

# European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural Production and Sustainability (EIP): How to realise the bottom-up principle?

Political Forum on the sixth international scientific conference

„Rural Development 2013 - Innovations and Sustainability“

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Das ESF-Projekt wird gefördert durch das Ministerium für Wissenschaft,  
Forschung und Kultur aus Mitteln des Europäischen Sozialfonds und des  
Landes Brandenburg. Europäischer Sozialfonds - Investition in Ihre Zukunft!

# Outline

- ▶ European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural Production and Sustainability (EIP)
- ▶ EIP implementation in the State of Brandenburg
- ▶ Role of Eberswalde University
- ▶ How to realise the bottom-up process?
- ▶ To conclude



- ▶ “Europe 2020 Strategy”

The Commission underlines the role of research and innovation as key elements in preparing the European Union for future challenges.

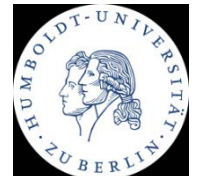
- ▶ Budget for “Europe 2020“

The Commission provides € 4.5 billion for research and innovation on food security, the bio-economy, and sustainable agriculture.

- ▶ “Europe 2020” flagship initiative the “Innovation Union” introduces the concept of “European Innovation Partnership EIP” as a new way to foster innovation.

“EIP Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability” is one out of four.

- ▶ Knowledge and technologies often exist but
  - Insufficient practical applicability of research results
  - Lacking dissemination within the sector
  - Missing consumer participation – reduced acceptance!
- ▶ Need of practical foundation of innovative processes and technologies (e.g. testing local applicability)
- ▶ Identification of (potentially) negative effects in an early stage of the innovation development
- ▶ Farms (forestry businesses) often have capacities for developing innovations but little encouragement/support
- ▶ Recognition of the researchers' role (methodology, publication, networking etc.), but problem of discontinuity of staff (junior staff)



Bokelmann et al. 2010 “Analysis of Innovation Systems in the German Agriculture”

# Aim of EIP

## A new concept to bridge the gap

between research and innovation, Horizon 2020 and other research programmes

and

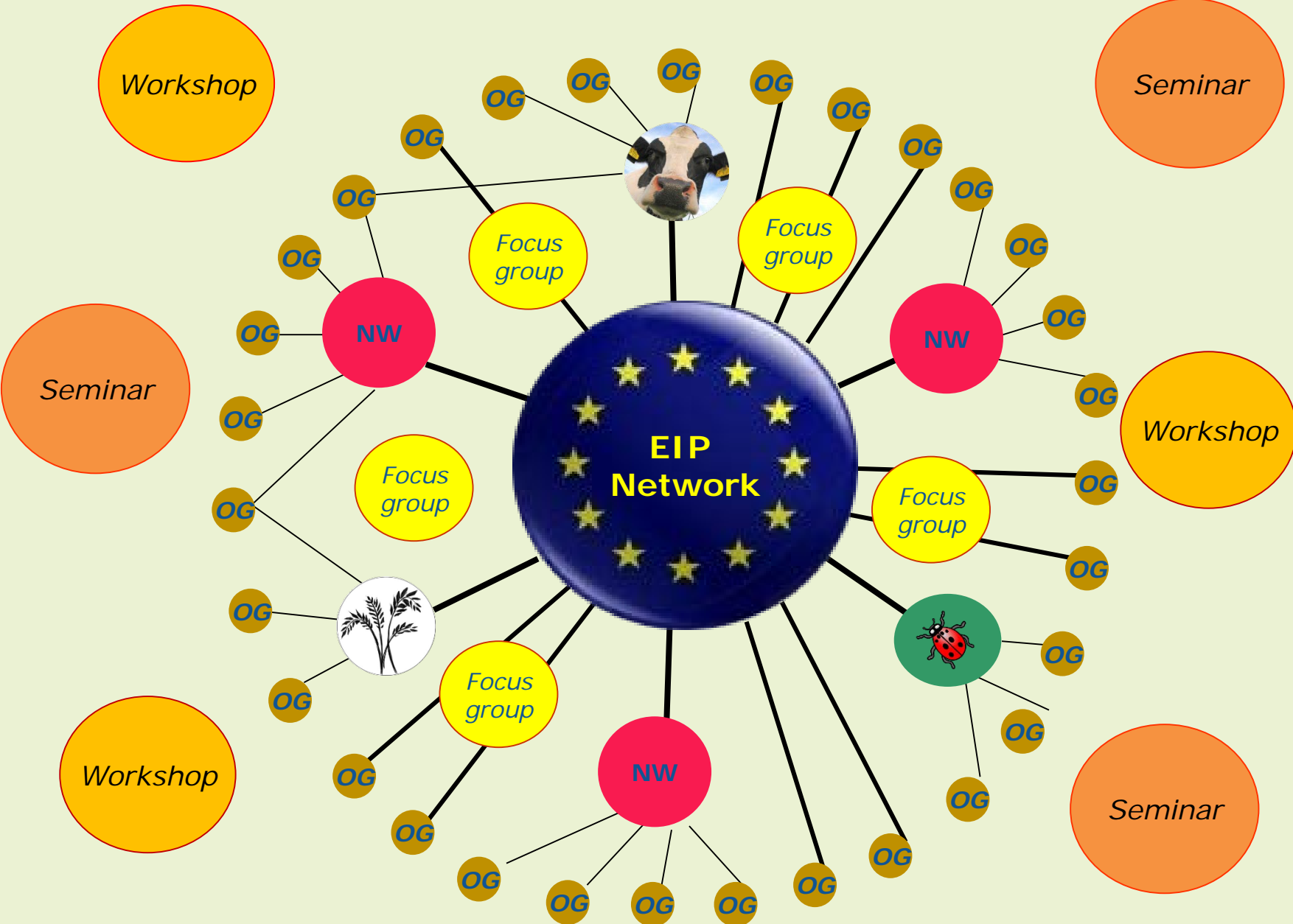
between local and regional innovation action funded through different sources, private, rural development, cohesion funds

Based on Operational Groups (OGs) involving actors such as farmers, scientists, advisers, NGOs, enterprises of the agriculture and forestry sector

Source: SCAR AKIS CWG– 25 April 2013

Inge Van Oost - DG Agriculture and Rural Development

# EIP on different levels



# EIP implementation on EU-level: Research based

- ▶ DG-Agri initiated EIP Agriculture but the concept follows the logic of DG-Research concepts
  - Steering board and Thematic Focus Groups
  - Expert panels develop research plans
  - Calls for cross-disciplinary scientific consortia
  
- ▶ Theoretical framework of Horizon 2020 similar to Operational Group and national networks concepts but...

# EIP implementation on the regional/national level (RDP)

- ▶ EU support under Rural Development Programmes
  - Art 36 - “Cooperation measure” for Operational Groups
- ▶ Innovation brokerage can be supported via
  - technical assistance - Art 55 (2)
  - animation under the cooperation measure - Art 36 (5)
  - advisory services - Art 16 (1)
- ▶ Identification of “innovations” is only possible in the review – the criteria “innovative” is unsuitable for funding.
- ▶ Mainly funding for farming and forestry businesses
- ▶ No extra funding within the second pillar of CAP!



# Operational Group (OG)

- ▶ Set up of cross-disciplinary groups consisting of farmers/forestry businesses, scientists and other stakeholders
- ▶ OGs focus on the development of new products, processes and technologies
- ▶ OGs run "pilot projects", pursuing the testing and adaptation of technologies and processes to "new" geographical/environmental contexts (i.e. contexts in which they have not yet been used).

Source: SCAR AKIS CWG– 25 April 2013  
Inge Van Oost - DG Agriculture and Rural Development

# Implementation in Brandenburg

- ▶ State of Brandenburg in the north-eastern part of Germany, rural countryside around Berlin
- ▶ Family farms (all sizes) and large scale legal farms (Ltd., limited partnership, registered cooperative)
- ▶ Brandenburgian Ministry of Infrastructure and Agriculture (MIL) is willing to introduce EIP for re-strengthening locally applied research and innovation development but
  - What will be the available budget (RDP: total and for different measures/articles)?



# First steps: a top-down process

- ▶ Federal states discuss the programming for the period 2014 – 2020 with the Federal Ministry BMELV
  - Budgetary constraints
  - Legal implementation
  - Administrative implementation
  
- ▶ Close(d) connection between Brandenburgian Ministry Infrastructure and Agriculture MIL and the ZALF institute (mainly founded by Brandenburgian und Federal Ministry for Research)
- ▶ MIL as responsible for RDP avoids inter-ministerial cooperation re innovation development with Ministry of Economics and Ministry of Science
- ▶ Non-transparency of EIP programming

- ▶ Regionally applied research for agriculture and forestry
- ▶ Establishment of the Innovation Network for organic farming in Brandenburg
- ▶ Based on the Innovation Network, there are several on-going cooperative study and research projects
  - Climate change adapted arable farming (INKA BB)
  - Direct marketing concepts (Lifelong Learning I)
  - Strengthening competitiveness of typical farming systems (Lifelong Learning II)



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# Status-quo of the Innovation Network at Eberswalde University

- Start-up in 2004
- Currently around 80 co-operating farms/enterprises
  - ❖ 30 cooperation contract
  - ❖ 50 assoc. enterprises
- Farmers
- Processors
- Merchants/wholesalers
- Stakeholders
- Researchers/teachers
- Students at HNEE

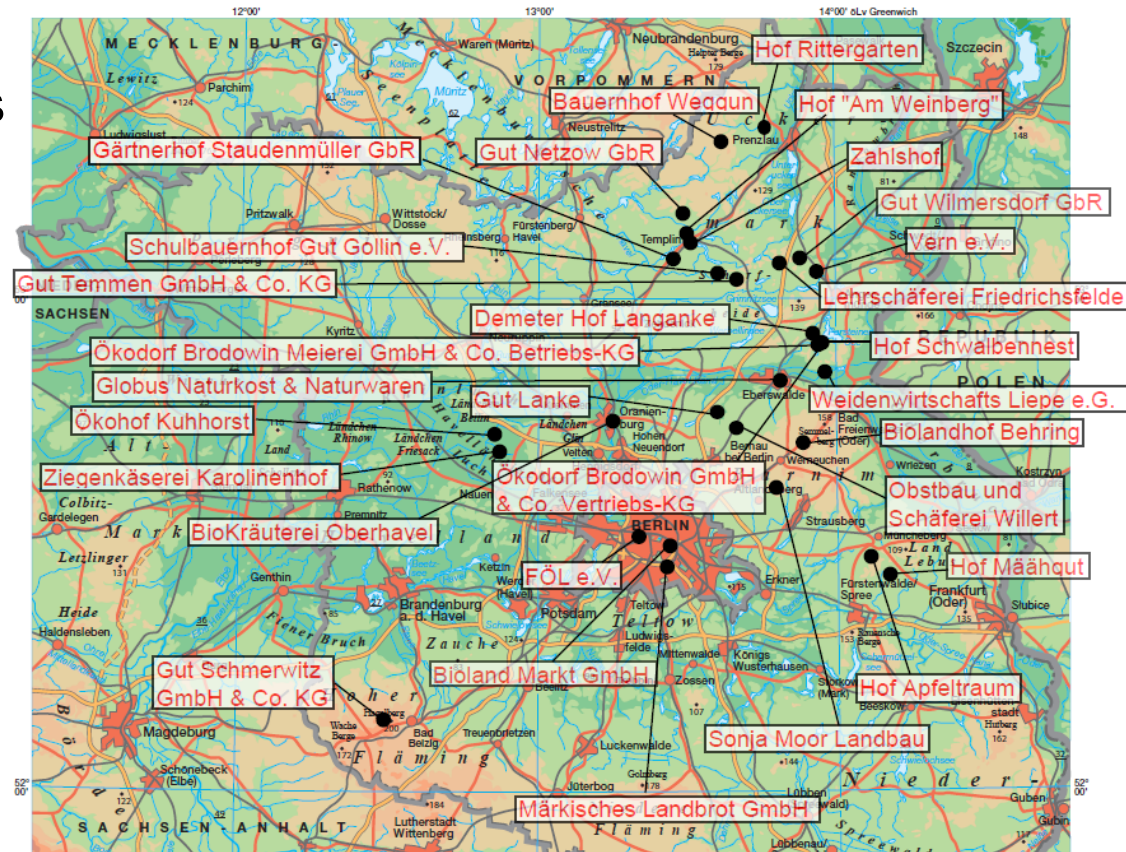


Abbildung: Übersicht der Kooperationsbetriebe (Stand 2013)

# Competences of the team

- ▶ Policy analyses
- ▶ Interpretation of research results into practitioners language
- ▶ Connecting potential partners of innovation projects
- ▶ Information on policy concepts, facilitation of processes and workshops
- ▶ Continuity due to permanent university staff but budgetary constraints!
  
- ▶ We wanted to get involved now! – HNEE team's initiative!
- ▶ How? Organisation of a EIP seminar and OG workshops for drafting project ideas in Nov 2013.

# Lessons learned from network management

- ▶ Network manager has a key role as connector, driver, facilitator, ‘Innovation Broker’.
- ▶ Personal contact and trust is a precondition for innovation project development.
- ▶ Monitoring and evaluation drive on-going adjustments.
- ▶ Project development, formal applications, administrative requirements challenge practitioners.
- ▶ “Successful” projects need practical foundation for further dissemination.
- ▶ Need to deal with farmers’ scepticism towards cooperative approaches (historical background of eastern Germany).

## Strengths

- Promising concept for fostering the cooperation: farmers – scientists
- Based on the vision of inter-ministerial, cross-border and cross-disciplinary communication and cooperation
- Funding of innovative projects, pilot plants, groups and networks
- Fostering administrative flexibility within Rural Development Programming
- Similarities with LEADER+, learning from existing networks in the region
- Learning from well-established Innovation Centres in NL, Belgium
- Bottom-up principle!

## Weaknesses

- Complexity of the concept – difficult communication and understanding
- Who drafts OG project proposals with/for farmers?
- Different funding logics on EU- and regional/local levels
- Unclear structure of vertical integration
- Competition for funding within RDPs
- RDP based – cross-border funding limited (but necessary for learning!)
- Challenging administrative bodies
- Implementation as non-transparent top-down process is possible!



# To conclude

- ▶ EIP implementation depends strongly on open-minded practitioners, scientists, ministry and administrative staff.
- ▶ In some countries, involvement seems limited due to the concept's complexity and programming “behind closed doors”.
  
- ▶ However, own initiative is crucial!  
Don't wait too long for participating in EIP and OGs!
- ▶ Unclear situation might even offer options for
  - “agenda setting” and
  - “new dynamics” in the policy development process.

## ... to conclude

### ► Role of research institutes

- Permanent staff guarantees continuity in cooperating with ministries and farming/forestry businesses
- Scientists can bridge the gap between rural development schemes (partner farms) and research funds (national and EU consortia)
- Reporting into national networks and focus groups

► Experienced innovation brokers provide information if we ask.

► EIP is an impressing tool which needs to prove if and how it works.