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TEMPLATE OF THE BUSINESS FORESIGHT PRACTICES REVIEW RESULTS

beFORE - Becoming-Oriented Entrepreneurs in universities and companies

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Guidelines: The aim of this template is to identify core foresight and innovation/entrepreneurship competences in relation to knowledge, skills and social competences that a future-oriented manager should possess. The information about the competences and the scope of business foresight practice could be retrieved from e.g.: 1) well documented foresight practices in the existing published works; 2) beFORE project partner's experience in (knowledge about) application of business foresight in the given enterprise. The number of the analysed cases is motivated by its availability.

A name of the enterprise	BASF Agro France (The Agriculture Food Systems ‘Futures Studies’ Club)
A country	France
A city	Dijon, La Croix-Saint-Ouen, Ecully
A field of activity	Agro-chemical industry
A size of the enterprise	Large
What was the scope of foresight practice? (a short description, up to 1500 characters including spaces)	<p>The foresight practice in The Agriculture Food Systems ‘Futures Studies’ Club of the BASF Agro France is conducted according to the French school of strategic prospective. The aim for BASF Agro France and Club members, the company’s clients for the most part, is to understand and anticipate the changes – of whatever nature – that might in the future affect the agricultural world and the players of the agri-food system: suppliers, distributors, agro-processing industry, and retailers. The Club focuses on the deep analysis of relations between agri-food system, farm production and the other important issues – on the national as well as the international level. The main aim of the Club’s activity is to highlight a collective point of view on the perspectives and future issues and their possible consequences, to explore the possible reactions of the various parties involved, and those that can be acted upon collectively, in order to provide a direct feed into the Club's strategic thinking. It is also easy for the members to increase the value of the results operationally to the benefit of their companies, because the Club's work provides a debated and validated diagnostic of the key questions for the future of the sector, as well as a detailed documentation of the major issues and their consequences.</p>
Core foresight and innovation/entrepreneurship competencies	<p>THOSE OF BASF AGRO FRANCE'S MANAGERS WHO WERE MEMBERS OF THE CLUB, LEARNED TO APPLY THE FUTURES STUDIES APPROACH, BASED ON:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - analyzing key factors and their evolution (mutations or break-points, uncertainties...), - selecting hypothetical futures, - evaluating consequences of hypothetical futures, and - identifying the most appropriate possible responses to hypothetical futures (responsive, preactive or proactive courses of action). <p>BASF AGRO FRANCE HAS GAINED ADDED VALUE FOR ITS PLANNING, POLICIES, AND ACTION PLANS IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifying and analyzing subjects of futures studies in order to understand possible evolutions of the company’s core business area and its players;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Becoming familiar with the techniques for understanding and analyzing complex issues; - Taking into account the relevance of the stakeholders' opinions, especially the general public, and - Understanding the differences in opinions and evaluations of specific issues (sometimes the paradoxical discrepancies) between professionals on the one hand, and stakeholders, citizens, consumers, on the other hand. - Challenging the company's view-point on a number of issues.
<p>The source of knowledge about the foresight activities of the enterprise</p>	<p>P. Chapuy, V. Gros, Collectively foreseeing futures issues: Prospective strategy contributes to the Agriculture and Food Systems 'Futures Studies' Club, in: Technological Forecasting & Social Change, Vol. 77, Nr 9, November 2010.</p>
<p>Other observations or comments</p>	<p>Initially, the Club was almost entirely made up of members of BASF Agro France – an upstream industry/provider to the agricultural domain – and executives or technical managers of co-ops and agri-businesses. However, it progressively broadened its base within the professional, technical and political worlds of agriculture, to include farmers, representatives or presidents of various institutions or organizations, such as co-ops, institutes of technology⁴ or specialized goal associations.⁵</p> <p>Meanwhile, as the subject base grew broader, and opened onto global, social or societal issues, the Club reached out to include two downstream economic links in the chain, specifically, the agro-processing industry and retailers, plus a representative of a consumer's association or from an institution of higher education.</p> <p>The other players, observers, or experts such as scientists and researchers, and the government or NGOs from the environmental field, also regularly input the Club, whether during the work itself to add their expertise or their view-point, or at its conclusion, completing or critiquing the Club's results.</p>