



Valorisation of Agro-Industrial Wastes via the Production of Zeolite-based Composite Materials and their use in Environmental Remediation and Biofuel Production

HORIZON EUROPE · MSCA STAFF EXCHANGES · GA NO 101086354



Welcome to the **7th VALZEO Newsletter**. Between May and October 2026, the consortium met in Ancona for its International Workshop, Science Café and General Assembly. Staff exchanges continued in Italy and Ireland, and the biodiesel pilot plant moved closer to completion. Since the summer, partners have prepared the VALZEO policy briefs and the final workshop at Ecomondo 2026.

In this issue, you can read about the three policy briefs on page 4, and we invite you to our final workshop at **Ecomondo 2026** in Rimini on 3 November.

The VALZEO Communication Team

IN THIS ISSUE

PROJECT COORDINATION 2

TRAINING & SECONDMENTS 2–3

SCIENCE & INNOVATION 4

EVENTS & DISSEMINATION 5

SAVE THE DATE: ECOMONDO 2026 6

LOOKING AHEAD 6



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PROJECT COORDINATION

General Assembly in Ancona Reviews Progress and Next Steps

22 MAY 2026 · UNIVPM, ANCONA (ITALY)

The VALZEO consortium held its General Assembly at the Faculty of Engineering of Università Politecnica delle Marche (UNIVPM). The meeting followed the International Workshop and Science Café held the day before.

Partners reviewed technical progress, secondments, dissemination results and next steps across all work packages. The day closed with a technical visit to the UNIVPM laboratories.



WP1	Raw materials: collection, selection, characterisation and silicon extraction	Roberto Boada, UAB
WP2	Functional materials for water treatment and catalysis	A. Rabdel Ruiz-Salvador, UPO
WP3	Laboratory-scale validation	Daniele Caterino, UNIVPM
WP4	Pilot-scale and real-environment validation	Josep Torà, AERIS
WP5	Dissemination, communication and stakeholder engagement	Leonardo Piccinetti, SITES
WP6	Project management: secondments, deliverables, risks and intellectual property	Roberto Boada, UAB

[Read more →](#)

TRAINING & SECONDMENTS

Masterclass No. 2: From PhD to Research Management

20 MAY 2026 · UNIVPM, ANCONA

Dr Leonardo Piccinetti, CEO of SITES, led an interactive Masterclass for researchers, PhD students and project partners. It covered project management under Horizon Europe, proposal writing with the Excellence–Impact–Implementation framework, career paths from PhD to research management, and building international research networks.

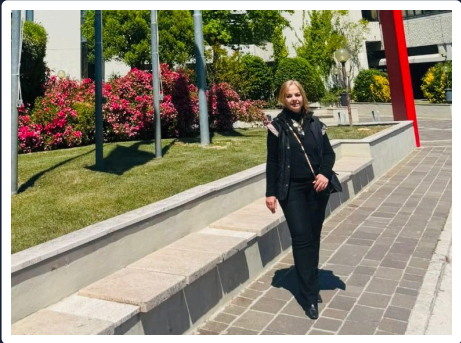
[Read more →](#)

Secondments at UNIVPM Link Research and Market

MAY 2026 · UNIVPM, ANCONA

Donatella Santoro (SITES) analysed the regulatory framework and the market for intellectual property rights, to support the exploitation of VALZEO results. Josep A. Torà Suárez (AERIS) adjusted the biodiesel pilot plant (see page 4).

[Read more →](#)



VALZEO Secondments in Donegal, Ireland

JULY 2026 · CILL ULTA AND GTEIC GAOTH DOBHAIR, DONEGAL



SITES hosted a week of VALZEO secondments in Donegal, focused on knowledge exchange, scientific collaboration and the regional bioeconomy. The programme opened at **Cill Ulta**, a community-driven centre for regenerative horticulture and circular bioeconomy, and at **Gteic Gaoth Dobhair**, with discussions led by Dr Leonardo Piccinetti (SITES). Participants also learned about the Northwest Bioeconomy Hub, which links academia, industry, policymakers and communities.

Prof. Roberto Boada (UAB, VALZEO coordinator) presented how the project turns agro-industrial residues, especially rice husk ash, into zeolite-based composites for environmental remediation and biodiesel production. Prof. A. Rabdel Ruiz-Salvador (UPO) and Dr Gustavo Pérez (Centre GTS, UAB) also presented during the week.

OPENING DAY · 28 JULY

Co-creation workshop: project goals, industrial uses in wastewater treatment and a guided tour of the Cill Ulta greenhouses

LATER IN THE WEEK

Funding and partner matchmaking, an Impact Canvas pitch session and the impact of Interreg projects in the Donegal Gaeltacht

SITE VISITS

Technical visits on circular innovation in marine bioeconomy, aquaculture and regional value chains

[Read more →](#)

SCIENCE & INNOVATION



Progress on the Biodiesel Pilot Plant

MAY 2026 · UNIVPM, ANCONA

In May 2026, Josep A. Torà Suárez (AERIS) adjusted the VALZEO biodiesel pilot plant at UNIVPM during his secondment. The team also requested quotations for equipment and materials, and prepared the specifications for the next construction phase. With the biodiesel reactor nearly complete, the pilot plant marks an important step for VALZEO's research and demonstration work.

Why it matters: pilot-scale testing shows whether laboratory results hold under real operating conditions. The pilot plant is where new catalysts can be tested at a larger scale.

From Evidence to Policy: VALZEO Policy Briefs

IN PREPARATION · AUTUMN 2026

VALZEO is preparing three short policy briefs that translate project results into practical recommendations for policymakers at EU, national and regional level. The briefs are under review by the consortium and will be published on the project website once validated.

No. 1 · RESIDUES

Rice husk ash as a secondary raw material.

No. 2 · WATER

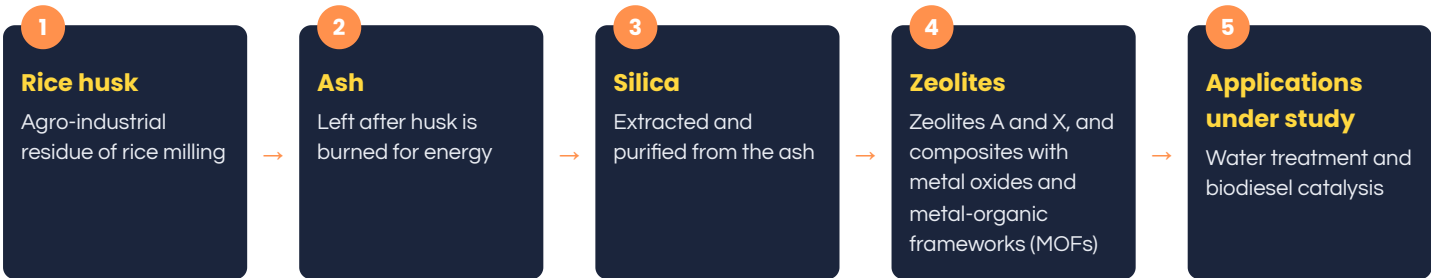
Natural zeolite for micropollutant removal and disinfection.

No. 3 · BIODIESEL

Waste-derived solid catalysts for biodiesel production.

The VALZEO Value Chain at a Glance

VALZEO links agricultural residues to environmental and energy applications in five steps.



EVENTS & DISSEMINATION

21 MAY 2026 · FACULTY OF ENGINEERING, UNIVPM

Chiara Giosuè (UNIVPM) · advanced materials and technologies for air quality and environmental sustainability

Prof. Anna Laura Eusebi (UNIVPM) · life cycle assessment (LCA)
of bio-based energy storage materials



Science Café: Can Waste Save Our Water?

Dr Leonardo Piccinetti (SITES) moderated the VALZEO Science Café *"Can Waste Save Our Water? Exploring the Future of Circular Materials and Clean Technologies"*. Students, early-career researchers, professors and stakeholders discussed how waste can become a resource for clean water, and the role of young researchers in a more circular society. Contributors included Massimiliano Sgroi (UNIVPM), an expert in sustainable water treatment.

SAVE THE DATE

VALZEO WORKSHOP AT ECOMONDO 2026

Bridging industrial needs and academic advances in water treatment

Tuesday, 3 November 2026

14:00 – 17:30 CET

Sala Orchidea

First floor, Pavilion D6 · Ecomondo, Rimini
Expo Centre (Italy)

ECOMONDO
The green technology expo.

14:00 · Welcome

Round of presentations

14:15 · Problem owners

Pitch session on unresolved
issues in water remediation

15:15 · Solution providers

Market-ready applications
and lab-validated materials

16:15 · Co-creation

Open discussion, networking
and matchmaking

Water utilities, industrial water users, technology providers, researchers and policymakers are welcome. Partners joining: UAB, UPO, UNIVPM, AERIS and SITES.

LOOKING AHEAD

As VALZEO enters its final months, the consortium will focus on:

NOVEMBER 2026

Final workshop at Ecomondo 2026, Rimini

10 DECEMBER 2026

Final project meeting (online)

BY DECEMBER 2026

Publication of the three VALZEO policy briefs

DECEMBER 2026

Newsletter No. 8, the final issue, with four years of results

All public results, including the three policy briefs, will be available on valzeo.eu.

ABOUT VALZEO

VALZEO is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Staff Exchanges project. It funds secondments of researchers and staff between universities, research centres and companies, so that knowledge moves across sectors and borders. Partners: Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB, coordinator), Universidad Pablo de Olavide (UPO) and AERIS Tecnologías Ambientales (Spain); Università Politecnica delle Marche (UNIVPM, Italy); SITES (Ireland); Z Prime (UK); Universidad de La Habana, EEPFIH and Instituto de Investigaciones de Granos (Cuba).

9 partners

5 countries

48 months: Jan 2023–Dec 2026



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