

COP28

AGROFORESTRY SECTOR IN THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN: TOWARDS NOVEL POLICIES, COOPERATION AND FINANCING FRAMEWORKS



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Mutual benefits of cooperation, in the GID and in the CIHEAM, between Mediterranean and European countries for solving forest ecosystems, agroforestry and environment crisis in the area ?



Contribution of GID to COP 28

Workshop « Agroforestry sector in the Euro-Mediterranean »

December 9, 2023 / between 2:00 p.m. and 3:30 p.m.

2:10 p.m.-2:45 p.m.: Latest developments and Knowledge applicable to agroforestry

Intervention in 2 voices during 8 minutes :

Michèle Gendreau-Massaloux, and Jacques Brulhet, both vice-presidents of GID.

Title :

Mutual benefits of cooperation, in the GID and in the CIHEAM, between Mediterranean and European countries for solving forest ecosystems, agroforestry and environment crisis in the area ?

By Michèle Gendreau-Massaloux :

Founded 15 years ago, the Inter-academic Group for Development (GID) is an international association uniting now nearly 30 academies from several countries on the southern and northern rib of the Mediterranean, France, and some academies in sub-Saharan Africa. It constitutes a unique network of scientists at the highest level, in the different areas of knowledge and experience: academies of agriculture, of science, of technologies, of medicine, of human and social sciences... The GID is an independent institution, which aims at a better knowledge of the main problems of the region, the essential demands of the people, and possible solutions.

Every two years, the GID organizes an international conference about a crucial issue. These symposiums, called Parmenides, give strength to proposals and resolutions which are sent to public and private decision makers, national and local.

We consider the CIHEAM, composed of 13 independent States, with its 4 Institutes based in Bari (Italy), Chania (Crete), Montpellier (France) and Zaragoza (Spain), as a major actor and partner.

We decided from year 2019 to have common conferences on common issues. The CIHEAM affords its students and researchers, and the Academicians of the GID propose their capacity of evaluation, science innovation and new technical skills.

The first common conference, held in Bari on October 19-21, was on watersheds. Its recommendations were transferred to the World Water Forum held in Dakar in 2022

The second conference, held in Chania from October 24 to 26, was about trees and forests facing global climate change: how Mediterranean countries can be at the forefront to ensure the necessary adaptation of forests and their management, in relation with users and farmers?

Our method and competences allowed us to present the forest preservation as a tool for ensuring the food security. We also demonstrated that the contact between human and tree is a key factor in the physical and mental health of populations. Consideration of local populations also includes knowledge of their customs, traditions, and the symbolism they attach to the forest. We can benefit from ancestral knowledge.

The crucial point of this Conference was cooperation. The speakers urged the multiplication of exchanges and knowledge, between actors and between disciplinary fields, to strengthen cooperation programs.

To improve analysis and cooperation, we agreed on supporting databases and standardizing these data in such a way that it can be used by everyone.

Young people should also be encouraged to work in the agroforestry sector and increase their employability in the sector.

We recommend improving the legal framework by adding the forestry issue to environmental issues.

All the elements resulting from our common work - research, teaching, land development, integration of new technologies - involve a cost and therefore a need for financing. The establishment of risk mitigation mechanisms in public policies could provide diversification of funding sources. Furthermore, market opportunities could accompany the transformation of forest management; products with high added value – olive, almond, argan, carob tree – should be supported.

In our vision, broad communication must aim to become a permanent dialogue between all stakeholders and the populations. The cooperation of stakeholders and the transformation of practices will also be favored by new institutional frameworks and by the commitment of the conference of the parties to the United Nations conventions on climate, biodiversity, and the fight against desertification.

By Jacques Brulhet :

I am perfectly in line with what Michèle Gendreau-Massaloux has just described in the conclusions and recommendations of our latest symposium held in CIHEAM of Chania, Greece, few weeks ago.

I add this approach with the reflections we are conducting at GID and the Académie d'agriculture de France on the development of agroforestry, **focusing on technical and general economic aspects** of the Mediterranean agroforestry sector.

Mediterranean trees and forests are directly affected by climate change, and so it is vital to **coordinate** and **combine** any **new public policy** with the extensive **research** carried out by specialist institutes, as well as with the remarkable **local initiatives** being developed in several regions.

Similarly, we fully agree that training young people and informing the general public must be priorities.

Safeguarding our forests and planting trees is a major tool for adapting Mediterranean ecosystems to climate change.

It should be remembered that in forestry, as in agroforestry, **it is not only planting trees**, but it is necessary to ensure their growth, which requires long and costly protection and monitoring.

So, how can we finance these actions, essential for the ecological transition, and how make agroforestry **economically viable and sustainable**?

Specific, innovative and adapted measures need to be recommended :

- France has set up a National Pact for hedgerows and agroforestry, granting subsidies to farms that plant or replant trees or hedgerows.

But success will **only come if the ecosystem services** provided by these plantations are truly **monetized**, such as carbon sequestration by trees, their role in water retention or protection of biodiversity.

This ecological remuneration is a major challenge that will require further research, such as the exact quantities of carbon sequestered by different species of trees.

- Agroforestry must demonstrate **other sources of profit** :

- Recent studies have shown greater resilience to climate change in agroforestry systems in the Mediterranean zone, where protected trees offer more stable agronomic yields than in conventional open field systems,
- Farm-integrated trees and shrubs can be a significant source for animal feed,
- Harvesting fruit trees or medicinal plants can also make agroforestry more profitable,
- With consumers increasingly interested and concerned by this ecological transition, it is possible that a special label for agroforestry products could be a new source of profit for the farms concerned.

A final important point for us is **feedback** :

At our GID/CIHEAM symposium in Chania, **we compare** the attempted Green Dam in Algeria some years ago, with the current Green Wall project in the Sahel, two actions built to limit desertification in Africa, in which trees and shrubs play a major role.

The results are very different, but for example in Senegal, Burkina Faso and southern Chad, we are observing the establishment of a veritable African "bocage".

Bocage is agroforestry par excellence, a reproduction of the ancestral bocage in Normandy that we know so well.