



**RE.
CAP**

Reinforcing CAP

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INTRODUCTION

This report is the last Deliverable of WP4 “Deployment and Operation” of the RECAP project and has been designed as a summary report on the outcomes and results of the deployment of the RECAP Platform within 5 pilot participating counties (Greece, Spain, Lithuania, U.K. and Serbia).

This report presents the procedure followed and Lessons learnt during the pilot operation; as well as the main services and advantages of the RECAP Platform for the different end-users.

This report is composed of the following parts:

1) Procedure followed and Good practices. This part presents a brief description of the procedure and steps followed during the RECAP project for the deployment of the RECAP Platform; as well as some good practices and testimonies from the Pilot Teams that are based on their experience of deploying the RECAP Platform in their territory.

2) Services and outcomes for end-users. This part presents the main services and features offered by the RECAP Platform to the different end-users (e.g. Farmers, Organic Farmers, Agricultural Consultants, Inspectors, Certification Bodies and Paying Agencies); as well as the advantages end-users may benefit from the use of the RECAP Platform.

3) Lessons learnt for future applications. This part presents the Lessons Learnt from each participating country on both i) the use of the RECAP Platform by end-users, and ii) the deployment of the RECAP Platform by the Pilot Teams.

This summary report provides some valuable insights that may be taken into consideration for future applications of the RECAP Platform in the 5 participating countries (Greece, Spain, Lithuania, U.K. and Serbia), as well as in any other country or region that may be interested in deploying the RECAP Platform in its territory.



1. Procedure followed and Good Practices.

The deployment of the RECAP Platform was carried out in the 5 pilot participating counties (Greece, Spain, Lithuania, U.K. and Serbia) following a **common methodology and procedure** which consisted in 6 main steps, as indicated below:

- # 1. DEFINITION OF LOCAL/SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS
- # 2. PRELIMINARY ACTIVITIES
- # 3. RECRUITMENT & TRAINING ACTIVITIES
- # 4. FILLING IN THE FARM DETAILS
- # 5. TESTING ACTIVITIES WITH PILOT PARTICIPANTS
- # 6. EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

This section of the report describes each of those steps that are necessary for a correct deployment of the RECAP Platform; and provide some **good practices and testimonies** based on the experience from the 5 Pilot Teams in the RECAP Project.



1. DEFINITION OF LOCAL/SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

- 1.1. User requirement identification.
- 1.2. Co-production phase with Farmers.
- 1.3. Co-production phase with Paying Agencies and Agricultural Consultants.
- 1.4. Co-production phase with Agricultural Consultants and developer.

>> *TESTIMONIES & GOOD PRACTICES from Pilot Teams:*

*** Serbia – Desk research and co-production phase with future end-users.** A very detailed identification of the payment scheme in the country of interest needs to be performed (e.g. organic subsidy scheme in the case of the Serbian Pilot), in order to make the deployment of the RECAP platform successful.

Firstly, a mapping of the stakeholders was carried out and key stakeholders were recognised. This action was followed by the recognition of relations among them as well. Secondly, with the aim to acquire the higher perspective, everything was enclosed by the respective legislative, institutional and organisational framework. Deep desk research, surveys and questionnaires were used as methods for the abovementioned actions. At the end, to tackle all challenges of organic subsidy scheme, a very helpful technique was the co-production method which has been applied in the frame of the RECAP project. Interviews with future end-users focused on their needs and issues, made the functional workflow for the RECAP platform.

*** Spain – Paying Agency involvement.** The Paying Agency should be involved and promote education and knowledge on cross-compliance among farmers. The Paying Agency should assume functions of informing and communicating widely on cross-compliance requirements – for each parcel and to all farmers, not only the ones the PA will inspect – for promoting education and knowledge on cross-compliance among farmers. Moreover, to do this, functions of administrating the Platform should be local – the PA should have at its disposal the tools for massive import of parcels' requirements.

*** UK – Translation of cross-compliance rules.** Presenting cross-compliance rules in a simple way is well appreciated by farmers. One of the aims of the project was to increase farmers' compliance with cross-compliance rules. At present, most farmers do not carry around a copy of the detailed rules with them as they are very long and often in a language that is very difficult to understand. Our team spent a lot of time 'translating' the cross compliance rules into plain, non-technical English and making them much shorter. The feedback from farmers was very positive.

*** UK – Accessing claim data and maps.** Displaying electronic maps of farms would be appreciated by Farmers. It took a long time to overcome the technical difficulty of importing IACS claim data from the paying agency into the platform. However, we eventually achieved this and the feedback from farmers was very positive about being able to view, amend and save the claim data and maps of their farms. At present, the paying agency does not provide electronic maps of farms but most farmers would like it.

*** Lithuania – Collection of experienced team is a crucial step.**



2. PRELIMINARY ACTIVITIES

- **2.1. Setting up of a Local Team** in charge of implementing the Pilot. The Local Team should be composed of different members; and their role in the Pilot implementation should be well defined. For instance: 1) Pilot Coordinator for the overall management and correct development of the differences phases of the Pilot; 2) ICT specialist for providing technical support; 3) Facilitators for the correct development of activities with pilot participants; 4) other staff for specific support in the organization of activities with pilot participants (e.g. training, testing, evaluation); etc.
- **2.2. Setting up of internal procedures** (e.g. coordination and communication, technical support, etc.). The Local Team should establish its own internal procedures in order to ensure the proper development of the Pilot implementation in its territory.
- **2.3. Testing of the RECAP Platform** by the local team. The Local Team should run preliminary testing of the RECAP Platform which consists in reviewing its functions in order to make sure that the adaptation made at local level properly fits with the initial requirements and the local specifications.
- **2.4. Training of the Pilot Team.** All members of the Pilot Team should be trained to the RECAP Platform in order to ensure that they can properly play their role in the Pilot implementation (e.g. Training Sessions, Testing Activities, etc.).

>> TESTIMONIES & GOOD PRACTICES from Pilot Teams:

* **Spain – Early involvement of Farmers.** Farmers should be involvement, as end-users of the Platform, from the very beginning of any process of deployment of the RECAP Platform and collect their needs. For instance in Spain, Farmers demand more precision information in relation to cross-compliance requirements of their parcels. Moreover, for improving the benefits of the RECAP Platform for users: the Platform should be more automatic than it is today, it is needed to develop simple mass importing instruments, as well as utilities for mass advice from agricultural consultants to farmers.

* **Serbia – Clear division of labour.** A clear division of labour and work for future pilot activities is recommended for creating the strategy that will make the RECAP pilot implementation successful.

Firstly, all pilot activities were split up into different tasks: technical, communicational and organisational. Different members of the team were responsible for different tasks according to their specialisation. At the end, there were members in charge of the technical issues (platform development, improvements, communication with the development team, bugs reporting...), members in charge of communication with participants (especially Farmers) and members responsible for all organisational issues and pilot in general. Throughout the duration of the pilot, communication within the Pilot Team was transparent and feedback circled in two-way manner.

* **Lithuania – Team members awareness of their exact roles ensures timely execution of tasks.**

* **UK – Preliminary testing by the Local Team.** Testing of the RECAP platform was very important as it identified bugs and potential improvements. It also helped us understand how users will use the platform better.

* **UK – Practical training of the Local Team.** Our aim was to develop a platform that is very simple-to-use and intuitive, so that a detailed user manual is not required. In a similar way, our pilot team was trained on the platform by requiring them to enter the details of a farm they know into the platform so that they could see how the platform could help a farmer in a practical way.



3. RECRUITMENT & TRAINING ACTIVITIES

- **3.1. Definition of the Local Training Strategy.** The Pilot Team should define its own Local Training Strategy in order to ensure the training of its Pilot Participants on the correct use of the RECAP Platform and its functionalities; and produce the corresponding Local Training Materials in Local Language. Local Training Strategy should specify both, the type of Training Materials (e.g. User Guides and Manuals, Videos, etc.) that will be produced, and the type of Training Activities (e.g. General Workshops, Specific Training Sessions, Individual Trainings, etc.) that will be organized in its territory; depending on the Pilot case and its Pilot Participants.
- **3.2. Recruitment of pilot participants.** The Pilot Team should i) define its own methodology for recruiting its Pilot Participants (e.g. Sending of invitation, Dissemination Workshops, Contact with local stakeholders and networks, etc.); ii) inform the potential Pilot Participants about the RECAP Platform and the specific Pilot activities (e.g. training, testing, evaluation) and its timeline; and iii) collect the agreement of Pilot Participants through the Consent Form in the RECAP Platform during their registration.
- **3.3. Training of pilot participants.** The Pilot Team should i) organize the Training Activities (e.g. General Workshops, Specific Training Sessions, Individual Trainings, etc.) for the different end-user groups according to its Local Training Strategy in order to ensure the proper access to the RECAP Platform by all the Pilot Participants and in all the devices that will be used in the frame of the Pilots (e.g. PCs, tablets and smartphones); ii) train the Pilot Participants on the use of the RECAP Platform and its functionalities; and iii) revise and get feedback on the Local Training Materials.

>> TESTIMONIES & GOOD PRACTICES from Pilot Teams:

*** Serbia – Activities for Farmers in accordance to their agenda and based on their needs. Specific attention should be paid to activities oriented to Farmers, which is perceived as the most sensitive group of pilot participants due to their low IT skills and their busy schedules on the farm.** The Serbian Local Team conducted the following actions in order to overcome potential barriers. Firstly, taking into consideration not only the farming calendar, but also their local market and other sales activities, Trainings for Farmers were organised in accordance to their agendas. Moreover, two workshops were organized at the occasion of the organic producers' gatherings - Forum for organic production and Biofest. These events were selected since it was the opportunity to gather, inform and involve the majority of Organic Farmers in the region of interest. Secondly, after workshops, Local Team divided Farmers into 2 groups: low and better IT skilled Farmers. First group - the most proactive Farmers, were included into pre-pilot activities for the pre-testing of the platform. Their feedback was used for the additional improvements of the RECAP platform. Further, they spread their feedback to the whole Organic Farmers community. For the low IT skilled group, if it was needed, individual trainings were organised via phone. At the end, such division of Farmers by their IT skills was used for the organisation of testing activities, as well.

*** Lithuania – Testing IT sources before training sessions allows avoid troubles during session or take decisions to postpone them.**

*** UK – Practical approach with Farmers – neither detailed user manual nor deep training.** Our aim was to develop a platform that is very simple-to-use and intuitive, so that training and a detailed user manual is not required. The feedback from farmers supported this approach and we doubt that many of them would have read a manual if it had been provided.



4. FILLING IN THE FARM DETAILS

- 4.1. Selection of Farm data used. Depending on its specific situation (e.g. availability of data from the current annual declaration, connexion with other software, etc.), the Pilot Team should work on the collection and transfer of the necessary Farm Details and Information (e.g. annual declaration of Farmers for BPS – Basic Payment Scheme, annual declaration of Organic Farmers for OSOS – Organic Subsidy/Organic Certification) into the RECAP Platform in order to properly start and run the Testing Activities.
- 4.2. Collection and transfer of Farm data.
- 4.3. Connexion with other software.

>> TESTIMONIES & GOOD PRACTICES from Pilot Teams:

* **UK – Automatic importation of Farm data.** The functionality to automatically import a farmer’s IACS data into the platform was critical, as we doubt many farmers would have manually inputted their data or used the platform.

* **UK – Connection would increase the usefulness.** The usefulness of the platform for farmers could be increased if data from other software could be easily imported, including from farm Management software (such as Gatekeeper and Muddy Boots) or from other sources (such as from the Government on issues such as soil erosivity or agri-environment priorities).

* **Spain – Connectivity and massive importation.** It important to ensure the connectivity with other digital platforms used by Farmers for avoiding multiple filling of similar data, as well as the massive importation of farm data. In Navarra, Farmers are already using other digital platforms that provide them with others technical services such as traceability, advice, accounting, etc. Consequently, the connectivity and the development of simple mass importing instruments would be very important for facilitating and simplifying the use of the RECAP Platform.

* **Serbia – Continual communication, testing and improvements.** Details on the RECAP Platform were reviewed together with the representative of end-user’s group before the pilot testing phase, in order to make the RECAP platform more useful to them. In the case of the Serbian Pilot, there was no transfer of data – the creation of farm profiles and the filling of the necessary information were done by Organic Farmers with the support of Certification Bodies. However, reviews were performed through continual communication and brief testing sessions during the pre-testing period (e.g. via phone with Farmers, during meetings with PA and CB). Later, these sessions led to small modifications and improvements on the platform. At the end, all these changes make the RECAP pilot implementation successful.

* **Lithuania – Documentation of all calculations performed allows to save time when the additional „viewing angle“ is requested.**

* **Greece – Modification of the database.** No integration was needed. The DB was modified in order to meet the data import requirements.

* **Greece – Pre-filled boxes.** Some questions in the checklist were pre-filled before the pilot implementation.

5. TESTING ACTIVITIES WITH PILOT PARTICIPANTS

- **5.1. Definition of the Local Testing Strategy (Operative procedure).** The Pilot Team should define its own Local Testing Strategy according to its own context (e.g. local specificities, the type of the organizations involved in the Pilot Teams, etc.) in order to ensure the testing of the RECAP Platform and its functionalities by the different target groups in its territory. Local Testing Strategy should define i) the exact scope of the Pilot (e.g. location and geographical scope, pilot scenario, end-users groups and number of pilot participants directly involved, target outcomes, etc.); and ii) the operative procedures (e.g. methodology, planning, etc.) for organizing the Testing Activities to be run by the different end-user groups (e.g. Farmers, Organic Farmers, Agricultural Consultants, Inspectors, Certification Bodies and Paying Agencies).
- **5.2. Testing of the RECAP Platform by the different end-users.** The Pilot Team should organize the Testing Activities (e.g. Specific Testing Sessions, Individual Interviews, etc.) and the corresponding tasks (e.g. Cross-Compliance Checks, On the Spot Checks, etc.) according to its Local Testing Strategy, in order to ensure the correct testing of the Modules and Functionalities of the RECAP Platform by the different end-user groups in its territory.

>> TESTIMONIES & GOOD PRACTICES from Pilot Teams:

* **Serbia – Categorisation of end-users.** Categorisation of end-users is recommended for overcoming low IT skills among Farmers. The Serbian Local Team categorized Organic Farmers into 2 different types of end-users of the RECAP Platform according to their IT skills – low and better IT skilled group – in order to face the biggest barrier that was foreseen from the beginning of the project. Training activities and communication with participants were based on this categorization. For instance, Training Activities for the Farmers with low IT skills were deeper, longer and were repeated if necessary (continual communication via phone). Moreover, during the Testing phase, these 2 groups started testing one after another. While, low IT skilled group started testing in March 2018, better IT skilled Farmers started in May 2018. In this way, Farmers with low IT skills managed to test the platform properly and the ones with better IT skills kept their interest to sustain in pilot until the end.

* **Spain – Wide evaluation from each end-user group.** The RECAP Platform should be evaluated in terms of functionality and usability by each end-users profile. Farmers see the RECAP Platform as a source of valuable information that the Paying Agency can offer to them. For Agricultural Consultants, it consists in an instrument of communication to provide information to farmers, which offers the opportunity to be close at the most important moments throughout the productive cycle of the crops. Then, for inspectors, it is an instrument for time saving and improving the quality of inspections thanks to the contribution of Sentinel. Finally, for the Paying Agency, it is an opportunity to improve the fundamental objective of cross-compliance and the agricultural sustainability.

* **Lithuania – Mobile app issues.** When we faced issues with mobile apps in the fields, a quick decision was taken to use a web application instead. One inspector was assigned responsible for the check of daily situation.

* **UK – Longer period of time for testing activities with Farmers.** We would have liked to have more time to test the different functions of the platform with farmers. Given the time we had available, the platform was not used in a pro-active way with the pilot farmers. For example, the notifications function could be used to notify farmers of important dates for cross compliance and prompt them to use the platform to upload evidence that they have complied. Other data, such as the NDVI data layer could be used before the time when farmers sow their crops to show them where crop growth is restricted.

* **Greece – Inspectors vs Platform.** Training sessions with the inspectors at OPEKEPE premises in order to demonstrate the platform prior to the OTSC.



6. EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

- **6.1. Definition of the Local Evaluation Strategy.** The Pilot Team should define its own Local Evaluation Strategy, adapted to its Local Testing Strategy, in order to ensure the appropriate evaluation of the RECAP Solution and the experiences of the Pilot Participants in its territory. Local Evaluation Strategy should specify i) the means of collecting feedback (e.g. Google Forms, Own Evaluation Forms, etc.) from Pilot Participants; and ii) the type of Evaluation Activities (e.g. Individual Interviews, Focus Groups, etc.) to be performed with the different end-user groups.
- **6.2. Collecting feedback from Pilot Participants (e.g. Evaluation Questionnaires).** The Pilot Team should collect feedback from Pilot Participants directly involved in its Pilot – covering all the end-user groups. The collection could be done by asking them to fill out Forms (e.g. Google Forms, Own Evaluation Forms, etc.); and, in some cases, through the organization of Individual Interviews in order to guaranty a precise collection of feedback.
- **6.3. Précising the main findings from the different end-user groups (e.g. Focus Groups).** In case of the Pilot Team do not collect feedback from Pilot Participants in the frame of close and individual interviews, it should also organize Focus Groups in order to discuss deeply and validate insights and observations from the different end-user groups.

>> TESTIMONIES & GOOD PRACTICES from Pilot Teams:

* **Serbia – Evaluation Sessions - interviews.** A good evaluation strategy is crucial to collect actual feedback from end-users. The Serbian Local Team needed to be very flexible in order to face the critical point of a successful collection – the busy schedule of all pilot participants, in particular farmers. Therefore, every Evaluation Activity was performed in accordance to the agenda of participant. On the other hand, the individual interview/one-to-one conversation is the best way to obtain deep insight from end-users. As a result, the Serbian Pilot Team selected representative participants for the Evaluation Sessions involving participants from the different end-users group, participants covering the large range of users (e.g. IT skills, age, active/passive users), as well as some participants from the co-production phase. The Serbian Local Team organized interviews in one-to-one manner together with testing session and questionnaires collection. In this way, the Evaluation was performed completely – the testing was real, the feedback was collected (questionnaires) and the deep insight on the usage of the RECAP platform was recorded (Focus Groups).

* **Spain – Valuable inputs from Focus Group.** Focus group provides much more valuable inputs than Questionnaires. Questionnaires are an imprecise instrument and very general, and do not provide so much useful information. The Focus Group has been much more valuable for collecting the opinion on the value of the Platform for each of type of users, especially in the case of farmers. Indeed, the opinions of some participants are inspiring for the rest, and the discussion of the meeting allows identifying the most valuable aspects and the most significant barriers.

* **UK – Individual interviews just after testing to ensure feedback from farmers.** Feedback from the farmers was collected face-to-face, just after they had used the platform so that i) its use was fresh in their minds and ii) feedback was guaranteed and we did not think many farmers would fill in evaluation forms. This approach also gave us the opportunity to show farmers how the platform worked if they had had any problems with it.

2. Services and outcomes for end-users.

The RECAP Platform has been built as a tailor-made solution and a supporting tool for **1) delivering services that enable the improved implementation of the CAP** – cross compliance and greening inspections; and assisting Farmers, Agricultural consultants, Inspectors and Paying Agencies in their respective CAP obligations; and **2) delivering services to support the administrative monitoring of the organic subsidy scheme in Serbia**; and assisting Organic Farmers, Certification Bodies and Paying Agency in their respective Organic Certification (OC) and Organic Subsidies (OS) obligations.

Based on the results and conclusions from the Pilot Activities carried out in the 5 participating territories, the below elements are the main ones outlined as important and successful by the Pilot Participants and the Pilot Teams.

This section of the report presents the main **services and features** offered by the RECAP Platform to the different groups of end-users.

Indeed, those aspects are the ones that users may take **benefit from** the use of the RECAP Platform; and the basis for fostering the wider take-up of the RECAP Platform.

2.1 For Farmers / Organic Farmers

The RECAP Platform offers to Farmers **an assisting service to comply with regulations imposed by the CAP (or organic subsidy scheme in Serbia)** by i) facilitating the interpretation of complex regulations and ii) providing alerts on potential breaches.

Benefits for **Farmers** are:

1. Facilitate understanding and increase awareness of Cross-Compliance rules:

- > Simplify the interpretation of complex regulations;
- > Provide information on requirements (e.g. CC and Greening) for each specific parcel;

2. Ease compliance with the Cross-Compliance rules:

- > Ease data management;
- > Provide reminders and decrease the likelihood of breaking CC rules;
- > Provide early alerts on potential non-conformities;
- > Provide personalized information (e.g. list of CC rules for the farm);
- > Allow storage of CC rule documents (e.g. geo-tagged photos);

3. Provide a direct means of communication with Paying Agencies;

4. Give assistance from the RST in self-checking compliance and for monitoring crops:

- > Provide maps and layers;
- > Provide information about plants' vegetation (vegetation indices);

5. Reduce administrative burden for Farmers

- > Time saving for preparing Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) application;
- > Time saving for preparing the documents for checking adherence CC rules;

Benefits for **Organic Farmers** are:

1. Facilitate understanding of Compliance with Organic Certification (OC) and Organic Subsidies (OS);

2. Make more efficient the processes:

- > Make the processes easier and less time-consuming for Organic Farmers;
- > Simplify the document management – reducing documentation work

3. Support and help with the following of the Organic requirements;

4. Provide a direct means of communication with Certification Bodies;

5. Give assistance from the RST in the application process and for monitoring crops:

- > Provide maps and layers;
- > Provide information about plants' vegetation (vegetation indices);

6. Reduce administrative burden for Organic Farmers

- > Time saving for presenting compliance with Organic Subsidy Organic Certification (OSOS);
- > Ease processes of Organic Subsidy Provision and Organic Certification;



>> Specific features for Farmers / Organic Farmers - turning Cross-Compliance / Organic Certification and Organic Subsidies Compliance into an easy task.

- **Cross Compliance Rules-Checklist / Data Management*** allows to:
 - ✓ View a list of all relevant CC rules / Organic Certification requirements* applicable to Farmer's / Organic Farmer's* fields;
 - ✓ Have an overview of Farmer's / Organic Farmer's* "obligations" and retrieve a total summary of what the Farmer / Organic Farmer* should do in order to be compliant with the CC rules / Organic Certification requirements*;
 - ✓ Check if the Farmer's / Organic Farmer's* declared sub parcels are compliant with the greening rules.
- **Farm Management** allows to:
 - ✓ Keep records of all fields-related information;
 - ✓ Register all the Farmer's / Organic Farmer's* purchases and have detailed tracking of quantities of all inputs and outputs;
 - ✓ Use reminders to schedule events or see notifications for events that have been scheduled by inspectors / certification bodies* and track them on the map.
- **Maps** allows to:
 - ✓ Check the Farmer's / Organic Farmer's* compliance;
 - ✓ Insert the Farmer's / Organic Farmer's* fields' data into RECAP and have access to information related to CC rules / Organic Certification requirements through the use of the RECAP Remote Sensing solution.
- **Others Features** available are:
 - ✓ Document uploads;
 - ✓ Direct communication with public authorities / certification bodies*;
 - ✓ Access to useful materials uploaded by public authorities;
 - ✓ View prior declarations;
 - ✓ Support multiple-user roles.
- **Mobile App** allows to:
 - ✓ Offline usage in the field;
 - ✓ Upload time-stamped and geo-tagged photos;
 - ✓ Receive notifications/ reminders;
 - ✓ View CC rules checklist.

* Specific to Organic Farmers or Compliance with Organic Certification (OC) Organic Subsidies (OS)



2.2 For Agricultural Consultants

In addition to facilities offered to Farmers, the RECAP Platform also offers to Agricultural Consultants the possibility **to develop new added value services** based on the combination of the i) access to available data – based on security and privacy policies – in the Platform; and the ii) use of the components (e.g. Remote Sensing product) of the RECAP Platform.

Benefits for Agricultural Consultants are:

1. **Give access to data available in the Platform;**
2. **Give access to tools, libraries and communication under an open approach;**
3. **Give possibility to develop new services to support Farmer.**

>> Specific features for Agricultural Consultants – for transforming knowledge into added value services.

- **Software Development Kit** allows to:
 - ✓ *Use the SDK tool to develop the Agricultural Consultant's own services under an open approach, search RECAP data, integrate search results into the Agricultural Consultant's applications and manage RECAP configuration and objects.*
- **Management system** allows to:
 - ✓ *Manage all the Agricultural Consultant's clients' farms in one place and have all data at the Agricultural Consultant's fingertips;*
 - ✓ *Deliver improved advisory services customised to fit the Agricultural Consultant's clients' needs.*
- **Other features** available are:
 - ✓ *Document uploads;*
 - ✓ *Direct communication with public authorities;*
 - ✓ *View farmer's prior declarations;*
 - ✓ *View farmer's CC rules-checklist.*



2.3 For Inspectors / Certification Bodies / Paying Agencies

Regarding **Inspectors**, the RECAP Platform offers them **an assisting service to optimize inspection processes** by i) facilitating the work of inspectors; and ii) reducing the cost for the administration.

Benefits for Inspectors are:

1. Make more transparent the Cross-Compliance procedure:

- > Give a direct way of communication with Farmers – allowing providing them with precise information about CC requirements for their parcels, and raising their awareness on CC;
- > Give possibility to check Farmers' Work Diaries;
- > Make visible every steps of the control process.

2. Make more efficient the CC inspection processes:

- > Allow controlling some requirements remotely – increasing the remote sensing checks and reducing the On-The-Spot-Checks (OTSC);
- > Time saving with farmers since the OTSC inspectors focus only on problematic issues;
- > Increase of inspections' speed – accelerating the performance of OTSC.

3. Give assistance from the RST in operational cross-compliance checks:

- > Provide comfortable maps;
- > Use of Sentinel indexes;
- > Support for the identification of crops;
- > Support for the cross-compliance checks (e.g. erosion sensitive areas, burning, etc.).

4. Reduce administrative burden for Inspectors:

- > Time saving for inspecting a Farmer;
- > Increase the number of inspected plot per day;
- > Reduce the need of human resources;
- > Reduce the use of paper by eliminating the paper documents to be filled in.

Regarding **Certification Bodies**, the RECAP Platform offers them **an assisting service to support Organic Farmers with their Organic Certification obligations**.

Benefits for Certification Bodies are:

1. Support and help with Organic Certification (OC):

- > Facilitate the Farmer's compliance monitoring – good preparation tool for on-site control;
- > Make more efficient the process of Organic Certification.

2. Give assistance from the RST in operational compliance to Organic Certification.

- > Provide comfortable maps;
- > Use of Sentinel indexes.

3. Reduce administrative burden for Certification Bodies:

- > Time saving for monitoring Farmer's Compliance.



Regarding **Paying Agencies**, the RECAP Platform offers them the possibility **to increase efficiency and reduce the cost of the controls** for cross-compliance (or compliance with organic subsidies in Serbia) through i) the use of open satellite data; ii) user-generated data (geo-referenced and time-stamped photos) provided by farmers; and iii) the use of a mobile application that allows inspectors to bring all relevant information about an audit at their fingertips and conduct the inspection process according to a guidance protocol based on checklists that speeds up the process and increase the transparency of compliance monitoring procedures related to CAP.

Benefits for Paying Agencies are:

1. Make more efficient the Cross-Compliance monitoring:

- > Improve communication with farmers; PA are able to keep farmers informed of any new legislation framework in a better, secure and quick way;
- > Enhance transparency of the control process;
- > Make process more optimized by refusing paper documents;
- > Increase the number of checks performed remotely and the inspections' speed.

2. Give assistance from the RST in operational cross-compliance checks:

- > Provide comfortable maps;
- > Use of Sentinel indexes;
- > Allow controlling the majority of GAEC requirements, also mowing of pastures and crop diversification.

3. Reduce administrative cost for Paying Agencies:

- > Reduce the need of in-field visits;
- > Reduce the use of paper and the administrative burden;
- > Reduce the cost of the monitor of CAP obligations;
- > Better allocation of human resources.

Benefits for the Serbian Paying Agencies are:

1. Support and help with Organic Subsidies (OS):

- > Provide a good quality of the parcel geometry drawn by Farmers;
- > Time saving for monitoring of Organic Subsidies (OS);
- > Make more efficient the administrative control.

2. Give assistance from the RST in compliance with Organic Subsidies requirements;

3. Reduce administrative cost by reducing the cost of the inspecting of Organic Subsidy (OS) Declaration.

>> Specific features for Inspectors / Certification Bodies / Paying Agencies – making easy Cross-Compliance / Organic Certification and Organic Subsidies monitor inspection.

- **Inspector Management** allows to:
 - ✓ View the list of the registered inspectors;
 - ✓ Assign to each farmer an inspector that would be responsible to perform the inspection.

- **Managing inspections** allows to:
 - ✓ View the Cross Compliance rules-checklist of the farmer inspected;
 - ✓ Have access to all the needed farm-related data;
 - ✓ Track farmer's inputs and outputs of farming with a few clicks.

- **Maps** allows to:
 - ✓ Select a bounding box on the map from the area you are interested in;
 - ✓ Have access to the farmer's fields' information generated by the Remote Sensing tool and external data before and during an inspection.

- **Other features** available are:
 - ✓ Document uploads;
 - ✓ Communication with farmers;
 - ✓ Managing users' accounts;
 - ✓ Access to previous inspections history.

- **Mobile App** allows to:
 - ✓ Offline usage in the field;
 - ✓ Upload time-stamped and geo-tagged photos;
 - ✓ Inspection scheduler;
 - ✓ Managing inspections.

3. Lessons Learnt for future applications.

This section of the report presents for each participating country the main Lessons Learnt based on the deployment of the RECAP Platform in their territory.

Depending on the profiles and competences of the Pilot organizations, as well all the scenario and focus of the Pilots; these Lessons Learnt could be more centred on specifics insights from i) the use of the RECAP Platform by end-users, or ii) the deployment of the RECAP Platform by the Pilot Teams.

Nonetheless, all those perspectives are valuable insights to take into consideration for future applications of the RECAP Platform in the 5 participating countries (Greece, Spain, Lithuania, U.K. and Serbia), as well as in any other territory.

3.1 Lessons Learnt in Greece

The deployment of the RECAP Platform in Greece by the Local Team, as well as its use by end-users; lead to the following insights and lessons learnt:

>> Lessons learnt from the use of the RECAP by end-users:

- **Self-assessment component.** The self-assessment component for the Farmers and the Agricultural Consultants is highly desirable for the Agricultural Consultants but not so desirable by the Farmers.
- **Inspectors.** Inspectors have very much appreciated the concept of RECAP but the pilot had many practical problems so not so well accepted.
- **Annual app's modifications.** CAP and cross compliance change constantly so annual app's modifications and updates are required.
- **More schemes.** More schemes should be added in RECAP.
- **Fine-tuning.** Fine tuning of the RECAP Platform is necessary to be used for production by the PA.
- **Enhancement and Integration.** Enhancement with further functionalities and possible integration with existing systems should be considered.

>> Lessons learnt from the deployment of the RECAP Platform by the Pilot Team:

- **More pilot time.** More pilot time would be preferable.



3.2 Lessons Learnt in Spain

The deployment of the RECAP Platform in Navarra by the Local Team, as well as its use by end-users; lead to the following insights and lessons learnt:

>> Lessons learnt from the use by end-users:

- **Simple and highly automated applications.** Farmers demand simple and highly automated applications, which allow them to receive accurate information about cross-compliance rules of their parcels.
- **Smooth communication.** Agricultural Consultants need the RECAP Platform to allow them communicating in an agile way with the groups of farmers they advise. The platform is well prepared for this function and the message system can be very powerful and practical.
- **Massive import of data.** The massive import of both, cross-compliance requirements and parcels, is essential in to order to facilitate the usability of the RECAP Platform.
- **Connectivity with other applications.** Connectivity with other applications is also an important feature that the RECAP Platform will have to develop in the future, especially with tools of traceability and farm management already used by farmers.
- **RS tool and Sentinel images.** The information offered through the Remote Sensing tool is highly valued by farmers, and open a range of services of great utility for the future – not only for the identification of crops, but also for assessing risks of erosion, water contamination, biodiversity, etc. that are related to cross-compliance of the CAP.
- **Time and resources saving.** The cross-compliance inspections can be done with a significant saving of time and resources thanks to the RECAP Platform, especially through its functionality of crop identification based on Sentinel satellite images.
- **Adaptation for the most professional Farmers.** The Platform should be adapted to the most professional farmers, which are the most interested in the RECAP Platform due to the complexity of their farms – with a large number of different parcels and therefore a large number of cross-compliance and greening requirements to comply with. For this reason, the RECAP Platform should be adapted to their administrative structures and their management systems from the corresponding region or Paying Agency. For instance, in Navarra, it is important that, on one hand, a Farmer could manage several CAP declarations, and, on the other hand, a parcel can be composed of several cadastral units. These improvements would help and facilitate the data entry and the use of the RECAP Platform. In any case, reports must be by cadastral parcel and CAP declarant, like they are defined at this moment.

>> Lessons learnt from the deployment of the RECAP Platform by the Pilot Team:

- **Further adaptation.** It is a first version of a line of services related to CAP that should be adapted to the situation in our Regions (Navarra and Spain).
- **Big Data (Sentinel)** is a new opportunity to create added value for users, farmers, advisors or paying agencies.

3.3 Lessons Learnt in Lithuania

The deployment of the RECAP Platform in Lithuania by the Local Team, as well as its use by end-users; lead to the following insights and lessons learnt:

>> Lessons learnt from the use of the RECAP by end-users:

- **Integration and constant update.** The integration of the RECAP Platform with other already existing tools (e.g. IKMIS, e-GEBA) is being considered; and constantly updated is needed because of the continually change of national CC requirements.
- **Remote Sensing tool.** The RS tool could be widely used for development of services of precision farming.
- **Interactive consultations.** In addition to the regulation of cross-compliance, the RECAP Platform could also be used in a future for receiving interactive consultations by Farmers.
- **Coverage of the whole territory.** The active map should be extended to the whole territory of Lithuania since other farmer data is not a sufficient motivation.
- **Further development.** Further development would be necessary in order to i) match to eligibility requirements - mowing, start/finish of grazing, etc., ii) create attractive work diaries and iii) upgrade the RECAP Platform.

>> Lessons learnt from the deployment of the RECAP Platform by the Pilot Team – from the Farmers' Advisory point of view:

- **Informing pilot participants.** Pilot participants must be continuously informed about project activities in order to maintain their interest in the implementation of the project activities.
- **Involving specialists from the beginning** of the project activities.
- **Early communication.** To communicate with project partners and raise problems as early as possible.

>> Lessons learnt from the deployment of the RECAP Platform by the Pilot Team – from the Inspection/PA point of view:

SUCCESS –PLANNED:

- **Experienced team and awareness of the roles.** Collection of experienced team and team members awareness of their exact roles ensures timely execution of tasks;
- **Clear and feasible planning.** A clear and feasible planning of the various management stages prevents possible problems;
- **Having B scenario** helps make quick decisions when troubles occur with the main activities planned.

SUCCESS –UNPLANNED:

- **Issues list.** Maintenance of issues list (Taiga) allows quick response;
- **Selection of farmers.** Selection of appropriate farmers enables better estimation of overall pilot results;
- **Use of available IT sources** prevents the work from stopping;
- **Daily team check-ins** remove blockers efficiently.

FAILURE – PLANNED:



- **Additional buffer** should be built into the schedule for duties where at least 2 responsible parts are involved;
- **Documentation of all calculations performed** allows to save time when the additional „viewing angle“ is requested;
- **Learning workforce with experienced people.** Combining a learning workforce with experienced people is tremendously powerful.

FAILURE – UNPLANNED:

- **Change team members** because of a lack of skills/illness can affect the timely achievement of goals;
- **Testing IT sources before training sessions** allows avoid troubles during session or take decisions to postpone them;
- Request to fix the situation of all fields (photos) allows creating a solid database.



3.4 Lessons Learnt in U.K.

The deployment of the RECAP Platform in England by the Local Team, as well as its use by end-users; lead to the following insights and lessons learnt:

>> Lessons learnt from the use by end-users – Farmers liked :

- **Easy-to-use & intuitive navigation.** The platform looks simple but it took a lot of development and developer time to achieve this. The RECAP Project could have spent more time on this so that the platform is even better.
- **Notifications & reminders.** It gave farmers a simple way of interacting with the paying agency, such as recording compliance by uploading geo-tagged and dated photos and documents, and by exchanging messages.
- **Having latest rules on line & in plain language.** It gave paying agencies a new way of interacting with farmers to increase compliance (and save costs). It has the potential to transform the way rules / regulations (and knowledge and research) is transmitted to farmers. It could be tailored to individual fields.
- **Ability to import farm map & data.** This is key functionality for farmers. Many farmers would have probably not manually inputted their data or used the platform without it. Farmers would greatly value if IACS RLE1 forms (Rural Land and Entitlements) forms for mapping changes could be uploaded onto the platform and proposed mapping changes or land cover changes could be sent to the Farmer which he could then accept if he agrees that these have been carried out correctly. This would make a process that is very time consuming and has scope for inaccuracies more efficient. This could be a two-way process between farmers and PAs.
- **Ability to upload documents & photos.** This may appear very simple functionality but it is important and was liked by the farmers. Clear rules on how a paying agency can see, access and use the documents and photos will be needed if this functionality is used in a real-life situation.
- **Access to satellite data, especially NDVI for crops.** Most farmers do not have easy access to easy-to-use satellite data. The pilot exercise showed them what is possible and how they can use the data to improve their compliance and also productivity. Data that is relevant to agri-environment management could greatly improve environmental outcomes, by i) improving the environmental targeting of applications and ii) identifying environmental issues early (such as risk of soil erosion) and iii) sending farmers notifications on when and what to do in terms of management of environmental features.

>> Lessons learnt from the deployment of the RECAP Platform by the Pilot Team:

- **Convergence of competences.** In terms of project design and management, the approach (combining IT, paying agencies, agricultural consultants) to design the system worked well. This is the means of developing a useful platform.
- **Further communication.** The iterative design process worked well. It could have been improved by better and earlier and constant communication.
- **Clearer idea.** The Pilot Team would love to redo project as could it be done faster and better, now it has a clearer idea of the design it wants and where the major challenges are.
- **Early flow chart for testing.** Very early in the project, all countries could have produced a flow chart of the process they plan to follow to test the platform, so that the pilot teams share ideas / best practice / coordinate better.

3.5 Lessons Learnt in Serbia

The deployment of the RECAP Platform in Serbia by the Local Team, as well as its use by end-users; lead to the following insights and lessons learnt:

>> Lessons learnt from the use by end-users:

- **Spatial & RS component.** Recognized potential for further exploitation of the Spatial & RS component. 4 out of 5 pilot participants find the RS component as the added value of the RECAP platform.
- **Useful preparation tool.** The RECAP Platform is a very useful preparation tool for the on-site control for the Certification Bodies.
- **More efficient processes.** More efficient processes of organic subsidy provision/organic certification through the digital support of the administrative control.
- **Time saving.** According to the Serbian PA, the RECAP Platform makes the process of organic subsidy provision 20-25 less time-consuming.
- **Simplification of the document management.** 90% of users confirmed that RECAP simplifies the overall document management.

>> Lessons learnt from the deployment of the RECAP Platform by the Pilot Team:

- **Overcoming low IT skills & busy schedule of Farmers.** The engagement of Organic Farmers have been ensured thanks to the 1) categorization of Organic Farmers by their IT skills into 2 different types of end-users of the RECAP platform – low and better IT skilled groups, and basing all the project activities – training, communication with participants and testing phase – on this categorization; and the 2) adaptation of the pilot activities according to Organic Farmers' agenda.