

# FOREWORD

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The adoption of the 2030 Agenda marked the beginning of a new era with a strong commitment from the international community to promote a wide range of transformative and universal changes to achieve Sustainable Development, with local and regional specificities. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) strive to provide inclusion and empowerment for all. The operationalization of this inclusive approach to growth and development relies on integrating the economic, social and environmental dimensions of development. Agriculture and food security play a key role in this regard. Indeed, they are at the heart of the 2030 Agenda.

The world, including the Mediterranean region, is faced with a number of challenges, such as inequalities, significant flows of distress migration and limited access to and poor management of natural resources, including water, land and biodiversity. Various forms of waste related to food, natural resources and knowledge are embedded in these challenges and pose significant obstacles for the achievement of sustainability.

In terms of food, the world produces enough today to feed the planet, but one third, representing 1.3 billion tons per year, is either wasted or lost in the supply chain, from initial agricultural production all the way to final household consumption.

Furthermore, continued increase in the use of natural resources such as water, land, forestry, biodiversity and fisheries, without paying sufficient attention to their depletion or environmental impacts, can lead to ecological crises and security threats. In the Mediterranean region, for example, wasting a precious resource like water may intensify such threats.

Additionally, the waste of human resources hampers development efforts. This happens, for example, in the form of unemployment, lack of access to education especially for girls, “brain drain” from developing countries, disappearance of local knowledge such as family farming practices and products, duplication of ideas without coordination and lack of synergies among relevant actors.

In this context, we are pleased to introduce the 2016 Edition of *Mediterra*, which addresses all of these waste challenges and presents innovative solutions while suggesting policy recommendations for the sustainable management of natural resources, food and knowledge in the Mediterranean.

For the first time ever, an Edition of *Mediterra* has been developed as a partnership between our two organizations: the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The two organizations share the same vision of a prosperous Mediterranean region.

CIHEAM and FAO have collaborated for more than 35 years through joint knowledge generation, brokering dialogues and developing cooperation projects to empower small-scale farmers and fisher folk and develop capacities of different actors. More recently, they felt the need to renew their strategic partnership in response to the 2014 Algiers recommendation, adopted on the occasion of the 10th CIHEAM ministerial meeting, during which the Ministers requested “that FAO and CIHEAM examine the idea of defining a common strategic cooperation agenda designed to support agricultural, food and sustainable rural development in the Mediterranean”.

This 2016 Edition of *Mediterra* is an expression of the renewed strategic partnership between the two organizations. It represents an important step towards building consensus on innovations and inclusive policies needed to respond to the challenges faced by the Mediterranean region, particularly in terms of the triple wastes related to natural resources, food and knowledge. We believe that this new Edition of *Mediterra* contributes to fostering synergies in thematic areas of mutual interest. We hope that this joint piece of work will act as a catalyst for action towards achieving food security and sustainable development in the region, in collaboration with policymakers and all the other actors of the Euro-Mediterranean multilateral cooperation.

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