

## The Second B2B event in Jordan on Multifunctional Olive Systems underscored state-of-the-art innovations

The [National Agricultural Research Center \(NARC\)](#), the [Regional Forest Agency for Land and Environment of Sardinia \(Fo.Re.S.T.A.S.\)](#) and the whole LIVINGAGRO Consortium hosted the **Second B2B event in Jordan on Multifunctional Olive Systems (MOS)** at the Regency Palace Amman- Queen Aliaa Street, Amman – Jordan, on the 14<sup>th</sup> of March 2023.

Experts and acclaimed speakers from Jordan, Italy and Greece met throughout the day and shared their experiences, addressing various issues with farmers, entrepreneurs, local administrators, researchers, private companies, policy makers and multiple stakeholders interested in agroforestry issues in Jordan, and stressing the importance of adopting the latest technologies to develop new olive cultivation strategies based on the agroforestry approach.

### The aim of the day

The aim of the brokerage event was to increase the connections between research and enterprises, governance, associations and citizens to close the gap between innovators in the field of agroforestry and end-users. Following the Open Innovation approach, the multi-directional flow of knowledge and innovations among different types of stakeholders was enhanced, building on the relationships built through the cross-border Living Laboratories in the last four years.

### Welcome and introductory remarks

**Dr. Salam Ayoub**, the Director of Horticulture Research Directorate at NARC, delivered the welcoming speech on behalf of Dr. Nizar Haddad, Director General of the National Agricultural Research Center in Jordan, while Dr. Maurizio Mallocci, Director of Technical Service of FoReSTAS -Italy and project coordinator, presented an overview of FoReSTAS' ongoing efforts for cross-border cooperation with Mediterranean partner countries through several European funded projects.

**Dr. Sara Maltoni**, head of the Forestry Value Chains office at FoReSTAS, described the contribution of the LIVINGAGRO project for the development of agroforestry, highlighting the LEADERS approach, which was originally developed in the "Alcotra Innovation Regional Strategic Project" and illustrating the benefits of the Living lab approach for open innovation.

Dr. Salam Ayoub, then detailed the achievements of LIVINGAGRO activities in Jordan, specifically the greenhouse rehabilitation for propagation of plant species for agroforestry projects, the implementation of several field trials for intercropping and cover crops in multifunctional olive systems, and the production of multimedia materials and publications on the topic in Jordan.

**Dr. Mauro Forteschi** from FoReSTAS – Italy, extended an invitation to everyone involved with multifunctional olive systems (olive growing) and/or grazed woodlands to join the cross-border Living Laboratories by registering in the project's ICT platform ([www.livingagrolab.eu](http://www.livingagrolab.eu)), in order to explore innovations in agroforestry and access free online classes, newsletters, online discussion forums, and a wealth of other events and information sources.

### Innovation pitches

The introductory remarks were followed by two sessions of innovation pitches, showcasing different ideas and categories of innovations: from hi-tech applications (eg. Gaiasense project, molecular markers, etc.), to social innovations for multifunctionality (eg. women association for olive oil production, ecotourism on MOS) and the importance of restoring traditional good practices for managing olive orchards in an innovative yet multifunctional and sustainable way (seeding cover crop mixtures with innovative seeds mixtures, selection of shade tolerant species, etc).

**Dr. Georgios Koubouris** from ELGO-DIMITRA – Greece, reviewed in an online presentation the adaptation of olive groves to climate change through sustainable management, stressing on the importance of biodiversity which plays a key role in agroecosystem resilience. Dr. Koubouris presented an overview of the various agroecology projects in Greece managed by ELGO-DIMITRA, aiming to improve the sustainability of the olive oil sector and develop smart and sustainable farming systems in Mediterranean countries.

**Dr. Claudio Porqueddu**, senior researcher at the Italian National Research Council (CNR), underscored the potential revenues and/or savings of using innovative legume-based mixtures as cover crops in multifunctional olive systems, in addition to its potential social and environmental benefits. In his presentation, Dr. Porqueddu explained that the implementation of legume-based mixtures as cover crops improves the sustainability of the multifunctional olive grove systems, as long as they are well adapted to the local soil and climatic conditions.

**Dr. Adolfo Rosati** from CREA - Italy, examined an innovation on “Coupling Olive, poultry and asparagus in Multifunctional Olive Systems”, explaining that the most obvious benefit in using geese and chicken as weeders is to eliminate or reduce the use of herbicides and fertilizers. In addition, Dr. Rosati showed that growing wild asparagus under olive trees, as they like the same pedoclimatic environment, can provide additional income in an increasing market without affecting the olive yield.

**Dr. Luciana Baldoni** research director at National Research Council, Institute of Biosciences and Bioresources (CNR-IBBR) – Italy, proposed a unique innovation in her lecture “Discriminating among extra virgin olive oils (EVOO) and table olives obtained from clonal variants of olive cultivars with high territorial value”. Dr. Baldoni explained that only a DNA analysis can identify the varieties and/or clonal

variants that contributed to the EVOO or table olives preparation. This innovation aims to discourage fraudulent practices and contributes to the protection of high products deriving from fragile, difficult yet precious regions/agro-environments.

**Professor Mohammad Brake**, from the Biology Department at Jerash University, presented a study on the complete mitochondrial genome sequence of historical olive cultivar Mehras in Jordan, and its effect to increase the farmers income.

The role of women in the olive sector was highlighted by **Dr. Sanaa Hinnawi**, project manager at JOOWN (Jordanian Olive Oil Women's Network)- Jordan, in a presentation titled: "Networking: Women inclusion in the olive sector in rural areas". On behalf of JOOWN, the speaker also underscored initiatives, such as the heritage and safeguarding "Al-Mehras" initiative, "Grandparents' Olive Trees are Grandchildren Treasure", which aimed to encourage family work in olive plantation in rural areas.

**Mr. Youssef Bader**, unit manager at Moltaqa Al-Wedyan Cooperative Society for Tourism and Environmental Agriculture – Jordan showed, through the Saham project in the northern side of Jordan, how agroforestry can be used as a tool for the development of tourism and environmental agriculture. In an area rich with a variety of trees, including olive trees, the Saham project aims to create a touristic hub for people locally and internationally from different countries, and to have an environmental agriculture hub for those interested in studying plants of all kinds.

Dr. **Francesco Marini**, technical collaborator at PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) – Italy, explained the marketing agroforestry systems through the PEFC agroforestry certification scheme. The speaker introduced the specific certification provided by PEFC for agroforestry and its products, detailing the certification standards for the management, maintenance and enhancement of agroforestry resources and biological diversity, stating that "the application field of the Agroforestry PEFC standard is the tree component of an agroforestry system and the elements connected to it".

Dr. **Vasilis Pyrgiotis** from NEUROPUBLIC – Greece presented Gaiasense by NEUROPUBLIC, smart farming system in the olive sector, and its main characteristics and how it was adopted within the framework of different projects like LIFE GAIA Sense demonstrating the benefits of smart farming technologies both for the producer, and their effects on the quality of the product and the environment.

### Open debate and Q&A

After a survey through the tool Mentimeter to encourage the participants to engage in the discussion, attendees participated in open discussions through Q&As with experts and representatives of the LIVINGAGRO consortium, focusing on how to implement or further develop the innovations in their farms or research labs, and how to maintain the productivity of the system by using state-of-the-art scientific



methods and innovations. All participants showed a great interest in the innovations proposed and posed questions relating to their filed application in Jordan, debating on the critical points that may hinder their immediate adoption.

### Concluding remarks

The **Second B2B event in Jordan on Multifunctional Olive Systems** concluded with a business match-making session, allowing stakeholders the opportunity to have an in-depth, tailor-made conversation with experts.

The [Cross Border Living Laboratories for Agroforestry \(LIVINGAGRO\) project](#) is co-funded by the European Union through the ENI CBC Med Programme 2014 – 2020 and implemented in Italy, Greece, Lebanon and Jordan. The project aims to support education, research and development, innovation, and technology transfer, including sharing of research results, by establishing two Living Labs, one for multifunctional olive systems (Living Lab 1) and the other for grazed woodlands (Living Lab 2).

Follow the LIVINGAGRO project on:

Web: [www.enicbcmed.eu/projects/livingagro](http://www.enicbcmed.eu/projects/livingagro)

ICT platform (Living Labs): <https://livingagrolab.eu>

FB: [www.facebook.com/Livingagro](https://www.facebook.com/Livingagro)

LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/company/livingagro-eni-cbc-med-project](https://www.linkedin.com/company/livingagro-eni-cbc-med-project)

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Project website: [livingagrolab.eu](http://livingagrolab.eu)

EU program website: [enicbcmed.eu/projects/livingagro](http://enicbcmed.eu/projects/livingagro)



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