

ACTIVITY 2023

REPORT 2024



CIHEAM

International Center for Advanced
Mediterranean Agronomic Studies



**CIHEAM
BARI**



**CIHEAM
CHANIA**



**CIHEAM
MONTPELLIER**



**CIHEAM
ZARAGOZA**

Founded in 1962, the CIHEAM (International Center for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies) is an intergovernmental organisation dedicated to sustainable agriculture, fishery, food and rural development in the Mediterranean region. Its activities are based on education, capacity building, research, diplomacy and practical cooperation.

Mrs Frida Krifka is the current president of the CIHEAM Governing Board



13
Member States

4
Institutes

1
General Secretariat in Paris



Learn more about CIHEAM

The CIHEAM Institutes :

CIHEAM Bari (Italy) focuses its activities on the sustainable management of natural resources, the development of sustainable food systems such as the Mediterranean Diet, and the promotion of climate-resilient agrobiological ecosystems. These activities also include food security, precision agriculture, youth and women entrepreneurship, as well as the development of innovation ecosystems. Its branch in Tricase is dedicated to the blue economy and integrated coastal zone management.

CIHEAM Chania (Greece) dedicates its activities to business economics and management, food quality and natural product chemistry, the use of geoinformation for environmental management, horticultural genetics and biotechnology, as well as sustainable agriculture and the conservation of Mediterranean plants.

CIHEAM Montpellier (France) concentrates its activities on agricultural and territorial management, the resilience of Mediterranean agroecosystems, the integration of local agri-food sectors into value chains, governance to promote attractive rural and coastal areas, project engineering, and public policies.

CIHEAM Zaragoza (Spain) focuses its activities on sustainable agricultural and food systems, fisheries, aquaculture, forest management, water and soil management, and inclusive territorial development. Special attention is given to agricultural economies, risk management in agriculture, and rural policies.

The General Secretariat of the CIHEAM :

- Develops external relations and institutional partnerships of the CIHEAM ;
- Manages the coordination of training, research, and cooperation activities amongst the Institutes ;
- Carries out publication and communication activities ;
- Promotes and coordinates activities on priority and strategic themes.

Table of Contents

Message from the Secretary General of the CIHEAM	4
CIHEAM at a Glance in 2023-24	5
Education and Training: Supporting the Mediterranean of Tomorrow	8
Research, Science and Innovation: Serving scientific diplomacy	18
Cooperation and Development: Acting for a shared prosperity	27
Political & Institutional Dialogue: Fostering effective partnerships in the region	40



“The CIHEAM has been serving the Mediterranean for more than 60 years and this will continue for a long time!”

The Mediterranean region faces substantial environmental pressures, including elevated temperatures, increased carbon emissions, land degradation, compromised water quality and access, rising sea levels, and biodiversity loss. These challenges are exacerbated by persistent regional tensions and conflicts, which intensifies food insecurity, particularly among rural and agricultural populations. This situation necessitates a **coordinated international effort** to bolster the resilience of food and agricultural systems, ensuring consistent access to food supplies, supporting recovery and reconstruction, and fostering a more inclusive and effective approach to regional food sovereignty.

For over six decades, CIHEAM has played a pivotal role in addressing these challenges through multifaceted interventions. These include:

- **Capacity Building and Knowledge Transfer:** Implementing comprehensive training and educational programs across diverse levels, promoting the exchange of expertise and best practices
- **Scientific Research and Innovation:** Engaging in fundamental and applied research, fostering scientific diplomacy, and facilitating the transfer of technology and innovation
- **Regional Cooperation and Development:** Promoting synergies between public, private, and civil society sectors through collaborative projects, strengthening regional partnerships, and facilitating dialogue on critical issues related to agriculture, food, and the environment and a dialogue of trust
- **Strategic Foresight and Advocacy:** Providing a platform for the examination of trends and challenges in Mediterranean agri-food systems, raising awareness among stakeholders, and promoting informed decision-making.

CIHEAM's recent initiatives, guided by the CIHEAM Strategic Plan 2030, demonstrate a commitment to proactive and innovative solutions. These initiatives leverage the expertise of CIHEAM's extensive network of professionals, institutional partners, and private sector actors, with a particular emphasis on the active participation of women and youth in driving the ongoing transition process.

Mr Teodoro Miano
Secretary General

CIHEAM at a Glance in 2023-24

Education

Education offer and students of the year

427

International students

41

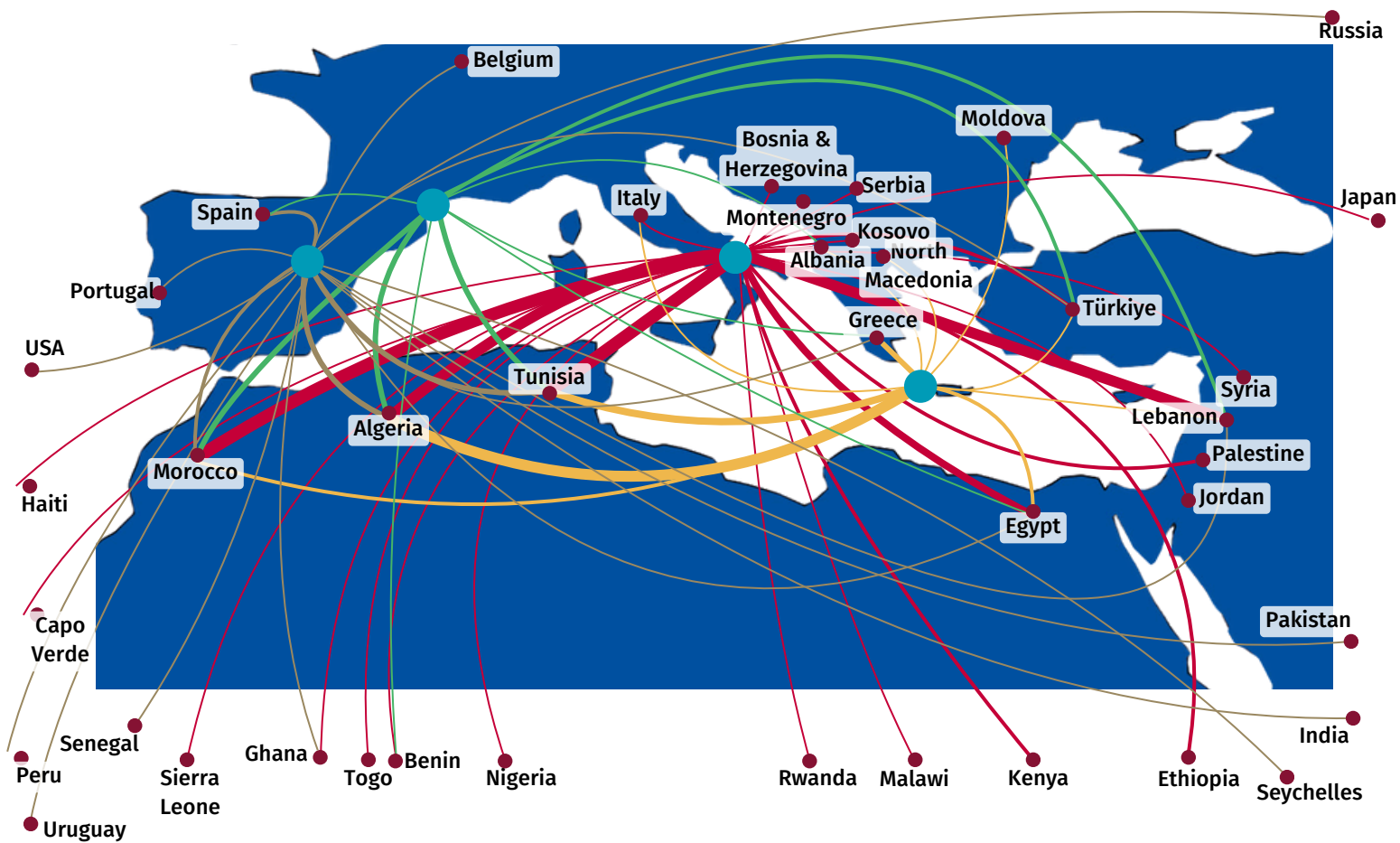
Countries of origin

60%

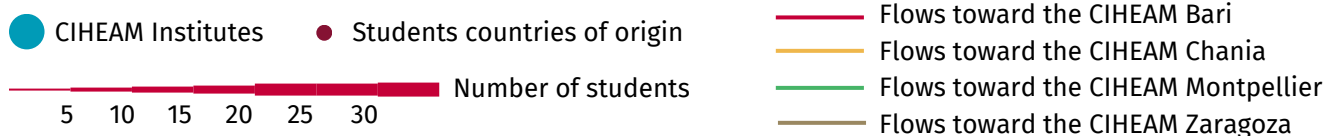
Of female students

22

Master programmes



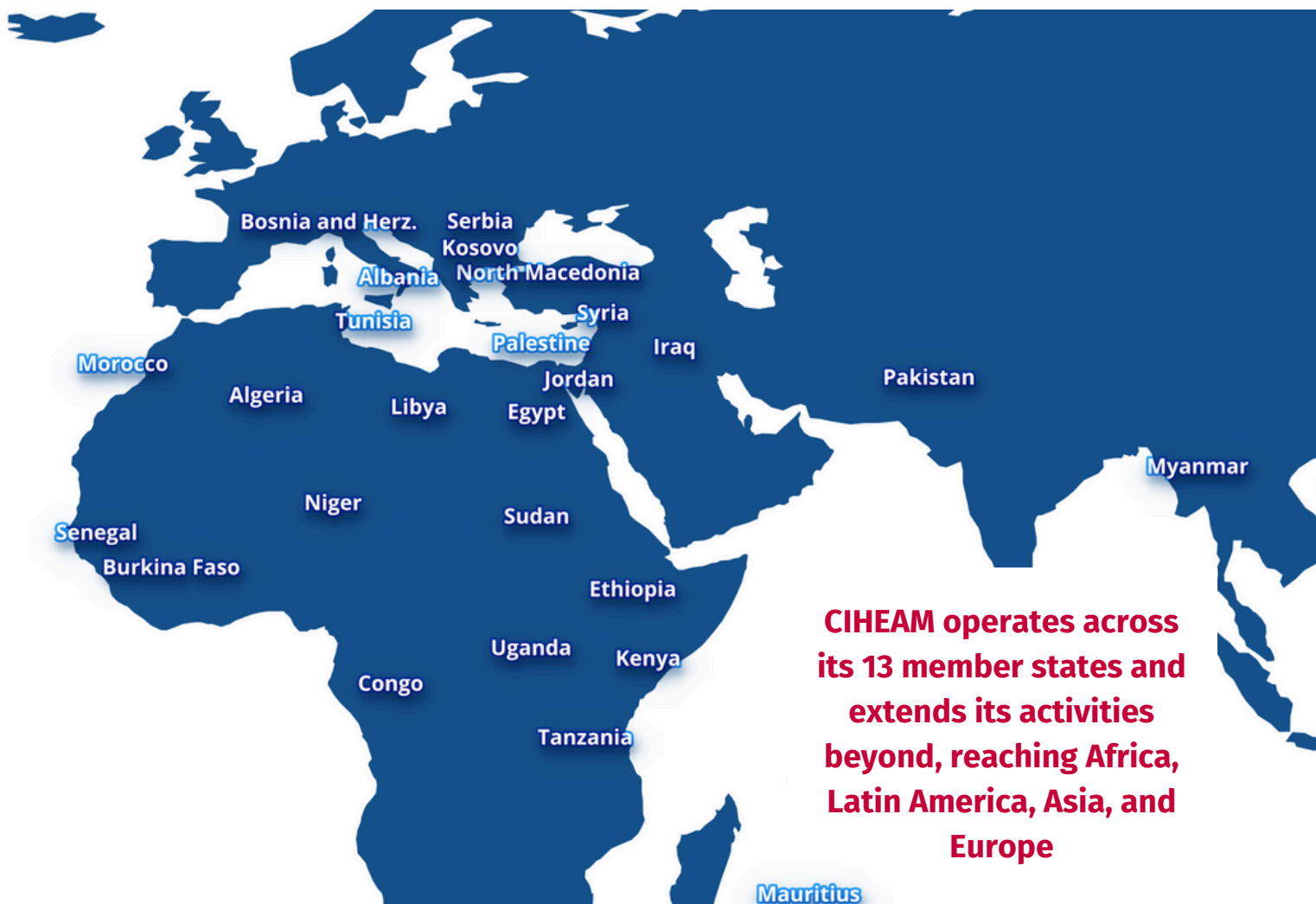
Flow of international students enrolled in Master's programmes at CIHEAM Institutes in 2023-24



CIHEAM Projects Map 2023-24

+230 ongoing projects

... in 47 countries



CIHEAM presence in other countries: Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Canada, China, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Ghana, Italy, Ireland, Japan, Lebanon, Norway, Oman, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Türkiye, United-Kingdom, etc.

The Institutes

14

Advanced courses

450

People following advanced courses

31

Workshops : training, capacity building for students, researchers, communities ...

67

Scientific and research conferences

179

Partnerships

114

Publications

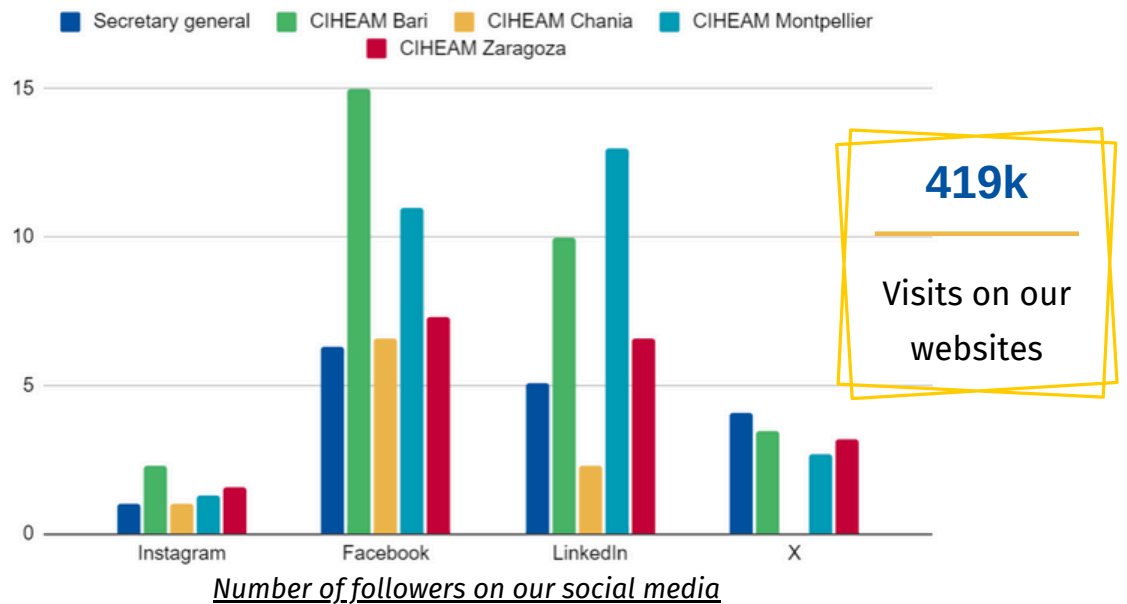
39

Events

152

Research & cooperation projects

Social Media



EDUCATION & TRAINING

*Strengthening the Mediterranean of
Tomorrow*





“Together, these efforts create an inclusive, effective, and equitable educational and training framework to drive sustainable change across the Mediterranean”

Education and training are central to CIHEAM's mission, reflecting its commitment to knowledge sharing and investing in future generations, which are key drivers of development, sustainability, and innovation in the Mediterranean. These issues are crucial in light of the socio-economic and environmental challenges in the region, where young people represent over 60% of the population and face problems related to integration, mobility, and inequalities in gender and development. **Education and training initiatives must be tailored to these emerging challenges** to enable future generations to become central actors in sustainable agricultural and food systems, while also making these initiatives attractive and rewarding for young people eager to develop their ideas and potential.

At CIHEAM, we help address these challenges through tailored educational programs (Master's and Master's of Science), collaborative strategies involving multiple stakeholders, and an integrated territorial approach. We promote mobility and knowledge exchange, combining academic learning with practical skills. We also contribute to **creating conditions for a Mediterranean community built on cultural respect and tolerance.**

To date, more than 40,000 young people from across the Mediterranean, the vast majority of whom were scholarship recipients, have participated in our training and education programs. They are now Ambassadors of Mediterranean dialogue and cooperation. This role is essential in a Mediterranean that increasingly risks becoming a wall rather than a bridge between the diverse and rich societies that compose it.

In addition to our education and training activities, we are committed to **creating research and networking spaces for young researchers and PhD in the region**, such as the MedForum. The region urgently lacks such spaces for young people who must learn to develop common solutions to the pressing challenges that continue to worsen. We also invest heavily in the introduction, dissemination, and diffusion of innovations. Recently, we established CIHEAM's first Master's program outside of an Institute: the "Open Innovation and Entrepreneurship" Master's, developed in partnership with Albanian universities and companies to support young people in the Balkans. In the future, such programs will multiply to address national and local realities more closely.

Together, these efforts create a more inclusive, effective, and equitable educational and training framework to foster sustainable change across the Mediterranean.

Mr George Baourakis
Director of the CIHEAM Chania

The CIHEAM Master Programmes

Each year, the Institutes welcome around 400 students in our Master and Master of Science programmes

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

- Sustainable Water and Land Management in Agricultural Ecosystems (BARI)
- Sustainable Agroecosystems and Resilience (BARI)
- Sustainable Agriculture (CHANIA)
- Geoinformation in Environmental Management (CHANIA)
- Climate Change, Agricultural and Territorial Management (MONTPELLIER)
- Sustainable Water Management and Governance in Natural and Agricultural Environments (ZARAGOZA)

ECONOMICS, MANAGEMENT, AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

- Business Economics and Management (CHANIA)
- Agricultural, Environmental Development Economics and Food (MONTPELLIER)
- Open Innovation & Youth Entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean Agrifood Sector (BARI)
- Sustainable Agri-Food Value Chains: Logistics, Environment, Strategies (MONTPELLIER)
- Agro-Food Marketing (ZARAGOZA)

FOOD SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS

- Food Quality and Chemistry of Natural Products (CHANIA)
- Olive Growing and Oil Technology (ZARAGOZA)
- Mediterranean Organic Agriculture (BARI)
- Mediterranean Farming System Design for a Sustainable Food-System (MONTPELLIER)

SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

- Sustainable Fisheries Management (ZARAGOZA)
- Marine Aquaculture (ZARAGOZA)

INNOVATIVE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION SYSTEMS

- Horticultural Genetics and Biotechnology (CHANIA)
- Integrated Pest Management of Fruit and Vegetable Crops (BARI)
- Plant Genetics, Genomics, and Breeding (ZARAGOZA)
- Animal Breeding and Reproduction Biotechnology (ZARAGOZA)
- Animal Nutrition (ZARAGOZA)

Our Advanced Specialised Courses Designed for the Needs of Professionals

The CIHEAM Institutes offer professionals the opportunity to develop their skills. The advanced specialised courses are therefore **tailored to the specific needs of our Member States** and **co-developed upon request**. In the Academic year 2023-24, the advanced specialised courses proposed by the Institutes cover:

- **Sustainable fishery and coastal development** - 4 courses: Sustainable Development of Coastal Communities; Fisheries Monitoring Control and Surveillance; Fisheries Scientific Observers; Assessment of Fish Quality, Safety and Traceability
- **Sustainable resources management for agriculture and forestry** - 4 courses: Management Strategies to Improve the Resilience of Mediterranean Forests; Sustainable Water and Soil Management for Resilient Viticulture; Efficient Water Use in Olive Groves in a Context of Climate Change; Integrating the Water-Energy-Food Ecosystem (WEFE) Nexus Approach in Mediterranean Irrigated Agriculture.
- **Technology for precision agriculture** - 4 courses: Precision Agriculture for the Mediterranean Region; Modelling and Decision Support Tools for Agriculture and the Environment; Pastoral Systems Innovation in Mediterranean Areas; Greenhouse Gas Assessment and Mitigation in Agriculture: Concepts, Methods and Simulation Tools.
- **Economy and value chains** - 1 course: Territorial Economy and Value Chains.
- **Communication** - 1 course: Written and Oral Communication and Scientific Information.

In addition, the CIHEAM Institutes provide professionals with the possibility to follow courses of their Masters. This year, this option concerned 450 people. CIHEAM training activities also include webinars, workshops and on-site training courses in the context of its collaborative projects.

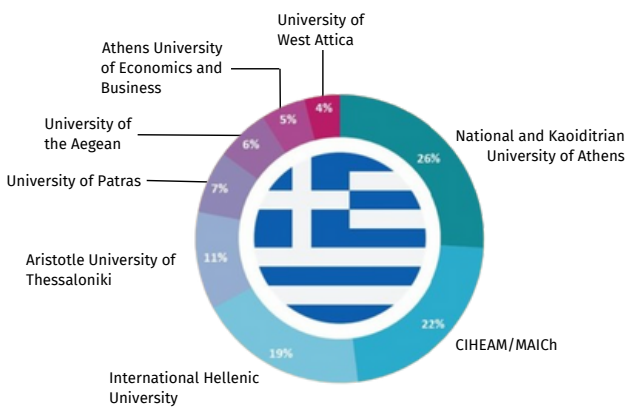


The advanced course on “Sustainable Water and Soil Management for Resilient Viticulture”, organised jointly by the International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV) and the CIHEAM, took place from July 1 to 6 2024 at the CIHEAM Zaragoza, Spain.

Once again this year, the quality of education provided by CIHEAM has been exemplary!

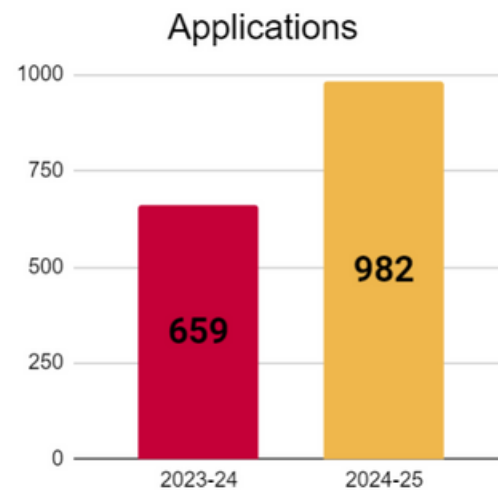
CIHEAM Bari short courses for the period of July 2023 to July 2024. Key statistics :

- Number of short courses : 43
- Total participants : 899
- Countries represented : 32 (including 12 of CIHEAM member countries).



The CIHEAM Chania is ranked 2nd in the top choice of Greek universities by foreign students

Application to follow a Master's Programme at the CIHEAM Montpellier increased by 50%



3rd place at the IFAMA Global Student Case Competition for 5 students of the CIHEAM Zaragoza

Jean-Paul, Yara, Elia, Mustapha Emre and Seifelden, students of the Master in Plant Genetics, Genomics and Breeding won 3rd place in the competition organised by the International Federation Agri Management Association

Student Pathways and Testimonials: Alumni, the Strength of CIHEAM

Mohamed Hamitouche from Algeria, graduated from the Higher National Agronomic School (ENSA) with a degree in Agricultural Engineering, specialised in agricultural hydraulics, then completed **CIHEAM Zaragoza's** MSc programme in "Sustainable Water Management and Governance in Natural and Agricultural Environments". His research work "Hydrological modelling using artificial intelligence to characterise and predict extreme hydrological events", was carried out at the Polytechnic School of Avila run by the University Salamanca in Spain, under the supervision of Dr José Luis Molina (Research Group in Water Engineering and Management).



Hamitouche's outstanding accomplishments as a student and young researcher earned him the CIHEAM Prize for the Best Master's Thesis 2022 and the top distinction in the FMP/FDP category of the VIII edition of the IIAMA Awards of the Valencian Research Institute of Water and Environmental Engineering of the Polytechnic University of Valencia, Spain. Hamitouche is currently conducting research at the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) in Boulder, Colorado, as part of the doctoral programme in sustainable development and climate change he is pursuing at the University School for Advanced Studies - IUSS Pavia, in collaboration with the Laboratory for Climate Modelling of the Casaccia Research Centre – ENEA, in Italy.



" My name is **Georgia Drakakaki**, and I am a Professor in the Department of Plant Sciences at the University of California, Davis. My research program focuses on endomembrane trafficking in plant cells, with a particular interest in pathways involved in polysaccharide deposition and plant stress responses.

I graduated from **CIHEAM Chania in 1998**. What left a lasting impression on me during that time were the enriching human interactions and the stimulating discussions with professors and fellow students.

It is truly a joy to return today and contribute to the training programs at the place where my career began.

Since 2005, I have been teaching the plant cell biology course at CIHEAM Chania. Every year, it is always a great pleasure to meet the students, share scientific experiences, discuss opportunities, and leave at the end of the week with many new friends and colleagues with whom I can continue exchanging ideas about science for a long time."



“My name is **Nour Aini**, I'm from Tunisia and I've just finished my second year of a Master 2 in Climate Change, Agricultural Management and Territories (CGAT) at the Institut Agronomique Méditerranéen de Montpellier (**CIHEAM Montpellier**). After graduating as an agro-economist from the Institut National Agronomique de Tunisie, I was attracted to the CGAT programme because of its approach to sustainability and natural resource management, but also because of the opportunities it offered in the field.

My experience at the CIHEAM Montpellier has been significant, both academically and personally. I developed skills in natural resource management, data analysis, and mapping, while deepening my knowledge of European and Mediterranean agricultural public policies. The modules also allowed me to explore the impacts of climate change on Mediterranean farmers. Additionally, I conducted a territorial assessment of climate vulnerabilities for the Cèze Cévenne community of communes, which was an enriching hands-on experience.

My six-month internship at INRAE enabled me to apply these skills to the agroecological transition of irrigated systems in Occitania, where I analyzed farming practices and provided recommendations for sustainable public policies.

I highly recommend the CIHEAM Montpellier for its international environment and practical training. My journey at this Institute allowed me to gain professional skills, build strong connections, and enrich my cultural experience. I now feel ready to enter the professional world with a rich and diverse network.”

Dr Marie Reine Bteich, of Lebanese origin, is an **Agronomist**. She attended and successfully completed her Master of Science in Organic Agriculture at the CIHEAM Bari and pursued her PhD in Engineering, Architecture and Economics for the Urban and Rural Environmental Development at the Università Politecnica delle Marche. Since 2019, she started lecturing at the **CIHEAM Bari** on sustainability transitions in the agri-food systems through the application of participative methods, sharing her experience and knowledge with students coming from all over the world in the framework of four of the Institute's courses.



Having been once a student at the CIHEAM Bari herself, she now shares her acquired expertise with new generations. This creates a virtuous cycle of knowledge, as she brings in a holistic perspective the expertise acquired and the skills developed through her two-decades involvement in European and international research projects as well as cooperation and development initiatives mainly dealing with the socio-economic sustainable development and gender equity.

Lecturing at the CIHEAM Bari offers several advantages for Marie Reine. It particularly revives in her what she first experienced and precious most at the CIHEAM Bari when she was a student. The international and multiple background academic environment that offers the opportunity to take part in innovative research and development projects tackling social, economic and agricultural sustainability and development in Mediterranean and African countries. Dr Bteich emphasises how inspiring is to deal and work with students, coming from different cultural and academic backgrounds in an international institution. This diverseness constantly brings a global constructive perspective to the classroom, enriching the learning process and preparing young people to become future leaders in their respective fields.

Unlocking Youth Innovation

A Strong Commitment from CIHEAM

Accompanying young people in developing their skills and providing them with opportunities for innovation is a core mission of CIHEAM. By supporting youth-driven projects, fostering entrepreneurship, and promoting sustainable practices, CIHEAM aims to empower the next generation to become leaders in agriculture, food systems, and environmental management. Through targeted programs and strategic partnerships, CIHEAM actively contributes to creating a resilient Mediterranean community where young people play a central role in shaping a sustainable future.

NEW MASTER!



On 9 and 10 October 2023, the Secretary General met the Albanian Ministers of Agriculture, Mrs Anila Denaj, and of Education, Mrs Ojerta Manastirliu, **in Tirana (Albania)** to discuss ways to strengthen their cooperation activities. They decided to create a new Master's Degree focusing on **"Open Innovation and Youth Entrepreneurship in Mediterranean Agri-food Systems"**. The initiative is promoted by an international partnership between the University of Agriculture of Tirana, the LUM University "Giuseppe Degennaro" of Bari, the CIHEAM and the CIHEAM Bari, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. The official agreement for the launch of this Master's program was signed on June 12, 2024 in Tirana, and the degree was officially **inaugurated on November 23, 2024**.

Closing ceremony of the AgriCultura project



This collaborative project, in partnership with the Teatro Pubblico Pugliese and the Municipality of Bari, aimed to combat the social exclusion young people in Bari who are early school leavers, unemployed and at risk of becoming delinquent. The young people had access to 40 hours of training followed by 260 hours in a company with a mentor who worked with the students to develop a business idea, a start-up project or another agreed plan. **The project helped over 400 NEETs find new career or entrepreneurial opportunities.**

30/10/2024

Innovation for Sustainable Mediterranean Pastoral Systems



Summer course organised by the CIHEAM Zaragoza, as part of the PASTINNOVA project, that brought together 31 young professionals from 12 Mediterranean countries (Albania, Algeria, Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia and Türkiye). The course provided participants with tools that they could use in their professional activity and offered them practical examples that could corroborate that pastoralism is alive and well, that it is innovating, and has a bright future ahead that will strengthen the sustainability of livestock farming and territorial development.

30/05-07/06/2024

3rd Mediterranean Agrifood Innovation Week - CIHEAM Bari

The Future is Young: Changing Mindset to Deal with Change

The three-day event, which focused on the need for a new mindset among the **young generation to drive change and innovation in the Mediterranean**, brought together more than 30 international experts and 22 incubator managers from 12 countries. On this occasion, Director Maurizio Raeli inaugurated the Mediterranean Innovation Hub, developed at the CIHEAM Bari as part of the Creative@Hubs project.



22-24/11/2023

Youth Innovation Award for Green and Blue Transition in the Mediterranean

On November 7, 2024, CIHEAM presented the Youth Innovation Award to Hasan Jaafar, co-founder and COO of YY ReGen. The ReGen-R8 project, which received a grant of €10,000, is an on-demand renewable energy platform that uses AI to enable farmers to adopt sustainable practices. This modular solar system provides clean and reliable energy for a variety of agricultural needs.



Other awards were also given in the form of a one-year scholarship for a Master in Open Innovation and Youth Entrepreneurship at CIHEAM Bari for the second prize, and an internship in one of the partner companies for the third prize. The winners are Guadaluna Chaer, co-founder, of the LUXEED Robotics project that uses AI and lasers to eliminate weeds with precision, replacing herbicides and Marilou Suc, co-founder and Secretary General, of the NOWA project, a social entrepreneurship network that supports gender equality and inclusiveness in global aquaculture.

The 60 projects submitted were evaluated according to several criteria: their innovative nature, their measurable contribution, both quantitative and qualitative, to the environmental, social and economic sustainability of food systems, their feasibility, their potential for scaling up, as well as their reproducibility.

For this second edition of the Prize, the CIHEAM has formed a partnership with the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), UNIMED and BUSINESSMED, who also participated as members of the jury.



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الاتحاد بين أمم المتوسط

This intergovernmental organisation brings together 43 countries to strengthen cooperation and regional dialogue with a view to human development, stability and regional integration.



The Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprise is a multilateral cooperation platform promoting foreign direct investment, dialogue and inter-Mediterranean socio-economic integration. BUSINESSMED aims to support the development of the Mediterranean private sector.



As a Mediterranean Universities Union, this network brings together 162 universities and research centers from 25 countries for intercultural dialogue and international cooperation.

CIHEAM Best Thesis Prize

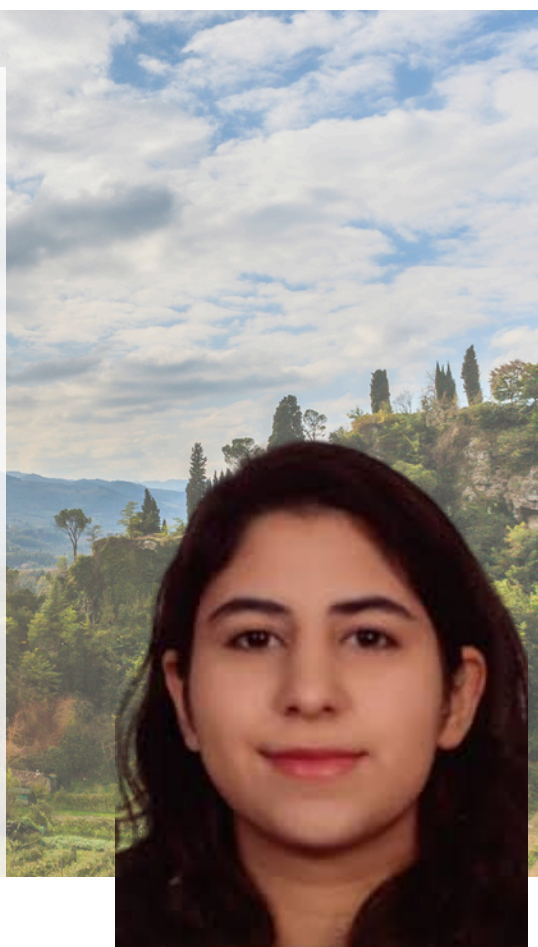
Rewarding Excellence of Youth

Since 1994, the CIHEAM every year has been rewarding the best thesis completed by one of the students of its Institutes as part of their Master of Science, in order to **highlight their work** and support them in the development of their **scientific career**. The prize of 5000 euros is awarded by the Governing Board on the basis of the recommendation of its Advisory Board.

CIHEAM Best Thesis Prize Attributed to Ms El-Khechen, 2023

The prize for the best thesis is awarded to **Ms Reem El-Khechen** for her Master of Sciences thesis entitled **“Green public procurement, a route to creating shared value: a comparative analysis between Emilia-Romagna, Italy and Occitanie, France”**. Ms Reem El-Khechen, from Lebanon, is a student at the CIHEAM Institute of Montpellier. She graduated with a MSc in Gestion Agricole et Territoires, in the framework of which she wrote this thesis on the implementation of GPP in the collective catering sector in Emilia-Romagna and Occitanie. The CAB members awarded this thesis for its originality and scientific quality, its applicability and its exemplary nature for Mediterranean cooperation.

Today, Ms El-Khechen is working on a thesis entitled **“Stratégies d’innovation des modèles d’affaires et filières fruits et légumes en Occitanie : quel rôle et quelles opportunités pour les producteurs agricoles à petite échelle de la région ?”** (“Business model innovation strategies and fruit and vegetable sectors in Occitanie: what role and what opportunities for the region's small-scale agricultural producers?”) at the CIHEAM Montpellier, in collaboration with the Institut Agro Montpellier and the University of Bologna.



RESEARCH & INNOVATION

Serving scientific diplomacy





At the CIHEAM, we are committed to advancing research and science to harness the full potential of the Mediterranean region. Research is one of the core pillars of our mission, enabling us to **address the unique challenges** this region faces while **capitalizing on its opportunities**. By integrating the latest scientific and technological advancements with sustainable, localized solutions, we ensure that our efforts have a lasting and meaningful impact on both the environment and the communities we serve.

Our approach is rooted in **collaboration and partnerships** across the Euro-Mediterranean region. The CIHEAM brings together researchers, institutions, International Organizations and countries to share knowledge, resources, and expertise, promoting innovation through collective efforts. Through our Master's programmes, PhD collaborations, research projects, and networks, we facilitate the mobility of researchers and foster high-level international cooperation.

Science diplomacy plays a critical role in our research initiatives, helping to promote political dialogue and international collaboration. By aligning our efforts with global scientific priorities, we contribute to addressing critical issues such as climate change, food security, and sustainable development in the Mediterranean context. We also provide direct **support to diplomatic processes** by incorporating research findings into policy dialogue, ensuring that decisions are informed by the latest scientific evidence. The results of our research feed into a continuous cycle of innovation, enabling the development of new methodologies, prototypes, and technologies that support further projects, partnerships, and policy formulation. This virtuous cycle strengthens the capacity of the Mediterranean to overcome challenges and build a prosperous future.

At the CIHEAM, we believe that by working together—through research, science, and partnerships—we can create a positive, sustainable Mediterranean that benefits all its people.

Mr Maurizio Raeli
Director of the CIHEAM Bari

“Through research and innovation, science diplomacy becomes a bridge for collaboration, driving solutions to global challenges and fostering a shared future in the Mediterranean”



Discover Some of our Research Projects

Research is a fundamental step in developing more sustainable food systems. Adapting these systems to the environmental, social, and economic conditions of a region requires a deep understanding of its specificities, challenges, and the tailored solutions that address them.

Within its Institutes, CIHEAM conducts research aimed at **deciphering the Mediterranean agri-food landscape**. These efforts include **analyzing factors** that influence food systems and designing innovative solutions to meet regional needs. By combining **field experimentation, laboratory work, scenario modeling**, and collaboration with international experts, CIHEAM researchers actively strive to pave the way for more sustainable, inclusive, and equitable food systems.

This section of the report highlights a selection of flagship projects conducted within the Institutes.

Beginning of BELIS project - CIHEAM Zaragoza Breeding European Legumes for Increased Sustainability

BELIS - Breeding European Legumes for Increased Sustainability is a project funded by the Horizon Europe programme to increase the competitiveness of the legume breeding industry in Europe by improving the methodology and governance of the sector, and to enable breeders and the seed industry to access the genetic progress achieved. The study will be carried out on 7 forage crops and 7 cereal crops used for feed, food and ecosystem services.



- October 1st : start of the project.
- October 17-18 : 1st meeting in Ancenis (France) with the aim of presenting and discussing the work programme of the project.



NATAE - CIHEAM Montpellier and CIHEAM Chania Fostering Agro-Ecological Transition in North Africa

NATAE- Fostering agroecology transition in North Africa through multi-actor, evaluation, and networking is an awarded project under the Horizon Europe programme. It will generate new perspectives to evaluate agroecology-inspired practices in a multidimensional way and at several scales (from production systems to territories and value chains). The objectives are to identify, evaluate and eventually promote the best combinations of agro-ecologically inspired practices in North Africa observed and tested, and to set up a Mediterranean agroecological network for knowledge exchange and advocacy at the regional level.



A series of webinars were held:

- The agro-ecological transition as seen by stakeholders in the field: between challenges and achievement.
- The case of the irrigated valley of Luxor, Egypt.
- Climate change: a catalyst for the agro-ecological transition of cereal cultivation in North Africa?
- Etc.



Xylella fastidiosa - CIHEAM Bari

Finding effective pest control solutions

The fight against *Xylella fastidiosa* is **one of the main research subject of the CIHEAM Bari**. This pathogen, discovered for the first time in Europe in 2013, is transmitted by an insect and **causes significant damage** on olive trees, vines, and other plants. The objective of the research is to find an efficient way of fighting it to avoid harvest loses.

The results of these researches have lead to the publication of 30 articles, 4 books and 1 book chapter and 4 contributions to conferences.



- Participation in the 4th European Conference on Xylella fastidiosa organised by the EFSA in Lyon (France)

Organised as a side event of the International Congress of Plant Pathology, the aim of this event was to bring together experts to discuss the latest research results.



The CIHEAM Bari participated with two posters entitled "Achievements, Challenges and Future Perspectives in Controlling the Menace of *Xylella Fastidiosa* by Organic Nanocompounds: the Case of the ANCOSIX Project" and "The Potential Direct Economic Impact of an Invasive Alien Species: *Xylella Fastidiosa* on Lebanese Wine Grapes".

- Launch of the "Sustainable Regeneration of Agroiculture in Territories Affected by *Xylella fastidiosa*"

The CIHEAM Bari, in partnership with the Almacube incubator of the University of Bologna, five companies from the Rigenrazione Salento open innovation community and five start-ups (selected by the companies), launched the co-design phase of the "Sustainable Regeneration of Agriculture in Territories Affected by *Xylella fastidiosa*" programme. This programme aims to redesign the agricultural production systems of the Ionian-Salentine area, incorporating them into a complex vision of sustainable and compatible support for the most vulnerable rural communities affected by the phytosanitary crisis.

The principle of this initiative is **to allow start-ups to present their innovation to companies** that could evaluate it through venture clienting: the company becomes the start-up's client in order to test the proposed solution. It offers mutual advantages: the company can acquire a new innovation quickly and at low cost, and the start-ups benefit from a contract with the company that allows them to develop their project.

19-20/08/2023

13/02/2024

PRO-GRACE project - CIHEAM Chania

Promoting a Plant Genetic Resource Community for Europe

40% of the world's 400,000 vascular plant species are threatened with extinction. Not only do land plants absorb CO₂ and contribute to the global carbon cycle, but about 10% of them are used by humans and form the basis of our food, medicines and bio-economy. The loss of these precious resources would jeopardise the long-term productivity, resilience and sustainability of our agriculture, food and bioeconomy.

Started in January 2023, PRO-GRACE is an EU-funded project to develop the concept for a novel European research infrastructure dedicated to the **cataloguing, description, conservation and improvement of European plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.**

From October 2 to 6, the CIHEAM Chania hosted the **1st International Workshop and Training School on the Sustainable Management of Plant Genetic Resources**, which brought together 64 participants from 20 countries.



BioValue project - CIHEAM Chania

Fork-to-Farm Agent-Based Simulation Tool Augmenting Biodiversity in the Agri-food VALUE Chain



BioValue is a project funded by the European Horizon Programme that aims to develop a dynamic and modular agent-based simulation tool to analyse the linkages between biodiversity, the agri-food value chain, the environment, consumer preferences and health. The idea is to introduce and disseminate the use of under-utilised, genetically diverse crops and their marketable end products to the consumer's plate, using a demand-driven (fork to farm) approach.

This year, the CIHEAM Chania worked on the development of **recommendations for dietary and nutritional properties, food combinations and recipes using underutilised crops.** These recommendations will be based on findings from recipe design, sensory evaluation and economic justification and consumer surveys conducted for innovative food products produced from underutilised crops.



GRASS CEILING- CIHEAM Zaragoza

Gender Equality in Rural and Agricultural Innovation Systems



GRASS CEILING is a multi-actor project that will increase women-led socio-ecological innovations in farming, the rural economy and in rural communities (smart-agri skills, eco-tourism, pasture led agriculture, organic cheese, energy neutral village halls, community gardens, elderly care cooperatives). Socio-ecological innovation in farming and rural areas is a developing area in Europe, and GRASS Ceiling will co-create tools to ensure women can fully participate. The consortia include end-users (women innovators), stakeholders and researchers in case study Member States, as well as European bodies and stakeholders who can influence EU policy such as

the EU Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP), Copa-Cogeca (EU representatives of farmers and agri-cooperatives), The European Association for Information on Local Development (AEIDL), and the European Environmental Bureau (EEB).

In 2024, GRASS CEILING consists of :

- 29 Partners covering 9 countries
- 9 Living Labs
- 72 Rural women innovators
- 1 000 Women trained



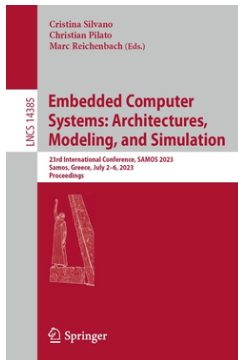
Some Scientific and Academic Publications

Sharing the Results of our Research Activities

ELAION: ML-Based System for Olive Classification with Edge Devices

Dimitris Teodoropoulos, Konstantinos Blazakis, Dionisios Pnevmatikatos, Panagiotis Kalaitzis, researchers at CIHEAM Chania

in Silvano C., Pilato C., Reichenbach M. *Embedded Computer Systems: Architecture, Modeling, and Simulation. SAMOS 2023. Lecture Notes in Computer Science*, vol 14385.



This paper presents **ELAION, an end-to-end system for olive cultivar identification using edge devices**. An application utilizes the device's camera to send olive images to a back-end server for feature extraction. Results are relayed back to the application, which identifies the originally depicted olive cultivar using pre-trained machine learning models. As a result, ELAION greatly reduces the time and errors on olive fruit identification with on-site results, thus paving the way for becoming an on-site key-tool for olive growers, breeders, and scientists.

[Read the article.](#)

Soil Science at the CIHEAM Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari in Italy

Pandi Zdruli, researcher at CIHEAM Bari, Teodoro Miano, CIHEAM Secretary General

in Dazzi C., Benedetti A., Corti G., Costantini E. A. C. *Soil Science in Italy 1861 to 2024*

This chapter of the book, dedicated to the history of soil science in Italy, highlights **the activities of the CIHEAM Bari in the field of sustainable soil management**. Soil science is at the heart of the educational and research programmes of the CIHEAM Bari. For decades, events have been organised, experts invited, surveys carried out and students trained. All this has contributed to the advancement of knowledge in soil management for the development of innovative and sustainable agricultural practices with a direct impact on local communities.

[Read the article.](#)



Applying the FAO Surveillance Evaluation Tool (SET) to Assess the Fish Farming Disease Surveillance System in Spain

Ana Muniesa, Imanol Ruiz-Zarzueta, Gael Lamielle, Sophie Von Dobschuetz, Dolores Furones, Chris Rodgers, Bernardo Basurco

in *Frontiers of Veterinary Science*, 17 July 2024, Volume 11

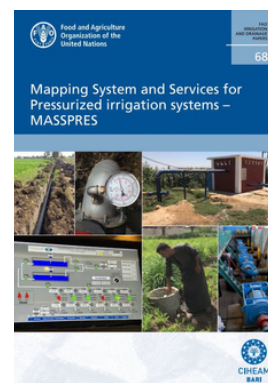
This study evaluates **Spain's disease surveillance system for farmed fish** using the FAO Surveillance Evaluation Tool (SET), marking its first application in aquaculture. The results showed notable differences between trout and marine fish (seabass and seabream) surveillance, with trout scoring higher in Institutional, Laboratory, and Surveillance activities areas. Most efforts focused on trout due to EU and WOAH-listed diseases, while surveillance for seabream and seabass, which lack listed diseases, was deemed necessary for monitoring abnormal mortalities and emerging diseases.

Mapping System and Services for Pressurized Irrigation Systems – MASSPRES

Pandi Zdruli, researcher at CIHEAM Bari, Teodoro Miano, CIHEAM Secretary General

Lamaddalena, N., Salman, M., Pek, E., Ahmad, W., Lebdi, F. & Wahaj, R. 2024. Mapping System and Services for Pressurized irrigation systems – MASSPRES. FAO Irrigation and Drainage Paper, No. 68. Rome, FAO.

Irrigation and Drainage Paper No. 63 of the FAO introduced the MASSCOTE methodology in 2007, tailored for modernizing large-scale canal irrigation systems. With global interest shifting towards pressurized pipe systems, particularly in water-scarce regions, the need for a similar methodology became apparent. Pressurized systems offer advantages like on-demand irrigation, reduced water wastage, and environmental impact. However, they require complex management due to changing water demands. To address this, FAO developed the MASSPRES approach, building on MASSCOTE's principles. MASSPRES aims to assess and enhance the performance of pressurized irrigation schemes, introducing steps like the Rapid Appraisal Procedure (RAP) for system mapping.



[Read the article.](#)

Premium wine in Spain. On the Road to Excellence

Raul Compés, Director CIHEAM Zaragoza, Carlos Moro, President Bodegas Familiares Matarromera, Vicente Sotés Ruiz, Professor emeritus of viticulture at the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid

Compés R., Moro C., Sotés V. (eds) (2024). Ed. Cajamar Caja Rural



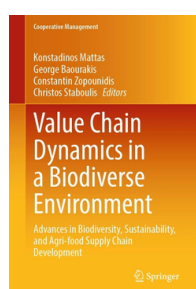
Spain has numerous high-quality wines, wineries, and winegrowing regions. However, its presence in the global premium wine market is relatively small. Spanish wine industry leaders must take decisive action to promote their most prestigious wines and increase their share of the premium wine market. By implementing a comprehensive marketing and communication strategy, the sector can showcase its expertise and quality, and establish itself as a major player in the global wine industry. Spain can develop more projects aimed at pursuing excellence. It has magnificent terroirs, good technicians, modern facilities, differentiation tools, and entrepreneurs willing to produce unique wines that are acclaimed by experts and sold at high prices. Premium wine is a valuable combination of tangible and intangible assets. Effective communication conveys

the glamour, exclusivity, and artistic spirit of elegant wines. Spanish wines are gaining international recognition and this book will contribute significantly to the knowledge and understanding of the key factors that determine the quality of top-tier wines.

[Read the article.](#)

Value Chain Dynamics in a Biodiverse Environment

Konstadinos Mattas, Pr. at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, George Baourakis, CIHEAM Chania Director, Constantin Zopounidis, Pr. at the Technical University of Crete, Christos Staboulis, researcher at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki



This book provides an **in-depth analysis of the latest advances in biodiversity, sustainability and agri-food value chains**. It examines the major societal and environmental challenges (desertification, floods, epidemics, rising trade costs, food insecurity) in order to propose research initiatives with the ultimate aim of informing decision-makers on responsible agri-food policies that are well integrated into the global economy.

[Read the article.](#)

NEW MEDIT

The CIHEAM publishes its own scientific journal dedicated to economics, agriculture, and the environment.

NEW MEDIT, with its multidisciplinary approach, serves as a tool for information and scientific analysis, offering in-depth insights into the economic and social transformations affecting agriculture, rural societies, and agri-food networks in the Mediterranean region.

Initially launched by CIHEAM Bari and the University of Bologna, the journal is now coordinated by the General Secretariat, enhancing its institutional dimension and expanding its reach to a broader audience.

This year saw the publication of issues 3 and 4 of the 2023 edition, as well as issues 1 and 2 of the 2024 edition. Recent issues feature a variety of articles exploring different aspects of the value chain, from producers to consumers.

These contributions address diverse topics, including agricultural practices, consumption habits, nutritional criteria, circular economy, the impacts of the post-Covid-19 crisis, the effectiveness of agricultural advisory services, market dynamics, the use of smart agricultural technologies, water management, support for young farmers, ecosystem services, and their integration into agricultural practices...



Find all the scientific articles produced by the Institutes this year here:



PhD Platform Activities

Since 2016, the CIHEAM has been organizing Forums for PhD students and young researchers. This initiative aims to establish a **Mediterranean platform** that supports and guides Master's graduates from its institutes who wish to pursue a PhD and to young researchers who have completed their PhD at affiliated national higher education and research institutions. Participants have the opportunity to **foster connections** between young scientists, rural communities, and local organizations. Mediterranean Forums for PhD students and young researchers aim to promote knowledge exchange and share best practices and innovative tools.

Four Mediterranean Forums have been organised:

- 1st Forum: Designing Sustainable Agriculture and Food Production Systems Under Global Changes in the Mediterranean. Montpellier, July 2016.
- 2nd Forum : Research and Innovation as Tools for Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security. Bari, September 2018.
- 3rd Forum : Understanding Mediterranean Agriculture Food Systems and their Supply Chain Actors Under Local, Regional and Global Uncertainty. Montpellier, July 2021.
- 4th Forum : Mediterranean Agriculture and Food Systems in a Time of Climate Change and Agrofood Crisis. Chania, December 2022.





COOPERATION & DEVELOPMENT

Act for a shared prosperity

“The work of the CIHEAM in the fields of training, research, technology transfer, and scientific diplomacy not only strengthens local capacities but also promotes innovative responses to environmental and climate challenges.”



Cooperation in the Mediterranean is essential to addressing the interconnected challenges of agriculture, food security, and rural development. The region faces **significant socio-economic disparities between its northern and southern shores**, with unequal access to resources threatening regional stability and shared prosperity. Climate change and geopolitical tensions further strain these divides, particularly in the southern and eastern Mediterranean, where food insecurity remains a pressing concern.

Since its foundation in 1962, the CIHEAM has been a key actor in fostering sustainable development through regional cooperation. Today, it aligns its mission with the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), focusing on inclusive strategies that address the needs in particular of vulnerable populations—rural communities, traditional fisheries, women, and youth—who are disproportionately affected by crises.

Given the scale of challenges facing Mediterranean food systems, decisive action is required. Through **its commitment to modernization and innovation**, the CIHEAM is well-placed to lead these efforts. Agriculture, as a fundamental sector of the Mediterranean economy, faces growing threats from resource degradation and climate change. Enhancing the resilience of food systems through collaborative actions is therefore critical. Partnerships between governments, researchers, NGOs, local authorities, and institutions like the CIHEAM enable knowledge-sharing, concrete solutions, and the investment needed for sustainable agricultural transformation.

Addressing agriculture and food security must remain a top priority for Mediterranean cooperation. The work of the CIHEAM in the fields of training, research, technology transfer, and scientific diplomacy not only strengthens local capacities but also promotes innovative responses to environmental and climate challenges. By engaging human resources and facilitating regional dialogue, Mediterranean agricultural cooperation can foster long-term food security, stability, and sustainable development.

Mr Raul Compés,
Director of the CIHEAM Zaragoza

Our Cooperation Projects

Cooperation is the key to CIHEAM activities. Whether in research, teaching or project development, everything is articulated around the **links that the CIHEAM establishes with public institutions, NGOs, private companies and, of course, the local population.** Through institutional partnerships and policy dialogues at all levels, the CIHEAM is able to give life to projects that, in collaboration with numerous partners, allow the development of initiatives that promote the transition towards sustainable and inclusive agri-food systems.

Discover here a selection of projects developed in CIHEAM Institutes, selected on the basis of this year's activities.

Food and Agriculture

SupMed

Increasing Biodiversity for Strengthen Resilience of Agricultural Systems and Innovative Sectors

CONTEXT

Dependence on water in Egypt and Lebanon in a context of climate change and lack of resource.

OBJECTIVES

- To reduce overexploitation of water resources,
- To improve the income of agricultural households.

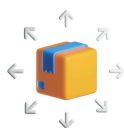
METHOD

Implementation and evaluation of integrated, agronomic and socio-economic solutions based on agroecology.

ACTIONS THIS YEAR



- Conversion of 126ha of olive growing from conventional to bio.



- Distribution of barley seed,
- Fertiliser distribution.



- Seminar on organic farming,
- Training in the efficient use of fertilisers.

On 8 September, the **Lebanese Minister of Agriculture**, Mr Abbas Hajj Hassan, **visited the General Secretariat** to discuss issues of food security, the challenge of socio-economic integration of young people and the impact of climate change in Lebanon. He expressed his wish to strengthen Lebanon's collaboration with the CIHEAM, especially in the area of training and capacity building for rural and agricultural communities. He highlighted the importance of the SupMed project for the country.



MEDIET

Building Sustainable and Resilient Systems in the Mediterranean

CONTEXT

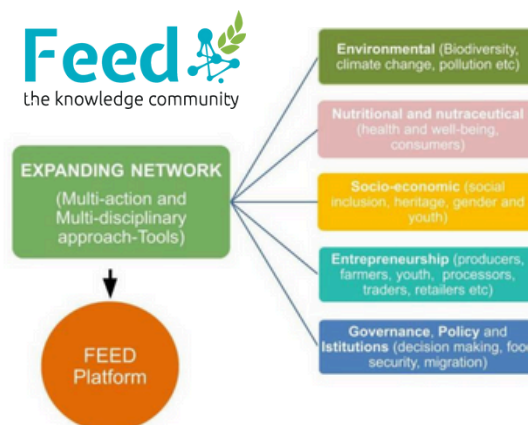
Legumes are an important part of Mediterranean food systems. Due to their high nutritional value, especially in terms of protein, they are essential for ensuring food security and safety in the region.

OBJECTIVES

Promoting the transition to sustainable food systems (SFS) in the Mediterranean region.

METHOD

Creation of the **FEED platform designed to host and share projects and ideas** that have brought about change for a community in the field of SFS. In this platform, each registered member can upload, through specific forms, the results of his/her activities, researches, experiences, read about the real needs of territories on the drivers and barriers to the development of sustainable food systems, creating a useful database.



ACTIONS THIS YEAR

On 18 March, the International Seminar on the Nutritional Properties and Environmental Impact of Legumes in Mediterranean Countries brought together the main partners of the project to share their results.

08/03/2024

MEDAE

Mediterranean Multi-Actor Network on Agro-Ecology



CONTEXT

The MEDAE network was born from the NATAE project and the desire of its partners to create a sustainable community of exchanges between the various stakeholders involved in the agroecological transition in the Mediterranean.

OBJECTIVES

- To foster collaborations, projects, and the exchange of information, knowledge, solutions, and experiences among the various stakeholders working towards the development of agroecology in the Mediterranean.
- To represent Mediterranean agroecology stakeholders at national and international levels, and to develop political and scientific advocacy in favor of agroecology in the Mediterranean.

ACTIONS THIS YEAR

Launch of a series of 5 webinars:

- How to strengthen the role of women in mountain agroforestry systems in North Africa?
- How to promote the development and commercialization of agro-ecological products in peri-urban areas?
- Between traditional and scientific knowledge, how can the resilience of peri-oasis systems be improved?
- Climate change: a catalyst for the agro-ecological transition of cereal crops in North Africa?
- The agro-ecological transition from the perspective of field actors: challenges and successes. The case of the irrigated valley of Luxor, Egypt.

15/04/2024



Biodiversity



GENMEDA

Network of Mediterranean Plant Conservation Centres

CONTEXT

The CIHEAM Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Chania is one of the 13 founding members of GENMEDA - Network of Mediterranean Plant Conservation Centres, a network of **seed banks and conservation centres of genetic resources of the Mediterranean flora** who share a common floristic region, a geographical area with a similar landscape and a common set of problems concerning natural environment disruptions.

OBJECTIVES

The mission of GENMEDA is to contribute to the conservation of Mediterranean flora genetic resources through the following objectives:

- Enhancement of human capital, equipments and methodologies to boost flora conservation applied knowledge.
- Harvesting of most threatened species genetic materials and creating, as far as possible, living plant collections.
- Creation of a virtual common collection of vegetal genetic and reproduction materials.
- Planning of joint initiatives concerning flora conservation and/or management
- Backing-up the making-decision processes of flora conservation public policies
- Support of environmental education and public awareness on biodiversity conservation.

ACTION THIS YEAR

From 23 to 27 October 2023, GENMEDA co-organized the 4th Mediterranean Plant Conservation Week in Valencia. Representatives from 27 of the 31 GENMEDA members participated in the 4MPCW as keynote speakers, session chairs and/or with oral or poster communications.

23-27/10/2023



EUPHRESKO III Global Cooperation for Plant Health

CONTEXT

To achieve the UN goals in terms of food security, environment protection, to increase biodiversity and for sustainable agrifood systems, plant health is a key issue. **Global trade and climate change**, because they bring **pests** to new territories and give them new ecosystemic conditions to grow, facilitate the emergence of new pests in front of which knowledge is insufficient.

Research projects are developed around the world to fight plant pathogens. However, the lack of financement and of coordination at the international level leads to a multiplication of disconnected researches on the same subject. For that Reason, the phytosanitary authorities of many countries called for the creation of a global coordination network on plant health.

OBJECTIVES

By building on the foundations developed by the Euphresco Network, the EUPHRESKO III project aims to enhance national and regional phytosanitary research coordination and to set the foundations for global phytosanitary research coordination through fit-for-purpose activities.

METHOD

This coordination programme will identify, among the participating R&I programmes, the common research and innovation priorities. In parallel, it will regularly launch calls for transnational projects. Finally, in order to get concrete effects from the results of R&I, it will support the development of plant health policy, technology, market and societal uptake.

ACTIONS THIS YEAR - Presentation of the project during the Plant Health Without Borders Symposium

The symposium "Plant Health Without Borders: International Collaboration to Underpin Policy at National, Regional and International Level" was hosted by the Belgian Presidency of the EU in Brussels. The aim of the event was to discuss the **impact of plant health on human, animal and environmental health** and the need for cooperation to develop scientific expertise in this field and to develop appropriate plant health policies to meet current challenges. It was therefore the occasion to present the EUPHRESKO III project and its ambition to become a major network for research and innovation in plant health.

The CIHEAM Bari participated in the event with the presentation "Capacity Building in Plant Health to Build a Mediterranean Research Area" by Anna Maria D'Onghia.

International Day of Plant Health Video Contest

3rd Edition of the Plant Health TV: Research that Helps Plant Health

On the occasion of the UN World Plant Health Day, the CIHEAM Bari, in partnership with the Euphresco III network and the Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative, organised a video contest to celebrate and promote the importance of plant health research. Scientists involved in plant health research and development at national or international level were invited to present their activities in a short video.

International Day of Plant Health, 12 May 

 CIHEAM BARI  PLANT BIOSECURITY RESEARCH INITIATIVE  EUPHRESKO III

 Participate in the 

Video Contest

Promoting the importance of **Plant Health research**



15/05/2024

12/05/2024



MEDFORVAL

A Community of Practitioners and Scientists Joining Forces to Protect, Manage and Restore Forest Sites

CONTEXT

The Mediterranean location, topography and climate have combined to create a variety of forests, woodlands and scrublands - a delicate mosaic of high ecological, cultural and economic value. Today, though, these landscapes are facing major global threats, including climate change, rural abandonment, forest clearing and agricultural intensification. By bringing a wide variety of practitioners and scientists together, exchanging knowledge and good practices we can be more effective in facing these urgent issues and push for real change.

Launched in 2015 and funded by the MAVA Foundation, this **network brings together forest landscape sites of high conservation value in the Mediterranean**. Its members are a community of practitioners and scientists representing selected sites across the region, and contributing to the integrity and resilience of the Mediterranean forest landscapes.

OBJECTIVES :

The network aims to:

- Improve the ecological status of Mediterranean forest landscapes.
- Build the capacity of practitioners and policy makers and encourage dialogue between forest-relevant stakeholders.
- Influence policy processes in favour of resilient forest landscapes.
- Increase people's support for forest landscapes.

METHOD :

The Medforval network is coordinated by Istituto Oikos, a no-profit organization dedicated to conserving biodiversity and promoting sustainable development. This effort continues the work initiated by AIFM (Association Internationale Forêts Méditerranéennes, Marseille, France) between 2015 and 2018. The primary focus of the current Medforval phase (2019- 2025) is to **strengthen cooperation for project development** and to **formulate a new 10-year Medforval strategy** for 2025-2035. The Medforval Network currently includes 15 sites from 9 countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea.

ACTIONS THIS YEAR :

The Aterno Valley Model Forest in Italy hosted the **Medforval annual meeting**. This event gathered 25 practitioners from nine Mediterranean countries and was part of the project "ASMed – From the Apennines to the Shouf: migrations of experiences and knowledge across the Mediterranean," funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS).

In the framework of the **MediterRE3 project**, led by Istituto Oikos (Italy), 4 partners and 8 members of the Medforval network gathered at the Luberon Natural Regional Park (France). The purpose of the meeting was to disseminate the outputs of the project across the Mediterranean region and to address common challenges and explore possible solutions related to the implementation of fire-smart landscapes (FSL) measures.

5-7/06/2024

25/10/2023



CIHEAM
CHANIA



OLIB

Strengthening Sustainable Local Development and Coexistence in Lebanon through Improved Olive Tree Yield and Productivity

CONTEXT

Since 2019, Lebanon has been facing a multicausal humanitarian crisis. The financial crisis, political instability, the Covid-19 pandemic, the devastating explosion in the port of Beirut in 2020 and the recent bombings along the southern border started in October 2023, have all contributed to growing needs and significant challenges for farmers and producers in the olive sector. Rising production costs and government-imposed export restrictions are the main causes behind the surge in prices, making it difficult for the local population to access olives and derived products.



OBJECTIVES

The project aims to encourage use of meteorological and environmental data in the olive-growing sector, positioning oil quality assessment as a driving factor. This data can be applied to improve production and at the same time ensure the environmental sustainability of the crop.

- To empower women by articulating the project through engagement with Deir Mimas women's cooperative.
- To achieve more sustainable management of olive crops and natural resources (water, soil and biodiversity) through producer capacity building.
- To draw up a compendium of best practices (Guidebook of Agronomic Techniques) in the local language (Arab) and in Spanish in order to protect the environment and make crops more resilient to climate change.
- To enhance the role of agrifood cooperatives in the sector.
- To improve knowledge on advanced olive processing techniques

METHOD

OLIB provides a theoretical and practical training for producers, farmers, technicians and local advisors. It supports innovative decision-making in agronomic management and olive production in the Nabatieh region of southern Lebanon. The training is designed based on the local needs for cooperatives, farmers, advisors and technicians in the olive sector and delivered with the support of the women's organic agriculture and beekeeping cooperative of Deir Mimas.

ACTION THIS YEAR

- Support for the beneficiaries (farmers' cooperatives, farmers, advisors and technicians in the olive sector) of the theoretical and practical training to improve olive yield and crop efficiency without damaging the agricultural ecosystem.
- Creation of knowledge networks, strengthening collaboration between the Lebanese and Spanish experts and providing beneficiaries of the theoretical and practical training with an advisory service in questions related to olive growing.
- Publication of a 'Guidebook of Agronomic Techniques' consisting of a manual of best practices. This was translated from Spanish into the local language (Arab) to be disseminated and used by the trainees and other farmers' cooperative members, advisors and technicians in Lebanon.



STARTUP10

A Journey in 10 Medafrican Countries for Eco-Innovations

CONTEXT

In the context of climate change and its impact on agri-food systems, start-ups must be provided with support to develop innovative solutions in the green and blue economy.



OBJECTIVES

Improving management and entrepreneurial skills in the agri-food, blue and green economy and digital technology sectors, and developing local start-ups offering innovative solutions in the green and blue economy sectors with a focus on digitalisation.

METHOD

- Strengthening 21 incubators and 140 local startups,
- Training of young graduates and technicians,
- Developing transborder collaboration and empowering local communities,
- activating a network of Italian companies.

NUMBER OF INCUBATORS



ACTION THIS YEAR

Launch of the STARTUP10 project. 22 business incubator managers from Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Tunisia, and Uganda participated in the workshop entitled “The STARTUP10 project and possible synergies with other the CIHEAM Bari activities on innovation” during which a focus was made on the MIP – Mediterranean Innovation Partnership and the FEED platform, a networking and knowledge sharing tool created by CIHEAM Bari during its actions in the Mediterranean area.

23/11/2023



Impacts in the Countries, Interview with Beneficiaries of our Projects

Amal studied nursing, but in 2004 she decided to opt for agriculture, specifically in the olive sector. She is president of the **Association of Agricultural and Beekeeping Cooperatives*** of Deir Mimes in Lebanon, which aims to improve the economic situation and encourage the exchange of experiences through training in order to improve the situation of women, helping them to progress and providing them with the knowledge they need. The training covers aspects related to olive growing, pruning, harvesting, storage, oil mill processes and the commercialisation of the products on the local market. They also strive to offer services to women, which is particularly relevant as there are a large number of marginalised women between the ages of 40 and 60.



We got to know **the OLIB project** through the UNIFIL Spanish peacekeepers with whom we do a lot of activities related to food processing, such as making pizza sauce, exchanging experiences in the culinary sector and soap making. This project has been very important for the cooperative, as it has given it visibility not only among the neighbouring populations, but throughout the country. We hope that this initiative will enable the women of the cooperative to progress even further. Thanks to this project, we have reached CIHEAM Zaragoza and I am convinced that the OLIB project will open up new perspectives for farmers and will bode well for the future.

**The cooperative has had to suspend all its operations temporarily due to ongoing conflict and war activities in the region.*



“My name is **Omar KCHAREM**, I am 35 years old and I come from Kerkennah, an archipelago located off the coast of Sfax, Tunisia. I am the owner and manager of **Kerkennah Plastic Free**, a company founded in 2014. In just a few years, I have succeeded in making this company a key player in the fight against plastic pollution on our archipelago. My company is involved in the territorial strategy Kerkennah Plastic Free, implemented by CIHEAM Montpellier through **the DEVLOK project**.

This project, funded by the European Union and carried out in collaboration with public institutions, associations and NGOs, has enabled me to optimise my company's activities through a number of initiatives. We have stepped up plastic collection on the archipelago, introduced selective sorting and raised awareness among residents and local authorities, who have become

essential pillars of our action. Thanks to DEVLOK, I've been able to structure the plastic waste management process while boosting our community's commitment to tackling this issue.

Today, Kerkennah Plastic Free plays a crucial role in preserving our environment. I am committed to raising public awareness and promoting local action against plastic pollution, thereby strengthening the sustainability of our archipelago.





Iheb and Mouhamed's Journey to Build a Successful Startup in Tunisia

Iheb and **Mouhamed** met during a training session organized by Nemo Kantara, and it didn't take long for a strong connection to form between them. They both come from a region where fishing is a primary livelihood, and where local fishermen often face difficulties repairing the aging engines of their boats. This shared background inspired them to join forces and address a pressing need in their community.

Driven by a desire to provide more than just traditional **car repair services**, Iheb and Mouhamed decided to establish **an assistance service that included small fishing boats** as well. This innovative approach quickly garnered attention, and today, their startup has grown. They have already hired two young collaborators, expanding their range of services to meet the growing demands of their clients.

Reflecting on his journey, Iheb shared, "Many of my friends and neighbours had left for Europe in search of better opportunities. To be honest, I had considered leaving the country too. But when the **Nemo Kantara project** team contacted me with the opportunity to finance an innovative business, I decided to take a different path. I chose to stay and start my own business here."

Iheb now encourages other young people to invest in learning a trade, emphasizing that it can open doors for career growth, whether in Tunisia or abroad. "I also advise them to work hard and remain committed to their homeland, Tunisia".

Discover our Partners

The CIHEAM operates thanks to its **extensive network of partners**. It brings together research and higher education institutions, international organisations and development agencies, as well as central administrations and local governments from CIHEAM countries. Together, the CIHEAM and its partners carry out research, cooperation, and development projects.

Here is a selection of some main strategic partnerships of the year :

International Olive Council (IOC) - CIHEAM Zaragoza



INTERNATIONAL
OLIVE
COUNCIL

The International Olive Council (IOC) and the CIHEAM Zaragoza have established a **strategic partnership** aimed at advancing **sustainable practices in the olive sector**, promoting research, and enhancing the dissemination of knowledge across Mediterranean and international stakeholders.

This collaboration focuses on various key areas:

1. Joint training and Capacity Building Initiatives;
2. Promoting Sustainable Practices in Olive Growing;
3. Enhancing Olive Oil Quality and Market Development;
4. Networking and Knowledge dissemination;
5. Strategic Alignment with Mediterranean Agricultural Goals.

This strategic partnership between the CIHEAM Zaragoza and the IOC not only strengthens the olive sector but also serves as a model for international cooperation in sustainable agricultural development, ensuring that Mediterranean expertise benefits the global olive oil industry.

Activities co-organised between July 2023 and July 2024:

- Advanced Course : “Efficient Water Use in Olive Groves in a Context of Climate Change”, Zaragoza (Spain), 18-23 September 2023 ;
- International Master in Olive Growing and Oil Technology 2023-2024 ;
- Olive Oil World Congress (OOWC), 26-28 June 2024;
- Invitation to participate in the international workshop entitled: “Carbon Balance of the Olive Sector : Part of the Solution Against Climate Change”, 17-19 October 2023.

La Maison de la Figue - CIHEAM Montpellier



The partnership between the CIHEAM Montpellier and La Maison de la Figue has played an important role in the development of the Gard fig sector as part of the **LAB4SUPPLY project**.

This Euro-Mediterranean project, supported by the PRIMA programme and funded by the Agence Nationale de la Recherche, aimed to **identify new opportunities for producers and encourage sustainable practices** within the industry.

Between July 2021 and June 2024, the partnership with La Maison de la Figue, in conjunction with Vézénobres town council, Alès Agglomération and the Gard Chamber of Agriculture, brought together various players, from production to distribution, to develop a Mediterranean fig network.

The objectives of the partnership :

- To support local producers;
- To optimise sustainable practices;
- To promote the Gard fig on a Mediterranean scale.

CIHEAM Montpellier led the project with its team of experts, and also mobilised international students from the Masters in Climate Change and Agricultural Management to provide a cross-section of perspectives on the challenges facing the sector. This partnership has facilitated the organisation of workshops, training courses and awareness-raising initiatives, thereby building the capacity of local players.

Although the LAB4SUPPLY project ended on June 30, 2024, **the objectives achieved**, in particular the consolidation of sustainable practices and the opening up of new economic prospects, leave a lasting impact on the Gard fig sector and the Mediterranean partners involved.

Establishment of a Scholarship in Memory of AT (Dick) Grove and Oliver Rackham by Dr Jennifer Moody to the CIHEAM Chania

Dr Jennifer Moody, archaeologist and researcher at the University of Texas (USA) intends to establish a scholarship which will be provided by MAICH to its students in memory of the British academics AT (Dick) Grove and Oliver Rackham. Dr Grove was a geographer, whose research revolutionized the study of climate change in Africa. Later, his interests moved to the Mediterranean, where he directed a research program on desertification in the Aegean Islands with N.S. Margaris. Dr Rackham was a botanist and ecologist and his research revolutionized the study of ancient woodland, trees and landscapes in England and the Mediterranean. He collaborated with MAICH and was also a guest Professor at the postgraduate program. Over the years, Dr Rackham collected an extensive Cretan herbarium and copies of his herbarium sheets are available at the CIHEAM Chania Institute.

Dr Rackham and Dr Moody collaborated with Dr. Grove on his Aegean desertification program and then went on to co-author their award-winning book *The making of the Cretan Landscape* (1996). In the 1990s, Dr. Grove and Dr. Rackham expanded their research to all Mediterranean Europe and wrote their groundbreaking book *The Nature of Mediterranean Europe* (2001). They present evidence against 'ruined landscape theory' and argue that Mediterranean landscapes are unique and diverse, and should not be compared to those of temperate Europe.

In memory of these great scientists, Dr Moody will establish a **scholarship for students at MAICH studying Mediterranean environments, landscape history and climate**. MAICH thanks Dr Moody for choosing it as the implementer of this selfless and important initiative that will contribute to the education of young scientists in the Mediterranean region.



PLANETEK ITALIA - CIHEAM Bari

Planetek Italia is an Italian Benefit Company, specialized in Geoinformatics, Space solutions, and Earth science. The company provides solutions to exploit the value of geospatial data throughout all phases of the data life cycle, including acquisition, storage, management, analysis, and sharing.

Operating in **various application areas**, such as environmental and land monitoring, open-government, smart cities, engineering, agriculture and food production, defense and security, as well as satellite missions and space exploration. Planetek Italia is also a diamond dealer of Hexagon Geospatial software and a reseller of satellite imagery from major global providers. The company operates internationally through its group of companies based in Italy and Greece.



Planetek and the CIHEAM Bari proudly collaborate on the following activities:

- Master in open innovation and youth entrepreneurship;
- EO AFRICA - Water Resources Management, promoted by ESA – European Space Agency;
- Specialized course in Sustainable Development of Coastal Communities;
- Irrigation needs from wastewater in Tunisia;
- Training Day on Precision Agriculture for the Mediterranean region (Sept 26, 2024);
- Upcoming: Egypt-PRIMA initiative (Cairo, October 2024);
- Upcoming: Training on Earth observation for Saudi officers (Valenzano, November 2024).



POLITICAL & INSTITUTIONAL DIALOGUE

*Fostering effective partnerships in the
region*

“Over the past 10 years, the CIHEAM has facilitated information sharing and, with the support of other organisations, gradually built an early warning system to which each Member State contributes, regardless of the nature of their bilateral relations”



The ability of the CIHEAM to foster institutional and political dialogue between stakeholders is one of the essential dimensions of the added value it brings in addressing the challenges faced by actors in the fields of agriculture, food, and rural development in the Mediterranean basin. To illustrate this, let us take the example of **food security**.

Already an underlying factor of social unrest in the Mediterranean basin at the beginning of the 21st century, can States still guarantee their ability to meet the challenge of food security in the Mediterranean basin on their own, without dialogue and cooperation? In this field, particularly in meeting cereal needs, which holds strong strategic and geopolitical significance, over the past 10 years, the CIHEAM has facilitated **information sharing** and, with the support of other organisations, gradually built **an early warning system** to which each Member State contributes, regardless of the nature of their bilateral relations. This initiative stemmed from a request formulated within a body specifically dedicated to political dialogue—the **Ministerial meeting** that the CIHEAM has been organising on a regular basis since 1999— and which led to the setting up of the **MED-Amin Network** (see next page). The outputs of the network are now recognised well beyond its members, and it serves as an institutional dialogue tool. Its success stems from the ability of the CIHEAM to base its coordination on scientific expertise recognized far beyond the region and to mobilise essential complementary expertise from international organisations with which it regularly engages, such as the International Grains Council, the FAO, the European Commission, and its Joint Research Centre, AMIS.

Moreover, several other CIHEAM networks, such as those focused on the sustainability of food systems (SFS MED), plant genetics (GenMedA), organic agriculture (MOAN), greenhouse gas emissions in agriculture, and innovations (MIP), strengthen the capacity of the CIHEAM to contribute to political and institutional dialogue on other issues in the Mediterranean.

Mr Thierry Dupeuble,
Director of the CIHEAM Montpellier



Med-Amin Network

Mediterranean Agricultural Market Information Network

Cereals are strategic products for food security, agricultural development and trade in the Mediterranean, especially in North African countries, which import a quarter of the world's cereal production. Most Mediterranean countries are net importers of cereals, such as Egypt, which is the world's largest wheat importer. **Cereal prices and markets** therefore have an impact on the food security and socio-economic situation of countries. Sharing information on cereal markets helps combat price volatility.

For these reasons, in 2012, the CIHEAM decided to create the **Mediterranean Agricultural Cereal Market Information Network (MED-Amin)**, in line with AMIS (Agricultural Market Information System). Involving all CIHEAM countries and managed by the CIHEAM Montpellier, this platform focuses on the markets for common and durum wheat, barley, maize and rice - it is envisaged that later on, it will be extended to pulses, soybeans, oilseeds, etc.

MED-Amin held its first strategic meeting in Paris in December 2023, at the CIHEAM General Secretariat. Over two days, experts and high-level country representatives discussed lessons learned from recent crises affecting food supply and trade, and potential improvements through Mediterranean cooperation.



31/11-01/12/2023

The latest newsletter highlights are:

- Summer Droughts, Irrigation, and Water Management;
- Cereal Market Trends in September;
- Overview of the French and Italian Harvests;
- Wheat Purchase and Import by Egypt;
- Algerian-Italian Partnership for Durum Wheat Production;
- Report on the Resilience of Fertilizer Markets;
- Characteristics of the cereal crop Triticum;
- Upcoming CIHEAM Ministerial Meeting (25/10/2024).

--> Download the newsletter [HERE](#) and share it to your networks.

--> Or scan this QR code :



Edito

Le 15 août dernier, la température médiane quotidienne de la surface de la mer méditerranéenne a atteint un nouveau record avec 28,9 °C, battant le précédent record qui datait de 2023. Si les chercheurs soulignent que le plus « remarquable n'est pas tant d'atteindre un maximum sur un jour donné, mais d'observer une longue période de températures aussi élevées », ce record souligne les étés de plus en plus chauds que connaît la région.

Cette année encore, l'est et sud de la région méditerranéenne ont connu un été particulièrement chaud et sec. Tandis que l'Afrique du nord subit une sécheresse prolongée, l'Italie du sud, notamment la Sicile, le nord-est de l'Espagne, la Grèce et le centre-ouest de la Turquie ont été frappés par des conditions particulièrement chaudes et sèches, qui ont aussi concerné l'est de l'Europe (Ukraine, Roumanie, sud de la Russie - voir article du Joint Research Center page 2). Ces conditions affectent les rendements estimés des cultures d'été dans le sud et le sud-est de l'Europe d'après le bulletin d'août de l'unité MARS du BIC.

Afin de répondre aux pénuries d'eau, les pays du Maghreb accélèrent leurs investissements vers la construction de retenues (le Maroc investit dans 16 nouveaux barrages), l'exploitation des énergies renouvelables (en Tunisie, la centrale photovoltaïque d'El Ghordhab est prévue pour fournir plus de 20 GWh par an et sera raccordée à un important puit de la région de Tataouine

afin d'irriguer des céréales), voire le dessalement d'eau de mer et le recyclage des eaux usées (l'Algérie mise sur le dessalement d'eau de mer pour couvrir 60 % des besoins en eau de sa population d'ici 2030). Si ces outils permettent aux pays de diversifier leurs sources d'approvisionnement, la durabilité de chaque projet est à prendre en compte.

Ainsi, la modélisation d'un aquifère en Égypte a permis d'estimer les volumes théoriquement prélevables pour rester dans le cadre d'une exploitation durable¹. Une autre étude publiée dans Nature (voir page 3) a montré que les aquifères du sud-ouest de l'Europe (Portugal, Espagne, France, Italie) étaient dans un état plus satisfaisant qu'estimé jusqu'alors, notamment grâce aux efforts favorisant la recharge. Toutefois, l'étude indique aussi que de nombreuses ressources seront affectées négativement par le changement climatique, et ces publications soulignent la nécessité de fonder la gestion des ressources en eau sur des données précises et d'accroître le dialogue entre politiques et scientifiques.

Dans ce cadre, le rapport spécial du MedECC (Mediterranean Experts on Climate and environmental Change) sur le nexus eau-énergie-alimentation-écosystèmes (WEFE), qui devrait

être publié prochainement, met en exergue les impacts du changement climatique sur la région (qui se réchauffe 20% plus rapidement que le reste du monde) et ses vulnérabilités, tout en caractérisant les interdépendances entre les composantes du système. Le rapport souligne la complexité et les controverses autour des solutions concernant la gestion de l'eau et montre l'impact positif des solutions fondées sur les écosystèmes ou les changements de comportement. Il met en avant l'importance de ne pas concevoir des solutions en silos, de partager les bonnes pratiques et de renforcer le dialogue intrarégional entre les porteurs d'enjeux (politiques, scientifiques, usagers), ce à quoi s'attache le réseau MED-Amin.

Ben Lemaître-Curri & Timothée Herviaux,
MED-Amin Secretariat

¹ La Méditerranée surchauffe: le réchauffement médian des eaux de la mer (28,9 °C) en Méditerranée

² Impactes... le Maroc investit dans 16 barrages pour un volume de stockage additionnel de 5 milliards de m³ (MARS/ICZ)

³ Données: Étude sur l'évaluation de la recharge d'aquifères d'El Ghordhab: un exemple égyptien d'usage de l'énergie solaire (MARS/ICZ)

⁴ Après four ou stress hydrique: des solutions innovantes pour un avenir durable (MARS/ICZ)

⁵ MedECC Approach for Assessment of Knowledge, Expertise and the MedECC Lead for Extension Rural Development



Official Meetings (2023-2024)

The CIHEAM gives voice to the Mediterranean, defending values such as **equality and inclusiveness**, and promoting **sustainable development** and the **protection of cultural and environmental wealth**. This political role, which emphasises the agronomic importance of the region and the need to act for its preservation and development, is translated into the inclusion of its issues in the political dialogue during official meetings or events dedicated to the general public.

JULY

- **6 July: Visit by the Jordanian Minister of Agriculture in Bari.** A fruitful exchange to strengthen technical assistance and capacity building in this sector.
- **17 July: Visit of the French Ambassador and Interministerial Delegate for the Mediterranean at the SG** to strengthen cooperation on issues related to food and agriculture.



M. S.E. Karim Amellal, French Ambassador and Interministerial Delegate for the Mediterranean, Mm. Yasmine Seghirate, Administrator at CIHEAM and M. Teodoro Miano, Secretary General

- **17 July: High-Level Meetings in Egypt for the Farmers Market Initiative.** The CIHEAM Bari, the World Farmers Markets Coalition and Coldiretti met with the Egyptian Minister of Internal Trade, Dr Ali El-Sayed Ali Al-Moselhi, to discuss the launch in Egypt of the regional Farmer Market project funded by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

- **18 July: Visit by DG of Education and Research of the French Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty in Montpellier** to present the activities of the CIHEAM Montpellier and its new strategic plan.
- **19 July: Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Arab Water Council in Bari** to discuss possible collaborations between the International Water Academy and the Arab Water Academy.
- **21 July: Agreement for broader cooperation with Lebanese institutions.**
- **24 July: Membership agreement signed between the CIHEAM Zaragoza and the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Services of Zaragoza.**



M. José Miguel Sánchez, director of the Chamber of Commerce, and M. Raúl Compés, director of CIHEAM's Institute in Zaragoza

- **28-29 July: Visit by the Egyptian Minister of Social Solidarity at the SG** to discuss the framework for further cooperation.

SEPTEMBER

- **6-8 September: Visit by the Minister of Agriculture of Lebanon in Montpellier.** The objective of this visit was to make progress in the definition of several projects, in particular the extension of SUPMED.



M. Abbas Hajj Hassan, Minister of Agriculture of Lebanon, and one of his advisors, Mr. Salem Darwich

- **11 September: Memorandum of Understanding signed by the CIHEAM Chania with the International Union for Conservation of Nature.**
- **12 September: Meeting of the Director of the CIHEAM Zaragoza and the Executive Secretary of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean in Rome.**

OCTOBER

- **9-10 October: Visit by the Secretary General in Albania** to discuss CIHEAM activities and the development of a new Master's programme in Tirana.
- **19 October: Meeting at the FAO Headquarters to sign a new Memorandum of Understanding.**
- **19 - 20 October: Italian delegation visits Tunisia.** The CIHEAM Bari was part of the delegation to the interministerial meetings held between Italy and Tunisia. The Italian and Tunisian Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Agriculture and Labour agreed on a joint agricultural development programme to contribute to food security in Tunisia.

NOVEMBER

- **8 - 9 November: Visit by the Secretary General in Türkiye** to discuss the recognition and certification procedures of the CIHEAM in the country, the opportunities offered by closer collaboration with non-CIHEAM Member States, especially the Balkans, and the development of training programmes for cooperation and research projects.



Mr Teodoro Miano, Secretary General welcomed by a large delegation from the General Directorate of Agricultural Research and Policies (TAGEM), the research body of the Turkish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, by the Turkish delegate to the CIHEAM, Mr Metin TURKER, and his alternate delegate, Mrs Nihan ATAY HASPOLAT.

- **15 - 19 November: Visit by the CIHEAM Montpellier Director in Egypt.** Meeting with the Egyptian delegate, Egypt's strategic referent for MED-Amin, the Dean of Cairo University, the DG of the National Planning Institute, and the Director of AFD in Egypt.
- **21 November: The CIHEAM Zaragoza hosts a visit for a delegation of Malta's Ministry of Agriculture.**
- **23 November: Visit by the Director of the Delegation of the German Academic Exchange Service in Greece (DAAD Greece) in Chania** to discuss educational cooperation activities between CIHEAM Chania and German Higher Education Institutes and universities.
- **27 November: Visit by the Spanish Delegate at the CIHEAM Montpellier.**

DECEMBER

- **15 December: Visit by the Vice-president in charge of the economic system and Minister of Agriculture, Forests and Water Management of Montenegro in Paris.** They expressed the country's interest to become a member of the CIHEAM and to establish cooperation programmes with the organisation.



Mr Teodoro Miano, Secretary General and Mr Vladimir Joković, Vice-president in charge of the economic system and Minister of Agriculture, Forests and Water Management of Montenegro

- **17 - 20 December: The SG met the Tunisian Minister of Agriculture, Water resources and Fisheries** to discuss on CIHEAM activities in the country, on new working opportunities and on the creation of a CIHEAM office in the capital city.

JANUARY

- **1 January: Membership Agreement of CIHEAM Zaragoza and Zaragoza City Council's Convention Bureau.**
- **4 January: Visit by the Albanian Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development at the CIHEAM Bari** to discuss on ongoing projects in the country.
- **19 January: Visit by the new Director of the AICS at CIHEAM Bari** on the occasion of the 17th edition of the International Cooperation Days during which he attended a session focused on cooperation.

- **26 January: Visit by the SG of the CNRS Lebanon in Bari** to discuss on possible future collaborations and on future projects, technical support in the field of scientific research and scholarships and the creation of incubators for agriculture and marine fishing agriculture.
- **30 January: The SG met the Moroccan Minister of Agriculture, Marine Fisheries, Rural Development and Forests in Rabat** to prepare the 12th CIHEAM Ministerial Meeting to be held in Rabat.



Mr Teodoro Miano, Secretary General, Mr Mohammed Sadiki, Moroccan Minister of Agriculture, Marine Fisheries, Rural Development and Forests, Mr Vincenzo Fersino, Administrator at CIHEAM

FEBRUARY

- **5-7 February: The Director of the CIHEAM Zaragoza meets the Tunisian Secretary of State of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Maritime Fisheries, and the Director of the Institution of Agricultural Research and Higher Education (IRESA)** during the 5th Mediterranean Water Forum.
- **13 February: Meeting with the OECD** on the occasion of the celebration of the Apulia region in Paris.

MARCH

- **4 March: Meeting with the President and the CEO of CIRAD** to discuss ways to develop partnerships with CIHEAM Montpellier.
- **5 March: High-Level Meeting in Libya** to promote agricultural entrepreneurship and developing production resources and efficiency.
- **14 Mars: Agreement signed by CIHEAM Bari with the Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina** for the project ANC-BiH on sustainable economic development and environmental protection of areas with natural constraints in the country.

APRIL

- **1 April: The CIHEAM Zaragoza and the Aragonese Cluster of Crop and Livestock Production Resources (CAMPAG) have signed a collaboration agreement** to conduct activities promoting sustainable agriculture and food production in the Mediterranean region.



Mr Antonio Alot, president of CAMPAG, and Mr Raúl Compés, director of CIHEAM Zaragoza

- **18 April: Visit of the Delegate of the Spanish Government in Aragon, to CIHEAM Zaragoza.**
- **30 April: The CIHEAM Bari took part in the High-Level Dialogue on Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture held in Rome.**

MAY

- **14 May: The CIHEAM Bari participated in the face-to-face meeting of the Working Group of Security in Rome** in prevision of the G7.
- **14 May: The SG went to the UNESCO Headquarters** to work on the establishment of joint CIHEAM-UNESCO programmes on the Mediterranean Diet Intangible Heritage of Humanity.
- **20-24 May: Mission in Algeria by the SG, the CIHEAM Montpellier and the CIHEAM Zaragoza** on the occasion of the Agriculture Expo SIPSA-FILAHA to discuss collaborations in terms of education, research and technical cooperation with the Minister of Agriculture and the national institutes.



CIHEAM Delegation in Algiers

- **23 May: The CIHEAM Bari visited the OECD in Paris** to explore potential synergies and opportunities in the Framework of governance models in the MENA region.
- **29 May: Signature of a framework agreement with the Groupe Roullier in Saint-Malo** for sustainable agriculture in Mediterranean countries.

JUNE

- **3 June: Working meeting with the Agence Française de Développement** to explore potential synergies for collaboration.
- **12 June : Launch of the new CIHEAM Master in Tirana.** Entitled “Open Innovation and Young Entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean Green Sector”, it is the first CIHEAM Master's to be held outside its institutes.



Mr Arjan Ymeri, Director of the Albanian Start-up Agency and Mme. Frida Krifca, President of CIHEAM

- **12 June: Signature of an agreement between the Lebanese Minister of Agriculture and the Director of the CIHEAM Montpellier** that is paving the way for the forthcoming opening of an office in Beirut.
- **21 June: Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights of Malta and the CIHEAM Zaragoza.**
- **25 June: Recognition of the diplomatic status of the CIHEAM Bari local office in Jordan** by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Meeting with the Minister of Agriculture to discuss new project proposals.

AUGUST

- **The CIHEAM joins ATLAS (Agricultural Transition Lab for African Solutions)** to support sustainable agriculture in Africa.

SEPTEMBER

- **16 - 18 September: Participation in the Arab Water Forum** and co-organization of the “Youth and Gender Voices on Water Security and for Sustainable Future” session. Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.



Mrs. Yasmine Seghirate, CIHEAM Administrator, at the Arab Water Forum

OCTOBER

- **24 - 25 October: 12th Ministerial Meeting and High-Level Meeting in Rabat, Morocco** “Mediterranean Approach to Food Sovereignty: Concerns and Impacts on Sustainable Food Systems”.



Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding

As an organisation engaged in Mediterranean regional cooperation, the CIHEAM develops and strengthens its partnerships with countries and institutions through official meetings and the signing of agreements. This year, the CIHEAM General Secretariat and the Institutes signed 8 agreements and 3 memoranda of understanding with institutional partners for the development of their joint activities, such as the organisation of and participation in events, congresses and conferences on a wide range of topics.



MoU between the FAO and the CIHEAM

On the occasion of the FAO 2023 Science and Innovation Forum, the CIHEAM and the FAO signed a MoU to **strengthen their partnership in the Mediterranean for an effective transition towards more sustainable food systems in the region**. This MoU covers several areas, among which food security, trade, the prevention of distress migration, training and empowerment of women and young people, the sharing of expertise and knowledge to establish sfs, responsible management of coastal areas, etc.



MoU between the IUCN, the Municipality of Gavdos and the CIHEAM Chania

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the Municipality of Gavdos (Greece) and the CIHEAM Chania signed a MoU for cooperation in action **to protect the biodiversity of Gavdos Island**.



MoU between Eratosthenes Center of Excellence and the CIHEAM Chania

In Cyprus, the Eratosthenes Center of Excellence and the CIHEAM Chania signed a MoU on **students and faculty exchange and research**.



Agreement between the Republic of Lebanon and the CIHEAM Bari

On 21 July 2023, the Director of the CIHEAM Bari and the Lebanese Minister of Agriculture, H.E. Abbas El Hajj Hassan - on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Lebanon – signed an agreement to **strengthen the institutional partnership for broader cooperation with Lebanese institutions**.



Agreement between the Libyan Ministry of Local Government and the CIHEAM Bari

On 9 October 2023, the Director of the CIHEAM Bari and the Undersecretary for Municipal Affairs of the Ministry of Local Government of the State of Libya, Mustafa Ahmed Elturki, signed a cooperation agreement to support the efforts of the Government of National Unity to **promote economic development and entrepreneurship in the Municipalities of Sebha, Mourzuq, Ubari and Ghat**.



Agreement between the Republic of Lebanon and the CIHEAM Montpellier

The Director of the CIHEAM Montpellier met the Minister of Agriculture, in the presence of the Ambassador of France, in Beirut, to sign an agreement for the **establishment of a CIHEAM office in the capital city**. This office will strengthen the presence of the CIHEAM on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean and its relations with Lebanon, where many projects are being developed.



Agreement between Albania and the CIHEAM

The CIHEAM and the Albanese Ministers of Agriculture and Education signed an agreement for the creation of a new Master's Programme in Albania.



Membership Agreement with the Mediterranean Innovation Partnership (MIP)

22 April 2024 : This Agreement enabled the CIHEAM to join the "Mediterranean Innovation Partnership (MIP) for youth entrepreneurship and technological transfer in the agro-food sector", a network founded by the CIHEAM Bari. The MIP is composed of relevant governmental bodies, Innovation Support Organizations (ISO) and International Organisations operating in the agri-food sector in Albania, Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, and Tunisia.



Agreement with Agro Innovation Internationale (All)

29 May 2024 : All is the innovation center of the Roullier Group, working for Timac Agro, a company specialized in soil nutrition, plant nutrition, biostimulation, and French animal production. This agreement allows both partners to continue their mission of supporting the development of Mediterranean countries and societies on shared topics and sectors of intervention (such as agriculture, education, natural resource and environmental protection, water, food, nutrition, and health), with a special emphasis on scientific training.



Memorandum of Understanding with the Agricultural University of Tirana-CIHEAM BARI - LUM University "Giuseppe Degennaro"



12 June 2024 : The Agreement defines terms and modalities for the functioning of the International first-level Master's programme in "Open Innovation and Youth Entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean Green Sector", to be jointly implemented by the CIHEAM Bari, the LUM University, the Agricultural University of Tirana and the CIHEAM HQ.



Partnership Agreement with the Organizing Committee of the International Humic Substances Society (IHSS)

25 June 2024 : The purpose of this Agreement is to establish ways of collaboration between the Parties for the 22nd meeting of the IHSS focused on "The Role of Natural Organic Matter (NOM) and Humic Substances (HS) in Achieving Sustainable Development Goals" and hosted in Rimini, Italy, on 25-30 August, 25-30, 2024.



Partnership Agreement with the UfM, UNIMED and BUSINESSMED

Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط



June 2024 : The purpose of this Agreement is to establish ways of collaboration between the parties for the awarding process of the 2024 edition of the "CIHEAM Youth Innovation Award for Green and Blue Transition in the Mediterranean" and a debate on Innovation and Knowledge Transfer, as a "side event" to be held in the framework of Ecomondo 2024, 5-8 November, Rimini (Italy).



Partnership Agreement with the UfM acting as Coordinator of the Coalition of Parties to the Mediterranean Pavilion at UNFCCC CoP29 in Baku

Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط

30 september 2024 : This Agreement enables the CIHEAM to participate as a sponsoring partner in the financial architecture for the construction and management of a "Mediterranean pavilion" within the premises of the CoP 29.

Significant Events of the Year

Each year, the CIHEAM General Secretariat and its Institutes organise or participate in events to share their work, discuss major diplomatic issues concerning the Mediterranean agri-food system, enhance knowledge of the region, its specificities and the challenges it faces, and establish or strengthen partnerships with national or international institutions or organisations.

Here is a non-exhaustive list of events in which the CIHEAM has participated. The aim of this section is to demonstrate the wide range of topics discussed by the CIHEAM, its numerous and diverse partners at all levels, and how the CIHEAM is integrated in the Mediterranean landscape through its activities, especially its diplomatic activities, in order to share its values, objectives and messages.

Rimini Meeting dell'Amicizia fra i Popoli 2023

Since the 80s, every year, during the last Week of August, Rimini (Italy) welcomes people from all over the world to share their faith and culture and build peace, coexistence and friendship among peoples. Politics, religious representatives, intellectuals, artists, and other famous personalities meet in this event. Thus it constitutes a great place for exchange and diplomacy.

The **CIHEAM Bari** took part in the event with a dedicated space in the International Pavilion, in partnership with the Italian Directorate General for Development Cooperation and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. The exhibition space received the visit of the President of the Italian Republic, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Minister of Infrastructure and Transport, the Minister of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forestry, Francesco Lollobrigida; the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Edmondo Cirielli; and the Director General for Development Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Ambassador Teresa Castaldo.



20-25/08/2023

Chania Film Festival Presented a Film about the CIHEAM Chania M.A.I.C.H in the Heart of the Mediterranean



06/09/2023

06/09/2023

XIV Congress of the Spanish Association of Agri-Food Economy Strategies for Agri-Food Systems in the Face of Global Challenges

This congress was organised in Zaragoza by the CIHEAM Zaragoza, the Agri-Food Research and Technology Centre of Aragon, the Faculty of Economics of the University of Zaragoza and the Agri-Food Institute of Aragon. Participants discussed **food geopolitics, governance, sustainable agriculture and food systems**, and the development of new tools to promote sustainable consumption.



The CIHEAM Secretary General took part in the first plenary session of the conference entitled "Food Geopolitics: Global Challenges, Local Impacts" and shared the CIHEAM's 60 years of experience in addressing the challenges of agriculture and food in the Mediterranean. In the margins of the conference, he gave interviews and statements to some of the most prominent media present, such as EFE:Agro and Heraldo Aragona, on topics of key importance to the CIHEAM, such as agricultural cooperation, sustainable agriculture and food security in the Mediterranean.

Euro-Mediterranean Conference on Science Diplomacy

Organised by the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), the conference aimed to highlight the state of science diplomacy in the Mediterranean, discuss current challenges and opportunities, and the way forward as a community of practice.



Secretary General Teodoro Miano shared the holistic, multi-stakeholder approach of the CIHEAM and its field experience in food security, sustainable resource management and socio-economic empowerment of vulnerable groups in rural areas. He cited the MedForums and partnerships with the GID as examples of diplomatic initiatives to disseminate knowledge.

Round Table at the Blue Planet Economy ExpoForum - CIHEAM Bari



The Blue Planet Economy ExpoForum hosted three days of conferences in Rome (Italy) to discuss **the challenge of ecological transition for the Mediterranean** in terms of sustainable development, regeneration and the contribution of youth to a blue future. Designed as a platform for blue innovation, the event focused on blue life protection, blue and green logistics, blue energy, blue food, blue future and youth experience, and blue tourism.

On this occasion, the **CIHEAM Bari**, together with ENEA (the Agenzia Nazionale per le Nuove Tecnologie, l'Energia e lo Sviluppo Economico Sostenibile), organised a round table entitled "Regional Innovation Ecosystems to Foster Food System Transformation Towards the Sustainable Development Goals". As food systems have an impact on all the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, the societal challenges they represent can become a lever for achieving the goals of sustainability and food sovereignty. Within this spectrum, the blue economy has a real role to play.

10-12/10/2023

International Euro-INBO 2023 Conference



The **CIHEAM Zaragoza** participated in the EURO-INBO conference held in Valencia (Spain).

The International Network of Basin Organizations is a grouping of organisations from all over the world working to implement **Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)** in transboundary and national lakes, river basins and aquifers. EURO-INBO is the European branch of the organisation dedicated to the implementation of the European Water Directive. Every year, EURO-INBO organises a conference that brings together representatives of all stakeholders involved in the implementation of IWRM.

The Conference was launched in 2003 so in 2023, it was the 20th edition. CIHEAM Zaragoza was invited to participate through the intervention of its Director, **Raúl Compés**, who participated as a panelist in the session dedicated to “Water and Agriculture: Non-point Source Pollution Management.”

16-19/10/2023

Signing of a new MoU at the FAO 2023 Science and Innovation Forum Strengthening the FAO-CIHEAM Partnership in the Mediterranean

On the occasion of the FAO 2023 Science and Innovation Forum, the Secretary General met the FAO Director General, Mr Qu Dongyu, Chief Scientist, Ms Ismahane Elouafi, and the Director of the Partnerships and Collaboration Division with the UN, Ms Marcela Villarreal for the signing of a new MoU. This agreement aims to provide a framework for stronger collaboration for an effective transition towards more sustainable food systems in the Mediterranean.

16-20/10/2023

4th Mediterranean Plant Conservation Week - CIHEAM Chania Plant Conservation and Ecosystem Restoration in the Mediterranean

The congress aimed to bring together researchers and managers involved with the conservation of wild plants and their habitats around the Mediterranean. For this 4th edition, the MPCW expanded its initial goal - centred on the conservation of species and the relationships between people and the wild or cultivated plants - towards the complementary recovery of habitats, as a contribution to the United Nations Decade for Ecosystem Restoration.

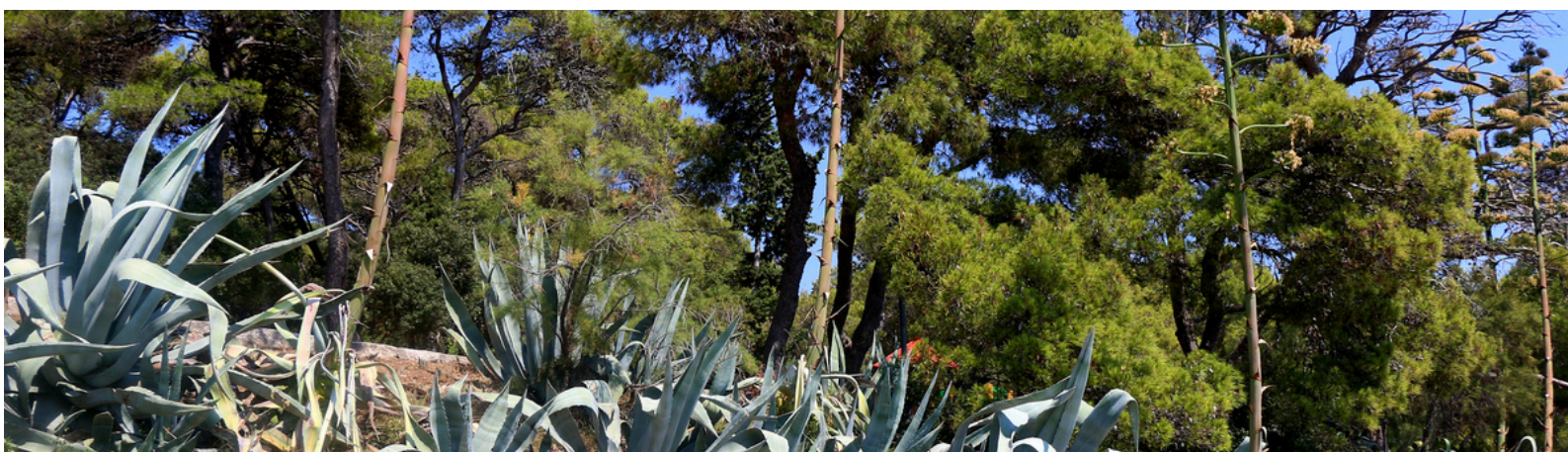


4th Mediterranean Plant Conservation Week

VALENCIA | SPAIN | 23-27 OCTOBER | 2023



23-27/10/2023



Xth PARMENIDES Conference

Trees and Forests in the Face of Global Change: Mediterranean Countries at the Forefront

24-26/10/2023



Last October, in Chania, the CIHEAM and the Groupe Interacadémique pour le Développement jointly organised the Xth Parmenides Conference on the theme "Trees and Forests in the Face of Global Change: Mediterranean countries at the forefront". Participants called for a strong increase in cooperation and mobilisation of Mediterranean decision-makers for the conservation of Mediterranean forests and the people who live there.

To watch the Conference, visit our Youtube channel:



The **next edition** of the Parmenides Conference will take place in Montpellier in June 2025 and will focus on Food and People.



Mediterranean forests

Mediterranean forests encompass a wide variety of ecosystems made up of a **complex mosaic of species**, many of them endemic, which have adapted to cope with different landforms, temperatures, water patterns and so on. Many plant species in Mediterranean forests are **sclerophyllous**, i.e. have small, hard leaves, which enable them to reduce evapotranspiration during hot, dry periods, and thus survive in climates ranging from tropical to arid.



These ecosystems face **growing threats** such as drought, increasing forest fires, soil erosion and flooding. Preserving these ecosystems, which are of high environmental and socio-economic value to the people who live there, is therefore a major challenge for the region. This is why the issues linked to Mediterranean forests are at the heart of the concerns and actions of the CIHEAM.

European Science Diplomacy Roundtable - CIHEAM Bari

Tackling the Food-Water-Energy Nexus in the Mediterranean Region through Science Diplomacy

Climate change, through rising temperatures and sea levels and the proliferation of extreme weather events in the Mediterranean, is threatening Mediterranean societies and economies, their access to resources and their food security, all of which is being exacerbated by increased migration flows and tourism. **Science diplomacy** is a strategic tool to address these threats by exchanging views on **solutions to the region's vulnerability**, harnessing its potential and seizing its opportunities for a sustainable future. Discussing science diplomacy was the objective of this round table in **Tunis** (Tunisia), co-organised by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research of the Republic of Tunisia as part of the Global Service Facility project. The event was coordinated by the CIHEAM Bari.

With as ultimate goal the promotion of prosperity in the Mediterranean, starting with the EU priorities, **conclusions** have been expressed:

- The need to involve the private sector in the innovation ecosystem to ensure that sustainable progress is effective and competitive.
- The need for transparent collaboration and adapted governance mechanisms to promote local adaptation,
- The need for measures to empower local communities,
- The need for ways to support capacity building,
- The need to support young people for innovation,
- The need to transfer the identified strategic information to policy makers in order to facilitate the implementation of sustainable and inclusive practices in agriculture.

International Seminar on the Mitigation of Greenhouse Gases Emissions on Agriculture by CIHEAM Zaragoza

Promoting a Network for Climate Change Mitigation in Mediterranean Agrifood Systems



The Ciheam Zaragoza hosted an international meeting on climate change and agriculture organised together with INIA-CSIC, in the framework of Spain's presidency of Global Research Alliance on Greenhouse Gases. This event brought together representatives from more than twenty countries as well as national and international institutions.

This event aimed to bring together experts from the countries of the Mediterranean basin to share the current state of scientific knowledge in the region on the **quantification of emissions and mitigation**, as well as to explore the potential and feasibility of **collaborative activities** between experts and organizations in these countries to transfer knowledge, methods, and experiences, strengthen scientific cooperation, and bridge identified knowledge gaps. Ultimately, the goal is to create the starting point for a **Mediterranean network on GHG mitigation in the agriculture, livestock, forestry, and land-use change sectors**.

1st Worldwide Coastal Communities Digital Marathon - CIHEAM Bari

21/11/2023



The Mediterranean region is built around the sea. A source of vital resources and home to numerous species, the sea is also home to communities that depend on it, in particular fisheries. In order to provide fishing communities from all over the world with a virtual space where they can exchange experiences and best practices, share needs and promote cooperation and development projects, the 1st edition of the Worldwide Coastal Communities Digital Marathon was organised in Tricase.

World Olive Day



INTERNATIONAL
OLIVE
COUNCIL

World Olive Day is celebrated every year on 26 November by the International Olive Council (IOC). Being part of the environment, tradition and economic environment of the Mediterranean, this tree has a major importance for the CIHEAM. This year, CIHEAM co-organised an event which focused on **the vital role of women in olive culture**, as they make up a significant part of the sector's workforce. For the event, women from all over the world were invited to speak about their work and the challenges they face. The event concluded with a lecture and the signing of a manifesto "For better Knowledge and Recognition of the Role of Women in the Olive World".



WOMANIFESTO

2023 WORLD OLIVE DAY
Women's vital role in olive oil
#WOD2023



*This event was an occasion for the CIHEAM to consider working in cooperation with the **Jordanian Olive Oil Women's Network**...*

The **Jordanian Olive Oil Women's Network** was established in March 2020 as an initiative to bring together women involved in olive oil. The main objective of the establishment of this women's network was to spread the culture of extra virgin olive oil among the younger generations and all segments of society, to enhance educational activities in schools, universities and associations, and to communicate closely with farms, mills and production companies to learn about the production of extra virgin olive oil and to raise awareness about choosing high quality olive oil.



23/11/2023

07/12/2023, 29/02 and 23/05/2024

3 Sessions of Café Doc - CIHEAM Montpellier

Several times a year, the Library of the CIHEAM Montpellier invites the students, teachers, partners and staff of the Institute to **exchange and debate** on current issues or on our cooperation and research activities. The sessions are also open to the public. This year, three Café Doc were organised on the theme: “The Mediterranean forests”, “The Yagour of the Imazighen” and “Analysis of territorial capital from the perspective of social capital in Albania”



The CIHEAM at COP28

As a **partner of the Mediterranean Coalition**, the CIHEAM was present at COP 28 to promote agricultural and food issues. On this occasion, working meetings were held with the **Moroccan Minister of Agriculture, Mohammed Sadiki**, and the **President of the Arab Water Council (AWC), Pr. Mahmoud Abu Zeid**. CIHEAM also participated in side events on agroforestry, the blue economy, the WEF nexus and climate security measures.

2nd Mediterranean Day on Modelling and Statistical and Economic Analysis - CIHEAM Montpellier

Organised in Montpellier by the the CIHEAM Montpellier, INRAE - Université Paris Saclay (France) and the Université de Carthage - L.R. Modélisation et Analyse Statistique et Economique - ESSAI (Tunisia), the Mediterranean Day is dedicated to the presentation of work of researchers from the Mediterranean region in the mathematical, statistical and econometric modelling of economic phenomena.

The aim of the meeting is to **promote the work of young researchers** in the region by allowing them to benefit from the experience of more experienced researchers. It is also an opportunity to meet and exchange ideas, to consider partnerships for international projects and to build a sustainable network of young researchers from the Mediterranean region.



08-10/12/2023

11/12/2023

05-07/02/2024

International CAMA Seminar - CIHEAM Zaragoza The Future of Conservation Agriculture in Mediterranean Areas

According to the FAO, **Conservation Agriculture** (CA) is a farming system that can prevent losses of arable land while regenerating degraded lands. It promotes minimum soil disturbance (i.e. no-till farming), maintenance of a permanent soil cover, and diversification of plant species. It enhances biodiversity and natural biological processes above and below the ground surface, which contribute to increased water and nutrient use efficiency and to improved and sustained crop production”.

In the Mediterranean, where arable land, nutrient and water resources are under pressure, CA could be a solution for more stable yields and support for small farmers. However, only a small number of farmers have adopted CA in their practices.

The CAMA project aimed to **understand the barriers that prevent Mediterranean farmers from adopting CA**. During 4 years, field experiments were carried out to measure the effects of CA on soil quality and crops, and to identify the socio-economic and technical issues.

This seminar acted as a wrap-up of the project. The results were presented and participants discussed the factors that influence the decision to adopt or not to adopt CA and how to improve them. The recommendations from this event will be presented to policy makers and farmers' organisations.



Maghreb Oilseed Meetings

The Oilseed Sector: a Lever for Resilience in the Face of Climate Change and the Challenges of Food Sovereignty in the Maghreb.

05-06/03/2024



The CIHEAM had the opportunity to discuss the challenges and opportunities of the Mediterranean oilseeds sector around the question **"Can the oilseeds sector be a lever of resilience in the face of climate change and food security challenges in the Maghreb?"** Organised by Agropol and the Fédération Interprofessionnelle des Oléagineux du Maroc, this meeting brought together public and private stakeholders working at national or international level to define common objectives to be achieved in order to involve the sector in the food sovereignty of the Maghreb region.

These include: ensuring the availability of seed varieties adapted to agro-socio-economic and climatic conditions; strengthening the provision of advice and local services to small and medium-sized farms to enable them to adopt oilseed crops and increase the area under cultivation; strengthening the organisation of operators to encourage exchanges between the links in the sector; limiting the risks to the internal market from fluctuations in international prices by means of price regulation systems; strengthening cooperation initiatives between the Maghreb countries and with France, in particular to create common technical standards.

Montpellier Global Days

19-20/03/2024

In the context of the current polycrisis and in the face of growing mistrust, it seems necessary to improve knowledge production and sharing. Conceived as a **platform** where local, national and global multisectoral expertise can meet and where science, policy and action can interact, the Montpellier Process aims to address controversies and define multi-scale aligned pathways for sustainable and equitable development, with food systems as the main transformation lever. It intends to create a **network** to share knowledge, support learning communities and facilitate links between the global scientific community.



The University of Montpellier and CGIAR mobilised experts, selected from the scientific community to represent the challenges of the whole world, without forgetting those of under-represented communities and countries of the South, to work together to imagine pathways for sustainable development by transforming food systems. Together, they prepared a common message for new policies at all levels.

At the 2021 edition, the CIHEAM participated in “The Essence and the Challenges of Partnerships for Sustainable Food Systems” panel through the intervention of Ms Yasmine Seghirate who described the levers for **involving women in SFS**, and in the closing panel through Mr Omar Bessaoud. Following this event, CIHEAM participated in the drafting of a paper entitled "Dynamiques Etats-marchés-communautés et Objectifs du Développement Durable" (“State-market-community dynamics and Sustainable Development Objectives”), based on a plenary session held at the Académie d’Agriculture de France in January 2022.

This time, representing the CIHEAM Montpellier Ms Elen Lemaître-Curri spoke in the session “Designing connections and proposing actions for more effective decision making across models, scientific communities, scientists and decision makers, sectors” which was based on the outputs of the first day of discussion.



World Water Day Webinar - CIHEAM Zaragoza

Seeking Solutions for Water Scarcity in Mediterranean Regions



The CIHEAM Zaragoza has invited a panel of experts and students to participate in the webinar to celebrate the World Water Day. Consensus among the participants is clear: **investing in human capital and developing water management skills** are crucial strategies to combat water scarcity in Mediterranean regions, which are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

The event has focused on the need to provide training that will strengthen sustainable water management in a context of water scarcity and climate change. Raúl Compés, Director of the CIHEAM Zaragoza, has pointed out that the Mediterranean region is undergoing one of the worst periods of drought in history and requires greater coordination, better policies and more professionals to improve water use efficiency, increase water availability and reduce losses.

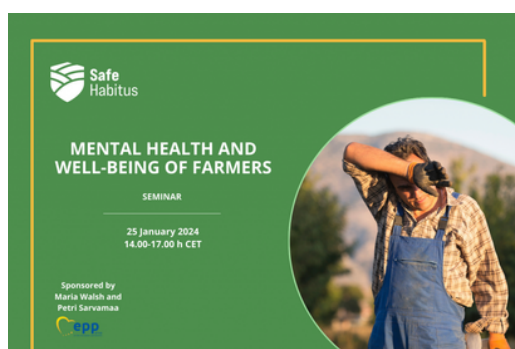
Water scarcity, water quality concerns, droughts, flooding, sustainable agriculture production, and food security are just some of the water-related challenges confronting Mediterranean countries. These issues are expected to intensify in the coming years due to the compounding effects of climate change, demographic growth, and urban development.



Seminar on Mental Health and Well-Being of EU Farmers

- CIHEAM Zaragoza

This seminar aimed at highlighting the pressing problems affecting the mental health of farmers and farm workers. It brought together a large group of farmers, rural mental health organisations, farmers' representatives and policy makers to discuss **the evolving landscape of farming and its implications for individuals, families, and rural communities**, as well as the increasing unpredictability associated with weather and markets, coupled with policy developments at the EU level, emerging as significant stressors undermining the capacity of some to cope with the daily pressures of farming. Throughout the seminar, speakers shed light on the consequences of stressors on farmers' well-being and the future sustainability of agriculture.



MEP Maria Walsh underscored the urgency of prioritising mental health within the farming community. She asserted, **“Mental health can no longer be an afterthought. We need better programs that truly connect with farmers, engaging in meaningful conversations not just about them, but with them.”**

Alun Jones, Head of Projects at the CIHEAM Zaragoza, and leader of the SafeHabitus Policy and Governance Programme, emphasised, “EU and national policymakers and stakeholders were united in echoing the urgency of the situation in farming and the imperative to address mental health challenges in the sector. This discussion is particularly relevant to the EC’s Strategic Dialogue on the future of agriculture.”

In a closing statement, SafeHabitus Coordinator, Dr David Meredith, struck a note of optimism, saying, “For me, the main message that I take from this seminar is one of hope and optimism. Yes, there are challenges, but we heard from practitioners and policy makers that they understand the issues, the need for action and, most importantly, the roll out of practical solutions.” This seminar marks the commencement of a series of SafeHabitus Policy Seminars, designed to foster **collaboration and knowledge-sharing among policy-makers, stakeholders, practitioners, and researchers**.

SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS. CHANGE OF ROUTE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

Sandro Dernini and Roberto Capone

Sandro Dernini, Senior Consultant of the CIHEAM Bari, Head of the CIHEAM office at the FAO since 2018, is co-founder of several international initiatives on Mediterranean food cultures. **Roberto Capone** is Principal Administrator at the CIHEAM Bari and CIHEAM Focal Point on Sustainable Food Systems. Together, they have pooled their knowledge and that of many experts to write this book, which focuses on sustainable food systems in the Mediterranean.

Sustainable Food Systems. Change of Route in the Mediterranean explores the **sustainability of food systems** through a transdisciplinary approach, highlighting the complex challenges facing food systems - from production to consumption - emphasising the vital role of the **Mediterranean diet** in different sectors, and recognising ecosystem-dependent relationships and interdependencies.

Inspired by the discussions held at the Third World Conference on the Revitalisation of the Mediterranean Diet, organised by the CIHEAM Bari, Italy in 2022, the book is an ideal continuation of a cultural journey towards a change in the vision of Mediterranean food systems, moving from agri-food production to sustainable consumption and placing the Mediterranean diet and the consumer at the heart of this new course.

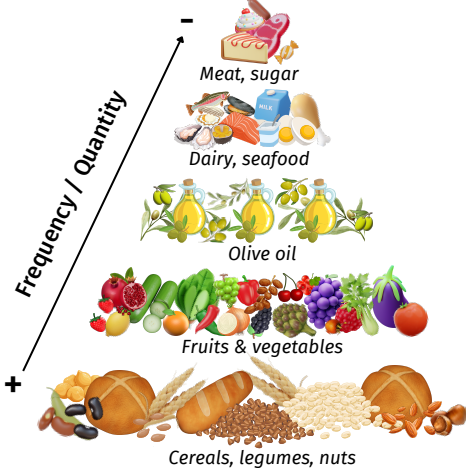
SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS CHANGE OF ROUTE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

EDITORS
Sandro Dernini and Roberto Capone



What does Sustainable Food Systems (SFS) Means ?

As defined by the FAO, a “sustainable agrifood system is one that delivers **food security and nutrition** for all in such a way that the economic, social and environmental bases to generate food security and nutrition for future generation is not compromised. This means that it is profitable throughout, ensuring economic sustainability, it has broad-based benefits for society, securing social sustainability, and that it **has a positive or neutral impact on the natural resource environment**, safeguarding the sustainability of the environment.”



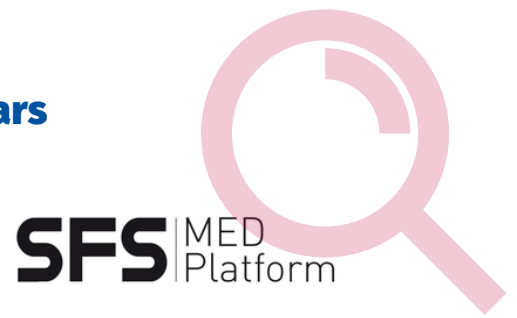
The Mediterranean Diet, a traditional SFS

Based on the eating habits of the Cretans in the 1960s, the Mediterranean diet is an example of a SFS. Recognised for its beneficial effects on health and disease prevention, it provides food that is produced locally using practices that benefit the environment by enhancing biodiversity and making efficient, rational use of resources, and participate to social well-being. Traditional, healthy, with a low environmental impact and part of the local socio-economic development of the Mediterranean, this diet is promoted by the CIHEAM and other Mediterranean stakeholders for the transition to SFS.

Composition of the Mediterranean diet

6th and 7th SFS-MED Platform Technical Webinars

The SFS-MED platform, supported by the FAO, the Union for the Mediterranean, PRIMA and CIHEAM, is a forum for dialogue and collaboration that aims to leverage **collaboration between countries and stakeholders** to advance the **sustainable transformation of agrifood systems** in the Mediterranean region.



The platform has organised a serie of webinars to bring together representatives from governments, businesses, researchers, international organisations and civil society to discuss the role of policy making, research, capacity building, technology and finance in the Mediterrean transformation toward sustainable food systems. The previous ones focused on food waste management and circular economy in the Mediterranean cities, WEFE Nexus to increase food system's resilience to climate change and conflict's cascading effects in the Mediterranean region, the role of multi-stakeholder approaches in linking agri-food SMES to innovation for SFS, women as key player in greening Mediterranean food systems, and the transformation of food systems with a specific regard on the Mediterranean diet. This year, two more webinars were organised.

Green Growth: Strategies and Actions to Shift towards Sustainable Food Systems in the Mediterranean Region



The SFS-MED Platform organised a successful sixth technical webinar entitled "Green Growth: Strategies and Actions to Shift towards Sustainable Food Systems in the Mediterranean Region". The aim of this webinar was to discuss ways to address pressing sustainability challenges in Mediterranean agri-food systems, providing insights into **innovative solutions, collaborative approaches and the importance of transitioning to sustainable practices** for food security, socio-economic development and environmental

protection. Factors such as water scarcity, land degradation and the adverse effects of climate change are having a significant impact on food production in the region, requiring a rapid transition to sustainable practices. The event provided a comprehensive insight into sustainable agri-food systems, covering areas such as sustainable agriculture, post-harvest management, food processing and waste management. Participants were exposed to practical examples of sustainable food production and consumption practices, as well as discussions on the key role of innovative technologies and policies, and targeted financial initiatives.

Blue Transformation: Strategies and Actions for More Sustainable Agrifood Systems in the Mediterranean

USD 450 billion : this is the annual economic value generated by the Blue Economy in the Mediterranean region. The 7th webinar, entitled "Blue Transformation: Strategies and Actions for More Sustainable Agrifood Systems in the Mediterranean", focuses on the challenges affecting the **Mediterranean fisheries and coastal areas**, in particular the fish supply deficit. Aquaculture is developing in the face of this problem. However, to be effective, it needs to be developed in a sustainable way, in terms of the environment and local socio-economic development. The role of policy and cooperation to achieve this goal was discussed during the webinar.





01-05/04/2024

1st International Week with African Universities Good Practices, Opportunities & Challenges

The CIHEAM Chania participated to the 1st edition of this international week, held in Heraklion, through the intervention of Dr. Grigorakis Spyros during the **Forum on New Technologies in Agriculture and Food Industry**.



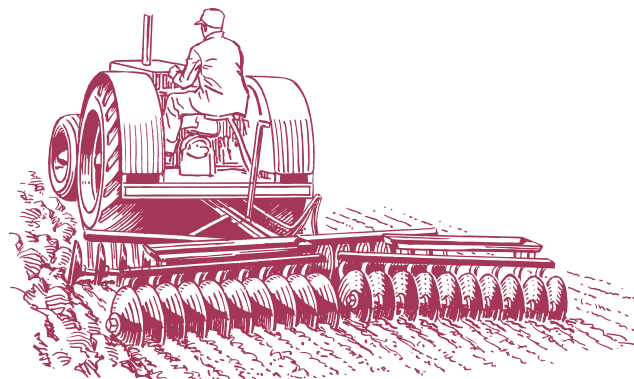
15-17/05/2024

Sponsor of the 5th Edition of Codeway Expo - CIHEAM Bari

The CIHEAM Bari sponsored the 5th edition of the Codeway Expo held at Fiera Roma (Italy). Codeway is a platform that brings together the main stakeholders of international cooperation to support the role of public and private enterprises in the context of the Italian and European development strategy. Its aim is to promote responsible innovation and entrepreneurship in order to **stimulate growth and youth employment**. The exhibition was organised around five themes: healthcare, agri-food and food safety, infrastructures, ecological transition, and education, training and future.



The event was the occasion for the CIHEAM Bari to present its project, STARTUP10, dedicated to increasing food security and youth employment in Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Tunisia and Uganda.



29-31/05/2024

Celebrating Apulia and the Mediterranean Diet In Paris, on the Occasion of the Italian Republic Day



The Permanent Representation of Italy to the International Organisations in Paris, the CIHEAM, the CIHEAM Bari and the Apulia Region's Department of Agriculture celebrated the Italian Republic Day with a series of initiatives in honour of the Region of Apulia. This choice was made in particular to pay tribute to the close **collaboration between the OECD and the Italian Presidency of the G7**, whose summit of Heads of State and Government will be held in Apulia, in Borgo Egnazia, from 13 to 15 June.

The event was marked by a guided tasting of Apulian products, an opportunity to discover and appreciate the rich gastronomy and oenology of Apulia.

The following day, a conference entitled "Agri-food and Sustainable Tourism: the Example of Apulia" was organised in collaboration with the ICE Paris office. It was attended by tourism experts from the OECD and numerous companies promoting local practices in Apulia. The session highlighted how agri-tourism can serve as a model for sustainable development.

Through the interventions of Mr Teodoro Miano and Mr Roberto Capone, CIHEAM recalled the importance of the Mediterranean diet and underlined its commitment to promoting SFS and **strengthening cultural and economic links across the Mediterranean**. They also reflected the importance of international cooperation and cultural exchange in preserving and promoting beneficial food traditions.

World Ocean Day 2024

Awakening New Depths (Understanding, Compassion, Collaboration and Commitment) for the Protection of the Oceans and Seas

27/06/2024

Organized by the Regional Agency for the Prevention and Protection of the Environment (Arpa Puglia) in collaboration with CIHEAM Bari, the initiative is part of the 2024 celebrations of 'World Oceans Day.' 'Awakening new depths (of understanding, compassion, collaboration, and commitment) for the protection of oceans and seas.' Experts in the field gathered to share their experiences and knowledge, providing insights on how everyone can



contribute to the preservation of the oceans. An award ceremony also took place to recognize the best works in the ArpAmare visual arts competition.



25-26/09/2024

International Seminar - CIHEAM Zaragoza Plant Material for the Future of Nut Production in the Mediterranean



The International Seminar on Plant Material for the Future of Nut Production in the Mediterranean Region has been held in Zaragoza, Spain, in collaboration with the Agrifood Research Centre of Aragon (Spain). Nut crops are experiencing an important growth in the Mediterranean, provided the increasing demand of nuts, the favourable climate for growing these species and the long Mediterranean tradition on cultivation of nut trees and consumption of nuts.

The CIHEAM Zaragoza has organised this activity gathering experts from Mediterranean countries with the objectives of assessing the current situation and availability of plant material (varieties, ecotypes, rootstocks - commercially available or in collections), and analysing the research lines and the future of genetic resources conservation and breeding of the nut species with the greatest importance or potential for the Mediterranean region (almond, hazelnut, chestnut, walnut, pecan, stone pine, and pistachio).

The Seminar was also conceived as a seed activity for organising a potential Mediterranean Network on Nuts focusing on the genetic improvement and selection of nut crops, and on the modernisation of production systems to meet the needs of Mediterranean nut production in the future.

01/10/2024

The CIHEAM Bari participated in the G7 High-Level Event | Investing in Lifelong Learning for Job Creation and Resilience: a Dialogue with Africa took who place in Caserta

The results of the meeting are reported in the Final Communiqué "Education and Development" section of the G7 Development Summit, which were chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Antonio Tajani in Pescara on 22-24 October.

The second session, attended by the Director of the CIHEAM Bari Maurizio Raeli, focused on training and capacity building to develop resilient and



sustainable food systems. Notably, opportunities for cooperation with the African Union and African countries to promote food security and climate resilience were emphasised.

Hosted at Palazzo Reale in Caserta, the event was chaired by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Hon. Edmondo Cirielli, and was also attended by the Minister for the Family, Nationality and Equal Opportunities, Hon. Eugenia Roccella.



Mediterranean Approach
to Food Sovereignty:
Concerns and Impacts
on Sustainable Food Systems

Rabat, Morocco
OCTOBER 25 / 2024



12th CIHEAM Ministerial Meeting in Rabat

The Minister of Agriculture, Maritime Fisheries, Rural Development, and Water and Forests of the **Kingdom of Morocco**, **Mr. Ahmed EL Bouari**, alongside **Ms. Frida KRIFCA**, President of the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM), chaired the 12th CIHEAM Ministerial Meeting on Friday, October 25, 2024, in Rabat.

The meeting brought together Ministers of Agriculture, including **Mr. Luis PLANAS PUCHADES (Spain)**, **Mr. Francesco LOLLOBRIGIDA (Italy)**, **Mr. Anton REFALO (Malta)**, and heads of delegations from the 13 CIHEAM member countries, as well as representatives of intergovernmental and international organizations. Recorded messages were also shared by **Ms. Anila DENAJ, Minister of Albania**, and **Mr. Abbas AL HAJJ HASSAN, Minister of Lebanon**.

This high-level meeting continues the political dialogues initiated by CIHEAM since its establishment, placing sustainable agriculture and food at the heart of Mediterranean cooperation. Amidst a region-wide poly-crisis, these strategic sectors for food security are seen as vital levers for promoting inclusive development and shared prosperity across the Mediterranean region.

The central theme of this edition, **“A Mediterranean Approach to Food Sovereignty: Concerns and Impacts on Sustainable Agri-Food Systems,”** emphasizes ways to accelerate the transition towards more sustainable and resilient agricultural and food systems, including the “blue transformation,” in response to challenges such as climate change and water scarcity. Special focus is given to the inclusion of rural communities, particularly youth and women, across agri-food value chains.

High-Level Meeting

On the eve of the Ministerial Meeting, on October 24, a high-level meeting was held at the IAV Hassan II. This event brought together researchers and scientists from across the Mediterranean basin, along with a hundred students, to discuss the theme: **“Food Insecurity in the Mediterranean: Approaches to Supporting Agriculture and Climate at National and Regional Levels.”**

The objective of this gathering was to create a space for dialogue and to shed light on the key challenges related to food security in the region. Discussions focused on various agricultural adaptation measures, food security and sovereignty, innovations, as well as investing in youth and reducing inequalities in the sector.



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The CIHEAM wishes to thank all its financial partners, without whom none of these projects would have been possible :

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