

Strategy 2026-2030



**The Nordic Joint Committee for Agricultural and
Food Research (NKJ)**



The Nordic Joint Committee for Agriculture and Food Research (NKJ) was formed in 1965 with the task of mediating and supporting joint Nordic agricultural research. Today NKJ operates as a cooperative body under the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Nordic Council of Ministers' Committee of Senior Officials for Fisheries and Aquaculture, Agriculture, Food and Forestry (MR-FJLS), and shares a secretariat with Nordic Forest Research (SNS).

NKJ's **mission** is to support joint research efforts for sustainable and resilient agriculture, food and reindeer husbandry, increase the knowledge base for research policy, and strengthen the Nordic region's position within its area of responsibility in the European research arena.

Vision

NKJ is a leading enabler in building a solid scientific base for sustainable and resilient food systems in the Nordic region



STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The following documents has formed the basis for the development of NKJ's strategy 2026-2030:

UN'S 17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)

■ Goals 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13 and 15 are considered particularly relevant. Goal 14: Oceans and marine resources also touch upon NKJ's areas.

NORDIC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS' VISION 2030

■ The Nordic region will become the most sustainable and integrated region in the world in 2030. This means that we work in the interests of a green, competitive and socially sustainable Nordic Region.

THE KARLSTAD DECLARATION

■ Declared on June 19, 2024, the Nordic Council of Ministers for Fisheries, Aquaculture, Agriculture, Food and Forestry (MR-FJLS) stands united in improving preparedness, robustness, and resilience in our sectors and supply chains.

NORDIC CO-OPERATION PROGRAMME FOR FISHERIES, AQUACULTURE, AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND FORESTRY 2025–2030

■ The co-operation programme influences the strategic focus for NKJ's operations. Its three goals set the course for Nordic co-operation in the 2025–2030 period: 1) Further the green transition, 2) Boost competitiveness and 3) Bolster our resilience.

ACTION PLAN 2025-2027 FOR THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME FOR FISHERIES, AQUACULTURE, AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND FORESTRY 2025-2030

■ The five areas of focus for EK-FJLS (Agriculture) and EK-FJLS (Forestry) and their overall priorities are considered for NKJ's strategic work.

NKJ STATUTES

■ The statutes define NKJ's boundaries and mandate. Paragraphs 1 (purpose), 2 (tasks) and 3 (working method) have been considered in the development of this strategy.



FOCUS AREAS

The focus areas shall be leading in NKJ's operations, such as topics for open calls, strategic projects and other activities during the years 2026-2030. NKJ shall also have scope to handle assignments from the Nordic Council of Ministers and NKJ's board shall be able to initiate activities that respond to unforeseen needs, which fall within NKJ's purpose/mission.

FOOD SECURITY, PREPAREDNESS & RESILIENCE

■ Ensuring food security in the Nordic region requires enhanced preparedness and resilience in response to a range of interconnected challenges. These include the impacts of climate change – such as extreme weather events – alongside geopolitical instability, disruptions in global supply chains, and the potential for future pandemics.

Central to strengthening food security is the sustainable management of land and water resources, which supports both production capacity and environmental resilience. It is also important to cooperate on climate mitigation in the sector, to prevent its contribution to global warming.

To improve preparedness, increased Nordic cooperation is needed. This includes strengthening the capacity to detect and anticipate emerging risks, such as new pathogens, pests, and other climate-related threats.

VIABLE RURAL COMMUNITIES

■ Rural communities in the Nordic region play a key role in the transition to a sustainable, circular, and bio-based economy.

At the same time, these areas face complex challenges related to balancing competing land-use priorities such as biodiversity, biomass production, food security, and climate mitigation, while maintaining their social and economic vitality.

Addressing such conflicting interests requires integrated approaches that combine environmental and socio-economic perspectives.

A major concern is the recruitment and retention of a younger and more diverse workforce in the green sectors. Despite increasing demand for skills and knowledge, particularly in areas like digitalisation and sustainable resource use, many universities struggle to attract students to relevant programs.

Enhancing the attractiveness of rural careers is therefore essential.

Strengthening the viability of rural communities also involves supporting initiatives that reduce structural barriers, promote inclusion, and improve opportunities for young people and underrepresented groups.

STRATEGIES AND MEASURES FOR CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND BIODIVERSITY

■ To meet the challenges of climate change, such as rising temperatures, irregular precipitation, longer growing seasons, and increased pest pressure, Nordic agriculture must strengthen its adaptive capacity. This requires tailored adaptation strategies that address the region's specific conditions and vulnerabilities.

Increased biodiversity and ecosystem restoration are essential natural defences against climate risks, as is development, safeguarding existing and use of climate-resilient and genetically diverse crops and livestock that can help to build resilience in agricultural systems.

Digital technologies and AI-based tools are vital enablers of this transition, supporting more precise monitoring, forecasting, and decision-making. Through digitalization, risk management and the ability to measure progress toward biodiversity and climate goals can be significantly improved, contributing to a more sustainable and climate-resilient Nordic agriculture.



OPERATIONAL GOALS

This section describes four operational goals that will be used to guide annual planning and future strategic work.

STRENGTHEN RESEARCH COOPERATION WITHIN THE NORDIC REGION

NKJ shall

- Actively seek cooperation with other Nordic organisations, inside and outside the Nordic Council of Ministers
- Initiate and finance Nordic networks within the relevant areas
- Initiate, manage and support projects and activities to support a Nordic joint knowledge base
- Participate in Nordic network activities

STRENGTHEN THE NORDIC POSITION WITHIN NKJ'S AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY IN THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH ARENA

NKJ shall

- Participate in relevant European partnerships and cooperational initiatives, as well as maintaining contact with relevant European institutions and other international bodies
- Utilise the expertise within the board to identify ways to increase visibility for Nordic researchers in the European research arena
- Organise activities to lower the threshold for Nordic participation in the European research arena

TRANSFER OF AND DIALOGUE AROUND NKJ-BASED KNOWLEDGE

NKJ shall

- Promote outputs and outcomes from funded networks through NKJ's website and social channels
- Organise and support seminars, conferences and workshops
- Contribute to Nordic policy formulation in agricultural, food and reindeer husbandry research by advising the Nordic Council of Ministers (MR-FJLS), senior officials committees (EK-FJLS) and engage with the other sectors and institutions within the Nordic cooperation when needed.
- Prioritize funding activities aimed at narrowing the gap between research and applied agriculture and food production, which facilitates the transfer of research results to practice.

CONTRIBUTE TO EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IN NORDIC RESEARCH

NKJ shall

- Prioritize funding projects that include a diversity of academic and stakeholder applicants in terms of gender, nationality, discipline and experience
- Actively sustain and promote NKJ's equality guidelines amongst funded networks
- Initiate activities that promote equality in Nordic agriculture, food and reindeer husbandry research



TOOLBOX

The following four main tools will continue to be used to address the strategic focus areas and to achieve the objectives:

- Funding
- Collaboration
- Policy support and advice
- Communication

