

PRESS RELEASE

The future of livestock farming in Europe: a meeting in Brussels opens up the way to innovation and sustainability

Enhancing the knowledge developed to improve the environmental performances of livestock farming and transferring the results into the future European rural development policies. That is the goal of the first of a series of meetings and exchanges between EU projects and policy makers in the sectors of Agriculture, Environment and Climate.

It will take place on 23 January at the premises of the Autonomous Region of Sardinia, with the participation of the regional Councilor for the Environment Donatella Spano, the meeting *Environmental actions for the EU sheep sector*. This event paves the way to a process of dialogue and cooperation between some European projects devoted to the livestock sector and stakeholders and policy makers at local, national and European level. “By this first meeting”, says Pierpaolo Duce, responsible for the Institute of Biometeorology of the National Research Council in Sassari and coordinator of the initiative, “we begin a virtuous circle of communication to channel all the efforts and undertakings of the actors involved in greening of livestock farming into common and shared approaches and targets”. The main results and the most relevant eco-innovation actions from the research activities undertaken by European projects will be at the centre of the debate, and the proper ways to successfully integrate them into the upcoming rural development programmes will be also discussed. The intention is to offer scientific input and practical support to policy makers who are to define the forthcoming agriculture and livestock intervention measures, taking into account the evidence base of knowledge and the good practices developed by the projects initiatives carried out for improving livestock systems.

Representatives of the two Directorate-Generals of the European Commission (CLIMA and AGRI), the European Network for Rural Development and the partnerships of EU projects will be also taking part in this initiative. An open debate at the end of the meeting will engage the audience of scientific and technical experts, stakeholders and European institutions in defining the next steps for ensuring a smooth transition for the eco-innovative proposals towards the next European policy measures. The small but relevant cluster of projects involved - SheepToShip LIFE, LIFE Forage4Climate, SheepNet (H2020), Inno4Grass (H2020) and DairyClim LIFE – share a common vision driven by the integration between economic targets and social, environmental and climatic benefits.

Environmental actions for the EU sheep sector’ is promoted by SheepToShip LIFE “Looking for an eco-sustainable sheep supply chain: environmental benefits and implications”, a project launched in 2016 to develop and implement an intervention model for the sheep-dairy supply chain of Sardinia, able to reduce GHG emissions by 20% over the next ten years through improved efficiency of production systems. The ultimate purpose of the project is to provide an Environmental Action Plan defining a path towards the full integration of mitigation measures for the sheep sector into the regional development strategies.



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“Transferring the SheepToShip LIFE model and fostering replication”, concludes Pierpaolo Duce,
“from local/regional to European level, is another vital goal we intend to pursue with this event”.

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