



Relevance of SPRINT project to various Commission initiatives and policies

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A few words on Horizon 2020

- Horizon 2020 is the biggest EU Research & Innovation programme ever
 - Nearly €80 billion of funding available over 7 years (2014 to 2020),
 - in addition to the private investment that this money attracts
- By coupling research and innovation, Horizon 2020 helps achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth
 - By taking great ideas from the lab to the market through all the steps of value chains (basic research, applied research, SMEs and industry), it promises more breakthroughs, discoveries and world-firsts
- Horizon 2020 is open to participation and has a bottom-up approach
 - Multi-actors: companies, universities, public authorities, NGOs, etc.
 - Multi-disciplinary to tackle all societal challenges

Various relevant Commission policies and initiatives, aiming to reduce use and risk of pesticides, protect health and environment

- European Green Deal
- Farm to Fork Strategy
- Biodiversity Strategy for 2030
- Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability
- Organic Action Plan
- Zero Pollution Action Plan
- EU Pollinators Initiative

Some relevant aims of Farm to Fork Strategy:

- *“The use of chemical pesticides in agriculture contributes to soil, water and air pollution, biodiversity loss and can harm non-target plants, insects, birds, mammals and amphibians.”*
- *“The Commission will take additional action to reduce the overall use and risk of chemical pesticides by 50% and the use of more hazardous pesticides by 50% by 2030.”*

Some specific actions foreseen in Farm to Fork Strategy:

- Planned revision of the Sustainable Use of pesticides Directive (SUD) to significantly reduce use and risk and dependency on pesticides and enhance Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
- Revision of relevant implementing Regulations under the Plant Protection Products (PPPs) framework to facilitate placing on the market of PPPs containing biological active substances
- Revision of the pesticides statistics Regulation to overcome data gaps and reinforce evidence-based policy making
- Promotion of sustainable food systems in international fora and events (e.g. UN Summit on Food Systems in 2021)

But the objectives of the Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy are not new.....

2006 Commission Thematic Strategy on the sustainable use of pesticides had the objectives of:

- minimising the hazards and risks to health and environment from the use of pesticides;
- improving controls on the use and distribution of pesticides;
- reducing the levels of harmful active substances, including through substituting safer alternatives for the most dangerous ones;
- establishing a transparent system for reporting and monitoring progress;
- encouraging conversion to low-input or pesticide-free cultivation.

Overall ambition to achieve a more sustainable food system:

2020 EU Group of Chief Scientific Advisers' scientific opinion: "Towards a sustainable food system"

- *"The EU food system has achieved high levels of food security, food safety and a wide consumer choice, but is currently not sustainable with respect to the environmental, economic and social aspects. Continuing with 'business as usual' will significantly endanger natural resources, our health, the climate, and the economy."*
- *"The European Commission's 'Green Deal' – with the forthcoming 'Farm to Fork' Strategy as one of its main pillars – are therefore welcome steps, with their objectives to develop a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system."*

Evaluation of SUD and impact assessment of its revision

- Criteria to be assessed in a Better Regulation evaluation:
- Relevance: needs/concerns/problems have changed or are still relevant
- Coherence (coordination/complementarity): in SUD and with other policies
- Effectiveness in achieving objectives of SUD
- Efficiency: costs/benefits in implementing and applying SUD
- EU added value of EU-level SUD versus actions by Member States alone

Evaluation conclusion from June 2021 stakeholder event

- Relevance: SUD objectives were, and still are, highly relevant. However SUD is likely only moderately relevant in addressing future issues and needs
- Coherence (coordination/complementarity): SUD is coherent, but improvements possible re Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and biocides
- Effectiveness: SUD has only been moderately effective
- Efficiency: main costs have been proportionate to likely benefits generated
- EU added value: broad consensus that the SUD has been key in ensuring that the use of pesticides and methods for risk reduction are considered by stakeholders and creating a common and more harmonised EU framework

The SUD evaluation identified 4 main problems:

- The SUD does not reflect the new ambitions of the European Green Deal, Farm to Fork Strategy, Chemicals Strategy and Zero Pollution Action Plan
- Monitoring and data availability are limited on PPP use, also on application of IPM, testing of pesticide application equipment etc.
- Uneven and incomplete implementation of the SUD in Member States
- New technologies are not sufficiently taken up by pesticide users

Findings of SUD revision online public consultation:

- Pesticides are used because they are perceived as most effective and because alternative methods may have disadvantages such as higher (labour) costs and greenhouse gas emissions
- Achieving Farm to Fork Strategy objectives: NGOs and EU citizens not using pesticides professionally see high benefits for environmental quality, food safety and public health but professional pesticide users and agricultural value chain industries see risks for food production in the EU and farmers' incomes
- Key themes: importance of IPM, the need for low-risk alternatives to chemical pesticides, concerns around environmental and human health impacts of pesticide use, need for indicators based on the use of pesticides

Findings of evaluation confirmed from other sources:

- European Parliamentary Research Service study on SUD implementation
- European Court of Auditors (ECA) special report on use of PPPs
- Commission reports of fact-finding missions, audits, and SUD implementation reports to European Parliament and the Council

Some challenges:

- How to clearly identify, assess, quantify and communicate risks to health and the environment from pesticide use, and benefits from reduced use and risk
- “Modelling Transitions to Sustainable Food Systems: Are We Missing the Point?” Eurochoices Agricultural Economics Society and European Association of Agricultural Economists paper 2022
- *“the baseline in the analysis should incorporate the impact of declining biodiversity and sustainability of the food systems on productivity in the sector....an analysis should also capture the full scope of environmental benefits that reaching the targets would deliver....the benefits of these reductions extend to the whole society.... need to...better understand the full scope of direct and ancillary benefits the strategies will bring”*

Expected impact of the SPRINT project, complementary to objectives of Commission policies and initiatives

- Establish the impacts of PPPs on the environment and human health
- Contribute to harmonise data collection approaches across Europe and indicators to assess and monitor trends over time and support risk management measures
- Develop appropriate tools and integrated approaches to improve monitoring of PPPs use and pressures on human and animal health and the environment
- Foster transdisciplinary cooperation on global approaches

Strengthen an **integrated health approach** and foster the **sustainable use of pesticides**



Thank you.



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