



PRESS RELEASE

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30 January 2023, Athens

Mainstream Mitigation pathways for a climate-conscious change in the food system: the CHOICE EU-funded initiative

The new Horizon Europe project, CHOICE, unites sixteen partners from five European countries, Colombia and South Africa, towards one goal: Pave the way to 2050 Zero Emission by driving efficient demand-side climate mitigation in the Food, Agriculture, and Land Use sectors.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has issued a stark warning: the planet must achieve zero emissions by 2050 to avoid dire climatic consequences. Climate urgency requires substantial demand-side mitigation actions and behavioural changes, especially in major industries like food and agriculture, major global CO₂ emitters. Policymakers often rely on Integrated Assessment Models (IAMs) to evaluate climate stabilization pathways and make informed decisions. However, these models have traditionally focused on supply-side measures. At the same time, less attention has been given to the demand side and representation of food systems due to their complexity and actor diversity.

The newly launched Horizon Europe project CHOICE aspires to mainstream Integrated Assessment Models (IAMs) by embedding behavioural change and actor heterogeneity and increasing their outreach to citizens, communities as well as industrial actors in the food chain. By leveraging various disciplines, technological advances, and large-scale awareness campaigns, CHOICE strives to accelerate climate action and contribute to the global target of limiting temperature rise to 1.5°C.

To achieve its objectives, CHOICE begins with a bottom-up analysis of individual consumers and actors, understanding their behaviour and potential for change. The project harnesses these insights to consistently enhance a new generation of IAM models that accurately reflect the underlying heterogeneity, accounting for multiple representative consumers and actors.

This approach is supported by the widespread adoption of CHOICE's digital immersive tools, data storytelling, and online games designed to elicit emotional appeals as well as social incentives. CHOICE will use these enablers to orchestrate impactful engagement and 'green marketing' campaigns across five pilot sites in Spain, Greece, Italy, Colombia and South Africa while continuously informing global IAM models focusing on Europe.



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Furthermore, CHOICE will employ established methods from behavioural science and marketing, such as Randomised Controlled Trials (RCTs), to promote specific mitigation actions, ranging from embracing plant-based diets to reducing food waste and adopting sustainable farming practices aiming to spearhead sustainable food choices starting at a pilot level and scaling up globally. The project will consistently evaluate the reactions of diverse socio-economic profiles and stakeholder groups to these incentives.

This process is further facilitated through the intuitive and insightful interfaces designed for the CHOICE IAM models and their complementary accounting tools. These enhancements strengthen the models' scenario-building capacity, improve result transparency and ultimately enable broader integration into decision-making processes.

CHOICE embarked on its journey in November 2023, while the consortium officially inaugurated the project's activities during a two-day physical meeting in Athens, Greece, on January 29 and 30, 2024. This significant assembly, hosted by the Institute of Communication and Computer Systems project coordinator, brought together 40 partner representatives, setting the cornerstone for a three-year collaboration committed to advancing sustainability and climate action within the food system.

NOTES TO THE EDITOR

PROJECT SUMMARY

Motivated by the need for substantial demand-side climate mitigation in the food chain towards achieving the 2050 Zero emissions goal, CHOICE aspires to mainstream Integrated Assessment Models (IAMs), an invaluable instrument for climate stabilization pathways impact assessment. This will be achieved by embedding IAMs into the lifestyle choices and decision-making process of consumers, producers and actors of the Food, Agriculture and Land Use sectors. This ambitious goal is supported by a more realistic representation of behavioural change and actor diversity within IAMs. Following an approach that bridges social science and marketing tools, CHOICE leverages digital enablers designed around emotional appeals and social incentives to orchestrate large-scale 'green marketing' campaigns across four continents: Europe, Africa, Latin America, and Asia, focusing on Europe.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Duration: 36 months | Starting from 1 November 2023

EU funding: €5 million | Grand Agreement no: 101081617

Coordinator: Institute of Communication and Computer Systems

Website: www.climatechoice.eu | Twitter: [@ClimateChoiceEU](https://twitter.com/ClimateChoiceEU) | LinkedIn:

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CHOICE Consortium:

Institute of Communication and Computer Systems ([ICCS](#)) | Athina-Erevnitiko Kentro Kainotomias stis Technologies tis Pliroforias, ton Epikoinonion kai tis Gnosis ([ATHENA](#)) | Internationales Institut fuer Angewandte Systemanalyse ([IIASA](#)) | SDSN Association Paris ([SDSN](#)) | Stichting Radboud Universiteit ([RU](#)) | LIBRA AI Technologies ([LIBRA](#)) | InoSens Doo Novi Sad ([INO](#)) | Bioazul, SL ([BIO](#)) | Ethniko Asteroskopeio Athinon ([NOA](#)) | Environmental Reliability and Risk Analysis ([ERRA](#)) | Cooperativas Agro-alimentarias de Andalucía ([CAAND](#)) | Inoqo GmbH ([Inoqo](#)) | SUPRACAFÉ Colombia S.A ([SUP](#)) | Corporacion Parque Tecnológico de Innovacion del Cafe y Su Caficultura ([TECNI](#)) | University of Pretoria ([UP](#)) | e-Fresh.gr Private Company ([e-Fresh](#)).

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