



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

25 YEARS 1995 - 2020  
BARCELONA  
PROCESS  
Union for the Mediterranean



USING SCIENCE FOR/IN DIPLOMACY  
FOR ADDRESSING GLOBAL CHALLENGES

UfM – S4D4C Workshop

## **What Role for the Science Diplomacy in the Mediterranean: The COVID19 as a case study**

15-16 December 2020

Address of M. Plácido Plaza, CIHEAM Secretary General during the High-Level Virtual Panel on Science and Innovation Diplomacy in the Mediterranean

“Ladies and gentlemen

First of all, I would like to thank the UfM Regional Platform on Research and Innovation and the Horizon 2020 project “*Using Science Diplomacy for Addressing Global Challenges*” for organizing this conference on science diplomacy, at a time when we are going through an unprecedented crisis to which resolution, diplomacy on the one hand and science on the other are contributing.

Indeed, **multilateral dialogue and scientific cooperation are fundamental** to get us out of this COVID-19 health crisis but also to prevent and manage other crises and insecurities that could arise in the Mediterranean region.

### ***What is science diplomacy for the CIHEAM, if not a “raison d’être” ...?***

CIHEAM was created to:

- Provide additional scientific, economic and social education to the professionals and officials that undertake the responsibility of framing and conducting the rural and agricultural development of the Mediterranean
- It was also created to conduct studies and scientific exchanges on international regional agricultural development issues



- But above all, his main mandate is to contribute to the development of cooperation between these Mediterranean scientists, professionals, officials and, through them, between their respective countries' policies

**Sixty years later, these major objectives remain unchanged as countless scientific and cooperation projects have been identified and implemented.**

Nearly 40,000 people have carried out studies in CIHEAM's Institutes. They acquired and shared scientific knowledge and technical skills, experimented and tested protocols but, most important, they had the opportunity to share common ideas, values and ambitions with other young professionals of the region. They are now ambassadors contributing to build our joint regional future.

Many years before the ERASMUS programme, mobility of knowledge and human capital has shaped the strong identity of the CIHEAM.

In fact, when establishing CIHEAM in the early sixties, its founders were pioneers of scientific diplomacy at the service of the Mediterranean.

For us, **"scientific diplomacy" and "cultural diplomacy" are two sides of the same coin** that can take different forms: Research & Development programs, networking, capacity building within mobility schemes, scientific and policy seminars and also regular Ministerial meetings gathering the Member countries' Ministers of agriculture on priority holding topics for the development of the region and to which CIHEAM can contribute.

For CIHEAM, Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in research and innovation is a powerful tool for tapping into the potential of sustainable development of the Mediterranean:

- by mobilizing knowledge production to achieve sustainable growth and decent job creation for the region
- by capitalizing on achieved results and best practices and reducing duplications and fragmentation.

This is clearly the ultimate goal of CIHEAM's flagship projects, such as our Doctoral platform and MED Fora, which bring regularly together young researchers and PhD students from the Mediterranean.



The scientific cooperation developed by CIHEAM addresses issues mainly related to rural and agricultural sustainable development, to food security and to resource management which have led, for example, to

- The creation of an official Mediterranean network on organic agriculture (MOAN)

Or

- To the establishment of an official regional platform for the exchange and analyses of economic and technical information on cereal production, the MED-Amin network

We have also developed numerous scientific collaborations to contribute to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Objectives for the region:

- in food systems adaptation to climate change
- in the preservation and management of terrestrial and marine biodiversity
- in the sustainable management of soils and waters

...so many initiatives that it would be too lengthy to mention them all, so let me please invite you to consult our [websites](#)

The efficiency of our actions and the efficacy of our projects largely owe their success to the involvement of organisations that are present today at this conference.

May these dynamics continue and be strengthened, to build a positive and resilient for future Mediterranean generations and beyond.”