



CIHEAM

International Centre for Advanced
Mediterranean Agronomic Studies

G20

Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture

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Speech of the CIHEAM Secretary General
Mr Cosimo Lacirignola

***Excellences,
Distinguished Ministers,
Ladies and Gentlemen,***

On behalf of CIHEAM, I would like to thank the Turkish authorities for inviting our Mediterranean Organization to this G20 meeting and especially Honourable Mehmet Mehdi EKER, Minister for Food, Agriculture and Livestock of Turkey, who has always supported CIHEAM Activities.

As an Intergovernmental Organization composed of 13 Mediterranean States (some of which are also G20 members), CIHEAM deploys its expertise in specialized training, applied research and technical assistance. Our mission of cooperation is solution-oriented: answering to the needs of our Member States in the field of agriculture, food security, fisheries and rural development.

All the challenges discussed during this ministerial meeting are also the main issues fuelling the debate at the Mediterranean level.

The pressures which mark food systems worldwide are the same in the Mediterranean: water stress, pressure on land, demographic growth, climate change, vulnerability of family farming and fisheries, nutritional transitions, inefficiency in logistics, and strong dependence on external markets with increasing volumes of cereal imports.



Food security will not be achieved only by increasing local agricultural production. Both employment and income generation policies are needed, targeting the most vulnerable sections of the population. Among the most vulnerable, small farmers and rural people, in particular women and the youth, require special attention.

The nutritional dimension of food security must not be by-passed. Adequate nutrition is an integral part of the right to food. Protecting and promoting the Mediterranean Diet is key to achieving an adequate nutritional status for the populations around the Mediterranean basin.

Improving agricultural productivity, strengthening food security and stimulating inclusive growth in rural areas are strategic pillars for a better sustainable development and a greater human security in the Mediterranean Region.

CIHEAM is therefore implementing a set of activities able to assist the European, North African and Middle Eastern Countries to face these challenges.

We are convinced that they can only be addressed through multilateral cooperation. Education, Research, Science and Technical Projects are at the core of the CIHEAM's Food Diplomacy.



Establishing concrete networks is also one of our missions. Let me mention MED-Amin, launched in 2014 at the initiative of the 13 Ministers of CIHEAM in order to implement a Mediterranean version of the AMIS Initiative.

As “Knowledge broker” in the region, we are also convinced that the very sensitive issue of Food Waste and Losses should be addressed through a triple approach:

- need to reduce the waste of natural resources;
- need to reduce the waste of food products;
- and equally important: the need to stop the waste of knowledge and of traditional know-how.

In order to properly address resource and food waste, it is necessary to share knowledge between the countries and between farmers. Traditional know-how in agriculture and environment needs to be preserved and its value enhanced. Agro-Ecological solutions exist in the Mediterranean to overcome the constraints of geography and manage the scarcity of resources. CIHEAM is persuaded that the diversity of agriculture and rural areas are part of the richness of the Mediterranean Area.

This approach has been promoted through the “Feeding Knowledge” Programme implemented by CIHEAM in the frame of Expo Milano 2015 which opened a few days ago in Italy.



Excellencies,

The Mediterranean Agenda of CIHEAM Member countries is complementary to the G20 Members Food Agenda.

I hope that we'll have the opportunity to develop synergies. Some of you are already members of our Organisation, but let me invite all of you to work with CIHEAM.

In the Mediterranean Region, the agricultural experience of your countries is warmly welcome.

The 53 history of CIHEAM is linked to that of Europe and of the Mediterranean Basin. We believe that for a better Mediterranean as well as global future we need to combine our forces and work together sharing our experience and expertise.

That's why CIHEAM is reinforcing its partnership with the FAO and European Union, but also with OECD, the World Bank and IFAD.

We are therefore calling for a greater cooperation with all of you, G20 Member countries or international organisations, because the Mediterranean Future depends certainly – if not only - on a better food security.

