



Speech of Mr Plácido Plaza, Secretary-General of the CIHEAM for the 3rd Independent FSS Dialogue on "Pathways for the future of Sustainable Food Systems in the Mediterranean"

“Ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues,

Let me start my intervention by thanking **Alwin Kopse** and **Angelo Riccaboni** for their introductory remarks and **José Valls** for his synthetic presentation of the stocktaking exercise conducted by FAO, CIHEAM and UfM on the national and independent UNFSS dialogues that took place in the Mediterranean region, as a starting point to reflect on the ongoing efforts by countries and stakeholders in the aftermath of the Summit and convey a special thanks to **David Nabarro**, Food Systems Summit Dialogues Senior Advisor, for moderating this 3rd SFS-MED dialogue.

It has been of utmost importance that the Member State Dialogue Convenors of **Albania, Egypt, Italy and Turkey**, as well as other stakeholder representatives participated today at this event. Their contribution and the experiences of their respective countries were very important in identifying concrete and sustainable paths in the Mediterranean to accelerate the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development in the region.

These three SFS-MED Dialogues were jointly aimed at advancing towards a common understanding of the complex environment of Sustainable Food Systems (SFS) in the Mediterranean region and their outcomes will support inclusive future discussions and commitments towards their transformation.



It appeared clearly to us that the food systems we shaping today will determine the lives of our future generations and, in this sense, youth and women constitute key agents for change. If an enabling environment is provided, they are and can be a catalyst for positive change and a source of creativity and innovation. This seems an obvious statement. However, it is important to formulate it clearly, here and now, as we bear a heavy collective responsibility.

In the framework of this stocktaking exercise, potential areas of collaboration between regional stakeholders and possible next steps to promote food systems transformation towards sustainability have been identified.

The CIHEAM is implementing different activities relating to Sustainable Food Systems within its Priority Action Areas, in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. In this context, on the occasion of its 60th Anniversary, CIHEAM is planning, on 28-30 September 2022, in Bari, the third World Conference on the Mediterranean Diet **“A Change of Route: Towards More Sustainable and Resilient Food Systems in Mediterranean Countries”**. The Mediterranean Diet as a Strategic Resource for Accelerating the Agenda 2030 in the Region, that will be organized by CIHEAM Bari.

The Conference will address priority issues from our three SFS-MED Dialogues and boost the operationalization of the SFS-MED Platform.

This Platform, with its Coordination Desk hosted at CIHEAM-Bari, will intend to catalyze a more effective transition to climate resilient Food Systems, through more "*green*", "*blue*" and "*circular*" solutions in Mediterranean countries and by strengthening multi-stakeholder partnerships between actors across food systems in Northern, Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries, and this within a collaborative One-Health development approach.

The SFS-MED Platform, by bringing together different mandates in the overall framework of the achievement of the Agenda 2030 Goals, should contribute to:

- Strengthen regional collaborations and interregional dialogues on both shores of the Mediterranean to redesign tomorrow's food systems and to trigger collective, context specific multi-stakeholder actions
- Mobilize more private and public investments in order to respond to the multiple and interdependent challenges that Mediterranean countries face and



that require innovative forms of dialogues and concrete actions on the ground at the country level.

This will include efforts through research, innovation, development of employable skills and knowledge to tackle malnutrition in all its forms while reducing environmental threat, increasing resilience to face climate change and ensuring economic and social sustainability.

By building innovative approaches, Sustainable food systems should become key vectors for promoting green and blue growth as well as circular economy on both shores of the Mediterranean region, thus lessening environmental risks and ecological scarcities.

Our interinstitutional collaboration is a unique opportunity to bring together different but strongly convergent mandates to directly contribute to the Summit's vision and objectives, as well as, to collectively building up the SFS-MED Platform and its programme of work for the coming years.

In CIHEAM, we have put a particular focus on our common valuable heritage of the Mediterranean Diet which constitutes a powerful lever for bridging sustainable food consumption and production.

We hope that the SFS-MED Platform will be an asset in bringing forward a joint vision and common actions on the ground at the country level, and this will certainly require, more than ever, a stronger regional cooperation.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION"