


## Topic 2.1.1-2026 (RIA\*): Leveraging ecosystem functions and enhancing water allocation for the protection and restoration of non-perennial watercourses in the Mediterranean

TABLE 11. GENERAL CALL CONDITIONS

 Thematic Area-1 Water management in the Nexus	
Topic 2.1.1-2026 (RIA*)	<b>Leveraging Ecosystem Functions and Enhancing Water Allocation for the Protection and Restoration of Non-Perennial Watercourses in the Mediterranean</b>
Contribution to SRIA	Operational Objective 2/LAND AND WATER SUSTAINABILITY 3/ WATER GOVERNANCE SYSTEM
Contribution to EU Policies	<a href="#">Water Framework Directive</a> <a href="#">EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030</a> <a href="#">EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change</a> <a href="#">Zero Pollution Action Plan</a> <a href="#">European Water Resilience Strategy</a> <a href="#">European Climate Law</a>
SDGs	<a href="#">SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation)</a> <a href="#">SDG 13 (Climate Action)</a> <a href="#">SDG 15 (Life on Land)</a> .
Admissibility conditions	The conditions are described in <a href="#">General Annex A for Section 2.</a>
Eligibility conditions	The conditions are described in <a href="#">General Annex B for Section 2.</a>
Financial and operational capacity and exclusion	The criteria are described in <a href="#">General Annex C for Section 2.</a>
Award criteria	The criteria are described in <a href="#">General Annex D for Section 2.</a>
Documents	The documents are described in <a href="#">General Annex E for Section 2.</a>
Procedure	The procedure is described in <a href="#">General Annex F for Section 2.</a>
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in <a href="#">General Annex G for Section 2.</a>
Expected contribution per project	PRIMA considers that proposals requesting contribution of at least <b>EUR 1 million</b> would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submitting and selecting proposals requesting other amounts or duration, following national regulations.
Duration	PRIMA considers that proposals with a duration of <b>36 months</b> would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submitting and selecting proposals with different durations.

Type of Action	Research & Innovation Activities (RIA* <sup>1</sup> )
Technology Readiness levels (TRL)	Proposals should clearly state the starting and end TRLs of the key technology or technologies targeted in the project. Applicants are encouraged to use the <a href="#">TRL self-assessment tool</a> to accurately determine the <a href="#">Technology Readiness Level (TRL)</a> of their proposal.

### **Expected Outcomes**

Enhancing the protection, ecological functionality, and climate resilience of non-perennial watercourses is essential for safeguarding biodiversity, ecosystem services, and water security in the Mediterranean. This aligns with the [Water Framework Directive](#), the [EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030](#), the [EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change](#), the [Zero Pollution Action Plan](#), and the recently adopted [European Water Resilience Strategy](#) and contributes to PRIMA Operational Objectives on Land and Water Sustainability and Water Governance Systems.

Projects will also support the [Kunming-Montréal Global Biodiversity Framework](#) and the [Sustainable Development Goals](#)—particularly [SDG 6 \(Clean Water and Sanitation\)](#), [SDG 13 \(Climate Action\)](#), and [SDG 15 \(Life on Land\)](#).

The action will support inclusive and ecosystem-based approaches to the management and restoration of ephemeral, seasonal, and intermittent rivers, streams, and wadis, ensuring that environmental flows and ecosystem needs are recognised in water planning and allocation. Projects are expected to strengthen resilience to hydroclimatic variability by maintaining or restoring key ecological processes.

### **Project results are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:**

- Improved scientific and policy understanding of non-perennial water systems in diverse Mediterranean socio-ecological contexts
- Evidence-based evaluation of ecosystem services including their condition, functionality, and benefits, and their interactions with land use, water abstraction, and climate variability.
- Demonstrated ecological restoration and improved resilience through nature-based solutions (e.g. riparian zone rehabilitation, agroecological practices, floodplain reconnection)
- Strengthened livelihoods and agricultural sustainability in communities reliant on non-perennial watercourses
- Updated water allocation frameworks that explicitly integrate environmental flows and prioritise biodiversity and ecosystem integrity

**Scope:** Non-perennial watercourses — including ephemeral, seasonal, and intermittent rivers and streams — are integral to the hydrological and ecological systems of the Mediterranean<sup>2,3</sup>. However, they are increasingly vulnerable to climate change, groundwater over-extraction,

<sup>1</sup> Please note that the acronyms IA (Innovation Action) and RIA (Research and Innovation Action) are used in Section 1 and Section 2, respectively. In Section 1, the actions follow the standard Horizon Europe Rules for Participation (RfP). However, in Section 2, while some rules are based on Horizon Europe RfP, specific participation and funding rate regulations apply. Projects selected in Section 2 are funded directly by national funding bodies and are therefore subject to respective national regulations. For more details regarding the rules for Section 2, please refer to the guidelines for applicants on the PRIMA website.

<sup>2</sup> Datry, T., Boulton, A., & Bonada, N. (2017). Intermittent Rivers and Ephemeral Streams: Ecology and Management. Academic Press.

<sup>3</sup> T.N. Skoulikidis, S. Sabater, T. Datry, M. Morais, A. Buffagni, et al. Non-perennial Mediterranean rivers in Europe: Status, pressures, and challenges for research and management. Science of the Total Environment, 2017, 577, pp.1-18. 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2016.10.147. hal-01774966

land-use change, and agricultural intensification<sup>4</sup>, while their ecological roles remain insufficiently recognised in water governance<sup>5</sup>. Strengthening their protection and restoration is therefore critical for climate resilience, sustainable agriculture, and biodiversity conservation in the region. By improving the understanding of the ecosystem services provided by these systems and informing water allocation frameworks that acknowledge environmental flows, projects responding to this topic will support inclusive, adaptive, and sustainable water governance under climate stress. Proposals should generate robust evidence and co-develop nature-based solutions (NbS) that maintain or restore the ecological functionality of non-perennial watercourses.

**Proposed activities should cover at least one of the following aspects:**

- Map Mediterranean non-perennial watercourses at country level to guide sustainable water planning and accounting under increasingly variable hydroclimatic conditions
- Co-design decision-support tools that integrate ecosystem water needs, users' demands, and biodiversity protection into water allocation and management processes. Tools should build on existing systems where appropriate and may include digital and AI-enabled features to enhance usability, transparency, and policy relevance.
- Implement and assess nature-based interventions to restore ecological functionality, stabilise soils, improve infiltration, and enhance biodiversity in non-perennial watercourses. These may include but are not limited to: riparian and catchment restoration, vegetated buffer strips, soil–water retention and erosion control measures, agroecological land and grazing management practices, and floodplain reconnection or reactivation where hydrologically feasible.

Projects should monitor biodiversity and ecosystem health to assess the effectiveness of interventions, with particular attention to maintaining ecological integrity under changing flow regimes.

While interventions may be tested at pilot scale, proposals are expected to lay the groundwork for scaling up tools, frameworks, and methodologies across different Mediterranean contexts, thereby enhancing both scientific knowledge and practical implementation.

Projects should ensure meaningful co-creation with local communities, water managers, and policymakers, so that solutions are socially relevant and policy-ready. Stakeholder engagement should therefore be embedded within solution-oriented activities, not treated as a stand-alone objective.

Proposals should adopt a Multi-Actor Approach (MAA)<sup>6</sup>, that ensures meaningful co-creation with local communities, end users, water managers, policymakers, SMEs, technology providers, researchers, and competent authorities. Stakeholder engagement should be embedded throughout the entire project lifecycle—including the identification of needs, the co-design of solutions, testing and validation under real operational conditions, interpretation of results, and formulation of policy-relevant recommendations—so that the solutions developed are socially

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<sup>4</sup> IPCC (2022). Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) – WGII: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability

<sup>5</sup> Gallart, F., Prat, N., García-Roger, E., et al. (2012). "A novel approach to analysing the regimes of temporary rivers." *Hydrological Sciences Journal*, 57(3), 742–758.

<sup>6</sup> The definition and specific requirements of the multi-actor approach as applied in PRIMA can be found in the Introduction of the Horizon Europe Work Programme (2025) - Cluster 6 (pages 14-16).

relevant, context-appropriate, and policy-ready. Living Labs<sup>7</sup> are encouraged ensuring their relevance to local socio-ecological contexts, and their feasibility under real operational conditions.

Knowledge, innovations, and tools developed under this topic are expected to be linked with the [AQUAGRI-KNOW](#) thematic network and, where relevant, contribute to the future Horizon Europe topic HORIZON-CL6-2026-03-GOVERNANCE-09: Increasing knowledge flows to practice within AKIS via EU thematic knowledge hubs, specifically under the thematic knowledge hub on Sustainable Water Management under Climate Change.

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<sup>7</sup> PRIMA adopts the ENOLL Living Labs definition recognising them as dynamic, open innovation ecosystems where research and innovation are developed, tested, and validated in real-life settings rather than isolated laboratory environments. Through a systematic co-creation approach, Living Labs place citizens, end-users, and local stakeholders at the centre of the innovation process, ensuring that new solutions are not only technically sound and creative, but also relevant, context-appropriate, and grounded in real-world needs.

## Topic 2.2.1-2026 (RIA\*): Novel remote and non-invasive ICT monitoring and control systems against disease and pest infestation

TABLE 12. GENERAL CALL CONDITIONS

Thematic Area 2-Farming systems in the Nexus	
Topic 2.2.1-2026 (RIA*)	<b>Novel remote and non-invasive ICT monitoring and control systems against disease and pest infestation</b>
Contribution to SRIA	Operational Objective 5/ PESTS AND PATHOGENS IN FARMING
Contribution to EU policies	<a href="#">European Green Deal</a> <a href="#">EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030</a> <a href="#">EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change</a> <a href="#">Vision for Agriculture and food</a> <a href="#">Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)</a> <a href="#">Digital Europe Strategy</a> <a href="#">EU Global Food Security</a> <a href="#">EU Organic Action Plan</a>
SDGs	<a href="#">SDG 2 (Zero Hunger)</a> <a href="#">SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production)</a> <a href="#">SDG 13 (Climate Action)</a>
Admissibility conditions	The conditions are described in <a href="#">General Annex A for Section 2.</a>
Eligibility conditions	The conditions are described in <a href="#">General Annex B for Section 2.</a>
Financial and operational capacity and exclusion	The criteria are described in <a href="#">General Annex C for Section 2.</a>
Award criteria	The criteria are described in <a href="#">General Annex D for Section 2.</a>
Documents	The documents are described in <a href="#">General Annex E for Section 2.</a>
Procedure	The procedure is described in <a href="#">General Annex F for Section 2.</a>
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in <a href="#">General Annex G for Section 2.</a>
Expected contribution per project	PRIMA considers that proposals requesting contribution of at least <b>EUR 1 million</b> would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submitting and selecting proposals requesting other amounts or duration, following national regulations.
Duration	PRIMA considers that proposals with a duration of <b>36 months</b> would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submitting and selecting proposals with different durations.

Type of Action	Research & Innovation Activities (RIA* <sup>8</sup> )
Technology Readiness levels (TRL)	Proposals should clearly state the starting and end TRLs of the key technology or technologies targeted in the project. Applicants are encouraged to use the <a href="#">TRL self-assessment tool</a> to accurately determine the <a href="#">Technology Readiness Level (TRL)</a> of their proposal.

### **Expected Outcome:**

Enhancing the early detection, monitoring, and sustainable management of crop pests and diseases is essential for safeguarding agricultural productivity, ecosystem health, and food security in the Mediterranean Area.

This aligns with the [European Green Deal](#), the [Vision for agriculture and food](#), the [EU Plant Health Law](#), the [Digital Europe Strategy](#), and the [EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030](#), while supporting the objectives of the [Common Agricultural Policy](#), the [EU Organic Action Plan](#), and the [EU Global Food Security strategy](#).

In line with *PRIMA Operational Objective 5: Pests and Pathogens in Farming*, successful proposals will advance the development, testing, and adoption of innovative, digital, and non-invasive systems for the early detection, monitoring, and management of pests and crop diseases. These systems should support the transition to sustainable, climate-resilient, and digitally enabled farming practices in Mediterranean agro-ecological contexts.

Projects are expected to strengthen resilience to climate-driven pest pressures by improving surveillance capacity, reducing dependency on broad-spectrum chemical treatments, and enabling more precise, adaptive, and sustainable crop protection strategies.

### **Funded projects are expected to deliver results that contribute to all of the following outcomes:**

- Enhanced early warning systems for pests and diseases through integrated digital technologies
- Increased adoption of affordable and user-friendly based pest and disease monitoring tools by smallholder farmers
- Reduced environmental footprint of pest and disease control through targeted and precise agrochemical application and/or eco-friendly treatments
- Improved institutional and farmer capacity in using digital tools for Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
- Increased stakeholder confidence in ICT-driven crop protection methods and decision support systems.

**Scope:** Pest and disease outbreaks, intensified by climate change, global trade, and biodiversity loss, pose increasing risks to agricultural productivity and food security in the Mediterranean, particularly for smallholder and open-field farming systems. FAO estimates that 20–40% of global crop production is lost to pests, underscoring the need for early detection and timely intervention<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> Please note that the acronyms IA (Innovation Action) and RIA (Research and Innovation Action) are used in Section 1 and Section 2, respectively. In Section 1, the actions follow the standard Horizon Europe Rules for Participation (RfP). However, in Section 2, while some rules are based on Horizon Europe RfP, specific participation and funding rate regulations apply. Projects selected in Section 2 are funded directly by national funding bodies and are therefore subject to respective national regulations. For more details regarding the rules for Section 2, please refer to the guidelines for applicants on the PRIMA website.

<sup>9</sup> FAO (2019). Pests and plant diseases: a growing threat to food security. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Available at: <https://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/1187738/code/>

Despite progress in digital agriculture, adoption in rural and resource-constrained areas remains limited due to infrastructure gaps, cost barriers, and the lack of context-adapted, user-friendly tools. This often results in delayed action and continued reliance on broad-spectrum pesticides, with environmental and socio-economic consequences. Emerging technologies — including AI-assisted diagnostics, Earth Observation systems, proximal and remote pest sensing, and non-invasive field monitoring — offer strong potential to improve Integrated Pest Management (IPM) through earlier detection, real-time surveillance, and targeted response. However, solutions must be affordable, scalable, interoperable, and tailored to Mediterranean farming conditions, particularly those of smallholders.

This topic aims to co-develop and demonstrate cost-effective, ICT-enabled systems for pest and disease monitoring and management that reduce pesticide use, lower environmental impacts, and support the transition toward sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture in the Mediterranean.

**Projects are expected to address at least two of the following activities** (consortia may cover more, depending on scope and resources):

- Implement, adapt, and validate existing low-cost, non-invasive digital tools (e.g., image recognition, *proximal pest sensing* devices such as smart traps or in-field optical sensors, handheld diagnostic tools, mobile-based plant stress imaging) for the early detection and monitoring of pests and diseases in Mediterranean farming conditions
- Proposals are encouraged to explore AI-powered solutions capable of providing real-time diagnosis, forecasting, and decision support via mobile or web-based platforms
- Integrate Earth Observation, satellite imagery, meteorological data, and in-situ monitoring to enable hyperlocal forecasting of pest and disease outbreaks and support tailored, context-specific treatment strategies
- Develop scalable business models to support the uptake, replication, and integration of digital tools into existing national agricultural advisory systems and ICT platforms
- Implement inclusive capacity-building initiatives targeting farmers, extension agents, and local institutions to ensure adoption, digital literacy, and long-term use. This should include training materials in local languages, interactive workshops, and support for digitally underserved communities
- Projects should produce technical guidelines, operational toolkits, and practical recommendations to support the deployment of ICT-based Integrated Pest Management (IPM) solutions, ensuring alignment with open data principles and national innovation ecosystems.

If applicants target regulated pests in the EU, such as *Xylella fastidiosa* or Fall Armyworm (FAW), they are expected to ensure full compliance with the applicable EU and national rules and procedures, including those set out in the [EU Plant Health Law \(Regulation \(EU\) 2016/2031\)](#) and relevant implementing acts. In such cases, the participation or formal involvement of the relevant National Plant Protection Organisations (NPPOs) is required to ensure alignment with official monitoring, control, and eradication measures.

Proposals should adopt a [Multi-Actor Approach \(MAA\)](#)<sup>10</sup> to ensure significant involvement of the [national plant protection organisation \(NPPOs\)](#) national plant protection organisation (NPPOs)

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<sup>10</sup> The definition and specific requirements of the multi-actor approach as applied in PRIMA can be found in the Introduction of the Horizon Europe Work Programme (2025) - Cluster 6 (pages 14-16).

together with the farming sector, in decision-making and implementation processes. Primary target groups include arable and horticultural farmers, farmer cooperatives, SMEs and technology providers in digital agriculture, advisory services, national plant protection organisations, and public authorities. These groups are expected to directly benefit from the project activities and should be actively engaged in co-design, training, demonstration, and knowledge transfer.

PRIMA strongly encourage collaboration and complementarity with other Horizon Europe relevant projects (e.g. [Cerberus](#), [Stella](#), [Forsaid](#), [Purpest](#), [WheatWatcher](#), [EUFAWREADY](#), [Bexyl](#), [SenseApeST](#), [EmergeNOW](#)). Proposals should consider joint dissemination activities, with particular emphasis on peer-reviewed publications and other high-quality scientific outputs, as well as concise summaries that distil research insights and practical recommendations to inform policy development and support evidence-based decision-making across relevant governance levels.

## Topic 2.3.1-2026 (RIA\*): Empowering Mediterranean food value chains through context-aware digital traceability

TABLE 13. GENERAL CALL CONDITIONS

 <b>Thematic Area-3-Food Value Chain in The Nexus</b>	
Topic 2.3.1-2026 (RIA*)	<b>Empowering Mediterranean Food Value Chains through Context-Aware Digital Traceability</b>
Contribution to SRIA	Operational Objective 8 (New Agri-Food Business Models) Additional Cross-cutting Alignment: Capacity Building, Digital Revolution
Contribution to EU Policies	<a href="#">European Green Deal</a> <a href="#">EU's Vision for Agriculture and Food 2025–2029</a> <a href="#">European Union's Digital Decade strategy</a> <a href="#">EU-AU Innovation Agenda</a>
SDGs	<a href="#">SDG 2 (Zero Hunger)</a> , <a href="#">SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure)</a> , <a href="#">SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production)</a> <a href="#">SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure)</a>
Admissibility conditions	The conditions are described in <a href="#">General Annex A for Section 2</a> .
Eligibility conditions	The conditions are described in <a href="#">General Annex B for Section 2</a> .
Financial and operational capacity and exclusion	The criteria are described in <a href="#">General Annex C for Section 2</a> .
Award criteria	The criteria are described in <a href="#">General Annex D for Section 2</a> .
Documents	The documents are described in <a href="#">General Annex E for Section 2</a> .
Procedure	The procedure is described in <a href="#">General Annex F for Section 2</a> .
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in <a href="#">General Annex G for Section 2</a> .
Expected contribution per project	PRIMA considers that proposals requesting contribution of at least <b>EUR 1 million</b> would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submitting and selecting proposals requesting other amounts or duration, following national regulations.
Duration	PRIMA considers that proposals with a duration of <b>36 months</b> would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submitting and selecting proposals with different durations.

Type of Action	Research & Innovation Activities (RIA* <sup>11</sup> )
Technology Readiness levels (TRL)	Proposals should clearly state the starting and end TRLs of the key technology or technologies targeted in the project. Applicants are encouraged to use the <a href="#">TRL self-assessment tool</a> to accurately determine the <a href="#">Technology Readiness Level (TRL)</a> of their proposal.

## **Expected Outcomes**

Strengthening the sustainability, transparency, and competitiveness of Mediterranean agri-food value chains is essential to support rural livelihoods, safeguard cultural heritage, and improve market access for smallholders and traditional producers. This aligns with the [European Green Deal](#), the [Vision for agriculture and food](#), the [Common Agricultural Policy \(CAP\)](#), [European Union's Digital Decade strategy](#), [EU-AU Innovation Agenda](#).

In line with PRIMA Operational Objective 8 – New Agri-Food Business Models, successful proposals will support the development and adoption of context-aware, affordable, interoperable, and *non-destructive* digital traceability and decision-support systems tailored to the needs of Mediterranean food value chains. These systems should enable producers to demonstrate authenticity and sustainability, meet certification or regulatory requirements, access premium markets, and strengthen consumer trust.

Projects are expected to empower smallholders, cooperatives, SMEs, and traditional food systems by reducing technical, financial, and organisational barriers to traceability and data integration, thereby improving their ability to participate in regional and international markets.

### **Project results are expected to contribute to all the following expected outcomes:**

- Improved traceability, transparency, and authenticity verification across Mediterranean agri-food value chains through digital, interoperable, and non-destructive solutions.
- Enhanced market access and competitiveness for smallholders, cooperatives, and traditional food producers through affordable verification of origin, quality, and sustainability.
- Greater adoption of practical and user-friendly digital solutions, adapted to low-resource contexts and existing production infrastructures.
- Strengthened organisational and digital capacity of producer groups, cooperatives, SMEs, and local institutions to manage compliance and data flows.
- Increased consumer and buyer trust, leading to improved value retention and reduced risk of fraud and imitation.

**Scope:** Traditional Mediterranean agri-food value chains, especially those rooted in heritage and small-scale production systems, face persistent structural barriers to accessing premium and regulated markets due to the high cost and complexity of existing traceability and certification systems (CIHEAM, 2024)<sup>12</sup>. Although traceability can increase consumer trust and value

<sup>11</sup> Please note that the acronyms IA (Innovation Action) and RIA (Research and Innovation Action) are used in Section 1 and Section 2, respectively. In Section 1, the actions follow the standard Horizon Europe Rules for Participation (RIP). However, in Section 2, while some rules are based on Horizon Europe RIP, specific participation and funding rate regulations apply. Projects selected in Section 2 are funded directly by national funding bodies and are therefore subject to respective national regulations. For more details regarding the rules for Section 2, please refer to the guidelines for applicants on the PRIMA website.

<sup>12</sup>[https://www.ciheam.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/SUSTAINABLE-FOOD-SYSTEMS-Change-of-route-in-the-Mediterranean\\_CIHEAM-2024.pdf](https://www.ciheam.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/SUSTAINABLE-FOOD-SYSTEMS-Change-of-route-in-the-Mediterranean_CIHEAM-2024.pdf)

retention, current digital solutions are rarely adapted to smallholder contexts, reinforcing fragmentation and reducing competitiveness (Skalkos et al., 2021)<sup>13</sup>.

This action aims to co-design, pilot, and validate modular, affordable, non-destructive, and context-adapted digital traceability systems for Mediterranean agri-food value chains. The scope includes value chains in both PRIMA Participating States and EU Member States, including those involving heritage and culturally significant products that are not covered by PDO/PGI<sup>14</sup> schemes.

Projects should address barriers such as fragmented production structures, low digital readiness, limited certification capacity, and high compliance costs. Solutions must be co-developed with producers, cooperatives, SMEs, and local authorities, ensuring usability, cost-effectiveness, and long-term uptake.

**Projects are expected to address at least two of the following activities** (consortia may cover more, depending on scope and resources):

- Mapping value chain structures, data gaps, authenticity risks, and governance arrangements, identifying where non-destructive verification methods add value.
- Co-development and field demonstration of digital traceability modules (e.g., mobile-based logging, QR codes, lightweight distributed ledgers, AI-assisted authenticity verification where appropriate).
- Development of modular decision-support tools for producer groups, cooperatives, and local authorities.
- Capacity-building and long-term adoption strategies, including training, peer learning, and demonstration actions.
- Multi-stakeholder dialogue to ensure alignment with certification bodies, national regulators, and market actors.

Solutions developed under this topic should be compatible with the emerging [Common European Agricultural Data Space \(CEADS\)](#) and adopt data governance models that support data sovereignty, interoperability, and fair value-sharing among producers and value chain actors. The use of open standards and open-source components is strongly encouraged to avoid vendor lock-in. or ensuring continuity, scalability, and knowledge capitalisation.

Proposals should adopt a [Multi-Actor Approach \(MAA\)](#)<sup>15</sup> ensuring inclusive participation of farmers, cooperatives, SMEs, consumer organisations, and local authorities throughout the project lifecycle, from design to deployment. Multi-actor, trans-Mediterranean cooperation is required, with meaningful involvement of producers, value-chain organisations, consumer groups, and regional authorities.

Solutions should build on and interoperate with tools developed by previous PRIMA-funded<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Skalkos, D., Malandrakis, O., & Kafetzopoulos, D. (2021). Consumers' Perceptions of Traceability for Traditional Food Products: Evidence from Greece. *Sustainability*, 13(22), 12687. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su132212687>

<sup>14</sup> Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) are EU quality schemes that protect the names of traditional food products linked to a specific geographical area. They ensure that only products genuinely originating from a defined region and made according to traditional methods can use that name on the market. This protects producers from imitation and helps consumers identify authentic products

<sup>15</sup> The definition and specific requirements of the multi-actor approach as applied in PRIMA can be found in the Introduction of the Horizon Europe Work Programme (2025) - Cluster 6 (pages 14-16)

<sup>16</sup> Applicants are encouraged to consider and leverage traceability solutions developed by PRIMA projects such as SUREFISH, Med Food TTHubs, and MEDIFIT, ensuring continuity, avoiding duplication, and maximising synergies across initiatives

and Horizon Europe projects<sup>17</sup>.

Consortia are also encouraged to build strategic collaborations with relevant research infrastructures such as [METROFOOD-RI](#) which provide advanced capabilities in traceability analysis, food authenticity testing, and quality assurance. Such collaborations can strengthen technical capacity, harmonise digital traceability tools, and foster cross-project learning across the Mediterranean region. Primary Target Groups are smallholder farmers, rural and mountain cooperatives, women- and youth-led enterprises, SMEs in food processing, local authorities, and consumer organisations. These groups are expected to directly benefit from project results and should be central to demonstration and capacity-building activities.

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<sup>17</sup> THEROS (Horizon Europe, 2022–2026) focuses on transparent food certification systems to boost trust and sustainability in agri-food supply chains. ALLIANCE (Horizon Europe, 2023–2027) aims to strengthen integrity and resilience in organic and geographical indication (GI) value chains through traceability and fraud prevention tools.