High-Level Meeting,

CIHEAM - IAV Hassan II

24 october 2024, Rabat, Maroc

"A Mediterranean Approach to Food Sovereignty: Concerns and Impacts on Sustainable Food Systems."

On October 24, 2024, the Hassan II Agronomic and Veterinary Institute (IAV Hassan II), located in Rabat, Morocco, hosted a high-level scientific meeting, organized by the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM). This event was held as a prelude to the 12th CIHEAM Ministerial Meeting, which took place on October 25. This scientific meeting brought together experts to exchange views on the theme: "A Mediterranean Approach to Food Sovereignty: Concerns and Impacts on Sustainable Food Systems.". Mr. Redouane Arrach, Secretary General of Morocco's Ministry of Agriculture, Maritime Fisheries, Sustainable Development, Water, and Forests, Mr. Abdelaziz El Hraiki, Director of IAV Hassan II, and Mr. Teodoro Miano, Secretary General of CIHEAM, opened the session. Three themes were then addressed in roundtable discussions: "Climate Resilience in Agriculture", "Fostering Innovation through Science and Technology", and "Strengthening Food Sovereignty and Security." The afternoon concluded with the rapporteurs' presentations, which briefly summarized the conclusions of each panel.

Panel 1. Climate Resilience in Agriculture

Our planet is facing multiple challenges: water scarcity, soil erosion, and land degradation. The situation is particularly concerning for the Mediterranean basin, recognized as a "major hotspot" due to its exceptional vulnerability to the impacts of climate change. In the face of the irreversible effects of these transformations on our planet, combined with the challenges

of feeding a growing population, the widespread adoption of agroecological practices has become an urgent necessity.

Moderator:

- **Mr. Mahmoud Elyes HAMZA**, Director, Regional Activity Center for Protected Areas (UNEP)

Panelists:

- **Mr. Stéphane LE FOLL**, President, “4 per 1000” Initiative
- **Ms. Roula Khadra**, Scientific Coordinator, CIHEAM Bari and Arab Water Council
- **Mr. Robin Degron**, Director, Plan Bleu

Rapporteurs:

- **Ms. Oumaima Hrameche**, Research Assistant, LEAF, University of Lisbon
- **Ms. Saida Boumakrat**, Researcher, IAV Hassan II

The discussion began with the following questions: How does climate change impact food security? What are the possible solutions for sustainable resource management? What actions or initiatives should be implemented to strengthen the resilience of our agricultural production systems?

More specific questions, guided by the moderator according to each panelist's expertise, followed: What are the outcomes and findings of the “4 per 1000” initiative? Is it possible to assess the vulnerability level of our systems? What initiatives should be prioritized to address gaps and adapt to the effects of climate change on agriculture? To ensure food security and sovereignty, what proposals does Plan Bleu suggest in the context of the climate crisis?

Mr. Stéphane LE FOLL emphasized the importance of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050, balancing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions with carbon sequestration to limit global warming to a maximum of 1.5°C, with carbon sequestration potentially reaching up to 9 billion tons. Agriculture, far from being merely a source of GHG emissions, can also provide solutions by promoting soil cover as a key alternative to minimize soil erosion and organic matter and nutrient losses, he highlighted.

He also stressed the need for a new mindset among agronomists and a different approach to agricultural challenges. This involves shifting from a farm-focused scale to a broader,

systemic scale at the watershed[1]level, characterized by homogeneous soil and climate conditions. Managing at the watershed level is essential rather than conducting an analysis limited to the farm. While research has already yielded solutions and functional examples, challenges remain in scaling up implementation.

Ms. Roula Khadra highlighted the effects of climate change, ranging from ecosystem degradation and disease proliferation to water shortages and extreme weather events. Agriculture is among the most affected sectors, making this not a temporary crisis but a

structural reality. While immediate impacts on productivity need to be studied, long-term effects also demand attention. Despite these challenges, agriculture remains a strategic sector due to its significant socio-economic impact; it provides income for a large portion of the population and is a key element in the water-agriculture-human nexus that ensures food security.

Ms. Khadra cited exemplary initiatives implemented in various countries, such as:

- Spain's reforestation project,
- Turkey's wastewater reuse projects,
- Morocco's establishment of a public-private partnership policy.

However, these successes are insufficient because ensuring optimal coordination among stakeholders at different levels remains challenging. The segmentation of the energy, water, and agriculture sectors hampers their effectiveness. These sectors need to communicate and interact in an integrated manner to promote policy changes and establish innovative financing mechanisms.

Ms. Khadra also emphasized the necessity of creating an interface between scientists and policymakers to translate research-driven solutions into concrete actions. This can be achieved through policy instruments that guide practices within a specific agroecological framework.

Mr. Robin Degron stressed the urgency of reducing climate change-related damage, even temporarily. The Mediterranean basin presents a unique context, distinct from Europe, Asia, or Africa, with its own culture, history, and soil-climate conditions. According to recent studies, global temperatures have risen by 5 degrees over the past 10,000 years, while an increase of 4 to 5 degrees is expected by 2050. Under these conditions, the basin is losing up to 50% of its water resources while experiencing continuous temperature increases. Finding new water sources has become urgent, as water is increasingly scarce. It is essential to focus on the invention and implementation of water reuse and seawater desalination technologies.

Finally, Mr. Degron underscored the issue of governance unity in the Mediterranean basin. For sustainable development, large-scale actions and strategies must be adopted within a unified and coherent governance framework.

[1]"An area of high ground from which water flows down to a river." Cambridge Dictionary. https://dictionary.cambridge.org/fr/dictionnaire/anglais/watershed

The speakers unanimously emphasized the crucial role of agriculture in food security, income generation, and the socio-economic impacts of climate change on this sector. They also shared a common recognition of the urgency of implementing systemic change to address climate change, particularly within the Mediterranean context. There was consensus on the need for integrated and holistic approaches that jointly consider agriculture, water, and energy, as well as the importance of inclusive participation in decision-making processes.

Regarding actionable measures and the distribution of responsibilities among various stakeholders (governments, businesses, citizens, etc.), the speakers proposed diverse solutions. **Mr. Stéphane LE FOLL** advocated for long-term sustainability, highlighting the goal of carbon neutrality by 2050 and the role of agriculture in carbon sequestration through practices such as soil coverage. **Ms. Roula Khadra** stressed the necessity of immediate action to address the current crisis, particularly in vulnerable sectors, and underscored the immediate socio-economic impacts of climate change on agriculture. She emphasized the urgency of political changes and cross-sector collaboration.

Mr. Robin Degron focused on the issue of water scarcity and governance unity in the Mediterranean basin. He stressed the need for a coordinated regional response and called for a socio-economic transition leading to a profound transformation of cultural norms and values.

Regardless of the varying scales of action and priorities outlined, all panelists agreed on the importance of integrated measures supported by innovative financing solutions.

Recommendations

R1. Promote Socio-Economic and Cultural Transformation: A profound cultural shift is required to steer socio-economic systems toward sustainability. This involves encouraging stakeholders to adopt new norms and values centered on long-term environmental and social responsibility.

R2. Establish Unified Governance: Address the lack of cohesion in governance across the Mediterranean region by creating a coordinated regional framework that aligns policies among countries and sectors. This will be critical to tackling shared challenges such as water scarcity and rising temperatures.

R3. Adopt Integrated and Holistic Approaches: Move beyond siloed sectors by integrating agricultural, water, and energy policies. Key actions include promoting sustainable agricultural practices (e.g., maintaining soil coverage), investing in water reuse and desalination technologies, and aligning these sectors to create resource-efficient and sustainable systems.

R4. Ensure Inclusive Participation and Build Capacities: Engage all stakeholders in decision-making processes and develop high-level skills to foster collaboration and the effective implementation of sustainable practices.

R5. Implement Immediate and Long-Term Policies: Strike a balance between the urgency of climate action and long-term sustainability goals. Policies should prioritize vulnerable populations, providing both immediate relief and building long-term resilience.

Panel 2. Promoting Innovation through Science and Technology

The second panel, titled ***"Promoting Innovation through Science and Technology"***, explored the role of science, technology, and knowledge transfer in fostering innovation and enhancing the capacities of youth and women within Mediterranean agricultural systems.

Moderator:

- **Mr. Raúl Compés**, Director, CIHEAM Zaragoza.

Panelists:

- **Mrs. Loubna El Mansouri**, Director, Digital Pole, Ministry of Agriculture and Maritime Fisheries, Rural Development, and Water and Forests, Morocco.
- **Mr. Giordano Dichter**, Economist, expert in local development.
- **Mr. Octavi Quintana**, Director, PRIMA Foundation.

Reporters:

- **Mrs. Giuseppina Miuli**, Project Manager, CIHEAM Bari, Italy.
- **Mrs. Charifa Touzani**, Researcher and Professor, IAV Hassan II.

At the start of the session, Mr. Raúl Compés presented quotes from the book *How Innovation Works: And Why It Flourishes in Freedom*[2] by Matt Ridley. He highlighted the importance of innovation, its progressive, gradual, and potentially infinite nature. Innovation manifests itself through freedom of expression and ideation but requires concrete investments.

The moderator structured the discussion around two specific questions for each panelist, along with one common question. Highlighting that digitalization is seen as a key innovation that must be implemented in all current strategic plans worldwide, he asked Mrs. El Mansouri: *What are the main obstacles hindering digitalization, and what should be the key incentives to accelerate the digital transition? In which areas of the Moroccan agri-food system can digitalization add the most value, making it more competitive and resilient?* He then asked M. Giordano Dichter : *What is the situation of innovation and entrepreneurship in Mediterranean countries, and are there significant differences between them? How can innovation and entrepreneurship be promoted, particularly among young people and*

[2] Ridley Matt, How Innovation Works: And why it Flourishes in Freedom, Harper Collins Publishers, 2020

women? And finally, the moderator asked M. Octavi Quintana the following questions : *How does PRIMA contribute to agri-food research and innovation in the Mediterranean? Can you provide some data and priorities? How does PRIMA move from knowledge and invention to*

According to **Mrs. El Mansouri**, the digitalization of data in the agricultural sector is essential, and it is crucial to address the challenges and obstacles encountered in data collection. Solving these issues requires a cross-disciplinary approach, integrating a global and holistic vision. Such a strategy would help better control and optimize the digitalization process.

Mrs. El Mansouri emphasized that the importance of digitalization lies in its ability to quantify its impact on sectoral strategies, particularly in terms of food security. This process requires defining rules, processes, a dedicated team, and all the pillars related to this approach. For example, the **Fimascure** project, aimed at reducing water consumption, has helped improve the competitiveness and sustainability of the sector. Establishing agricultural digital services is crucial for ensuring product tracking and traceability. It is vital not to separate agricultural skills from digital tools, integrating artificial intelligence to optimize sector performance.

Mr. Giordano Dichter, highlighted that innovation is a critical issue. Statistics show that the most successful entrepreneurs are generally in the age range of 25 to 45. According to him, there is a need to promote a shift in mindset regarding failure and encourage individuals to venture into entrepreneurship despite the risks. Today, one in two people fears failure, which represents a significant barrier to innovation.
The economist added that it is essential to provide women and young people with opportunities, support them, and offer the necessary resources to create and develop their businesses.

According to Mr. Dichter, the age of 45 is often considered optimal for succeeding in an entrepreneurial project, thanks to the experience and maturity accumulated. It is about investing in the development of an entrepreneurial mindset by providing tools to foster resilience and perseverance. Encouraging the involvement of women in entrepreneurship and having confidence in their ability to achieve results is also crucial. Finally, he emphasized the importance of normalizing failure, which is still often perceived as negative and disheartening in contemporary Mediterranean societies, while it should be viewed as a learning experience. Mr. Dichter reminded us that the fear of failure, especially among young people, is a real barrier to innovation and development.

Mr. Quintana explained that the funding of research and innovation projects for Mediterranean countries focuses on initiatives based on the identification of promising talents and human activities. Each year, a budget of 70 million euros is allocated, supporting around 250 projects with more than 2000 teams working on PRIMA projects. These teams include one European team and two non-European teams.
The main priorities include climate change, water management in agriculture, and food security. These projects follow the "Nexus" concept, which aims to provide practical,

field-applicable solutions, going beyond academic studies. The "Nexus" concept refers to how solutions to Mediterranean challenges are approached by integrating all concerned

sectors, such as water, food, renewable energy, and ecosystems, together. The sectoral approach, which fails to provide practical solutions, must be abandoned.

According to Mr. Quintana, supporting high-potential startups capable of generating added value is crucial for helping them reach both national and international markets. Every innovative project requires a comprehensive and strategic design, from the initial idea to final implementation, in order to maximize its impact and ensure its sustainability.

The speakers highlighted the crucial role of science, technology, and knowledge transfer in fostering resilience, sustainability, and the development of innovative food systems. There was strong consensus on the importance of innovation and digitalization in addressing agricultural challenges, while also inclusively integrating youth and women.

Loubna El Mansouri presented Morocco's **agricultural sector digitalization strategy**, which is based on a holistic approach, integrating data, infrastructure, and supportive political orientation. She illustrated the impact of digitalization by citing the Moroccan sugar industry, where digitized management led to a reduction in water use and a 40% increase in market value. This example shows how new technologies can promote efficiency, competitiveness, and sustainability in agricultural sectors.

Regarding the means to overcome obstacles and make innovation truly accessible and sustainable for all stakeholders, the speakers highlighted various solutions. **Giordano Dichter** discussed the **cultural challenges** in the Mediterranean, particularly the fear of failure, which hampers entrepreneurial spirit. He stressed the need to develop a regional model that values failure as a learning step, which is difficult to achieve with the methods used in Silicon Valley. Mr. Dichter also emphasized that initiatives supporting young entrepreneurs must focus on changing mindsets and including women in leadership roles to democratize entrepreneurship in the region. He referenced key indicators from the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, such as entrepreneurial intentions and early-stage activity rates, to illustrate regional disparities and specific obstacles.

Meanwhile, **Octavi Quintana** identified a **structural weakness**: the difficulty in translating research results into marketable innovations. According to him, many research projects have significant potential to influence public policy, but the current system lacks the support to help these innovations reach commercialization. He called for reforms, especially in Europe, so that SMEs are integrated from the beginning of projects with long-term support. He also reiterated the importance of the "Nexus" concept to ensure that research projects are interconnected, particularly in the context of climate change, to offer global and transformative solutions.

At the end of each panelist's intervention, the moderator posed a question regarding future actions, strategies, and the panelists' views on their relationship with CIHEAM. How do you think CIHEAM can better contribute to innovation in Mediterranean agri-food systems? How can we strengthen the relationship between your institutions and CIHEAM?

Recommendations:

R1. Strengthening Joint Training Programs: Collaboration between international institutions, such as CIHEAM, and national bodies, such as the Moroccan Ministry of Agriculture, is crucial. It would help establish mobility programs for students, facilitate skill transfer, and create professional networks across the Mediterranean. Loubna El Mansouri highlighted a project for a precision agriculture master's program, developed in partnership with CIHEAM Bari and IAV Hassan II, aimed at preparing a new generation of digital farmers and entrepreneurs.

R2. Fund Dedicated to Agricultural Digitalization: Morocco is considering the creation of a specific fund to support digitalization in the agricultural sector, with a focus on assisting young entrepreneurs. This fund would finance innovative projects, enhance digital skills, and promote entrepreneurship in rural areas. It would also aim to replicate success stories like that of the sugar industry and encourage young people to invest in digital agriculture.

R3. North-South and South-South Collaboration: Octavi Quintana emphasized the need to strengthen cooperation between the Northern and Southern Mediterranean countries, as well as South-South collaboration, to address common climatic and environmental challenges. He proposes creating networks that bring together researchers, entrepreneurs, and policymakers to formulate locally relevant solutions with a broader regional impact. This also includes promoting "Nexus" projects that integrate water, energy, and agriculture challenges.

R4. Increased Support for SMEs and Innovative Projects: To ensure that innovations can be commercialized, it is necessary to support SMEs throughout their journey, offering financial and technical assistance over the long term. Mr. Quintana highlighted the importance of reforming European support mechanisms to include SMEs early in initiatives and assist them through critical growth stages. This would enhance their ability to transform research into viable products or services in the market. In terms of SME and innovative project support, CIHEAM Bari offers an Open Innovation-Design Thinking learning model through the Master's program *Open Innovation & Youth Entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean Agrifood Sector*, where multidisciplinary student teams work synergistically with international companies to generate innovative ideas for new products and services. Additionally, the STARTUP10 international development cooperation project, which features coaching and open innovation programs, strengthens incubators and startups in Africa, the Middle East, and the Balkans while connecting local entities with the Italian business ecosystem.

Panel 3. Strengthening Food Sovereignty and Security

The final panel, which concluded this scientific meeting, was titled **"Strengthening Food Sovereignty and Security"** and aimed to highlight various strategies to promote food sovereignty in the Mediterranean basin and address issues related to resilience and food security.

Moderator:

- **Mr. Thierry Dupeuble**, Director of CIHEAM Montpellier

Panelists:

- **Mr. Matthieu Brun**, Scientific Director of the Foundation for Agriculture and Rurality in the World (FARM)
- **Ms. Lamiae Ghaouti**, Deputy Director of Cooperation, Partnerships, and Development at the Hassan II Agronomic and Veterinary Institute
- **Mr. Roberto Capone**, Senior Administrator at CIHEAM

Reporters:

- **Ms. Manal Benani**, Head of Youth and Culture, Africa-Europe Foundation
- **Ms. Claire Maréchal**, Student at IRIS and Content and Publication Assistant at CIHEAM

Thierry Dupeuble addressed the following questions to Matthieu Brun: *Food security, food sovereignty, what are we talking about? What is the current situation in the Mediterranean region? Reconciling security and sovereignty through co-development between the EU and the southern shore? What are the prospects for dairy cooperation?* The moderator asked Lamiae Ghaouti about the following topics: *A regional approach to cooperation to work towards food security: the MED-Amin network, from information to early warning. Cooperation between research stakeholders: the IBTIKAR project.* Finally, Roberto Capone responded to the questions: *How to support the transition to sustainable food systems to improve food security: what are the achievements of the SFS-MED platform? How to reconcile nutritional quality and food security: what are the challenges for the rehabilitation of the Mediterranean diet?*

Mr. Matthieu Brun began the discussion by highlighting the distinction between the concepts of food sovereignty, food security, autonomy, and food self-sufficiency. The concept of food sovereignty, which has gained importance following recent health and political

crises, was originally defined by Via Campesina, an international peasant movement, at the 1996 World Food Summit. Food sovereignty is therefore defined as "the right of each country to maintain and develop its own capacity to produce its food, an essential factor for

national and community food security, while respecting cultural and agricultural diversity." This concept includes issues related to public policy, political economy, and social and environmental justice. It does not exclude trade or interdependence but considers them in the pursuit of food sovereignty. The Mediterranean scale presents particular interest for studying food sovereignty due to the strong interdependencies between the countries in the region.

Mr. Brun then highlighted the major challenges faced by the region: rapid population growth (+140% in 2023), dependence on imports (between 15% and 20% of global wheat imports are destined for Eastern Mediterranean countries), and the impacts of climate change. These factors exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and inequalities, particularly in resource distribution (75% of freshwater resources are located in the northern part of the basin).

Secondly, Mr. Brun emphasized the importance of the Mediterranean diet in adapting to climate change. To illustrate his point, he used the example of the dairy sector, one of the key products of the Mediterranean diet. According to Mr. Brun, milk has a dual strategic importance: first, from an economic and social perspective, as many milk producers exist in countries such as Morocco, Algeria, and Egypt; and second, because it is an essential product for food stability (bread, dairy products). For instance, Algeria is the second-largest importer of powdered milk in the world, indicating a strong dependency on the milk market.

Moreover, dependence on production factors, particularly natural constraints (water and environmental), leads to a "scissor effect," where prices rise while production decreases. However, mega-farms are developing, along with efforts to promote sustainable and profitable livestock farming for producers.

Ms. Lamiae Ghaouti assessed the Med-Amin network, highlighting its strengths and weaknesses. The Med-Amin network was created in 2014 by the CIHEAM member countries following the ministerial meeting held in Malta in 2012. During this meeting, ministers expressed their desire to establish a network aimed at sharing information to combat the volatility of agricultural market prices. Thus, Med-Amin's mission is to monitor food markets and anticipate crises to improve policy coordination and risk management. The network, with its 13 member countries, plays a crucial role in facilitating the collection and centralization of data. However, its use remains limited, and Ms. Ghaouti noted that its impact on policies remains relatively low. Nonetheless, the network has developed since 2012, reaching a more strategic level through national focal points, an early warning system, and increased funding with stronger involvement from France and Spain.

Med-Amin serves as a good example of a Mediterranean cooperation tool aimed at ensuring the food sovereignty of the countries in the basin. By providing crucial information during crises, this network enables the implementation of action plans to guide policies and mitigate shocks.

Then, **Mrs. Lamiae Ghaouti** explained how the alignment between training, research, and development systems works using the example of the France-Morocco cooperation

project.The IBTIKA project represents an investment of 4 million euros over 3 and a half years at IAV Hassan II. This project is innovative in that the EU has never granted direct

investment to research and training institutes.

The goal of the project is not to fund a single action but to create a virtuous cycle across four areas:

- **Training**: Rethinking curricula to align with current needs and trends.
- **Research**: Launching calls for projects within the consortium.
- **Information sharing**: Establishing a platform to gather data.
- **Incubation**: Supporting students, creating start-ups, and providing management and entrepreneurship tools.

Lastly, **Mr. Roberto Capone** emphasized the importance of adopting sustainable food systems (SFS) to achieve food security and sovereignty goals. Sustainable food systems are those that ensure food and nutrition security for all without compromising the current and future economic, social, and environmental foundations. They must be economically viable throughout the process and ensure social and environmental sustainability. Mr. Capone reminded us of the importance of adopting SFS, as well as the challenges faced by Mediterranean populations.

From an environmental perspective, the region is one of the most affected by climate change, with natural resources becoming scarcer, and consumption patterns, along with population growth, leading to overexploitation. Additionally, the region remains too dependent on fossil fuels and chemicals. From an economic and social perspective, the high costs of transportation and energy place additional pressure on food systems. The inequalities between the northern, southern, and eastern shores of the Mediterranean continue to widen. While food security issues have been highlighted by policymakers and international organizations for the past twenty years, hunger and malnutrition remain key concerns, while obesity rates and diet-related diseases have increased significantly. Rural exodus and the aging of farmers are also important issues. Finally, traditional food systems that are part of SFS, such as the Mediterranean diet, represent a heritage that is gradually being lost.

Mr. Capone concluded this session by emphasizing the importance of revitalizing the Mediterranean diet. First, because it is a model of sustainable eating that guarantees food and nutritional security, is economically equitable, and is beneficial to health. It also has environmental advantages as it is based on plant-based products, with a low environmental impact, and respects biodiversity. Additionally, it reflects the culture and traditions of Mediterranean peoples. In 2010, the Mediterranean diet was inscribed on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list, primarily recognized as an anthropological model and a way of life centered around food culture. However, in a globalizing world, especially in terms of food consumption patterns, the Mediterranean diet is at risk of being lost. Mr. Capone raised awareness about the issue of passing on this tradition.

The speakers agreed that achieving food sovereignty in the Mediterranean does not mean severing trade relations or interdependences but rather accelerating cooperation processes. While **Ms. Ghaouti** highlighted the importance of scientific cooperation to anticipate crises

and strengthen informed political decision-making, **Mr. Brun** focused more on cooperation

among the various stakeholders in food systems and the significance of the Mediterranean diet, using the dairy sector as an example. **Mr. Capone** also emphasized the importance of the Mediterranean diet as a sustainable diet from economic, social, environmental, and health perspectives. Going beyond the issue of food sovereignty, Mr. Capone concluded by underlining the cultural dimension of this diet and urged us to protect this heritage.

Recommendations

R1. Share and adopt strategic tools to guide climate change adaptation and strengthen food sovereignty in the region.

R2. Develop a crisis management plan, an adaptable action plan, and create a decision-support tool with a dashboard for the region (Med-Amin).

R3. Create a favorable food environment and promote sustainable diets among the population, particularly the Mediterranean diet, which encourages sustainable resource management, a circular economy, inclusive rural development, and fair trade standards. Political systems and actions must support each other. Educational issues are also crucial for generating expectations and demands for sustainable diets. Refer to the SFS-MED platform, which brings together various stakeholders to promote collaborative actions for the transition to sustainable food systems in the Mediterranean.

R4. Reconcile food sovereignty, the fight against climate change, and trade. It is essential to promote cooperation based on the EU Green Deal and leverage political, commercial, and CSR tools.

Conclusions of the High-Level Meeting:

In summary, the panelists of Session 1 called for holistic and integrated solutions that include inclusive participation, unified governance, and intersectoral collaboration to effectively and sustainably address climate change.

The speakers of Session 2 shared a vision for a Mediterranean future based on collaboration, innovation, and development to create a resilient, sustainable, and competitive agricultural sector. To achieve this, they called for bold policies that support not only technological innovation but also training, social inclusion, and a change in mindset, in order to build a modern, inclusive agrifood economy capable of meeting future challenges.

Finally, the panelists of the last session explained that food sovereignty differs from the concept of food security in that it takes into account public policies, economic policies, and social and environmental justice. It also includes the idea of sustainability, emphasizing the importance of creating food systems that do not negatively impact the environment for future generations. Achieving food sovereignty in the Mediterranean region is not about eliminating interdependencies between the countries in the basin but rather about fostering cooperation (such as the Med-Amin project), fair trade, climate change adaptability through

training and support (such as the IPTICA project), and the promotion of sustainable food systems. In this context, the Mediterranean diet was particularly highlighted, both for its health benefits and for its economic, social, and environmental advantages.