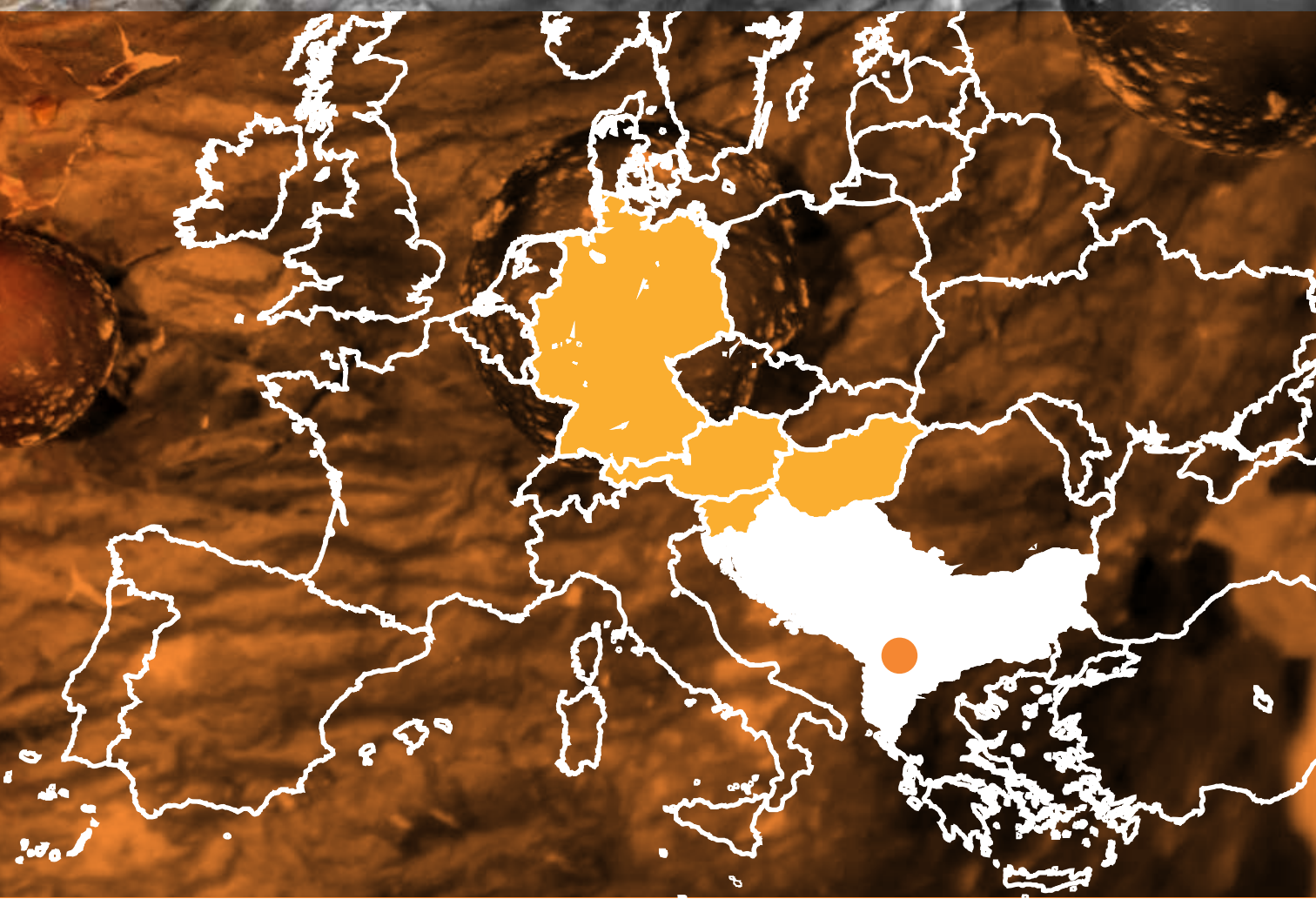


AGRICULTURAL POLICY FORUM

Modern Rural Policy: Competitiveness, investment and well-being in rural regions of South East Europe



14th – 15th October 2015

Pravets, Bulgaria

2015

South Eastern Europe

SWG RRD

Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH



BMZ

Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

The 15th Agricultural Policy Forum (APF), furthermore referred as the “Forum”, held in Pravets, Bulgaria in the period 14th – 15th October 2015, provided an opportunity to review the accomplishments achieved by the APF process over the past period, while considering the challenges and opportunities for the development of agriculture and rural areas in South Eastern Europe (SEE) over the period up to 2020.

In a time where the EU integration process has become inert with an equivocal perspective for accession of EU candidate and potential candidate countries from the SEE region, in particular the Western Balkan (WB) countries, the Forum addressed and provides guidance on agricultural and rural development policy in the context of regional cooperation.



THE FORUM DEBATED IN DETAIL ON THE FOLLOWING THREE POLICY TOPICS RELEVANT TO THE SEE COUNTRIES:

- The structures for implementation of the ABD approach in four cross-border areas are consolidated with balanced representation of local authorities, civil and business sector. The Forum recommended future actions targeting rural cross-border areas, should build on the ABD programming documents;
- The Forum recommended that regional inter-sectoral cooperation and coordination at the interface among rural development, agriculture, forest and water would contribute to the regional strategy processes and strengthen the interlinkages among sectors concerning preservation and use of natural resources for the purpose of rural and economic development of the regions;
- The Forum recommended that governments in WB should increasingly rely on evidence based policymaking and to involve all stakeholders in policy formulation. In this regard the Forum welcomed the importance of the monitoring and analytical work of the regional policy analysis platform and recommends that the work of the platform is strengthened in the future.

