Innovation Support Services in Agriculture and Rural Areas - Lessons learnt from the AgriSpin project

Contribution to the SCAR AKIS IV report
Andrea Knierim with AgriSpin Science Group

Presentation to the SCAR AKIS meeting on the 31st of Oct, in Brussels
Alex Koutsouris

Structure of both, presentation and report

- Aim and core activities of AgriSPIN

- Identification and analysis of innovation cases

- Insights on innovation support services (ISS) in the course of the innovation process

- Insights on the enabling environment
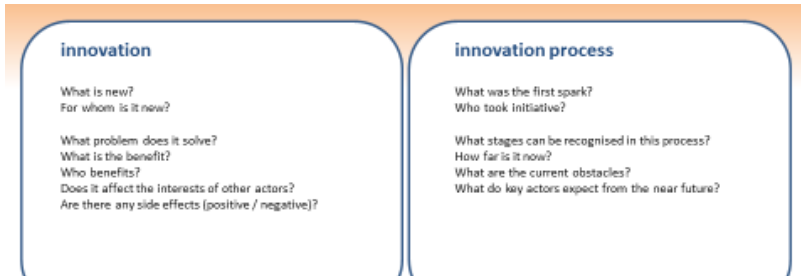
- Lessons learnt, conclusions

AgriSpin: creating SPace for AGRIcultural INnovation

- The project aimed at creating space for innovations through amplifying good examples of innovation support systems and through multi-actor learning about ways to stimulate innovation and remove obstacles.

- The main target group were intermediates who connect initiators to other actors for involving them in creating innovations, such as farmers, knowledge workers, actors in the value chain, administrators, civil society groups, etc..

- *Learning about innovation processes at farm level and beyond*
- *Collecting best practices of innovation support*
- *Provide Recommendations*

Identification and analysis of innovation cases

innovation	innovation process
What is new? For whom is it new? What problem does it solve? What is the benefit? Who benefits? Does it affect the interests of other actors? Are there any side effects (positive / negative)?	What was the first spark? Who took initiative? What stages can be recognised in this process? How far is it now? What are the current obstacles? What do key actors expect from the near future?

Analytical categories
- Innovation, innovation process
- Actors and networks, innovation support
- Environment, critical incidents
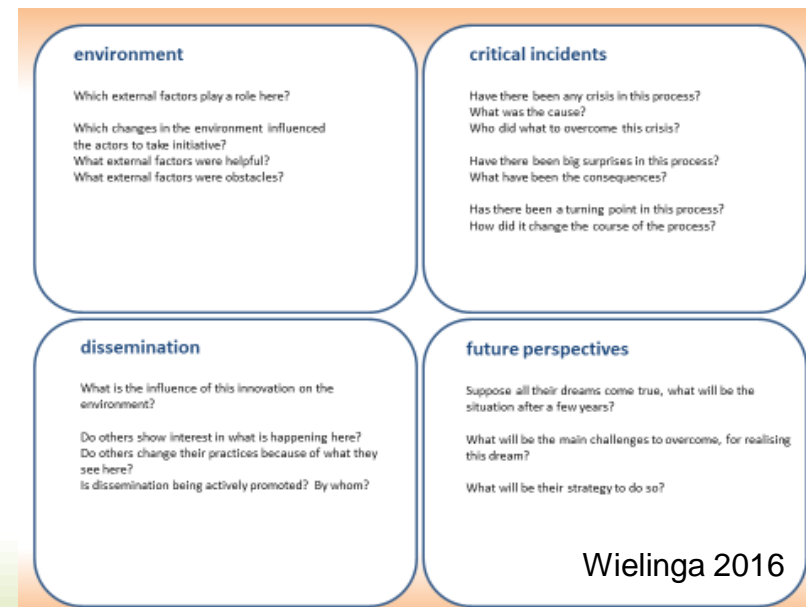- Dissemination, future perspectives

We did a targeted identification of innovation cases ….

Identification criteria
- Ag or rural innovation
- Multi-actor setting
- Certain maturity / degree of implementation
- ……

environment	critical incidents
Which external factors play a role here? Which changes in the environment influenced the actors to take initiative? What external factors were helpful? What external factors were obstacles?	Have there been any crisis in this process? What was the cause? Who did what to overcome this crisis? Have there been big surprises in this process? What have been the consequences? Has there been a turning point in this process? How did it change the course of the process?
dissemination	**future perspectives**
What is the influence of this innovation on the environment? Do others show interest in what is happening here? Do others change their practices because of what they see here? Is dissemination being actively promoted? By whom?	Suppose all their dreams come true, what will be the situation after a few years? What will be the main challenges to overcome, for realising this dream? What will be their strategy to do so?

And analysed cases
- *Along the process (spiral of innovation)*
- *With analytical frames*
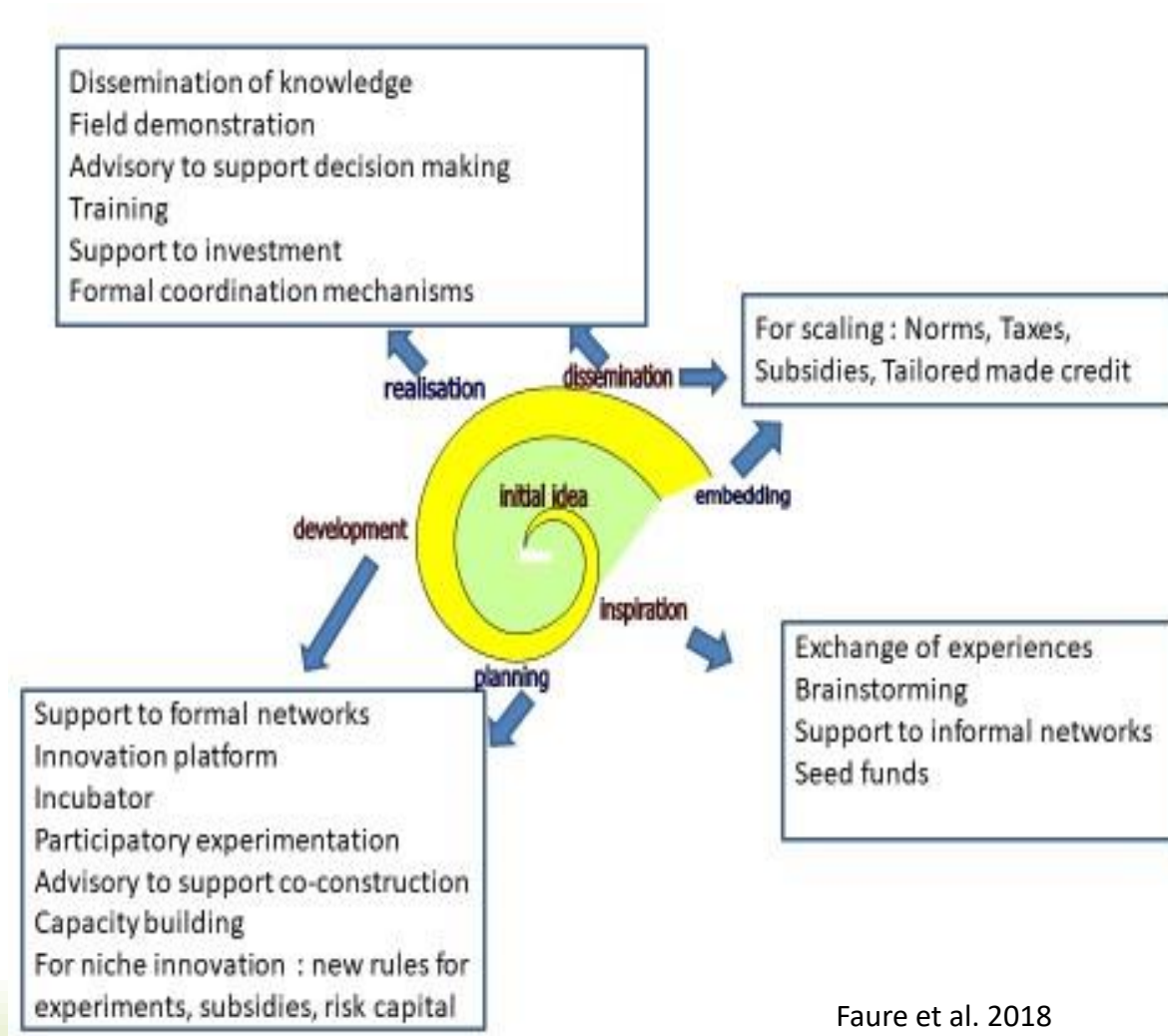- *And pearls and puzzles*

Wielinga 2016

Insights on Innovation support services in the course of the innovation process
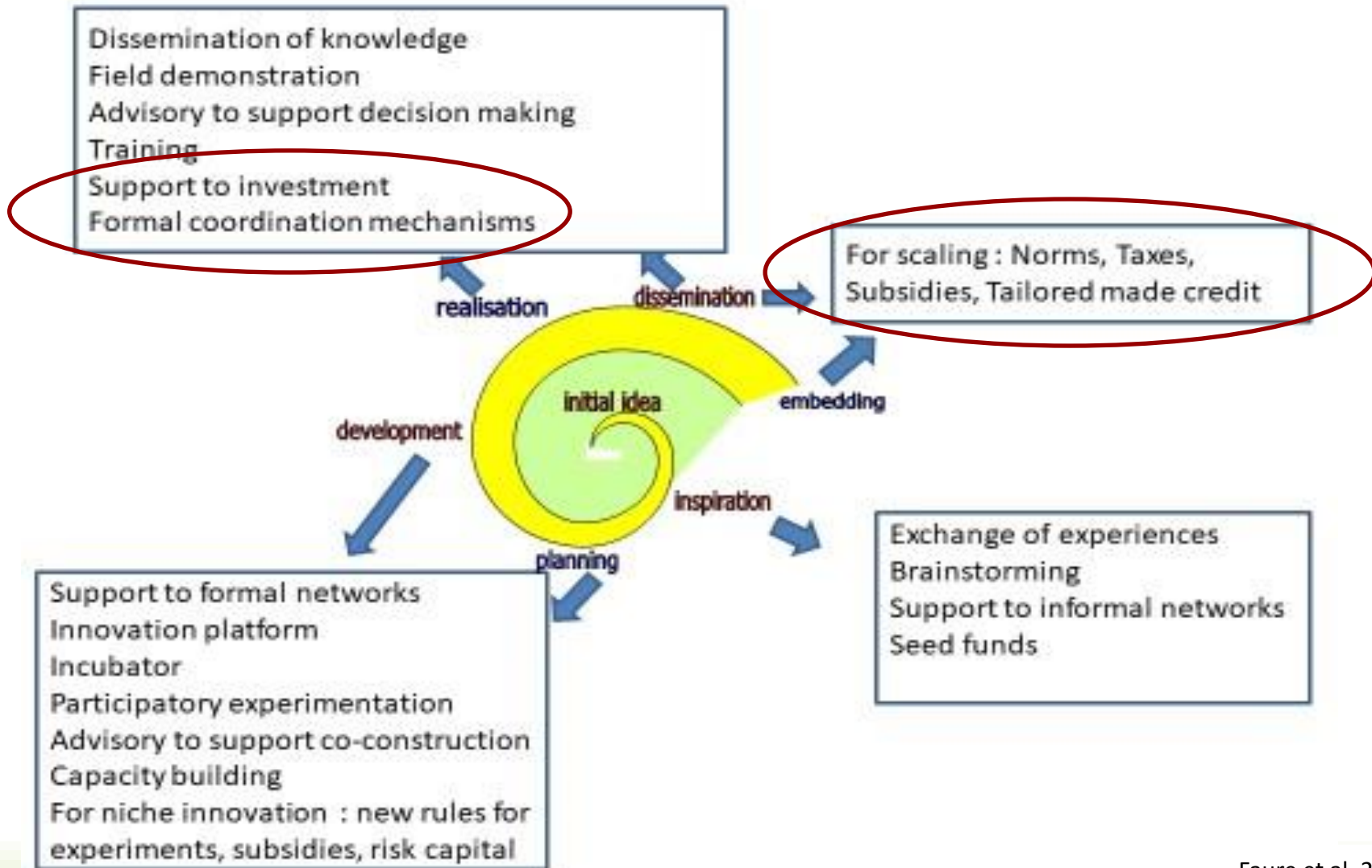
Innovation support service functions

- Knowledge and technology transfer
- Advisory, consultancy, backstopping
- Capacity building
- Demand articulation
- Networking facilitation and brokerage
- Access to resources
- Institutional support for niche innovation and scaling stimulation

Mathé et al. 2016

Dissemination of knowledge
Field demonstration
Advisory to support decision making
Training
Support to investment
Formal coordination mechanisms

For scaling : Norms, Taxes, Subsidies, Tailored made credit

realisation
dissemination
initial idea
embedding
development
inspiration
planning

Exchange of experiences
Brainstorming
Support to informal networks
Seed funds

Support to formal networks
Innovation platform
Incubator
Participatory experimentation
Advisory to support co-construction
Capacity building
For niche innovation : new rules for experiments, subsidies, risk capital

Faure et al. 2018

Insights on the enabling environment (I)

Dissemination of knowledge
Field demonstration
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Training
Support to investment
Formal coordination mechanisms

For scaling : Norms, Taxes,
Subsidies, Tailored made credit

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Faure et al. 2018

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Insights on the enabling environment (II)

- Public authorities should set relevant ecosystems for innovation (regional/ local scale)

- Public authorities and funding bodies should recognize/endorse that innovation implies taking risk (all scales)

AgriSpin recommendation 2017
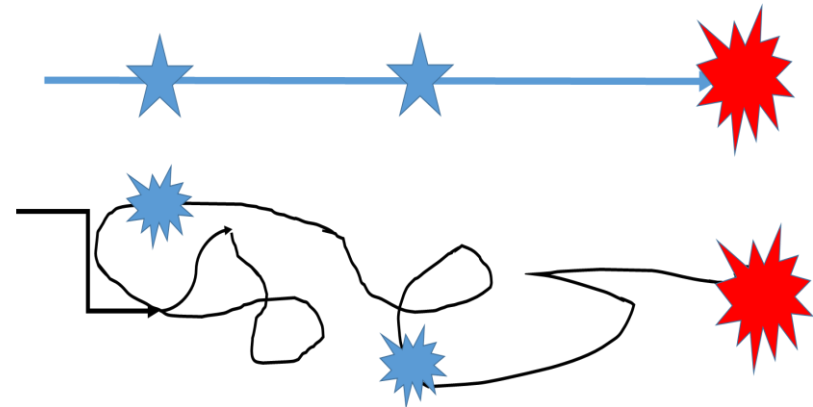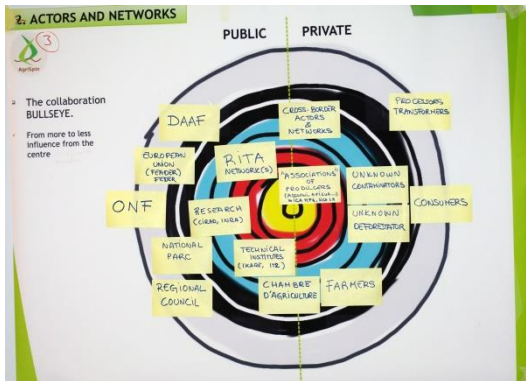
Lessons learnt, conclusions

❖ Understand innovation as a process (not as an outcome), evolving over time

❖ Understand innovation as a result of multiple interactions

❖ Differentiate phases of the innovation process for targeted intervention

❖ Understand specific needs and corresponding innovation support services as typical for certain phases while others are unspecific in this regard

Thank you for your attention