1.   Summary of the Work Programme of the Italian NRN

After a negotiating process with National Stakeholders, Civil Society and Regional Managing Authorities, in **June 2011**, the definitive 2011 working Programme of the Italian NRN has been formally adopted.

The 2011 Working Programme, covers all 16 Actions of the Italian NRN for a total of 294 outputs expected in 2011.

The main subjects of intervention are:
1) _the improvement of national governance_ (in particular actions for supporting the RDPs Managing Authorities; the RDP evaluation and a national common framework for evaluation; the involvement of national stakeholders; Inter-regional programmes for networking);

2) _the strengthening of management skills for those involved in rural development_ (i.e. support for the Local Action Groups and learning activities on LEADER; exchange of information and experiences; enhancement of sub-thematic programming in RDPs; technical assistance to inter-territorial and trans-national cooperation; technical assistance to cooperation amongst institutions);

3) _Best practices and knowledge_ (identification, analysis, transfer in national RDPs and information about best practices and innovation; promotion of informative services for farmers and rural operators; dissemination of information on rural development and CAP for the public opinion).

These activities are carried out by 5 Thematic Task Forces, 10 Thematic Working Groups and 19 Regional Antennas of the NRN covering all regional RDPs.

2.   Focus and annual priorities supporting the RDP implementation in 2011

Concerning the support for RDPs some of the 2011 priorities are:
* Network support for achieving a good expenditure target by 2011 (exchange of information and experiences, monitoring and evaluation framework on efficacy and RDPs efficiency);
* Networking support for the implementation of the broadband measure in rural Italy;
* Networking support for the on-going implementation of the LEADER approach;
* Support for the implementation of a _"Guarantee Fund"_ for RDP;
* Implementation of an IT service for the _"business plan on line"_ for farms;
* Exchange of experience on social farming;
* Exchange of experience on short supply chains and sub-thematic programming.

3.   Thematic Activity

3.1. Thematic Initiatives launched by the Network

The Italian Rural Network is currently involved in the Thematic Initiatives launched in the context of the EN RD _(social aspects of rural entrepreneurship, short supply chains, rural finance, and forestry)._

* **Thematic groups established:**
This is the list of the NRN Thematic Task Forces set up according to the priorities identified in the Italian National Strategy Plan:
    » Leader;
    » Good practices and innovation;
    » Cooperation;
    » Monitoring and evaluation;
    » Support to RDPs.

The NRN Task Force "Support to RDPs" is actually structured in 10 "Thematic Working Groups", as follows:

- » "Thematic Working Group" Sub-Thematic and supply-chain programming;
- » "Thematic Working Group" Forestry;
- » "Thematic Working Group" Water resources;
- » "Thematic Working Group" Rural Development and its integration with other policies;
- » "Thematic Working Group" Competitiveness;
- » "Thematic Working Group" Environment and Cross-Compliance;
- » "Thematic Working Group" Young Farmers;
- » "Thematic Working Group" Equal Opportunities;
- » "Thematic Working Group" Bioenergy;
- » "Thematic Working Group" Landscape.

Furthermore small operative groups have been established for supporting the Italian Rural Network in the following topics: *"Legal aspects"; "Events organization"; "Translation and interpreting service"; "IT systems"; "NRN Secretariat".*

- • **Events:**

Main international Events:

- » Present and future role of Forests resources in the socio-economic development of rural areas. Rome 23-24 June 2011 http://www.reterurale.it/romaforest2011;
- » "CooperAction Day" 20th June 2011 – Inter-territorial and Transnational Cooperation. http://www.reterurale.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/5625
- » International Seminar on the efficient communication of Rural Development measures – Milan 17th 18th November.

3.2. Relevant Experiences/Good Practices

There are available "innovative instruments" dealing with Communication.

Link: http://www.reterurale.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/3618

In detail the relevant experiences in Communication are:

- » **"YOURuralNeT"** a Web Community for Young Farmers: http://46.137.91.159/youruralnet/
- » **Communication Plan about Cross Compliance** http://www.reterurale.it/pcc2010
- » **RURALand project** *(Rural4kids, Rural4teens e Rural4youth)* for communicating rural development in the schools http://www.reterurale.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/3690
- » **PIANETA PSR** – newsletter on Rural Development http://www.pianetapsr.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/1
- » **RRN MAGAZINE** http://www.pianetapsr.it/flex/files/8/3/b/D.9817b296eb2daaf0f4ab/RRN_n1web_def.pdf
- » **Communication Campaign on the National Strategic Plan (NSP).** http://www.reterurale.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/3372

Concerning the support to RDPs there also some interesting examples:

- » Support for the implementation of a Guarantee Fund for RDP;
- » Implementation of an IT service for the "business plan on line" for farms;
- » **LEADER IN PRATICA** "learning by doing". Visiting the best projects of Italian LAGs (open to all Italian LAGs) http://www.reterurale.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/4902
- » Summer School for LAGs http://www.reterurale.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/5845
- » **"LEADERBOOK"** Web Community for LAGs http://www.reterurale.it/leaderbook

3.3. Leader related activities and LAG support

- • **NSU members dedicated to LAG support:**
  - » 10

- **Training for LAGs:**
  - » **"LEADER IN PRATICA"** learning by doing. Visiting the best projects of Italian LAGs (open to all Italian LAGs)
    http://www.reterurale.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/4902
  - » **Summer School for LAGs**
  - » http://www.reterurale.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/5845
  - » **"LEADERBOOK"** Web Community for LAGs http://www.reterurale.it/leaderbook
  - » **Guides or other support documents:**
  - » Relevant documents for LAGs support can be found at the following link:
    http://www.reterurale.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/1387

3.4. TNC Activity

- **NSU members dedicated to TNC support:**
  - » 5 people

- **Cooperation fairs and similar events:**
  - » "CooperAction Day" 20th June 2011 – Inter-territorial and Transnational Cooperation.
    http://www.reterurale.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/5625

- **Partner search facilities, guides, other support documents:**
  - » **"Project Announces data-base"** It is active a webpage with all projects TNC announces coming from Italian LAGs are published:
    http://www.reterurale.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/2026
  - » Documents dealing TNC from the Italian Rural Network (NRN) can be found here:
    http://www.reterurale.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/1703

- **Approved TNC projects:**
  - » At June 2011: none

4. Monitoring and evaluation of Networking

Being the Italian NRN a specific Programme approved by the EU Commission, there is an independent evaluator for the Italian NRN Programme, ECOSFERA (www.ecosfera.it) that has been selected through a call for tenders.

In 2011 it is carried out a specific enquiry on **"customer satisfaction"** of NRN Stakeholders and on the ability of the Italian Rural Network to establish contacts for a proper added-value in achieving the Programme objective (i.e. this enquiry is called **"Networking analysis"**).

Furthermore the Italian Rural Network is working in improving its set of indicators.

The Programme already developed a complete set of indicators for Networking (i.e. Outputs; Results and Impacts indicators).

5. Communication

- **Communication Plan for the NRN:**
  - » at the moment the main communication about the NRN is provided through the website www.reterurale.it
- **Communication plan for RDP:**
  - » Communication Campaign on the National Strategic Plan (NSP).
    http://www.reterurale.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/3372

» A specific page of the Italian Rural Network website is dedicated to all calls coming from all Italian RDPs (every measure):

» http://www.reterurale.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/377

» Data base of all RDP calls:

» http://www.reterurale.it/flex/FixedPages/IT/RicercaBandiPSR.php/L/IT

» RDP calls at a glance:

» http://www.reterurale.it/flex/FixedPages/IT/QuadroSinottico.php/L/IT

» A specific page of the Italian Rural Network website is dedicated to all calls coming from Italian LAGs (LEADER):

» http://www.reterurale.it/leader/bandigal

6.   NRN Knowledge Base

• **Publications**
   » All publications by the Italian National Rural Network (NRN) can be found at the following link:
      http://www.reterurale.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/1377
      Clicking on *"documenti per settore"* it is possible to find the National Rural Network (NRN) in relation to different topics.

• **Latest version of the NSP and RDP:**
The latest versions of the NSP and RDP are available at:
   » NSP: http://www.reterurale.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/5054
   » Italian RDPs: http://www.reterurale.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/2439

• **Further Information: •**
Please find below a link to the MA/NSU/RDP's website, where more information is available about financing under the RDP:
   » Managing Authority: www.politicheagricole.it
   » National Rural Network: www.reterurale.it
   » Rural Development Programmes: http://www.reterurale.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/2439