



7th meeting of the CIHEAM Member Countries' Ministers of Agriculture and Fisheries

Zaragoza (Spain) – 4th February, 2008

Recommendations

Press release

Regional cooperation in the effort to promote sustainable management of fish stocks and water resources in the Mediterranean Basin must be enhanced as a matter of urgency. This is the main idea to emerge from the recommendations adopted by the Ministers at the close of their 7th meeting in Zaragoza on 4 February 2008.

As to the increasing threats to fish stocks, the Ministers drew particular attention to “overfishing, pollution, invasion by non-indigenous species and degradation of the marine environment”. In order that these threats might be countered effectively, they proposed the adoption of various measures as part of a cooperative effort based on solidarity. They consisted in:

- Basing fisheries policies on an analysis of objective, reliable data;
- Increasing and sharing knowledge relating to assessment of stocks and protective measures;
- Further harmonising regulations on fishing, while taking account of ecosystems and applying the precautionary principle.

Ministers believed it was necessary to improve coordination between players in the fisheries sector and those working to develop high-quality aquaculture. Countries that were members of both CIHEAM and the European Union called upon governments to take due account of the Mediterranean zone and its marine resources in the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Development (FPRD).

In the course of his address, Mr Joe Borg, the European Commissioner responsible for fisheries and maritime affairs, told participants that a conference on the new integrated EU/Mediterranean maritime policy was to be organised for June 2008. At pains to point out that this event would involve all the Mediterranean countries, he informed the meeting that it had been organised at the joint initiative of the European Commission and Slovenia, which currently held the presidency of the Union.

As to the management of water resources, which were becoming increasingly rare and were threatened by - among other things - unsound irrigation practice and climate change, Ministers called for the introduction of appropriate checks in public policy on water. They accordingly urged the Mediterranean countries to adopt further measures designed to rein in water demand and modernise infrastructure. Ministers also recommended that CIHEAM, an organisation reputed for its expertise in agriculture, food and sustainable rural development, should help the Mediterranean countries, through its education and cooperative research work, in the task of identifying the water management techniques and policies and the irrigation zones that were most appropriate to each context.

Matters relating to basic agricultural products, notably cereals issues and food safety, were discussed at the meeting and were the subject of two recommendations:

- that the 8th meeting of CIHEAM member countries' Ministers of Agriculture, to be held in Turkey in 2009, be devoted to the strategic cereals market;
- that members support the Spanish request to have the Mediterranean diet inscribed on UNESCO's List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

CIHEAM

CIHEAM was founded at the joint initiative of the OECD and the Council of Europe on 21 May 1962. It is an intergovernmental organisation with thirteen member countries from the Mediterranean Basin (Albania, Algeria, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey).

CIHEAM's establishments comprise a General Secretariat in Paris and four Mediterranean Agronomic Institutes (Bari, Chania, Montpellier and Zaragoza).

In pursuing its three central missions (education, research and cooperation) CIHEAM has gradually established itself as an authority in its fields of activity: Mediterranean agriculture, food and rural development.

CIHEAM - General Secretariat

11 rue Newton - 75116 Paris - France
secretariat@ciheam.org
+33 (0)1 53 23 91 00

www.ciheam.org

CIHEAM-MAI Zaragoza

Apartado 202 - 50080 Zaragoza - Spain
iamz@iamz.ciheam.org
+34 976 716 000

www.iamz.ciheam.org