



CIHEAM

International Center for Advanced
Mediterranean Agronomic Studies

**2nd MEDITERRANEAN INDEPENDENT DIALOGUE FOR THE UN
FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT
21 JUNE 2021 (14.30-18.00 CEST)**

**"Enabling Actions for More Sustainable Food Systems in the Mediterranean"
#SFSMED**

Speech of Plácido Plaza, Secretary General of the CIHEAM

“Ladies and gentlemen, Excellencies, Dear colleagues,

First of all, I would like to thank all our partners co-organizers of this second independent dialogue on **“*Enabling actions for more sustainable food systems in the Mediterranean*”** and particularly, the Member States Dialogues Convenors who have agreed to participate in this event.

After the successful 1st Web-dialogue held last April, the collaboration between the FAO, the CIHEAM and the UfM, together with the PRIMA Foundation and the UN One Planet Network offers us today a unique opportunity to bring together different but strongly convergent mandates to directly contribute to the Summit’s vision and objectives.

We hope that these dialogues will foster an inclusive discussion on future pathways for sustainable food systems in the Mediterranean as well as commitment towards supporting their transformation in line with the 2030 SDGs. So, thank you all for being with us today.

The CIHEAM has, since long, prioritized activities on the sustainability of food production and consumption in the Mediterranean and, in particular on the sustainability of food



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systems, using the Mediterranean Diet as a case study for the assessment of the sustainability of the Mediterranean diets.

Sustainability of food systems involves the dynamics “from land and sea to plate” and vice-versa, but also the important specific issues of communities, territories and their interrelationships. Indeed, in CIHEAM we think that Food Systems cannot be well understood if we overlook the interconnexions between the social, economic, health-related, cultural, politic and environmental dimensions they induce.

Today, it appears clearly that the food systems we are now shaping will determine the lives of our future generations. We have to be aware of the heavy collective responsibility that we bear in particular to youth and women whose potential as a force for proposals and a catalyst for innovation is clearly underutilized.

Addressing the current unsustainable trends and interconnected challenges facing the region and their impact on resource management, food production and dietary patterns will require innovative approaches and initiatives based on research and innovation, the development of employable skills as well as the implementation of concrete actions on the ground. And this even more, with the crises linked to the COVID19 pandemic which will aggravate certain vulnerabilities.

Being aware of the imperious necessity of our food systems’ transformation, CIHEAM, with FAO and UfM, is strongly supporting the co-development of the SFS-MED Platform as a multi-stakeholder initiative.

We hope that this Platform will play a significant role in strengthening regional collaborations and interregional dialogue on both shores of the Mediterranean, helping redesigning tomorrow’s food systems and triggering collective, context specific multi-stakeholder actions on the ground at the country level.



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As I mentioned before, we have put a particular focus on our common valuable heritage of the Mediterranean Diet which constitutes a powerful lever for inclusion, bridging sustainable food consumption and production and job creation and in this sense, we are considering the perspective of organizing the third World Conference on the Mediterranean Diet in 2022.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

If one thing appears clearly to all of us now, it is that addressing the agricultural and food challenges facing the region **will require, more than ever, a stronger regional cooperation and that's why, today, our Institutions are standing together.**

I wish you a fruitful meeting. Thank you for your attention"