

1. Annual Work Programme (AWP) 2012: priorities supporting RDP implementation

- The Network maintains a multi-annual work programme. The current AWP has been approved on the 22nd September 2011.
- The current AWP focuses on 3 themes and on the production of studies and projects led by different national structures.
- The working themes are:
 - management of rural areas,
 - services in rural areas, and
 - rural entrepreneurship.
- Each theme has a working group. Each group brings together different structures, and implements studies, through call for proposals, as to promote collective structures in rural areas, to help new forms of settlement for young farmers or agriculture and urban management. The work of the French NRN also covers other themes such as: food and agriculture, biomass and energy, and new inhabitants welcoming and settlement policies.
- The current AWP is available on:
 - <http://www.reseaurural.fr/gtn/presentation>



2. Thematic Initiatives launched by the Network

• Status info and plans about continued thematic initiatives:

- The main theme selected for 2009 and 2010 was the attractiveness of territories, divided into three sub-themes: land management; attraction or preservation of populations in rural areas; and valuation of local economic resources, including short-distance networks for farm and non-farm products, forest and the use of biomass. Three thematic groups have been formed to identify areas of work with a multi-annual Action Plan.
- For the "attraction or preservation of populations in rural areas" thematic group, a final seminar was organized on the 23rd January 2012. A review was published after that which is available on: http://www.reseaurural.fr/files/rf_04.pdf.
- In 2011, 3 others thematic groups (GTN) were created on "Services to population in rural areas", "entrepreneurship in rural areas" and "spatial management of rural areas".
- In 2012, an inter-regional seminar has been organized by the Provence-Alpes Côte d'Azur, Champagne-Ardenne, Midi-Pyrénées and Nord-Pas de Calais rural networks, on the subject of short food supply chains, after a transfer project between former project leaders from working groups and these regional rural networks.
- A final national seminar will be organized at the end of 2013. This event will be an opportunity to review the whole activity of the NRN and the regional rural networks, to report thematic groups analysis and conclusions.

• Issues addressed by the events:

- On the 20th of November, 5 Regional rural networks (Lorraine, Basse-Normandie, Haute-Normandie, Bourgogne, Pays de la Loire), assisted by the NRN support unit, organized a seminar on youth issues.
- On the 8th and 9th of November the French NRN organized a seminar about LAG cooperation.

• Issues addressed by working groups:

- Each national working group (GTN) organizes meetings every 3. The 'spatial planning group' works on SCoT (Scheme of territorial coherence) and spatial use conflicts. The 'entrepreneurship in rural areas' working group works on two issues: how to support entrepreneurs in rural areas to promote local development, and what are the financial helps available for entrepreneurs. Finally the 'services to the population' working group works on monetization of inhabitants services and on the observation of existing

services with different economic models (public sector, non-profit private sector) trying to address the question: 'which kind of alternative models, of hybridizations, of innovations can be found to promote services accessibility, including the weakest populations, and to improve territorial impacts?'

- During the meetings experts or practitioner are invited to make presentations.
- Issues addressed by committees/steering groups:
- The 3 GTNs are followed by the Standing Committee as well as others national issues such as the '2020 EU Strategy and the future' or the countryside typology lead by the Datar.

• **Issues subject of surveys/consultation/analysis:**

- Each of the 3 GTNs has on going surveys:

1. Spatial management of rural areas

- "Rural areas : please smile, you are SCoTés!", proposed by the Association de Promotion et de Fédération des Pays (APFP) and the Fédération Nationale des SCoT (FNSSCoT)
- "How to mobilize elected people to implement a spatial management procedure and with which kind of tools that are adapted to rural areas needs?", proposed by the Parcs naturels régionaux de la Brenne et du Morvan
- "Impact of rural areas specificities on spatial management process : in application to the double issue of energie efficiency and accessibility ", proposed by ETD
- "Spatial planning practices in rural areas and sustainable development", proposed by INRA UMR SADAPT
- "For a rural SCoT with territorial quality", proposed by Terres en Villes

2. Services to population in rural areas

- «Time policies to follow «services to population» evolution in rural areas », proposed by AIDER.
- « Local communities' evolution and impacts on services local offer and on social needs », proposed by Familles Rurales.
- «Deadlocks and innovations of rural areas services in front of new contexts : identifying trends and deadlocks, identifying breaks and innovations needed.» proposed by ADRETS

3. Entrepreneurship in rural areas

- "Agricultural activities creation by entrepreneurs out of family context: specific needs, levers and complementarities of support aids" - project co-steering by the Jeunes Agriculteurs (JA) and the Mouvement Rural de Jeunesse Chrétienne (MRJC)
- "Developing entrepreneurship in rural areas: the added-value of project territories" – proposed by the Association de Promotion et de Fédération des Pays (APFP)
- "Welcoming policies and support to enterprises creation/buyouts in rural areas" – proposed by the Assemblée Permanente des Chambres d'Agriculture (APCA) and partners
- "The agricultural test-spaces: adapting a new entrepreneurship form, shared with agri-rural activities" – proposed by the Réseau du Test Agricole
- "To promote the link between production and consumption: new ways to make more dynamic local entrepreneurship?" – proposed by ETD (national resource center on local development)
- "Collective entrepreneurship: what solutions to create, develop and transmit enterprises in rural areas?" – proposed by the Fédération Nationale des CUMA (FNCUMA) and AFIP

• **Thematic issues addressed in other ways:**

- The French NRN publishes one newsletter a month to talk about activities in rural areas. The network also publishes a rural review.
- Information about thematic initiatives available on:
 - On the network's website : www.reseaurural.fr
 - For working groups activities : <http://www.reseaurural.fr/gtn/presentation>
 - For rural review : <http://www.reseaurural.fr/centre-de-ressources/archives> (the review is translated in english)
 - For thematic file : <http://www.reseaurural.fr/centre-de-ressources/dossiers-publications>

2.1 LEADER-related activities

- The NSU and the MA have staff dedicated to LAGs' support: the MA has a team to support LAG about all questions they can have; the NSU is dedicated mainly for cooperation LAG support.
- The MA organizes training and events for the LAGs. The last LEADER meeting took place on July 2012.
- Information about these events is available on: <http://www.reseaurural.fr/territoires-leader/leader/actualites-des-gal>.
- The MA provides LAGs support also by publishing implementation guidelines.
- These documents are available on: http://www.reseaurural.fr/files/guide_de_gestion_leader_2007-2013.pdf
- The Ministry of agriculture, through his services settled in each region (DRAAF), coordinates regional support groups for LAG.
- The NSU and the MA support inter-regional and transnational cooperation: the MA helps for legal questions, and the NSU for practical questions.
- The MA and the NSU organized cooperation fair (one in 2010 and one in 2012).
- Information about these events is available on: <http://www.reseaurural.fr/territoires-leader/cooperation/rencontres>.
- The NRN provides partner search facilities, guidelines and other support documents through its website. One webpage is dedicated to partner search for inter-territorial cooperation One webpage presents a "question fair" document with the MA's answers to the most important and usual questions asked by the LAG. The website also have a "resources page" with all documents known about cooperation.
- Information about these support documents is available on:
 - For partner search : <http://www.reseaurural.fr/territoires-leader/cooperation/avec-qui-cooperer>
 - For "question fair" : <http://www.reseaurural.fr/territoires-leader/cooperation/faq>
 - For resources : <http://www.reseaurural.fr/territoires-leader/cooperation/comment-cooperer>
- Other forms of support for cooperation implemented by the network are:
 - Occasional cooperation letter - http://www.reseaurural.fr/files/maquette_lettre_cooper_v26_oct_.pdf;
 - Meetings for cooperation technical assistance with regional correspondents.

3. Relevant Experiences/Good Practices

- **Identification and dissemination of EAFRD-funded projects representing relevant experience:**
 - The EARDF-funded projects representing relevant experience are identified by regional rural networks and send as "relevant experience". After that, the NSU through an indexing work upload the stories collected on the website in the project database page.
 - Relevant experiences are disseminated through the website, seminars, villages initiatives, reviews and the newsletter.
 - Relevant experiences/good practices are available on: <http://www.reseaurural.fr/centre-de-ressources/recherche>

4. Monitoring and evaluation of networking

- The French rural network made its own self-assessment, sending a questionnaire to all NRN members. The French NRN is also launching an external evaluation.
- Other self-assessment activities are done by the regional rural networks that are working on both external and internal evaluation.
- The NRN implements both quantitative assessment comparing output units with target and qualitative assessment reviewing feedback of network constituents.

5. Communication

- The network has both a NRN communication plan and a RDP communication plan.
- The communication tools mostly used by the NRN are: the newsletter, the website and in particular the website's agenda, stands during events.

6. Cooperation interests of the Rural Network

- Themes of interest: Short food supply chains.

7. Documents

- List of publications, info materials, videos, etc:
 - Publications: newsletter, rural review, thematic files, database (<http://www.reseaurural.fr/centre-de-ressources/recherche>)
 - Info materials: flyers, kakemono, "umbrella stand"
 - Videos : <http://www.reseaurural.fr/centre-de-ressources/videos>