



Climate Smart WATer Management
and Sustainable DEVElopment
for Food and Agriculture in East Africa



ISSUE 05 | MAY 2025



WATDEV PARTNERS CHART THE WAY FORWARD AT THE PARTNERSHIP MEETING HELD IN WAGENINGEN



The Extraordinary Partnership Meeting of the WATDEV Project convened partners from across Egypt, East Africa, and Europe at the **Wageningen International Congress Centre (WICC)** on the 10th and 11th of April 2025 for two days of intensive dialogue, reflection, and strategic planning. Hosted in the heart of the Netherlands' agricultural innovation hub, the gathering marked a pivotal moment in the project's implementation timeline, bringing together **around thirty expert participants committed to the WATDEV mission.**

Partners from Ethiopia and Sudan joined the meeting remotely, ensuring their continued inclusiveness and engagement in the WATDEV consortium.



Welcoming addresses opened the event on 10 April, with keynote contributions by **Andries Bosma of ISRIC, Martino Melli of AICS Cairo, and Claudio Bogliotti of CIHEAM Bari.** The warm opening set the tone for a meeting that balanced technical updates with administrative foresight. The morning session focused on technical progress, with CIHEAM Bari presenting the overview of activities carried out in the last year, **highlighting key achievements, critical challenges, and adaptations to the original work plan.**



[Find out more](#)

INNOVATION ROADSHOW IN EGYPT ON BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE



On February 2-3, 2023, the **Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA)** in collaboration with **Heliopolis University (HU Egypt)** successfully organised “**The Best Practices and Innovation Roadshow in Egypt**” workshop. The workshop was hosted at Sekem Farm in Belbeis, gathering around 60 participants, including researchers, farmers, and stakeholders, with support from various institutions. The workshop aimed to disseminate the know-how and innovative ideas and technologies acquired during the second module training “**Water, Soil, and Crop Management in a Climate-Smart Agriculture**”, which took place from September 9th to 20th, 2024 in Bari, Italy. The workshop started with **Prof. Wael Khairy**, welcoming all the participants and underlining the critical need for sustainable water and soil management.

[Find out more](#)

WATDEV PROJECT PROMOTES AGROFORESTRY AND WATER MANAGEMENT BMPS IN TANA RIVER COUNTY KENYA



By Genevieve Apio

Tana River County, Kenya – The Follow Up Training and Innovation Roadshow and Exhibition convened participants at the Hola Irrigation Farmers’ Cooperative Society Ground on 24th and 25th March. The event, labelled as a Field day, aimed at showcasing technologies, innovations, and best practices to enhance the implementation of agroforestry and water management Best Management Practices (BMPs). The project is funded by the European Union through **the DeSIRA initiative**, with **AICS** as the executing body and **CIHEAM Bari** as the technical and scientific lead partner. The event was facilitated by **ASARECA** in collaboration with **KALRO** and the **Tana River County Government** and attracted **over 700 participants**, including women, youth, farmers, agripreneurs, startups, researchers, and policymakers for training and exhibition.

[Find out more](#)



EMPOWERING FARMERS THROUGH INNOVATION: ETHIOPIA HOSTS WATDEV CAPACITY BUILDING AND ROADSHOW EVENT



The Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (**ASARECA**), the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies – Institute of Bari (**CIHEAM Bari**), and the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (**AICS**) joined Ethiopian partner Water and Land Resource Centre (**WLRC**) in co-hosting a capacity building workshop and innovation roadshow on Best Management Practices (**BMPs**) in **Debre Zeit** on 31 March and 1 April. Held at the Bishoftu Agricultural Research Centre (**BARC**), the event was designed to disseminate knowledge gained by Trainers of Trainers (**ToTs**) during two earlier trainings in **Bari, Italy**, and to identify scenarios for scaling innovations across **Ethiopia**. More than 60 participants attended consisting of smallholder farmers, researchers, start-ups, decision-makers, and more.



[Find out more](#)

WATDEV'S 3RD TRAINING MODULE ON CLIMATE- SMART AGRICULTURE: NETWORKING AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION



The WATDEV project successfully concluded the 3rd Module of its Training and Capacity Building Course on **"Water, Soil, and Crop Management in a Climate-Smart Agriculture."** Held from February 17th to 28th, 2025, at CIHEAM Bari, Italy, this initiative aimed to empower young scientists and researchers from Kenya, Ethiopia, Egypt, and Sudan. With twenty selected participants, four PhD students working on the WATDEV project, and representatives from ASARECA and Heliopolis University, this last module focused on **networking, international cooperation policies, project design, and funding opportunities to develop the agronomic sector in WATDEV countries.**



Led by CIHEAM Bari, the training provided remarkable contributions from European institutions, internationally renowned experts, and practitioners who delivered well-balanced and varied insights into European policies and strategies, international funding instruments, and project design techniques. The first week of the training featured expert-led sessions.



The opening remarks given by CIHEAM Bari Director **Maurizio Raeli** and AICS Cairo Director **Martino Melli** highlighted the role of international cooperation in strengthening food systems. Keynote speeches were delivered by the European Commission representatives. **Etienne Coyette** of DG INTPA and **Nienke Buisman** of DG Research & Innovation focused their contributions on EU Policies and Programmes for Research and Development in the Agro-food Sector in Africa.



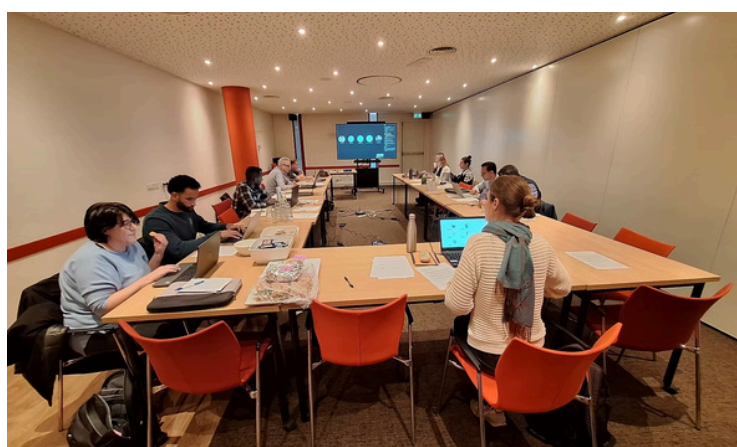
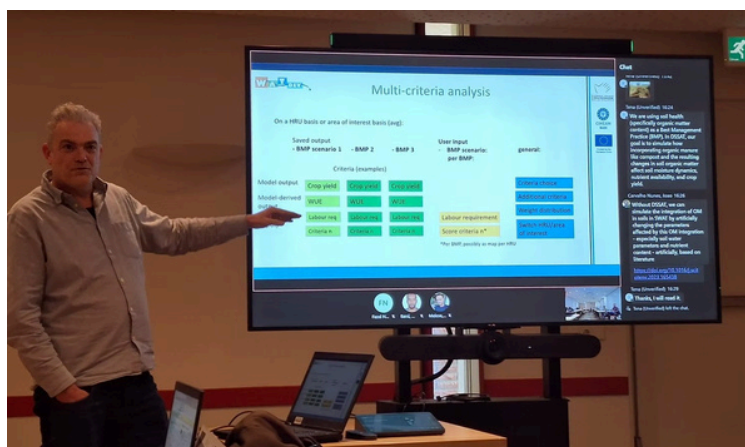
The following day, two lectio magistralis were held by **Joachim Spangenberg** (Sustainable Europe Research Institute) on sustainability and resilience in the polycrisis and by **Prof. Pierre-Bruno Ruffini** on Science Diplomacy. The DeSIRA Initiative, along with the Erasmus+ Programme, the Horizon Europe Programme, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, are among the main initiatives examined in this training module. Workshops on **international development cooperation, global challenges, and project and budget design** completed the range of topics which were at the forefront of this training.

[Find out more](#)

THE MODELLING WORKING GROUP PROGRESSES TOOLBOX DEVELOPMENT AT FOURTH MEETING



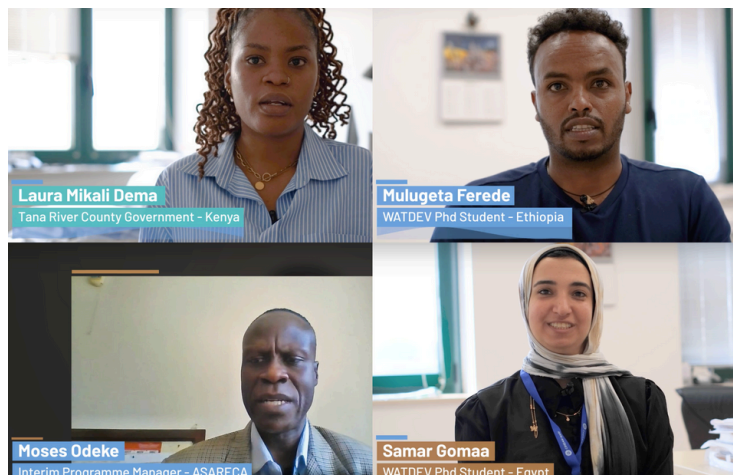
The fourth meeting of the **WATDEV Project Modelling Working Group** was held on 9 April 2025 at **Wageningen University Campus**, in the Gaia Building (Wageningen, The Netherlands). The meeting was **organized by the International Soil Reference and Information Centre (ISRIC)** and attended in person by representatives of the **Finnish Environment Institute (Syke)** and **CIHEAM Bari**. The discussions focused on key updates to the integrated model applications, refinement of integration methodologies, and planning of the next steps in toolbox development. The agenda was structured to facilitate both **information exchange and technical refinement**.



[Find out more](#)

WATCH PEOPLE, CHALLENGES, AND PRACTICES TACKLING WATER SCARCITY AND FOOD SECURITY

FIND THE WATDEV PROJECT'S JOINT REPORTS & PUBLIC DELIVERABLES ON THE WEBSITE



As the WATDEV project progresses, the partnership has produced joint reports and deliverables that make the results of their research and development activities public and evident. Take a look at the [WATDEV website](#) to find out and consult the deliverables finalized by the partnership. You can then understand how the research led to the selection of the best management practices for each study area, how local communities and stakeholders are constantly involved in the process, which training programs have been delivered to the agroecosystem key actors, and how the modelling strategy has been defined and is evolving.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES



Join the conversation online



Funded by the European Union

This publication was funded by the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the WATDEV partnership and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.