

**A Junta de Andalucía. Consejería de Agricultura, Pesca, Agua y Desarrollo Rural,  
Agencia de Gestión Agraria y pesquera de Andalucía (AGAPA)**

Welcome to Andalucía and the Agrifood Complex of the “Hacienda de Quinto”.

Firstly, I would like to apologize because of the absence of Mr José Carlos Alvarez, the Manager Director of AGAPA. His agenda prevented him from being here to welcome as a member of the Andalucía Government Council.

For the Junta de Andalucía and AGAPA it is an honor to host this joint CRG and IRG GRA meeting that includes researchers participating from many and diverse areas of the planet.

We expect that the stay in our territory will be very friendly. Andalucía is one of the most large and diverse regions of Europe with over 87200 km<sup>2</sup>. It is one of the most populated regions with 8,4 inhabitants in Europe and has a singular geostrategic place as it is the most southern region of the European continent and acts as a bridge between two continents: Africa and Europe, being also a meeting point between the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea.

Around a month ago we received the request from Rosa Mosquera to host this meeting in our buildings and, and we promptly accepted.

Our relationship with Rosa Mosquera started several years ago, through the collaboration in different initiatives and projects of the Research and Innovation Framework of the EU, mainly related with the Agroecology and Agroforestry systems, always under the framework of the sustainability and the strategies established by the European Green Deal, but, also with other topics related with the extensive livestock systems and the grazing. This collaboration is so diverse because AGAPA and its Human Resources are also diverse.

AGAPA is an Andalucía agency belonging to the Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development Regional Government (Consejería de Agricultura). Its activity is oriented to develop the mandates of the Consejería de Agricultura aiming at developing the policies related to agriculture, livestock, agrifood, fisheries and rural development sectors. Some of the working areas of AGAPA are:

- Supporting the management and control the aids for farmers, livestock, fisheries and agrifood industries
- Auditing, surveilling and controlling of the primary production, crop and livestock health, completing the analysis activities carried out by our network of laboratories.
- Formation in the agricultural and fisheries field associated with the organic farming.
- Analysis, development of prospective studies and technology transfer
- Information systems and technologies
- Agrifood and gastronomy quality and promotion
- Land development, international and Cooperation relationships

AGAPA has an ample presence in Andalucía, with more than 100 offices placed along the region and around 2500 specialized workers. Besides the different representative office buildings placed in each of the 8 Andalucía provinces, AGAPA is the manager of the European Institution of the Mediterranean Food IEAMED and the Agrifood Complex of the Hacienda de Quinto.

For Andalucía, it is of an enormous interest the aim of the GRA dealing with the development of methodologies producing food without increasing the GHG emissions.

Therefore, AGAPA hopes that this joint CRG and IRG meeting will be very fruitful, as it will allow us to collaborate in the knowledge dissemination about this topic towards policy makers, scientific community and the agriculture leaders.

The Consejería de Agricultura has also a full compromise with the green transition promoted by the EU. On this regard, the Consejería de Agricultura has open several implementing lines that supports the

participation and promotion in projects dealing with the sustainable strengthening of both the food and feed chains. In particular, the Consejería de Andalucía is actively participating in the initiatives such as Mission Soils, the Agroecology partnership and the project Smartfood Lifewatch.

The mission soil of the EU has the aim at guaranteeing that all soil ecosystems in the EU become healthy by 2050, aiming at creating 100 living labs and lighthouses. AGAPA is a partner in the project HuMUS, linked to this mission, aiming at identifying a set of good practices to improve the soil health at a level of the European municipalities. HuMUS has, among other, a workpackage, lidered by the Agrocoecology Europe network, oriented to identify and work with experience exchange platforms at European and Regional level.

The Agroecology partnership aims at structuring and supporting the living labs and research infrastructures network to accelerate the transition towards the agroecology along Europe. Smartfood LifeWacth is a project aiming at developing to facilitate knowledge generation and its value with respect to the digitalization processes in agriculture, silviculture, fisheries and its impacts in the biodiversity and ecosystem services provision. It develops a set of VRE (Virtual Research Space) related with these areas.

Moreover, AGAPA is also a partner of AF4EU (Agroforestry for Europe) aiming at establishing a thematic network to support innovation advisory in agroforestry systems including business models. Agroforestry for Europe is a project leded by the University of Santiago de Compostela being the GRA one of the networking organizations mentioned in the project. Without any doubt, the GRA will be part of this project to promote the knowledge dissemination generated by the project partners with a clear aim: accelerating the best practices adoption in land use alternative systems through the Agroforestry Systems implementation and guarantee the long-term preservation of the main developed solutions.

The concept of carbon farming has been framed in the European Green Deal, which currently developed the priority aim to reach the climate neutrality by 2050. To reach this aim, both the forestry and agri-livestock sectors play a major role through the reduction of the GHG emissions and carbon farming activities.

Therefore, it is very important working to make research and knowledge transfer among all of us to establish the strategic plans of the CAP through the implementation of “carbon farming” models. This productive model aiming at implementing practices to reduce emissions and increase or maintain the carbon store is also complementary with other measures such as the promotion of carbon market credits. All these activities are key elements of the present and future to work on this topic.

Reducing human GHG emissions causing climate change has been converted into a priority also for Andalucía to ensure our survival for the forthcoming decades. However there are also other parts in the equation such as the UN aim to reach neutrality by 2050, meaning that even there are some emissions, they should be compensated with the carbon store by adopting other means.

In this sense, we have many things to do, there are a lot of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions that are captured by the land, meaning, the soil and the plants. On this regard we have the capacity to have some kind of influence.

This modality of agriculture uses the plants to store carbon and subsequently implements strategic practices such as the low tillage, the use of deeper root plants, the incorporation of the organic materials into the soil to promote that the capture carbon is incorporated into the soil. Also the use of regenerative agriculture that also implies the combined use of the soil with tree, crops and livestock or the use of the local markets has the same aim. All of them are some of the most general practices that we know nowadays, but there are many more.

The EU legislation about climate has the climate aim to reduce the EU emissions at least by 55% by 2030. Some EU countries are working in a new legislation to fulfil this aim to reach the climate neutrality in the EU by 2050.

To conclude, and based on the high relevance of the agricultural and forest aims in Andalucía, we would like to highlight the AGAPA and Junta de Andalucía interest to have practice oriented tools to design

policies aiming at promoting sustainable systems and in particular carbon neutral systems. Moreover, the GRA discussions related to the design of payments for farmers and the value chains associated with the carbon neutral systems are of the highest relevance for the development of policies based on evidences within the climate neutral framework as aims the EU green deal and therefore for the framework of the all agricultural system policies.

There are several pathways to reach the small carbon emissions, but they need a strong policy and institutional compromise, a joint acting, that should have solid policies and a good governance, besides the investments and specific human resources that allows to make research, transfer and disseminate results on this regard.

We wish you a successful meeting for today and tomorrow here in Seville that allow us to provide a small grain in this knowledge that you advice.

Thanks a lot and welcome to everyone.