CLUSTER SUMMARY

Cluster title

CARBON 4 SOIL QUALITY Peer Review Cluster

Setting

Carbon 4 Soil Quality General Assembly meeting
(Thessaloniki, Greece)

Duration

09.12.2025
17-18h
(1h session)

Participants

CARBON 4 SOIL QUALITY CONSORTIUM:
Agricultural Institute of Slovenia – KIS (SI); University of Almería – UAL (ES); Aristotle University of Thessaloniki – AUTH (EL); Institute for Sustainable Development – ISD (SI); Ri.nova Cooperative Society – RI.NOVA (IT); University "Ss Cyril and Methodius" – Institute of Agriculture – IAS (MK); University of Padova – UNIPD (IT); University of Montenegro, Biotechnical Faculty – UCG (ME).

Natural Heritage Mission Governance Projects: moderators of the session
Technical University of Athens – NTUA (EL); CREAF (ES)

Reviewers:
Prof. Javier Retana Alumbreros and Dr. Marc Gràcia Moya (CREAF)

Goals & Objectives

The peer review cluster session aims to enrich perspectives on how to enhance the transfer of CARBON 4 SOIL QUALITY (C4SQ, hereafter) to target audiences and its impact in real-world settings. This session is promoted by the Interreg Euro-MED Natural Heritage Mission within the framework of the Amplification Room activities, which seek to support Thematic Projects within the Mission, such as C4SQ, in the collection, analysis, dissemination and transference of their key results and messages. In this context, the Interreg Euro-MED Natural Heritage Mission promotes a focused conversation with experts who did not participate in the project development with the aim of contributing critical perspectives on the project results, identifying leverage points for boosting transference towards target audiences, fostering adoption and replication, as well as to profile concrete opportunities to strengthen the projects' societal impact.

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Cluster Roadmap

Step 1: Identification of experts through exploration of the Natural Heritage Mission Community of Practice and interests raised during community-building activities

Step 2: Provision of the five deliverables to be peer reviewed by the experts for their analysis, along with the self-analysis submitted by the Thematic Project to the Adaptive Resource Collection.

Step 3: Organisation of the peer review session in the C4SQ General Assembly.

Step 4: Gathering experts' insights during the peer review session and filling the cluster summary file.

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Main Outcomes

Indicators capturing their outcomes:

- 4 experts identified and linked up with the project
- 2 experts engaged in the peer review session at the C4SQ consortium General Assembly
- 41 participants involved in the revision of results
- 5 deliverables reviewed

The deliverables analysed were considered of good quality and relevance. While D1.1.1, D1.2.1 and D1.3.1 report the technical basis of the main output (a toolbox for carbon farming practices, including advancements on the definition of Soil Organic Matter reference values to the definition of business models based on carbon credits), on the other hand, D2.1.1 and D2.2.1 are more oriented towards the transfer of these tools. The first conducts a strategic analysis of transferability, and the second collects experience and feedback on the training materials they have prepared. Experts also referred to the Adaptive Resource Collection form, a self-assessment on the transferability of results.

Reviewers commented that the D2.1.1 PEST analysis is particularly enriching, as it provides an overview of the state of the art across different countries engaged in C4SQ. The reviewer indicated that monitoring carbon balances is very tricky and that C4SQ contributed to consolidating the assessment framework. The practices included in the catalogue of carbon farming are highly synergic with those promoted in regenerative agriculture and potential replication cases in other farming settings. The work on identifying soil characteristics was received with great interest, and potential scientific exchanges were envisioned.

To strengthen capacity building for the take-up of the promoted tools and techniques, it was recommended to increase in-person and peer-to-peer learning workshops. Regarding the potential of the approach, both a vision that accounts for the carbon cycle and a vision from the plot to the landscape were emphasised, thus maximising the co-benefits of carbon farming with the conservation and restoration of ecosystems. In fact, a multidimensional support system for farmers willing to change their practices is essential to overcome current barriers to adoption.

Notes and remarks

The session served as a basis for exploring replication cases of carbon farming tools in new settings and for kicking off the mentorship programme.

Next steps

Follow up on the relationships established for a new project development.

Publication of the peer-reviewed deliverables in the Library of the Interreg Euro-MED Academy and the Natural Heritage Mission Catalogue of Transferable Solutions

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