

Food in Eco Network – internationalization and global competitiveness  
of European SMEs in Food and Eco Logistics Sector – GA 783395



How to create a sustainable metacluster ?

Services and activities to develop / Bernard Piette



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# Plan of the presentation

- ▶ What is a metacluster ?
- ▶ Added value a metacluster
- ▶ Lessons learned from past experiences
- ▶ Conditions for establishing a successful metacluster
- ▶ Next steps for FoodNet

# What is a metacluster ?

- ▶ A cluster is a geographic concentration of interconnected companies, specialized suppliers, service providers, firms in related industries, and associated institutions in particular fields that compete but also cooperate

Definition of Michael Porter

## What is a metacluster ?

- ▶ Trans-regional network of clusters, which focuses on the same or complementary specific technological field or sector.
- ▶ It consists of at least three clusters in three different regions.

# Added value of a metacluster

- ▶ Form of clusters collaboration on regional / national / international scale for taking advantages of the clusters potential to foster economic development, competitiveness and innovation
  
- ▶ Multiple benefits for clusters and their members.
  - Access to new markets.
  - New knowledge, technologies and infrastructure.
  - Enlargement of the customer base.
  - Improvement of the overall innovation milieu.

# Lessons learned from past experiences

- ▶ Many initiatives have been launched and few of them are still active
- ▶ It works if the metacluster offers services that are not accessible by clusters individually (trainings for cluster managers, contracting with external parties) or not offered by other parties (TPO's, chambers of commerce...)
- ▶ Necessity to have a structure and a governance at the meta level; this ensures the involvement of the members.

# Lessons learned from past experiences

- ▶ Governance must be adapted to the size of the metacluster (to avoid slow decision making process)
- ▶ Communication between members is key (cultural differences)
- ▶ Different maturity levels of clusters can create discrepancies and misunderstandings about expectations

# Conditions for a successful metacluster

- ▶ Internal conditions :
  - Considering registration in order to apply for fundings (at regional, national or EU level),
  - Governing body and clear decision making process
  - Ensuring that needed competence is present in every member (qualified team in the field and in cluster management)
  - Sufficient fundings
  - Sufficient coverage in the membership



# Conditions for a successful metacluster

- ▶ **External conditions :**
  - Clear strategy !!
  - Scope well defined
  - Right match between the scope and the competence of the metacluster members
  - Build on existing international relations
  - Right services not offered by others
  - Create a range of services not accessible by the single members

## Next steps for FoodNet

- ▶ Evaluation of the results of the project
- ▶ Positioning every member in a future phase of the project
- ▶ Validate options selected in the Strand 1 (country focus for instance)
- ▶ Define a clear action plan (roadmap)
- ▶ Define a clear budget and financing options



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**Thanks for your attention !**

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