

# Call for proposal



The overall expected outcome of the project is the realization of a shift from traditional agriculture practices towards a low-emission and organic agricultural system and a sustainable food chain in specific areas, named BioValleys, of 5 EU Member States.

In the specific, the project aims at:

- developing and testing climate-friendly and organic agricultural methods, contributing to a sustainable land-use and management;
- increasing the production, diffusion and consumption of organic food locally produced;
- raising awareness and knowledge about low-impact organic food production methods and benefits among farmers and local communities;
- increasing the cooperation between farmers, University research centres, local authorities and citizens for the development of a local sustainable agriculture food-chain.
- contributing to the achievement of broader sustainability, climate and urban development targets at local level.

Optimal low-emission and organic agriculture techniques will be selected in advance with the help of University research centres and tested in pilot projects in 3 Municipalities of the identified areas. Indicatively, two of these pilots will be conducted in rural areas, while the third one is expected to test organic agriculture practices in an urban area. Expected impacts range from the environmental to the social and economic and public governance fields.

First of all, the implementation of the project will contribute and showcase GHG emissions reduction, with direct impact on climate change mitigation, through an improved agricultural land use and a shift towards a more local and organic food production system. Positive results in this field are achieved through eliminating the use of fertilizers and pesticides, reducing food transport from producers to consumers, stimulating the use of “clean” energy, enhancing CO<sub>2</sub> removal through land use change and, thus, enabling the use of sustainable, climate-friendly and organic techniques. These practices will have positive impacts on soil quality, reducing land degradation, but also positive repercussion on consumers’ health. From a social perspective, awareness raising, capacity building and cooperation among local institutions, private farmers, Universities and local communities are considered crucial for the success of the project. These are central elements for the realization of a community shift towards the achievement of the final outcome. Economically speaking, enlarging the hectares of land devoted to organic agriculture and enabling the use of modern and efficient techniques is expected to increase the production and lower the high costs borne by sustainable agriculture strict standards, resulting in more accessible retail prices but also increased sales and revenues for farmers. In addition, awareness raising campaigns underlining the organic fits of growing and consuming climate-friendly organic local food, supported by a major availability of these products in local markets, under the BioClimate label, is expected to increase their consumption and favour the shift towards a more sustainable food-chain. Finally, relevant impacts will be registered for the local governance of the involved areas. Results will be maximized thanks to the support of local policies, the adoption of low-emission and

organic agriculture standards and the alignment with local climate, sustainability and urban development strategies and plans.