



CARBONICA
Brain Gain Conference #2
“Carbon Farming and Climate
Adaptation: Solutions for
Resilient Regions and Local
Communities”

Summary and Key Outcomes



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CARBONICA Brain Gain Conference #2

Title: Carbon Farming and Climate Adaptation: Solutions for Resilient Regions and Local Communities

Date: April 3, 2025

Location: Centre for Dissemination of Research Results (KEDEA), Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (hybrid)

Lead Working Group: Greece

Invited Diaspora expert speaker:

- **Chrysanthi Giortsou**, Head of Unit DIGIT.B.3– European Commission (Policy), “A keynote of digital trust in the Brain Gain”
- **Olympia Dolla**, Head of Sustainability Program EMEIA, ASSA ABLOY (Industry), “EU Green Deal: Opportunities for State-of-the-Art Strategies in Sustainable Development “

Other keynote invited speakers:

- **Maria Goulaptsi**, Deputy Head of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Support Directorate, Region of Central Macedonia, Greece, “The Role of Regional Innovation Support Services in Brain Gain”
- **Dr Georgios Papastergios**, Head of the Dept. of Operational Planning & Development Programmes Monitoring (Resilience Office), Municipality of Thessaloniki, Greece, “The Role of Municipalities in Strengthening Brain Gain: Municipal actions and programs for climate resilience”
- **Spyros Ignatiadis**, Board of Directors member, Hellenic-Italian Chamber of Commerce of Thessaloniki, “Greek market and brain gain: Funding tools and financing opportunities within the new carbon production model for the return of young scientists.”
- **Nikolaos Theodorakis**, Scientific Director of Walk-AUTH Innovation Accelerator, “The Walk-Auth Innovation Accelerator”
- **Dimitra Palantza**, Research Associate, Spectra Lab, AUTH – MRV4SOC
- **Kostas Karyotis**, Research Associate, Spectra Lab, AUTH – AI4SoilHealth

Overview:

The second CARBONICA Brain Gain Conference was led by the Greece WG, and specifically i-BEC. The conference brought together key regional stakeholders and experts from diaspora to explore the intersection of carbon farming, climate adaptation, and strategies for reversing brain drain. Designed as a single, integrated session, the event emphasized the catalytic role of carbon-smart agriculture and local governance in empowering resilient communities and creating new employment pathways for young scientists.

Key Outcomes

- Brain gain is not only about returning scientists but also about providing meaningful, future-oriented opportunities linked to the green and digital transition.
- Municipalities and regions are emerging as critical actors in enabling innovation and entrepreneurship driven mechanisms, attracting young talents for employment, and demonstrating local climate resilience.
- Academic Institutes and Universities can play an important role in guiding young scientists to the right path, keeping them in the country.
- EU-funded initiatives such as CARBONICA, MRV4SOC and AI4SOILHEALTH offer practical bridges for diaspora engagement and sustainable employment creation.
- Synergies among municipalities, governmental agencies, and academia—fostered through EU-funded initiatives—have been identified as a promising avenue for advancing brain gain, innovation, and carbon farming practices at the regional level.
- From the industry perspective it is noted that the implementation of the EU Climate Law marks a turning point for industrial transformation, which requires regulatory compliance and creates the need for strategic changes, opening new pathways for green innovation, carbon accountability, and skills-based job creation in sectors undergoing sustainability transition.
- Close collaboration of all these sectors can be proven more that useful to mitigate brain drain.

Join the CARBONICA Forum and share your insights, questions, or feedback with fellow stakeholders:

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