



## **8<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE MINISTERS OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES OF CIHEAM'S MEMBER COUNTRIES**

Istanbul – 8 March 2010

---

### **FINAL DECLARATION**

---

# FINAL DECLARATION

The 13 CIHEAM member countries' ministers of agriculture, or their representatives, met in Istanbul on 8 March 2010 at the invitation of H.E. Mehmet Mehdi EKER, the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of the Republic of Turkey. This occasion, coinciding with the International Women's Day, the Ministers and Head of Delegations underline the importance of rural women's role and contribution to food security, food safety the development of rural areas and adaptation to climate change

## THE MINISTERS AND HEADS OF DELEGATION,

**Aware** that the original configuration of CIHEAM, comprising countries that have been full members for many years, offers an appropriate framework for the joint review of trends in Mediterranean agricultural economies in the current context of radical structural and institutional change, informed notably by the need to adapt agricultural systems to meet increasingly rapid climate change;

**Given** that Climate change is one of the main concern of the new process on "Global Partnership for Agriculture, Food and Nutrition" set up after the 2008 food crisis.

**Aware** that enhanced agricultural productivity depends both on improved water management and on the access and optimum use of other farm inputs, availability and sustainability of services and marketing possibilities to ensure an equitable standard of living for farmers and rural populations,

**Given** that responsible development of the Mediterranean area calls for a common commitment to work together to meet the many challenges posed by climate change throughout the region and requires a joint effort to identify those assets that distinguish the Mediterranean zone from other regions across the world,

**Given** that food and agriculture, terrestrial and marine biodiversity and ecosystems are stakes of strategic importance to the Mediterranean Region, underpinning stability and sustainable development – major objectives of the Union for the Mediterranean – in countries on the rim;

**Conscious** of the fact that climate constraints, hydric stress and limitations on land have always existed in the region but that Mediterranean farmers have frequently found ingenious solutions to the many problems that arise.

Have focussed their debate on the future of the Mediterranean Region on the "**Impact of climate change on food safety and security in the Mediterranean Region**".

In order to promote closer cooperation and support an active and effective regional partnership as well as in keeping with the joint task of assessing the future of Mediterranean agriculture,

At the close of their discussion, the Ministers addressed the following recommendations to:

- the Mediterranean countries,
- the international organisations active in the Mediterranean area, and
- the CIHEAM

## **REPERCUSSIONS OF CLIMATE CHANGE FOR FOOD SAFETY AND SECURITY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION**

Discussion concerned the different ways in which climate change affected agriculture and the various initiatives launched by countries to adapt their agricultures to ensure food safety and security.

**Considering** that measures to adapt to climate change cannot be dissociated from food security and safety issues, and that any agricultural policy must integrate these two requirements,

**Aware** that the disruption caused by climate change is already increasing tension over land and water resources, encouraging the propagation of certain diseases and fostering human migration, and that these trends will continue if adequate measures are not immediately adopted and incorporated into an agricultural and rural development policy that looks to the long term;

**Having regard** to the discussions held during the Copenhagen meeting (December 2009) as part of the United Nations conference on climate change, in the course of which emphasis was laid on the need to establish a comprehensive adaptation programme, including international support, and the urgent need to adapt to the negative effects of climate change through the implementation of response measures and strategies for all countries;

**Having regard** to discussions at the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on Drought Management on “Economics of Drought and Drought Preparedness in a Climate Change Context”, organised in Istanbul in March 2010 by the NEMEDCA network managed by MARA, CIHEAM, ICARDA and FAO, which analysed methods for assessing impacts of drought and plans to mitigate them.

## **THE MINISTERS RECOMMEND,**

### **To the Mediterranean countries:**

1. That each country be aware of the impact of climate change on agriculture and the role of the latter in ensuring food safety and security and hence be able to develop measures needed to adapt agricultural systems to natural constraints.
2. That ways be sought to adapt agricultural systems to cope with climate change in the region through greater bilateral and regional cooperation and, more generally, that the question of adaptation measures be more widely included in the agendas of international policy meetings.
3. That the countries promote national policies to fight climate change and that these policies be based on the principle of shared, complementary responsibility on the part of national and local administrations and all local players, particularly those from civil society and agricultural producers who are in a position to deal with such matters.
4. That they recognize rural women as a social group that suffers the consequences of climate change which contributes to amplify already existing inequalities. Rural women represent a high percentage of agricultural labour force which could help reverse these trends if they reach an adequate level of awareness and decision power.

5. That they mobilise existing human resources and encourage Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in scientific and technical research in order to identify techniques and measures to increase the productivity of farms, extend and intensify responsible irrigated agriculture, increase the productivity of land used for rain-fed agricultural systems, introduce new crop varieties that are more tolerant to heat and drought, promote product diversification suited to natural and climate conditions and introduce effective local services and extension programmes.
6. That they support food policies that favour consumption of local quality food products in tune with natural resources endowment and encourage the development of mutual recognition and protection of geographical indications and denominations of origin
7. That they promote, at national and regional, the development of a “green economy” based on renewable energy, particularly solar and agricultural by-products, that could provide important new ways to diversify and secure energy supply for the agro-food sector and improve its competitiveness.
8. That they support initiatives to improve water use efficiency in agriculture and provide for more flexible management of water supply systems, notably through the development of small and medium-sized hydraulic equipment.
9. That they seek the resources needed to increase productivity, including any new technologies and innovations that are safe, effective and environmentally sustainable.
10. That they work together to make sure that plant and animal health problems posing the most urgent threat on account of their destructive socio-economic and environmental impact (spread of harmful organisms and emerging diseases) are quickly provided for in regional projects.
11. That they recognise the crucial role played by forests in absorbing greenhouse gas emissions and the contribution sustainable development of forests can bring to the protection of water and land resources and to biodiversity in balanced agro-sylvo-pastoral systems.
12. That they undertake necessary national and regional capacity development which should focus on the sustainable use of soil and water resources in support to enhanced food security while considering the need to protect the environment.
13. That they take necessary steps to enhance Early Warning Systems at national and regional level and sustain their coordination in order to monitor droughts and floods in the Mediterranean Region.
14. That they suggest to governments to assign appropriate priority to the agricultural sector, in order to create opportunities to enable the farmers, in particular in vulnerable areas of the region, to benefit from financial mechanisms and investment flows to support climate change adaptation, technology development, transfer and dissemination.
15. That they promote exchanges among Mediterranean Countries on policies and tools aimed at the sustainability and development of the agro-food sector and at stabilizing farmers revenue by reducing risks exposure.
16. That they consider the rich regional biodiversity as an effective instrument to combat the adverse effects of climate change and, with a global approach, take the necessary measures for its sustainable use and conservation.

**To the international organisations active in the Mediterranean zone:**

1. That the European Union work to implement support measures for policies and projects designed to adapt agricultural systems to the new climate conditions, collaborating with all the Mediterranean countries and privileging a regional approach.
2. That the European Union support activities of knowledge and capacity building addressing sustainable management of Mediterranean terrestrial and marine ecosystems and biodiversity, taking into account the need of increasing and developing the competitiveness, innovation and technology dimensions in the agricultural and environmental sectors. When implementing such activities, the support of international regional organizations active in the fields of agriculture,

food security, management of marine and terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity should be sought after. To this effect the Union for the Mediterranean is as a suitable multilateral coordination framework.

#### **To the CIHEAM :**

1. Given that six of its member countries are members of the European Union and that several others have signed association agreements with the EU, pursue and intensify its efforts to **foster the emergence of a more cohesive Mediterranean zone in the fields of agriculture and food**, as well as management of terrestrial and marine ecosystems and biodiversity through concerted initiatives aiming at developing policy dialogue in the region, an example of which is given by this regular Ministerial forum.
2. Work to promote a healthy and sustainable regional food production system following the standards of the **Mediterranean diet** that foster the spirit of conviviality and favour consumption of local and seasonal products, particularly by encouraging regional networks to support public decisions for the protection, promotion and marketing of Mediterranean products and the development of environmentally sound agricultural production systems.
3. **Develop institutional capacity** at all levels (local, national and regional) for elaborating and implementing drought adaptation strategies as well as establishing more efficient support and cooperation mechanisms in order to enhance agricultural drought adaptation efforts among the Mediterranean Countries strengthening existing Regional/Inter-institutional Network in order to share information, exchange expertise and build up indicators to provide consistent and rigorous monitoring focusing on drought management in order to develop a common regional strategy that will integrate all risks induced by climatic change.
4. **Support joint scientific research/development programs** regarding the effects of climate change and drought impact on agricultural production, food quality and safety ensuring that decision-makers are adequately equipped to deal with climate change impact by producing analyses and strategic frames of reference. An inventory of adaptation policies more appropriate to the Mediterranean area could be of special interest (Mediterranean Observatory and Mediterra report).
5. Given the importance of the economic benefits that the whole region can derive from better managed and monitored food quality and safety systems, **promotes integrated regional programs** encompassing human resources development, coordination of national approaches and setting up of early warning systems as well as support to decision making and promotion of Mediterranean products.

At the kind invitation of Mr. George Pullicino, the Ministers and Heads of delegation agreed to hold their ninth meeting in 2012, the year in which CIHEAM will be celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, in Malta on the topic "Mediterranean diet and quality signs".

They thanked H.E. Mehmet Mehdi EKER, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and all his collaborators for the effort that had gone into making this meeting a success

They thanked CIHEAM for having provided secretarial backup and for its contribution to the success of the meeting and also expressed their appreciation of this organisation, which was entirely devoted to developing genuine cohesion in the Mediterranean area.