



AFINET

AGROFORESTRY INNOVATION NETWORKS



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REPORT ON THE 4TH RAIN WORKSHOP IN PORTUGAL

Summary

The main objectives of the 4th RAIN meeting were:

- presenting AFINET activities carried out over the last months (dissemination materials developed and farm visits carried out)
- presenting operational groups relevant to the agroforestry sector in Portugal and some first results if already available.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AFINET - Agroforestry Innovation Networks

BIOPROTEC – Associação Nacional dos Engenheiros de Agricultura Biológica

CEF – Centro de Estudos Florestais

IB – Innovation broker

INIAV - Instituto Nacional de Investigação Agrária e Veterinária I.P.

ISA – Instituto Superior de Agronomia

OG – Operational groups

PT – Portugal/Portuguese

RAIN - Regional Agroforestry Innovation Networks

RRN - Rede Rural Nacional (National Rural Network)

S.A. Freixo do Meio – Sociedade Agrícola do Freixo do Meio, Lda.

UNAC - União da Floresta Mediterrânica

1. PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES

The preparatory activities included the anticipated definition of the objectives and program of the meeting, followed by the alert/information of all Portuguese RAIN members using the emailing list managed by ISA. The objectives of the meeting also implied contacting and inviting the RRN responsible person and the operational groups coordinators (S.A. Freixo do Meio, INIAV, BIOPROTEC and UNAC). Unfortunately, one of the coordinators from one of the OG (BIOPROTEC) could not finally attend the meeting due to personal reasons.

The emails were sent using the PT RAIN mailchimp account, in order to keep track on the percentage of RAIN members reading the email (on average 50%). To maximise impact a sequence of emails and social media alerts was planned in advanced. It included:

- 1) First email alert ('Reserve now in your agenda') about a month in advance, as soon as the date and place were settled, including a first program version.
- 2) [Social media event](#) creation and dissemination in the AFINET PT RAIN Facebook group (currently with 755 members). A total of 128 people have marked 'interested' in the event.
- 3) Second email alert including the final program on the 12th of February.
- 4) Final email reminder on the 20th of February.

Regarding social media, two press releases were sent by email to national and regional journals. The first focusing on the Agroforestry topic, and the second on the invitation to the 4th AFINET PT RAIN meeting.

The meeting was also publicly announced on CEF, ISA, RRN, UNAC and INIAV websites and social media.

2. AGENDA OF THE 4th RAIN MEETING

Meeting description	
Brief description	4th Regional Agroforestry Innovation Network (RAIN) meeting in Portugal
Date	27/02/2019
Time	9:30h – 13:00
Location	Instituto Superior de Agronomia Main building “Sala de Atos” Lisboa

Agenda	
9h30	Attendees registration
10h00	Summary of the activities of the AFINET project for the last 6 months. Presentation of the first dissemination materials. Joana Amaral Paulo (CEF/ISA)
10h25	Operational groups: concept, goals, current numbers and perspectives. Maria Custódia Correia (Rede Rural Nacional)
10h50	Ecomontado XXI - Agroecology applied to the design of new Montados Alfredo Sendim (Sociedade Agrícola do Freixo do Meio)
11h15	Coffee Break
11h30	Oak®eGeneration - Strategies and models of forest management for the creation of natural regeneration areas of cork and olm oak on national oak stands. Isabel Melo (ACHAR)
11h55	GMOVEL – Using chickens for weed control in alley cropping systems: vineyard, Orchards and horticultural crops and egg and meat production Luís Mendes (BIOPROTEC)
12h20	UNDERCORK – Integrated management of <i>Coroebus undatus</i> Conceição Santos Silva (UNAC)

12h45

End of meeting



3. LIST OF ATTENDEES

Table 1. List of attendees of the 4th RAIN meeting in Portugal

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4. STAKEHOLDERS PARTICIPATION

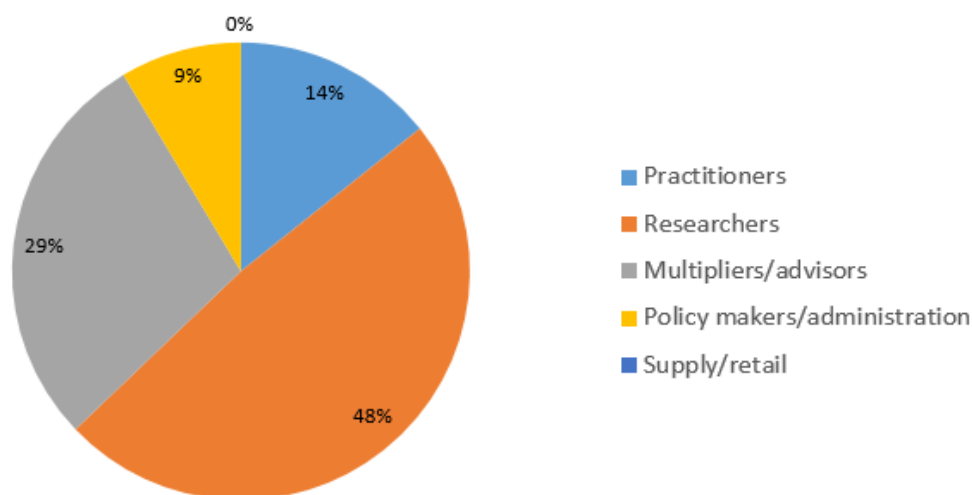


Figure 1. Proportion of each stakeholder category in the 4th RAIN meeting in Portugal

The majority of stakeholders attending the 4th Portuguese RAIN meeting (Figure 1) were researchers (48%). The reason for this number is the place where the meeting took place, that attracted researchers and students from a diversity of areas (forestry, agronomy, environmental engineering and biology). The presence of this audience allowed the promotion of a interesting discussion concerning future operational groups topics.

The audience included 14% of practitioners, a value below the 33% aimed in the AFINET RAIN guidelines. This number is related to the distance of the farms to Lisbon, that was already taken into consideration by ISA in previous meetings. Also, the meeting format with oral presentations is recognized as not being the most attractive for farmers. This was discussed by ISA team when defining the program of the meeting. The alternative of having the meeting held in a farm where one operational group is developing work will be considered for the final RAIN meeting in September 2019. It was finally not considered viable for this 4th meeting for the following reasons:

- i) travel expenses of the people presenting the operational groups;
- ii) the need to present and discuss more than one operational group;
- iii) the presented operational groups are still on a starting phase of implementation of treatments and trials, and this would limit the field visit.

The presence of 29% of multipliers is considered a successful number. One must remember that many of these multipliers are farmers associations and technical advisors. Their impact in the

suggestion/advising/motivating to farmers for new systems, management alternatives and techniques is much relevant, specially under CAP support measures related to agroforestry. Having a total of 43% of practitioners and multipliers present in the meeting is considered a good final result under the objectives of the meeting.

The only new stakeholders invited was the farmer from S.A. do Freixo do Meio. Being a farmer, and also leader of one operational group relevant for the PT AFINET RAIN, implied that he was invited. All other presenters (RRN, UNAC and ACHAR) are already members of the RAIN from the start of the project.

5. RESULTS OF THE 4th RAIN MEETING

5.1. The concept of operational groups

The information about the OG's was presented to the RAIN members in an [oral presentation made by the responsible for the Portuguese RRN](#), followed by a moment for debate among all the participants. This allowed members to have the opportunity to ask questions and make suggestions. The presentation included a description of the operational groups concept, current numbers (total and by sector), communication and dissemination channels of the OG, and the relation of OG with CAP objectives.

5.2. Operational groups presented during the RAIN meeting

The following operational groups were present (link to the RRN webpage of each OG – in Portuguese – is given below):

- [Ecomontado XXI - Agroecology applied to the design of new Montados](#)
- [Oak@eGeneration - Strategies and models of forest management for the creation of natural regeneration areas of cork and olm oak on national oak stands](#)
- [UNDERCORK – GIntegrated management of *Coroebus undatus*](#)

Montado is the most relevant agroforestry system in Portugal, predominant in the South region but increasingly extended to the center and northern regions of the country due to increasing edafoclimatic constraints observed in the South, in particular severe drought frequency and precipitation reduction. These constraints are also affecting other systems, and farmer's species/cultures selections. Water management is one of the main topics for the PT AFINET RAIN. This topic is considered in the ECOMONTADO XXI operational group and for this reason an invitation was made to present it in the meeting. The Key line approach presented is relevant not only for the montado system, but also to many others systems discussed by RAIN members.

Cork is one of the most valuable products for farmers in montado agrosilvopastoral systems. The current reduction of the number of trees per hectare and tree crown cover has implications in cork production, soil protection, animal welfare etc. Strategies for the of promotion and increase success of natural regeneration of oak stands (cork and holm oak) are crucial for farmers. This topic is addressed in Oak@eGeneration and for this reason this operational group was invited and presented.

Industrial cork quality, related to cork price and therefore the farm revenue, is reduced due to the presence of *Coroebus undatus*. The reasons for the increase frequency of this insect in some stands are not well understood. Also, management tools and strategies for reducing its presence are unavailable, since the biological cycle of the insect is poorly understood. UNDERCORK is dedicated to this topic, and was for this reason was considered relevant for the program.

GMOVEL was the operational group considered ‘out of the box’. It aims at developing strategies and quantifying the option for including grazing activities with chickens in vineyards managed under biologic agriculture. This option is already seen in some farms in Portugal, one of them already visited by the PT AIFNET IB. Unfortunately, a last minute cancelation did not allow this OG to be presented.

After the presentations, during the question/discussion period, some topics were raised. In particular:

- One farmer suggested that the farms included as partners in current OG are mainly the ones associated to farmer’s associations and federations, mainly large dimension farms. This would imply that the topics and innovations defined for OG are not suitable for all farms size (medium and small farms), and that knowledge concerning the results is not equally accessible to all.
- The importance of agroecology concepts was focused.
- The inexistence of OG related to silvoarable agroforestry systems, in particular for the production of pulp and biomass, was referred.
- The price for the installation of 1 ha of montado according to the ECOMONTADOXXI management plan was questioned. The answer provided by S.A Freixo do Meio was that it is difficult to give a value that includes all of the social and ecological benefits and outputs of the system. Instead, if one is only focusing ONLY in the economic values, the installation and maintenance of the system is only possible if public financial support measures are available and added to the private and long term investment.
- One farmer asked about the bird species that was predators from the *Coroebus undatus*. The reply was that this is still not known, but is currently under research by the team of the UNDERCORK operational group.
- The importance of communicating results from operational groups inside / using the PT AFINET RAIN was noticed.

5.3. Workshop/Panel discussion

There was no workshop in this meeting. Instead, the presentations had time slots to allow a clear presentation of objectives and work developed, and were followed by time for questions and debate among the participants.

It should also be noticed that information, pictures and even short live films of the event were frequently posted in the RAIN social media (facebook) during the morning and in the event webpages afterwards.

5.4. Presentation of AFINET dissemination materials

A significant effort was made in the weeks previous to the meeting in order to allow to start the dissemination of AFINET materials in the meeting. This included the translation to Portuguese and

printing, of the already available AFINET factsheets (Figure 2). In addition, AgForward project leaflets were also distributed (in English).

The materials were also presented in more detail during the oral presentation of the PT IB, focusing the consortium effort at the European scale to disseminate a large variety of agroforestry systems, benefits and innovations. The availability of the materials in the AFINET website and in the Knowledge Cloud was also noticed.

The interest of the participants in these materials was clear.



Figure 2. AFINET factsheets being offered to attendees

5.5. Field visit

There was no field visit organized in this meeting.

6. CONCLUSIONS OF THE 4TH RAIN

It is considered that the objectives of the 4th RAIN meeting were accomplished. The main setback was the percentage of farmers attending the meeting, that was under the expected value of 33%, even if a large amount of effort was made in the communication of the event and the technical features of the presentations.

The place and format of the meeting are key issues for the attendance of farmers/practitioners.

Operational groups are an important tool for innovation and knowledge dissemination, but the percentage of them directly related to innovation in agroforestry systems is still small when compared to the forestry and agriculture sectors (horticulture, animal production etc.).

Future communication of operational groups results by the members of the PT AFINET RAIN is crucial and has been referred. Events format and place is crucial for the final number of participants, in particular practitioners (farmers).

The AFINET factsheets presented have been very well received by the RAIN members present.



Figure 3 Attendees of the 4th Portuguese RAIN meeting

ANNEX I: Signed list of attendees

This information is confidential.

