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## Report on the National Workshop in Estonia

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This report presents the outcomes of the discussions at the PEGASUS WP5 national workshop in Estonia. The workshop was attended by 14 people.

The main aim of the workshop was to collect the views of national stakeholders and receive feedback to the findings emerging from the PEGASUS project so far. Special interest of the workshop was to collect the views of **practitioners** (e.g. farmers, land owners and rural entrepreneurs (8), supply chain stakeholders (2), and more specifically of those related to Estonian in-depth case study “Grass-fed Beef”, and researchers (4).

### ***Lessons emerging from the project so far***

*Questions for the discussion:*

- *Is there any salient point that emerges as being particularly relevant/not relevant or not accurate to the situation in your country?*
- *Are there any other points specific in your country not included in the emerging findings so far?*

The main points of the discussion with stakeholders covered:

- Findings were appreciated by attendees, however for some of the attendees they seem rather generic. For the communication purposes, the findings should be put into the context, presented together with examples and explanations.
- The results of the national case study were recognised by participants, however, some attendees found the results “too positive”, suggesting that also few negative aspects and things not working well should have been more emphasised in order to learn and positively change.

### ***Messages for policy and practice***

*Questions for the discussion:*

- *Do the emerging findings of the project and discussions in previous sessions imply that policy change is needed? If yes, what change? What types of policy measures do you feel are currently missing (please use examples if possible)?*
- *Are there serious constraints preventing the achievement of the environmental and social goals? In what areas?*
- *How has policy (in combination with other factors) contributed to success?*
- *What opportunities are there for developing public-private interactions?*



- *What key qualities or actions/stepwise processes do participants need to adopt, to develop and achieve success? Who are the key people to involve, to enable long-lasting change? Why?*

The main points of the discussion with stakeholders covered:

- Regarding ESBO provision, there will be always a question, what kind of ESBOs we want, or what should be “ideal” level of ESBO provision? This is kind of rhetorical question without clear answer.
- At the same time, it is very important for practitioners (farmers, land owners, supply chain actors etc., e.g. those implementing common actions or support measures) that they know and understand the possible impact of what they do. This includes provision and explanation of monitoring and evaluation data available.
- **Motivation, cooperation** and finding **common interests** are crucial for launching the actions delivering ESBOs.
- Policy measures have been really important for the common action approaches, but the **bureaucracy** is heavy burden to actors: there are too many administrative requirements and inspections, complicated and time-consuming reporting, lack of flexibility (if some changes are needed) related to support measures etc. All this is influencing also the achievement of the environmental and social goals. The level of bureaucracy should be reduced a lot, especially in respect of EU and national support measures. This applies also to inspections which should be reduced and designed as really meaningful, rather than just build on insignificant aspects easily verifiable. For example, the farmers are not satisfied with the identification requirement of the animals as a part of the cross-compliance system (support will be reduced already when only one ear-tag is lost or missing and this is really common when grazing e.g. on semi-natural habitats). Another example pointed out by beef breeders is related to transitional premium for suckler cow breeding – it is not allowed to reduce the number of animals in herd (e.g. sell) during few months from the date of application which for the farmers is difficult to follow and is financially disadvantageous.
- For the next programming period, the **system of support measures should be simplified**. Instead of applying for dozens different measures there could be e.g. “packages” as combinations of different measures per e.g. type of production, designed in a complex way and covering different aspects of production, investments, development etc.
- Self-financing share of the support measures related to joint marketing (including the aspect of consumers` awareness rising) should be lower in order to facilitate this kind of cooperative activities.
- Requirements for the support measures related to quality scheme establishment should be in place already at the beginning of the programming period, as launching it in the middle of programming period will entail additional costs, administrative burden etc.
- The last two points are especially important for transferability and enhancement of ESBO provision.
- Possible conflicts between objectives of different measures (and thus ESBO provision) should be taken into account when planning measures or common actions.



Discussion and recommendations based on the emerging findings:

- *Emerging finding 1: The provision of economic, social and environmental benefits often can be delivered more effectively when the approach and mechanisms involved arise as a collective effort from well-grounded and operational relationships between key actors operating in a region or along a supply chain.*
- *Emerging finding 2: Collective initiatives or actions frequently generate greater engagement by land managers to deliver environmental goods and services. Social capital, trust, good communication and cooperation are critical for enabling collective action to emerge and for the success of initiatives on the ground.*
- Participants agreed with the finding and considered good relationships between actors as a crucial aspect in order to deliver ESBOs through collective approaches. Building of trust between actors, communication, cooperation and networking are the fields where there is in general a lot of room for improvement in Estonia.
- *Emerging finding 3: The interplay between public and private actors (individuals or commercial entities) is critical in many initiatives and there is scope for strengthening it further in a wide range of schemes*
- *Emerging finding 4: Governance and institutional aspects are critical in securing the durability and success of collective initiatives, especially where market signals are weaker. Having the right institutional settings is important not only to enable the emergence of collective action but also to maintain and cultivate a culture of trust between local stakeholders, including government and commercial actor*
- Interplay between public and private actors is indeed critical. This is another topic which is always mentioned and talked about, but real actions in order to strengthen this interplay are often missing. The issue of bureaucracy and need for substantially more simple/clear/flexible support measures for starting and developing collective initiatives was mentioned already previously.
- *Emerging finding 5: Increasing the public's appreciation of, and transforming this into demand for environmental and social goods and services from agriculture and forestry systems would help to increase their provision.*
- This finding was considered as very important and highly relevant. Public awareness about the ESBOs and their provision is relatively low and should be constantly dealt with, not only through special campaigns and through targeted support measures. Farmers themselves could do a lot by communicating with consumers, specific activities should be supported with public money.



- *Emerging finding 6: It can be difficult to establish causal linkages between management actions on agricultural or forestry systems and the related environmental and social outcomes they deliver, particularly over a short timescale. Establishing such linkages requires robust, spatially explicit and accessible data to be available and this is currently not the case for all types of outcomes at EU level. A mixed approach, focussed both on measurable environmental results and the promotion of preferred practices, could be pursued when designing policies where causal links cannot be established or monitored.*
- This finding caused a lively debate and finally it was agreed by the participants that results-based measures would *not* be the right direction where to move as it is again step towards endeavour of simplification of the inspection system related to support measures, could bring the increase of fraud and is simply not in accordance with the processes in nature, especially related to landscape and biodiversity objectives. However, looking at the causal linkages between management and the related ESBOs is something to keep in mind.

