

## Speaker and facilitator bios (in order of the programme)

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### Isabel Bombal Díaz

**Directora General de Desarrollo Rural, Innovación y Formación Agroalimentaria**

Currently, Isabel Bombal Díaz holds the position of General Director of Rural Development, Innovation and Agri-food Training at the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. Her duties include rural development, innovation, agrifood training, digitalisation and sustainable irrigation. She has been working at the Ministry in positions of high responsibility since the early 2000s.

Moreover, she is an Agricultural Engineer, specialized in Agri-food Industries at the Polytechnic University of Madrid (UPM). She also holds a University Expert qualification in Industrial Quality from the National University of Distance Education (UNED), a master's degree in Dairy Product Processing from the Polytechnic University of Madrid and has completed the INAP Executive Development Programme at the Ministry of Public Administrations.



### Marta Iglesias

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

Marta Iglesias is an agricultural engineer working in DG AGRI on innovation and communication within the EIP-AGRI framework. She focuses on connecting farmers, advisors, researchers and rural actors, supporting knowledge exchange and helping transform innovative ideas into practical solutions for sustainable agriculture



### Pacôme Elouna Eyenga

**EU CAP Network, Support Facility 'Innovation and Knowledge exchange | EIP-AGRI'**

Team Leader of the EU CAP Network Support Facility for Innovation & Knowledge Exchange | EIP-AGRI. Previously, Team Leader of the EIP-AGRI Service Point.





### **Pierluigi Londero**

**European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development, A.4 Data governance**

Pierluigi Londero is Head of Data Governance in the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Commission. He is responsible for data governance, data integration and dissemination on [AGRI-Food Data Portal](#), as well as for coordinating the initiatives fostering the digital transition in EU agriculture and rural areas. Economist by training, over the last 25+ years Pierluigi worked on quantitative analysis supporting policy proposal and trade negotiations.



### **Sébastien Weykmans**

**EU CAP Network, Support Facility 'Innovation and Knowledge exchange | EIP-AGRI'**

Sébastien Weykmans is an agricultural engineer with a degree from the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences in Gembloux (Belgium). He has always been passionate about the digital transformation of the agricultural sector in general, and crop production in particular. For 22 years, he has been offering his services to various organisations. He is a co-founder and the manager of WalDigiFarm, an association of 130 members (including 60 farmers) in Wallonia that aims to remove barriers to the use of digital technology in farms.



### **María Teresa Ambros Mendioroz**

**Rural Development, Innovation and Agrifood Training at the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries**

With a degree in Agricultural Engineering from the Polytechnic University of Madrid and a Master's degree in Public Policy and Program Evaluation from the Complutense University of Madrid, she serves as the Head of Unit for Innovation and Digitalization. This unit coordinates the Digitalization Strategy for the Agri-food Sector, and acts as Spanish EIP-AGRI Focal Point, managing this grants in the current CAP SP of Spain with a budget of over 82 million euros (for supra-regional EIP-AGRI Operational Groups) . It also support two other lines of funding: knowledge and advisory services for the digital transition of the agrifood sector. They are in charge of the Ministry's Digital Innovation Center called La Vega Innova <https://lavegainnova.es/>, and for a platform [www.akisplataforma.es](http://www.akisplataforma.es) to strengthen the Spanish AKIS.





### Alejandro Tena

#### Institut Valencià d'Investigacions Agràries (IVIA)

Alejandro Tena has been the Director of the Institut Valencià d'Investigacions Agràries (IVIA) since February 2025. Throughout his scientific career, Dr. Tena has developed numerous Integrated Pest Management programs targeting invasive pests that affect the main crops of the Valencian Region. Scientifically, he has published more than 100 scientific manuscripts and supervised eight doctoral theses. He is also member of the Editorial Board of four prestigious international scientific journals; Vice President of the Board of Directors of the "Spanish Society of Applied Entomology" (SEEA); served as Treasurer of the "International Organization for Biological Control" for four years; and collaborates as an expert advisor for EFSA (European Food Safety Authority) and EPPO (European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization) to improve pest control. Recently, he has worked on several national and international projects to enhance the control of psyllids transmitting HLB, various thrips species, the South African mealybug *Delottococcus aberiae* in citrus, and whiteflies and the mealybug *Pseudococcus longispinus* in persimmon.



### Emilio Gil

#### The Polytechnic University of Catalonia

Emilio Gil is a Full Professor at the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC) and Head of the Agricultural Machinery Unit (UMA), leading an officially recognized research group (2021 SGR 240). His profile is strongly oriented to European project leadership, serving as Project Coordinator of INNOSETA (H2020), AGRICT (Erasmus+), and RENOVATE (Horizon Europe, 2024–2028), and coordinating EU-wide training actions under DG SANTE / BTSF on inspection, calibration and risk mitigation during pesticide use.



### Francesco Iadecola

#### European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development, F.2 Research and innovation

Francesco IADECOLA Research Programme Officer – DG Agriculture and Rural Development, Research and Innovation Unit (F2) As a Research Programme Officer at the European Commission, Francesco contributes to DG AGRI's Research and Innovation strategy on digital and data technologies for agriculture and rural areas and to the programming of Horizon



Europe funding. Francesco has extensive work experience developed through EU-funded projects and studies implemented in EU and non-EU countries, during which he collaborated with key stakeholders providing evidence-based solutions for policy-makers and society. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Agricultural and Environmental Sciences and a Master's degree in Sustainable Rural Development from the University of Perugia (IT).



## EU CAP Network team

### 1. Support Facility 'Innovation & Knowledge exchange | EIP-AGRI' team



**André Vizinho**  
**Main facilitator**

André Vizinho, PhD, works as a main facilitator with EIP-AGRI since 2019 and has over 20 years of experience in facilitation and participatory action research within the fields of agriculture, forestry and rural development. He works both as a consultant and project coordinator at the University of Lisbon (CE3C) and at Regenerativa, a multisectoral cooperative he co-founded and co-manages. His technical work includes the use of QGIS, LiDAR, topographic surveys, drones and sensor-based analyses to support farmers and advisors in agroforestry planning, implementation and decision-making.



**Darius Kavaliauskas**  
**Task manager**

Darius works as a Research & Innovation Officer at EIP-AGRI and as a senior researcher at Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas, Lithuania, specializing in forest genetics and the conservation of forest genetic resources. He holds a PhD in Forestry and a Master's degree in Forest Ecology. With over 10 years of experience in forestry, forest management, and forest genetic research.



**Ana Pires da Silva**  
**Co-task manager**

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 senior board advisor at the Portuguese National Institute for Agricultural and Veterinary Research (INIAV).





**Anna Rafaella Alvim Oliveira**  
**Co-task manager**

Anna is part of the EU CAP Network Support Facility team, contributing to activities in smart farming and rural development under Division B: Smart and resilient agricultural sector and food security. With a background in Veterinary Medicine from both the Federal University of Minas Gerais (Brazil) and the University of Liège (Belgium), her work is rooted in the One Health perspective, linking animal welfare, public health, and sustainability. Prior to joining the team, she gained experience in clinical settings, academic research, and community-based outreach projects.



**Konstantin Mihhejev**  
**Co-task manager**

Konstantin specializes in EIP-AGRI agricultural innovation and rural development, focusing on knowledge transfer, stakeholder cooperation, and implementation of CAP measures. With over 20 years of experience and a background in agricultural sciences from the Estonian University of Life Sciences, he supports project evaluation, advisory services, and the development of sustainable and resource-efficient solutions in the agri-food sector.



**Kaat Van Royen**  
**Event communication officer**

As part of the European CAP Network's EIP-AGRI Support Facility's communication team, Kaat Van Royen, is responsible for the video production and website content management, and contributes to social media. She also contributes to other communication projects at WETA (communication agency), such as awareness raising campaigns, workshops and podcasts. Kaat obtained a master in Sociology focusing on international development, and experience as production officer and event manager for socio-cultural events.



**Céline Karasinski**  
**Facilitator**

Céline started in June 2014 as policy officer for the European innovation partnership 'Agricultural productivity and sustainability' (EIP-AGRI Service Point), She is now head of division at the EIP-AGRI support facility. She organized and facilitated a large number of events, Focus groups and workshops.

In parallel, she works since 2009 for Chamber of Agriculture network in France. She was involved in rural development and



research and innovation. She is an Agricultural engineer, specialist of environment and ecology.

### **Beatriz Guimarey Fernandez**

#### **Facilitator**



Bea is Head of office of Division D at the EIP-AGRI Support Facility where she coordinates and supports the organisation of EIP-AGRI events (Workshops, Seminars and Focus Group). Division D is dealing with topics such as generational renewal, jobs, growth and equality in rural areas, including circular bioeconomy and sustainable forestry. Additionally, she frequently attends the EIP-AGRI events as part of the facilitation team.

Grown up on a small family farm in Galicia region (NW Spain), Bea is Forestry Engineer and has a Master in Sustainable Land Planning by the University of Santiago de Compostela (Spain), where she works as a researcher as well.

### **Xurxo Loureiro Veira**

#### **Facilitator**



Xurxo Loureiro is Research and Innovation Officer in the EIP-AGRI Support Facility. He has a doctorate in sustainable land management, with an academic background in forest engineering and agri-food business. Xurxo is currently working as associate researcher in the Land Laboratory (University of Santiago de Compostela) collaborating in projects on several topics such as food security and food systems, sustainable land planning, resilience, biogovernance, ecosystem services and rural development.

### **Pedro Naves**

#### **Facilitator**



Pedro Naves is a research and innovation officer of the EIP-AGRI Support Facility, involved in the organisation and facilitation of events (Workshops, Seminars and Focus Group). Researcher working at a public Institute in Portugal, with a professional focus on the identification and management of forest and agricultural pests. Scientific consulting and technical phytosanitary advice to farmers and forest owners, providing support and expertise with field visits, analysis of biological samples, taxonomic identification of pests and elaboration of technical reports.



## 2. Communications and Events Support



**Anne-Fleur Labbé**  
**Events team leader**

Anne-Fleur, Managing Partner at Phrenos, is a multilingual professional with 18 years of experience in events and communication. She is currently the Events Team Leader for the Logistical & Communication Support for Networking Activities of the CAP (Lot 4) for DG AGRI.

She graduated from the London School of Economics with a MSc in History of International Relations, and from Université Paris II – Panthéon Assas with a MSc in Banking & Finance. At INSEAD, she completed a certification in “Strategy in the Age of AI and Digital Disruption”, “Design Thinking and Creativity for Business”, as well as one in “Leadership in a Crisis”. She speaks French, English, Italian, and German.



**Irene Sánchez**  
**Junior events organiser**

Junior events organizer, graduated in Protocol, Event Organisation, and Corporate Communication at Universidad Rey Juan Carlos in Madrid. Before graduating, she spent a year in the U.S., which sparked her passion for travel and cultural exchange. After completing her studies, she moved to Brussels for her Erasmus program and internship. Since then, Irene has been living and working in Brussels in events.

