



CIHEAM

International Centre for Advanced
Mediterranean Agronomic Studies

COP 22 MARRAKECH (MOROCCO)

**Side-Event on
Climate Smart Agriculture and food waste**

16 November 2016

**CIHEAM
Secretary General Statement**

Cosimo Lacirignola

**Dear Secretary of State,
Dear Representatives of Ministries,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Please let me first congratulate the Kingdom of Morocco for the hosting of that decisive conference and for playing a so active role in mitigating the effects of climate change. Morocco is a member state of the CIHEAM since 1991 and has always been a visionary and a pioneer in sustainable development and inclusive growth actions. On behalf of the whole CIHEAM Team, I would like to express my most sincere gratitude to the Moroccan authorities for this constancy and for the excellent organization of such a tremendous event. The COP22 is an extraordinary moment for Morocco, for Africa and for **the Mediterranean which can play a pivotal role in terms of climate cooperation.**

Today, we need to convey a strong message:

We have to produce more to meet the population growth and the primary requirement of feeding human beings and, in the same time, we have to produce better while preserving natural resources in order to reduce the sector's environmental footprint.

In the Mediterranean, the struggle against climate change cannot be done without taking consideration of the agricultural component and without ensuring food security. Often accused of being an important emitter of greenhouse gases, the agricultural and forestry also sectors offer many



solutions for the adaptation and mitigation of climate change. The ability to sequester greenhouse gas soil and biomass can help reduce global warming and the adoption of sustainable irrigation systems can sustainably refresh the Mediterranean region and fight against desertification. We also need to always repeat the interdependency between agriculture and climate. Farmers and fishermen are the first victims of natural disasters on climate shocks.

What do we do?

As a Mediterranean Intergovernmental organization dedicated to multilateral cooperation in the fields of agriculture, food, fishery and rural territories, CIHEAM is particularly active in environmental and climate issues.

- We develop studies and analysis aimed at modelling the impact of climate change on crop productivity, crop water needs and hydrological cycle.
- We assess the impacts on biodiversity and soils (SEMCLIMED) and on possible wild fire phenomena in the forests (MedWildFireLab).
- We train and advice local communities for a more sustainable and participatory management of natural resources, e.g. for water, in programs such as ACLIMAS (Adaptation to Climate Change of the Mediterranean Agricultural Systems).
- We publish analyses on emerging issues in the Mediterranean Basin targeting a broad audience and aiming to feed the debate on subjects like climate change.



We intervene also on a broader political dimension

- First of all, we carry out political dialogue, institutional exchange and capacity building activities, for the elaboration of positive policies and practices of climate change adaptation and mitigation, in initiatives like ClimaSouth.
- Secondly, we actively participate in international fora, as the COP21, where we supported and promoted the 4/1000 Initiative, aimed at boosting agriculture sector's engagement in soil preservation. And we are present today for the COP22 and be pleased to contribute to the Triple A initiative with Moroccan and African countries.

Climate- Development-Migration Nexus

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.

It is a universal principle, People leave places with harsh or deteriorating conditions. Interactions between climate and migration in the Mediterranean



region deserve the greatest attention especially when social and economic difficulties among young people in rural areas come in addition and complicate seriously the situation.

Migration, climate change, sustainable and inclusive development, security are interrelated. In the Mediterranean this complex nexus needs to be addressed in a **holistic manner**.

Last September in Tirana, took place the 11th Meeting of the Ministers of agriculture of the 13 Member States of CIHEAM. It focused on the root causes of distress migration from the point of view of agricultural development and food security. We recalled the necessity to provide a global answer to prevent distress migration in the Mediterranean, connecting environmental, economic and social approaches. The CIHEAM Action Plan for the Mediterranean (CAPMED 2025), endorsed during the Ministerial meeting, is in straight line with that vision.

For the 10 next years, CAPMED is our framework for action. It is articulated around 4 pillars:

1. Protection of the Planet by combating Triple Waste
2. Ensuring Food Security and Nutrition by Boosting Sustainable Agriculture and Food
3. Acting for inclusive Development by Investing in New Generations and Fragile Territories
4. Preventing crises by managing tensions and working on more resilient systems



This holistic and multilateral approach is fundamental to deal with distress migration issues.

The Mediterranean region takes centre stage since it concentrates climate, agricultural, food and migratory tensions, this is why Mediterranean countries need to play a proactive role in the conference of the parties (COP).

CIHEAM remains at the disposals of the countries and the Organizations to help them face these challenges by sharing its tools: Education and training, Research, Networks and open knowledge platforms, Science and Technical assistance because we are convinced that solutions can only be found through multilateral cooperation and continuous dialogue.

Thank you

