



CARBONICA
Brain Gain Conference #3
“Carbon Farming In Focus:
Global Knowledge and Local
Challenges ”

Summary and Key Outcomes



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CARBONICA Brain Gain Conference #3

Title: Carbon Farming In Focus: Global Knowledge and Local Challenges

Date: June 5, 2025

Location: Goce Delcev University, Faculty of Agriculture, Stip, North Macedonia (hybrid event)

Lead Working Group: North Macedonia

Invited diaspora expert speakers:

Dr Kiril Manevski - Senior advisor/Researcher, Department of Agroecology

Aarhus University, Slagelse, Denmark - Interdisciplinary Center for Climate Change. Advisor to the Danish Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries on measures to reduce greenhouse gases from agriculture.

(Academia/Policy)

Prof. Kiril Bahcevandziev - Polytechnic Institute of Coimbra, Portugal

Other keynote invited speakers:

Prof. Verica Ilieva, Faculty of Agriculture, Goce Delcev University, North Macedonia

Prof. Trajce Stafilov, Faculty of Natural sciences and mathematics, University "Ss. Kiril and Metodius", Skopje, North Macedonia (Academia)

Sotir Angelov, Farmer, BMF Kocani, North Macedonia (Agriculture/Civil Society)

Katica Taseva - Representative from State Agricultural Inspectorate, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water economy, North Macedonia (Policy)

Mario Petkovski, AgFutura Technologies, Skopje, North Macedonia (Industry)

Kristina Panev, UNILAB, North Macedonia

Key Outcomes:

The CARBONICA Brain Gain Conference marked a significant milestone in advancing the project's mission to promote carbon-smart agriculture and climate resilience within North Macedonia and the wider region. The event yielded several important outcomes across collaboration, knowledge exchange, policy dialogue, and capacity building.

- **Strengthened multistakeholder collaboration**

The conference successfully convened a broad spectrum of participants, including government officials, academic leaders, diaspora experts, farmers, and soil laboratory specialists. This diverse assembly fostered the creation of a dynamic, multidisciplinary network committed to driving sustainable agricultural practices and environmental resilience. The dialogue underscored the importance of coordinated efforts across sectors to address complex climate and socio-economic challenges.

- **Enhanced knowledge exchange and capacity building**

Through interactive panels, workshops, and practical sessions, the conference facilitated the transfer of state-of-the-art scientific knowledge, innovative methodologies, and applied farming practices. Notably, young scientists and local practitioners benefited from hands-on training in soil diagnostics and field techniques, enhancing regional expertise and fostering a culture of continuous learning and innovation.

- **Promotion of Brain Gain through diaspora engagement**

The active participation of experts from the diaspora brought invaluable international perspectives and advanced research experiences to the regional context. Their contributions highlighted the transformative potential of diaspora engagement in reversing brain drain, strengthening research capacities, and fostering interdisciplinary collaboration across borders.

- **Showcasing innovative practices and research**

Presentations of empirical findings from pilot investigations and laboratory diagnostics demonstrated the feasibility and benefits of low-input, climate-resilient agricultural models. These practical examples provided evidence-based validation of carbon farming approaches tailored to the ecological and socio-economic realities of the region.

- **Policy dialogue and regulatory insights**

The conference provided a critical platform for discussing policy frameworks and regulatory mechanisms essential for enabling the adoption and scaling of sustainable agricultural practices. Government representatives



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and inspectors highlighted current challenges and opportunities, advocating for integrated governance strategies to support innovation and environmental stewardship.

- **Empowerment of future generations**

Dedicated workshops for students and emerging researchers played a vital role in building future capacity. By engaging participants in field and laboratory soil diagnostic practices, the event equipped the next generation of scientists with the technical skills and interdisciplinary understanding necessary to lead ongoing climate adaptation efforts.

- **Catalyst for sustainable regional development**

Collectively, the conference outcomes positioned the CARBONICA Project as a pivotal initiative in promoting environmental sustainability, socio-economic transformation, and climate resilience. The strengthened partnerships, enhanced knowledge base, and renewed commitment among stakeholders laid a solid foundation for sustained progress in the region's transition toward carbon-smart agriculture.

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