

SustainIT Internal Newsletter

#30 March 2022

This is the fourth internal newsletter of the SustainIT project. The aim of this internal newsletter is to keep all team members and project partners in the same loop of information about past and upcoming activities, events and other information that are directly and indirectly related to the project. All your ideas, inputs, and recommendations for the newsletter are warmly welcome. Please send your suggestions and other relevant information to Ranjana Hegde (EMU) at ranjana.hegde@emu.ee.

Project activities

WP1 – Living Labs

In the past three months, few Sustain IT Project biweekly meetings were held. As an outcome of the meetings, the partners shared updates on work progress and results regarding the project living lab (PLL) and country living lab (CLL) concepts. The project leaders discussed vacation plans and CLL topics. The PLL and CLL processes will provide answers to research questions. Milestones and Deliverables were presented. Antonia Rüede-Passul from TUM shared the WP1 work plan for 2022 (T1.2 Living Lab coordination). TUM is working on an evaluation framework to evaluate the living labs in a combined qualitative and quantitative approach.

The 2nd German CLL took place on 28 January 2022. Stakeholders representing Germany's biggest cooperative dairy, Germany's largest livestock data center providing information solutions for animal husbandry as well as breeding, and a Bavarian livestock transport company participated. The main topic discussed was identifying (additional) major barriers, which lead to a lack of linkage between the various players of the VC and the associated data, e.g. the silo thinking of different actors, for historical or competitive reasons, is still preventing innovations. Especially the broad variety of stakeholders and organizations, which comes from the historic federal structures in Germany is one of the main challenges because many actors seem to not even want to work towards unification

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or fusion of data exchange, data collection, or data processing. Double entry and counting of data, which costs time and other resources, is also still common, e.g., animal health data via farm management applications and public databases.

Different approaches of solutions to improve linkages between actors of the value chain (VC) were developed. This includes creating new data interfaces and simple and practical new digital solutions (e.g., apps for animal welfare control). Digital solutions are applied only, if they bring a fast, new and good benefits such as timely slaughter data or receiving data in aggregated (and analysed) form. Digitization as a facilitator will gradually become more and more established due to generational changes by itself. Data must be plausible, therefore standards for data collection and processing have to be created. The effort of collecting, entering and processing the data is a service and should be monetarily rewarded. Furthermore, synergy effects are to be created, highlighted and used more intensively to improve the status quo, new digital requirements for producers or transporters must be supported by (ideally) all market participants in order to become established. This could be realized through initiatives from producer organizations, which thus generate an advantage for the marketing processes. Generated animal health data and statistical analyses can improve the image of agriculture in the public perception by presenting a widespread good practice. Quality programs (transparent animal health data) can generate additional added value for the producer in times where customers increasingly ask critical questions. Through the targeted use of data, the trust of customers can be regained through simple solutions (traffic lights system). At the same time, areas with potential for improvement have to be clearly identified. In the end, all stakeholders in the VC should benefit from the provision of additional data.

In the second workshop the participants also introduced different examples of best practices to promote animal health and welfare through the strengthened use of ICT, e.g.:

- The Netherlands works with many centralized digital solutions: aggregated database structures combine data on environment, animal health, economy, etc., and a central rendering service provider supports data collection. However, structures and the mentality within the VC segments such as agriculture, processing, etc. differ from those found in Germany.
- Replacing the analogue birth reports with the digital HIT-reports is a success story.
- The electronic tracking of international animal transports (cf. IDEM Telematics, TRACES) can serve as a blueprint for a digital control of live animal transports also within Germany under strictly regulated framework conditions.

The University of Oulu completed at the beginning of the year the internal report of the first CLL meeting. Similarly, Halmstad University and Estonian teams prepared the reports of the first CLL meetings held in 2021.

The next PLL reflection and feedback meeting is planned for June 2022.

WP2 – Animal health and welfare

The University of Oulu completed at the beginning of the year the internal report of the first CLL meeting and has since that continued gradually compiling the final deliverable for Task 2.1. Availability of animal health data should be completed at the beginning of April. The University of Oulu has also collected information about animal health data collection technologies (tools for monitoring activity and behaviour, automatic milking systems). The data will be used both for a survey made to the regional vocational agricultural institute and to SustainIT project.

Tuija Kallio from the University of Oulu left the SustainIT team in March and Elisa Tikkainen took over her role.

WP3 - Business development

A preliminary draft file on the consumer survey was updated. Colleagues from Germany and Estonia provided suggestions and comments for the questionnaire developed.

Tasks related to T3.1 Consumer and societal demands (Nov2021-Aug 2022), the barriers & opportunities that exist when it comes to connecting producers with consumers and how to value creation that can fit the consumer profile and business model of the companies in VC was presented in the project meeting.

Discussion about the polling companies and the number of samples was held on 25 February 2022.

In January 2022, in Germany, the consumer survey was finalized. After a successful test, the survey was conducted with 2000 participants. The survey had 39 questions and covered the following areas:

- Background information about the interviewees
- Animal welfare and grocery shopping

- Consumer behavior and online shopping
- Use of ICT

The University of Oulu has also commenced work for Task 3.1. Consumer and societal demand by starting to translate consumer questionnaire to Finnish and finding out which opinion poll companies will be invited to tender execution of the questionnaire.

Estonian team translated the German version of the questionnaire to Estonian language, and took price quotations from the polling companies. It is expected that the data is collected b the end of May.

On 22 April 2022, Halmstad University team will conduct a WP3 planning meeting. The initial workplan has been sent to all partners.

It is expected that the activities related to task 3.2 Integration of ICT in enterprise management start in April 2022 and project partners are asked to conduct interviews with farmers and managers in companies along the VC to identify opportunities and barriers to the adoption of ICT.

WP4 - Public sector interactions

EMÜ team prepared a work plan document for the WP4. All partners provided written feedback, and also meetings were held on 8 February, 15 February, and 22 March 2022 to discuss the unclear issues of the work plan. Based on the received feedback, the work plan was revised and updated. The document is available in the shared folder under WP4 > Coordination of WP4 work plan.

It is expected that in relation to Task 4.1 Pooling the data until May/June all partners:

- Screen the potentially relevant data initiatives in their country.
- Select the initiatives for the review and interview engaging CLLs and PLL.
- Review and interview the data initiatives.

In relation to Task 4.2 Use of data by public sector until May/June all partners:

- Interview public sector representatives to find out the vision of public sector stakeholders about their (leading) role in the digitalisation of the agri-food sector.
This is done in case data collection is merged with activities of Task 4.1.

In relation to Task 4.3 ICT innovation ecosystem until May/June all partners:

- Screen potentially relevant digital innovation hubs (DIH).
- Select the DIH and the corresponding challenge in CLLs.
- Participate in initial interviews with the selected DIHs.

WP5 – Dissemination, exploitation, and communication

The external newsletter was completed in January 2022. Further, it was requested for the partners to share information on the ongoing and upcoming events, research articles published papers, and reports.

Anne Põder from the Estonian Dairy Cluster requests all partners to review D5.2 Data Management Plan that is available in the SustainIT_Project folder>WP5 Dissemination, exploitation, and communication by 7 April 2022. The main questions are relating to if research papers will be published with Gold or Green access (and if any anonymized data file accompanying it). And, will this be uploaded to a central public repository (at present Zenodo is suggested) or institutional repositories (e.g. EULS has dspace.emu.ee) depending on your usual practices.

Horizon 2020 requires open access to publications and generally open data with reference to a database or an explanation of why data is not open is required (journals also have started to ask for the explanation). In the present project, it will depend on the financers' requirements and these may be different. Also, the repositories used may be different depending on the institution. So it is requested to check with the financing agency if they have requirements that research papers from the project have to be open access, and any requirements for specific data repositories or what are usual institutional practices on where research papers and databases are deposited in projects that require open access. On the basis of this information, the plans can be updated.

Further, the German and Finnish teams are requested to send Anne information on who could be the contact person for communication activities. A WP5 communication team meeting is planned in two weeks to review what has been done and what needs to be done in relation to communication activities. This needs to be done by April 1st.

WP6 – Coordination, and management

All WP leaders are expected to revise the project monitoring worksheet that is available in the SustainIT_Project folder by 7 April 2022. All work packages, milestones, and

deliverables until the end of the project (end of 2023) are detailed here. In 2022 we have all WP's running in parallel, therefore WP leaders need to take a bigger role in coordinating the work of their WPs.

EMÜ created a new shared SustainIT_Project folder to ensure that all project members can access the files. All the content of the old shared folder was moved to the new folder on 16 March 2022.

TUM is working on an annual report for the funding bureau summarizing the research and progress of 2021.

EMÜ submitted to the Estonian Ministry of Rural Affairs the annual report of 2021 in the beginning of January. The report was accepted.

Upcoming Activities

In April-May 2022

The University of Oulu will organize a CLL meeting where participants get deliverable 2.1 for commenting before finalizing, data initiatives will be discussed and data collection technologies discussed very shortly. A collection of examples about current data exchange in supply chains (Task 2.3) will be also started.

The Halmstad University team will conduct a WP4 meeting on 22 April 2022 to discuss the work plan for the WP3.

The EMÜ team expects that in the next CLL meeting (in April-May), all partners engage CLL members to select the data initiative to be reviewed and interviewed for Task 4.1, and select a Digital Innovation Hub and innovation challenge to be addressed in Task 4.3.

Other relevant information

The ICT-AGRI-FOOD 2022 joint call was pre-announced. The call is titled: **More transparent agri-food systems for consumers and other stakeholders along the food value chain based on ICT technologies**. The call addresses three topics:

- TOPIC 1: Agri-food systems enabled by interconnected digital technologies that are more transparent to consumers, farmers and other stakeholders along the agri-food value chain.

- TOPIC 2: Identify, address and remove barriers for adoption of ICT technologies in the agrifood systems.
- TOPIC 3: Development and impact estimation (if applicable: evaluation) of data-driven reward and incentive systems to support sustainable and resilient farm management practices.

Important dates:

- Launch of the call: Mid of April 2022
- Deadline for submission of full proposals: By second week of August 2022
- Letters to inform applicants on selection result: End of November 2022
- Start of projects: Spring 2023

More information can be found here: https://ictagrifood.eu/sites/default/files/Pre-announcement%20ICT-AGRI-FOOD%202022%20Joint%20Call_2.pdf