



## Welcome and introduction by the Chair (DG AGRI)

Chair Antonia Gamez Moreno (DG AGRI) welcomed members to the [2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the CAP Strategic Plans Subgroup](#), which aimed to: provide an overview on CAP Strategic Plans (CSPs) and explore CSP implementation progress; update members on relevant activities of the EU CAP Network linked to CSP implementation; and consider potential topics or formats for the EU CAP Network activities as a part of the consultation process for the preparation of the Network's next Annual Work Programme 2024-2025.

## CSP overview and update (DG AGRI)

To provide context and aid Subgroup discussions, DG AGRI presented the outcomes of an external mapping study of CSPs<sup>1</sup> (published end November). The study fed into the Commission report on the joint effort and collective ambition of the CSPs (adopted on 23 November). The study observed a diverse range of demands in relation to CAP objectives and noted that Member States designed approximately 2 500 CSP interventions tailored to address close to 1 600 identified national needs. Supporting farmers' fair standard of living, fairness of income support, tackling environmental and climate challenges and generational renewal are common priorities for CSP ambitions.

A Q&A session confirmed that further information on CSP results will be available e.g., via Managing Authorities' annual reporting channels. This can help clarify implementation factors concerning different ways that Member States are managing CSPs. Complementarity within CSP interventions, including eco-schemes, other green architecture funding and across CSP rural development ambitions will also be important for the success of the CAP. Complementarity with other EU and national instruments are also very relevant in this respect, in some areas covered by the CAP more than others.

Subgroup members called for a common level playing field. They pointed out that a lot of things are going on outside the CAP (e.g. national schemes), in particular for rural development. The Commission should keep monitoring this to guarantee the coordination between different funds (EU and national) in particular in rural areas. There are other funds that need to be captured in rural development (e.g. social funds and Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)).

The Rural Pact can provide complementary support to CAP networking.

## Exploring CAP SP implementation progress at Member State level: a dialogue with members on national updates

Subgroup members had previously noted preferences for reviewing CSP progress with simplifying the CAP and managing regional coverage. These two topics were considered further by the members to help collate collective perspectives for informing the [Assembly](#) at its [second meeting](#) in December.

Outcomes underlined the role of institutional and advisory capacity balanced by robust controls to safeguard CAP expenditure. Effective communication was seen as key to help optimise stakeholder understanding of the legal certainty of CSP opportunities and procedures.

Member States' experience of integrating regional approaches into a national CSP acknowledged challenges for coordinating territorial specificities. In France, regional systems have been established and coordinated to inform territorial approaches for CSP implementation. Subgroup members also pointed out the need to enhance the relationship between regions and DG AGRI, with a focus on deepening the territorial dimension of the CSPs.

Practical examples of CAP simplification from Finland were explained involving increased digitalisation. Close working between designers and users of the digital administration systems here helps the efficiency of online approaches and data management. Another simplification measure described by the Subgroup members referred to mechanisms helping CAP beneficiaries in France to revise their declarations in real-time.

The EU's forthcoming strategic dialogue on the future of agriculture would provide prospects to reflect on CSP implementation issues like simplification and national, regional and territorial approaches.

<sup>1</sup> [Mapping and Analysis of CAP Strategic Plans](#), by Ecorys, Metis and Agrosynergie

## EU CAP Network update: Sharing insights from Thematic Groups (TGs) & exchange with members

Insights from the Network’s three current **Thematic Groups** (TGs) were presented by the TG representatives for Subgroup discussion. Highlights reports from the first round of the TG meetings are being prepared to provide details. These will recognise good practice possibilities for **TG CSP Monitoring Committees**, **TG Design and Implementation of Eco-schemes in the new CSPs**, and **TG Nurturing Skills for a Thriving and Sustainable Agricultural Sector**.

The Subgroup confirmed their interest in following the TGs including reflections on how Member States can learn from each other about forecasting and facilitating targets for large CSP funding allocations like eco-schemes. For instance, Subgroup members reported that some eco-schemes are more popular than predicted in their first year. This could lead to more farms applying environmental approaches that exceed compliance standards but the resulting lower payments for individual farms might risk reducing the future popularity of the same eco-schemes. Conversely, the current system may also lead to payments becoming higher for less popular eco-schemes.

Additional points suggested by the Subgroup during this part of the meeting for TGs to consider include the timings of when Monitoring Committees become involved with CSP amendments and solutions for motivating farmers to upskill or strengthen the use of advisory services.

Building on these perspectives to help direct ongoing activities of the TGs and wider EU CAP Network, Subgroup members then focused on three issues via a poll asking:

- How can Monitoring Committees have a stronger impact on the effective implementation of the CAP?

- How can skill development in agriculture be improved within CAP implementation?
- What are your top 3 elements that are needed for eco-schemes to reach their full ambition?

CAP networking was seen to be useful for supporting optimised Monitoring Committee operations by sharing knowledge and exchanging experience about: administrative approaches to providing Monitoring Committees with timely information; involving municipalities and regions; protecting independent opinions; exchanging good practices; membership selection and management; enabling CSP amendments; representing stakeholders; applying digitalisation; and making data-led decisions.

Skills issues tabled for the TG and its follow-up gathered a host of topics such as: making best use of AKIS opportunities; integrating sustainability; summarising training material in concise and accessible formats; leaving no one behind by mainstreaming equality; taking advantage of digital tools for expanding outreach and improving efficiency; complementarity between CSP interventions funding advisory services, training, and business development; cooperation between Managing Authorities and education service curriculums; designing and delivering client-oriented skills development support; involving National CAP Networks; peer-learning best practices including demonstration farms and visits.

Subgroup members made more than 130 suggestions about their top 3 eco-scheme success factors. These were collated in the word cloud (see below) which spotlights the scope for ongoing CAP networking in eco-scheme fields like simplification, good practices, flexibility, digitalisation and communication, among many others.

## What are your top 3 elements that are needed for eco-schemes to reach their full ambition?

123 responses



## Interactive session

Another interactive session further focused and harvested Subgroup expertise on suggesting priority topics for the EU CAP Network's Annual Work Programmes. A 'Pitch your ideas' methodology was used to help members develop concrete ideas on how these priority topics could be addressed through the Network.

Outcomes from this productive working group session developed prioritised proposals for EU CAP Network activities covering themed options for topics, formats, activities, target groups, expected outputs and relevance. The themes were:

- Next generation in rural areas.
- New young farmers/entrepreneurs and generational renewal.
- Assessment of the green architecture and its implementation.
- Integrated territorial approach.
- Simplification using digital tools.

Subgroup pitches and proposals in these areas helped to clarify related capacity-building needs and inform the EU CAP Network Assembly's [second meeting](#).

## Wrap-up of the day

Key points from the meeting for the Assembly to consider were reiterated and highlighted the potential from Member States sharing experiences with CSP implementation regarding optimising Monitoring Committee operations, leaving no one behind during agricultural skills development and flexible eco-schemes that are simple to use.

Information about upcoming EU CAP Network events was then summarised before the Chair thanked CSP Subgroup members and underlined her appreciation for their valuable inputs.

In summing up, the Chair pointed to the mapping study presented during the meeting as a contribution to the ongoing debate about the future of EU agriculture and rural areas. She emphasised that other updated contributions about CSP implementation will also feed into such policy debates. Subgroup encouragement of common, complementary, simple, inclusive, flexible and sustainability-led approaches to CSP implementation were noted. Digitalisation, communication and networking opportunities can remain key cross-cutting tools here.

