

Newsletter

01/2018



This Newsletter summarizes the major achievements, news and activities of ECAF and its National Associations in the field of Conservation Agriculture.

EDITION

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LATEST EVENTS

ECAF presented the report on CA to Vice-President of the European Parliament



Report presentation meeting to members of the Commissioner's Cabinet



Citizen's Dialogue with Commissioner Mr Phil Hogan



ECAF ACHIEVEMENTS

New member of ECAF 2018

We welcome the Slovene Conservation Agriculture Association (SZOORT). Mr Rok Mihelic, its representative, attended the ECAF General Assembly where the Association was unanimously accepted as a new full member of ECAF.

ASSOCIATIONS ACTIVITIES

Conservation Agriculture is of interest for the Japanese journalists' association "Agricultural News".

For the second consecutive year, thanks to the INSPIA Project on Best Management practices, and the Life+Climagri project

latest events

1

ECAF assisted MEP Mr Nuno Melo (Member of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, Member of the Special Committee on the Union's authorisation procedure for pesticides and Substitute of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety) in drawing up a report on Young Farmers through the *ad hoc* elaborated document "The Young Farmers-Conservation Agriculture pairing" by ECAF. The mentioned report, taking in consideration the ECAF document, was presented to the Parliament by MEP Mr Nuno Melo.



2

ECAF participated in **Citizen's Dialogue with Commissioner Mr Phil Hogan**, together with the Spanish Minister for Agriculture Ms Isabel García and with the European Parliament Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development Vice-Chair and Member of the Special Committee on the Union's authorisation procedure for pesticides, Ms Clara Aguilera. Discussion was about Conservation Agriculture in the future CAP and Ms Paula Triviño from ECAF was given the opportunity to ask directly to Commissioner Mr Phil Hogan how are going to be integrated in the new CAP techniques such as Conservation Agriculture (agronomic system based on the scientific evidence) that promotes Carbon Sequestration and favours Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation. Commissioner's refers to the series of measures (including Conservation Agriculture) that help achieving CAP objectives in all their dimensions and to meet the targets of our society are going to be more taken on board and thus more integrated in the CAP.



Debate in the Citizen's Dialogue.

3



With members of the Cabinet of Commissioner Phil Hogan

President of ECAF Mr Gottlieb Basch, Mr John Geraghty from CA-Ireland and Ms Paula Triviño from ECAF, met Mr Tom Tynan (member of Cabinet of Commissioner Phil Hogan, Agriculture and Rural Development and Personal Assistant), Mr Emmanuel Petel (Policy Coordinator at DG Agri, Unit D2, Greening, cross-compliance and POSEI) and Mr Angelo Innamorati (Policy Officer, Environment / Resource Efficiency at DG AGRI Unit D4, Environment, climate change, forestry and bio-economy). In the meeting, ECAF

attendees introduced the aim of the European Federation, its purposes, and explained the promising results of CA concerning Climate Change, stated on the recent publication entitled “Conservation Agriculture: Making Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Real in Europe”. A presentation of the projects INSPIA and Climagri was made as well. Due to the interest arisen on the subject, contact and collaboration have continued since then.

4

At the European Parliament

President of ECAF Mr Gottlieb Basch, Mr John Geraghty from CA-Ireland and Ms Paula Triviño from ECAF, met Ms Mairead McGuinness (Vice-President of the European Parliament, member of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development and substitute member of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety and the Special Committee on the Union’s authorisation procedure for pesticides). In the meeting, ECAF attendees explained the report “Conservation Agriculture: Making Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Real in Europe” and discussed the role of Conservation Agriculture in meeting the targets of the CAP 2020 for a more sustainable and productive agriculture in the EU.



ECAF achievements

New member of ECAF 2018. **We welcome the Slovene Conservation Agriculture Association (SZOORT).**

Mr Rok Mihelic, SZOORT representative, attended the ECAF General Assembly where the Association was unanimously accepted as a new full member of ECAF.

SZOORT describes itself as composed by 25 members, including farmers, researchers and other members concerned about the conservation of soil fertility. As part of its institutional mission it promotes soil “best practice” management in the context of conservation agriculture.



ECAF held its last General Assembly in Istanbul (Turkey) on March 8th-9th 2018.

The General Assembly was attended by 9 National Associations, members of FAO and members of the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock of Turkey.

Over the different sessions of the Assembly, many topics were covered including: a special session on conservation agriculture (CA) in Turkey, the state-of-the-art of the different National Associations present in the assembly, the adoption of the accounts for 2017 and the budget for 2018, current state of projects, collaborations and partnerships of ECAF, future ECAF participation in conferences, congresses and meetings and advocacy activities among others.

LIFE+Agricarbon - Best LIFE project

ECAF as a participant in the LIFE+ Project Agricarbon is proud to announce that the **European Commission has rewarded the project “LIFE+ Agricarbon” for its contribution to Climate Change mitigation and adaptation, as one of the best projects of the year** out of almost 400 European projects, for its valuable contribution to the fight against climate change effects. In the project it is shown that, thanks to Conservation Agriculture, CO₂ emissions of more than one million European citizens have been compensated.

From 62 finalists, nine outstanding projects have been awarded the title **“Best LIFE project”** Climate Action winners, being LIFE+ AGRICARBON one out of the three Climate Action winners.

Agricarbon helped farmers in southern Spain to switch to more sustainable and more precise agricultural techniques that were found to store 30% more carbon in the soil.

Miguel Arias Cañete, EU Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy said: “Climate action starts with people. These outstanding LIFE Climate Action projects show that well-designed actions involving citizens and businesses from the outset

can achieve concrete results. LIFE helps small, climate-smart investments make a visible impact, for example by helping farmers develop sustainable and economically viable techniques. It shows that meaningful change is feasible and affordable.”
<https://bit.ly/2sm0VzQ>

This award comes in addition to the XVII Andalusian Environment Award, as the best project on climate change, and of the presentation of LIFE+ Agricarbon as a success case in the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP).

The LIFE Awards ceremony took place on 24th May in Brussels.



Jesus Gil, AEAC.SV President and Emilio González, AEAC.SV Executive Director receiving the award from Joachim Balke, member of cabinet of Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete, Climate Action and Energy.

National Associations Activities



GKB-Germany

- On the 22nd of February, GKB e.V., held its general meeting 2018 and the annual conference on “Nutrition of soil and plants - environmentally friendly and economical”



- On March 27, 2018, a field day was held in Kraichtal-Oberacker on the subject of “Increasing sustainability in agriculture through the promotion of soil biology and the use of modern technology”. 180 interested farmers, consultants and students from the University of Applied Sciences Nürtingen (HfWU), Triesdorf (HSWT) and the University of Hohenheim attended.



AEAC.SV - Spain

- Conservation Agriculture is of interest for the Japanese journalists' association “Agricultural News”.**



- For the second consecutive year, thanks to the INSPIA Project on Best Management Practices, and the Life+Climagri project, last 13th of February AEAC.SV, together with Professor Carlos Cantero at the University of Lerida, organized an open farm day in a farm under Conservation Agriculture for 30 years.

- AEAC.SV is the coordination member for the “Sunflower Sustainability Improvement under Conservation Agriculture (Girasolo Project)” EIP Task Force. Other stakeholders' representatives are ASAJA Sevilla, University of Cordoba and ASAJA Andalucía. The task force will design a project to overcome the complications that sunflower direct seeding presents, delivering innovative solutions for the implementation of the sunflower direct seeding.

- Last 8th of February AEAC.SV organized at the University of Cordoba a Conference on “SOC quantifying and certification in Mediterranean arable lands”.

The topics were related to carbon sequestration on perennial crops; CA in the Andalusian agro-environment; CA as carbon sink in the current 4x1000 framework.

There was also a visit to the University fields under CA.

- Participation on Conferences and Training days**

- AEAC.SV is a member of ALAS (Alliance for a Sustainable Agriculture). Together with the other ALAS members, AEAC.SV defends a sustainable production model (economic, social and environmentally). The alliance stands up for a productive model that would be profitable, efficient, competitive in the market and environmentally sustainable. ALAS members have recently had a meeting to discuss its new position paper.

- Conference about “Vegetable covers for sustainable agriculture”. March 20th 2018. Ibercide (Ibercaja Business Development Center) and AGRACON (Aragon Association of Conservation Agriculture) are organized. Held in Ibercide (Monastery of Cogullada, Zaragoza).
- Conference about “Sustainable management of agricultural land” within the acts of the Exelagri Convention. April 4, 2018 in Almería.
- Demo tour 2018- Technical Days. April 9th(Presencio-Burgos), 10th (Monegrillo (Zaragoza) and 11th (Prat De Llucanes-Barcelona) 2018.



AEAC.SV - Spain



APAD - France



☞ **“Du ver de terre au consom’acteur”** (From earth-worm to the consum’actor)

1st of February, on the frame of its annual general assembly, the network APAD organized a conference with the objective of analyze and share the current challenges and think over in a positive way about agriculture. With more than 260 attendees there was a session about Conservation Agriculture benefits. Using 30 surveys of different operators, APAD has also analyzed the different approaches proposed.

☞ Benoît Lavier, APAD president, participated in the Paris International Agricultural Show. He talked about Conservation Agriculture in a space for experts filmed in the Agriculture Ministry stand.



Besides, APAD participated in the show with a stand where Conservation Agriculture was explained to the general public.

☞ On 22nd February, APAD held a field day in Loire Valley, sharing experiences on Conservation Agriculture and exchanging experiences with American farmer from Iowa, Loran Steinlage.



HACA

☞ On 3rd of May, HACA organized a field day to demonstrate and promote Best Management Practices for a sustainable winter wheat production in Perivlepto, Greece.



More than 100 people, (students, farmers and other stakeholders) participated on the event. The importance and benefits of adopting a number of sustainable management techniques included CA were presented. The event was covered by local media (TV, press) and it was considered a great success for the promotion of CA.



PROCORE



☞ ProCoRe: Between 28th and 30th March, a study visit to Romania was carried out by for Regional Co-operation. The purpose of the visit was to take good practice on solving community problems at local level based on the LEADER approach and Local Action Groups. The visit included 14 people, including 6 NGO representatives, 4 representatives of the LPA and 4 economic agents from 5 LAG territories in the Northern Region of the Republic of Moldova, which initiated the creation of a Local Action Group in their territory.

FRDK General Assembly took place on 27 February and was followed by interesting presentations and discussions on conservation agriculture, companion cropping, slug management and nitrogen leaching. Record high 130 members participated in the Assembly.

New CA projects

CarbonFarm project

The public fund “GUDP” supports the CarbonFarm project where four farms in the western part of Denmark are testing and optimising conservation agriculture practises.

Use of cover crops and companion cropping will be optimised for weed control to avoid and reduce herbicide use. Field trails has established on the farms comparing conservation agriculture with farming practises based on tillage. Aarhus and Copenhagen University will measure and compare plant growth, carbon dynamics, nitrogen efficiency and biodiversity of plants and the fauna.

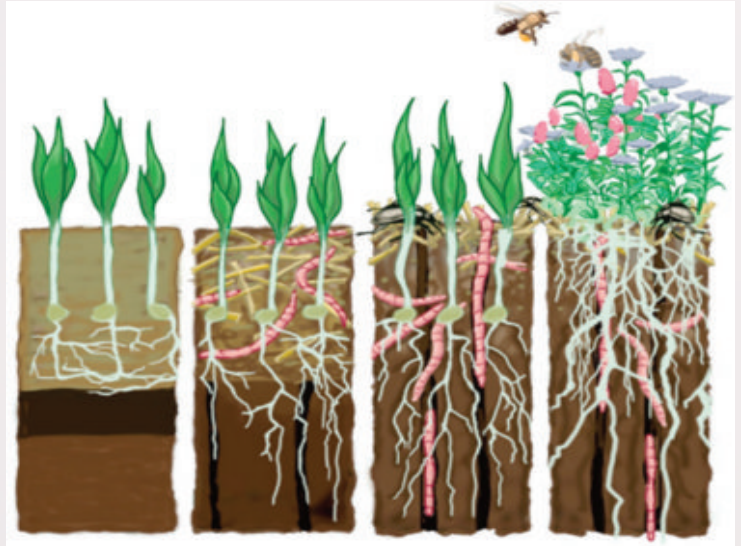
(www.frdk.net/carbonfarm)

“Green Fields - Strong Roots” project

At Zealand in the eastern part of Denmark, another CA project “Green Fields - Strong Roots” is supported by the private “Velux Foundations”.

Key figures such as time use, fuel use and total turnover per ha on three neighbour farms using different farming practises will be compared. Copenhagen University will investigate root development, soil nitrate and biodiversity

(www.gmsr.dk)



Living soil: 1) Inversion tillage, 2) Mulch tillage, 3) Conservation Agriculture, 4) CA with deep rooting cover crops. Graphics: Pernille Martiny Modvig, Agrovi Knowledge center

APOSOLO

APOSOLO has been one of the prize winning in the 2018 edition of the “Vida Rural Awards” (Rural Life Awards), an initiative of the “Vida Rural” magazine that rewards to people, companies and projects that stand out in agribusiness in Portugal. The motto of this year has been the Sustainability.



ECAF projects in the pipeline



Broadening the INSPIA network to Germany has been one of the principal achievements of INSPIA from March 2018 onwards. There are 5 farms located in Saxony-Anhalt, Baden-Wuerttemberg and Saxony.

New extension of the INSPIA project in Germany

INSPIA project has contacted Ms Jana Epperlein of the German National Association GKB e.V., to establish a farm network of the project in Germany (which will join to the present in Belgium, Denmark, France and Spain).



The tune up of the new platform of indicators (economic, social and environmental).

A new tailored set open source scientifically referenced Sustainability Indicators for INSPIA has been elaborated and launch in 2018. This deliverable has a tutorial to fill in the platform and also has a help guide, where each basic indicator's methodology is being explained. <https://platform.inspia-europe.eu/en/>

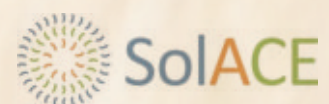
INSPIA results obtained from the platform, enable farmers to know their benchmark at a given moment, and provide the bases and the guidelines to improve farm management.



INSPIA farmer Mr Stephan Frank in (Saxony-Anhalt)

Solace Project

ECAF is involved in advocacy activities of SolACE Project (Solutions for improving Agroecosystem and Crop Efficiency for water and nutrient use), a project that counts with a network of 25 partners in 14 countries and that it is financed by the European Union Framework Programme for Research and Innovation Horizon 2020.



SolACE aims to help European agriculture facing major challenges, notably increased rainfall variability and reduced use of N and P fertilizers for both economic and ecological purposes. It will do so by designing strategies and tools that combine novel crop genotypes and agroecosystem management innovations to improve water and nutrient use efficiency in a range of agricultural contexts across European pedoclimatic regions and farming systems.

The first Annual Meeting of SolACE took place in Foggia, Italy, from 14th to 16th of May 2018.

LIFE + Climagri

climagri

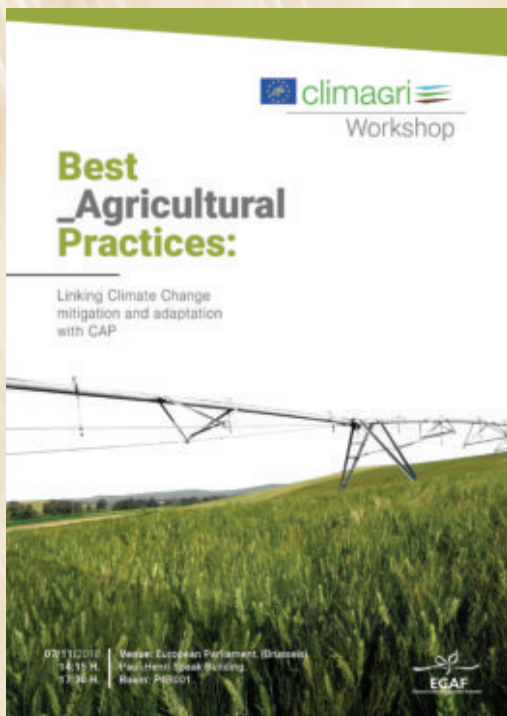


ECAF, as one of the members of the project LIFE+ Climagri is organizing a **European Workshop** on which the results of the project will be presented. The event is **taking place on November 7th, 2018 at the European Parliament in Brussels.**

The Workshop will be co-hosted by 3 members of the European Parliament:

- MEP Clara Aguilera, Vice-Chair of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development;
- MEP Nuno Melo, Member of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development and Substitute of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety; and
- MEP Ivan Jakovčić, Member of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development.

The event's organization is making good progress. So far, the program of the Workshop is still being developed, but certainly, the results of the LIFE+ Climagri project will be presented, jointly with the involved farmers' experiences and their improvements thanks to the implementation of the Best Management Practices proposed in the project. Please, check all the info related to this event in the website of the project LIFE+ Climagri: www.climagri.eu.



Members of ECAF



SLOVENSKO ZDRUŽENJE
ZA OHRANITVENO OBDELAVO
IN RODOVITNOST TAL

ECAF Honorary Member
Dr Amir Kassam

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