Why carried out this initiative?
The extensive cultivation of crops on rainfed lands covers approximately 50% of the agricultural surface of Spain. The volume and distribution of rainfall creates a semiarid environment contained in the Mediterranean region, limiting the crop yield of these lands. These soils offer low profitability, high erosion rates, an alarming decrease in organic matter, as well as loss of biodiversity, soluble fertilizing elements and serious consequences for contaminant processes. These areas of Spain have thus become unsustainable for agricultural activities to continue, thereby accelerating the process of desertification.

Control and monitoring

- The effects of organic agriculture techniques vs. conventional management in different dryland crops were evaluated.

Beneficial practices of the project

1. To achieve agricultural sustainability in rainfed areas is necessary
   - Implementation of appropriate soil management
   - Mixed crops (legume-cereals)
   - Mechanical methods for weed control
   - Vertical tillage systems
   - Reinsertion of traditional crops

2. Vertical tillage is beneficial and highly recommended:
   - Horizons are kept intact
   - Allows for the best possible soil organic matter content
   - Avoids compaction and favours water infiltration

3. Crop rotation Avoids the specialization of weed flora and helps improve soil quality. The different crop root systems carry out mechanical structuring work in the soil and they also combat hardsetting

4. The perceptions of participating farmers have shown a clear tendency towards a more positive outlook on the effects of organic agriculture and support for the argument that organic land becomes much more valuable.

5. Economic assessment. Example of the economic assessment comparing chickpea production in conventional management to organic management based on the actual data collected by the farmers involved in the project.