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Work Package 5 – Innovation Ecosystem
D5.2 – Stakeholder Exchange Platform Report

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1. Introduction

At the start of the project NIVA (New IACS Vision in Action) in June 2019 we were used to travel all around Europe (and the world) without hardly any restrictions. The NIVA project was set up to further demolish restrictions regarding the IACS by piloting with new technologies. To connect with the stakeholders the planning was to organise Stakeholder Forums after each project conference. The first NIVA Stakeholder Forum took place on the 13th of November in the city of Copenhagen in Denmark. NIVA was ready to organise a second Stakeholder Forum in Dublin, Ireland in May 2020. The outbreak of the COVID19-virus shook the whole world, and unfortunately still is. The preparations of the Stakeholder Forum were rudely disturbed by the outbreak of the COVID19-virus and the necessary measures to fight the virus. Initially, the stakeholder forum was postponed and eventually the decisions was made that a physical Stakeholder Forum is not feasible in the upcoming period.

In order to engage with our stakeholders we decided to organise a series of webinars, that took place on the 23rd of June, the 30th of June and the 7th of July 2020. Although the webinars were not announced long before they took place a lot of stakeholders expressed their interest and eventually attended the webinars. The number of participants varied between 70 and 90 participants.

In the webinars NIVA was happy to inform the attendees on issues that affect the daily work and the work to come, but also is satisfied that it could present what NIVA has been developing in the past year. And how the NIVA work could benefit Paying Agencies all over Europe to deal with the upcoming challenges. The outcomes and material from the three webinars were published on the NIVA website and were further brought to the attention of people through the NIVA twitter account.

2. NIVA webinar ‘NIVA State of play’ (23 June 2020)

On the 23rd of June 2020, NIVA hosted its first webinar as an alternative for a physical Stakeholders Forum. The topic of the webinar was NIVA State of Play and was intended to give the stakeholders an idea what the project had done and what the next steps will be.

The webinar started with a short introduction of WP5 lead Folkwin Poelman on the series of webinars as an alternative of the physical stakeholder forums,

A brief overview of the project was given by the project coordinator Sander Janssen. After a quick introduction about the NIVA project and its objectives Sander Janssen shared the the results of the project since the previous NIVA Stakeholder Forum (November 2019 in Copenhagen). Two important steps were taken:

1. From exploratory to executive
2. From in-ward organisation to outside visible

Finally, an overview was given of the impact of the COVID-19 crisis and the mitigation measures NIVA will take in order to reach the project objectives.

On behalf of WP2 co-lead Jesús Estrada presented the progress of the nine Use Cases that are the heart of the NIVA project. Under WP2 the design, deployment, testing and validating of ICT tools and services for a modern Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) take place: the 9 Use Cases. After showing the NIVA simplified architecture for all the Use Cases information was given on the general status and overview, results so far, the planned final product and how the results could be used by other Paying Agencies.

Jesus Estrada summarised the work on the Use Cases:

- NIVA is delivering common e-tools at EUPL basis
- Free and Open to any other Pas and partners in the IACS ecosystem
- Semantic and component Interoperability based on common vocabularies, common APIs and common approaches

Finally, Dominique Laurent shared the latest insights on the work of WP3 on the interoperability. The core geospatial data is necessary for most Use Cases. Within NIVA there’s a general will to have a common crop type list(s) for:

- NIVA tools
- Opening IACS data for other domains

The methodology to come to a proposal on a common crop type was explained in more detail. The methodology consists of three sources:

- Requirements: Questionnaire on crop types (UC leaders)
- Existing practices in Paying Agencies: Questionnaire on semantic interoperability and comparison exercise with the crop type tables used in Sen4CAP
- Existing standards: Bibliography

3. NIVA webinar ‘Digital Technologies & OTSC in times of COVID-19’ (30 June 2020)

On the 30th of June 2020, NIVA hosted its second webinar. The COVID19 Pandemic and lockdowns reinforced the importance of e tools and digital technologies for any monitoring and compliance system of farm payments. During the lockdowns in-person visits are more difficult and can be more risky, especially towards at risk groups or in situations where the virus is spreading rapidly. In such situations it is useful to replace the in person visits (of an advisor completing farm subsidy applications, or of On-The-Spot-Checks) with remote monitoring through digital technologies, which is also an ambition of the Common Agricultural Policy in the new programming period.

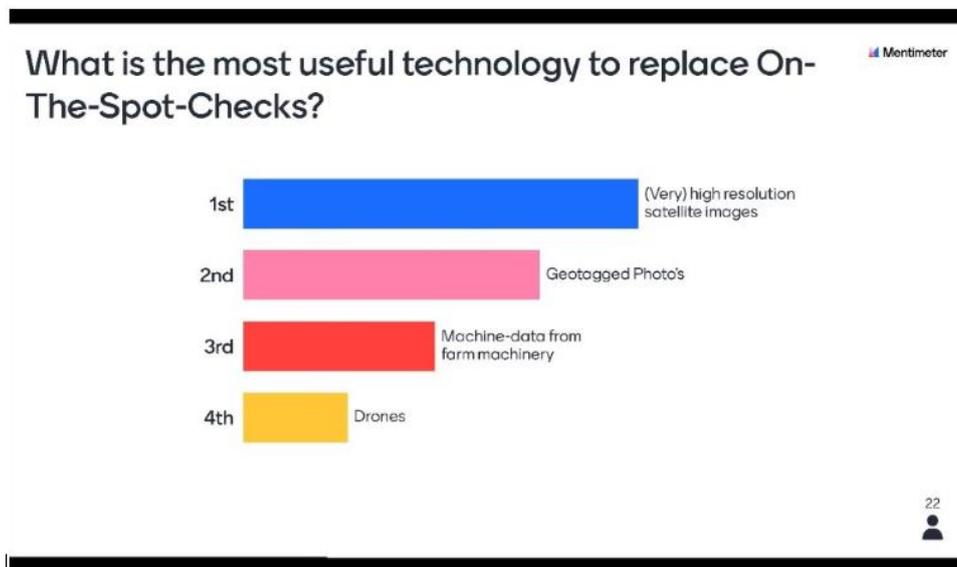
The NIVA webinar ‘Digital Technologies & OTSC in times of COVID-19’ that was organised on the 30th of June 2020 explored the policy background to digital technologies and OTSC from the perspective of DG-AGRI, and explored two technologies in detail: Geo Tagged Photos and Machinery Data as both these technologies have the potential to replace an On-The-Spot-Check with a virtual check, and are use cases within the NIVA project (see here for Geo Tagged Photos & here for Machinery Data). Other technologies might also be promising such as drone-technology or Very-High Resolution images.

During the webinar, Joanna Stawowy (DG AGRI) explained ‘Use of new technologies in claim year 2020 and beyond: flexibility offered in response to the COVID-19 pandemic as incentive for a true paradigm shift’, from the perspective of the EC. With the COVID 19 pandemic and the lock downs, the EC was able in a very short time to establish an emergency regulation (Regulation 2020/532) allowing member states some flexibility in the execution of OTSC, allowing for the use of satellite/aerial imagery or geo-tagged photo’s with no strict recommendation for one technology in particular. Joanna highlighted that this fits into the gradual process of switching to the Area Monitoring System and Checks-By-Monitoring, and that frontrunners in this respect should benefit from their earlier trials and efforts.

Subsequently Eoin Dooley from DAFM explained what NIVA is doing with the Geotagged Photo app that is being developed as part of the use case. A lot of requirements were collected from different stakeholders to the app (farmers, advisors, DAFM colleagues) through workshops and interviews, using different formats, and even continuing online in the times of COVID 19. This has lead to a good understanding of what the user can and cannot do, and what the paying agency (in this case DAFM) is able to accept or not in terms of proof-of-activity in a location. A prototype of the app is now being developed based on the specifications derived from these feedback rounds. Developments from GSAA app for accurately positioning the person and the object being photographed have been incorporated as well.

In a final presentation Marc Middendorp from RVO showcased NIVA efforts in using machinery data to identify activities on a parcel. He highlighted the importance of Farm Management Information Systems (FMIS), and showed a first demonstrator for tracking a crop management activity based on the sowing of a winter cereal for a cover crop, that could then be tracked through the FMIS and shared with the Paying Agency as additional proof next to the CbM. Standards are very important to allow for these connections between FMIS, Machinery and Paying Agency, hence this use case worked with the e-CROP standard.

Through the presentations the different technologies were explained, along with the progress made in NIVA so far. In a short discussion session participants were asked for feedback and ideas, and responded to a few questions on MentiMeter, as a shared discussion platform. One interesting result of this discussion was a ranking of different potential technologies to reduce the number of required OTSC, and participants there highlighted the importance of Very-High resolution satellite images, or orthophotos an additional source of information. It was suggested that NIVA organise another stakeholder forum Webinar on the role of Very High-Resolution Satellite Images in IACS and AMS.



4. NIVA webinar ‘Datasharing’ (7 July 2020)

On the 7th of July 2020, NIVA hosted its last webinar in a series of three. In the agricultural domain, sharing of farm(er) data has become a big issue, in particular because the rights of different stakeholders towards the data are not very explicit. This has several causes. First of all, the originator of data (who could have prime rights) is often not known or it is unclear who or what is in fact the real originator. Secondly, the nature of the data that is subject to those rights is often ill described. As a third aspect, the rights that can be exercised on data are often not clear.

At the same time, farmers and other stakeholders agree that the value of data is mostly in sharing it. So this requires a framework for data sharing. Since Paying Agencies are collecting a substantial part of farm(er) data, they are an interesting outlet. But then of course many questions arise on how Paying Agencies can share the data they collect, under what conditions and how to arrange this with farmers.

The NIVA project works on modernising the tools of Paying Agencies and the ongoing digitisation makes the issue of data sharing urgent. Hence, the project is facilitating that debate – with a webinar on the 7th of July 2020.

Tamme van der Wal, host of the webinar on behalf of NIVA’s WP5, started with an introduction to the topic of data sharing and the program of the webinar.

Sander Janssen, coordinator of NIVA, presented the way that the farm data position in the Netherlands is organised. He showed the technical perspective of data sharing as the “Stack” where the different layers – all needed to constitute data sharing facilities – have different conventions and more importantly different key stakeholders (‘ownership’). The challenge of data sharing seems more a governance aspect than a technical hurdle. Sander proposes that the data position of the farmer should be ensured by a farmer-controlled data space, where government takes the lead in arranging agreements. Other stakeholders that also benefit from data sharing should collaborate and stimulate data sharing, as that is where the value can be made.

Doris Marquardt, policy officer at DG-AGRI, then continued by providing an overview of the EU initiatives in support of organising and facilitating data for the agricultural sector and for policy purposes. She elaborated on the European strategy for data, and on the evolution of a Common Agriculture Data Space. The European Partnership ‘Agriculture of Data’ will bring together stakeholders to ensure a digital future for European agriculture. A main objective is to help farmers to improve their sustainability performance. And it will help monitoring policy implementation and evaluating the performance of the CAP. Organising this data space will have many scale benefits and will overcome the current fragmentation of the digital agricultural landscape.

The third speaker was Mohamed El Aydam, policy officer at DG-AGRI in the D3 unit. He updated us on the data sharing process and the data sharing project that DG-AGRI is currently executing. In this project, DG-AGRI seeks ways how to effectively share the data that is collected in IACS systems across Europe for the purpose of farmer claims in the CAP. These data are valuable for environmental and climate monitoring. The project proposes to follow the INSPIRE directive, which has good policies and

governance for spatial data. Sharing the IACS data is an important step forward for other commission services and for reporting on the impact of the CAP in its performance towards the societal goals.

The webinar concluded with a lively Q&A where questions from participants were answered in a panel-like setting. The webinar was also enlightened by several polls.

5. List of presentations

The presentations are also available on the NIVA website (www.niva4cap.eu) under the news items of the webinars and will also be made available in the section Downloads – in the folder “Summer 2020 webinars”. The presentation are an integral part of this deliverable.

Webinar ‘NIVA State of play’ (23 June 2020)

- A. Overview of progress in the NIVA Project
- B. NIVA Use Cases
- C. Harmonization and Interoperability progress

Webinar ‘Digital Technologies & OTSC in times of COVID-19’ (30 June 2020)

- D. NIVA Overview
- E. Use of new Technologies in claim year 2020
- F. NIVA Geotag Photo Application
- G. NIVA Farm Machine Data in IACS

Webinar ‘Datasharing’ (7 July 2020)

- H. Data Sharing webinar introduction
- I. Organising farm data position, experiences from the Netherlands
- J. EU initiatives in support of data for the agricultural sector and policies
- K. IACS Data Sharing

6. Evaluation of the NIVA webinars to involve stakeholders

Within the WP5 project team the webinars were evaluated. The outcome of the evaluation was also shared within the NIVA Project Management Board:

- Technical issues. We need to figure out if we can come up with an alternative for Skype. According to Peter MS teams would work for most organisations. Webex and Gotomeeting are also working well. For some tools the problems are caused by security issues, this is mainly the case with PAs and the Commission services. Since the Commission services are an important stakeholder for NIVA we should see what are their preferred tools.
- Organisational issues. Agendas needs to be sent out earlier and be more detailed, so that the people know what they can expect. A detailed timeline would work, e.g. confirmation of speakers, outline agenda ready, etc.
- The duration of a webinar should be maximum 1,5 hours. If the webinar should last longer, there should be a break included.
- Prepare the presenters what the audience want to hear. Prepare the webinars more with all the presenters.
- Split the tasks in the organisation of the webinar. At least three people to run the webinar. Assign one person (and a back-up) to run the presentations.
- Have a webinar test. Max 3 people to do the full webinar (to test both the technical issues as the content).
- It is good to use an outlook invitation should be for the actual meeting + mail. Use info@niva4cap.eu for external communication and therefore also when sending the invitations for webinars.
- We should explore the opportunities for more interaction.

One of the most important decisions is that we operate a digital approach for the stakeholder involvement. WP5 will use part of the budget for physical stakeholder forums for assistance for future webinars (and conferences) in order to have more professional webinars and interactive possibilities.