



Agriculture, Food Security
and Climate Change



Good Practice Guide for Increasing Stakeholder Engagement in FACCE-JPI Joint Research Actions

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This note has been written by Caroline Lesser from the FACCE-JPI Secretariat. It is based on suggestions made by the members of the FACCE-JPI Stakeholder Advisory Board. The note has benefitted from valuable suggestions from FACCE-JPI Secretariat colleagues (Paul Wiley, Heather McKhann) and FACCE-JPI Joint action coordinators (Nicolas Tinois, SURPLUS ERA-NET; Christian Breuer, SUSCROP ERA-NET; Pablo Gomez, TAP Soil). It has been reviewed by and finalised with the Chair, the Chair-elect and the Vice-Chairs of the FACCE-JPI Stakeholder Advisory Board (Beate Kettlitz, Rebeca Fernandez, Bram Moeskops, Aleksandra Malyska).

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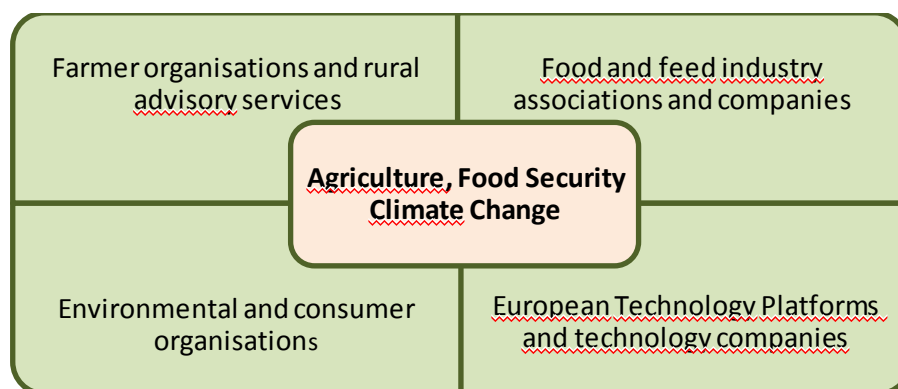
1. Background and objective of this note

The Governing Board of the *Joint Programming Initiative on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change* (FACCE-JPI) invited the members of the Initiative's Stakeholder Advisory Board (StAB)¹ to reflect on ways to better involve relevant stakeholders and end-users of research in FACCE-JPI joint research actions (see Fig. 1 below).²

The FACCE-JPI [Strategic Research Agenda](#) (2016 edition) and the European Commission's Experts' Group [Evaluation of Joint Programming](#) indeed highlight the importance of involving private sector stakeholders (who can be directly impacted by, and benefit from the research) in the **entire JPI programming cycle** in order to increase the relevance and impact of FACCE-JPI research, and effectively address global challenges. Likewise, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon2020, promotes a "multi-actor approach" to research, through which the complementary knowledge of farmers, researchers, advisers and agri-businesses can be leveraged. The main objective is to develop research projects that address end-user problems or challenges, and that can help develop innovative solutions ready to be applied in practice.³

The FACCE-JPI Stakeholder Advisory Board (StAB) discussed when and how to best engage with European and national stakeholders (e.g., farmer organisations, industry representatives, environmental and consumer organisations, see Fig. 1) in the JPI programming cycle, during its April and October 2017 meetings. The objective is to make FACCE-JPI research activities **more participatory and relevant for end-users**, promote research results' dissemination, facilitate knowledge exchange and **research uptake**, and ultimately encourage (behavioural, technological and social) **innovations**.

Figure 1. Main non-governmental stakeholders in the FACCE-JPI remit



Innovation in the FACCE-JPI context refers to:

- (i) *New products and services* to improve food security under climate change, achieve more sustainable agricultural and food systems, and help the agricultural sector mitigate and adapt to climate change (e.g., climate-resilient crop/seed varieties, new animal feed, new ICT tools for the agriculture sector, risk assessment tools, biogas and other bio-based products, and climate information, insurance and other advisory services for farmers);
- (ii) *New agricultural and resource management practices* (e.g., inter-cropping, precision farming) and enhanced land, soil and water management practices (incl. agroforestry, enhanced carbon and water storage);
- (iii) *New consumer habits*, which can help mitigate and adapt to climate change and improve food security (e.g., reduction of food loss and waste; changes in food consumption habits).

This note summarises the StAB's recommendations for increasing stakeholder engagement, with the aim to provide **practical guidance** to FACCE-JPI joint action coordinators.⁴ Some of these recommendations have already been taken account of during the elaboration and implementation of joint research actions of the *FACCE-JPI Implementation Plan 2018-20*. Other recommendations have not been implemented yet, in part due to budgetary constraints. The guidance has been developed with input from the coordinators of existing FACCE-JPI joint research actions.

¹ The StAB currently includes 16 European organisations, see list here: <https://www.faccejpi.com/About-Us/Stakeholder-Advisory-Board/Stakeholder-Advisory-Board-members-and-contact>

² See the Summary of the FACCE-JPI Governing Board meeting of 1-2 December 2016. Involvement of national and EU policymakers is covered by the FACCE-JPI Communication and Valorisation Strategy, hence will not be addressed here.

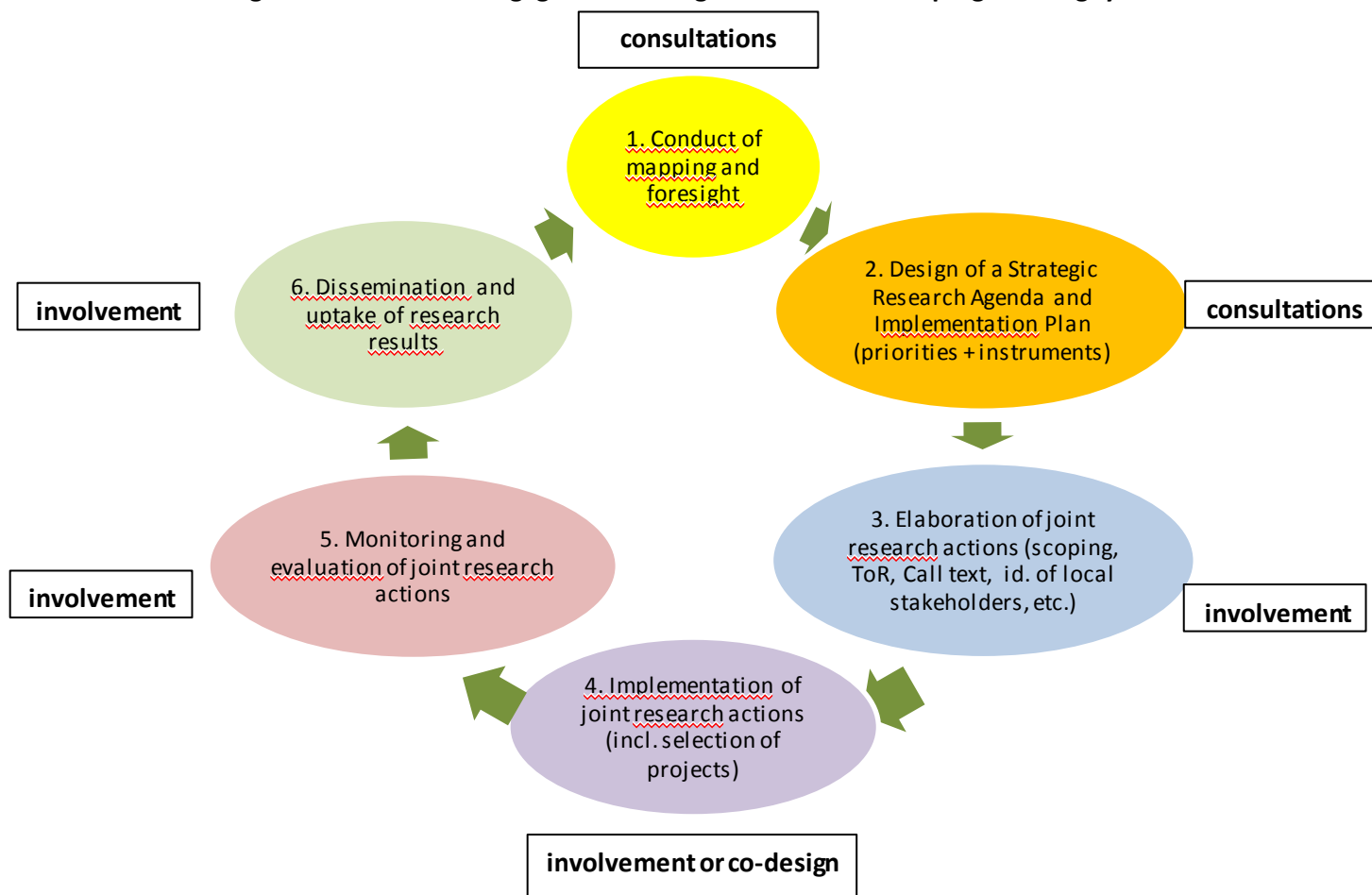
³ For further info., see the EIP Agri Brochure: <https://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/en/publications/eip-agri-brochure-horizon-2020-multi-actor>

⁴ For complementary guidance, see also the BioDivERsA Stakeholder Engagement Handbook.

2. Current practice in FACCE-JPI

Since its outset, FACCE-JPI has engaged with stakeholders, via information exchange, consultations, involvement in the design and implementation of joint research actions, and to a lesser extent, via co-design and co-implementation of transnational research projects. As is further explained below, stakeholder engagement has actually occurred across the entire JPI programming cycle, from the definition of the joint Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) to the evaluation of joint research actions that have been undertaken to address the priorities identified in the SRA (see Fig 2).

Figure 2. Stakeholder engagement throughout the FACCE-JPI programming cycle



In January-March 2012, the FACCE-JPI Secretariat conducted public consultations amongst over 160 European and national (governmental and non-governmental) stakeholders in order to get feedback on the key priorities for transnational research vis-à-vis each of the five Core Themes of the FACCE-JPI **Strategic Research Agenda (SRA)**. A Public Stakeholder Consultations Report was subsequently produced (see [here](#), and “Mapping and foresight”, in Fig. 2).

Subsequently, members of the Stakeholder Advisory Board (StAB) were consulted on the SRA (2012, 2015) and on more operational FACCE-JPI **Implementation Plans** (2014-15; 2016-18; 2018-20). StAB members had the possibility to make suggestions regarding new transnational research actions to be undertaken, and to comment on those proposed by the Governing Board (in terms of expected scope and impact). Such consultations have occurred on average every two years, ahead of the finalization of such Plans (see “SRA and Implementation Plan”, in Fig. 2).

In addition, once the Governing Board adopted the FACCE-JPI Implementation Plan, selected StAB members (i.e. “StAB lead” and “StAB support” contacts) have participated in the **design of FACCE-JPI research programmes and other joint activities**, via participation in the Joint Action Working Groups. Such Working Groups have allowed these StAB representatives to participate in the **scoping** of the joint research action and in the elaboration of its terms of reference, alongside participating funding agencies and scientific experts from the FACCE-JPI Scientific Advisory Board (see “Elaboration of joint research actions” in Fig. 2).

Several FACCE-JPI Joint Research Action Coordinators have also reached out to **additional stakeholders** beyond the StAB. The FACCE-JPI **SURPLUS ERA-NET** (Sustainable and Resilient Agriculture for Food and non-Food Systems), which explicitly recognises the importance of involving civil society and industry representatives as well as policymakers at an early stage

in the design of research programmes, is a good case in point. First of all, selected (non-StAB) stakeholder representatives, e.g., from regional public administrations (Province Frysland, Denmark), industry (Biobased Industries Consortium, Consorzio Italiano Biogas) as well as from farmer organisations, had the possibility to express their expectations vis-a-vis the 14 research projects selected for funding, before their start (cf. SURPLUS Kick-off meeting, September 2016). Furthermore, the SURPLUS 2nd (non-cofunded) Call explicitly encouraged private sector stakeholders to **participate in the implementation of the joint research action**, by joining research project consortia (see Box 1). In addition, FACCE SURPLUS has attempted to better integrate social sciences and humanities (SSH) in the research conducted, as lack thereof is often seen as a weakness and can be a barrier to the uptake of research by industry or farmers.

Box 1. Co-design and implementation of research projects with stakeholders: The case of FACCE-JPI SURPLUS

The FACCE-JPI SURPLUS ERA-NET Consortium of funders explicitly encouraged collaboration with (industry) stakeholders in transnational research projects in the ERA-NET's 2nd [Call on Small-Scale Biorefineries](#), whenever allowed by national funding rules, by specifying this in the Call text. Furthermore, a StAB member joined the ERA-NET Evaluation Committee and helped select research projects for funding.

As a result, 6 out of the 8 transnational research projects selected for funding (75%) included one or more stakeholder organisation in the project consortium (e.g., rural advisory service, technology company, non-governmental research foundation, food importing company, food producing company).

Source: <http://facceturplus.org>

Members of the Stakeholder Advisory Board have also been involved in the **monitoring and evaluation** of completed FACCE-JPI joint research actions, such as the [ERA-NET+ on Climate Smart Agriculture](#). A StAB member was then part of the ex-post Evaluation Committee, which was responsible for: (i) evaluating whether the projects funded under the programme contributed to the call objectives; (ii) assessing the academic impact of projects and whether or not they demonstrated European added value, (iv) evaluating valorisation opportunities for the projects, and (v) identifying potential gaps in the programme and how they might be addressed in future FACCE programmes.

Finally, members of the Stakeholder Advisory Board as well as additional stakeholders have been invited to the end-of-programme meetings and **valorisation workshops** of FACCE-JPI joint research actions, such as the [Pilot Valorisation Workshop](#) on the Impacts of Climate Change on Agriculture and Food Security of March 2017.⁵ In addition, some FACCE-JPI joint actions developed **knowledge products targeted at stakeholders**. For example, the FACCE-JPI Knowledge Hub on Modelling European Agriculture with Climate Change for Food Security (MACSUR) elaborated **regional case studies** (e.g., on Finland, Austria and Italy) to assist national policymakers and other stakeholders in the agri-food chain in identifying effective and efficient adaptation and mitigation measures in their respective countries.

⁵ Some suggested to further increase stakeholder participation in such workshops. See below.

3. Suggested improvements

StAB members have suggested to intensify the degree of stakeholder engagement across the JPI programming cycle, and to further promote the **co-design and implementation** of joint research actions and projects with high expected Technology Readiness Levels (TRL). The section below summarises the main recommendations made. The StAB also suggested to further explore the opportunities for collaboration with the EU's Knowledge and Innovation Community on Climate (Climate KIC), e.g., by bringing some of the FACCE-JPI research results into KIC Innovation projects.

1. Conduct of foresight and mapping to identify common research needs and priorities		
Current FACCE-JPI practice	Suggested improvements	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FACCE-JPI currently relies on the EU Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR) and FACCE-JPI Scientific Advisory Board foresight work to better gauge forthcoming scientific and policy needs FACCE-JPI conducts mapping exercises, by running surveys amongst Governing Board members, to better understand member-countries' ongoing and forthcoming research funding priorities in the FACCE-JPI remit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better map the needs and priorities of end-users via wide stakeholder consultations Involve members of the Stakeholder Advisory Board in the identification of new research needs, missions and gaps, ahead of Strategic Research Agenda updates (e.g., organise a discussion about this in a StAB meeting, and report back to the Governing Board) (<i>Done in Q2 2018</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governing Board and Stakeholder Advisory Board
2. Design of the JPI Strategic Research Agenda and Implementation Plans		
Current FACCE-JPI practice	Suggested improvements	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FACCE-JPI organises StAB consultations during the preparation and elaboration of the SRA and Implementation Plans StAB members can suggest new joint research actions and comment on those proposed by the Governing Board and Scientific Advisory Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better define the expected outcomes and the impact of each joint research action of the Implementation Plan (from a stakeholder perspective) Put more focus on dissemination and research uptake activities in Implementation Plans (<i>Done in the new Implementation Plan 2018-20</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governing Board and Stakeholder Advisory Board
3. Elaboration and scoping of joint research actions (e.g., ERA-NETs, joint calls for research, knowledge hubs)		
Current FACCE-JPI practice	Suggested improvements	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FACCE-JPI sets up Joint Action Working Groups (WG) to scope the action and identify members' financial commitments. Such groups include selected StAB members ("StAB lead" and "StAB support" contacts) who can actively participate in the elaboration of the research action (via phone calls, web meetings, scoping workshops) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with additional stakeholders beyond the StAB representatives during the Joint Action preparatory and scoping meetings, with particular attention to farmer, environmental and consumer organisations (<i>requires time and financing</i>) Ask the StAB lead and StAB support contacts who participate in the Joint Action WG to suggest relevant stakeholders Invite the StAB lead contact involved in the Joint Action Working Group to report back on progress during the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> StAB lead and StAB support contacts; Secretariat; Joint Action Coordinators

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinators of FACCE-JPI joint research actions involve the “StAB lead” and “StAB support” contacts in the drafting of joint action Terms of reference and Call texts 	<p>StAB meetings (<i>done since 2018</i>) and to consult with additional StAB members in order to seek their feedback on the terms of reference⁶</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better reflect stakeholder views in joint action descriptions/ Terms of Reference (<i>challenging when there are contradictory views!</i>) Whenever possible: narrow the scope of the joint action, to effectively reach out to the most relevant stakeholders/ end-users Include Key Performance Indicators regarding “engagement with, and impact on, end-users” in FACCE-JPI joint action descriptions and Call texts to encourage researchers to better take this aspect into account when planning and executing research Whenever relevant, design the joint research action in consultation with innovation players (e.g., European Innovation Partnership or Knowledge and Innovation Community) so as to facilitate research results uptake by these organisations and their members, after the projects’ completion Ensure that the joint research action’s Communications Strategy includes dissemination activities towards end-users as well as a plan to promote research uptake amongst end-users (see 6 below) 	
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4. Implementation of joint research actions (e.g., ERA-NETs, joint calls for research, knowledge hubs)		
Current FACCE-JPI practice	Suggested improvements	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint action Coordinators invite stakeholders to joint action related meetings (e.g., kick-off meeting) to seek their feedback on the expected outcomes of the research projects selected for funding Joint action Coordinators refer in the Call Announcement or Terms of reference to the need to co-design and implement transnational research projects with industry, farmers and other stakeholders, following the multi-actor approach, whenever relevant, (<i>only one FACCE-JPI action so far</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include more systematically a reference to industry/farmer/other end-user participation in Call announcements or joint action’s Terms of reference Ask in the Call text for multi-actor proposals whenever relevant Organise brokerage events between researchers and stakeholders (beyond StAB members) before the selection of projects for funding, to facilitate co-design and implementation, when relevant Set up mixed evaluation panels (researchers + stakeholders), when relevant, to help select research projects for funding, e.g., during the 1st phase of the evaluation process (<i>done for the FACCE-JPI SURPLUS ERA-NET 2nd Call</i>) Set up stakeholder advisory panels to facilitate effective stakeholder involvement during the design and implementation of joint research actions and funded projects (<i>requires time and financing</i>) Organise regular mid-term reviews together with stakeholders to assess preliminary research results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint action Coordinators, and StAB lead and support contacts

⁶ The StAB Chair and Vice-Chair could consider allocating more time for such consultations during the StAB meetings.

5. Monitoring and evaluation of joint research actions		
Current FACCE-JPI practice	Suggested improvements	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders have been involved in research actions' mid-term meetings and have had the possibility to comment on mid-term research results Some StAB members have also participated in research action Evaluation Committees (<i>done for the FACCE-JPI ERA-NET+ on Climate-Smart Agriculture</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systematically include StAB members in joint action mid-term progress meetings and in end-term evaluation exercises Monitor and evaluate stakeholder engagement too (see above) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint action Coordinators, and StAB lead and support contacts

6. Dissemination and uptake of joint research results		
Current FACCE-JPI practice	Suggested improvements	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders have been invited to the 1st FACCE-JPI Valorisation workshop (March 2017), the International Conference on Agricultural GHG Mitigation (Sept 2018) and to joint action final programme meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite more stakeholders (beyond StAB members) to FACCE-JPI valorisation workshops (<i>requires financing</i>) Address in these workshops the practical applications deriving from FACCE-JPI research results Develop tailored communication products, including practice briefs or abstracts, webinars and tutorials that explain possible concrete applications (e.g., new farming practices or consumption habits) and/or marketable products and services that could be derived from the research projects⁷ Partner with knowledge and innovation brokers, advisory services and innovation initiatives such as the European Innovation Partnership on Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability (EIP-AGRI) and Climate KIC with which FACCE-JPI has institutional ties. Identify research results that could be of relevance, in order to facilitate research uptake Include dissemination and demonstration activities in the joint action Terms of reference, e.g., in the case of an ERA-NET: include joint actions dedicated to market, farmer or consumer uptake or demonstration and trial projects under the ERA-NET's additional activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint action Coordinators and Secretariat

⁷ Policy briefs targeted at policymakers are also planned, in the context of the Communication and Valorisation Strategy.

4. Final observations

While increasing stakeholder engagement is key to help strengthen the relevance and impact of FACCE-JPI research activities, it also comes with some challenges, for example:

- Stakeholders come from different horizons and have differing expectations, hence they can have contradictory views. Joint action coordinators need to ensure a balanced stakeholder representation and “voice”;
- Stakeholders may suffer from “consultation fatigue” and have limited time to provide feedback; and
- Stakeholder organisations have limited human and financial capacity to engage in research activities.

For stakeholder engagement to be successful, the Governing Board should encourage FACCE-JPI joint action coordinators to:

- Allocate **sufficient financial resources** to it, e.g., to be able to finance stakeholder participation in different joint research action related meetings and deliverables, both in terms of travel costs and extra workload;
- **Plan** stakeholder engagement **from the outset** of the research programme and ensure, whenever possible, that it is timed appropriately (take account of the policy context and of other major meetings; allow for sufficient time to integrate feedback);
- Ensure that there is **no conflict of interest** (a stakeholder organisation that helps scope a research programme should not be allowed to apply for funding to participate in the latter);
- Better **take account** (ex-ante) of the proposed ways to engage with stakeholders and promote research uptake during the evaluation and selection of research projects/ activities for funding; and
- **Monitor and evaluate** (ex-post) stakeholder engagement (define key performance indicators and monitor progress towards them).

In light of the above challenges, it is also key for joint action coordinators to:

- Conduct a stakeholder mapping at the outset of the programme (e.g., with the help of the StAB lead or support contacts) in order to identify and prioritize the most relevant and influential stakeholders;
- Communicate the benefits of engagement to stakeholders;
- Clearly define the role of and expectations vis-a-vis stakeholders; and
- Better take account of their views.

The FACCE-JPI Secretariat may consider providing more detailed guidance and support to the joint action coordinators in this regard, for example, via the meetings of the (forthcoming) FACCE-JPI Joint Action Coordinators’ Group. Likewise, the StAB lead and support contacts should raise awareness of the guidance included in this note amongst the “FACCE-JPI Joint Action Working Groups” they are part of, so as to promote its uptake.