

Water and Rural Territories in a Changing Europe

From competition for water resources to shared resilience: policies, investment and Mediterranean solutions for the future of the European Union.

Esperienza Europa – David Sassoli
Europa Experience – David Sassoli

Rome 9 November 2026

9.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.

Europa Experience - David Sassoli Centre,
Piazza Venezia 6c, Rome

Register for the event

PIANO STRATEGICO DELLA PAC
IL FUTURO DELL'AGRICOLTURA SOSTENIBILE

MINISTERO DELL'AGRICOLTURA DELLA SOVRANITÀ ALIMENTARE E DELLE FORESTE

Finanziato dall'Unione europea

RETE PAC
Connessioni che seminano opportunità

crea
Consiglio per la ricerca in agricoltura e l'analisi dell'economia agraria

ANBI
ASSOCIAZIONE NAZIONALE CONSORZI GESTIONE E TUTELA DEL TERRITORIO E ACQUE IRRIGUE

People Power Community Europe Rights
CERSTE

THE EUROPEAN DIMENSION

Drought, floods, water scarcity, ecosystem degradation, food insecurity and rural depopulation are interconnected challenges that transcend national borders and demand coordinated European responses. The conference will examine the implementation of the European Water Resilience Strategy across territories, and its links with the Water Framework Directive, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), cohesion policy, the Long-Term Vision for the EU's Rural Areas and the Rural Pact, the Territorial Agenda 2030, and climate adaptation policies. Italian experience will be presented as Mediterranean evidence that can be compared with that of other Member States and transferred to other European contexts.

WHY THIS CONFERENCE?

Water security, food production, ecosystem protection, agricultural competitiveness and the ability of people to continue living in rural areas are all facets of the same challenge. The conference brings together European and national institutions, regional and local authorities, agricultural and irrigation organisations, universities, research centres, businesses and local communities. Its aim is to overcome fragmentation between water, agricultural, environmental, climate and cohesion policies and to identify solutions that can be replicated, measured and financed: reducing consumption and losses, promoting reuse and retention, upgrading infrastructure, preventing climate risks, and supporting thriving, resilient rural communities.

TOWARDS THE ROME DECLARATION

The discussions will lead to five shared proposals covering:

- Water efficiency, knowledge, data and digitalisation;
- Resilient infrastructure and nature-based solutions;
- Water storage, retention, reuse and integrated resource management;
- Economic instruments, investment and multi-level governance;
- Rural cohesion, food security and the right of communities to remain in their territories.

These proposals will form the Rome Declaration, an operational document prepared by ANBI and CREA, which will be submitted to European and national institutions as a contribution to implementing the Strategy and to the debate on the 2028-2034 Multiannual Financial Framework and will launch a process of cooperation and monitoring.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

1. Adoption of a bilingual Rome Declaration, no longer than two pages, setting out five actionable proposals;
2. Circulation to previously identified EU and national stakeholders;
3. A commitment to follow-up discussions in 2027, subject to support from European partners.

Programme

9.30 **Registration and welcome**
Admission by registration

10.00 Institutional opening

THE VALUE OF EUROPEAN DIALOGUE AMONG CITIZENS, INSTITUTIONS AND TERRITORIES
Fabrizio Spada, Head of Institutional Relations of the European Parliament Liaison Office in Italy
Claudio Casini, Head of the European Commission Representation in Italy (T.B.C.)
Caterina Truglia, Deputy Director-General, ANBI
Armando Pugno, CERSTE Delegate for Local Action Groups (LAGs) and Rural Areas
Alessio Tola, Director, CREA Research Centre for Agricultural Policies and Bioeconomy

10.30 **SESSION 1** Moderator : Alfonso Scarano, CERSTE

The European context: from competition for water resources to shared resilience. State of implementation of the European Water Resilience Strategy; links with agriculture, food, adaptation and post-2027 investment.

"THE EUROPEAN WATER RESILIENCE STRATEGY AND MEDITERRANEAN AGRICULTURE: WATER EFFICIENCY, RISK, AND FOOD SECURITY"
Adriano Battilani, Irrigants d'Europe

TOWARDS THE POST-2027 CAP: WATER, AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS BETWEEN CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND EMERGING CHALLENGES
Simona Angelini, Director General for Rural Development - MASAF (T.B.C.)

"MOVING BEYOND SECTORAL SILO APPROACH: HOW TO RETAIN THE VALUE GENERATED BY WATER IN RURAL AREAS"
Daniela Storti, CREA – Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forests (MASAF) delegate to the OECD Working Party on Rural Policy

"THE PORTUGUESE EXPERIENCE IN WATER-RESOURCES MANAGEMENT"
Josè Nuncio, President Fenareg

"RETHINKING RURAL-URBAN RELATIONS: NEW GEOGRAPHIES FOR TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT AND RESILIENCE."
Sabrina Lucatelli, Director of the "Riabitare l'Italia" Association and Vice-Chair of the OECD Working Party on Rural Policy

11.00 Break and European networking - Dialogue among institutions, networks and territories

11.20 **SESSION 2** Moderator: Marianna Ferrigno, CREA

Efficiency, innovation and territories: creating value through better water management. Multi-level governance; digitalisation; risk management; rural landscapes; inner and peri-urban areas; Mediterranean perspectives.

"MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE, COHESION AND THE RIGHT TO REMAIN: INTEGRATING WATER, TERRITORIES AND EUROPEAN POLICIES"
Armando Pugno, CERSTE Delegate for LAGs and Rural Areas

"GOVERNING WATER, INNOVATING TERRITORIES AND USING DATA FOR INTEGRATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT"
Raffaella Pergamo, CREA-PB - Project manager for SOS Acqua Rete PAC activity

"WATER, RURAL LANDSCAPES AND CULTURAL HERITAGE: COMPARING EUROPEAN AND MEDITERRANEAN EXPERIENCES"
Mauro Agnoletti, University of Florence

"THE ROLE OF LAND RECLAMATION AND IRRIGATION CONSORTIA IN INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT AND TERRITORIAL PROTECTION"
Caterina Truglia, Deputy Director-General, ANBI

"ECOLOGICAL FLOW IN THE PRESENCE OF LARGE DAMS: OBSERVATIONS, REFLECTIONS AND IDENTIFICATION OF EVOLVING STRATEGIES"
Francesco Fornari, Vice President of ITCOLD
Cecilia Mosca, ITCOLD

11.50 **ROUNDTABLE: TOWARDS A EUROPEAN PACT FOR WATER AND RURAL TERRITORIES.**

Moderator: Fabrizio Stelluto, Vice President of A.R.G.A.V.
(National Union of Agricultural and Environmental Journalists")

Discussion of a five-point draft:
1. Efficiency and data;
2. Infrastructure and nature;
3. Storage and reuse;
4. Risk and ecosystem services;
5. Cohesion and the right to remain.

Veronica Manganiello, CREA-PB SIGRIAN Database Coordinator
Francesca Coniglio, Head of Division DISR I - MASAF
Alessandro Monteleone, CREA Board Member
Francesco Fornari, Vice President ITCOLD
Cecilia Mosca, ITCOLD
Adriano Battilani, Irrigants d'Europe and ANBI

12.20 Conclusions- **Five proposals for implementation and the EU post-2027 policy cycle**
Presented by ANBI and CREA

12.30 Close of conference

COMMITTEES AND SUPPORT

Scientific Committee:
Adriano Battilani (Irrigants d'Europe), Armando Pugno (CERSTE), Alfonso Scarano (CERSTE), Daniela Storti (CREA), Raffaella Pergamo (CREA).

Organising Committee / Event Coordination:
Adriano Battilani (Irrigants d'Europe), Armando Pugno (CERSTE), Daniela Storti (CREA).

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Mario Cariello, Anna Lapoli, Roberta Ruberto (CREA).

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ORGANISING SECRETARIAT

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Project implemented with the contribution of the EAFRD (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development) within the framework of the activities set out in the 2025–2027 CAP National Network Programme, specifically the “Long Term Vision” (WP5 CR 05.07) and “SOS Water” (WP4 CR 04.14) projects..