



IFSA 2016 Symposium Abstract Submission Template

**Symposium Theme:**

5. Enabling governance, policy and institutions

Number and title of workshop:

Workshop 5.4

Exploring farmers' conditions, strategies and performances in a context of multi-dimensional policy requirements, market imperfections and globalisation: Towards a conceptual mode

Title of offered paper:

Adaptation strategies and performances of three producer groups during times of change: lessons learned from the application of the Conditions-Strategies-Performances (CSP) concept in three case studies

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Abstract: (maximum 400 words)

With this paper, we want to contribute to the operationalisation of the theoretical CSP framework, inspired by Porter (1990), by testing its application in three case studies. The testing is based on data from the ongoing EU funded HealthyGrowth and SUCCESS projects.

In the analysis, we will

- identify the most significant changes over time in relevant market, regulatory, institutional and territorial conditions,
- assess the social, economic and other *resources* available among different groups of primary producers,
- relate conditions and resources to the (adaptation) *strategies* pursued (e.g. regarding the management of the chain and risks), and
- explore the (potential) impacts of the resulting (or expected) changes on social, economic and environmental performances.

The analysis aims at capturing the interrelationships between external and internal conditions, (adaptation) strategies and (sustainability) performance. A first important step in the analysis is to express conditions, strategies and performances in absolute and/or relative terms, and to relate them to different points in time. This will then allow us in a second step to relate the producer groups' strategies to change in (framework) conditions on the one hand and to performances on the other. The three illustrative cases are a grain farmers' association in Lower Saxony, Germany,

a group of carp producers using traditional ponds in Franconia, Germany, and a beef farmers' association in Uppland, Sweden. In all three cases, attention will also be paid to relate (adaptation) strategies to decision-making and to identify limitations in available data and check possibilities to overcome them.

The first assessment of the application of the CSP concept indicates that, in principle, the approach provides a suitable holistic conceptual framework for the analysis of the interrelationships between conditions, strategies and performances. The main challenge in a wider application will be to operationalise the framework with sufficiently meaningful indicators and data.

Particular challenges are:

- the apprehending of conditions and effects at multiple scales (individual business, producers group, territorial, national, international) and to address inter-scale effects;
- the capturing of 'performance(s)' as this needs to comprise the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development as well as (potential) trade-offs and synergies;
- the potentially weak connections between conditions and strategies, strategies and actions, and between strategies and performances (and again all at multiple scales);
- the connections between strategies and performances, in particular, requires a number of assumptions because actions taken by farmers will need to be related to a variety of drivers often emerging at different times.

With our discussion, we aim to highlight the challenges that we need to overcome when applying the CSP concept on a larger scale. We want to highlight the particular importance of business-level actions and their dynamics as an additional level in the analysis. Moreover, our paper will contribute to the identification of measurable and comparable performance indicators, which also includes the question of meaningful reference systems for assessing 'performance'.

Keywords: (maximum of 6 keywords)

agriculture, aquaculture, conditions, adaptation strategies, sustainability, performance indicators

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