



**CIHEAM**

International Centre for Advanced  
Mediterranean Agronomic Studies

# **11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture of CIHEAM's member states**

**Tirana (Albania)**

22 September 2016

**KEYNOTE**

## Two objectives in the agenda of this ministerial meeting

The meeting shall pursue two objectives:

- **An exchange of views on migrations** from the point of view of agricultural development and food security as against the specific Mediterranean challenges.

*The current crisis of refugees, whose effects are hard to be fully estimated, is forcing us to consider the root causes of migrations and future trends in order to identify possible solutions from the point of view of agricultural and rural development and food security in the Mediterranean area.*

- **The presentation of the CIHEAM Strategic Agenda 2025**, identifying the Organization's cooperation mission in the Mediterranean area around 4 pillars, divided in 15 thematic priorities.

*This Agenda aims at prioritizing the CIHEAM activities facing the current regional challenges, identifying the Mediterranean dimension of the Post-2015 Global Agenda, promoting the mobilization of complementary funding sources to conduct cooperation, and strengthening institutional synergies for the Mediterranean.*

*The addresses by the Ministers and representatives of international/regional organisations shall be focused on these two themes; the same applies to Tirana declaration that shall be adopted at the end of the meeting.*

*This keynote is designed to take stock of the major challenges arising from migrations in the Mediterranean area from the agricultural and rural perspective but also to present the CIHEAM Strategic Agenda 2025 in order to facilitate the elaboration of speeches and of Tirana declaration.*

## Migrations in the Mediterranean

As stated by the former United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. António Guterres, «*the 21st century is the century of people on the move*»<sup>1</sup>. Throughout history, people have always been on the move but this phenomenon has dramatically overgrown due to the effects of population increase, inequalities, globalisation but also frequent conflicts. The challenges relating to migrations are at the core of the Post-2015 Development Agenda adopted by the United Nations in September 2015<sup>2</sup>.

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The Mediterranean has long been a basin of migrations. However, factors triggering displacements have changed. This situation has become complex and *is forcing us to consider the root causes of migrations and future trends in order to integrate them in a model of sustainable development, including the agricultural sector and food security in the Mediterranean area*

### A. State of Play

#### *The migrating planet*

Nowadays mobility of people is increasing both in terms of distance and frequency. The growing flows of goods, capitals and above all of information catalyse these migration dynamics. People may migrate by choice or may be forced off<sup>3</sup>. Economic inequalities, territorial disparities, insecurity or natural catastrophes force people to leave their home. In parallel, the higher standards of living and of freedoms push people to move following the opportunities offered by a wider horizon.

Migrations may be internal <sup>4</sup> (within a state or region) or international (relocation of people between nation-states). Internal migrations often respond to the mass movement towards the cities at the detriment of marginalized areas (rural, coastal, mountainous regions). These movements fall within the global trend towards urbanization; they are motivated by the will of rural populations to adopt an urban lifestyle but also by the need to leave underdeveloped areas where agricultural income is not enough to make a living. In the Mediterranean area, this rural exodus shall be meant as a movement from the coastal zones to the urban centres. Internal migrations may also be forced in many States where conflicts, human rights abuse or natural disasters generate mass displacement of people.

International migrations respond to the same logic and are often the second step of the migration process. It is a choice as for the wide array of economic migrants that move from one country to another to advance their economic and professional prospects. Forced migrations refer to the displacement of people towards another country to flee from conflicts, violence, persecutions or environmental disasters. Over the last years, the number of displaced people within their country or towards another country has dramatically grown. In 2014, about 60 million people were compelled to move<sup>5</sup>, i.e. 50% higher than in 2004. However, these figures shall be put into perspective: forced displacements of people are a minority with respect to migrations as a whole.

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<sup>1</sup> Antonio Guterres, *Le Monde* 28-29 September 2008

<sup>2</sup> Migration issues are at the heart of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) on decent work and economic growth (SDG8), on reduced inequalities (SDG10) and on partnerships for the goals (SDG17)

<sup>3</sup> People who are compelled to move are called refugees (when an international border is crossed); people are internally displaced when displacement occurs within one state. The status of refugee is recognized by Geneva Convention of 1951 and provides protection to people recognized as such.

<sup>4</sup> According to the UN, about 1 billion people in the world are on the move. 75% of migrations are internal, 25% international.

<sup>5</sup> UNCHR, *UNCHR's Annual Global Trends Report: World at War*, 2015.

## ***The Mediterranean at the heart of migration phenomena***

Migrations are constantly changing in the Mediterranean area. South-North flows are not a new phenomenon; they have grown over the last years as a result of economic disparities, conflicts and human insecurity<sup>6</sup>. Migration dynamics across the Mediterranean have a long history and are multi-faceted; however, they acquire an even more complex geopolitical configuration in the current context of the region<sup>7</sup>. The profile of migrants evolves along with the change in migration routes<sup>8</sup>.

Although a lot of people have left their countries in the South of Europe as a result of the economic crisis, it shall be underlined that international migrations impact above all the East and South shores of the Mediterranean area. Near East and North Africa countries are transit zones for populations fleeing wars and persecutions or searching for better living conditions. Over the last years, several million people have been displaced or have migrated towards this zone and the Mediterranean area has become the greatest recipient of displaced persons and refugees and this, coupled with the economic hardships, complicates the implementation of budgetary means and logistics for the assistance and integration of these people<sup>9</sup>. The arrival of populations on the north Mediterranean shores has often been dramatic over the last years. Regrettably, more than 20 000 people died between 2000 and 2015 at sea. Although medium to long-term movements of people are unpredictable, the Mediterranean area, and notably Africa and the Middle-East remain at the core of strategic attention.

### ***Diversity of causes***

The globalization of exchanges, increasing social and economic disparities within one same country and between countries, demographic growth, anarchical development of some areas, frequent conflicts, tensions brought about by the scarcity of some vital resources like water, land and nutrition<sup>10</sup> or the climate change<sup>11</sup> contribute to the increase in migratory phenomena on the planet. In the rural zones, the status and conditions of farmers or of fishermen (labour conditions, informal labour, low income, precariousness and lack of long-term visibility, low expertise of actors, insufficient social protection, etc.)<sup>12</sup>, may lead to migration flows.

Among the causes leading to migrations and displacements, mention shall be made of climate factors. Although no one may be recognized as a refugee for climate reasons, links between mobility, environment and climate change shall not be disregarded. Low-income people living on subsistence agriculture are deeply affected and this increases vulnerabilities<sup>13</sup>. These climate-induced migrations interfere with the challenging sustainable and inclusive development and with food security. The recent creation in 2015 of an ad-hoc division on these themes within the International Migration Organization (IMO) bears testimony to the increasing attention due to these overlapping challenges.

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<sup>6</sup> IOM, *the Middle East and North Africa. Annual Report 2014*, 2015.

<sup>7</sup> Catherine Wihtol de Wenden, Camille Schmoll, H  l  ne Thiollet (sous la dir.), *Migrations en M  diterran  e*, CNRS Editions, 2015.

<sup>8</sup> Arezo Malakooti, *Migration Trends Across the Mediterranean: Connecting the Dots*, IOM/AltaiConsulting, 2015.

<sup>9</sup> ESCWA/IOM, *Migration, Displacement and Development in a Changing Arab Region*, 2015 Situation Report on International Migration, 2015.

<sup>10</sup> FAO, *Climate Change and Food Security: risks and responses*, 2016.

<sup>11</sup> Jane McAdam, *Climate Change and Displacement. Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, Hart Publishing, 2008.

<sup>12</sup> FAO (eds), *Social protection and agriculture: breaking the cycle of rural poverty*, The FAO State of Food and Agriculture 2015, 2015.

<sup>13</sup> Glauca Boyer, Matthew McKinnon, "Le d  veloppement et les risques de d  placement", in *Revue des Migrations Forc  es* 49, May 2015

In the Mediterranean area, sea level rise, salinization and erosion of soil, water scarcity, drought and extreme climate conditions are hazards that are doomed to increase during this century. Agriculture is the most affected sector by climate change. When extreme climate conditions occur, most costs are absorbed by agriculture. The side effects of climate change on emerging plant health crisis and on the outbreak of new pests have a dramatic impact on agriculture. When agriculture is the only means of subsistence, rural populations are compelled to migrate towards urban areas or other countries. Interactions between climate and migration in the region deserve the greatest attention<sup>14</sup>.

In the light of the above remarks, the Mediterranean region takes centre stage since it concentrates climate, agricultural, food and migratory tensions. This is why med countries play a proactive role in the conference of the parties (COP) which meets annually to discuss climate changes. In December 2015, on the occasion of COP21 in Paris, France laid a strong emphasis on agricultural and food issues in the negotiations. Morocco wishes to carry on this dynamic in November 2016 during COP22 that is due to be held at Marrakech.

### ***When migrations induce shared benefits...***

It is quite hard to understand these migrations given the wide range of their causes and consequences. They may produce shared benefits for the migrants and their families but also for the host country and for that of origin. Not only are these benefits economic<sup>15</sup> but also political, social or cultural...Down through the centuries, the blending has contributed to consolidating the creation of States. Diversity and melting pot have become major assets for several nations and have stimulated innovation and openness. Diasporas in the world play an essential role with respect to the levels of shared benefits in time and space. In this respect, migrations have always played a key role in the development dynamics.

The Mediterranean, lying at the crossroads of three continents, is an area of permanent and multidirectional migrations and provides examples of shared benefits. Since time immemorial, Mediterranean populations have always been on the move. This is one of the main features of this area, characterized by flows of human, economic and cultural exchanges. This constant intermingling has brought about a social mosaic in which identities intertwine and the cosmopolitan nature gets stronger<sup>16</sup>.

In the Mediterranean region, agriculture holds old and highly diversified links with movements of populations<sup>17</sup>. It shall be noted that thanks to agriculture, nomad populations started to settle down: when the first domestications of plants and animals started centuries ago, such as for wheat in the Ancient Fertile Crescent, humans settled down in the region. Agriculture in the Mediterranean highlights the shared benefits provided by the flows of populations. The existence of highly diversified cuisines (which, however, share a lot of common gastronomic and cultural traits), promoting the Mediterranean diet, as a life style and sustainable dietary pattern, cutting across borders<sup>18</sup>, is a clear-cut example.

<sup>14</sup> Quentin Wodon, Andrea Liverani, George Joseph, Nathalie Bougnoux, *Climate Change and Migration: Evidence from the Middle East and North Africa*, World Bank, 2014.

<sup>15</sup> OECD, *International Migration Outlook 2014, Special Focus: Mobilising Migrant's Skills for Economic Success*, 2014.

<sup>16</sup> David Abulafia, *The Great Sea. A Human History of the Mediterranean*, Penguin Book, 2011 ; Franco Cardini, *Il grande blu. Il Mediterraneo, mare di tesori. Avventure, sogni, commerci, battaglie*, Florence Press, 2014.

<sup>17</sup> CIHEAM, *Atlas Mediterra. Mediterranean Agriculture, Food, Fisheries and the Rural World*, CIHEAM/Les Presses de Sciences-Po, 2010.

<sup>18</sup> CIHEAM, *Atlas Mediterra. Mediterranean Agriculture, Food, Fisheries and the Rural World*, CIHEAM/Les Presses de Sciences-Po, 2010.

### ...but also shared costs

Such migrations bring up challenges at different levels starting from the urban one. At present, migrants get settled first of all in the cities, both in their home country or in a new one, and this raises huge challenges in terms of sustainability and resilience of urban systems. Economic migrants look for better living conditions in the urban zones which is not always possible in the Mediterranean cities struck by the economic crisis, low employment rate and pressure on resources. The scenario is not at all comparable to that reported in the XX century in Europe when urban areas provided more job opportunities and success chances to individuals coming from the rural areas.

In the Mediterranean area, the rural-urban exodus has not resulted in a dynamic professional inclusion of these persons looking for a better job. Cities hardly respond to the needs of newcomers and are not capable to offer a better life perspective. Another consequence of these migrations, which is still underestimated, concerns the drain of brains and of expertise. The loss of human capital, for the countries of origin, which is also a waste of knowledge, affects all the sectors, urban, coastal and rural areas. This is a « lose-lose » drain since host countries are unable or do not wish to integrate skilful migrants in their labour market offering them jobs that match their skills.

The displacement of populations by force often result in humanitarian crises and most refugees get settled in the cities of host countries and not in the camps managed by international organisations<sup>19</sup>. This is why it is advisable to discuss nutritional and social effects of these movements towards the cities and not only their impact on the habitat and labour market. These migratory movements raise economic, agricultural and infrastructural challenges in order to face a transformed food equation. The supply of food and the access to drinking water and care are among the very first vital needs to be satisfied for people displaced by force. Despite the actions undertaken by the host communities, civil society, humanitarian organizations and economic operators, the situation presents great challenges. Responses are linked to emergencies. Food security needs to be ensured in the short term for the benefit of these populations. But medium to long-term solutions must be found to tackle challenges: following the UNHCR estimations, refugees live in exile for 17 years. The creation of « MADAD »<sup>20</sup>, by the EU regional trust fund, to respond to the Syrian crisis, falls within a programme of efficient and long-term assistance for displaced peoples.

For the States of the Mediterranean basin, but also for the EU and its member states, these flows raise great political challenges at a time of « *polymorphic crisis* »<sup>21</sup> (economic recession, uncertain integrations, mass arrivals of migrants at the borders, instability in the neighbourhood countries, etc.) which does not encourage the implementation of common solutions<sup>22</sup>. In order to counter irregular migrants, States apply increasingly stringent policies to immigration. Over the last twelve years, the management of refugees, border inspections, and fight against illegal networks are at the heart of debates in the European Union; the migration issue is high on the Mediterranean agenda. The way in which the EU shall tackle this migratory challenge will impact, in part, the evolution of the European project. This is both a major bench test for the solidity of EU mechanisms<sup>23</sup>, but also a tool to test the future cooperation with the med basin states and with the Middle East and Africa. As underlined by Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and

<sup>19</sup> At present, 59% of refugees in the world live in urban areas

<sup>20</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/neighbourhood/countries/syria/madad/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/neighbourhood/countries/syria/madad/index_en.htm)

<sup>21</sup> As stated by Jean-Claude Juncker, current President of the European Commission

<sup>22</sup> Angeliki Dimitriadi, « *L'Europe face aux réfugiés* », in Afkar-Ideas, n°48, winter 2015-2016.

<sup>23</sup> Sergio Carrera, Steven Blockmans, Daniel Gros and Elspeth Guild, « *The EU's Response to the Refugee Crisis: Taking Stock and Setting Policy Priorities* », CEPS Essay, n°20, December 2015.

vice-president of the Commission, «*Europe risks disintegrating*»<sup>24</sup> if it is unable to come up with a unified response to the mass migration crisis.

## **B. Agricultural and rural contexts**

In the light of these multiple and interconnected challenges, agriculture may provide unique insights and also actions to solve some of these equations. It is high time to consider the role of agriculture and of rural development to prevent the rural-urban exodus but also to respond to the challenges of migrations<sup>25</sup>. These remarks fall within a strategic development of rural areas and agriculture as major determinants for the stability and economy of the countries in the region.

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### ***Addressing the root causes of the rural depopulation***

The rural world, agricultural and coastal fisheries communities are drivers of changes and solution providers but also contribute to migration dynamics. The potential of youth (often untapped), their employability and active involvement in the life of rural areas are a major area of actions to prevent rural-urban exodus. The rural exodus of the youth is not necessarily a bad option provided that agriculture might evolve (as in the XIX and XX centuries in Europe). However, the secondary and tertiary sectors do not offer the same job opportunities as in the past. Migrations do not necessarily improve their conditions. This is why it is expedient to provide better living conditions to young people in rural areas. Demographic aging both in the rural and agricultural sector raises some difficulties. Decent but also innovative and attractive jobs shall be created by promoting entrepreneurship or social economy in the rural areas. Rural territories should also become more attractive in cultural terms for the young populations in search of a more urban lifestyle. Furthermore, inclusive development models should be worked out in order to link communities (especially vulnerable groups) to local policies and to the organization of social life in the rural zones.

Technical and economic responses cannot stand alone. They shall be backed up by goals to achieve, political response and social contracts to which individuals subscribe. Participatory initiatives based on dialogue, co-construction and self-fulfilment (entrepreneurship spirit, being players of the community interest...) may help rural populations and the youth get out of their spatial, economic and social marginalization. It is therefore necessary to prevent the migration of the main actors of the rural world and to strengthen the sense of community. Offsetting the rural brain drain and the radical downturn implies the inclusion of land into dynamics of development and economic growth, creation of new jobs that may have a strong social impact for the youth in these rural regions. This challenge was one of the main recommendations formulated in November 2014 reported in the declaration adopted during the second Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on agriculture held in Palermo « *a greater number of young Mediterranean people must view agriculture and rural regions as dynamics of the future and, for this to happen, multisectoral tailored policies, both national and regional, are needed and should be adequately funded* ».

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<sup>24</sup> Federica Mogherini, *Sole 24 Ore*, 29 October 2015.

<sup>25</sup> Statement of the FAO Director General, José Graziano da Silva, on the occasion of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference held in Palermo (Italy), on November 28, 2014.

### **Promoting solutions of rural worlds**

Deep changes in terms of technical and professional training shall be taken up so as to promote the initiatives of new farmers without forgetting the fundamentals of a better rural and agricultural development: sustainability of natural resources, adaptation to climate change, food security and nutrition of populations, improvement of the living conditions and logistics in the rural areas or resilience of societies facing crises (market, prices, health crises due to natural catastrophes or conflicts). In this respect across the Mediterranean area, agriculture and rural areas still remain sources of resilience for numerous families facing economic shocks<sup>26</sup>. The youth shall be the main player of innovative agriculture. The development of an economically, socially and ecologically efficient agriculture is a driving project for the Mediterranean area and for its states capable to pool traditional knowledge, innovation (technical, social and institutional) and highly diversified peculiarities which are the main assets of the Mediterranean<sup>27</sup>.

Urban areas hardly respond to the needs of newcomers. This is why we should rethink the role of rural policies and of investments in agriculture; this challenge falls within the goals of inclusive and sustainable development and food security. The middle of the years 2000 marked a turning point at world and regional scale in terms of increasing attention paid to agriculture and rural areas. Several countries, along with the UN and international organizations and donors put these issues high on their strategic agenda.

Migrants, especially those coming from rural areas, hold skills in the field of agriculture and must be the main actors of future integration processes in the host community. Furthermore, in several EU and Mediterranean countries, it is up to the migrants to instil new life in the rural and mountainous areas, reinforce labour force in agriculture<sup>28</sup> and respond to the needs of skilful agricultural labourers. In this respect, apart from the need to improve the labour conditions of these workers, emphasis shall be laid on the advantages produced by well-organized seasonal agricultural migrations. Similarly, education and training should be delivered to migrants in their host country. As a matter of fact, the education and training of these populations is quite challenging especially for the populations displaced by force<sup>29</sup>. Apart from children, the needs of young adults (one third of international migrants are aged between 15 and 34 years) and of skilful people deserve special attention. Language training shall be completed by technical training tailored to the knowledge of these populations and to the job opportunities in the host country, with special reference to rural zones.

### **Reducing the impact of climate change**

The challenges of forced migrations orient policy and cooperation actions towards the effects and impacts of these dynamics overshadowing the political decisions that might be taken to prevent them. This is especially true for climate migrations. The slow degradation of the environment, water stress and frequent drought may, as in Syria or Sudan, contribute to the mass displacement of populations with much greater socioeconomic consequences<sup>30</sup>. In such a context, dynamic agricultural policies are essential since they may prevent the effects of climate change. There is no peace without food security and no agriculture without development dynamics in rural areas. Food

<sup>26</sup> Mélanie Requier-Desjardins & al, "Une lecture de la crise migratoire en Méditerranée: l'agriculture et le développement rural comme source de résilience", in CIHEAM Watch Letter n°36, April 2016.

<sup>27</sup> CIHEAM, Politecnico di Milano, *Feeding the Mediterranean through knowledge*, Policy Paper, Expo Milano 2015.

<sup>28</sup> Michele Nori, "Shifting Transhumances :migration patterns in Mediterranean pastoralism", in CIHEAM Watch Letter n°36, April 2016.

<sup>29</sup> European Economic and Social Committee, *Fact-finding missions on the situation of refugees, as seen by civil society organisations*, Synthesis Report, 2016

<sup>30</sup> Francesca De Chatel, "The Role of Drought and Climate Change in the Syrian Uprising: Untangling the Triggers of the Revolution", in *Middle Eastern Studies* Volume 50, 2014.



security and agriculture are strictly linked to peace and stability; they shall be considered as medium- to long-term priorities to prevent forced displacements. Agriculture may provide responses in the attenuation and adaptation to the effects of climate change. Farmers and their professional organisations need the support of ad-hoc policies for the full exploitation of this potential.

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### **Some ideas for action**

- Setting up a high-level multisectoral work group on migrations and agricultural, food and rural challenges whereby a Euro-Mediterranean platform of dialogue, knowledge sharing and studies may be launched. Studies should deal with interactions between agriculture, food security, climate and migrations in a perspective of inclusive and territorial development across the Mediterranean. Further avenues of research might be a deeper knowledge of the role of rural populations in the migratory dynamics, along with the quantification of climate factors in the mobility of people or farmers. A regional report might be envisaged in an effort to provide data that may be used by different actors (administrations, communities, associations, professional organisations, etc.....) and encompassing a practical and operational dimension.
- Setting up a consortium including skilled and multidisciplinary experts along with representatives from the public authority. Among its roles, this consortium should also promote the dissemination of studies pursued by the high-level group through training and technical assistance projects. This training will help promote best practices/solutions and will be designed for officials in charge of rural development, local communities, public institutions, social partners and civil society stakeholders. It will contribute to the management of crises.
- Developing technical and multidisciplinary training courses in agriculture and fisheries for the inclusion of economic migrants and refugees.
- Launching initiatives conducive to « living together » and creating new links with food and nutrition (collective vegetable gardens, processing and marketing of food products...). These initiatives will be supported by the private sector (enterprises, investors...).
- Encouraging the development of rural integration networks in the countries of destination of migrants and refugees so as to propose their professional inclusion in the agricultural, forestry and fishery sector, in the agro-food industry and relative services; and this may contribute to their social recognition as skilful human resources.
- Strengthening arrangements enabling the migration of professionals and mobility of entrepreneurs, students and researchers in the field of agriculture, food, fisheries and development of rural areas.

To discuss the root causes of migration and build on agricultural, rural, food and climate policies promoting a more inclusive development of the Mediterranean area, emphasis must be laid on the local and national strategies in coordination with the actions of international and regional organisations that intend to respond to the needs of countries and territories. Institutional synergies must become intersectorial in that challenges related to migration, agriculture and rural development call for a stronger integration between projects and strategies<sup>31</sup>. These strategies must be a political priority for the future of Europe and of the Mediterranean region. The 11th Ministerial Meeting of Tirana and the CIHEAM Strategic Agenda 2025 are heading in this direction.

In fact, CIHEAM may propose actions thanks to its long experience in the fields of multilateral dialogue, expert training and technical assistance in the countries of the region. It pursues several goals of the Sustainable Development Goals of the post-2015 agenda in the Mediterranean area by promoting the inclusion of food and climate challenges in the Euro-Mediterranean strategic debate.

Fragmentation, poverty and unemployment in rural areas are at the heart of challenges linked to population movements and social crises. Populations may be anchored to rural territories creating decent living and working conditions and opportunities, boosting and enhancing agriculture and holding the spotlight on the rural youth. Diversification of rural economy is equally important. Agriculture and rural areas are not attractive and this explains their social and spatial marginalization. These challenges call for medium to long-term actions and strategies of intersectorial cooperation; this is the area in which CIHEAM works contributing to the training, sharing of experience and dissemination of best practices to promote human, economic and sustainable development in the most vulnerable regions in the Mediterranean area.

In line with its repositioning process launched in 2012 on the occasion of its 50th anniversary, CIHEAM is undertaking some reforms in order to adjust its cooperation mission to the Mediterranean context. In its attempt at responding to the current needs of the region, but also in order to reinforce institutional synergies (between regional and international organisations, between cooperation stakeholders, etc.) in favour of the Mediterranean, CIHEAM has worked out a medium to long-term strategic agenda (horizon 2025). Such Agenda intends to contribute to the Mediterranean dimension of the Post-2015 global development agenda. In 2016, the goal is to tangibly define the main lines in this CIHEAM Strategic Agenda 2025 that might be politically validated by the ministers in Tirana.

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<sup>31</sup> CIHEAM (eds), *Post-2015 Agenda and Mediterranean Future*, CIHEAM Watch Letter n°34, September 2015.

## **An Agenda around 4 pillars and 15 thematic priorities**

The CIHEAM Strategic Agenda 2025 fits into the cooperation mission of our organisation, in the fields of agriculture, food, fisheries, rural areas and climate. It is structured around **4 pillars** matching the major issues of the Post-2015 Global Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

- A. Protect the Planet
- B. Food Security and Nutrition
- C. Inclusive Development
- D. Crises and Resilience

This Agenda, based on 4 pillars (A, B, C and D), is divided in **15 thematic priorities**:

- A. Protect the Planet "*by Struggling Against Triple Waste*"
  - 1. Sharing Knowledge and Defending traditional Know-How
  - 2. Managing Natural Resources and Energy (water, soil forests, energy, biodiversity, sea...)
  - 3. Reducing agricultural losses and food waste all along food chains
  
- B. Food Security and Nutrition "*by Boosting Sustainable Agriculture and Food*"
  - 4. Promoting the Mediterranean Diet
  - 5. Enhancing Agro-Ecological practices
  - 6. Improving food safety and quality
  - 7. Increasing access to food
  
- C. Inclusive Development "*by Investing in New Generations and Marginal Territories*"
  - 8. Youth Employment and Life-long Learning
  - 9. Development of rural and coastal regions
  - 10. Vulnerable Groups Participation and Gender Equality
  - 11. Emergence of smart rural territories and of inclusive agro-fishing models
  
- D. *Crises and Resilience "by contributing to tensions management"*
  - 12. Population mobility and Migrations
  - 13. Climate Change prevention and adaptation solutions
  - 14. Animal and Plant Health
  - 15. Agricultural commercial markets

Despite different political, social and economic situations, Mediterranean countries share common challenges at regional level. Protect the planet (i), food security and nutrition (ii), inclusive development (iii) resilience in the face of crises and tensions (iv) are crucial challenges for the Mediterranean area calling for a strong multilateral and multi-stakeholder mobilisation.

These are the four pillars proposed by CIHEAM for its Strategic Agenda in order to adapt its mission to the new regional context. This agenda, that includes 15 thematic priorities, is also designed to reinforce cooperation with the States, Organisations and players all involved in the creation of a solidary and inclusive Mediterranean area.

#### **A. Protect the planet by struggling against triple waste**

*Knowledge, traditional know-how, agricultural productions and natural resources shall not be wasted any longer across the Mediterranean. Systemic and simultaneous actions are therefore needed.*

Mediterranean countries are confronted with a new challenge: producing more with fewer resources and protecting the environment. In this perspective, the issue of wastes and losses is essential for food security and sustainability. Wastes and losses are multidimensional (social, economic and environmental) and should be addressed from three different yet complementary angles. Indeed, humans take centre stage by combining the analysis of natural resources, food production and knowledge.

##### **1. Sharing Knowledge and Defending traditional Know-How**

Thanks to the ability of humans to find innovative solutions and to build up knowledge, we can adapt to changes. Over the last years, innovation has been addressed from the point of view of sustainable development. However, it now shall be put higher up. First, recognizing the human ability to create changes, promote science and feed knowledge. Second, underlying how important it is to consider cultural, economic, social and geographic peculiarities of all societies when applying SDG at local level. During its history, the Mediterranean has been the cradle of civilisations built around agricultural traditions adapted to the natural conditions of the region. This know-how shall be preserved, shared and integrated with scientific knowledge in order to respond to the current and future needs of agricultural production. This phenomenon may be catalysed thanks to the use of new communication tools.

##### **2. Management of natural resources (water, soils, forestry, energies, biodiversity, sea...)**

Agriculture is one of the most natural-resources- and energy-consuming sectors. Agricultural activities have a deep impact on fresh water, arable land, marine and land biodiversity. Agriculture is dependent on these resources; without fertile soils or abundant water, food security is at risk. At a time when climate and environment issues are increasingly challenging, agriculture shall adapt its activities to the protection of natural resources and reduce its dependence on fossil energy.

### 3. Reducing agricultural losses and food waste all along food chains

One-third of agricultural production is lost or wasted. Along the food chain, from farm to fork, during transport and storage, losses and wastes may be avoided. In a “crisisogenic” food context and faced with limited resources, it is imperative to fight against this waste with modern infrastructure, technical and organizational innovations as a result of a renovated awareness of consumers, politicians and agrofood actors. Sea products shall be better integrated within research and strategies to reduce food waste.

### **B. Food Security and Nutrition “by Boosting Sustainable Agriculture and Food”**

*Given the environmental and food challenges, we must produce more with fewer resources. A new agricultural equation for the Mediterranean region in order to strengthen access to food and improve the quality of products.*

In 2020, as a result of demographic growth, there will be some 530 million people to be fed in the Mediterranean region. The region shall face the impact of climate change and frequent drought that may reduce yield in agriculture. These phenomena add complexity to the already vulnerable situation of the Mediterranean agriculture. Improving food security in the region shall pass through the adoption of adaptation strategies at several levels.

### 4. Promoting the Mediterranean diet

Recently rediscovered and promoted for its positive impact on human health and the environment, the Mediterranean diet is considered a healthy, sustainable dietary pattern which promotes local production. However, the Mediterranean region is living a nutritional transition due to international trade, urbanization, and lifestyle changes. Despite increasing obesity across the Mediterranean, undernourishment is still present mainly in the south and east shores. Thus, the Mediterranean diet may be envisaged as a tool of sustainable dietary pattern for the whole region.

### 5. Enhancing Agro-Ecological practices

Agroecology aims at developing agricultural systems based on a holistic approach to the advantages offered by ecosystems; its goal is to increase production and reduce pressure on the environment and natural resources. This knowledge-intensive concept of agriculture is in line with an agricultural model which is resilient to climate change and sustainable promoting food security in the Mediterranean region.

### 6. Improving food safety and quality

Food safety is as important as food security. Food safety is a key issue which links producers to consumers. In between, agricultural and sea products may be exposed to elements that may compromise their safety and nutritional quality. This is why best practices are essential all along their production, processing, delivery and consumption.

## 7. Access to food

The notion of access to food is one of the key pillars of food security; it deserves special attention in the Mediterranean context. The ability to produce food (and for a farmer to access soil, water, seeds, technologies) or to buy food, and to have the necessary purchase power, impacts food security. Access to food must be stable and continuous at all times. However, access to food is not guaranteed due to the marginalisation of rural areas, farmers forgotten by public power or poor consumers.

### C. Inclusive Development “by Investing in New Generations and Marginal Territories”

*Agriculture and fisheries depend on active forces: labourers. To face migration from rural areas and the abandonment of small-scale fisheries, inclusive development must contribute to the promotion of rural and coastal areas, a decent remuneration of farmers, fishermen and vulnerable groups.*

Mediterranean countries have strong economic and agricultural human capital. However, inequalities still persist. Although some economic indicators show an improvement of the standards of living, huge disparities still exist between countries. Non-inclusive development, precarious labour and unemployment increase the pressure within and between countries. The development of the Mediterranean area shall concern not only rural areas but also vulnerable groups with special attention to women and young people. Small-scale fisheries are another sector that contributes to the blue growth of the area.

## 8. Youth Employment and Life-long Learning

Mediterranean countries share a common problem: unemployment and rural migration of young people in search of a better future. Students involved in the sectors of agriculture, rural development and agrofood industry want to become more active and have access to higher income and decent working conditions. Agriculture is a low-profit, high-risk activity which hardly attracts and retains young people in the rural areas where underdevelopment still prevails. Given the regional challenges, the human capital whose expertise is essential for the life of populations and political stability of States cannot be wasted. Education and knowledge is the mainstay for strengthening food security. However, such knowledge shall be adapted to the needs of Mediterranean countries thus facilitating its transformation into practical and innovative solutions for development.

## 9. Development of rural and coastal regions

One third of the Mediterranean population lives in rural areas and one job out of ten is in agriculture. It is therefore impossible to think of developing rural areas without considering agriculture. It is likewise unreasonable to make urban development sustainable without reconnecting cities with rural areas since this geographical divide is not geopolitically viable. Agriculture is a source of job opportunities and income for the rural population and an essential factor (not the only one) to revitalise rural economy whose role is primordial in consolidating the transition now underway in the South and East Mediterranean countries. In addition, small-scale fishery has a significant role in the social and economic sphere mainly in the coastal zones. It accounts for 80% of the fishing fleet in the Mediterranean area, and may be very effective in the sustainable use of resources thereby contributing to the blue economy of the region.

## 10. Gender equality and inclusion of vulnerable communities

Inclusive development is both a process and an objective with a dual approach: promote the evolution of society to suppress barriers that cut out vulnerable groups and increase their skills and influence. Women play an essential role in the agricultural and food production; they also preserve traditional know-how. Notwithstanding, their access to ownership, education and credit is rather reduced. For their actions and knowledge to be enhanced and shared, the process of development must include women and vulnerable groups.

## 11. Emergence of smart rural territories and of inclusive agro/fishing models

The primary role of agriculture is to feed people; however, it is also a source of jobs and stability in the rural areas where more innovative social and economic policies must be implemented. The role of States and of international cooperation is crucial although a higher development also depends on a greater mobilisation of stakeholders, society and private sector. In consideration of demographic and geographical characteristics of Mediterranean rural territories, innovation processes must be multifaceted: social, technical, numerical, institutional or ecological. Funding tools for developing agriculture shall be sustainable; investments must respond to social realities and environmental constraints. Innovation has to be socially intensive and technology driven enabling links between territories and agrofood chain. Different forms of agriculture must be promoted and its competitiveness cannot be measured in terms of financial performance. These development dynamics may shape a concept of smart agribusiness that may be launched through territorial best practices.

### D. Crisis and resilience «contributing to the management of tensions»

*Agriculture and the rural world shall show resilience in order to face increasing shocks in the Mediterranean.*

The Mediterranean is unfortunately one of the regions in the world affected by numerous and worrying tensions. Political, social, migratory, climate, economic and financial crises are concentrated in an area at the crossroads of trade and exchange between continents and cultures. Farmers are direct victims of unrest and crises. Risk prevention, management of tensions, and higher resilience may contribute to the improvement of agriculture in the Mediterranean area. Therefore agriculture may help bring about solutions.

## 12. Mobility of populations and migrations

At present, the displacement of populations is a dual challenge. This political and humanitarian crisis shall be tackled in respect of and in compliance with international law. Accordingly, a farsighted approach is highly demanded in order to identify the most effective tools that may help alleviate tensions across the Mediterranean also in the future. Insecurities linked to water, soil, climate and the management of rural areas cannot be dissociated from economic migrations and movement of refugees. Rural areas are the most vulnerable to crises and the first to be left by their dwellers. A sustainable and inclusive development of agricultural activities can act as leverage for a better rural well-being and resilience.

### **13. Climate change**

Agriculture is an essential component of climate negotiations. Faced with scarcity, Mediterranean agricultural systems have often demonstrated their ingenuity to overcome such difficulties. Nowadays, its resilience ability is confronted with climate change whose effects are already impacting the whole region. Frequent droughts, desertification and shrinkage of arable land are examples of the tremendous tensions generated by climate change. Agriculture may avail of several solutions to reduce the impact of climate change and adapt itself in order to preserve food production. Similarly, the sustainability of small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean is equally confronted with the challenging climate that changes in the coastal areas.

### **14. Animal and plant health**

With the growth in international trade, increase in the movements of people and goods and climate change, crops are becoming more and more susceptible. Animal health is also at risk: new pests and diseases threaten livestock. Hence, animal and plant health is now raising a great concern for Mediterranean countries since new risks are coming up and losses compromise key sectors of their economy.

### **15. Agricultural markets**

For most Mediterranean countries, the food balance depends on agricultural imports. This trade is now global: much of our food comes from other regions of the world. Due to these features, the Mediterranean area is highly vulnerable to the volatility of international foodstuff prices and the regional food security is at risk. Political measures may attenuate price volatility and their impact on vulnerable people even though long-term resilience is primordial to this process. Growth of agricultural output and resilience is key to achieving a higher food security but also to backing up the potential of agricultural exports of different Mediterranean countries



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