



## **Dissemination of sustainable irrigation strategies for almond and olive orchards via a participatory approach. Project LIFE+IRRIMAN**

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Spain is the world's first and third largest producer of olive oil and almond, respectively. Despite huge efforts in the last years by the production sector towards intensification, cultural issues relative to the traditional rain-fed crop management know how, prevent farmers from adoption of sustainable irrigation management practices. Consequently, even though there has been progress in irrigation management research for these two crops, adoption of modern irrigation techniques by farmers has been slow. Sustainable irrigation strategies for olive and almond orchards are being designed, implemented, validated and disseminated under the framework of the LIFE+IRRIMAN project, through a participatory approach. The implementation of the LIFE+ IRRIMAN innovative and demonstrative actions has been carried out in an irrigation district of Southern Spain (Genil-Cabra Irrigation Scheme, Andalusia). The approach designed has four phases: i) design and implementation of sustainable irrigation strategies in demonstration farms; ii) dissemination of best irrigation practices which were tested in the initial year throughout the irrigation scheme by the irrigation advisory service; iii) assessment of degree of adoption and re-design of the dissemination strategies; and, iv) based on the results obtained, elaboration of sustainable irrigation guidelines for knowledge transfer in the district at regional and national levels to promote changes in irrigation practices. Participatory approaches have proven to be effective tools for successful irrigation strategies design and diffusion, especially in traditional rain fed crops such as olive and almond trees in the Mediterranean countries.

### Acknowledgements

This work has been funded by the European Union LIFE+ project IRRIMAN (LIFE13 ENV/ES/000539).