (Leader of the Operational Group Małopolska Food Producers and Member of the Małopolska Group of Innovation and Development in Agriculture) where she serves as a facilitator of processes and communication, which helps in managing projects and maintaining communication flow. In 2023, she received an award from the Minister of Agriculture for the best female farmer in the "Woman for Polish Countryside" competition.



Sylvain Sturel

I2connect

Sylvain STUREL (M), CDAF: agricultural engineer (MS level); worked in agricultural and rural development in Equatorial Guinea and Laos for seven years; in charge of European and international projects at Chambres d'agriculture France (CDAF) since 2003; supported the participation of the French Chambers of Agriculture in 25 Horizon projects; currently coordinator of i2connect, aimed at fostering the role of advisors in interactive innovation, and actively involved in the AttractISS and modernAKIS projects.



Parallel workshop 3 – ‘Involving farmers and foresters from start to finish: ensuring that end-users are benefitting’ (‘CO-CREATE’)



Raquel Arroyo

OG ‘ECOPIONET – Innovation and bioeconomy in the rural environment’, Spain

Raquel Arroyo Palomares has a degree in agricultural engineering from the Technical University of Madrid (UPM). She has been leading the Muñovela Experimental Farm since 2013, a farm belonging to the IRNASA-CSIC (Institute of Natural Resources and Agrobiology of Salamanca-Spanish National Research Council). In her role, she is responsible for organizing, controlling, and supervising the agricultural activities of the farm, which provides agricultural services for experimental trials, conservation of native species, and rural development projects.

She participates in several European and national innovation and rural development projects and in the transfer of knowledge and technology to the agricultural sector, in order to get a more profitable and sustainable activity.



Susanne von Münchhausen

LIAISON / PREMIERE

Dr. Susanne von Münchhausen is an agricultural economist working with Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development in the unit ‘Policy and Markets in the Agri-Food Sector’. She coordinates Horizon CSA project PREMIERE – Preparing Multi-Actor Projects in a Co-creative Way, which develops material and offers workshops for multi-actor partnerships as well as policy briefs for the further development of the EIP-AGRI. She is also involved in the projects ‘Female-led Innovation – FLIARA’ and the Organic Advisory Network, that is just about to start. Moreover, Susanne is the EU-FarmBook Ambassador for Germany. On the grass-root level, Susanne is coordinating an agri-food civil society network in the Federal State of Hessen. Some of the actors involved are also linked to OGs or other practice-driven innovation projects.



Parallel workshop 4 – ‘Creating an enabling environment to support Operational Groups throughout the project’ (‘ENABLE’)



Anita Beblek
OG ‘BioStripPlant’, Germany

Anita Beblek is a lawyer and has been founder and managing director of agrathaer GmbH since 2011. She has several years of experience in strategic consulting as well as in project, contract and innovation management. She has an additional degree from the University of Stanford for "Leading digital transformation". Innovation is her passion and she co-developed several of them, ranging from organizational to technical innovations. She advises various national ministries on innovation policies and strategies in the Agri-Food sector.



Elena-Teodora Miron
modernAKIS

Elena-Teodora Miron is the responsible contact point for innovation, research and application projects in the Austrian Chambers of Agriculture. She coordinates the organization-wide capacity and project management development activities. In parallel she is involved in several EU-funded projects (ATTRACTISS, EU-FarmBook, ClimateSmartAdvisors, AdvisoryNetPest and OrganicAdviceNetwork) while coordinating the modernAKIS project (www.modernakis.eu, www.akisconnect.eu). She studies applied Computer Science at the University of Vienna and has worked for 20 years in research and industry in business informatics. Her expertise lies in process and project management, digital platform ecosystems and platform business models, as well as systems innovation.

Parallel workshop 5 – ‘Sharing results for better uptake by practice, during and beyond the lifespan of the project’ (‘SHARE’)



Guillermina Fernández-Villar
OG ‘TERRACTIVA’, Spain

Guillermina is a master student investigating at the Land Laboratory of the University of Santiago de Compostela. During the last months she has focused her investigations on new ruralities and the social spectrum of agriculture. After graduating, she started working at an agroecological



regenerative farm and afterwards in a VET Centre, in both cases searching for a down to earth connection with the core of the sector, what she aims to transfer in future projects.



Lisa van Dijk
EU Farmbook

Lisa works as a senior international consultant for Highclere Consulting and she has over 25 years of experience in knowledge exchange, learning and innovation with farmers and rural communities. Her PhD focused on farmer-led innovation in the European livestock sector, and she has long-standing experience in facilitating multi-actor/stakeholder collaborative learning and co-creation processes. Over the years she worked on a variety of H2020/HEU projects, including HENNOVATION, EUREKA, PATHWAYS and LIAISON, and she is currently involved in the EU-FARMBOOK and PREMIERE project. Prior to her PhD studies, she worked for over 15 years in international development in the management and coordination of complex projects and programmes related to agriculture and rural development in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Apart from her research, facilitation, training and project management activities, she is also a passionate practising sheep farmer.

Parallel workshop 6 – ‘Inspiring Operational Groups to collaborate with other innovative projects’ (‘COLLABORATE’)



Tamara Korošec
OG ‘The role of industrial hemp in adaptation to climate change and in protection of agricultural resources’, Slovenia

Tamara Korošec holds a Ph.D. in Animal Science. Following her academic career focused on oxidative stress at the Biotechnical Faculty of Ljubljana, she specialized in organic farming and worked as an advisory specialist for organic farming for six years. Presently, she works as a project manager at the Institute of Agriculture and Forestry Maribor, a vocational college lecturer in the field of organic food production, and an associate professor at the Faculty of Agriculture and Life Sciences Maribor, focusing on feed safety and organic farming. Notably, she is one of sixteen Slovenian agricultural advisors with a CECRA certificate (International Competence Development Program for agricultural advisors). Additionally, she leads and partners in national research projects, EIP projects, and international projects.





Ana Ventura
FOREST4EU

She is a Sociologist with a Master's in Land Use Policies and Environmental Planning and a PhD Student in Biosciences Engineering-Socioeconomics (U.Gent) and Biology (F.Ciências —U. Lisboa). She has professional training and experience in agriculture entrepreneurship, regional development, sustainability challenges in socioecological systems, project management and science communication. As a professional experience, relevance to consultancy activities at Solutopus, Lda, Member of the Thematic Group: “Nurturing Skills for a Thriving and Sustainable Agricultural Sector”- EU CAP Network, a Researcher in national and international projects (e.g., Soildarity; PolRura), Evaluator in the frame of Horizon Europe; EIC Accelerator, EISMEA, 2021-2024, a former Member of the administration of NGOs and Training development for agriculture sector. Current engagement with the H. Europe projects FOREST4EU and ECHOSoil. She is particularly interested and enthusiastic about innovation uptake and impact in rural areas.

Parallel workshop 7 – ‘Fostering transnational Operational Groups’ (‘TRANSNATIONAL’)



Anri Timonen
OG ‘SMART FEED – Smart measurements in cattle feeding and health’, Finland

DVM, Dr. Anri Timonen is a project researcher at the Unit of Measurement Technology in University of Oulu, Finland, working in projects related to cattle health and welfare, bedding management of dairy cattle, cattle health and welfare data economy, antimicrobial properties of natural products, microbiology and technological solutions for cattle health and welfare assessment. Her background is in veterinary medicine with strong specialization in dairy herd health and cattle medicine and is familiar with cattle husbandry both in Estonia and Finland. She studied and did her PhD about epidemiology of *Mycoplasma bovis* intramammary infection at Estonian University of Life Sciences. Previously she has worked as practicing and dairy herd health veterinarian in Finland and Estonia, and still operates as invited lecturer for studies in degree program of veterinary medicine in Estonian University of Life Sciences. Her high interest is the development of sustainable cattle herd welfare and health as well as herd managing practices.

