



# Sustainable Agriculture Initiative

*Thoughts for Food*

## Newsletter

Winter 2011



December is a time for looking back. We have had an extraordinary, breakthrough year of growth: 14 new members, six webinars, two seminars, a new working group (on beef) and with the members' support we have put together a database of projects that already boasts over 60 inspiring examples of sustainable agriculture. 2011 was also the year of a successful strategy reform that will shape the future of our work: from defining to implementing.

In 2012 we will be celebrating our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. I remember my grandfather solemnly telling me on my 10<sup>th</sup> birthday: "You are a teenager now". At the time I didn't grasp the meaning of those words. With hindsight I realize it heralded a decade of learning, discovery, friendship and fun. I hope the same will apply to SAI Platform's teenage years!

Your SAI Platform team wishes you Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

### TWO NEW MEMBERS



Arla Foods is a global dairy company and a co-operative owned by Danish, Swedish and German dairy farmers, with production facilities in 13 countries and sales offices in a further 20. Arla's products are sold under the brands Arla, Lurpak and Castello in more than 100 countries.

Arla is committed to driving down its carbon impact throughout its supply chain. Arla recognizes that it is on farm where the greatest potential for reducing the carbon footprint of milk exists, through increased efficiency. In 2008, Arla set itself an ambitious target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions from production, transport and packaging by 25 per cent before 2020.



Mars Foods is a privately owned company operating 132 factories worldwide and employing more than 65,000 people. In its products portfolio are brands such as M&Ms, Snickers, Twix, Milky Way, the Mars bar, Seeds of Change organic food, Uncle Ben's rice, and pet food made under the Pedigree, Sheba, and Whiskas names.

With a strong history of working on improving the sustainability of cocoa, Mars currently has several sustainability initiatives which include a commitment to reduce waste, water and energy at their sites, a commitment to sustainable sourcing of cocoa and fish by 2020 and to sustainable sourcing of palm, coffee and tea by 2015.

### HIGHLIGHTS

#### **Sustainability Performance Assessment (SPA) - Phase III**

During this year the first two phases of the SPA project were

conducted. This benchmarked, in detail, existing indicators and tools to measure sustainability at farm level.



The results of this work were discussed with member companies at a seminar last September. Consequently, it was agreed to conduct a third and final phase of the project: to define a set of common requirements (farm data, methodologies and indicators) which can serve as Terms of Reference (ToR) for tool-builders to adapt existing tools or develop new tools aimed at measuring sustainability at farm level, in a comparable way. The ToR will be developed and published in the first semester of 2012.



### Database of Members' Projects

We are proud to announce the publication of more than 60 projects on sustainable agriculture from our member companies. The projects feature a wide selection of countries, commodities and sustainability issues along the economic, environmental and social pillars.

They can be found on our website using the interactive map as well as a detailed search engine. If you wish to know more about a specific project, don't hesitate to contact us.

## DON'T MISS

### Secretariat to meet American members

We are pleased to announce that our Secretariat will hold a one day meeting in Winter Park, Florida, on February 15, to update American member representatives on our new strategy, recent activities and related services and tools. We will also be discussing their own challenges and opportunities related to sustainable agriculture. We have already received positive responses from three members: McDonald's, Land O'Lakes and Innovation Center for US Dairy.

To register or find out more, [contact us](#)



### GA 2012: Brabeck and Engel keynote speakers!

On May 2, 2012, SAI Platform will celebrate its tenth Anniversary, in Evian, France. On this special occasion an Executives Event will be held before the General Assembly. Peter Brabeck, Chairman of Nestlé and Marc Engel, Chief Procurement Officer of Unilever, two of the three founding members of the SAI Platform, will be there to celebrate with us.

With other executives from our member companies, they will speak about their joint achievements and look at the challenges the sector faces and at the developments needed to solve them. Several senior executives have already confirmed their participation.

If you would like to show your support for the event and your Platform, we have a number of sponsorship opportunities available. [Contact us](#)

## WORK IN PROGRESS

### Strategy reform process

In November ExCo and the Chairs of the Working Groups met to discuss the final draft of the revised strategy document. This is a response to the need to further develop the unique pre-competitive collaboration we have created within the SAI Platform. The meeting agreed with the vision of continued development of tools throughout the

SAI Platform to facilitate individual members' implementation of sustainable agriculture.

The approach can be described as two pillars: one of compliance (with the recommended principles and practices) and the other of continuous improvement (by a joint frame of farm metrics and indicators to monitor progress). Both supporting a roof of sustainable supply. We will officially launch this new strategy at the General Assembly in May, in Evian.



### NERC's "research club"

The proposal of the Natural Environment Research Council of creating a "research club" has to date received the support of Heineken, Unilever, PepsiCo and Kraft as well as some interest from Coca-Cola, McCain and Kellogg.



Currently, two researchers are preparing an agenda for a facilitated workshop to be held probably in London in late February or early March 2012. The aim of the workshop is to further develop the concept and create a workable template for the "research club".

### WEB based videos for sustainable farm practices

SAI Platform, in cooperation with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS), has explored the potential of using video to facilitate farmer-to-farmer learning. Several member companies have expressed interest in the project which will be discussed in more detail.



### Responsible Sourcing of Natural Vanilla

On November 29, at a multi-stakeholder meeting on Responsible Sourcing of Natural Vanilla, SAI Platform presented our approach to and activities in sustainable agriculture. Participants agreed to further discuss options for joint work on sustainable vanilla production in a pre-competitive way, and the role that various groups such as SAI Platform may play in this.

### NEWS FROM EXCO

The last Executive Committee meeting took place in Paris, on December 1, kindly hosted by Danone. The following decisions were made:



- SPA III project proposal approved.
- A communication sub group has been created for the 10 year anniversary event.
- Approval given to publishing the strategy.
- Mars and Arla have been accepted as new members of the SAI Platform.
- Publication of list of members' projects approved.
- To align decisions and work program, ExCo is proposing a new procedure for budget approval: ExCo will finalize this before the end of the year, and it will be brought to GA for information.

### SHORT NEWS FROM THE WORKING GROUPS

#### Arable & Vegetable Crops

The arable crops working group met on October 27. The well-attended full day meeting covered topics including: support for the financial sustainability proposal; SPA; the Polish Chapter; the strategy and, in particular, the issue of 'equivalency' with other standards. Katrin Recke of AIM progress was invited to discuss opportunities for collaboration.

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## **Beef**

The Beef Working Group conducted a webinar for interested stakeholders to discuss the challenge of addressing the four areas on non-alignment identified through a beef LCA methodology review. A workshop is planned for January in London, to bring academic and sector representatives together in order to better understand the options available and hopefully achieve alignment.

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## **Coffee**

The Working Group has spent the last few months finalising preparations for the launch of a multi-stakeholder project towards defining Product Category Rules (PCR) on the measurement of green house gas emissions for green coffee. If all goes well, including securing the total budget needed from internal and external sources, the project will be launched early 2012.

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## **Dairy**

The Dairy Working Group had 25 attendees at its last meeting held at the World Dairy Summit. At this meeting the Chair, Sarah Paterson of Fonterra, stood down (as she is now based back in NZ). We would like to thank her for her excellent work in guiding the working group through some challenging but exciting work programmes. We are pleased to announce that Didier Moreau of Danone has moved from the Vice Chair role to be the Chair and the new Vice Chair is Beth Sauerhaft of PepsiCo.

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## **Fruit**

The WG held the last call of the year to discuss and agree on the Workplan 2012. After a survey of priorities was made, the Group chose to focus the efforts of 2012 on the very ambitious project: "where do we source sustainably?" Work is currently being done to identify a potential partner for this study. Talks are being held with the University of Florida. Next meeting will be in Orlando, Florida, hosted by Coca-Cola.

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## **Water & Agriculture**

This month saw the successful completion of the 18 month pilot project on sustainable water management in India. The project, jointly conducted with the International Crops Research Institute for the semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), developed a user-friendly tool named "Water Impact Calculator", to help farmers identify agricultural practices to reduce their water footprint. The tool was successfully tested in the North-West of the country, and is now ready for wider use.

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## **SHORT NEWS FROM THE CHAPTERS**

### **Argentina**

After the launch in August, the members met again in December to review the options and legal requirements to register and set up the Chapter in Argentina. A brainstorming session was held to understand the expectations of the participants in relation to the Chapter, working group and benefits to the members. There is interest of the group in some cut-crossing themes like water and carbon footprint as well as in the cooperation with Solidaridad and its programs on sustainable agriculture.

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### **Australia**

SAI Platform Australia organized in October a successful Field Trip "Towards Sweet Sustainability Success" with the primary objective to gain knowledge of agricultural production systems of sugar and beef in the Herbert and Burdekin Regions of Northern Queensland. The field trip provided an outstanding opportunity for members to understand cutting edge agricultural sustainability initiatives being undertaken within a regulated environment in close proximity to the Great Barrier Reef.

For more information visit: [www.saiplatformaust.org](http://www.saiplatformaust.org)

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### **Poland**

As agreed during the kick off meeting in September 2011, the Polish Food Producers Federation has kindly agreed to host the project and at the Dec. 15 meeting this was confirmed. The first step will be to build project capacity within the Federation. Project goals, strategy and ways of implementation will be also discussed. The project is open

for both members of the Federation as well as any other companies/ organizations from outside who are willing to contribute to sustainable agriculture development in Poland.

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Questions or comments? E-mail us at [info@saiplatform.org](mailto:info@saiplatform.org) or call +32-2-5008757  
To remove your name from our mailing list reply to this email with: "unsubscribe"