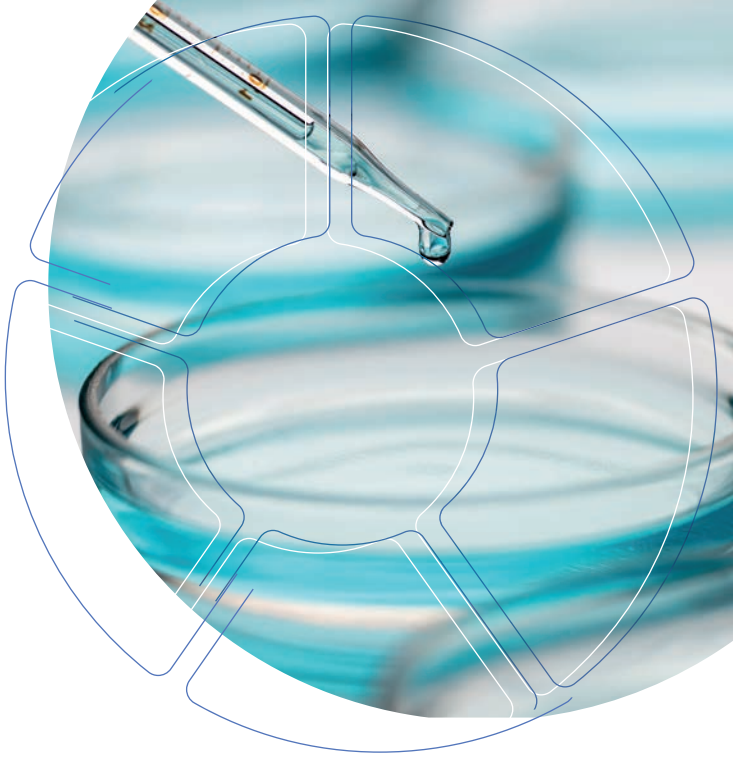
MICROBE
the Microbiome Biobanking (RI) Enabler



5th MICROBE project newsletter *(Sept. 2026)*

Dear colleagues, friends and innovators,

Welcome to our fifth project update! We are thrilled to share the latest developments and milestones with you. In this edition, you'll find:

- Some information on our 3rd annual project meeting hosted by CABI in London, UK
- Information on our latest achievements in research
- MICROBE Experts Campaign - Introduction to talented MICROBE researchers
- Retrospect on MICROBE's participation in several key conferences and workshops

In March 2026, we met at our 3rd Annual Consortium meeting in London, UK, hosted by our project beneficiary CABI. The project partners presented progress achieved in the 3rd project year and agreed on further important steps towards achieving the stated objectives and results. This alignment is instrumental as we entered our final project year, and have to assure that different research threads are finalized, results consolidated and disseminated to key stakeholders. Main research topics discussed included Soil, Seeds and Marine microbiome preservation research, Ring trial using defined microbial communities (DMCs), MICROBE data portal and From Network Hubs to Functional MAGs. Furthermore, key opportunities for dissemination and training activities were defined (e.g. European Biobank Week 2026, ECCO 2026) and concept for additional MICROBE webinars elaborated. CABI colleagues organized a tour through their facilities including CABI's microbial collection featuring Penicillium strain deposited by Alexander Fleming. Pursuing its objectives, MICROBE has generated extensive datasets. Analysing, integrating, and interpreting these data will be the primary focus and key challenge during the final year of the project. Although the datasets are not yet publicly available, we would like to take this opportunity to provide a sneak peek of resources generated so far. The figures below highlight the breadth of the data collected across the different project activities:

MICROBE samples registered in BioSamples

- *Total: 4.362 of which*
  - *Soil: 2.498*
  - *Marine: 98*
  - *Seed: 1.351*
  - *DMCs: 406*
  - *Isolates (fed into DMCs): 9*

Available links to sequencing (raw-reads) data:

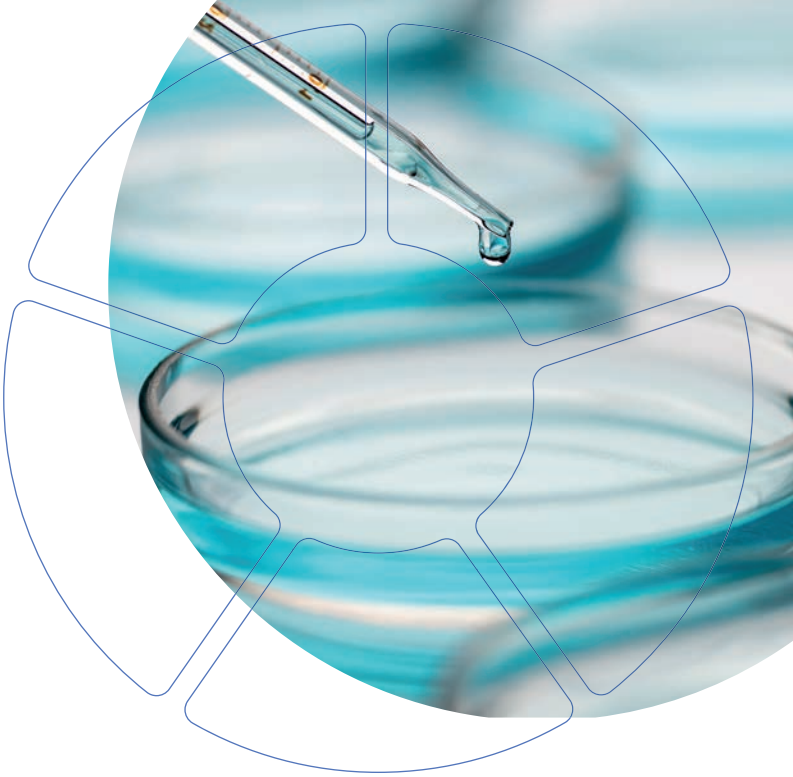
- *Soil: 4.917*
- *Marine: 12*

Phenotype analyses:

- *Soil 4MU: 41*
- *Soil Biolog: 276*

Funded by the European Union

MICROBE workshop at EBW 2026



We held a dedicated MICROBE workshop on 19th May within the European Biobank Week 2026 in Prague, CZ. Tanja Kostic (AIT), Sara Pipponzi (AIT), Cornelia Stumptner (MUG) and Perrine Portier (INRAe) presented the lessons-learned within MICROBE to about 40 workshop participants. The MICROBE Team facilitated an open discussion with participants on the practical challenges of microbiome biobanking, including interoperability, standardisation, governance, data sharing, and long-term sustainability. The workshop also highlighted key lessons learned and best practices developed through the EU-funded MICROBE project. Andreas moser (rtds) recorded the talks given by our MICROBE experts and you can find the videos on our project website:

https://www.microbeproject.eu/ebw26workshop

MICROBE publications

From "synthetic" to defined microbial communities for clearer terminology. Koch et al.

https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-026-74251-1

Policy Briefing: from access to use—untangling the international legal frameworks that govern microbial resources; Davide Faggionato et al.

https://doi.org/10.1093/sumbio/qvag005

Policy in Practice: How to do the Nagoya Protocol: common misconceptions, challenges and best practices for access and benefit-sharing compliance; Davide Faggionato et al.

https://doi.org/10.1093/sumbio/qvag007

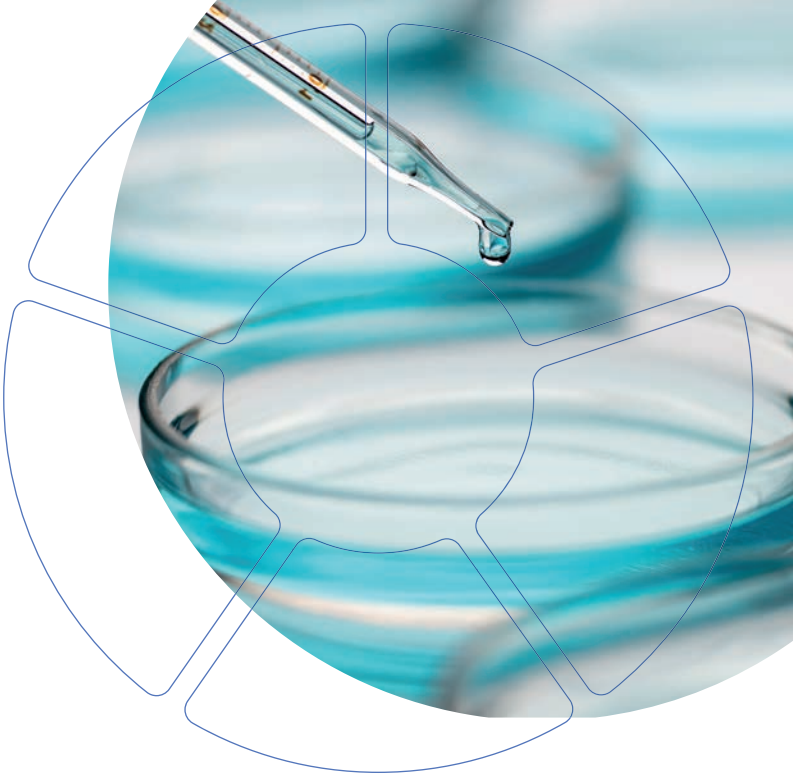
How can biological databases support the new UN mechanism for benefit-sharing from digital sequence information?; Debora S. Raposo, Davide Faggionato et al.

https://doi.org/10.1038/s41597-026-07725-y

A trait-based framework to identify microbial keystone taxa for microbiome engineering, Pamela Espíndola-Hernández et al.

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.crsus.2025.100615

MICROBE Experts Campaign



MICROBE has designed a MICROBE Experts Campaign to promote the people behind MICROBE. The campaign is based on the teams of each project partner and also focuses on promoting our young researchers and colleagues in their workspace. We produce videos, photos and personal statements that are shared via the MICROBE social media channels and YouTube. The videos are also available on the MICROBE website.

https://www.microbeproject.eu/videos/

In this fifth newsletter we present the team from INRAe, FR, Dr. Perrine Portier and Oceane Fogliani. The INRAe team involved in the MICROBE project manages the French Collection for Plant-associated Bacteria. The collection holds more than 7000 strains, resources strategic for plant health.

Dr. Perrine Portier



My name is Perrine Portier and I am the head of the CIRM-CFBP, the French Collection for Plant-associated Bacteria. Within this framework I develop researches centred around the characterisation of the biodiversity of bacteria associated to plants. I started by leading the molecular characterisation of the more than 7000 accessions of the collection by obtaining the sequence of 2 housekeeping genes. With these data we now have a broad view of the diversity of the resources which were deposited in our collection. The research questions of the scientific community associated to the collection have evolved and now we take into account the whole microbiome. Thus, naturally my projects switched toward the microbiome. The MICROBE project deals with the preservation of the microbiotas. Today I also develop projects which aim at obtaining the whole genome sequence of the bacteria which are present in the plant and seed microbiota. The strains present in this environment are different than the ones already present in collection and very little is known about them and more information is needed to understand their effects on the plants.

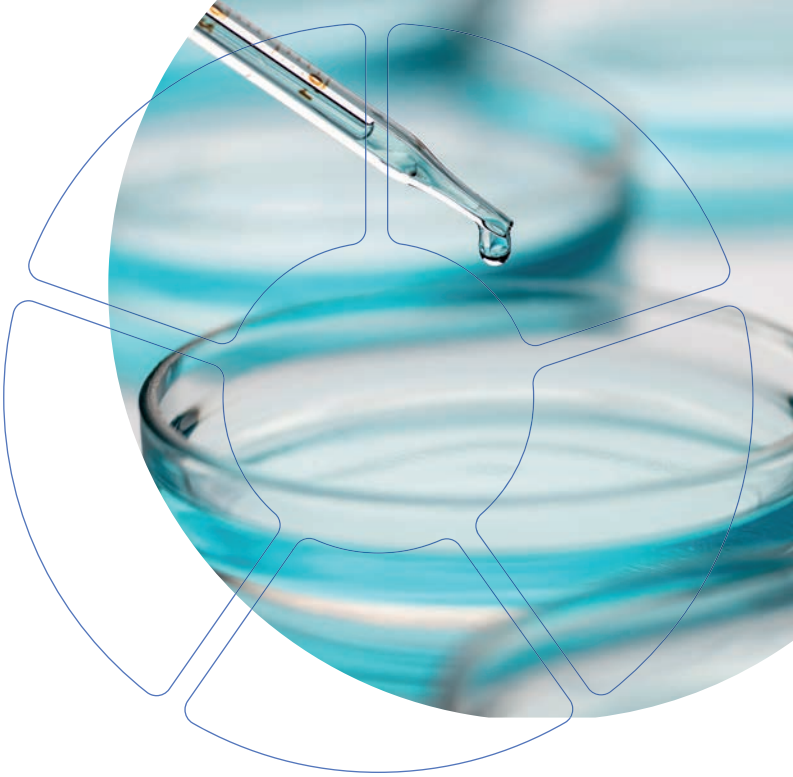
Oceane Fogliani



My name is Oceane Fogliane, and I have been working within MICROBE at the INRAe Institute in Angers. I am passionate about microorganisms and I am interested in their interactions and their roles in ecosystems. I continuously seek to understand the biological and ecological mechanisms that govern them and their interactions with plants, insects, and other organisms. The MICROBE project has allowed me to investigate these interactions at the seed level by studying the microorganisms associated with seeds in the context of biological resource conservation. In particular, I had the opportunity to analyse the data generated from experiments designed to assess the impact of different conservation methods on the diversity and taxonomic composition of microbial communities.

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Visit our website and register to our MICROBE Community



MICROBE events and news

Here, we present MICROBE events and workshops as well as events related to the areas we are working in.

MICROBE at Conferences & Meetings

In 2026, MICROBE has been presented at:

- MICROBE has been invited to participate at a dedicated session at the Project Meeting of **MICROBE4CLIMATE** in Braga, Portugal (5th February 2026), to discuss about microbiome infrastructures and related business models. MICROBE Experts (Tanja Kostic, Rob Finn, Andreas Moser) participated and worked together with the project partners on novel ideas and related business models in microbiome biobanking and services.





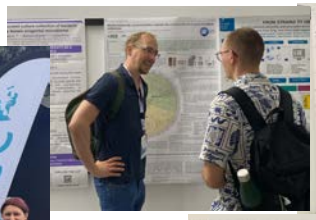



- MICROBE participated actively at the **European Biobank week 2026** in Prague, CZ. Two posters have been presented and a MICROBE dedicated workshop was organized.

https://www.microbeproject.eu/ebw26workshop

- MICROBE has been invited to participate at the recent meeting of the European Culture Collections´ Organisation (ECCO) in Portugal, Azores, from 14-16 September 2026. MICROBE experts presented about the project results with talks and posters and a dedicated interactive workshop. Our coordinator Dr. Tanja Kostic has been invited as key-note speaker on Microbiome Biobanking: Navigating Complexity – insights from the MICROBE Journey. Further actively participating MICROBE experts have been Davide Faggionato (DSMZ), Tanja Kostic (AIT) Sara Pipponzi (AIT), Perrine Portier (INRAe) Lars Moeller (DSMZ), Amber Scholz (DSMZ).





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www.microbeproject.eu