

Risk Indicators

SUSTAINABLE USE DIRECTIVE & RISK INDICATORS

One of the key objectives of the EU Thematic Strategy on the Sustainable use of Pesticides is to provide a substantial reduction of the risks associated with farming and in particular with the use of pesticides by targeting the use phase of pesticides. The more sustainable use of pesticides can be achieved by

- improving the quality and efficacy of pesticide application equipment
- ensuring better training and education of users
- developing Integrated Pest Management (IPM) schemes
- introducing buffer zones to isolate field use from environmental features

At the same time the directive wants to measure step-by-step improvements made from an initial assessment, towards the final objective. The Risk Indicators presently available in the Europe all have their specific purpose and methodologies. However, at present there is no universal ideal indicator which can be used for pesticide and environmental policy monitoring and evaluation. Utilising Risk Indicators that are sympathetic to the wider aspects of sustainability and that can measure the overall success of mitigation strategies more effectively will be crucial to the widespread adoption and implementation of such strategies.

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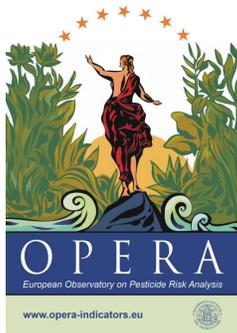
NATIONAL ACTION PLANS



Examples of National Action Plans

Member States (MSs) are requested to transpose the Directive into national legislation within two years from the entry into force, effectively by the end of 2011. The National Action Plan (NAP) is the tool that transforms EU policy into an organized set of national actions. In transposing the objectives of the Directive into national law, MSs will have to align the legislation with the country's specifications, political needs, and existing legislation. Transposition has to identify how that objective will be reached. Several European countries have already initiated detailed programmes concerning reductions in the use of pesticides (Denmark and Sweden started in 1986, the Netherlands in 1991, Norway in 1998, UK in 2006, Germany in 200x etc., see <http://www.opera-indicators.eu/eng/guests-area/NATIONAL-ACTION-PLAN.html>). Policies for risk reduction programme differ in the countries (ranged from pesticide taxes to voluntary initiatives, etc) and not all of them have produced the desired results.

OPERA'S ROLE



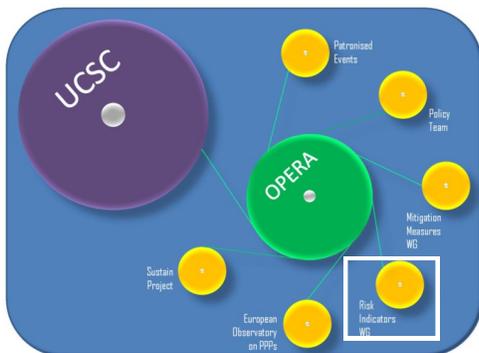
OPERA recognises that, despite the desirable increase in harmonisation across the EU, some strategies and risk indicators specific to individual Member States or groups of countries will be necessary to successfully implement the Sustainable Use Directive.

OPERA has been tasked with preparing a review of existing Risk Indicators, and to pose potential options that may prove of value to Member States in selecting both the indicators and the strategies to meet their objectives.

OPERA aims to prioritise strategies and Risk Indicators that are pragmatic to implement and achievable by all those stakeholders involved. To further progress with this initiative, and to enable OPERA to generate additional guidance of value to policy makers within the Member States, it would be highly beneficial to extend the dialogue with all stakeholders and policy makers.

“Balance needs to be struck between simplicity and timeliness (for policy advisors) and robustness (scientific soundness) – and relevance for farmers”

EXPERT TEAM ON RISK INDICATORS



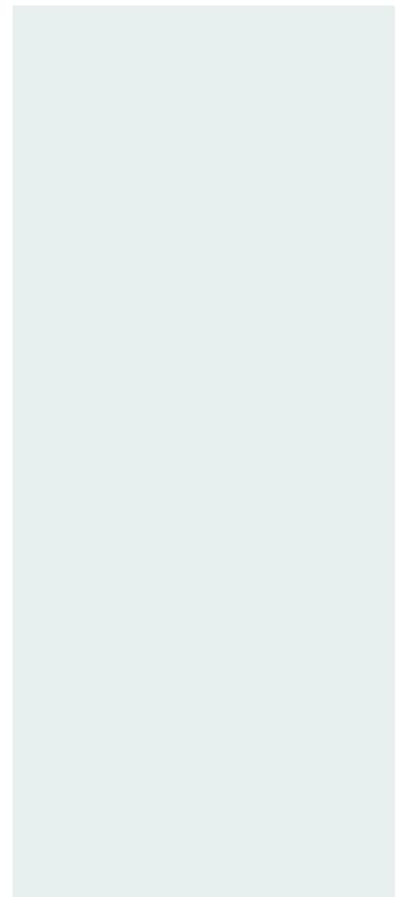
In September 2009 OPERA Research Centre initiated an expert working group consultation with the objective to produce a document to support the transposition process of the Directive and the drafting of the NAP focusing on the proposal of a package of national indicators of risk and benefit.

Experts from the fields of agriculture, industry, trade, academia, environmental and consumer protection were called on to state and exchange their position in order to discuss criteria for the selection of risk indicators.

The 1st Expert meeting was held on 10th November 2009 in Milano and the second meeting was held on 08th April 2010 in Brussels.

TEAM MEMBERS

Alain Dini, Bayer CropScience, France
 Alexandru Marchis, OPERA
 Antonella Romano, Noesis Comunicazione, Italy
 Cesare Pacini, DISAT, Italy
 Christian Bockstaller, University Nancy, France
 Colin Brown, University of York, UK
 Ettore Capri, OPERA
 Johan Vanhemelrijck, HI&PP Consult BVBA , Belgium
 Kiki Machera, Benaki Phytopathological Institute, Greece
 Marco Trevisan, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy
 Martin Streloke, BVL, Germany
 Martin Wilks, Swiss Centre for Applied Human Toxicology, Switzerland
 Maura Calliera, OPERA
 Paul Chambers, British Agriculture Bureau, UK
 Romano De Vivo, Syngenta Crop Protection AG, Switzerland
 Sara Sánchez-Moreno, Instituto Nacional de Investigación y Tecnología, Spain
 Silke Bollmohr, OPERA
 Ton van der Linden, RIVM, Netherlands



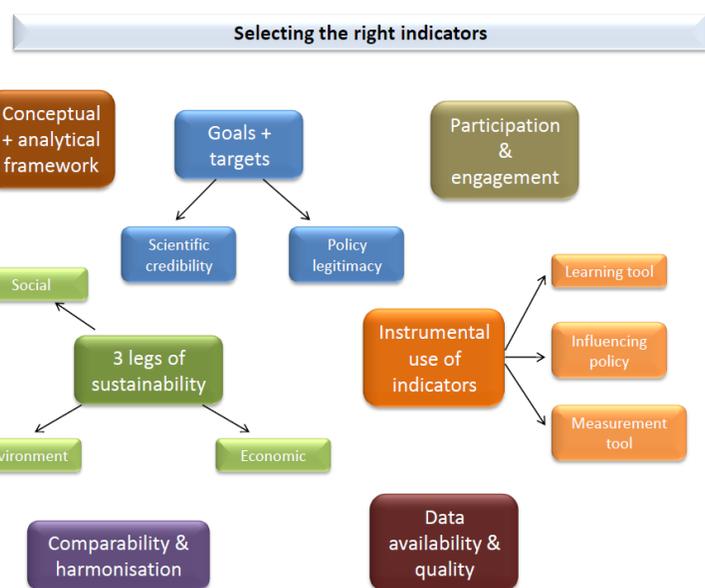
OUTCOME

In order to select the right indicators, a structural approach need to be applied with the purpose to provide Member States and all involved in implementing the Sustainable Use Directive with a **functional, simple** but **robust toolbox** of criteria.

1st Expert Team Meeting

Various questions were discussed dealing with sustainability, frameworks, data availability and communication (further concepts see Figure 'Selecting the right indicators')

To read the whole document produced after the 1st Expert meeting ("*Selecting the right indicators to successfully implement the Sustainable Use Directive*") please visit <http://www.opera-indicators.eu/eng/guests-area/96.html>



2nd Expert Team meeting

The 2nd meeting highlighted the fact that it is important to clearly define goals in the National Action Plan and describe measures to reach these goals.

The first step is to define the **purpose of indicators** and then to **select them** on the basis of how well they can fulfil the required role and that are **pragmatic to implement** and **achievable** by all those stakeholders involved. This includes evaluating Risk Indicators that can be extracted from, or integrated with, existing data collection and recording, to minimise duplication or generating additional information, and to avoid further burden on administrative systems or those supplying the information.

While the Directive clearly ask to report and to monitor the progress made in achieving the objectives, the national scale is one to which we refer in the toolbox designed by OPERA and the Expert Team.

The final document with a suggested toolbox will be published soon on our webpage.

“The criteria to select indicators are driven by the goals and the methods to reach the goals, which can differ for different targets”

USEFUL LINKS COMPILED BY OPERA



Risk Indicators

A selected list of available literature in Pesticide Risk Indicators, as a summary on indicators currently used in some Member States.

Please visit:

<http://www.opera-indicators.eu/eng/guests-area/INDICATORS.html>

However the list is obviously not exhaustive of all indicators available, thus we invite you to help us to improve and update the list.

Databases

The availability of data is often lacking and the reason for difficulties in implementing the development and/or selection of risk indicators.

Thus OPERA compiled an extensive list of data available on

- Pesticide properties data
- Sales and usage data
- Environmental data
- Biodiversity and ecological data
- Consumers

Please visit: <http://www.opera-indicators.eu/eng/guests-area/data-bases-link.html>

GENERAL NEWS ON OPERA

NEW STAFF

Erica Durigon

Erica received a Bachelor in Med-Vet Biotechnology and a Masters in Plant Biotechnology at the University of Udine and the BOKU university in Vienna.

As part of a one year course in agribusiness at Sacred Heart Catholic University in Cremona, she will conduct the practical part with OPERA in Brussels.

Gabriele Sacchetti

Gabriele received a Bachelor in Economics at the University of Florence and a Masters in Social Sciences (Environment).

As part of his Masters degree "Economics of the Agri-alimentar system (SMEA)" in Cremona at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore he will conduct the required practical part with OPERA in Brussels.

OPERA would like to welcome these two interns being with us for six months.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Brussels June 14th, 2010

Meeting of the OPERA Informal Expert Group on SUD

The OPERA Research Centre has commenced its activity on the implementation of the Sustainable Use Directive and we have decided to **give the opportunity to all the stakeholders** involved in the discussions on SUD implementation **to exchange information on the already started process of implementation**. We seek to share good practice, hear opinions and also to identify areas where further guidance is needed to ensure successful implementation of the Directive and to avoid scientific and technical inconsistencies.

To view the programme please visit: <http://www.opera-indicators.eu/eng/guests-area.html>

“Indicators would neither be used to substitute existing procedures nor to quantify pesticide risks in a strict sense but they are expected to help national regulatory institutions to estimate general trends in pesticide risk reduction and to judge the effectiveness of their programmes.”
