



## COOPERATION AGREEMENT AREPO-ERG SYAL

The following Agreement is hereby concluded between

**the European Research Group on Localised Agrifood Systems (ERG SYAL)**

represented by its coordinator

- hereinafter referred to as the "ERG SYAL" –

The ERG SYAL gathers together a great number of research institutions from different European countries with the **following missions:**

- **To develop scientific research** applied to the local Agrifood development.
- **To develop teaching and training** oriented to the enhancement of knowledge and skills in this field.
- **To provide a scientific basis to analyse and to give information** on sustainable local development strategies to the public opinion.
- **To provide technical assistance** for the design of public policies, legislative regulations, public and private strategies and other types of frameworks for cooperation and negotiation between local actors.
- **To serve as a platform for launching initiatives and projects for further European and international cooperation** (for instance, the European Research Framework Program) on sustainable local development activities and Agri-food systems.
- **To strengthen the cooperation with non-European countries** to develop research applied to the problems of Localised Agri-food systems.
- **To promote the publication and diffusion of relevant information and research results** for the welfare of the civil society.

and

**the Association of European Region for Products of Origin (AREPO)**

Headquarter:

Rue François de Sourdis 14

33077 Bordeaux Cedex

France

*represented by its President, Vincent Labarthe*

- hereinafter referred to as "AREPO" –

AREPO represents around 30 regions from 8 different EU Member States with the following missions:

- **To promote and defend the mutual interests of regions and producers involved in the valorisation of products of origin** at EU and global level;



- **To organise and develop dialogue, consultations, common studies and actions of the regions and producers involved in the valorisation of products of origin, particularly in the legal, technical, economic and cultural fields;**
- **To strengthen the representation and the expression of regions and producers involved in the valorization of products of origin within the European institutions;**
- **To facilitate their access and participation in the decision-making process at EU level for everything that concerns them, i.e. quality policies, environment;**
- **To contribute to a better harmonisation of the procedures that define GIs specifications at the European level;**
- **To help promoting and achieving international recognition of European Union's geographical indications (GIs).**

Now, therefore, the parties hereto mutually agree as follows:

### ***Article 1 - Context***

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In the framework of the DG AGRI Week of Stakeholders, AREPO organized in collaboration with ERG SYAL a high-level seminar on GIs: "Innovating and Organising Research, Education and Training for Sustainable GIs", in the EU Pavilion at Expo. The seminar underlined the need for support and funding at EU level on research, education and training on GIs.

AREPO continued to work in collaboration with ERG SYAL to capitalise on the seminar's conclusions. As a result, in December 2015, AREPO presented to the European Commission a position paper as a contribution to the consultation process for the definition of the EU long-term strategy for agricultural research and innovation. This document carries AREPO and ERG SYAL logo, accompanied by the text line "in collaboration with".

It aims at assuring that the research needs and issues related to Local agro-food systems and GIs will be taken into account and included, highlighting their potential for a sustainable rural development. It focuses on the primary sector and its links with the food chain and rural development. Furthermore, it establishes relevant links to the bioeconomy strategy. It argues that Localized agro-food systems and quality and origin products can contribute to sustainable bioeconomy, thanks to their innovation potential in the governance of the food system at local/regional level and in the sustainable use of resources.

A second outcome concerns the development and strengthening of working relations between AREPO and ERG SYAL.

### ***Article 2 – Subject of the Cooperation Agreement***

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In order to achieve its goals concerning defense, development and promotion of GIs and other EU quality systems, AREPO, together with its Member Regions and its producers, bases its actions on political considerations supported by scientific and technical data.

The ERG SYAL, thanks to its member institutions, is one of the leading providers of scientific data and research specialised on quality systems.

The cooperation between AREPO and ERG SYAL aims at:



- strengthening AREPO positions and actions by better refocusing them with the help of scientific information produced by the ERG SYAL;
- bringing questions and research needs highlighted by AREPO regions and producers to the attention of ERG SYAL and its members that could include them in their research;
- strengthening the European research and innovation policy in favor of geographical indications, EU quality systems and Localized Agrifood Systems.

### ***Article 3 – Terms of cooperation***

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#### ***Participation in the events of the two networks***

AREPO and ERG SYAL commit to invite each other to participate in the events they organise in connection with the subjects of this agreement.

They plan to give the floor to the invited organisation whenever it is relevant depending on the subject of the event.

As a general rule, the invited organisation will have to bear its own participation costs. However, whenever possible, the hosting organisation may envisage offering reduced costs of participation. It may even consider guarantying free admission to the event, the coverage of certain costs and/or the provision of specific resources, when appropriate.

#### ***Sharing work and activities, exchanging information and opinions***

AREPO and ERG SYAL commit to share non-confidential data and information that are property of one of the two networks and/or whose dissemination has been authorised by its owner.

#### ***Contribution of ERG SYAL to AREPO Scientific Committee***

AREPO undertakes to create a “*Scientific Committee*” including also ERG SYAL representatives.

For its part, SYAL undertakes to provide scientific support to AREPO activities and to appoint its representatives to AREPO “*Scientific Committee*”, chosen from the members of ERG SYAL coordination committee.

AREPO reserves the right to appoint other members of the “*Scientific Committee*”, depending on the topics and on the collaboration with research centres and universities from its member Regions.

AREPO operates with two annual plenary meetings. One is generally held in Brussels while the other is organised in one of the member Regions. In occasion of these events, AREPO undertakes to organise a meeting of the “*Scientific Committee*”, at least once a year.

To this end, whenever possible in occasion of its plenary meeting, AREPO will provide the necessary logistics, including a meeting room.

In case of a special event or depending on the opportunities and calendar constraints, AREPO “*Scientific Committee*” could meet independently of a plenary meeting.



Each network is free to decide how to participate in the Committee meeting, in particular regarding the number of participants as well as their role.

Travel costs related to the participation in AREPO "Scientific Committee" are always the responsibility of participants or of each organisation for its own members. Specific cases can be discussed.

#### Article 4 – Duration of the agreement

This agreement shall be of unlimited duration.

Each network can end the agreement through a simple written communication (by post or email) signed by its designated representative.

Brussels, 25<sup>th</sup> January 2017

Vincent Labarthe  
President of AREPO

François Casabianca  
Coordinator of ERG SYAL