



MAIL Newsletter 1

Editorial —

Dear friends and colleagues,

MAIL (Identifying Marginal Lands in Europe and strengthening their contribution potentialities in a CO₂ sequestration strategy, GA No. 823805, H2020-MSCA-RISE-2018) is a cooperation European project funded by the Research Executive Agency (REA), to be realized between January 2019 and December 2021.

One of the aims of our project is to reach as many individuals and organizations as possible from the science community and stakeholders/end-users and widely disseminate the project activities and results related to efficient use of mountainous and semi mountainous marginal lands as potential carbon sinks.

I hope that the launch of our 1st newsletter along with the other five in the series will build an effective communication platform and it will be a good opportunity for us to exchange information and create awareness on marginal lands management. Please do not hesitate to send your suggestions on this publication as well as on project activities.

Petros PATIAS

MAIL Coordinator

Director of AUTH's Laboratory
of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing

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— The MAIL project

The global climate change is a worldwide problem where its mitigation is one of the 17th Sustainable Development Goals of the UN. An effective mitigation strategy should assess all the possible sustainable actions that can contribute to this direction. A challenging and very prominent contribution to raise CO₂ sequestration could come from the Land Use Land Use Change and Forestry sector (LULUCF sector) and the utilization of Marginal Lands (MLs) that today are widely available in the EU. MLs can play significant role as potential Carbon Sinks. Especially those on mountainous and semi-mountainous areas (m/sm MLs) are of great capacity and can contribute actively to that goal having no effect in the agri-food production sector. Even though MLs' contribution is acknowledged the influence of their active inclusion in the climate change mitigation strategies has not yet been estimated in depth.

MAIL focuses on m/sm MLs in order to classify them into Carbon sequestration capacity categories based on innovative approaches fully consistent with the IPCC methods and the UNFCCC requirements. The final goal is to deliver a methodology and application set in a web-based platform format, which will be valuable for policy makers, stakeholders or researchers. Free open access data of other EU initiatives will be combined, (land cover, soil, topography, climate, etc.) in order to detect the potential existence of m/sm MLs. These, will be further examined, validated and classified in Carbon sequestration capacity groups through stratified field sampling. State of the art remote sensing (RS) techniques and free open access satellite images with improved spatial and radiometric resolution will be used in order to augment the accuracy of the produced pilot thematic maps. In addition, actions that have to be taken in order to increase the Carbon sequestration capacity will be proposed, while their feasibility will be assessed. A final methodology will be delivered for on-demand production of thematic maps within Europe.

MAIL has the following **objectives**:

- Definition of parameters describing Marginal Land within the different European climate zones, as MLs are affected by latitude.
- Implementation of certain series of data processing in order to determine the best possible way to map/monitor m/sm MLs based on free available datasets, satellite data or open source applications.
- Quantification of potential CO₂ sequestration capacity and sustainable utilization of MLs under the prism of LULUCF.
- Alternative proposals of possible vegetation species that might be used for CO₂ storage on MLs considering the limited site conditions.

- Creation of a knowledge base and a virtual web classroom for the training of participants in advanced classification remote sensing techniques. Creation of a virtual place where partners, stakeholders or research community, could collaborate and find useful information regarding the training excellence, research activities, scientific publications, funding initiatives etc.
- Establishment of a permanent working team consisting of RS and Forestry experts that will focus on the MLs management at EU level.
- Creation of general guidelines and manuals that will attract and help relevant stakeholders.

[Read more ...](#)





MAIL - Identifying Marginal Lands in Europe and strengthening their contribution potentialities in a CO₂ sequestration strategy

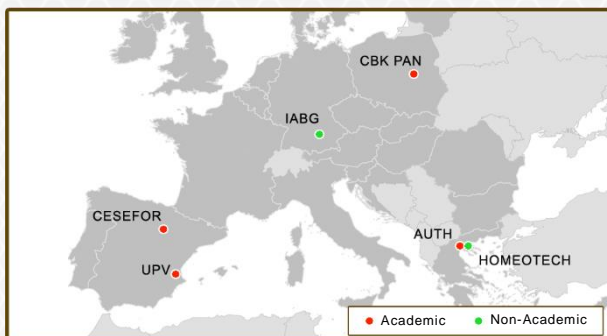
MAIL project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 823805; [H2020 MSCA RISE 2018]



About the Project

The following data describes MAIL at a glance:

- Topic: MSCA-RISE-2018 Marie Skłodowska – Curie Research and Innovation Staff Exchange
- Title: Identifying Marginal Lands in Europe and strengthening their contribution potentialities in a CO₂ sequestration strategy
- Project Duration: 36 months
- Official start of the project: 01/01/2019
- Total budget: 800,400.00 €
- EU funding: 800,400.00 €



Consortium

Coordinator:
The Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH) Greece



Gounaris N. – Kontos K. OE (HOMEOTECH) Greece



Universitat Politècnica de Valencia (UPV) Spain



Industrieanlagen Betriebsgesellschaft MBH (IABG) Germany



Centrum Badań Kosmicznych Polskiej Akademii Nauk (CBK PAN) Poland



Fundacion Centro De Servicios Y Promocion FOrestral Y de su Industria De Castilla y Leon (CESEFOR) Spain



MAIL kick off meeting

The MAIL kick off meeting was held in Brussels, Belgium at January 16, 2019. All the consortium partners (AUTH, HOMEOTECH, UPV, IABG, CBK PAN, CESEFOR) along with the Project Officer were present at the MAIL kick off meeting.

The kick off meeting consisted of two sessions. In the first session the Project Coordinator Prof. Petros Patias presented an overview of the MAIL project, while the consortium partners presented their organizations. The Project Officer gave a presentation focusing on the administrative and financial management issues of the RISE projects. Following the presentations, the consortium interacted with Project Officer to clarify management issues. The Project Officer answered to all the consortium partners questions.

The second session was realized among the consortium partners and the following issues were discussed:

- The project monitoring plan
- Organization of activities within Work Packages and Tasks
- Secondments implementation
- Discussion about the procedures, deliverables, milestones, steps and actions to be taken
- Introduction of the project management and other tools for internal communication
- Planning of the project meetings

A total of 13 persons attended the MAIL kick off meeting.

MAIL in the H2020 MSCA RISE 2018 Coordinators' Day:

The Research Executive Agency (REA) organized the H2020 MSCA RISE 2018 Coordinators' day in Brussels, Belgium at 17-18 January 2019. The event was realized at the meeting room COV AUD 4/121 Place Charles Rogier 16 and the MAIL project was represented by the Project Coordinator Prof. Petros Patias and Assistant Prof. Charalampos Georgiadis members of the AUTH team. The H2020 MSCA RISE 2018 Coordinators' Day was a 2-day event. During the first day (January 17, 2019) The following presentations were realized:

- Welcome and opening remarks by Mr. Bodo Richter (Acting Head of Unit DG EAC.C.2) and Mr. Frederik Olsson Hector (Head of unit REA.A.3)
- Eligible Researcher and amendments Panel session by Ms. Tiphane Spanier
- Payment and audit by Mr. Rodrigo Gutierrez-Dominguez
- Reporting and meeting by Ms. Aleksandra Schoetz Sobczak

At the end of the first day the AUTH team had a panel session meeting with the project officers discussing about administrative and financial issues with respect to the MSCA RISE 2018 procedures.

During the second day (January 18, 2019) the following presentations were realized:

- Ethics in the RISE GA by Ms. Berta Vizcarra
- Dissemination and communication of the project results by Irina Tiron

At the end of the second day the AUTH team had a panel session meeting with the project officers discussing about administrative and financial issues with respect to the MSCA RISE 2018 procedures. It must be noted that during each session of covering the different aspects of the MSCA RISE 2018 aspects testimonial presentations were given by project coordinators of the previous MSCA RISE call.

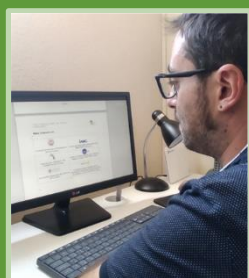




Secondments

1. Mr Alfosno Abad Gallego (CESEFOR) successfully finished his secondment to HOMEOTECH for Task 2.1
2. Mr Lampros Papalampros (HOMEOTECH) successfully finished his secondment to CESEFOR for Task 2.2
3. Ms Bettina Felten (IABG) successfully finished her secondment in AUTH working on Task 2.1

4. Mr Elefterios Mystakidis (HOMEOTECH) successfully finished his secondment in CESEFOR working on Task 2.2
5. Mr Vasileios Tsioukas (AUTH) is currently being seconded in ABG working on Task 5.3
6. Mr Rodrigo Gomez (CESEFOR) is currently being seconded in IABG working on Task 2.3



My name is Alfonso Abad Gallego. I am from Valladolid and I work in CESEFOR. I am a graduate of University of Valladolid (2006) and the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Zaragoza (2007).

My professional experience covers environmental management, information technologies and civil works. I was an officer responsible for Geographic Information Systems for the Natural Park of Montesinho in Portugal, consulted environmental impact assessment in Valladolid (Spain) and worked on environmental monitoring in Greece.

During my secondment I worked in the Task 2.1: "Literature review on Marginal Land definition" in order to provide a Marginal Land Definition based on national, EU and International policies, search Marginal Land policies, set the definition of mountainous and semi mountainous areas and develop indicators for the identification and assessment of s/sm categories. The secondment has been carried out at the premises of Homeotech for a period of 3 months in March, April and May. 2019. I was working alongside Bettina from IABG and we have developed the deliverable draft which is currently on revision by the rest of the project consortium.

[Watch video](#)



My name is Lampros Papalampros. I am from Thessaloniki/Greece and I work in HOMEOTECH since 2007. I am a graduate of the Department of Forestry and Natural Environment of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH) (2006).

I have substantial experience in scientific areas such as forest management, cadastre, research programs, LIFE programs, environmental subjects, etc., as I am professionally active since 2004.

I have acquired an M.Sc. degree in "photogrammetric production and remote sensing management in GIS environment" (2013) from the School of Rural and Surveying Engineering (School R&SE/AUTH).

Since 2013, I am studying towards a Ph.D. in the area of Geodesy and Surveying (School R&SE/AUTH), in the field of 3D capturing and monitoring of natural environments through novel technologies.

Regarding my secondment in Cesefor I worked for Task 2.2 that has to do with "Collection of appropriate existing European/Global datasets". At this task literature review has taken place in order to detect and evaluate all the available European or Global scale datasets that will help to assess land cover and characteristics regarding marginality (acidity, salinity, nutrition, organic matter, slope values, etc.). For this task I was seconded for two months period and my colleague Lefteris Mystakidis continued for another two months (at Cesefor also). At the beginning of September we will have a first draft for that deliverable.

[Watch video](#)





My name is Bettina Felten and I work as a GIS and remote sensing specialist at IABG Geodata Factory in Dresden, Germany, since September 2018. My main focus is automated image analysis in the context of remote

projects. Previously, I graduated from Wageningen University and Research with a M.Sc. Geo-Information Science and Remote Sensing.

During my secondment at Aristotle University Thessaloniki, Greece, from May to July 2019 I worked on task 2.1 of the MAIL project, revising scientific and non-scientific literature in order to define the term "marginal lands" within the context of MAIL. Marginal lands in the context of MAIL are semi-mountainous areas which are not suitable for productive agriculture due to different constraints. Most constraints identified in former research can be classified as either environmental / biophysical or socioeconomic. It is important to note that marginality is a dynamic, scale- and location-dependent concept.

[Watch video](#)



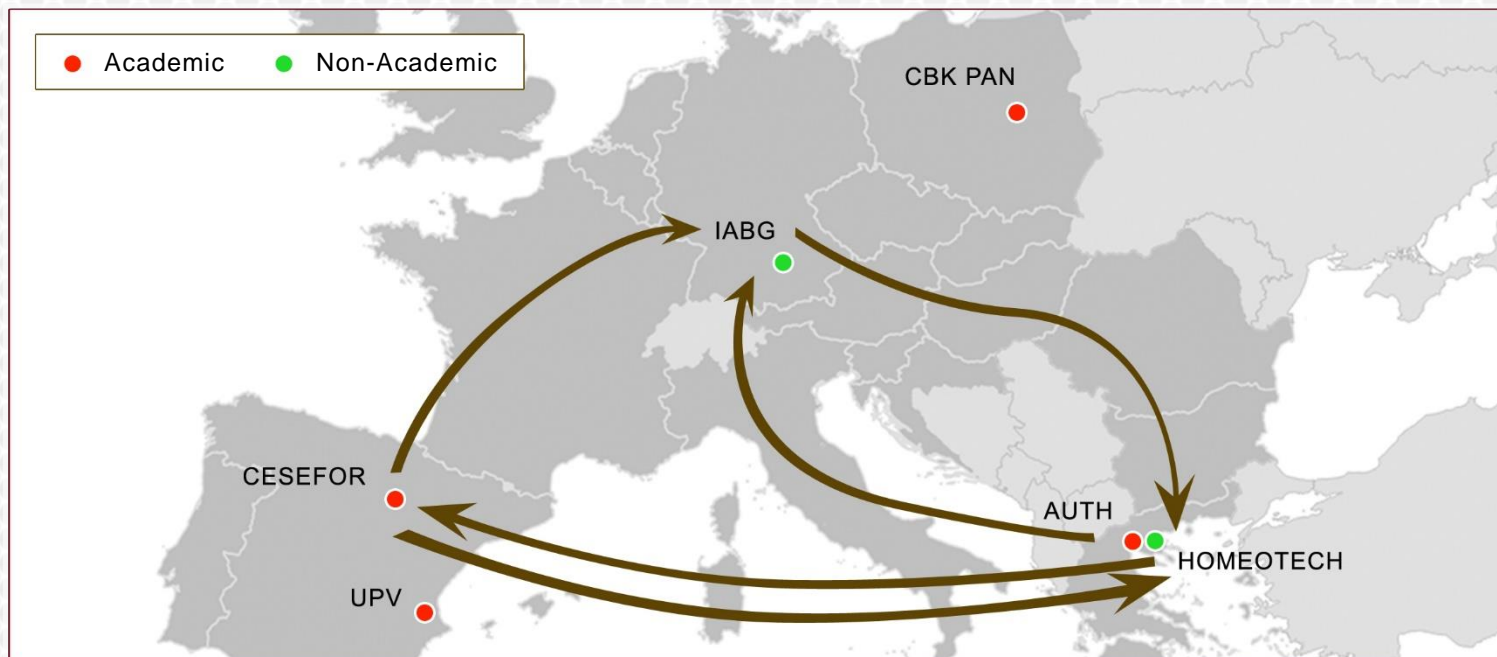
My name is Eleftherios Mystakidis, I am from Thessaloniki/Greece and I am a 2013 graduate of the Department of Forestry and Natural Environment of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH).

I have been working at HOMEOTECH since 2013, providing technical support on projects involving GIS applications, databases and field surveying, participating in redaction of forest and environmental studies (management, fire protection, road construction and maintenance, technical works, management of protected areas, etc) and field works for surveying and data collection.

During my secondment in CeseFor, at Soria/Spain, for the MAIL project, from June to July 2019, I was working on task 2.2 which is about European/Global datasets collection.

I was searching and collecting available datasets already been published. Further criteria were applied such as date of publication, credential of the author, reliability of the source, depth of analysis etc. trying to increase the levels of datasets validity and reliability. Finally the datasets were classified in the following generic categories: land cover, land use, land surface topography, soil, climate and socioeconomic categories.

[Watch video](#)



The directions of secondments from period between January and August 2019