



Official Participant

Rapporteur Template for Scientific Events

Event Title :	GLAMUR: Struggling between Global and Local food chains	Date:	13 October 2015
Event Organiser:	Project GLAMUR (FP7-n°311778)		
Event Target Group:	Value chain players; researchers; food activists and consumers		
Rapporteur:	Luca Colombo – FIRAB		

1. Which research themes are concerned? (Tick all relevant areas)

- A: Improve public health through nutrition – healthy and sustainable consumption
- B: Increase food safety and quality
- C: Reduce losses and waste – more efficient food chain
- D: Manage the land for all ecosystem services – sustainable rural development
- E: Increase agricultural outputs sustainably – sustainable intensification
- F: Understand food markets in an increasingly globalised food system
- G: Increase equity in the food system

2. What is the challenge and why does it exist?

The issue of the food system sustainability catalyses attention and concerns in policy and research environments. It is similarly becoming one of the key operational goals for most actors in the value chain. The need to improve the value chain performance in relation to the environment, health, economy, society, ethics has strengthened the position of those who claim the need for a resolute transition towards clear(er) sustainability goals. The issue of sustainability raises the problem of how to analyse and quantify the effects of a given economic activity on both society and the environment. Tensions on how to pursue sustainability pathways arise around the food system configurations, having particularly in mind the multiple structures, scales and governance aspects. In this respect, local and global value chains often appear as conflicting polarisation.

3. What will happen if the challenge is not addressed?

- Short Term Consequences
- Long Term Consequences

Local and global food chains coexist and will co-evolve. No major short term consequences of a status quo are foreseen, but a rupture between mainstream food system configurations and societal expectations could be envisaged in the longer term.

5. What were the suggested solutions, research insights and/or policy proposals? Were specific new research or development actions identified?

The Glamur event presented the project rationale and main results. Some preliminary considerations emerging from the project were illustrated and discussed, such as: the need for a multidimensional and multi-scale sustainability performance assessment; the existence of multiple values and interests to take into account through participatory processes; the potential of local food chains as drivers of innovation, thus deserving a special attention.

The event made clear as the wide range of possible patterns of 'local' and 'global' value chains requires a scrutiny of complementarities and synergies in the many cases of coexistence of various food chain configurations, taking into consideration that a generalized comparative assessment of 'local' and 'global'

food chains as abstract entities could be misleading.

Glamur researchers remarked how the assessment of performance gaps between actual and optimal performance in both 'local' and 'global' can help identifying crucial development areas within sectors and individual food chains.

6. What are the expected benefits and risks of such initiatives?

The aim of holding a scientific event at EXPO represented a good opportunity for Glamur to reach out a larger public and share the ideas developed during the project in the present decisive phase of defining policy recommendations. The interactive nature of the event, devoting a prolonged time to debating with actors and stakeholders the project's findings, rationale and implications, had the goal of harvesting valuable feedbacks on the Glamur *-in itinere-* messages. However, the context of EXPO also represented a big challenge as the public coming to the exhibition had many other possible events in the same day and place. To enlarge the potential audience, the Glamur project team decided to make available the scientific event at EXPO to a remote public through a webinar available online (<http://glamur.eu/glamur-at-expo-13th-october-2015/>).

7. Does this event address research challenges others than those in the discussion document ?

The main research challenge that the GLAMUR project and this event addressed is the sustainability assessment of local and global food chains. In particular, it underlined the need to use a multidimensional approach to sustainability performance estimation.

8. Did this event point out gaps in the private and public research infrastructure/systems which should be addressed?

Private and public research on sustainability assessment often focus on specific dimensions of sustainability. Most research initiatives measure sustainability with a mono-dimensional approach, using linear optimization models (e.g. cost-benefit; carbon footprint, LCA, etc.). The GLAMUR project Expo event, intentionally underlined since its introduction the need to integrate different methodologies for sustainability assessment of local and global food chain, using a multidimensional approach.

9. What best practices were mentioned at this event?

The Expo event represented an opportunity for Glamur to present some of the project case studies to the public. Overall, the project selected its case studies among the most noteworthy value chains within the analysed sectors. They do not necessarily represent champions of sustainability in their pertinent food chain configurations, but in most cases, their specific performance proved to be above average in the sector. Out of the overall 36 Glamur case studies, three project researchers presented at Expo results on the assessment of 3 pork chains in Italy and Netherlands (3+3), the performance of local and global dairy sector in Switzerland and UK and finally a sustainability assessment of artisanal, medium scale and industrial bread chains in Italy and UK (3+3).

A total of 16 best practices were mentioned at this event.

10. What follow-up actions emerged from this event?

The main follow-up of this event will be the policy recommendations document. Glamur is currently developing the main project messages and policy recommendations in a pro-active discussion with stakeholders. The Expo event was intentionally planned to offer a further opportunity to build debate and exchange on the topic, thus receiving feedbacks from a new range of stakeholders.

11. Did this event point out gaps in the private and public research infrastructure/systems which should be addressed?

N.A.