



Added Value of Networking

Success Story

Success Story title	<i>1st Meeting of the Mediterranean Macro-regional Network Cluster, "Developing Mediterranean Quality Agricultural Products"</i>		
Theme	<i>Network communications; Knowledge exchange; Cooperation</i>		
NRN	<i>Greece</i>	Coordinator	<i>The Greek and Italian NRN</i>
Partners	<i>Italian NRN and the Contact Point of the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD)</i>		
Period	<i>1st February 2012</i>		
Geo-location	<i>Thessaloniki, Greece</i>		
Beneficiaries	<i>NRNs of Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta and Portugal</i>		

Background

In 2007 the Nordic- Baltic Rural Network began regularly communicating. This cluster is an entirely bottom- up initiative and successful, led by the networks themselves. Their first meeting was in February 2008 and since then they meet twice a year, rotating around the NRNs. In about 2009 the Italian NRN had the idea of establishing a cluster, consisting of countries around the Mediterranean Sea and during the 13th NRN Meeting in the Netherlands in 2011, an idea by the Italian and Greek NRNs was generate to develop a similar platform, concerning common issues in the Mediterranean countries. The majority expressed a keen interest to explore and develop a platform for this cluster.

Main activities

When the Greek NRN undertook the initiative to organize the 14th NRN Meeting, it was decided to challenge the 1st Mediterranean Macro-regional Network Cluster, so the 1st contact was made with the Italian NRN. The theme that was chosen was: "Developing Mediterranean Quality Agricultural Products" and the objectives of the meeting were: 1. To bring the Networks together to share experience on EAFRD support for Mediterranean Quality Agricultural Products, 2. To identify common problems/issues that would justify common action, 3. To develop a clear vision and commitment for future activities.

At the beginning of the meeting there were 3 presentations, 2 of them by professors from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and one from an expert from the Ministry for Rural Development. All of them concerned issues of local products and the Mediterranean diet. At the second part of the meeting, every representative of the NRNs made a short presentation and delivered information on RDP Measures 132, 133 and 123A (Agricultural Products), related implementation, progress achieved, challenges and outcomes.

Main results/benefits

The Networks discussed the need to take action on the issues identified. This process will conclude to a "Common Paper" from both the implementation of these measures as in proposals for the next programming period. A work plan was discussed and key actions and time frames where agreed. Italy proposed to undertake the coordination of the process for the first period (4 months) and host the next meeting by the end of May 2012.





Contribution of the NSU

The Greek NRN organized the 1st meeting as it was also the host of the 14th NRN meeting and saw the opportunity to combine the two meetings in Thessaloniki. Key input regarding logistics and the meeting programme was provided by the Greek NRN.

Contribution of the partners

Based on the ideas developed and ambitions expressed by the Italian NRN in the past, the IT NRN provided input for the programme including speakers to the theme selected. The Contact Point of the ENRD provided technical support in the organization of the thematic discussions and coordinated and guided the discussions for this first meeting.

Success factors

1. Based on common activities, needs and working environments, a Common Paper will be delivered concerning issues about RDP Measures 132, 133 and 123A to address such commonalities and develop together an approach to meet the objective of Developing Mediterranean Quality Agricultural Products.
2. Every representative declared that the formation of a Mediterranean macro-regional Cluster is of high importance and they tend to support it.
3. It was generally declared that this 1st meeting built the foundations for future cooperation.

