

# AHFES

## A QUADRUPLE HELIX ATLANTIC AREA HEALTHY FOOD ECOSYSTEM FOR GROWTH OF SMES

### D7.2. Catalogue of environmental sustainability support services for SME innovation, competitiveness, and growth

*This project has been co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through the Atlantic Area Programme, under the subsidy contract EAPA\_1071\_/2018 AHFES.*

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**Project acronym:** AHFES

**Project title:** A quadruple helix Atlantic Area healthy food Ecosystem for growth of SMEs

**Project code:** EAPA\_1071/2018

**Deliverable number and name:** D7.2. Catalogue of environmental sustainability support services for SME innovation, competitiveness, and growth.

**Work Package:** WP7 Environmental sustainability for innovative healthy foods and lifestyles, and increased SMEs competitiveness.

**Author:** Clúster Alimentario de Galicia

**Document history:**

Version	Date of issue	Content and changes	Edited by
VF	16/03/2023	Final version reviewed by partners	Perla Ferrer

The AHFES project is implemented by the following partners:



## Executive summary

The objective of the WP7 in the AHFES project and for this report is to complement the existing framework with the additional component of environmental sustainability and green transition. The current support services and the training programmes offered by the partnership in the Atlantic Area regions have been enlarged by the development of a specific component addressing green transition, as a critical aspect for SME innovation, competitiveness, and growth, within the healthy food production and lifestyles value chain.

This deliverable is a catalogue developed in Action 2. Design and pilot demonstration of environmental sustainability support services for SMEs in the Atlantic Area, that made possible the design of a series of innovation support services to improve the sustainability of food SMEs and that can be offered by AHFES partners.

These services have been developed based on the needs detected and the lessons learned in the phase of strategic identification of the challenges of food SMEs to advance in the green transition in the healthy food and lifestyles value chains. This catalogue includes three types of services that can be offered to food SMEs to strengthen their growth, innovation and competitiveness focused on improving their sustainability: A) Coaching services for green transition by carrying out a sustainability diagnosis service that includes all areas of action of the food company, as well as the entire value chain. B) A service to adapt to the new strategic legislative framework, and C) A customised service focussing on the establishment of alliances and projects for innovation and sustainability.

Finally, this deliverable has been prepared considering the analysis and conclusions conducted in Action 7.1 Strategic identification of SMEs challenges and needs to advance on environmental sustainability in the healthy food and lifestyle value chain. A series of trainings for companies in the Euroregion contemplating 7 areas of sustainable knowledge, related to the concerns previously shown and related with the green transition, the circular economy and sustainability was developed. The flexibility in modalities (face-to-face, webinars, or hybrid), as well as in languages of the Euroregion, allowed to improve the knowledge of a total of 256 participants, including SMEs and other stakeholders, including academics, researchers, and public administration. That allowed the participating food SMEs to rely on the clusters in the AHFES Project not only to improve their knowledge about sustainability but also to be in contact with key knowledge agents, thus strengthening the networking in the innovation ecosystem of the Atlantic Area.

# AHFES | ENVIROMENTAL SUPPORT SERVICES FOR SMEs

## Building a catalogue of environmental sustainability support services

To design the services, the partnership considered the challenges prioritised by the SMEs interviewed in the field of sustainability. To find a useful solution, the clusters thought about the kind of support they can provide to satisfy those needs, by understanding the SMEs' motivations and design the service according to that, on a needs basis.

In the next section, we present the three services that have been included in the services catalogue, indicating the challenges addressed by each and the type of support the clusters can offer

## BIGGEST CHALLENGES SMEs face as detected in Action 7.1

Following-up and monitoring the progress on sustainability measures (indicators, action plan)

Exploring ways to integrate circular economy principles, but do not have a formally recognised strategy

It is difficult to get buy-in from all levels as sustainability actions are very diverse

Comply with sustainability legislation: what legislation applies: plastics, emissions, wastes, etc.

Enhancing the value of sustainable involvement: Raising consumer awareness of sustainable products.

Improving energy efficiency: work on the reduction of energy consumption, the recyclability of packs, reducing Food waste generated, reducing natural resources, changing industrial tools, etc...

## CLUSTER'S SUPPORT

Initial Sustainability Assessment.  
Preparation of an initial diagnosis under the focus of sustainability, so that the SME knows its situation point. This is because many actions that are taken for other purposes throughout the daily activity of the SME have a direct relevance to its sustainable development. This will allow the clusters to indicate some recommendations to follow, which will allow them to establish a roadmap on which to base their next actions, objectives, indicators and sustainability plans.

Legislative and regulatory observation

Actively participate in public policies with recommendations

Facilitate networking and the formation of alliances, and supporting on the generation of ideas for R&D&i projects to improve sustainability.

## SERVICES CATALOGUE

Coaching services for green transition by a demonstration pilot, ***Sustainability Diagnosis.***

Services for adapting to the new strategic legislative and regulatory framework

Service customised support focus on innovation for sustainability



# Building a catalogue of environmental sustainability support services

Building on the methodology for the design of the other AHFES services, for each of the three services included in the catalogue on sustainability, the following aspects have been established:

- **Who** is it aimed at?
- **What** do companies get? What is included?
- **How** to get access?
- **When** is the service available?

The methodology used built on the previously designed scheme for services developed during the first stage of the AHFES project, which facilitated an easy testing in a demonstration pilot of some of the sustainability services; the objective being to expand the services portfolio of the clusters, looking into sustainability as a key aspect for growth and innovation of their member companies in the different regions.



# 1 Coaching services for green transition



## *Sustainability Diagnosis Service*

### **Who is the target audience?**

SMEs in the Atlantic Area that wish to know their starting point on sustainability.

### **What is included in this service?**

Direct assistance for:

- Workshop-interview and visit to the SME to identify actions carried out under the sustainability prism.
- Compilation in a structured guide of information about sustainability in the whole value chain.
- SWOT analysis of the SME in relation to sustainability.
- Recommendations and prioritised areas for action.

### **How to get access?**

Direct request to consortium

### **When is it available?**

From to Septembre 2022 to March 2023

## Services for adapting to the new strategic legislative and regulatory framework



### *Enviromental Regulations Monitoring Service*

#### **Who is the target audience?**

SMEs in the Atlantic Area wishing to keep up to date with the new regulations being developed.

#### **What is included in this service?**

- Information about strategies carried out in relation to environmental sustainability within the European, State and regional frameworks.
- Information about current regulations and new approved legislation.
- Information about the progress and status of draft laws and upcoming legislation.
- Information about public consultations.
- Compilation of information in a periodic bulletin of environmental monitoring published bi-monthly.

#### **How to get access?**

By subscription

#### **When is it available?**

From November 2022 to March 2023

### 3 Support service for alliances and projects for innovation for sustainability



#### *Customised support service for innovation for sustainability*

##### **Who is the target audience?**

SMEs in the Atlantic Area that wish to receive personalised support to develop innovation projects focused on the optimization of resources, valorization of wastes or decarbonization.

##### **What is included in this service?**

Direct assistance for:

- Identification of actions performed by competitors in sustainability and circular economy.
- Identification of partners or technical and specialized suppliers
- Identification of potential funding sources.

##### **How to get access?**

Direct request to consortium

##### **When is it available?**

From November 2022 to March 2023



# AHFES | TRAININGS ORIENTED TO CAPACITY BUILDING AND PROVIDING HANDS-ON, PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE ON KEY SUSTAINABILITY AREAS FOR ACTION

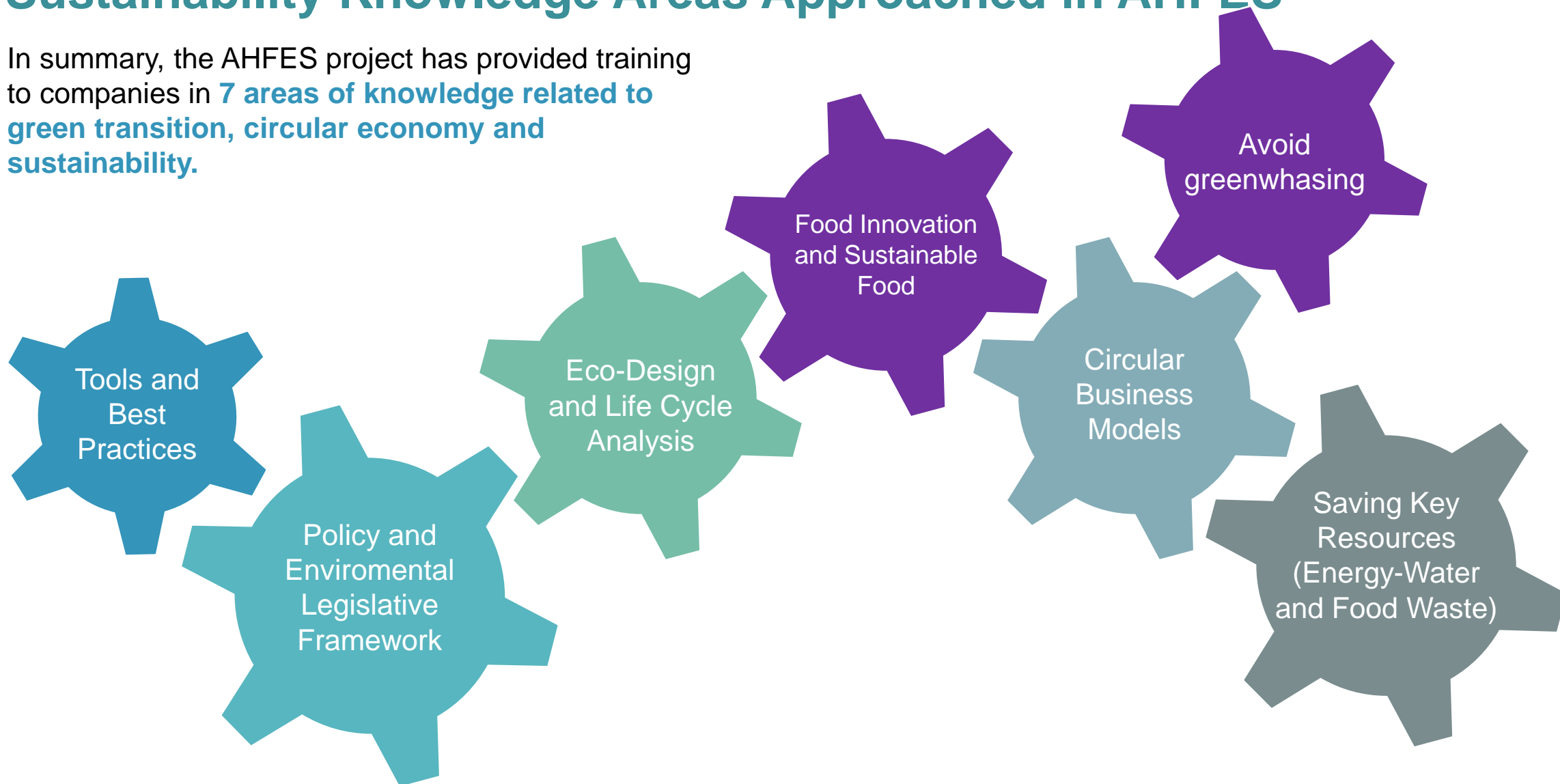
## Building a catalogue of knowledge areas related to green transition of SMEs

Following the same dynamics as for the design of the services, the selection of the sustainability areas of knowledge to be addressed in the trainings was based on the needs and challenges detected in the SMEs' interviews, the conclusions and lessons learned in Action 7.1, the scenarios of each of the regions in the Atlantic area, and the internal competences of each of the members of the partnership.

Therefore, a broad spectrum of relevant topics to be addressed was identified and coordinated by the different members of the consortium thus, increasing the portfolio of trainings that can be offered.

# Sustainability Knowledge Areas Approached in AHFES

In summary, the AHFES project has provided training to companies in **7 areas of knowledge related to green transition, circular economy and sustainability.**



# Sustainability Knowledge Areas Approached in AHFES

A total of 9 trainings focused on the sustainability areas along of the different regions, have been conducted by the AHFES partnership. The trainings were carried out by the means of both face-to-face workshops and online and hybrid webinars. All materials were shared with the participants. The following sustainability trainings were implemented:

- Strategic environmental legislative framework for the food sector.
- Food innovation: how to reconcile the quest for price with the quest for meaning?
- Ecodesign of food products from side streams.
- How to explain the environmental value of innovation? Life cycle analysis, a tool.
- Agro-food Circular Business Models.
- What is sustainable development? How to avoid greenwashing.
- Sustainability. Existing Tools and Best Practices.
- The Road to a More Sustainable Agribusiness.
- Energy Efficiency - Existing Strategies and Tools to Support Enterprises.

A brief abstract, summary of participants and evidences of each of the trainings follows.



## Knowledge Area: Food Innovation and Sustainable Food.

### Abstract:

*Meaning* is what consumers seem to be ever more looking for.

How does this translate into innovations by food companies? What does this notion of 'meaning' in food innovation mean? And how do consumers in search of meaning cope with their budgetary constraints?

Sustainable food, respect for the environment, labelling...

### Total participants:

55 including 8 speakers  
(16 in person and 39 online).

- 14 education, research organisations.
- 37 enterprises
- 5 other organisations and movements



# Knowledge Area: What is sustainable development, and how to avoid greenwashing?

## Abstract:

What is sustainable development?

How can I implement it?

Is it possible to measure it objectively and to communicate positively my actions to my clients?

Methodological tools to objectify sustainable development, identify the pitfalls to be avoided in order to communicate calmly on actions in favor of sustainable development, etc.

## Total participants:

29 including 4 speakers  
(online).

- 4 education, research organisations.
- 18 enterprises.
- 7 other organisations and movements



**Valorial' Connection**  
[ Présentiel & Webinaire ]

**Qu'est-ce que le développement durable ? Comment éviter le green-washing ?**

**Mardi 17 janvier 2023, Locminé (56) et webinaire**

**9h > 12h30 (Interventions)**

**12h30 > 16h00 (Déjeuner / visite du pôle énergétique de LIGER)**

**Valorial**  
OSONS L'ALIMENT PLUS INTELLIGENT

**Interreg Atlantic Area**  
European Regional Development Fund

**EUROPEAN UNION**

**A H F E S**



Cette présentation a été enregistrée pour la dernière fois le : Il y a 33 min

**Introduction de la maïtnee & présentation du projet AHFES – Gwenn WEBER & Blandine FORTIN**

**Mise en place de workshops et webinaires de soutien à la durabilité environnementale**

**Valorial' Connection**  
[ Présentiel & Webinaire ]

**Innovation alimentaire : comment concilier quête de prix & quête de sens ?**

**Jeudi 1er décembre, Saint-Lô & Webinaire**

**Dr. Sophie Deschamps**

**OSONS L'ALIMENT PLUS INTELLIGENT**

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**Valorial**  
OSONS L'ALIMENT PLUS INTELLIGENT

**Interreg Atlantic Area**  
European Regional Development Fund

**EUROPEAN UNION**

**A H F E S**

## Knowledge Area: Policy and legislative and regulatory framework

### Abstract:

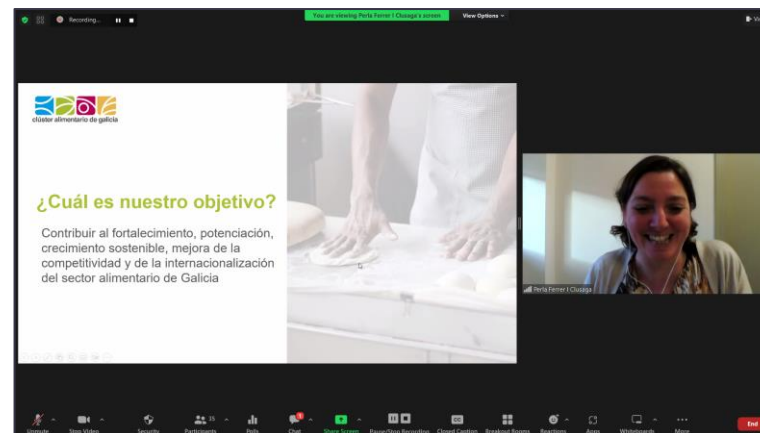
Currently, the environmental legislative and regulatory package within the strategic framework linked to sustainability and the circular economy is growing considerably at the European, State and regional levels.

The main purpose is to facilitate the green transition of food companies through knowledge of the new laws and regulations that have been approved and those that are in preparation, allowing them to learn about new developments of interest in this area and to participate in the public consultation processes on the new regulations.

### Total participants:

44 participants in total including 2 speakers online.

- 3 education, research organisations.
- 23 enterprises
- 3 other organisations and movements





# Knowledge Area: Eco-Design

## Abstract:

The workshop focused on the eco-design methodology applied to upcycling in the food industry through the incorporation of “side streams”.

The main goal was to facilitate the understanding of the role of design in the reduction of the environmental impact and the optimisation of resources in the development of innovative food products.

## Total participants:

16 participants  
(in person)

- 5 education, research organisations.
- 10 enterprises.
- 1 other organisations and movements



# Knowledge Area: Life Cycle Analysis

## Abstract:

To incorporate environmental criteria, to evaluate the impact on the environment and to introduce innovative elements in food products, services and technologies through ecoinnovation, which is one of the methodologies used for Life Cycle Analysis (LCA).

The LCA evaluates the development phases, from the extraction or production of raw materials, to the final management of the waste, including its reuse or recovery. In addition, LCA analyses all stages of the production and manufacturing process, logistics and consumption.

## Total participants:

14 participants  
(in person)

- 3 education, research organisations.
- 10 enterprises.
- 1 regional public institution





# Knowledge Area: Circular Business Models

## Abstract:

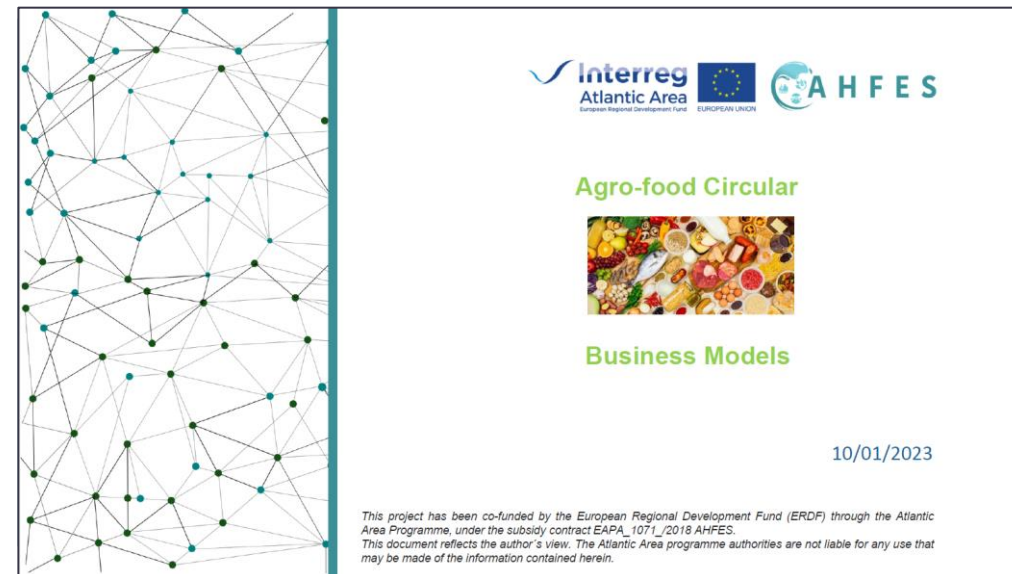
The workshop focused in agro-food circular business models.

The aim was to facilitate knowledge transfer between entities focused on sustainability and present the audience with some practical examples of companies that incorporated sustainable practices and contribute to the development of a more inclusive and sustainable environment.

## Total participants:

28 participants  
(in person and 8 online)

- 3 education, research organisations.
- 11 enterprises.
- 3 other organisations and movements -1 public institution.



# Knowledge Area: Tools and Best Practices

## Abstract:

What are the challenges of sustainable business practices in food industry?

The implementation of sustainable business practices in the food and agriculture industry can be quite challenging, especially for businesses that lack large financial resources and sustainability knowledge. To shine a light on that we counted on a couple of Northern Ireland companies who were happy to share their experience in tackling this challenging issue.

## Total de participants:

31 participants  
(in person)

- 1 education, research organizations.
- 24 enterprises.
- 6 other organisations and movements





## Knowledge Area: Environmental Sustainability

### Abstract:

The webinar focused on how to reach sustainability. Inovcluster presented projects supporting SMEs for the green transition in the agro-industrial sector.

The aim was the transfer knowledge, and two companies of the agro-industrial sector shared their good practices.

### Total de participants:

22 participants  
(online)

- 2 education, research organizations.
- 10 enterprises.
- 10 other organisations and movements

**INOVCUSTER**  
Associação do Cluster Agro-Industrial do Centro

**A H F E S**  
**WEBINARES SUSTENTABILIDADE**

**30 JAN** **O Caminho para uma Indústria mais Sustentável**  
11:00h | Boas vindas | Christelle Domingos - InovCluster  
11:10h | Apresentação do projeto AHFES | Gabriela Sousa - InovCluster  
11:25h | O contributo da InovCluster para apoiar a transição verde no setor agroindustrial - Projetos REINOVA\_SI e ByP4Dev | Susana Calo - InovCluster  
11:55h | Exemplos de boas práticas de Sustentabilidade ambiental na Agroindústria | Geocakes e Casel  
12:25h | Questões  
12:30h | Encerramento | Christelle Domingos - InovCluster

**31 JAN** **Eficiência Energética - Estratégias e Ferramentas existentes de apoio às empresas**  
11:30h | Boas vindas | Christelle Domingos - InovCluster  
11:35h | Apresentação do projeto AHFES | Gabriela Sousa - InovCluster  
11:50h | Eficiência Energética - Ferramentas de apoio às empresas criadas no projeto +Agro | Susana Calo - InovCluster  
12:10h | Auditorias energéticas e implementação de medidas de eficiência energética do setor agroindustrial | Paulo Calau - ADENE  
12:30h | Atuais apoios de financiamento à transição energética | Pedro Santos - 2GoOut Consulting  
12:50h | Questões  
12:45h | Encerramento | Christelle Domingos - InovCluster

Interreg Atlantic Area  
EUROPEAN UNION  
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## Knowledge Area: Energy Efficiency

### Abstract:

The webinar focused on energy efficiency strategies, measures and tools, that companies can implement.

The current European, national and regional public funding support measures for the green transition in companies were presented.

### Total de participants:

23 participants  
(online)

- 1 education, research organizations.
- 11 enterprises.
- 11 other organisations and movements




## WEBINARES SUSTENTABILIDADE

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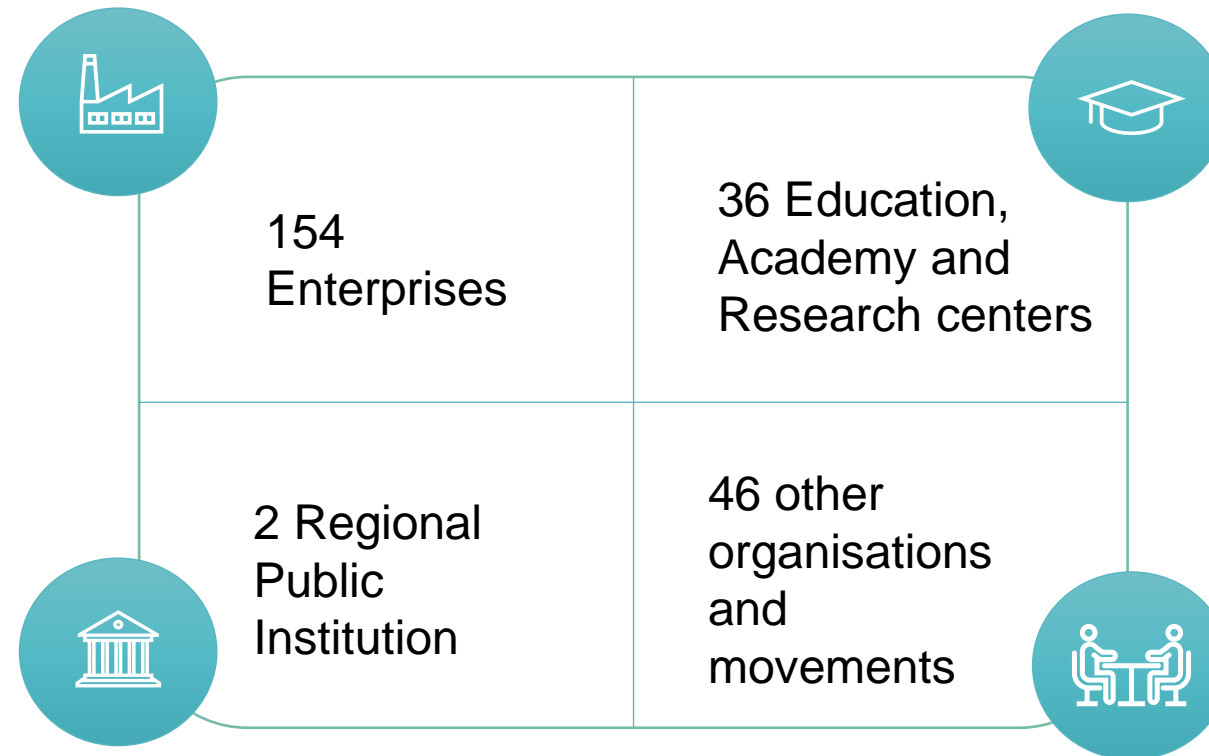


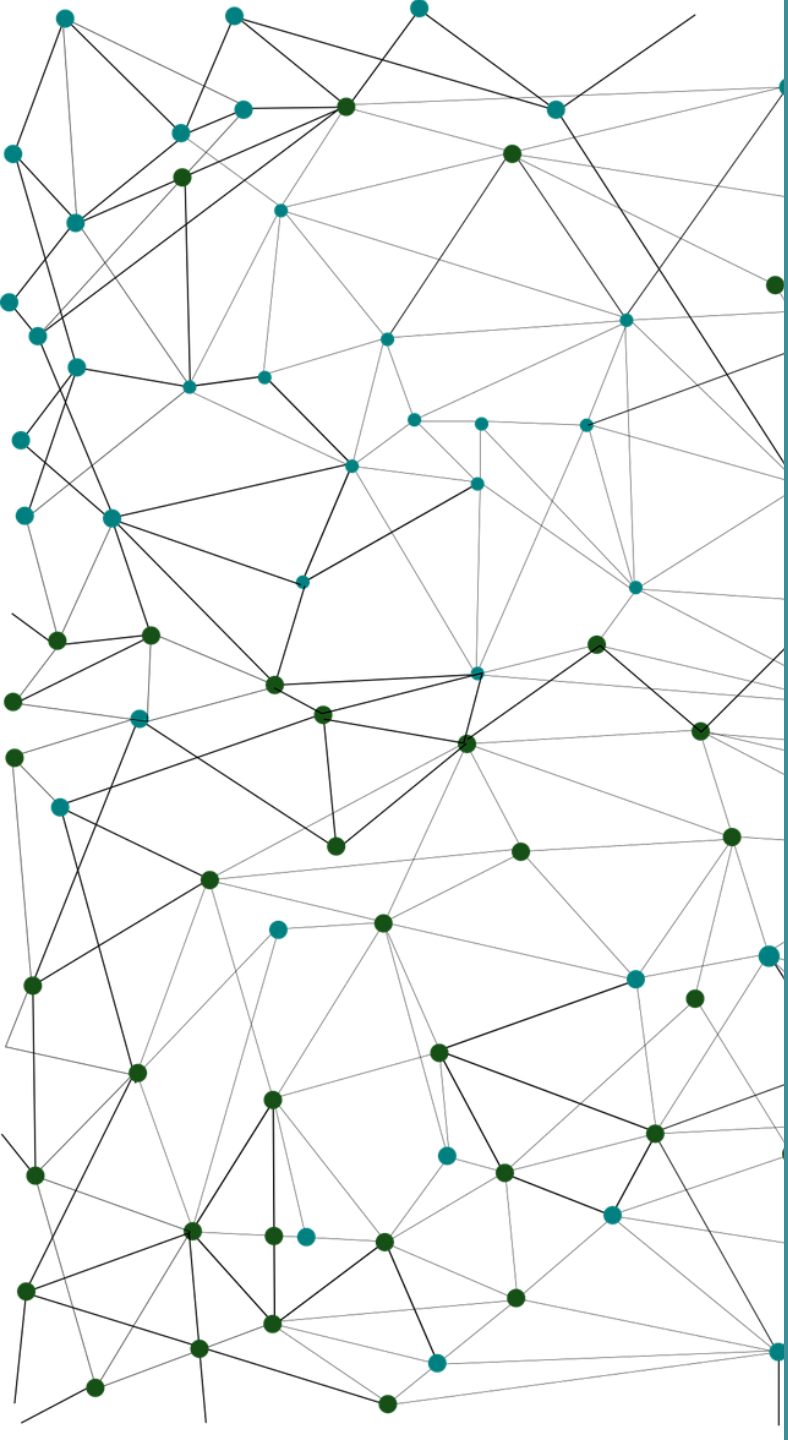




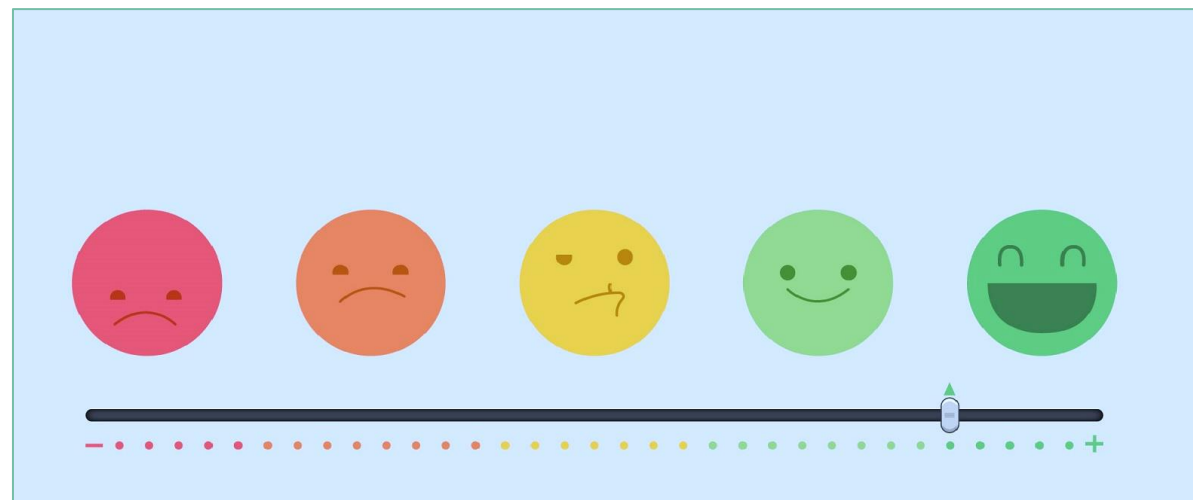
## Sustainability Knowledge Areas Approached in AHFES

Once the trainings were completed, the lists of participants were reviewed by the members of the partnership, and it has been possible to draw a picture of the scope of the trainings and the networking provided. These trainings have allowed to improve the knowledge of **a total of 256 participants**, distributed by different types of entities, as follows:





# Feedback from the SMEs and results of the satisfaction surveys



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# Participants

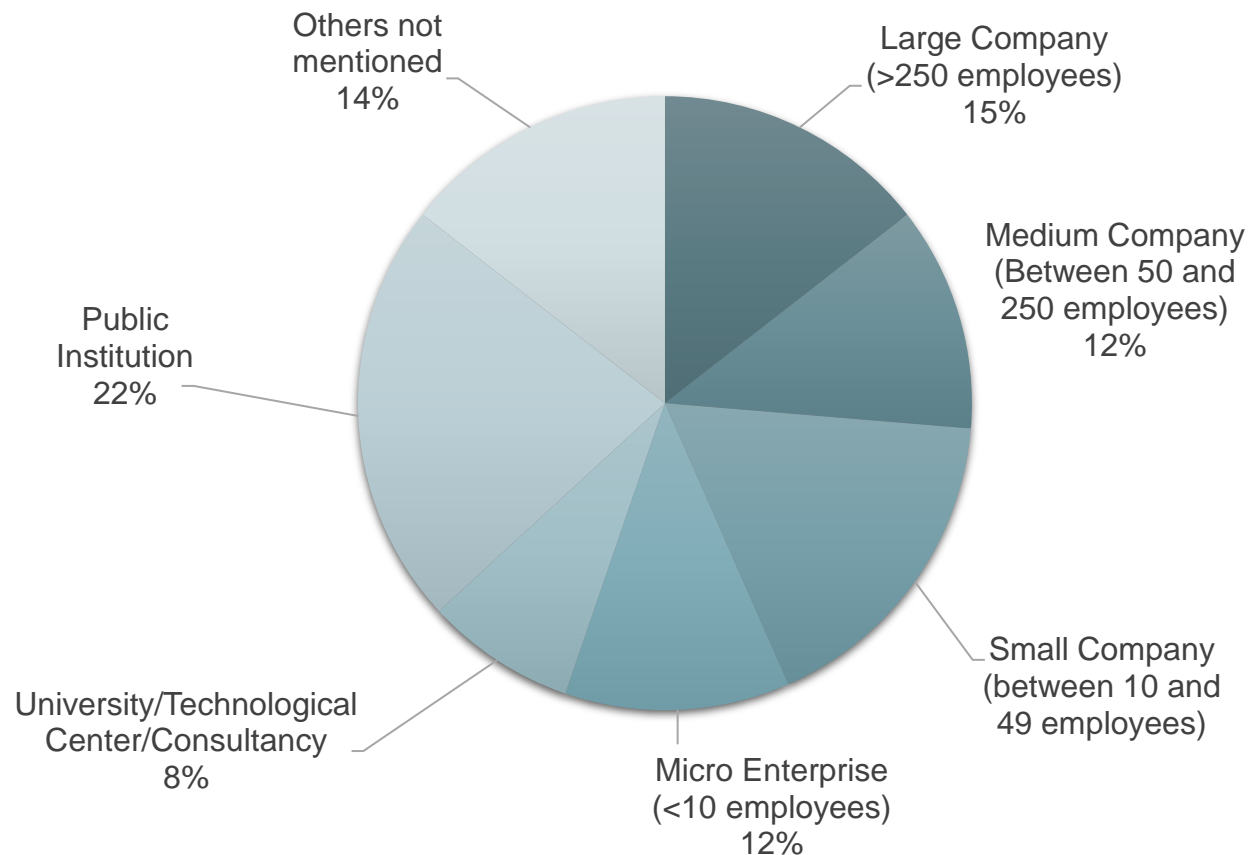
To homogenise the type of feedback given by training participants, a common survey was designed so that all partners could ask the same questions and the results could be analyzed together, considering all Atlantic Area regions.

The responses on the trainings satisfaction survey were distributed by different entities:

55 % of the respondents were enterprises, from which 41% were SMEs

Additionally, 27% of the respondents are knowledge centers that provide support to companies and Public Institutions.

Some associations and social entities representing “slow food movement” also have participated as other





# Results of trainings satisfaction survey

## **Overall satisfaction with the workshop**

95% percent of the survey subjects gave the workshop a very high rating (equal to 4 or even 5), of which, the 64% evaluate the workshop with the maximum scoring (5).

## **Meeting expectations**

Only 4% of those surveyed found they did not meet their expectations, but they would recommend the theme of the workshop (except for 1 participant).

## **Satisfaction with methodology**

In reference to the methodology of the workshop, close to the 87% of the surveyed gave high level scorings, and the 52% of them gave the highest scoring (5). No person scored the workshop below the medium qualification.

## **Improved knowledge**

97% of the surveyed consider that the workshop has helped them to improve their knowledge about sustainability

# Results of trainings satisfaction survey

## **Application of knowledge acquired**

96% of respondents believe that what they learned at the workshop can help them in the future to implement actions or take advantage of opportunities for green transition and/or circular economy.

92% of the surveyed believe that they can implement the knowledge acquired in their work area.

## **Relevance of thematic**

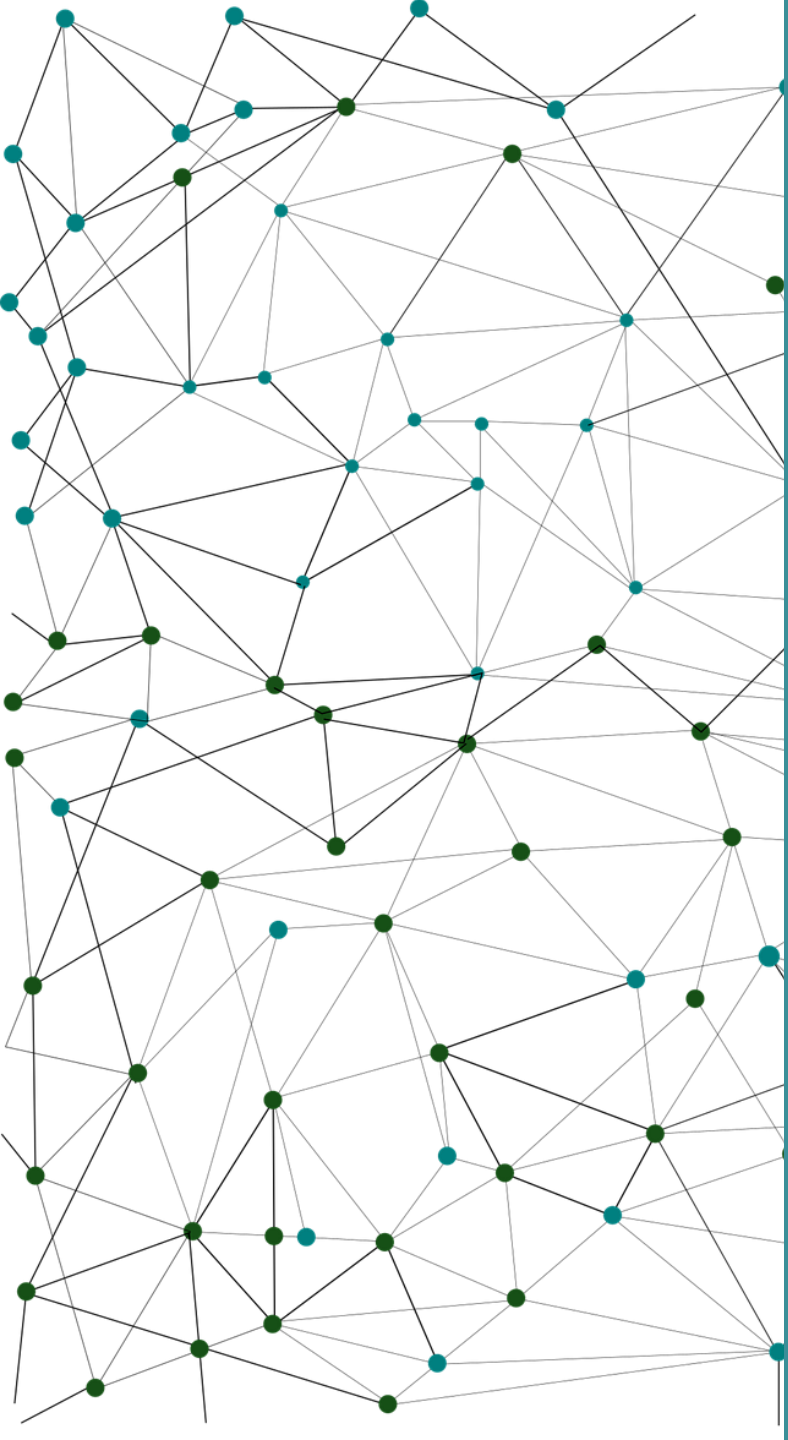
98% of the surveyed would recommend the subject matter of this workshop.



## Other training interests of the participants. For the future...

Other sustainability-related training areas have been identified for further training of partners in the future.

- ☐ Holistic view of sustainability (packaging, production, etc.).
- ☐ Water footprint calculation and possible techniques to reduce water consumption.
- ☐ Carbon footprint.
- ☐ Use of by-products.
- ☐ Renewable energies applied to industry.
- ☐ How to reduce consumption without impacting inflation.
- ☐ Knowing limiting stages, by-products of the work of the companies to find solutions, company-research center collaborations.
- ☐ Food production technologies with low environmental impact.
- ☐ Life cycle analysis and eco-design in advance level.
- ☐ Legislation.



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[www.ahfesproject.com](http://www.ahfesproject.com)

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