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Karlheinz has an agricultural, environmental and economics background and more than twenty-five years of experience in the area of sustainable development of agriculture and rural areas. His experience comprises applied research, policy analysis and evaluation for the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the European Commission and government agencies. The projects he is involved in tend to be transdisciplinary, international, comparative and policy-oriented. From 2008 to 2011, he was Senior Economist in the New Zealand Ministry for the Environment.

Karlheinz has a particular interest in the establishment of effective research-policy-practice linkages in his work and the translation of scientific concepts into practical solutions. He coordinated the FP7 project 'INSIGHT – Strengthening innovation processes for growth and development in agriculture and rural areas', the ERA-Net project 'RETHINK - Rethinking the links between farm modernisation, rural development and resilience in a world of increasing demands and finite resources', is a co-author of the European Parliament study 'Sustainable competitiveness and innovation in EU agriculture' and currently is the scientific coordinator of the Horizon 2020 project 'SALSA – Small farms, small food businesses and sustainable food and nutrition security', <http://www.salsa.uevora.pt/en/>.