



**CIHEAM**  
International Centre for Advanced  
Mediterranean Agronomic Studies


## MEDFORUM 2018

# Students and Young Researchers' Dialogue on Important Mediterranean Challenges

Forum

20 September 2018

Bari, Italy



The International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM), together with the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (IMFA), the Centre for Mediterranean Integration (CMI) with the technical collaboration of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and Agreenium (the French consortium for research and education in agriculture, food, animal health, and the environment) organised the 2nd Mediterranean Forum for PhD Students and Young Researchers in Bari, Italy.



175 PhD students and young researchers met at the CIHEAM Bari (Italy), from 18 to 20 September, to participate in the 2nd Mediterranean Forum on **“Research and Innovation: Tools for Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security”**, which gave them the opportunity to present recent research on the basis of previously selected abstracts as well as to listen to keynote speeches from invited guest speakers and panels of experts.

Coming from 27 countries (Albania, Algeria, Bosnia, Chile, Egypt, France, Jordan, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Haiti, Iran, Iraq, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Macedonia, Netherlands, Palestine, Russia, Serbia, Syria, Spain,



South Africa, Tunisia, Turkey), the participants had the opportunity to present their PhD thesis in 180 seconds, and discover success stories of young entrepreneurs and researchers in the region. They participated in training sessions and contributed to strategic discussions on the challenges for sustainable development and agriculture in the Mediterranean region and beyond.

The event aimed to strengthen the dialogue and sharing of knowledge and experiences among PhD students, young researchers and project leaders from the Mediterranean region, with a view to orientating research and collaborative efforts towards the specific development needs of the Mediterranean countries, including the empowerment of women and youth, enhancing employment opportunities for youth and improving rural livelihoods.

The Forum highlighted the role that research can play in developing innovative tools and integrated solutions for sustainable agriculture, food and nutrition security, fostering entrepreneurship and enhancing employment opportunities for women and youth to support the achievement of CIHEAM's Strategic Agenda 2025 (CAPMED) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In her keynote address, Marcela Villarreal, Director of the Partnerships and South-South Cooperation Division, FAO emphasized that "research should be focused on the needs of small-holder farmers and their organizations, including women and youth, because in spite of their fundamental role in agriculture, they do not have the access to the productive resources that would enable them to develop their potential".

During the Forum, CIHEAM and FAO launched a Field Research Initiative for PhD students and young researchers participating in the event. This Initiative will provide participants with the opportunity to carry out short-term research in the field, aiming to strengthen interactions between young scientists, rural communities and local organisations, promote knowledge exchanges, equip youth with practical skills, share best practices and innovative tools for sustainable agriculture and rural poverty reduction across the Mediterranean.

Strengthening research and innovation to enhance employment opportunities for youth and other policies targeting young people are of the highest importance for the Mediterranean area, as a significant proportion of its population is under the age of 30.

The MEDFORUM 2018 is a part of the UfM-labelled project "[Higher Education on Food Security and Rural Development](#)" promoted by the CIHEAM and its main objectives are set in accordance to both the Agenda 2030 and the CAPMED's strategic goals:

- To foster entrepreneurship, women and youth employment;
- To identify and share potential innovation tools geared towards integrated solutions for sustainable agriculture, food and nutrition security;
- To enhance the impact of research and innovation at national and regional levels;
- To understand the drivers of rural migration, including of young researchers.



The [1st edition of the Mediterranean Forum for PhD Students and Young Researchers](#) was organized in the CIHEAM Institute of Montpellier in 2016.

More about [Agreenium](#)

More about [CIHEAM](#)

More about [CMI](#)

More about [FAO](#)

More about [IMFA](#)

More about [UfM](#)

[MEDFORUM2018 website](#)

[PHOTOS](#)

#### CIHEAM

Established in 1962, the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM) is a Mediterranean intergovernmental organisation composed of 13 Member States (Albania, Algeria, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey). As a key player in multilateral cooperation in the fields of agriculture, food, fisheries and rural territories, its missions revolve around four main objectives:



# CIHEAM

International Centre for Advanced  
Mediterranean Economic Studies



Protection of the planet by combating waste in all its forms including waste of knowledge and know-how;



Food and nutrition security by boosting sustainable agriculture and food;



Inclusive development by investing in new generations and fragile territories;



Prevention of crises and resilience of territories.

The CIHEAM Action Plan for the Mediterranean 2025 (**CAPMED 2025**) that falls within the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development of the United Nations is based on these four lines. The CIHEAM carries out its missions through the tools of specialised training, network research, cooperation, technical assistance but also political dialogue and partnerships.

[www.ciheam.org](http://www.ciheam.org)