

PRESS RELEASE

CAPSELLA Project launched on January 1st 2016 under Horizon 2020 will establish a Collective Awareness Platform for Environmentally-sound Land Management based on Data Technologies and Agrobiodiversity

13 February 2016: Since its birth, the European Union has put high priority to its rural development policies that were considered key drivers of social and economical development and wealth. The main tool by which Member States implement their policies for agricultural development is the well known [Rural Development Plan](#) (RDP), one of the two pillars on which the [Common Agricultural Policy](#) (CAP) rests. Through the CAP, Europe is increasingly recognising the value of farming for the conservation of agricultural biodiversity and the provision of ecological services in farmland, including some of paramount global importance, like the mitigation of climate change.

Furthermore, Europe was one of the most active players in negotiations on the [International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture](#) (IT PGRFA), trying to bridge the gap between the [Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development](#) (OECD) countries and developing nations. Biodiversity is a cornerstone implemented by the European Union in all its policies, since it is one of the key assets for sustainable development.

In the light of the aforementioned framework, a newly project under Horizon 2020, CAPSELLA (Collective Awareness PlatformS for Environmentally-sound Land management based on data technologies and Agrobiodiversity) has been funded and took its first steps on 1 January 2016. Just like the tiny yet sturdy little plant it takes the name from, the CAPSELLA project will deepen the roots of sustainability in agri-food systems by harnessing scientific and local knowledge, people's energy, motivation and innovation skills around the theme of agro-biodiversity by making use of novel, improved and demand-driven ICT solutions.

CAPSELLA will focus on two complementary domains: agro-biodiversity and the food supply chain. It will use participatory bottom up data collection and top down data integration to develop solutions for these domains. The project will build from scratch open data repositories concerning regional agro-biodiversity, and will build upon and enhance existing data sets on the agro-biodiversity and food domains. Based on these, the project will develop a number of community-driven data powered ICT solutions, which will be tested by the communities engaged in the project and will result in a number of pilots. At the centre of the CAPSELLA work will be three multidisciplinary, community-driven use cases:

- “field scenario” addressing use of functional agro-biodiversity in cropping systems;
- “seeds scenario” addressing on-farm genetic diversity conservation and informal seed systems;
- “food scenario” addressing the transparency of the food chain in the processes related to the production, distribution and consumption of food.

CAPSELLA will build a sustainable technical prototyping platform, a meeting environment for innovation that democratizes access to big data, cloud computing, open data, open software and pilots. To do so, it will build up on on-line and off-line tools including the organisation of key events to raise awareness about the project and collect information by a bottom up approach. The project will have a strong societal and business sustainability focus by including incubation activities for selected pilots.

The first open workshop will be held in Volterra (Pisa), Italy in **May 30 & 31 2016**. It will bring together agro-biodiversity stakeholders (farmers, communities and networks) in order to understand and collect their requirements and needs, to encourage them to provide open data and to share knowledge and to raise awareness about CAPSELLA's goals and results such as the delivery of innovative ICT solutions to match communities' needs. Stay tuned, further information about this event will come up soon!

About Capsella

Topic: ICT-10-2015 Collective Awareness Platforms for Sustainability and Social Innovation

Duration: 30 months

Partners

Athena Research and Innovation Center in Information Communication & Knowledge Technologies – ATHENA RC, Greece (Coordinator)

Scuola Superiore di Studi Universitari di Perfezionamento Sant’ Anna – SSSA, Italy

Aston University – AST, United Kingdom

Agro-Know – AK, Belgium

Rete Semi Rurali – RSR, Italy

Zephyr s.r.l. – ZPH, Italy

We Deliver Taste – WDT, Czech Republic

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Further information at www.capsella.eu

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