

Newsletter #4

LIFE GAIA Sense project

Smart Farming in 4 Dimensions



The smart farming journey

How can smart farming contribute to the conservation of natural resources and inputs in agriculture?

Is smart farming an approach that can lead to the reduction of the environmental impact of agriculture?

Can Circular Economy models be supported by a smart farming-based production management approach?

These are some of the questions that the LIFE GAIA Sense project aims to address during the three years of its implementation. The answers will come from the **18 demonstrators** that the project will launch across **Greece, Spain and Portugal** covering **9 crops (olives, peaches, cotton, pistachio, potatoes, table tomatoes, industrial tomatoes, walnuts, kiwi)** in various terrain and microclimatic conditions.

The project's results will be applied on the field in order to measure the input reduction rate on selected crops. A correlation between the gaiasense results and the **Circular Economy** targets set at EU policy level will also take place, in order to highlight the contribution of

smart farming in complying with these policies.
Here are the latest news on LIFE GAIA Sense. Stay tuned for further updates!

Highlights

LIFE GAIA Sense features as EU success story for COVID-19 recovery

LIFE GAIA Sense video now available!

LIFE GAIA Sense in progress

Deployment of the 2nd wave of the 5 demonstrators

Launch of a new learning platform for LIFE GAIA Sense

Project meetings/events

5th Project Meeting, 17-18 June 2020

LIFE GAIA Sense training - capacity building at Farsala

LIFE GAIA Sense in events and media around Europe

GREECE - LIFE GAIA Sense press coverage in newspaper Eleftheria
(Peloponnese Region, Greece)

PORTUGAL - LIFE GAIA Sense in the 7th National Meeting of
Technicians

GREECE - LIFE GAIA Sense in the 7th Panhellenic Congress on the
Development of Greek Agriculture of GAIA EPICHEIREIN

BRUSSELS - LIFE GAIA Sense makes itself heard in the European
Parliament

LIFE GAIA Sense at the 28th Agrotica fair

Highlights

LIFE GAIA Sense features as EU success story for COVID-19 recovery



European farmers, with EU support, managed to maintain the food supply to shops during the coronavirus crisis. But another challenge looms on the horizon: climate change, and with it the need for more sustainable farming practices to meet the growing demand for food while protecting the environment.

On our path to recovery, we must build a greener and more sustainable Europe.

Towards this end, the European Commission has published on its official website success stories that follow the recovery path while responding to the long-term challenges described above in the context of a series of articles entitled "[Recovery from the coronavirus: success stories](#)".

LIFE GAIA Sense featured among the success stories, as a funded project showing that the EU has stepped up its support for farmers across Europe, so they can take advantage of smart farming technology and be better prepared for future challenges.

The article is available [here](#)

LIFE GAIA Sense video now available!



The first LIFE GAIA Sense video has just been uploaded on the project's YouTube channel. The video was recorded in Messinia (Greece), which is one of the 18 demonstrator sites of the project. It provides an overview of the main goals of the project and includes interviews of two stakeholders participating in the project, regarding the problems that the farming sector faces and the necessity of using smart farming technologies. More particularly, it is explained how the use of the smart farming technologies integrated into the gaia sense tool, have supported the provision of accurate agricultural advice that can lead to the efficient use of natural resources, the reduction of inputs, the protection of the environment, the overall sustainability of production and as well as the production of high-quality products.

The video has been subtitled in all the working languages of the project (English, Greek, Spanish, and Portuguese). You can watch it [here](#)

LIFE GAIA Sense in progress

Greece - Deployment of the 2nd wave of the 5 demonstrators

Following the 1st wave of installation of the smart farming infrastructure in Greece, Portugal and Spain, telemetric stations were placed in the 5 new Greek Use Cases of the project.



1st new Greek Use Case in Arta

The placement study for **AGROPLAN** resulted in 5 telemetric stations.



2nd new Greek Use Case in Pella

The deployment plan for Pella (**NOVAPLAN**) is comprised of 4 telemetric stations



3rd new Greek Use Case in Euboea

In the island of Euboea (**STOUPIS KARANTONI LTD**), the placement study resulted in 3 different locations that were appropriate within the scope of the project.



4th new Greek Use Case in Messinia

The deployment plan for Messinia (**Agricultural Cooperative "Messinia Union"**) is comprised of 2 telemetric stations.



5th new Greek Use Case in Farsala

The deployment of telemetric stations for the **Agricultural Cooperative Farsalon Gi** in Farsala- Larisa resulted in the establishment of 3 telemetric stations.

Launch of a new learning platform for LIFE GAIA Sense

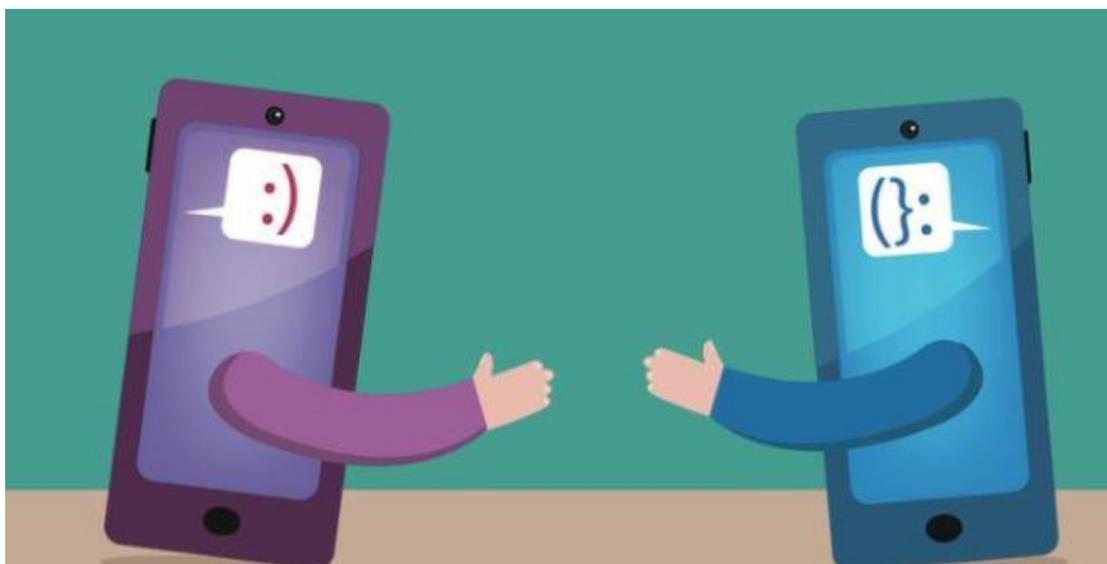
A new learning platform with modules in English & Greek has been created in order to facilitate the learning process and to maximize learning outcomes around smart farming. Four distinct modules offered, addressed to the needs of the following target audiences:

1. Farmers/ Agricultural Cooperatives
2. Agronomists
3. General Public
4. Interested parties in being certified as LIFE GAIA Sense advisors

It should be mentioned that the module created for the general public is open to everyone who is interested on Smart Farming principles. It is available [here](#). All you have to do is Log In as a guest!

Project meetings/events

5th Project Meeting, 17-18 June 2020



The 5th project meeting of the LIFE GAIA Sense project took place from the 17th to the 18th of June, 2020 online, due to imposed restrictions as a result of outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19).

The objectives of the meeting were:

1. to discuss the impact of the Coronavirus Outbreak on the project;
2. to discuss the progress of the project during M19-M24;
3. to discuss with the partners about the work that has to be accomplished for M25-M30;
4. to work in detail on the Financial Aspects of the project.

The partner organizations that participated in the meeting were [Neuropublic](#), [GAIA EPICHEREIN](#), [Aristotle University of Thessaloniki \(AUTH\)](#), [Vina COSTEIRA](#), [CONFAGRI](#), [\(ASEPOP\) Velventou](#) and [Mirabello](#).

Greece - LIFE GAIA Sense training - capacity building at Farsala



A meeting between the project coordinator NEUROPUBLIC & Agricultural Cooperative Farsalon Gi took place on 15th of July, 2020, with the participation of local cotton producers. During the meeting, producers were introduced to the LIFE GAIA Sense project and the software applications to be used in the next months for data recording.

In the next months, giasense smart farming services will be applied in selected cotton fields of the area in order to allow a sustainable cotton production with less agrochemicals, less natural resources and of course lower environmental impact.

LIFE GAIA Sense in events and media around Europe

GREECE - LIFE GAIA Sense press coverage in newspaper Eleftheria (Peloponnese Region, Greece)

Τα τελευταία χρόνια η γεωργία καλείται να καλύψει τις διατροφικές ανάγκες του συνεχώς αυξανόμενου πληθυσμού, αντιμετωπίζοντας προκλήσεις όπως η κλιματική αλλαγή, η οικονομική κρίση αλλά και η πρόσφατη πανδημία του COVID-19, μεταξύ άλλων. Οι προκλήσεις αυτές δυσκολεύουν το έργο του αγρότη και αναδεικνύουν την ανάγκη για υποστήριξη της βιωσιμότητας της γεωργίας και της παραγωγής τροφίμων με σεβασμό στο περιβάλλον.



Το LIFE GAIA Sense συγχρηματοδοτείται από το Πρόγραμμα LIFE της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης με αριθμό σύμβασης LIFE17 ENW/GR/000220

On the 9th of February, 2021, the local newspaper of the Peloponnese region, Eleftheria, had a press coverage of LIFE GAIA Sense project. The article outlines the challenges the agricultural sector faces and how smart farming application addresses those challenges, featuring interviews of three stakeholders that take part in the implementation of the LIFE GAIA Sense project in the area of Messinia.

You can read the article in Greek [here](#)

PORTUGAL - LIFE GAIA Sense in the 7th National Meeting of Technicians



On the 29th of January, 2021, António Baião from project partner CONFAGRI, presented LIFE GAIA Sense project at the **7th National Meeting of Technicians webinar**. The 3-day event, that took place from 27th to 29th of January concerned the innovation in agriculture and gathered 300 technicians from organizations associated with CONFAGRI. The event was attended by the Portuguese Minister of Agriculture that was informed about the goals and the expecting outcomes of the LIFE GAIA Sense project

GREECE - LIFE GAIA Sense in the 7th Panhellenic Congress on the Development of Greek Agriculture of GAIA EPICHEIREIN



The **7th Panhellenic Congress** on the Development of Greek Agriculture that was organized by GAIA EPICHEIREIN took place online as a result of the restriction measures due to Covid-19 on Friday 06 November, 2020.

More than 1,000 online connected participants attended 28 speeches by Greek and European speakers **addressing critical issues linked with the policy context within which LIFE GAIA Sense is deployed**, such as European directions and national planning for green and digital transformation in agriculture, the role of smart farming and smart consulting for a more sustainable and competitive agriculture.

Among the speakers at the 7th Panhellenic Conference attended Mr. Mavroudis Vouridis, the Minister of Rural Development & Food, the Deputy Minister of Digital Government, Greece Mr. Georgios Georgantas, the former Deputy Minister of Rural Development & Food, Greece Mr. Vassilios Kokkalis, the President of the Association of Agricultural and Cooperative Organizations & Enterprises of Greece (SASOEE) and former Minister of Rural Development and Food, Greece Mr. Alexandros Kontos, the Professor of the University of Piraeus and former Minister of Environment, Energy & Climate Change, Greece Mr. Giannis Maniatis, the President of the Agri-Food Partnership of the Region of Central Macedonia and former Deputy Minister of Rural Development and Food, Greece Mr. Konstantinos Kiltidis, the President of the largest cooperative bank in Spain Cajamar Caja Rural Mr. Eduardo Baamonde Noche, the Chief Agricultural Economist of the World Bank Ms. Svetlana Edmeades, the Director of Strategy, Simplification and Policy Analysis of the Directorate-General for Agriculture of the European Commission, Mr. Tassos Haniotis, as well as many other important experts and institutional, economic and business ambassadors in the agri-food sector from Greece and the EU. A specially designed tab of the Congress platform available [here](#) was dedicated to LIFE GAIA Sense, enhancing its dissemination.

BRUSSELS - LIFE GAIA Sense makes itself heard in the European Parliament



Members of the European Parliament, European Commission Officials and representatives of EU agri-food lobbying organizations were informed about the efforts EU farmers are making, in the context of the LIFE GAIA Sense project, to improve sustainability performance of the production activity through the implementation of smart farming.

GAIA EPICHEIREIN Director General Mrs Elli Tsiforou participated as a speaker in the public hearing on “**EU Support for innovation in agriculture**” organized by the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Parliament on February 18, 2020.

The hearing focused on EU support for Innovation in Agriculture: first, within the Common Agriculture Policy and the AGRI-EIP and second, in the EU Framework programme for Research and Innovation (Horizon Europe) and the future Mission “Soil health Food”.

Mrs Tsiforou presented the overall sustainability benefits of smart farming practices and underlined, among other, the significant contribution of the LIFE programme in supporting EU farmers towards this direction, by providing support within the context of the LIFE GAIA Sense project.

You may find more information on the public hearing [here](#)

LIFE GAIA Sense at the 28th Agrotica fair

LIFE GAIA Sense participated in **Agrotica**, one of the largest exhibition brands in the agriculture sector in the Balkan and the European markets. **Agrotica** took place between 30 January and 2 February 2020 at the Thessaloniki International Exhibition Centre and it was the 28th event of the series.



During the fair, the LIFE GAIA Sense project was promoted at the specially designed stand and the participants were informed about the aims, the objectives and first results of LIFE GAIA Sense and its ongoing activities. Presentations & discussions with visitors focused on how smart farming can support their farms in a sustainable way, minimizing their impact on the environment.

Additionally, information & dissemination material was distributed to exhibition's participants.

It should be mentioned that in 2020 Agrotica attracted more than 160,000 visitors!



About the project



The main objective of the LIFE GAIA Sense project is to **demonstrate GAIA Sense, an innovative Smart Farming solution** that aims at reducing the consumption of natural resources, as a way to protect the environment and support **Circular Economy (CE)** models. This project will demonstrate a method on how farmers will be able to decide either to use or avoid inputs (irrigation, fertilizers, pesticides etc.) in a most efficient way, without risking their annual production.

The focus is on the **resource consumption reduction side of CE**, and the results will be both qualitatively and quantitatively, considering the resources' efficiency in agricultural sector.

The Project Consortium

 NEUROPUBLIC Information Systems & Technology	NEUROPUBLIC AE PLIROFORIKIS & EPIKOINONION
 ΑΡΙΣΤΟΤΕΛΕΙΟ ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗΣ	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki - Special Account of Research Funds - AUTH
 CONFAGRI CONFEDERAÇÃO NACIONAL DAS COOPERATIVAS AGRÍCOLAS E DO CRÉDITO AGRÍCOLA DE PORTUGAL	Confederação Nacional das Cooperativas Agrícolas e do Crédito Agrícola de Portugal CCRL
 VINA COSTEIRA B O D E G A	VINA COSTEIRA SCG
 gaia ΕΠΙΧΕΙΡΕΙΝ	GAIA EPICHEIREIN ANONYMI ETAIREIA PSIFIAKON YPIRESION
 ΕΝΩΣΗ ΜΕΡΑΒΕΛΛΟΥ	Agricultural Cooperative Partnership Mirabello Union S.A.
 6 ΟΙΣΙΝΤΙ ΒεΑΒεντού	Agrotikos Synetairismos Epexergasias kai Poliseos Oporokipeftikon Proionton (ASEPOP) Velventou SYN.PE

Brief Project Info

Project acronym: LIFE GAIA Sense

Project full title: Innovative Smart Farming services supporting Circular Economy in Agriculture

Start date: 01/07/2018

End date: 30/06/2022

Project Coordinator: NEUROPUBLIC S.A. PLIROFORIKIS & EPIKOINONION



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