

# ENRD Thematic Group on The European Green Deal and rural areas<sup>1</sup> Year 7 Workplan July 2020- July 2021

*October 2020*

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<sup>1</sup> The Thematic Group is part of ENRD's broader thematic work on [Greening the Rural Economy](#).

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## 1. Introduction

The Thematic Group (TG) on the European Green Deal and rural areas will focus on the European Green Deal's (EGD) role in rural areas and on rural and agricultural activities' possible contributions to achieving selected EGD objectives, especially in domains of environmentally sustainable and climate neutral food systems, agriculture and forestry, while also taking into consideration the economic resilience and social viability of rural communities.

The TG will build on practical lessons from delivering the 2014-20 RDPs, as well as on ENRD's past TG work on resource efficiency, soil and water management, transition to green economy in rural areas, and rural climate action and bioeconomy. It will aim to collect and provide useful indications and ideas for the programming and implementing of green interventions under the future CAP Strategic Plans.

Within this the TG's main focus will be on EGD elements (e.g. Farm to Fork, the Biodiversity Strategy and the Clean Energy package) and specific targets or actions set out by them that are linked to the delivery of the three climate and environment specific objectives of the CAP post-2020 (on climate action, environmental care and preserving landscapes and biodiversity).

The TG is a multi-stakeholder platform drawing its core participants from National Rural Networks (NRNs), Managing Authorities of the Rural Development Programmes (MAs), Local Action Groups (LAGs), advisory services, agricultural organisations, NGOs and other associations, amongst others.

## 2. Objectives of the Thematic Group

The TG's work aims to support the CAP SP preparations and their implementation by identifying schemes, interventions and combinations of interventions that can effectively contribute to both the CAP and EGD climate and environmental objectives by effectively upscaling good practices.

The TG will also identify lessons and good practices about how the delivery of EGD actions and objectives can most benefit EU rural areas and contribute to increasing the acceptance and 'buy-in' of EGD objectives by rural actors and communities. At the same time the TG's work will help improve the visibility and understanding of the importance of rural areas and the agri-food sector for the achievement of selected EGD objectives.

The TG's work will be practically oriented, draw on tangible EAFRD examples and mobilise practitioners to highlight effective delivery.

### 3. Main activities, outputs and their feed in-out to other Contact Point activities

#### 3.1 Thematic Group meetings

Four TG meetings will be organised between September 2020 and May 2021. The objective of the meetings is to contribute to knowledge development and sharing of experiences around the specific topics addressed by the TG. Indicative topics, selected on the basis of a scoping work carried out by the CP and the preferences expressed by TG members in the first TG meeting (28 September, 2020), encompass:

- Effective support to the transition to fully sustainable farming and forestry practices that benefit rural economies;
- Strategies promoting rural areas' contribution to the Clean Energy Package;
- Horizontal issues such as ensuring local ownership and 'buy-in' to the green interventions by rural stakeholders.

In addressing these topics the meetings will explore the various ways that CAP SPs can contribute to achieving relevant EGD objectives on the basis of tested approaches; specifically

- The ways to upscale environmentally sound land management practices and business models;
- The role of locally-led community initiatives;
- Territorial or value chain cooperation models;
- Information, knowledge transfer and advisory approaches; and
- Other kinds of rural initiatives that contribute to supporting these EGD objectives.

The CP will explore the possibility of organising one or more of the TG meetings in collaboration with National Rural Networks, to enable an in-depth view on national contexts, real-life examples and tested approaches.

#### 3.2 Capacity building tools

Drawing on the analytical work and members' inputs, the TG will develop tools (such as 'factsheets') around the meeting topics. These can support Managing Authorities in 1) designing and combining effective interventions within the CAP Strategic Plans, and 2) implementation that effectively delivers for climate action, environmental care, and preserving landscapes and biodiversity, while also delivering on vibrant rural areas in the future. The factsheets will build on quantified and credible evidence of rural development approaches' potential to deliver on CAP and EGD environmental and climate targets, and on lessons learnt from RDP implementation.

Good practices drawn from the delivery of 2014-20 RDPs and other initiatives (such as LIFE projects, H2020 or national initiatives) that are identified by the TG will be prepared in an easily accessible common-language form as written case studies or, for example through short video presentations or interviews. These outputs will be adapted for a broader audience beyond just the Managing Authorities.

### 3.3 Support to exchanges and peer learning

Following suggestions by the TG members, the possibilities of using a specific social media platform to facilitate members' exchanges between the meetings will be explored. Such a platform could allow for the centralising of examples and information shared by the members and for peer-to-peer discussions between them in a 'safe' and dedicated environment. In addition to this, and upon request the CP may consider facilitating informal and more restricted virtual meetings between TG members.

Members are strongly encouraged to capitalise on the TG work by disseminating its outputs to relevant national stakeholders, using appropriate channels, in order to produce a multiplier effect. The TG will actively share and promote examples of such independent follow-up of TG outputs by members to encourage other members to replicate them.

### 3.4 Communication

A series of communication activities will disseminate the knowledge acquired through the points above to a wider audience. This includes continuous updating of relevant ENRD web pages including the CAP Strategic Planning portal and the Rural Bioeconomy Portal. Coordination with NRN's communication activities on environmental and climate themes will be explored and ensured where relevant, for example by disseminating NRN communication materials.

Social media, in particular Twitter and Facebook will be used to keep the wider audience informed about the TG's work.

Whenever feasible the cases highlighted in TG meetings are also disseminated in simple video form as short video interviews or video messages by practitioners, or through recordings of the presentations. The TG members are encouraged to produce relevant video materials with relevant on-the-ground stakeholders that can be shared among TG members and with the broader public.

### 3.5 Links to other ENRD activities




The tools and orientations produced by the TG will contribute, as relevant, to ENRD's capacity building work in view of supporting the MS authorities in the preparations for the post-2020 period, in particular for the CAP Strategic Plans and the new delivery model.







As relevant the TG will use materials from ENRD's previous years' thematic work, including previous TGs and relevant RDP screenings focusing on environment and climate issues in RDPs, to identify stakeholders, approaches and lessons learnt to be shared with the TG. The entries and nominees of previous years' Rural Inspiration Awards will also be scoped for the identification of relevant inspirational examples.

Relevant good practices linking to environmental and climate objectives collected from the National Rural Networks, LEADER/CLLD local action groups, and other rural stakeholders will be used in the TG work and disseminated through its communication channels. The aim is also to elaborate the EAFRD cases highlighted in TG meetings as ENRD Good Practice examples whenever feasible.


























Cross-fertilization with the parallel ENRD Thematic Group on the Long Term Vision for Rural Areas and a planned LEADER/CLLD thematic meeting on the linkages between LEADER and the EU Green Deal/Farm to Fork Strategy will be pursued when relevant. The guidance for the design and implementation of interventions delivering on the EGD and CAP environmental and climate targets will also feed in to other appropriate ENRD activities supporting the CAP Strategic Plans preparation.

**Table 1: Main activities and outputs of the ENRD Thematic Group on the European Green Deal and Rural Areas**

| ACTIVITIES  |   |
|---|---|
| <br><b>Background research</b>             | The background research carried out by the ENRD CP provides a short introduction to the European Green Deal (EGD) and its relevance for rural areas and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), it provides a starting point for discussions in the Thematic Group on the specific focus and sub-topics of its activities.                  |
| <br><b>Up to four TG meetings</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1st TG meeting (September 28, 2020 - webinar)</li> <li>• 2nd TG meeting (December 2020 – webinar - tbc)</li> <li>• 3rd TG meeting (February 2021 - tbc)</li> <li>• 4th TG meeting (May 2021 - tbc)</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Analysis of rural development approaches that deliver on the selected EGD and CAP targets</b>                              | Following the most relevant areas of action identified in the background research and input from TG members, the TG will carry out analytical work on initiatives and support approaches that effectively deliver on the selected topics, focusing on approaches that can be linked to the green architecture of the CAP Strategic Plans. |
| <br><b>On-going peer-to-peer exchanges</b> | Depending on the demand and interest from the TG members, the possibility of using a social media or other digital platform to enable members' direct exchanges with each other between the meetings will be explored <b>(to be confirmed)</b> .  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Communication and outreach activities</b></p>   | <p>Relevant parts of the ENRD web page as well as ENRD publications and social media channels are used to share TG work and as well as content provided by TG members, and other relevant organisations and events on the EGD actions and rural areas. Video materials are produced around relevant cases and contributions within the TG whenever feasible. The members are actively encouraged to use video for disseminating local and national examples of relevance for the TG's work.</p>                                      |
| <p><b>OUTPUTS</b></p>  |  |
| <p><b>EGD and rural areas meeting highlights</b></p>    | <p>Highlights reports prepared with the main outcomes from each of the TG meetings in a visual, reader-friendly format for broad dissemination.</p>  |
| <p><b>Fact sheets on environment and climate objectives in CAP Strategic Plans and their implementation</b></p>  | <p>A series of short factsheets around the TG meeting topics will be developed based on analytic work, previous ENRD thematic work, inputs from key experts and from TG members. They will map and explain key tools and approaches to promote selected CAP and EGD environmental objectives and how they could be programmed through the CAP green architecture in the post-2020 period. Their scope goes beyond specific agricultural or forestry practices and focuses on the enablers and conditions for effective delivery.</p> |
| <p><b>Inputs to relevant ENRD web portals</b></p>   | <p>The 'CAP post-2020' information portal and the Rural Bioeconomy Portal will be updated with relevant content including links to initiatives delivering on the CAP and EGD climate and environmental objectives in rural areas. The work includes regular updates of the content in term of policy initiatives, projects, relevant stakeholders, events and news, multimedia, interactive and visual tools, etc.</p>   |
| <p><b>Good practices and video materials</b></p>    | <p>Cases highlighted in TG meetings are documented as EAFRD Good Practices or as short videos whenever possible (eg. recorded presentations or interviews). The TG members and involved stakeholders are encouraged to produce simple and cost effective 'project visit' type videos or other visual and easily disseminated materials of the presented cases.</p>   |
| <p><b>A digital peer platform</b></p>  | <p>A dedicated social media or other digital platform is launched to enable members' direct exchanges with each other between the meetings <b>(to be confirmed)</b>.</p>   |
| <p><b>TG summary report</b></p>   | <p>Synthesis of the key outcomes developed and activities throughout the year in a brief document.</p>   |

### 3.6 Indicative work plan

|   | Aug  | Sept  | Oct  | Nov | Dec  | Jan   | Feb   | Mar   | Apr | May  | Jun | Jul   |  |
|---|--|---|--|-----|--|---|---|---|-----|--|-----|---|--|
| <b>Background Research</b>                                      |     |   |  |     |  |   |   |   |     |  |     |   |  |
| <b>1<sup>st</sup> TG Meeting</b>                                |  |  (Sept 28, 2020) |  |     |  |   |   |   |     |  |     |   |  |
| <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting: Ongoing TG work &amp; TG meeting</b> |  |   |     |     |  (Dec 2020 - TBC) |   |   |   |     |  |     |   |  |
| <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting: Ongoing TG work &amp; TG meeting</b> |  |   |  |     |                   |   |  (Feb, 2021 - tbc) |   |     |  |     |   |  |
| <b>4<sup>th</sup> Meeting: Ongoing TG work &amp; TG meeting</b> |  |   |  |     |  |   |   |     |     |  (May 2021-tbc) |     |   |  |
| Analytic work around meeting topics                             |  |   |    |     |  |   |   |   |     |  |     |   |  |
| Launching a digital peer platform (TBC)                         |  |   |   |     |  |   |   |   |     |  |     |   |  |
| External communication  |  |   |  |     |  |   |   |   |     |  |     |   |  |
| <b>TG Outputs</b>   |  |   |  |     |  |   |   |   |     |  |     |   |  |
| Background (scoping) document                                   |  |                |  |     |  |   |   |   |     |  |     |   |  |
| Meeting highlights  |  |   |   |     |  |  |   |  |     |               |     |   |  |
| Fact sheets for the CAP SP                                      |  |   |  |     |                 |   |   |   |     |               |     |   |  |
| Video materials, Good Practices documents                       |  |   |  |     |                 |   |   |   |     |               |     |   |  |
| Active digital peer platform (TBC)                              |  |   |  |     |  |   |   |   |     |  |     |   |  |
| Relevant ENRD web portals: Ongoing updates                      |  |   |  |     |  |   |   |   |     |  |     |   |  |
| TG Summary report   |  |   |  |     |  |   |   |   |     |  |     |  |  |