Background and aims of the study
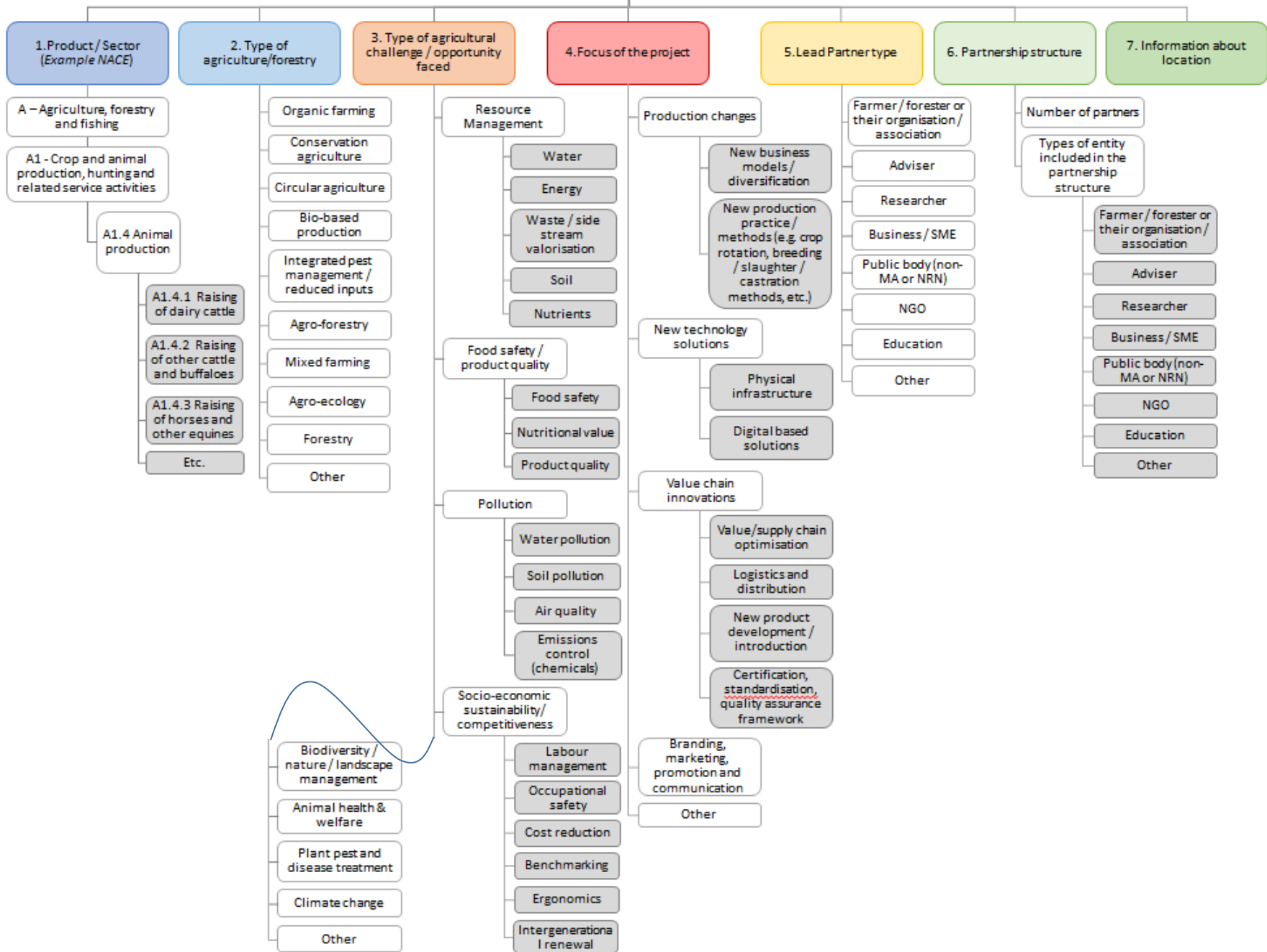
▶ Assessment of the actual implementation of EIP-AGRI Operational Groups (OGs) - until first quarter 2018 (**600** OGs)

▶ Insight into OGs…

   o Thematic focus, challenges addressed

   o Project approaches and partnership structures

   o External collaborations and networking

   o Results and dissemination strategies

   o Support received on regional/national and EU-level

▶ Input for DG AGRI/Service Point to plan EIP-AGRI network activities

▶ Run by IDEA Consult (Feb 2018 – Feb 2019)

Agriculture
and Rural
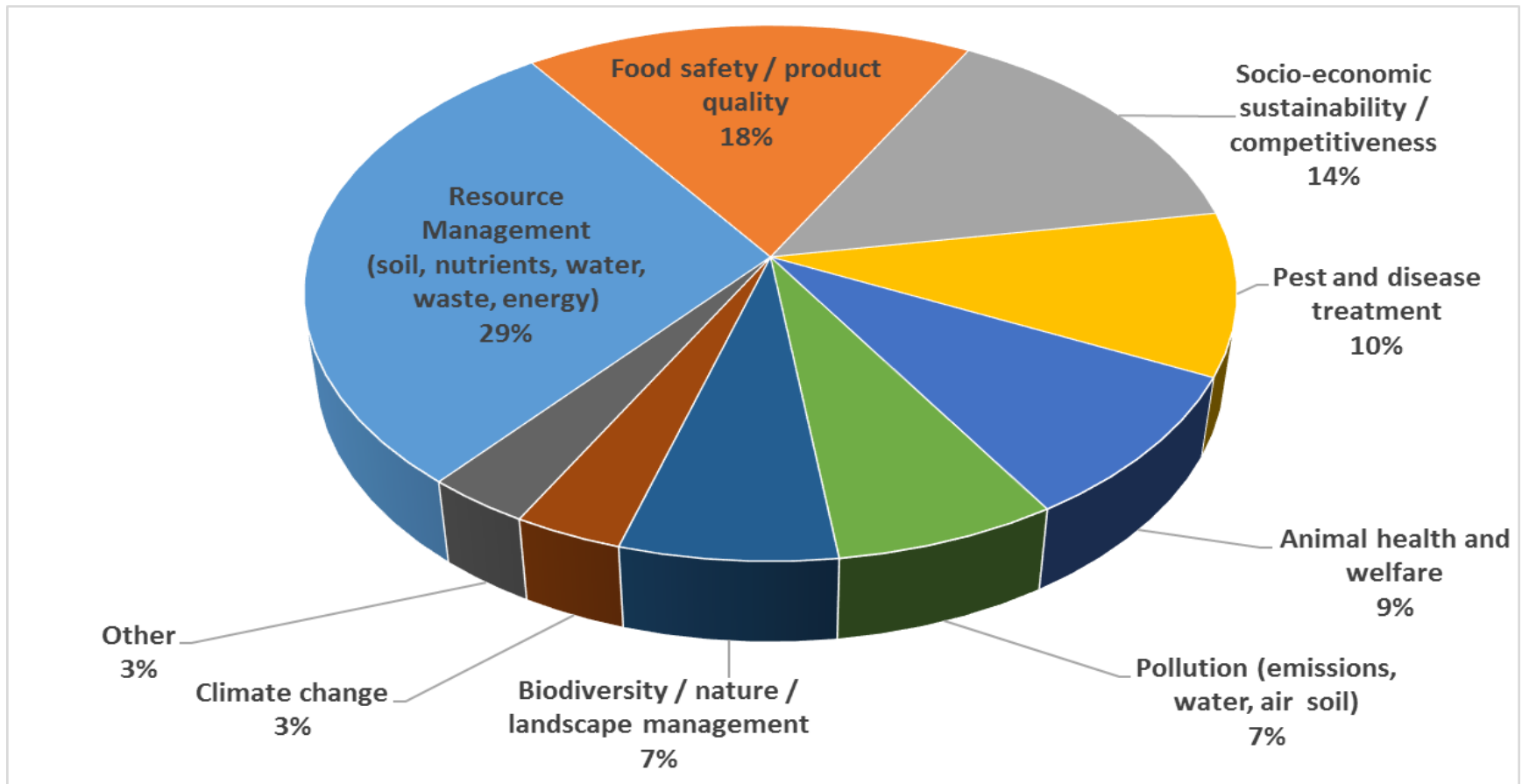Development

funded by
European Commission

Main steps in the study

▶ Database and clustering exercise

▶ Survey to OGs

▶ Case studies (9 OGs)

▶ Conclusions

Identified Cluster Categorisation

1. Product / Sector (*Example NACE*)
- A – Agriculture, forestry and fishing
  - A1 - Crop and animal production, hunting and related service activities
    - A1.4 Animal production
      - A1.4.1 Raising of dairy cattle
      - A1.4.2 Raising of other cattle and buffaloes
      - A1.4.3 Raising of horses and other equines
      - Etc.

2. Type of agriculture/forestry
- Organic farming
- Conservation agriculture
- Circular agriculture
- Bio-based production
- Integrated pest management / reduced inputs
- Agro-forestry
- Mixed farming
- Agro-ecology
- Forestry
- Other

3. Type of agricultural challenge / opportunity faced
- Resource Management
  - Water
  - Energy
  - Waste / side stream valorisation
  - Soil
  - Nutrients
- Food safety / product quality
  - Food safety
  - Nutritional value
  - Product quality
- Pollution
  - Water pollution
  - Soil pollution
  - Air quality
  - Emissions control (chemicals)
- Socio-economic sustainability/ competitiveness
  - Labour management
  - Occupational safety
  - Cost reduction
  - Benchmarking
  - Ergonomics
  - Intergenerational renewal
- Biodiversity / nature / landscape management
- Animal health & welfare
- Plant pest and disease treatment
- Climate change
- Other

4. Focus of the project
- Production changes
  - New business models / diversification
  - New production practice / methods (e.g. crop rotation, breeding / slaughter / castration methods, etc.)
- New technology solutions
  - Physical infrastructure
  - Digital based solutions
- Value chain innovations
  - Value/supply chain optimisation
  - Logistics and distribution
  - New product development / introduction
  - Certification, standardisation, quality assurance framework
- Branding, marketing, promotion and communication
- Other

5. Lead Partner type
- Farmer / forester or their organisation / association
- Adviser
- Researcher
- Business / SME
- Public body (non-MA or NRN)
- NGO
- Education
- Other

6. Partnership structure
- Number of partners
- Types of entity included in the partnership structure
  - Farmer / forester or their organisation / association
  - Adviser
  - Researcher
  - Business / SME
  - Public body (non-MA or NRN)
  - NGO
  - Education
  - Other

7. Information about location

Type of agricultural challenge/ opportunity faced

Results from cluster analysis (600 OG - 14 MS)

- Food safety / product quality 18%
- Socio-economic sustainability / competitiveness 14%
- Resource Management (soil, nutrients, water, waste, energy) 29%
- Pest and disease treatment 10%
- Animal health and welfare 9%
- Pollution (emissions, water, air soil) 7%
- Biodiversity / nature / landscape management 7%
- Climate change 3%
- Other 3%

Agriculture and Rural Development

OGs' aims and motivation

Results from OG survey (236 OGs – 39% response rate)

Main reasons to start an OG = improving practices and solving practical problems by connecting to research and innovation
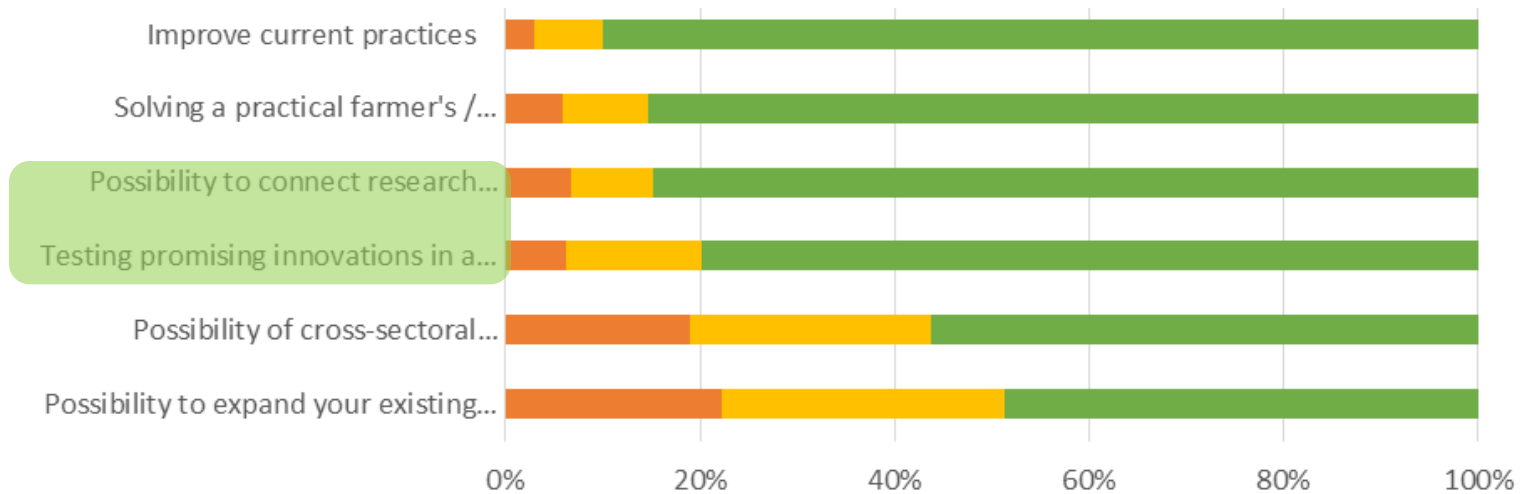
	Possibility to expand your existing network to new partners / experts	Possibility of cross-sectoral cooperation	Testing promising innovations in a real setting in the farm or forest	Possibility to connect research with farming / forestry practice	Solving a practical farmer's / forester's problem	Improve current practices
■ Slightly/Not at all important	22%	19%	6%	7%	6%	3%
■ Important	29%	25%	14%	8%	9%	7%
■ Fairly/Very Important	49%	56%	80%	85%	85%	90%

Slightly/Not at all important   ■ Important   ■ Fairly/Very Important

Partnership

Lead partner and other partners

▸ OGs cover mix of partners and partnership structures

▸ Research organisations as main lead partners; other lead partner types well represented

▸ Farmers (organisations) most represented partner

Lead Partner Type	N° of OGs	%
Researcher / Research Institute	173	**32%**
Farmer/forester or theirorganisation/ association of farmers or foresters	112	**20%**
Business / SME	80	15%
Advisor	65	**12%**
Other	33	6%
Public body	20	4%
NGO	15	3%
Education	13	2%
Total	**511**	**100%**

Overall partner types	Amount
Farmer/forester or their organisation/ association of farmers or foresters	**220**
Researcher / Research Institute	182
Business / SME	115
Advisor	**99**
Public body	84
Education	60
Other	55
NGO	29
Total number of partners in 239 OGs	**844**

Agriculture and Rural Development

Collaboration

9%

91%

- Collaborated or planning to collaborate
- No collaboration

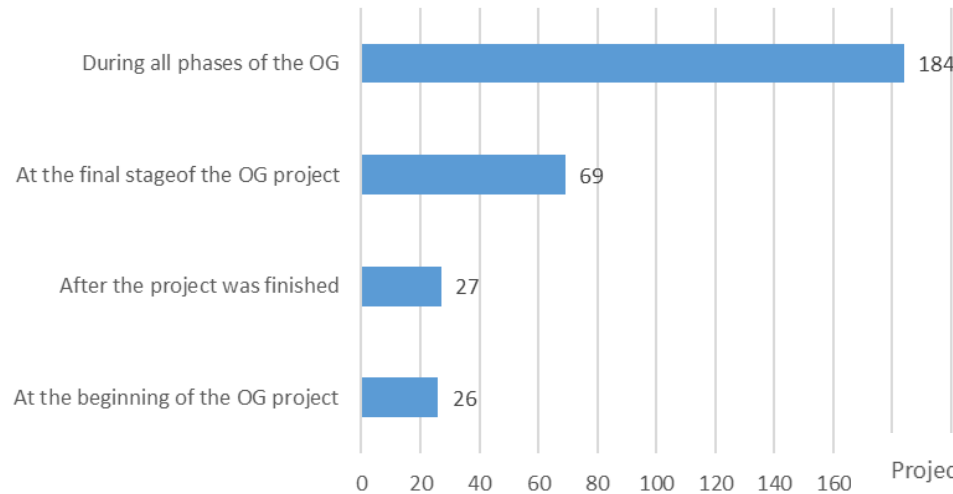**The great majority of OGs are collaborating or plan to with external entities (91%!)**

▸ Mainly within own region/country

▸ Circa 26% across borders

▸ Circa 14% with H2020 or other EU projects

▸ Mainly limited to (informal) information exchange through existing contacts

Organisations / individuals who are not partners in the OG project, in your own country / region	111
OG projects in your country / region	75
Organisations / individuals from other countries	36
OG projects in other countries / region	26
Other EU funded projects	21
H2020 multi-actor projects or Thematic Networks	16

0   20   40   60   80   100   120
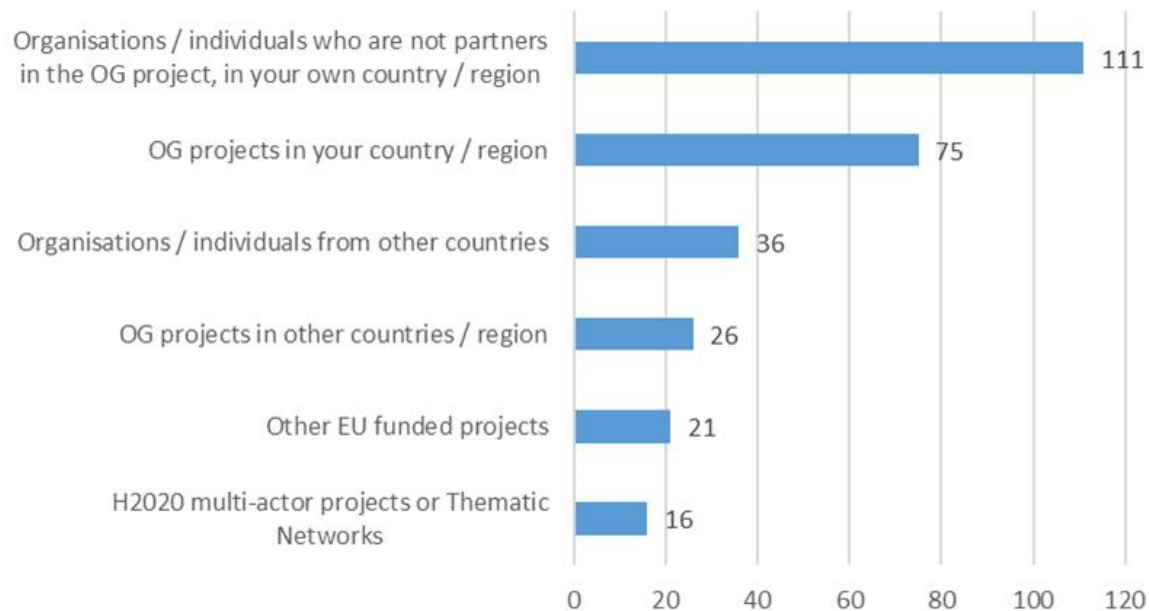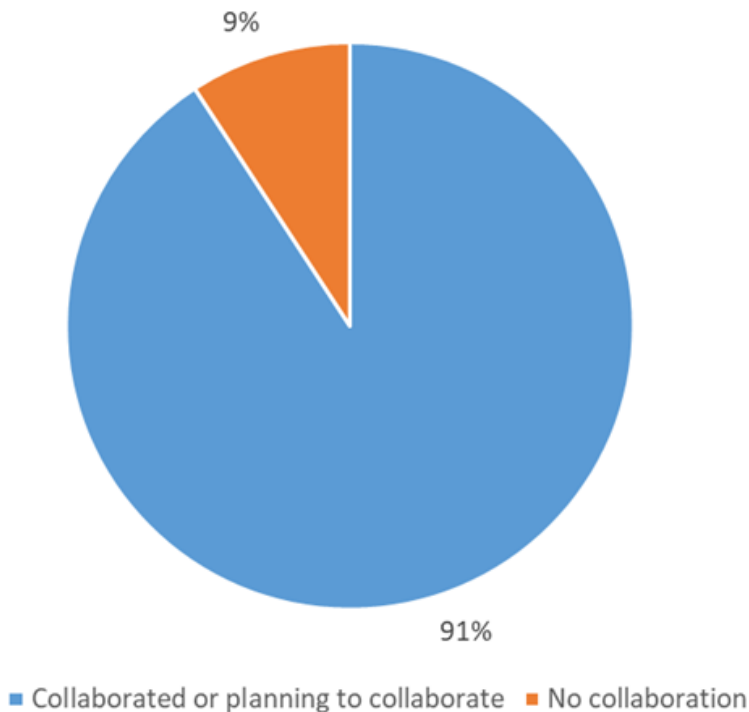
Outcomes and dissemination

Results from OG survey

During all phases of the OG	184
At the final stage of the OG project	69
After the project was finished	27
At the beginning of the OG project	26

(0 20 40 60 80 100 120 140 160)

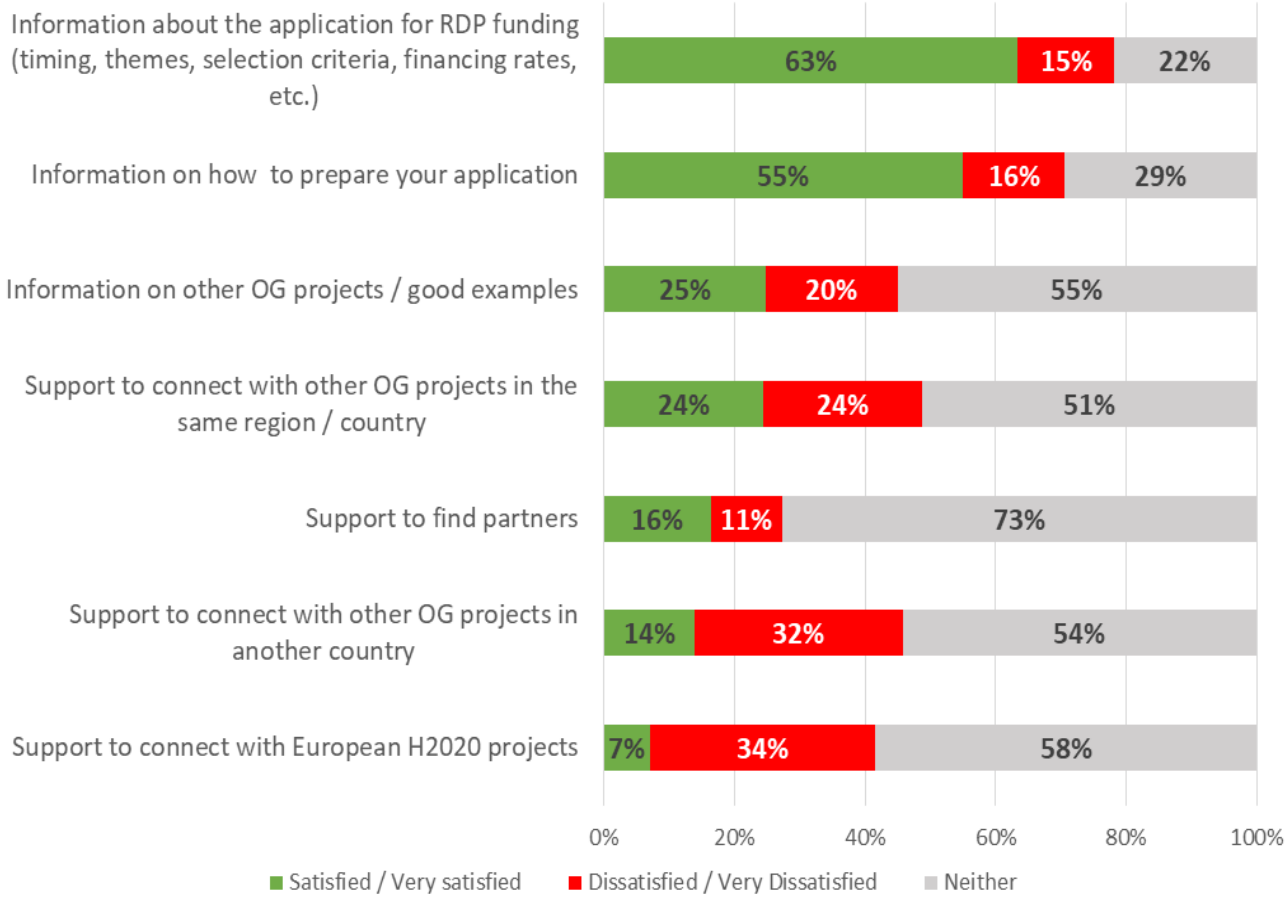**Dissemination activities mostly throughout whole project period**

▶ Mainly using own channels

▶ Guidance/assistance for practitioners more limited

▶ Only 10% use EIP-AGRI or MA's website for wider dissemination

Project's own publications - newsletter, flyers, booklets, guidelines	
Dedicated events organised by the OG project	
Project's own website / online platform	
Other publications	
Participation in event(s) organised by others	
Project's own guidance/training of practitioners	
Project's own digital product/app for practitioners	
Other websites/online platforms related to practitioners	

(0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40)

Support provided to OGs

Results from OG survey

- Majority of OGs (very) satisfied with the information in the application

- Quarter to third of OGs (very) dissatisfied with support to connect to other projects

- **Innovation Support Services needed**

Category	Satisfied / Very satisfied	Dissatisfied / Very Dissatisfied	Neither
Information about the application for RDP funding (timing, themes, selection criteria, financing rates, etc.)	63%	15%	22%
Information on how to prepare your application	55%	16%	29%
Information on other OG projects / good examples	25%	20%	55%
Support to connect with other OG projects in the same region / country	24%	24%	51%
Support to find partners	16%	11%	73%
Support to connect with other OG projects in another country	14%	32%	54%
Support to connect with European H2020 projects	7%	34%	58%

■ Satisfied / Very satisfied   ■ Dissatisfied / Very Dissatisfied   ■ Neither

Conclusions

Confirmed **great interest** in the EIP-AGRI OG framework and instrument

▶ Since launch of study, number of OG has **increased** to almost 900, and growing: **over 1000 NOW**

▶ Some MS launch a set of OG calls, both open and thematical aspects

▶ 91% of OGs are positive about their experience and **would recommend** other actors/organisations to become involved in an OG project

▶ OG partners highlight such projects **could not have been realised with other national or European funding frameworks** *(focus farmers' needs & co-creation)*

Conclusions

OGs focus on **tackling farmers' needs** in a practical and collaborative way

▶ OGs prove a **unique, versatile and flexible framework** to address various concrete bottom-up farmers' challenges/needs

▶ OGs do connect the farmer's community with **complementary external expertise** to help solve these challenges in variety of partnership compositions

▶ OG partnerships are indeed set up to co-develop new/adapted methods, tools, solutions, **directly applicable by farmers**

Conclusions

Partnership and project structures in three circles help connecting and disseminating to farmers' communities

▶ OG partnership usually consist of a few core partners, complemented by group of partners for practical parts of the project (2nd circle)

▶ Regular interaction and involvement of **wider target group** built into project structure through testing & demo activities

▶ **3rd circle of up to 100 farmers/end-users not formally part of the partnership**, testing new solutions in real farming practice and providing direct feedback

▶ This structuring ensures **efficient project coordination** while providing practical **feedback mechanism and dissemination channels** to farmers' community

▶ Farmers are still reluctant to take administrative lead as they lack the capacity and resources to deal with the related obligations (pre-financing)

Conclusions

Outcomes and dissemination

▶ OGs devote substantial attention to **dissemination in a variety of ways** throughout the project

▶ OGs interestingly **link rural-agricultural community with other sectors and industries**

▶ OGs can **test** and prepare the field and motivate beneficiaries **for agri-environmental measures in the next programming cycle**

Support

▶ OGs **satisfied with administrative support** received: useful advice from Managing Authorities

▶ **Innovation support services** also **important** in setting up the right partnership structure and preparing the application (12%)
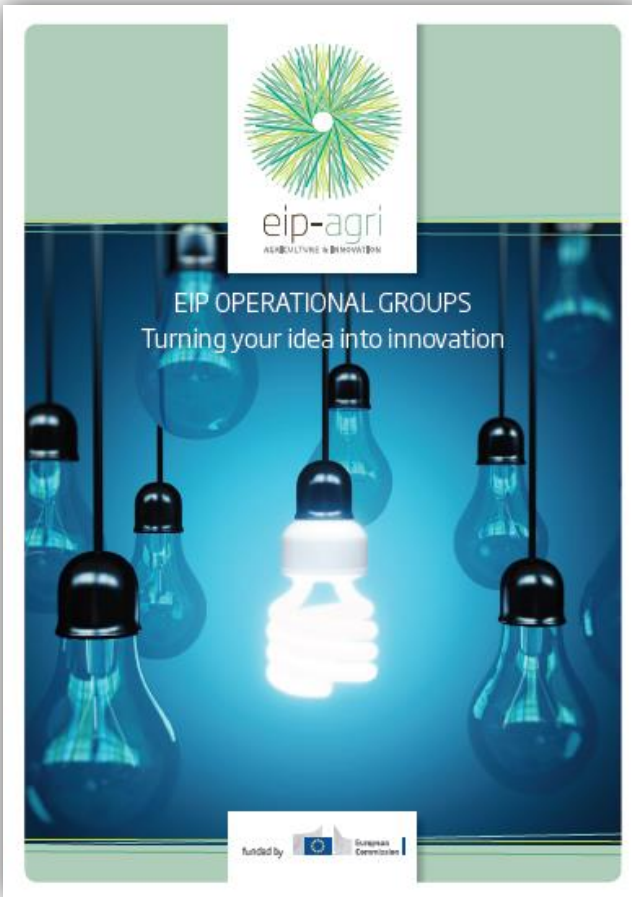
Conclusions

OGs as vehicles to connect to other (rural) innovation initiatives and actors

▶ OGs **discovering the collaboration potential** beyond the scope of the own OG, and interested to explore further, even though no priority in current period yet

▶ 90% of OGs **established relations with organisations outside the partnership** or intend to do so, even though the current funding framework cannot cover all the costs for this

▶ **Need to better facilitate this**, e.g. by more structured and accessible information on the themes and approaches of OGs

▶ OGs would welcome **more pro-active support** for this by national/regional support structures

▶ Importance to communicate about OGs in a timely and complete way

Thus…..

▶ Importance to communicate about OGs in a timely and complete manner:

    ▶ Info on Operational Group projects absolutely essential as from the start of their project → making information available via the EIP Common format **to make connections outside the OG possible** (other OGs, H2020 projects, etc.)

Communicate through SFC asap

OG assessment 2018
See more on the
EIP-AGRI website:

https://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/en/publications/eip-agri-operational-groups-assessment-2018

includes a list with the 600 OGs