



Capsella Newsletter

n. 4 December 2017



As 2017 comes to an end CAPSELLA's adventure is starting. In the last months some of the new pilot products we have been nurturing have come to fruition. Through listening to user communities and their needs and by combining the know-how of our own IT and agri experts we have tested some compelling product ideas.

The results? The only people who are well placed to judge are the users themselves and the feedback from them has been excellent. From the spade test app and storytelling tool, to the seed data entry interface and food prediction tool, the CAPSELLA 'field' is yielding data technologies which promise to reinforce agro-biodiversity. So, while the farmers in Lyon (read article below) endorsed the value of the spade test, the **'successful digital communication from farmers to consumers'** was nominated from among 240 contenders to win The European Digital Skills Award 2017, whose Award Ceremony took place in Brussels on December the 7th 2017.

More inspiring outcomes from CAPSELLA and its Collaboration projects follow below

The importance of diversity.

2017 was welcomed with a wave of angst about fake news. These worries were quickly accompanied by fears that the digital revolution is creating echo chambers which reinforce divisions in society. Widely shared interviews from Facebook's former head of growth have showed that even former Big Tech directors are fearful of the fault lines that technology can create. The common denominator among these worrying trends is 'exclusion' and contempt for difference. Fake news, as well as being fake, tends to exclude any other possible truth or nuance in a zero-sum game. It is anti democratic. Likewise, online echo chambers exist naturally to the exclusion of those who hold different opinions. Debate and scrutiny are left out of this societal 'software update'. Digital society is just starting to respond to these trends however, and we hope 2018 will see some positive corrections.

This is all relevant for CAPSELLA because our purpose - the ultimate outcome we want to see in the world - is a strong, resilient and vibrant agrobiodiversity. There are parallels between the suffocation of diversity online and in the environment. Just as new laws and initiatives are responding to the online flaws, so CAPSELLA is responding online to the degradation in our natural world.

Agrobiodiversity is the result of natural selection processes and the careful selection and inventive developments of farmers, herders and fishers over millennia. As a confluence of culture and nature, the history of agrobiodiversity is also the history of civilisation. By implication the future of agrobiodiversity is also the future of civilisation. This makes our future bleak if we see reports such as that published by biodiversity international last July. The same pressures threatening wild animals are also endangering humanity's food supply, with at least 1,000 cultivated species already endangered. And with three-quarters of the world's food today coming from just 12 crops and five animal species this is more than cause for concern. Moreover, a reduction of diversity in field, seed and food type causes a poverty in culture and local land-based knowledge. Without a vibrant and diverse culture, just as without an abundance of food, humanity will starve.

Capsella is responding with an online innovation lab to boost agrobiodiversity. Our e-infrastructure is enabling open- data based innovation to yield new practices which will - we hope - lead to system-wide changes and herald new paradigms that reinforce agrobiodiversity. As with all successful scaled up

of a package of a comms toolkit nominated for an award by the EC. Our other pilots are maturing fast and will soon be ready for wider market testing. Together they will create a swathe of open data about field, seed and food trends which will spark further innovations in the area.

These pilots will come to fruition in the new year and make a difference directly, as well as provide a platform for others to innovate within, for agrobiodiversity. How can we be so sure? Because they are being developed by, with and for the users. This bottom up participatory approach to innovation is what defines our approach. Ultimately this will yield a more robust agrobiodiversity and a more vibrant, diverse and humanity. And with that we can wish you and abundant and hopeful 2018!

ACTIVITIES

CAPSELLA in the Netherlands bridging precision and sustainable agriculture



On December the 1st hosted by the innovative Dutch potato producer Jacob van den Borne, who has experience in measuring potato growth, the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna and ZLTO Teams organised a stimulating meeting that brought together farmers from both precision and organic agriculture. These group of friends through open and frank discussions paved the way to bridge these two worlds, apparently far away from each other but with common interests: making agriculture more sustainable. This workshop was also the occasion to test the compost

How CAPSELLA played a role at the first Agroecology Europe Forum in Lyon

Scuola Sant'Anna and Rete Semi Rurali teams were present at the [first Agroecology Europe Forum](#), held on 25-27 October in Lyon, France. The event, organised by the [European Association for Agroecology](#), involved researchers, NGOs and farmers from all over Europe and beyond on the theme "Fostering synergies between movements, science and practice". Both the "[Soil health](#)" and "[Data Management for EU Seeds Networks](#)" pilots were presented at the workshop on "Digital and technological revolution in the agricultural sector: Fitting in the Agroecological approach?". This workshop was a great opportunity for discussing the perceived opportunities and risks of digital innovation in the context of biodiversity based agricultural systems. Diverse positions emerged in the discussion, highlighting the importance to enlarge the practical experiences, such as the ones conducted in CAPSELLA, for having

calculator and soil health apps. In the compost calculator pilot the effect of adding compost was measured. By means of a soil scanner, which is mounted behind the tractor, Van den Borne measures the organic matter in the soil. He applies compost in 3 ways: no compost, standard application and precision application on basis of soil data. Watch this space for further developments!

CAPSELLA Story telling app for sustainable farming nominated for digital skills award in Brussels

A new story-making app to help farmers inspire their consumers, which is part of the **programme 'successful digital communication from farmers to consumers'** has been nominated from among 240 contenders to win The European Digital Skills Award 2017. Developed under the CAPSELLA project by the coordinator ATHENA RESEARCH CENTRE, the app – similar to a virtual tour - has a triple social impact. It helps drive sales of the farmers' goods, boosts digital skills and encourages consumers to participate in agrobiodiversity projects.

This 'story telling' app allows farmers to easily create a story out of the daily decisions they take, scenes they witness, and updates they want to share as they manage their farms along agrobiodiversity principles. Thanks to the app's user-friendly prompts and templates, farmers can weave their photos, videos and text into stories which inspire consumers and make compelling content for social channels.

Full article available on the [CAPSELLA website](#).



Image of courtesy Marateresa Iazzaro Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna Pisa

The forum included also visits of farms in the area of Lyon. On the visit of an integrated crop-livestock farm, we tested on field the "SPADE TEST app" (soilhealth.capsella.eu) for visual observation of soil conditions. The participants performed the visual evaluation of the soil and used CAPSELLA app on their own devices for recording the observations. The field demo was also a good occasion to present the Greek (*Aegilops*) and Italian (*Esapoda*) farmers associations collaborating to the pilot and to discuss about the overall experience of co-innovation with them. The feedback on these pilots has been excellent and we have seen further uptake of the app from other communities, such as in Germany (see next article).

CAPSELLA Soil health app tested in Germany by the Institute for Soil Conservation & Sustainable Agriculture

The CAPSELLA Consortium would like to thank very much the Institute for Soil Conservation & Sustainable Agriculture located in Germany for having run a pilot to test its soil health spade test app and provided some key and useful feedback. Institute for Soil

Multi-actors Innovation Workshop in Milan, Italy

Thanks to the proactive behavior of its partners, the new CAPSELLA apps related to the Data Management and Soil Health spade test were presented during the Multi-Actors Innovation Workshop held in Milan on Monday the 11th of December.

The event brought together local entities active in the agrifood domain, farmer networks, agrifood consultant, Universities and research centres with a focus on innovation in agriculture and citizens interested in learning more of what it is happening in the innovative and vibrant agriculture world. Further information available in Italian at <http://www.semirurali.net/notizie/progetti-multi-attore-per-la-ricerca-e-l-innovazione>

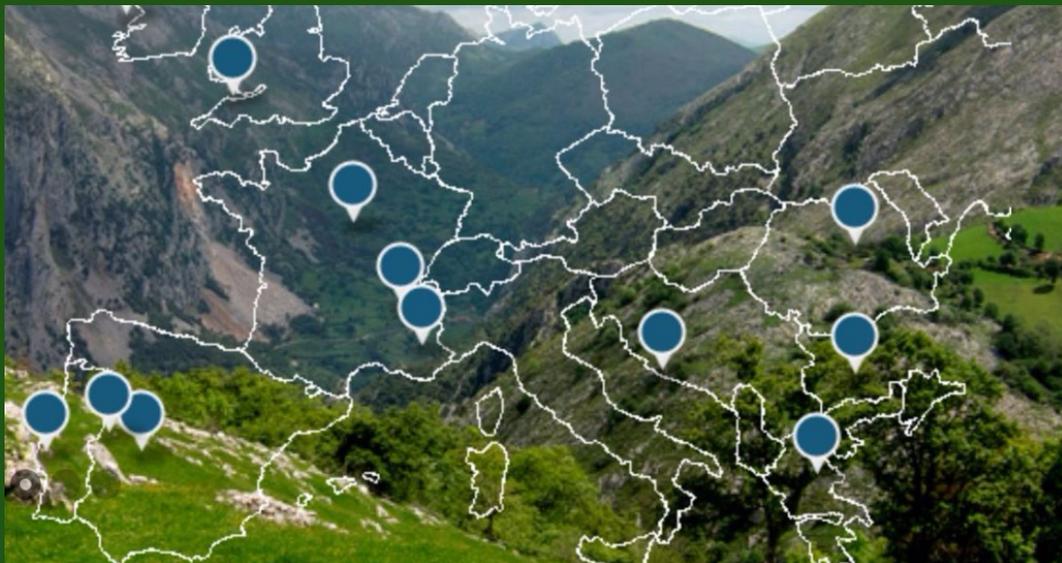
Service Institution based in Germany that offers a series of on-line and off-lines tools such as consultancy, trainings and publications around soil conservation and sustainable agriculture management practice.

Specifically trainings and consultancy are offered for and to



European institutions, research-projects, universities, nature conservation organisations, NGO's as well as food industry, farmers, privates and gardeners. For further information please visit the website <http://www.gesundeerde.net/homekontaktenglisch.htm> and/or contact Dr. agr. Andrea Beste with: gesundeerde@posteo.de

COLLABORATION CORNER... news from the related projects



News from the HNV Project

Value (HNV) farming. Modern pressures on farmers to either abandon or intensify their production threatens biodiversity as well as livelihoods and heritage. To find ways to improve the social and economic sustainability of HNV farming without losing the HNV characteristics, a Horizon2020 project HNV-Link aims to identify and share innovations that support farming systems in areas of high biodiversity across Europe. It supports efficient innovation transfer between its 10 Learning Areas. Each Learning Area has unique characteristics and, therefore, needs, capacities and skills. These characteristics have been mapped in the first phase of HNV-Link and summarized in 10 Baseline Assessments and the Atlas. The HNV-Link multi-actor teams have then collected existing innovations and innovation needs for each Learning Area.

An example is the GPS-tracking system from the Learning Area of Thessaly, Greece. By tracking the moving sheep flocks, farmers obtain data needed to control the grazing pressure in the hilly and fragmented terrain. The pasture quality is further monitored by drones. The system also helps avoiding conflicts with forest management. And finally, it is used for verifying the origin of farm products: do they really come from farms respecting High Nature Values of the area? This contributes to the reinforcement of trust between small producers and consumers who local products with multiple values. The example thus combines technological and social innovations in a successfully model that can be replicated elsewhere.

The examples will become available in Innovation Reports and Innovation Compendium. Finally, to adapt and transfer innovations among the Learning Areas and beyond, the project will organize cross-area visits and disseminate the results according to the area-tailored action plans www.hnv-link.eu

Focus on the GODAN open data at 2017 Meeting of G20-Agricultural Chief Scientists

On November 14 and 15, the Agricultural Chief Scientists of the G20 countries met for their annual meeting in Potsdam under the German Presidency. **Johannes Keizer** from the GODAN Secretariat and **Daniel Martini** from the German MACS delegation presented the results of the [Linked Open Data](#) workshop, which was jointly organized by GODAN and the German Ministry of Agriculture and Nutrition. The presentation

Many delegates reacted positively on this report and confirmed their commitment to open data. Full article on the [GODAN website](#)

What it is going on in the SAVINGFOOD project?



Do you know how much you through away, in terms of food and money? SavingFood, a CAPS project that offers a socially responsible solution to fight food waste has developed a self-assessment tool for businesses like supermarkets, restaurants, bakeries etc, in order to help them understand the financial and environmental impact of their food waste activities.

Such organisations are now able to use this tool for free and estimate what food wastage currently costs them in terms of lost revenue and waste management expenses.

It's free, it's quick and easy to use! Calculate your waste, now! <https://savingfood.eu/food-waste-calculator/>



COMING SOON



CAPSELLA FINAL WORKSHOP

The final project event will be organised within the **Food Week** in Milan next May 2018 in

CAPSELLA Bootcamp part of the Acceleration Programme has kicked off!

Capsella is more than an infrastructure for innovation online: it also provides an incubation service for great new ideas coming from user communities. The winners of the Capsella Hakathaon of November – and other select users, will participate in the three month training (December 2017-February 2018), offered online through the [CAPSELLA training platform](#). It is designed to support participants to turn their initial

Agrobiodiversity.

Amid mounting evidence of the degradation of global biodiversity, Policy makers have called for greater resilience and risk management in agrobiodiversity so the planet can feed its people in a sustainable way. Likewise, Scientific advocacy groups have called for more diversified and decentralized innovation in agrobiodiversity, to put us on a more sustainable trajectory.

The CAPSELLA event will help you both understand the problem and how to become a change-maker by turning these calls for strengthening agro-biodiversity into a reality.

Further information will be available by mid January 2018

concept in the agri-food sector into a Start-Up. The aim of this phase

of the CAPSELLA Acceleration Programme is not only to provide participants with the needed knowledge background in order to innovate in the agri-food sector and succeed as entrepreneurs, but also facilitate their interaction by having the chance to play, create, learn and invent, thus preparing you in the best possible way for the business plan competition.

If you are interested in joining the CAPSELLA Bootcamp, fill in the [Open Call template](#), sent it to capsella@corallia.org and apply to become part of an existing team or to participate with your own team. Further information at <http://www.capsella.eu/acceleration-programme/>

The CAPSELLA consortium wishes you a joyful holiday season!



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