

EXPLORING OUR COMMON GROUND

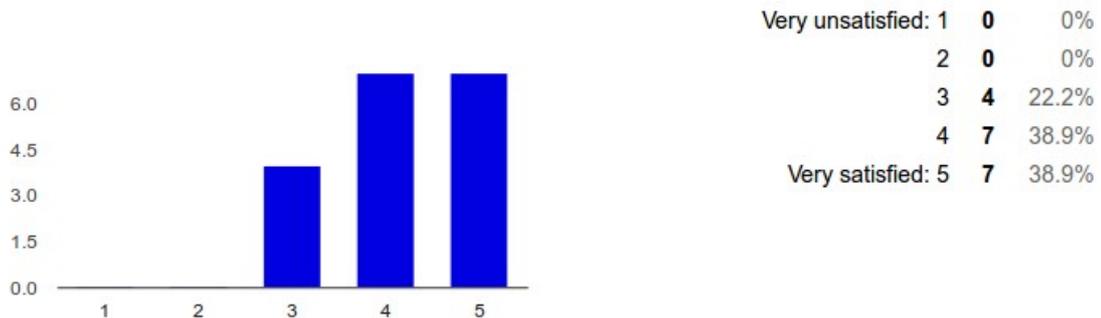
A NETWORKING EVENT ON COMMON GRAZING IN EUROPE

Brussels (Belgium), 18-19 November 2015

SUMMARY OF THE FEEDBACK SURVEY

At the end of the Meeting, we prepared an online survey to gather feedback from participants. The summary of the 18 responses received is presented below.

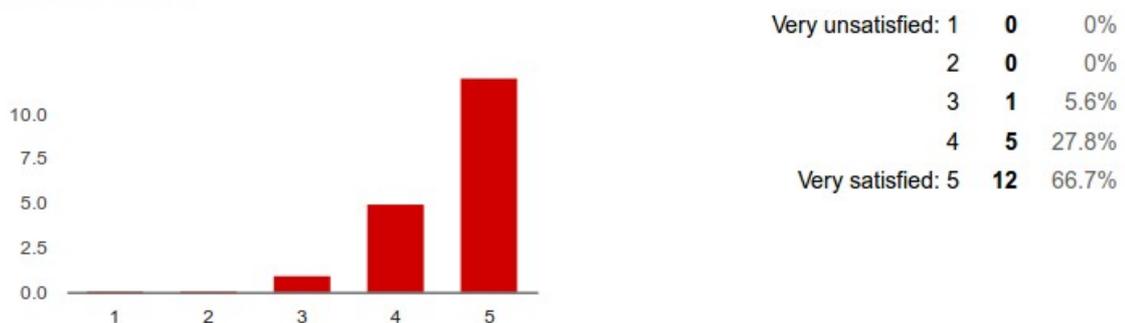
How satisfied were you... 1) Overall with the Meeting?



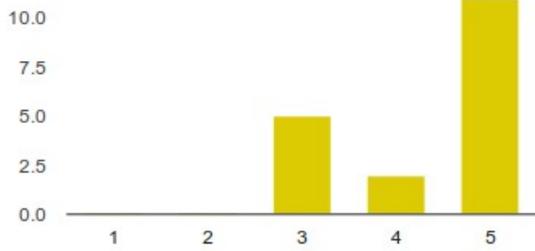
2) With the information beforehand and the booking process?



3) With the venue?

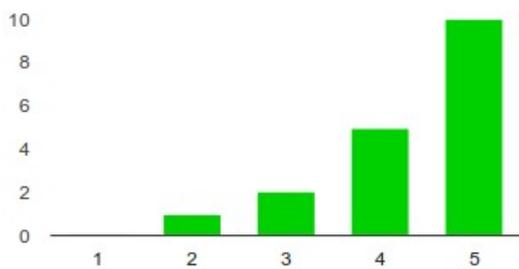


4) With the food/catering?



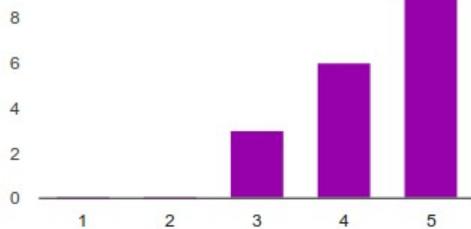
Very unsatisfied: 1	0	0%
2	0	0%
3	5	27.8%
4	2	11.1%
Very satisfied: 5	11	61.1%

5) In general with the programme?



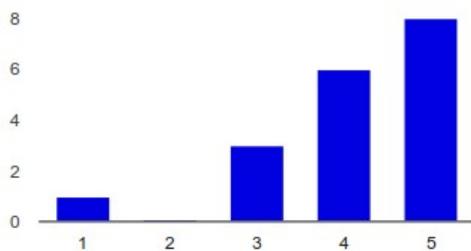
Very unsatisfied: 1	0	0%
2	1	5.6%
3	2	11.1%
4	5	27.8%
Very satisfied: 5	10	55.6%

6) With the level of new and useful information you got?



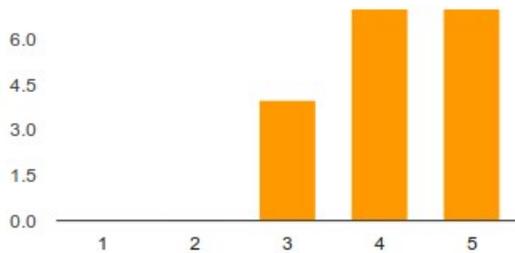
Very unsatisfied: 1	0	0%
2	0	0%
3	3	16.7%
4	6	33.3%
Very satisfied: 5	9	50%

7) With the range and quality of participants?



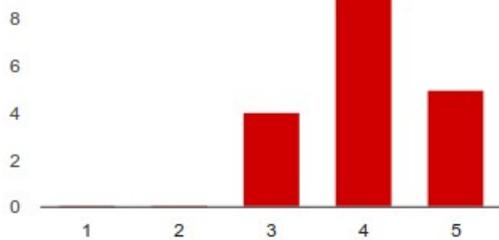
Very unsatisfied: 1	1	5.6%
2	0	0%
3	3	16.7%
4	6	33.3%
Very satisfied: 5	8	44.4%

8) With the discussions?



Very unsatisfied: 1	0	0%
2	0	0%
3	4	22.2%
4	7	38.9%
Very satisfied: 5	7	38.9%

9) With the conclusions and planning for subsequent action?



Very unsatisfied: 1	0	0%
2	0	0%
3	4	22.2%
4	9	50%
Very satisfied: 5	5	27.8%

10) What did you like most in this Meeting?

- ✓ The enthusiasm! Feeling it was worth it!
- ✓ Exchange of the information between participants - communication with the people with hands on experience. Enough time for the discussion - all present had the opportunity to speak up. Possibility to follow up with the joint actions.
- ✓ Everything!
- ✓ The exchanges with the various countries. This meeting allows to see how with the same CAP there is strong one disparities of implementation in member state of european union, Thanks for this initiative
- ✓ All the presentations were very rich. Despite great differences between the countries, the analysis have been made with quite similar approaches, so it was easy to compare each case. Moderator was particularly brilliant.
- ✓ Some of the presentations were just excellent!
- ✓ The interaction with other countries and seeing their problems and challenges
- ✓ Assessing where other Member States are in terms of progressing with commonage management into the future
- ✓ A real insight into commoning through out Europe. It was a pleasure to hear other views and challenges.
- ✓ Sharing of issues related to commons management and commoning. Knowing that other EU countries have similar or worse issues then UK. That there is work going on to improve the situation, commons just do not fit comfortable into agricultural policy. Thus making it difficult for farmer organisations to fight battles for the commoning/farmer cause (NFU,TFA, CLA etc)

- ✓ I wanted to hear how FARMERS were managing common land and how EU policy was being implemented on the ground
- ✓ The informal discussion open to the floor. There was a relaxed comfortable atmosphere at the meeting.
- ✓ Awareness of the diversity of land tenure patterns within the union and the impact of these on the implementation of any plans, supports or schemes. Perhaps somewhat naively I assumed that the Anglo Irish pattern existed in other parts of Europe. It was an eye opener for me to learn that this is not the case and that for all of our problems in Ireland we probably operate in the most benign and user friendly legal environment of all EU states.
- ✓ The opportunity for representatives from all over Europe to hear about the stories from other countries and to hear people engage in meaningful discussions.
- ✓ To know the legal status and statistics of common land across Europe. To meet people from a lot of European countries that have the same preoccupations

11) Where do we need to improve?

- x Where appropriate, internal coordination within countries.
- x The uneven thematic coverage of presentations - for example - 3 presentations from Spain - and still some crucial information from that country was missing in the end.
- x Suggest that native English speakers speak slowly!
- x That each makes the effort to speak slowly and clearly in English
- x Maybe it lacked some connections to other "commons" initiatives, such as those led by the IASC
- x More balanced recognition from farm organisations
- x Shorter presentations more workshops
- x Perhaps the venue for the meal closer to the accommodation and meeting venue. I wouldn't evaluate people's individual presentations, highly subjective and language is also a challenge and relevance plays a part. Simply ask whether the presentations were good and add a comments box. Also I can score myself!!
- x There was possibly too much detail about history of how commons work and have evolved, from the first day speakers (middle speakers one was from Spain I think) and not enough about current / future issues. Have scored speakers hopefully got them correct!
- x More direct input from actual farmers. Less historical data-we need to look forward
- x With the limited time available on these occasions we would need to be discussing current problems and issues and look to the future with optimism. Mentor / adviser available to help navigate the public transport system on arrival at the airport especially where there is a language barrier. This was the most stressful part of an otherwise very enjoyable event.
- x It was unfortunate that tragic events elsewhere impacted on some potential participants. I hope that in future a greater range of contributors would be feasible. Language was an issue, as a hopeless monoglot who benefitted from the entire discourse being in English I cannot complain but I am sure the benefit to some other participants was less than it could have been. I know translation is a big overhead but if some of the presentations could have been made available to participants in languages other than English it may have been of greater benefit to some participants.
- x Preparation and organisation of event.
- x Meetings should not be focused on future lobbying before the EC.

12) Any suggestions for further action, for future networking, for funding?

- Yes - but do not have time now to elaborate. Most of them were communicated during the session.
- We AGTER, would like to propose our resource site agter.org for a broader visibility of the very rich information the different organisations shared during the meeting. A specific dossier on "Common pastures in Europe and CAP" could be built on this basis. We will send you soon a formal proposal. Since we are based in France, we will think about how to support the organisation of the next meeting.
- From an Irish perspective the meeting had too many participants from one farming organisation and the main farming organisation in the Country namely the IFA didn't get the same recognition.
- Future networking events.
- It would be great to set out the challenges facing the different countries and then pick a couple for the next meeting, look at how they are being addressed in different countries. Share the challenges/solutions with the graziers our own areas. There is real strength in knowing that you are part of a wider network.
- Tap into communities funding commoning delivers a lot of benefits for others to enjoy, art tap into pillar 2 funds way can not commoners/ farmers tap into Arts Council funds etc. ?? Health budgets are huge, commons deliver 'health benefits' letting people escape there personal pressures from work,home, city, town or just other people. Thinking laterally what commoning delivers for the others is huge is unseen and not deliverable if commoners are not profitable. Commoning animals are higher cost mainly because of time costs involved on the commons ie some of our cattle, sheep and ponies run on commons 7 miles from the home farm. A Quad bike is used, wear and tear on it is high because of rough terrain +high fuel cost. The end food produced is a smaller quantity, arguably higher in quality, yet receives less payment from the meat processors who pay by weight. Hope this helps
- We need to develop a common strategy for influencing EU policy on common land to ensure that farmers on common land are properly represented at EU level and get our fair share of pillar 1 and 2 funding going forward
- Networking is important, but for it to be of value it has to be in the right context. I know the meeting in Brussels was a first step but any future events should be more focussed on developing a platform for influencing policy at a European level. While the pool of participants was a little Irish heavy it did at least bring farmer bodies in Ireland to a common appreciation of the difficulties in other EU countries. I am certain that this lesson will colour their approach to lobbying Brussels in the future. If farmer bodies in other countries could be engaged in a similar manner it may give the basis for concerted action. I am very conscious of the nature of my position (which perhaps has some parallels with that of some of the British and French contributors) I am a professional provider of technical support and I would like to think a relatively unbiased commentator but I am not representative of any farmer group. People like me have a role, offer some insight and perhaps a little influence, but to have real influence other stakeholders need to be brought on board.
- Some countries will have more in common than with others and may be interested in forming alliances and partnerships with specific representatives. It would be good to have some kind of channels open up for these groups to continue communication but I'm not sure if this would be something the EFNCP would have capacity/funding to carry out.
- To highlight the importance of the legal status and relation between natural resources as common land, and focus on the political dimension of the Commons.