



# **CARBONICA**

## **Brain Gain Roundtable #1**

### **“Carbon Credits Certification and Policy Recommendation”**

## **Summary and Key Outcomes**



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**Title:** Carbon Credits Certification and Policy Recommendation

**Date:** July 16, 2024

**Moderator:** Ms Eva Sarigiannidou and Ms Daphne Kitsou, i-BEC, Greece

### Working Group speakers:

- Mr Grigoris Chatzikostas, reframe.food, Greece (CARBONICA Project Coordinator)
- Dr Paraskevi Chantzi Research Coordinator, i-BEC, Greece (Academia)

### Invited Diaspora expert speaker:

Dr Nikolaos Tziolas, Ass. Prof., University of Florida (Academia)

### Other keynote and MAP representatives invited speakers:

- Mr Ricardo Beck, Credible EU Carbon farming project, coordination team, (Policy)
- Ms Chara Christodoulou, Phassouri Plantations Co. Ltd, Cyprus (Agriculture)
- Mr Vasko Karangelevski, Certified Management Consultant, North Macedonia (Industry/Business)

### Key outcomes

- Cross-regional innovation ecosystems play a critical role in aligning local carbon farming initiatives with EU frameworks. Projects like CARBONICA support stakeholder engagement and help shape a coordinated European approach to carbon farming.
- The implementation of the CRCF Regulation faces significant challenges, especially in long-term monitoring and quantification. Harmonisation of standards across countries, -which can be supported by projects like CREDIBLE, is necessary to ensure consistent application and scalability.
- The stabilisation of carbon markets requires standardised MRV and certification practices. A Certification was identified as a key requirement for landowners to participate effectively in carbon credit schemes and to ensure transparency and comparability across regions.
- There is a growing need for financial instruments tailored to smallholder farmers. Flexible financing tools—such as upfront payments, milestone-based disbursements, zero-interest loans, and insurance—are vital to reduce financial risk for farmers.
- Scientific research is needed to validate the co-benefits of carbon farming, which will help build farmer trust. Using short-term indicators, offering pre-financing, subsidies, and crop insurance, and linking carbon farming to broader decarbonization strategies can drive adoption, especially in climate-vulnerable regions.
- The importance of standardizing terminology related to carbon farming and financing mechanisms was emphasized to avoid confusion and ensure coherent policy implementation across the EU. A Triple Helix approach—involving government, implementation mechanisms, and support institutions—was proposed to harmonise efforts across sectors and improve clarity in the rapidly evolving voluntary carbon market landscape.
- Digital transformation offers clear benefits such as traceability and product quality improvement. However, its success depends on better data collection systems, policy backing, and training. In regions with low digital maturity, there is a critical need for capacity building, advisory support, and EU-led incentives to encourage farmer engagement.
- Roundtable participants poll results showed that 57.1% favour European funding as the most viable support policy, followed by 31.4% for pre-payments. Low-interest loans and crop insurance were less favoured (5.7% each), highlighting the preference for upfront, grant-based support mechanisms.

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