Ghent Group Forum 2026

Tuesday November 3:

Conference programme.

Venue: Kosmopol, Fiolstræde 44, Copenhagen K

Ghent Group
Science-based Advice
in Agriculture and Environment

From	To		
08:30	09:00	Coffe and registration	
09:00	09:45	Session I: Setting the scene	
		Welcome address	Maria Sommer Holtze, Aarhus University
		Building Effective Science-Policy Interfaces in Europe: Navigating Environmental and Geopolitical Change	Rainer Baritz EEA (tbd)
		Visions of the Ghent Group: Better together	Niels Halberg, Aarhus University
		Four years of Ghent Group: Synergies and lessons learned	Giampiero Mazzocchi, CREA/FutureFoodS
09:45	10:00	Networking break	
10:00	11:00	Session II: Use of AI in science advice	
		Insights from the OECD AI Capability Indicators for knowledge brokerage	Margarita Kalamova, OECD
		AI in Science for Policy: Current Practices, Readiness and Emerging Perspectives	David Budtz-Pedersen. Aalborg University
		Fishbowl discussion: Reflections and shared learning	Faciliator: Lene Topp
11:00	11:15	Networking break	
11:15	12:45	Parallel sessions:	
		Grosserens (basement)	Main meeting hall
		Workshop: What Makes a Science–Policy Interface Effective? Towards a Common Framework for Assessing SPI Effectiveness	**Contributed session: Knowledge Governance in Action: Experiences from Science–Policy–Practice Interfaces**
		Sundus Saleemi, Shaswati Chowdhury (Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research (ZALF)) How can we assess whether science-policy interfaces (SPIs) effectively support evidence-informed policymaking and societal impact? This interactive workshop introduces a practical assessment framework based on established and emerging SPI effectiveness criteria. Participants will critically examine the proposed indicators, identify strengths and gaps, and contribute their own experiences from science advice practice. The session aims to refine and strengthen a common framework that can support transparent, low-cost, and systematic assessment of SPI effectiveness across contexts.	**Mara Lai:** Building a Multi-Level Knowledge Governance System: Lessons from the Italian National AKIS Coordination Body **Eewoud Lievens:** Experiences with introducing a charter on evidence-based policymaking in the Agency for Agriculture and Fisheries of Flanders (Belgium) **Sara Lystlund Hemi:** Building Connections – Learnings from Facilitating a Science–Policy–Practice Forum in the SmartField Pro-ject **Aurélie Courcoul:** Building effective science–policy relationships: two contrasting pathways from animal health expertise to na-tional decision-making **Alisa Spiegel:** Agricultural climate governance across the EU: An AI-assisted comparative analysis **Hanna Kekkonen:** Spatial targeting as a tool for climate action: identifying cultivated peatlands suitable for climate measures in Finland without compromising food security **Carsten Paul:** Challenges, objectives and solutions for agricultural soil health: the perspectives of European stakeholders **Interactive discussion**
12:45	13:30	Networking Lunch	
13:30	15:00	Parallel sessions:	
		Grosserens (basement)	Main meeting hall
		Workshop: National policy pathways and the challenge of international coherence	**Workshop: Governance of Trans-European Collaboration in Science Policy Interfaces: Lessons from the FutureFoodS and Agroecology Partnerships**
		Katharina Bäumler (Thünen Institute & Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin) and Alisa Spiegel (Thünen Institute). This interactive workshop explores how nationally tailored agricultural climate policies can be aligned with the need for international coherence. Drawing on insights from the MACSUR SciPolNet network and the AgriDENZ project, participants will discuss cross-border impacts, policy trade-offs, and opportunities for coordination. Through audience polling, peer exchanges, and facilitated discussion, the session will co-create practical principles for integrating an international perspective into policy development and science-policy advice.	**Niels Halberg (Aarhus University), Giampiero Mazzocchi (CREA), Roberto Henke (CREA) & Hubert de Jonge (Aarhus University)** How can science advice be effectively organised across countries, institutions, and governance cultures? This interactive workshop explores emerging approaches to Science-Policy-Society Interfaces (SPSI) within the FutureFoodS and Agroecology Partnerships. Participants will discuss governance models, quality assurance mechanisms, and the balance between shared principles and national diversity in science advice. The session will also co-design key elements of a new training programme for researchers and civil servants, helping translate SPSI principles into practical tools and competencies for policy engagement.
15:00	15:30	Networking break	
15:30	16:45	Session III: Learning Across Borders: Strengthening Science–Policy Interfaces Through European Collaboration	
		Building Science–Policy Collaboration Across Borders: Lessons from the NW European Policy-Science Working Group on Reducing Nutrient Emissions	Wibke Christel, Danish Ministry of Nature and Animal Welfare
		Turning Scientific Collaboration into Policy Change: Lessons from the European Soil Monitoring Law	Claire Chenu, INRAE
		Fishbowl discussion: Reflections and shared learning	Faciliator: Lene Topp
16:45	17:15	Closing Session: Lessons for Action	
		Reflections and Next Steps for Advancing SPI	Faciliator: Lene Topp
17:15	18:00	Networking and drinks	
18:30	20:30	Dinner at Food Club Nørrebro, Sortedam Dossering 7C	

Ghent Group Forum 2026

Wednesday November 4

Open Ghent Group Workshop: Preliminary workshop outline (draft)

Venue: Aarhus University Campus Emdrup in Copenhagen, Tuborgvej 164, Copenhagen NV

From	To	Tentative programme	
08:30	09:00	Coffee and arrival	
09:00	09:45	Opening: From Conference Insights to Collaborative Action in the GG: Reflections from day one as input to ongoing analyses and future themes, integration of new members and creating new working groups	
09:45	10:15	Plenary Session I: Lessons from Diversity – Current overview of Science–Policy Interface Models: Presenting status and preliminary results from GGs litterature review (coding effort), Surveys of SPI	
10:15	10:45	Plenary Session II: Ideas for future activities in GG, future priorities, new working groups, funding options	
10:45	11:15	Networking break	
11:15	12:45	Workshop Session Ia: Ongoing Work on a Joint Paper – Review of SPIs, discussion of first review of coded papers	Workshop session Ib: AI and the Future of Science Advice
12:45	13:30	Networking Lunch	
13:30	15:00	Workshop Session IIa: Ongoing Work on a Joint Paper – divide tasks and responsibilities, agree on draft outline for paper	Workshop session IIb: Continued and New activities in GG, formulation and planning
15:00	15:30	Networking break	
15:30	16:30	Plenary Session III: Reporting from groups, Decision on Future Priorities and Collaboration in the Ghent Group, Continuation of	
16:30	17:00	Closing Session: Copenhagen Reflections on Science Advice 2026 (Draft)	
17:00		End of workshop	

Note: This is a preliminary workshop outline. Session formats and specific content will be developed in dialogue with participants, facilitator and the Ghent Group community