

PRESS RELEASE

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Seite | 1

Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research (ZALF)

Invitation to a conference - in Brussels and online:

From Research to Practice: EU Conference on Sustainable Food Systems

The EU has set ambitious goals for agriculture and food: fewer pesticides, more organic farming, and significantly lower emissions. But how can these goals be effectively implemented? Two EU research projects will provide answers at their joint closing conference on June 16, 2026, in Brussels. As part of the VISIONARY project, the Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research (ZALF) conducted research on the management of food systems, value chains for legumes, and incentive schemes to promote biodiversity in agriculture.

Under the motto "From Research to Action," the EU projects VISIONARY and ENFASYS will present the key findings from four years of research. The focus was on determining which measures are effective across the entire food chain—from production through trade to consumption—and which incentives actually promote sustainable behavior.

The challenge is enormous: About one-third of global greenhouse gas emissions are linked to food production—at the same time, it significantly impacts biodiversity, soils, and water resources. Despite ambitious goals, research shows that many policy instruments have had only limited impact in practice so far.

Research Meets Policy

Through a mix of presentations, panel discussions, and interactive breakout sessions, the conference offers evidence-based recommendations for action for policymakers and the retail sector, as well as insights into concrete, EU-wide interventions by the projects—such as the design of effective CO₂ pricing, the impact of climate labels on biodiversity, or the question of how consumers can be encouraged to choose plant-based alternatives more often in supermarkets.

The conference serves as a platform to bridge the gap between research and policy implementation and to provide concrete impetus for the further development of European sustainability policy.

Invitation:

Date: 16. June 2026, 9:00 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Location: Vlaamse Overheid – Herman Teirlinck Building, Brussels and online

Participation in the conference is free of charge.

Contact: Eva Schellenbeck, Global Nature Fund, schellenbeck@globalnature.org

Program and Registration: <https://visionary-project.eu/events/from-research-to-action-visionary-enfasys-final-conference/>

About VISIONARY

VISIONARY is an EU-funded research project that has spent four years investigating how sustainable transformations can be shaped along the food chain. Twelve research institutions and NGOs from eight European countries participated.

German project partners include FiBL (Research Institute of Organic Agriculture), ZALF (Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research), and the Global Nature Fund.

ZALF in the VISIONARY Project

Researchers from the Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research (ZALF) contributed expertise in the areas of systems approaches, behavioral and experimental economics, and policy analysis for the governance of food systems to the VISIONARY project.

In particular, the Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research (ZALF) contributed its expertise on institutional barriers and levers in legume value chains to VISIONARY (see study by Rønn et al., 2026).

In addition, ZALF researchers investigated how a labeling approach could be institutionally designed to make biodiversity services in agriculture more visible. A label could create incentives for farmers to participate in nature conservation measures.

About ENFASYS

ENFASYS is an EU-funded research project aimed at transforming food systems toward greater sustainability. The focus is on developing and evaluating policy measures that promote sustainable consumption and production patterns. The goal is to provide evidence-based recommendations for policymakers and to accelerate the implementation of sustainable food systems in Europe.

More information:

Rønn, T. H., Schulze, C., Czajkowski, M., Matzdorf, B., Moreno-Pérez, O. M., Olsen, S. B., ... & Zawadzki, W. (2026). Weak pulse: A Q-methodology study of stakeholder viewpoints on barriers in European food legume value chains. *Food Policy*, 139, 103033. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodpol.2025.103033>

Website VISIONARY: <https://visionary-project.eu/>

Project partners:

- Cooperativas Agro-alimentarias de España U de Coop Sociedad Cooperativa (CCAIE), Spain
- Copenhagen Business School (CBS), Denmark
- Global Nature Fund (GNF), Germany
- Highclere Consulting (HCC), Romania
- Institute of Agricultural Economics (Agrárközgazdasági Intézet, AKI), Hungary
- Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research (ZALF)
- Research Institute for Organic Agriculture (Forschungsinstitut für biologischen Landbau, FiBL), Germany
- Universitat Politècnica de València (UPV), Spain (Coordinator)
- University of Aberdeen (UNIABDN), UK
- University of Copenhagen (UCPH), Denmark
- University of Exeter (UNEXE), UK
- University of Trento (UniTrento), Italy
- University of Warsaw (UW/ UNIWARSAW), Poland

Funding:

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Over the course of four years, research institutions and NGOs have worked together on the international VISIONARY project to address sustainable transformations along the food supply chain. On June 16, 2026, the project will present its findings to the public at a closing conference. The picture can be used for editorial purposes by stating the source: © Pixabay | Picture in color and print quality: <http://www.zalf.de/de/aktuelles>

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About the Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research (ZALF) in Muencheberg, member of the Leibniz Association:

Mission of ZALF is to deliver solutions for an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable agriculture –together with society.

As a contribution to overcoming global challenges such as climate change, food security, biodiversity conservation and resource scarcity, we develop and design crop systems, integrated in their landscape contexts that combine food security with sustainability. Therefore we process complex landscape data with a unique set

of experimental methods, new technologies and models as well as socio-economic approaches.

ZALF research is integrated systems research: starting from processes in soils and plants to causal relationships on the field and landscape level up to global impacts and complex interactions between landscapes, society and economy. www.zalf.de