

Webinar series

SEEDS of the MEDITERRANEAN

March 16th

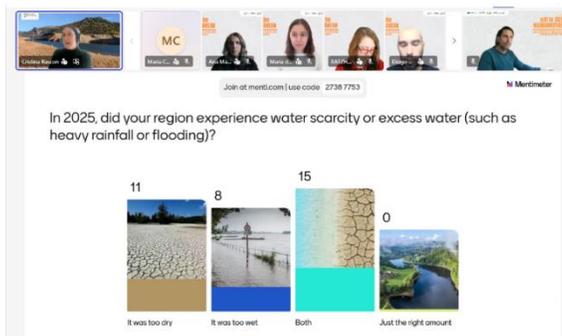


Seeds of the Mediterranean – Water Management

The webinar “Seeds of the Mediterranean: Water Management” took place on March 16th.

The webinar [“Seeds of the Mediterranean - Water Management”](#) is the first event of a new webinar series launched within the framework of the Mediterranean Cluster, a cooperation group that brings together the National CAP Networks of Mediterranean EU Member States (Italy, France, Romania, Spain, Greece, Portugal, Cyprus, Malta and Croatia). The cluster is coordinated and facilitated by the [EU CAP Network](#).

The “Seeds of the Mediterranean - Water Management” webinar provided a platform to share innovative solutions and good practices for water management in Mediterranean agriculture. The event fostered knowledge exchange between countries, highlighted successful projects, and promoted cooperation among stakeholders facing common challenges such as water scarcity and climate change.



Picture 1: Cristina Rascón from the EU CAP Network leading an icebreaker exercise during the webinar.

WEBINAR TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

- ♦ Water Management in Agriculture for Mediterranean regions.
- ♦ March 16th, 2026, from 11:00 to 12:30.
- ♦ Online format.
- ♦ Attendees: Researchers, farmers, local action groups, foundations, NGOs, associations, business entities, state and regional public administration, etc.
- ♦ Webinar organized by the Portuguese, Greek and Spanish CAP Networks and coordinated by the EU CAP Network.

Background

The idea for this series emerged during a previous in-person Mediterranean Cluster meeting, where participating networks identified the need to create a regular space for **sharing experiences, addressing common challenges and showcasing innovative solutions relevant to Mediterranean rural areas.**

The **Seeds of the Mediterranean** series aims to organise **one webinar every four months**, each one focusing on a topic of strategic importance for Mediterranean agriculture and rural territories. These events are designed to promote knowledge

exchange, highlight innovative practices and strengthen cooperation between countries facing similar environmental and agricultural challenges.

The first webinar in the series, **jointly organised by the [Portuguese](#), [Greek](#) and [Spanish](#) National CAP Networks**, focused on **water management in Mediterranean crops**, a topic of increasing importance due to climate change, increasing water scarcity and the need for more efficient and sustainable irrigation systems.

Specific Objectives

Based on the above, this event was organized with the following objectives:

- **Present three good practices and innovative projects** focused on water management in Mediterranean contexts.
- **Give visibility to real solutions** addressing water-related challenges through technology, advisory services, innovation, and collaborative approaches.
- **Promote knowledge exchange** and support the transferability of solutions to other Mediterranean territories.
- **Raise awareness** of the importance of efficient water management across Mediterranean regions.
- **Strengthen cooperation** among national networks, universities, researchers, farmers, administrations, and private stakeholders.
- **Inspire future projects** contributing to climate and water resilience in the Mediterranean area.

Opening session

The webinar was opened by representatives of the [Portuguese National CAP Network](#).

Maria Custódia Correia welcomed participants and introduced the objectives of the webinar. They highlighted the importance of cooperation among Mediterranean countries and the role of the

Mediterranean Cluster in facilitating knowledge exchange between National CAP Networks.

During the opening remarks, the speakers emphasised that water management is one of the most pressing challenges for agriculture in Mediterranean regions. Increasing drought events, irregular rainfall patterns and growing pressure on water resources require innovative solutions and collaboration between farmers, researchers and policymakers.

Participants were also introduced to the **Seeds of the Mediterranean webinar series**, which aims to create a platform where practical experiences and innovative projects can be shared with stakeholders across the Mediterranean region.



Picture 2: **Maria Custódia Correia**, coordinator of the Portuguese National CAP Network.

Interaction tools

Following the introduction, **Cristina Rascón** from the **EU CAP Network** explained how participants could interact during the webinar through the Padlet platform, which was used to collect questions from the audience and facilitate discussion with the speakers.

Participants were encouraged to submit their questions throughout the session, allowing the organisers to gather feedback and promote interaction between speakers and attendees.

Presentations

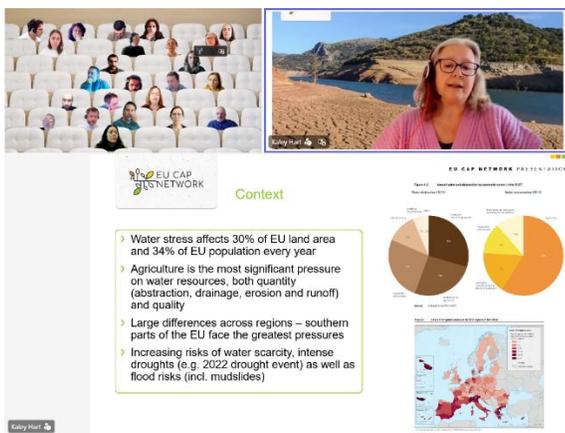
The main part of the webinar consisted of four presentations addressing water resilience and innovative water management practices in Mediterranean agricultural systems.

Improving Water Resilience in Rural Areas

Speaker: Kaley Hart, policy analyst - EU CAP Network

The first presentation provided a broader policy perspective on water resilience in rural areas.

Kaley Hart introduced the concept of water resilience and discussed the growing importance of sustainable water management in the context of **climate change and increasing environmental pressures on agricultural systems**. The presentation highlighted how European agricultural policy, particularly the **Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)**, can support farmers and rural communities in adapting to water scarcity and improving sustainability of their production systems.



Picture 3: Kaley Hart, policy analyst, EU CAP Network explaining which areas of Europe suffer the most water stress.

Key aspects addressed during the presentation included:

- The role of the CAP in promoting sustainable water management practices.
- Policy tools that encourage water efficiency and climate resilience.
- Examples of initiatives supporting water management across Europe.
- The importance of integrating environmental considerations into agricultural policy.

This intervention provided a useful policy framework for the more practical case studies that followed.

[HIDROLIVAR: Water management in olive groves](#)

Speaker: Juan Manuel Martín García, associate professor - [University of Granada](#)

The second presentation introduced the **HIDROLIVAR project**, an innovative initiative focused on improving water management in olive groves, one of the most important crops in Mediterranean agriculture.

The project explores techniques based on **hydro-infiltration**, aimed at increasing soil water retention and improving the efficiency of water use in olive production systems. These practices help reduce water losses, enhance soil moisture availability and improve crop resilience to drought conditions.

To address this, the project proposes the use of a biochar infiltration device, an ultraporous material capable of absorbing several times its weight in water and creating preferential pathways to the roots, reducing evaporation, improving deep infiltration and allowing nutrients to be supplied directly to the plant.

During the presentation, Juan Manuel Martín García explained:

- The challenges of water management in olive groves under Mediterranean climate conditions.
- The technical approach developed by the HIDROLIVAR project.
- The role of soil management and infiltration systems in improving water efficiency.
- The potential benefits for farmers in terms of sustainability and resilience.

The project generated significant interest among participants, particularly due to its potential for **replication in other Mediterranean olive-growing regions** facing similar challenges.



Picture 4: Juan Manuel Martín García, associate professor, University of Granada.

RicEnviFlow: Water management in rice fields

Speaker: Charalampos Doulgeris, principal researcher, [Soil & Water Resources Institute, Hellenic Agricultural Organization DIMITRA](#)

The third presentation focused on the **RicEnviFlow project**, which addresses water management challenges in rice cultivation systems.

Rice production traditionally requires large quantities of water, making it particularly sensitive to water scarcity and environmental pressures. The RicEnviFlow project aims to develop **more efficient and sustainable water management practices** while maintaining productivity and reducing environmental impacts.

The plan for investigating the reduction of the amount of irrigation water used in rice cultivation included:

A) In the pilot fields which cover an area of 82 acres, different irrigation scenarios were applied according to different amounts of irrigation water, resulting in different water conditions, under which the yield per acre and the quality of the harvest were checked.

B) Evaluation of the irrigation scenarios and estimation of the net profit of the producer, taking into account, in the calculation of production costs, among other parameters (fertilization, sowing, etc.), the cost of water based on the charge per unit volume of water consumed.

C) Estimation of the amount of saved water that ended up at the estuary of the River.

Charalampos Doulgeris presented the main objectives and activities of the project, including:

- Improving water use efficiency in rice production systems.
- Developing sustainable irrigation practices.
- Monitoring water flows and environmental impacts.
- Supporting farmers in adopting more efficient water management techniques.

The presentation highlighted how innovation and research can contribute to improving the sustainability of water-intensive crops while ensuring agricultural productivity.



Picture 5: Charalampos Doulgeris, principal researcher, Soil & Water Resources Institute, Hellenic Agricultural Organization DIMITRA.

H2OEfficient - Water management in avocado plantations

Speakers: Helder Lucas, irrigation service technician, [National Fruit and Vegetable Operational and Technological Centre](#) and Sandra Pires, technical director, [Hidrosoph](#)

The final presentation introduced the **H2OEfficient project**, which focuses on improving irrigation efficiency in **avocado plantations**.

Avocado production has expanded significantly in recent years in Mediterranean regions, raising important questions about water use linked to sustainability. The H2OEfficient project aims to

