



European project on assuring food security and biodiversity in times of climate change

1. 10 Living Labs joined the ECO-Ready Consortium



As of May 1, 2024, 10 Living Labs joined the ECO-Ready consortium. The Living Labs were from the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Spain, Sweden representing various climatic zones addressed in the project. Stay tuned through this newsletter on the projects dealing with data collection, contingency planning, scenario specification, modelling towards resilience and many more, jointly organized by ECO-Ready project partners and the Living Labs. We look forward to sharing our journey and the remarkable advancements we achieve together.

The various Living Labs will present themselves in future Newsletters. First presentations will soon be available on the ECO-Ready website.

[ECO-Ready website](#)

2. Successful Kick-Off Meeting for the ECO-Ready Living Labs

We are thrilled to announce the resounding success of the kick-off meeting for the ECO-Ready Living Labs that was held in Thessaloniki on the 22nd and 23rd of April 2024, organised by Foodscale Hub and Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Over these two days, this pivotal event has set the stage for the implementation of the sub-projects selected under the ECO-Ready Open Call, aimed at facilitating knowledge sharing and data collection related to food security, climate change and biodiversity to ultimately support European agrifood systems' security and resilience.

Highlights from the Event. The meeting featured comprehensive presentations from the 10 selected Living Labs, each chosen through our meticulous Open Call process. These presentations were more than just informative; they were rich with valuable insights and fostered dynamic discussions among the Living Labs and our esteemed project partners.

Each Living Lab showcased their unique approach and strategies for addressing food security, climate change and biodiversity challenges. The diversity in methodologies and regional focuses provided a holistic view of the innovative solutions being developed across Europe.

Acknowledging contributions. We extend a massive shoutout to each and every Living Lab for their exceptional engagement. Their enthusiasm and willingness to share their wealth of knowledge have been crucial in shaping the direction of our collaborative efforts. The success of this kick-off meeting would not have been possible without their active participation and invaluable contributions.



Stay tuned for more updates as we continue to progress with the ECO-Ready Living Labs sub-projects. For more information about the ECO-Ready Living Labs and their sub-projects, please visit our website at www.ECO-ready.eu which will feature the individual Living Labs in the weeks to come.

[More on insights and discussions](#)

3. Confagricoltura and ECO-Ready at CIBUS fair 2024



The Confagricoltura team participated in the “CIBUS” fair with an own stand which took place May 7-10, 2024 in Parma. CIBUS is the most important fair dedicated to the Italian agri-food sector. Here, institutions, trade associations, companies and professionals meet to outline together the future strategies for food business. With more than 75,000 attendees (+25% compared to 2022), it was a record edition for the CIBUS fair, both in terms of the number of brands (3000) and buyers present.

The Confagricoltura team provided information to visitors about the ECO-Ready project and its objectives. It distributed information material and organized a workshop which was attended by about twenty people.

[More about CIBUS](#)

4. Unifying Efforts in EU Soil Policy Frameworks

At the Centennial Celebration and [Congress of the International Union of Soil Sciences](#) held from May 19-21, 2024, in Florence (Italy), ECO-Ready partner ENEA participated in the session "Soil Ambitions: Driving Soil Health into National and International Policy" with a presentation on “Towards a Resilient Agriculture: Unifying Efforts in EU Soil Policy Frameworks”.

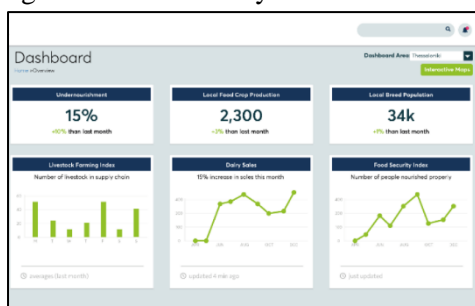


In recent years, the escalating impacts of climate change and environmental degradation have intensified the challenges faced by agri-food systems globally. Within the European ECO-Ready Project, a critical examination was conducted to assess the alignment of existing policies with resilience measures for Climate Change (CC), Biodiversity (BD), and Food Security (FS). Using Eclipse synthesis methods, expert consultation, and systematic mapping, scientific data were linked to EU policies, including the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the Green Deal. This thorough screening of more than 100 policy documents revealed significant gaps between the available data and existing policies. The evaluation of EU policies and the identification of these gaps were performed using keywords related to CC, BD, and FS drivers and indicators.

[More on framework and report](#)

5. A Successful Online Co-Creation Workshop

An online co-creation workshop aimed at defining user requirements for the ECO-Ready Observatory Platform was organized in March by White Research in collaboration with Wageningen University and the Aristotle University of



Thessaloniki. They were supported in the moderation of discussions by the project coordinator and project partners IFOAM and WU. The workshop managed to have 58 participants from different food system stakeholder groups (farmers/breeders, civil society, academia/research, LLS representatives, Industry). It was inclusive, interactive and ended up a success, as the organizers obtained interesting and valuable feedback and insights around four thematic sessions (User needs and cases, Data, Features and functionalities, Community interaction).

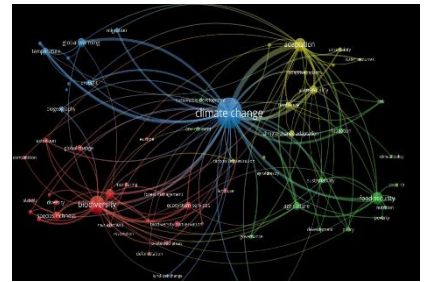
Altogether, the workshop proved that online meetings with stakeholder groups are not only an alternative to face-to-face meetings but could attract more and more diverse stakeholder groups. They might not only represent an alternative

to face-to-face meetings but might be preferable to them depending on the focus interest. The outcome of this online workshop is summarized in an extensive report

[Report of online workshop](#)

6. Report on Stakeholder Perception of Climate Change and Behavioural Changes

The report aims at improving our understanding of relevant stakeholders' perception, intentions, and level of awareness regarding climate change, biodiversity, and food security, as well as consumers' needs, interests, and behavioural change triggers toward more sustainable consumption. AUTH designed and led four focus groups implemented virtually, dedicated to an EU macro-region and covering all biogeographical regions. WHITE conducted an EU-wide survey, along with desk research, to identify factors influencing consumers' sustainable behaviour. The resulting analysis provides valuable insights that will contribute to the development of consumer-driven resilience strategies.

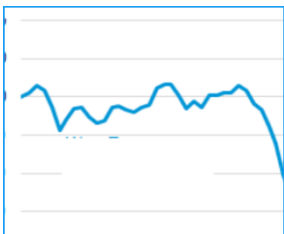


Our research underscores an overall widespread positive inclination towards adopting sustainable practices among the general public. Despite this positive trend, persistent barriers include the perceived higher cost of sustainable products, limited availability, and a lack of information on product sustainability. Notably, the study reveals a general willingness among the public to pay more for sustainable products. Furthermore, indirect effects through sustainable behaviour as a mediator emphasize the significance of income, environmental awareness, and ECO-labels in shaping sustainable food choices.

[More information](#)

7. A Web-based Tool for Forecasting/Foresight Support

In ECO-Ready, knowledge about forecasting and foresight methodologies, requirements of their use, examples of applications in food security and biodiversity, and the availability of data resources for dealing with food security and biodiversity has been outlined by ECO-Ready partner proQuantis in an internal framework. It will be integrated in a web-based tool that can support science and policy in dealing with forecasting and foresight problems. A first version of the tool is scheduled for publication by the end of 2024 or early 2025.



The tool is planned as an open tool that allows constant uptake of new methodologies, new example applications and new database availabilities. The coming months is dedicated to developing the user interface and user guidance. For assuring the tool's databases to be up-to-date and to remain up-to-date, we are looking for interested people with backgrounds and interest in forecasting related to food security and biodiversity but also other climate and food related issues that could act as an advisory board, providing new information, evaluating

incoming information and contributing to the tool's further development beyond project duration. The Beta-version of the tool will be made available to this group at an early stage for evaluation and development feedback.

[More information](#)

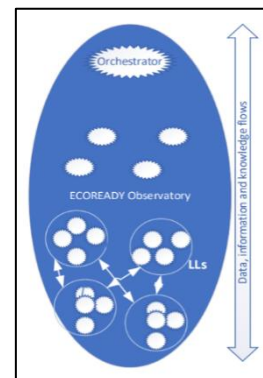
8. ECO-Ready Co-creating Value for the Observatory

A first round of semi-structured interviews was conducted involving a broad range of stakeholders to co-create the functions of the ECO-Ready Observatory. Participants from targeted Living Labs were engaged to better understand their roles in the European food system and data exchanges. During the conversations, especially the topics of knowledge sharing and stakeholder engagement on themes like biodiversity, food security, and climate change were addressed. Stakeholders also shared their expectations and interests concerning the Observatory's functions.

The ongoing analysis aims to understand the positioning of participant organizations in terms of food system resilience, helping to define the value the Observatory can deliver and how to best leverage on the organization knowledge and functions. To ensure effective uptake and integration of the Observatory's e-platform and app, ECO-Ready is

establishing a co-creation process that aligns project work packages, Living Labs members, and external stakeholders who can provide advisory services (stay tuned for updates on the Committee of Platforms).

Core findings identified two primary functions for the Observatory: scenario forecasting and dissemination. Stakeholders expressed enthusiasm for scenario development, which would help predict pathways and practices to enhance their activities and sustainability. They also highlighted the need for practical insights to effectively communicate and advise other stakeholders on the value their organizations create for agrifood system resilience. The importance of translating data into effective communication and action strategies was frequently mentioned, emphasizing the need for dissemination and the empowerment of diverse perspectives through the Observatory.



Interviews with Living Labs and external organizations will continue over the next year, adopting a multi-stakeholder approach. To develop a viable co-creation plan, we will engage with platforms hosting relevant datasets and repositories that support the co-designed Observatory functions.

9. ECO-Ready at Global Food Security Conference

The [5th Global Food Security Conference](#) took place in Leuven, April 9-12, 2024. It was attended by several hundred scientists and featured presentations in plenary and group sessions, discussion groups in “world cafes”, poster sessions and intensive communication environments in coffee and lunch settings which were integrated with poster displays and world cafe discussions.



ECO-Ready partner proQuantis presented its first concepts on contingency planning which will be published in a report in November. There are many publications on contingency planning related to food security. However, there is a shortage on well-defined contingency planning processes. ECO-Ready aims to fill this gap and to provide a framework utilizing latest process developments including AI concepts which interested groups could follow in times of need. It will be tested with the ECO-Ready Living Labs in efforts to provide first contingency plans for high impact hazards, the

Living Lab regions might have to face.

The presentation followed an international group discussion during the [Intern. Forum on System Dynamics and Innovation in Food Networks](#) in February. A follow-up presentation is scheduled for the [Intern. Conference of the International Food and Agribusiness Association \(IFAMA\)](#) in Almeria, Spain later this year.

[More on the conference](#)

More information

For more information on the project and its development during the coming years you may subscribe to the newsletter through the newsletter link on its website. Previous newsletters are accessible on the website www.ECO-ready.eu as well.



[Subscribe for newsletter](#)

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