

Introduction to OPERA

WHAT IS OPERA?

OPERA is a research center of the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (UCSC). It is an independent, non-profit scientific think tank, committed to the sharing and developing of the best practices in agri-environmental measures in the context of European legislation.

OPERA will provide its members and the wider public with rapid, high-quality information, recommendations and analysis of the latest developments in European agri-food policy-making, it aims to promote a balanced dialogue between the interested parties, covering the majority of stakeholders. As a fully independent body, OPERA's vision is to be transparent to all the relevant stakeholders and the public.

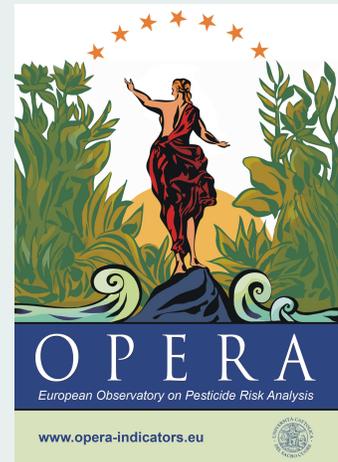
"OPERA wants to achieve a successful implementation of agricultural policies across EU in order to reach sustainable agriculture including environmental, social and economic aspects"

WHAT WILL OPERA DO?

The fundamental contribution of OPERA is to use the potential of existing scientific researches and knowledge to support the stakeholders in their political and technical decisions concerning agriculture. OPERA may, in itself, also produce relevant new research.

The information compiled by OPERA will primarily fall in two categories:

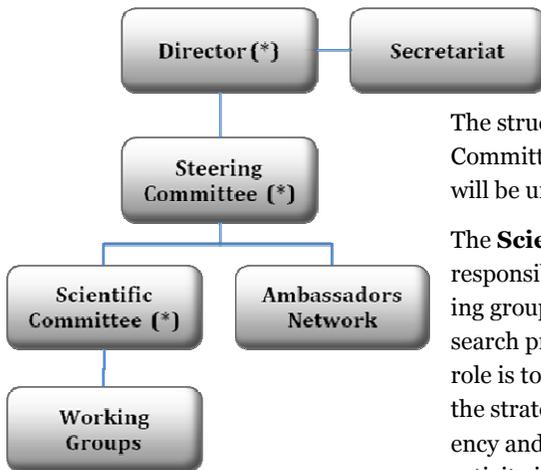
- **Policy Recommendations** - short documents providing an overview of the possible solutions for the development and implementation of EU and national policies related to agriculture
- **Detailed Studies and Suggestions for National Implementation** - these will be more complex scientific papers, providing specific solutions and supported by the creation of an ad-hoc international expert group.



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HOW IS OPERA GOVERNED



(*) Nominated by Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore

Governance structure of OPERA

The structure includes a Steering Committee, a Secretarial Team, a Scientific Committee, and an Ambassadors Network. A systematic audit of the activities will be undertaken by the relevant bodies of the UCSC.

The **Scientific Committee** (SciCo) represents the group of scientific experts responsible for providing guidance to the research activity of the technical working groups. The SciCo is responsible for the coordination of the scientific research projects and the supervision of all the scientific documentation. The SciCo role is to guarantee that the research projects are in line with the objectives and the strategy formulated by the Steering Committee, but also to ensure transparency and independence of the research activity. The SciCo organizes the scientific activity in Expert Working Groups. The SciCo is chaired by the **Director** (Dir).

Secretariat has the responsibility for the effective operational functioning of OPERA. It will organise meetings, provide operational guidance and methodological support. It will verify the objectives and deadlines for initiatives, and will measure performances.

Expert Working Groups (EWGs) will examine the latest state-of-the-art research and developments, as well as proposals for new and innovative ways improve the future effectiveness of agriculture policies across the EU. Members of the EWGs are internationally recognized technical experts, policy makers and professionals from industry and NGOs in the field of agriculture, public health, economics and politics. They will use their individual knowledge and experience to provide technical expertise and strategic guidance to develop this important component of the OPERA activity. Furthermore, at the request of the EWGs, additional experts may be invited to provide specialist testimonies and to discuss specific issues. The final report of the EWGs will be presented to the SciCo and to the SteCo.

The **National Ambassadors Network** (NatAm) is a group of scientists and policy makers of the EU member states with detailed understanding the specificities of national agriculture and legislation in countries across the EU. They will provide national stakeholders with relevant information on the OPERA position, along with papers and support for the implementation of the technical sug-

" The model of governance should guarantee the maximum effectiveness and efficiency, as well as to assure the transparency and independence of the group ."



DIRECTOR

Ettore Capri

Ettore who holds a PhD in Chemistry, Biochemistry and Ecology at Milan University (1992), became Professor in Agricultural Chemistry in 2002. He teaches Ecotoxicology, Risk Assessment and Contaminant, Residues & Additives in food in master and PhD School. He wrote about 130 international papers and he is active member in different national and international bodies.

Email: ettore.capri@unicatt.it

SECRETARIAT

Silke Bollmohr, Scientific Officer of OPERA

Silke, who holds a PhD in Environmental Science at University Koblenz-Landau, has extensive experience in the environmental fate of pesticides, field relevant toxicity testing and the use of empirical modelling in predicting environmental exposure scenarios. Research work also investigated options for minimising pesticide input into agricultural surface waters, including the use of vegetated wetlands and ditches as risk mitigation strategies as well as performing training and capacity building on chemical management in South Africa. Next to the administrative responsibilities within OPERA (e.g. newsletter, networking) she is involved in the working groups dealing with risk indicators, mitigation measures and sustainability.

Email: silke.bollmohr@opera-indicators.eu

Maura Calliera, Scientific Officer of OPERA

With a first degree in Agricultural Sciences from Milano University, Maura has experience of research into the fate and behaviour of pesticides in the environment. She has worked in the ecotoxicology team of the Department of Environmental Science and Landscape, Università Milano Bicocca and, since 2005, is contract researcher on human pesticide residues exposure and environmental risk assessment, for the Università Cattolica Sacro Cuore, Istituto di Chimica Agraria ed Ambientale (ICAA). She participated in the European project 'HARMONISED environmental Indicators for pesticide Risk European projects (HAIR) in the consumers task.

Next to the administrative responsibilities within OPERA (e.g. webpage) she is involved in the working groups dealing with risk indicators, mitigation measures and sustainability.

Email: Maura.calliera@opera-indicators.eu



THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

The following experts were nominated from different authorities within the EU balancing academia, industry, administration and associations :

Anne ALIX, France

Romano De Vivo, Switzerland

Pasquale Dirubbo, Belgium

Lovei Gabor, Denmark

Vittorio Rossi, Italy

Walter Steurbaut, Belgium

Marco Trevisan, Italy

Alain Dini, France

Anthony Van der Linden, Netherlands

Carlo Zaghi, Italy

NOMINATION PERIOD

Members of the steering committee were nominated for the academic quadriennium 2009/2010 - 2012/2013

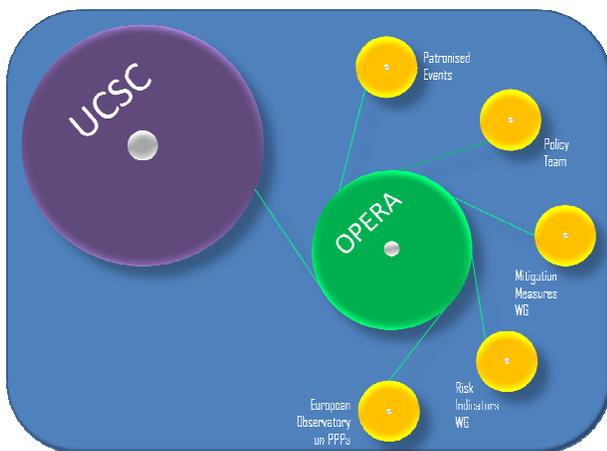
" The Scientific Committee represents the group of high-level stakeholders and reputed experts, who are responsible for providing guidance on the overall strategic direction . "



AMBASSADOR NETWORK

National experts from 16 European countries were identified as potential members of the Ambassador Network. OPERA still looks for national experts from Austria, Norway, Spain, Italy, UK, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Czechia, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Malta, Cyprus.

EXPERT WORKING GROUPS



The various expert working groups all interact with each other.

Policy Team

This group works on Policy Recommendations and will deliver and disseminate policy papers and studies on certain important topics in the discussion at national and EU level e.g. on the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

Mitigation Measures

A group of experts suggests possible uses of mitigation measures (e.g. field margins) to reduce the risk of pesticide use and to advocate for a balanced implementation of the Directive on the Sustainable Use of Pesticides

Risk Indicator

The Directive requires Member States to develop national action plans to reach the objectives. Risk indicators are needed to measure the success of mitigation measures and thus the success of the implementation of the Directive. An Expert working group was established 2009 consisting of members of NGO, industry, academia, farmers association and government. OPERA may provide the national advisory committees with ideas and proposals for the introduction of national indicators of environmental, social and economic risk and benefit.

European Observatory on PPPs

The responsibilities within this group are:

- Networking with the authority and informal meetings with stakeholders
- Development of databases (stakeholders, literature,...)
- Analysis of the pesticide legislation

„SOSStain‘ Project

This expert group will develop new models for sustainable production at farm level, will do protocol development, and will give scientific advice for farmer associations that would like to implement sustainable programmes.

OPERAS OFFICES

HEADOFFICE

OPERA is headquartered in Piacenza, Italy and hosted by the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (UCSC), which provides the necessary resources and support. Other financial resources are provided throughout the research project commissioned by European Commission, farmer associations and companies

Contact details:

Via E. Parmense n.84 - 29100 Piacenza (Italy)

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OPERA activities are shared between two offices, the headoffice and the new Brussels office.



Through its office in Brussels OPERA provides a central platform of networking and information exchange between various stakeholders at European level

BRUSSEL'S OFFICE

Since April 2010 OPERA has a second office in the building of the representation of Regione Lombardia in Brussels. The policy team is based in this office and various meetings were and will be held in this building. Due to the central location it will be possible to communicate more effectively with relevant organisations and representatives in Brussels.

Contact details:

Place du Champs de Mars, n.2, - Brussels 1050

Ph. +32 (0)2-518.76.83

Alexandru Marchis is based in the Brussels office and he is coordinating the policy group mostly related to the debate on the CAP reform.

His academic background is in agricultural economics. He holds two post university degrees, one in agro-business by the University in Cluj Napoca, Romania and the second in diplomatic international relations granted by the Romanian Diplomatic Academy. Coming with an experience of nine years in the administration of the agricultural sector, he will promote and develop the OPERA think-tank on the Common Agricultural Policy.

Email: Alexandru.Marchis@opera-indicators.eu



LIST OF DOCUMENTS PRODUCED BY OPERA

DOCUMENTS

Opera produced a couple of discussion and policy papers on topics relevant to the Sustainable Use Directive including risk indicators, Common Agricultural Policy and mitigation measures. For more information please visit our webpage (<http://www.opera-indicators.eu/>), register and go to <http://www.opera-indicators.eu/eng/guests-area/96.html>

Selecting the right Risk Indicators to successfully implement the Sustainable Use Directive.

Multifunctional Landscapes- Why good field margin management is important and how it can be achieved.

Aspects of the UK "Consultation on the implementation of EU pesticides legislation"

Reflection paper- Competitiveness of the EU Farming.- The roots of the problem

OPERA comments- Comments to the NGO proposal for the architecture of the new CAP: proposal for a new EU Common Agricultural Policy

Outcome of the first roundtable discussion on the CAP reform

Reflection paper on the second roundtable discussion on the Cap reform

LIST OF EVENTS

EVENTS

For more information please visit our webpage (<http://www.opera-indicators.eu/>), register and go to <http://www.opera-indicators.eu/eng/info/events.html>



PAST EVENTS

Brussels May 26th, 2010

Second OPERA Roundtable of Stakeholders on the Reform of CAP dedicated to the debate on the possible policy solutions for the numerous problems faced by CAP.

Brussels May 11th, 2010

New study on EU agricultural production and trade: EU agricultural production and trade: Can more production efficiency prevent increasing 'land-grabbing' outside of Europe? presented by Prof. Harald von Witzke - Humboldt University Berlin

Brussels April 23th, 2010

1st OPERA Roundtable of Stakeholders on the Reform of the CAP

Piacenza April 20th, 2010

First Opera public event on "implementation of the sustainable use directive" and "sustainability measure in agro-industry": in Italy with more than 120 stakeholders involved.

Brussels April 08th, 2010

2nd Expert Meeting on Pesticide Risk Indicators took place in Brussels to discuss 'Key criteria for the selection of Risk Indicators to monitor the achievements of the Sustainable Use of Pesticide Directive'

Milan, 10th November 2009

1st Expert Meeting on Pesticide Risk Indicators to analyse and interpret the evolution in development, use and implementation of the risk indicators for pesticides into National and European legislation, in order to give scientific support to the decisions of the different stakeholders involved in the process new EU Common Agricultural Policy

NEXT ISSUE

The next issue will cover the news and recent developments and documents from the Expert Working Group 'Risk Indicator'



UPCOMING EVENTS

Brussels June 14th, 2010

Meeting of the OPERA Informal Expert Group on SUD: OPERA has commenced its activity on the implementation of the Sustainable Use Directive and we would like to share with you the results on possible mitigation measures, possible indicators and on the interpretation of the legal framework