

Revealing policy paths for rural development

White Paper

GO-GRASS demonstration results show the importance of supportive business environments that foster innovative, grass-based business. The four business cases have the potential to deliver improved policies for rural development and rural jobs. The White Paper shows that readiness level of some of these initiatives is above technology readiness level (TRL) 7 and that significant market breakthrough requires adequate funding, rules and regulations that do not hinder opportunities, and mechanisms that valorise additional benefits such as carbon sequestration.

Policy makers can stimulate grassland valorisation and foster new opportunities for farmers and rural businesses by securing grasslands functions as a sustainable source of raw materials, a space for social, organisation and business innovations, and an important contributor to carbon removal and climate change mitigation.



Measures at national & regional level:

- support conversion of arable land to grassland
- facilitate the utilisation of surplus grass from non-agricultural areas
- valorise ecosystem services
- contribute to carbon sequestration related to grassland
- ensure access to regional and national funding for technologies that use grass as a resource and its side streams
- support R&D to bridge the gap between innovation readiness and market entry

Support measures:

- raising awareness of the benefits and ecosystem services of grassland through education and outreach to consumers

Have a **sneak peak** of some of our **recommendations** and get the PDF for a detailed read.

Get the PDF



White Paper

We think **grassland is important**, but don't just take our word for it:

Rikke Lundsgaard - Agriculture Policy Advisor at the Danish Society for Nature conservation

“Grass ticks all the boxes that we as a society require farm crops to do: climate, biodiversity, leaching, soil stability.”

Marilda Dhaskali - EU Agriculture & Bioenergy Policy Officer, BirdLife Europe and Central Asia

“Sustainable managed grasslands are a critical piece of the puzzle of the EU efforts to tackle biodiversity and the climate crisis that are intertwined.”

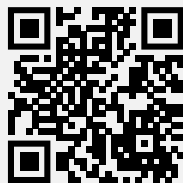
Empowering rural innovation

Training Kit booklet

There are nine GO-GRASS tools created for rural entrepreneurs, trainers and advisors. From business plans to navigating environments, each tool delivers tailored solutions for sustainable grassland innovation. The GO-GRASS tools help to transform grass-based ideas into profitable businesses, giving an advantage in sustainable innovation.



Get the PDF



Training Kit booklet

Innovation action

GO-GRASS

Discover the results of our project!



2019 - 2024

Grassland in Europe covers a large area and provides essential ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration, promotion of biodiversity and water protection. Thus, grassland has the potential to contribute significantly to the supply of raw materials and the **development of a bio-based economy** using residual biomass.

Since October 2019, the GO-GRASS project has developed small-scale demonstration cases of a circular agrifood system in four EU countries. The goal was to establish new grassland-based business opportunities in rural areas and support their replication in rural communities across the EU. GO-GRASS prioritised replicability aiming for the adoption of these models with minimal investment, risk and technical effort in various locations and contexts.



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement N°862674

Organic Protein Denmark

Extracted protein concentrate from grass and clover can be fed to pigs and poultry to enrich their diet and substitutes imported soy protein.

- Other product streams:
- fibrous pulp for biogas production, ruminant feed or biomaterials
 - brown juice for biogas production and subsequently as fertiliser, or for precision fermentation

For the validation and documentation of the nutritional value of the products in animal feed, trials were conducted with local farmers.



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demosite video



Process:
Green biorefinery technology

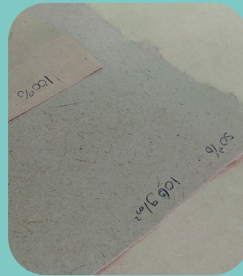
Type of grass:
Grass from
nitrate sensitive areas
and Paludiculture

Paper & Packaging The Netherlands

A process has been developed to extract fibres from grass for high-quality packaging and paper production, substituting wood cellulose with grass cellulose fibres:

- new local resource for paper production
- requiring less water
- reducing transportation movements
- adding value to low-quality (herbaceous) grass and other lignocellulose biomass
- promoting sustainable paper manufacturing

Additionally, the development of a cleaning technology for polluted grass enables the use of roadside grass as input material.



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Process:
Automated waste removal,
digester and fibre upgrading

Type of grass:
Nature and roadside grass

Animal bedding Sweden

To produce Klimatströ reed canary grass is shredded and pressed into briquettes, which then are shredded to an innovative animal bedding:

- for horses, livestock, and poultry
- heat-treatment = good hygiene
- binding ammonia odours = good stable climate

Other qualities:

- mixed with manure = good fertiliser out on the fields
- an increased biogas production

The production and application are at local scale, increasing the level of circularity.



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demosite video



Process:
Grass briquetting
and shredding

Type of grass:
Reed canary grass

Biochar Germany

Grass of poor quality is converted into biochar during the pyrolysis process. Pyrolysis products and their possible utilisation:

- biochar as potent soil enhancer
- energy as heat to substitute fossil fuels

Biochar can increase the water holding capacity, and if mixed with manure, the nutrient content of the soil. Through carbonisation, it enriches the soil's carbon content, effectively sequestering carbon and functioning as a negative emissions technology.

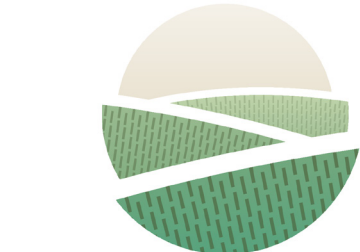


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Process:
Pyrolysis

Type of grass:
Wetland and
late-harvest grass



GO-GRASS

The team:



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