



CIHEAM International Center for Advanced
Mediterranean Agronomic Studies
Sharing Knowledge, Feeding the Future

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between

The Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group of South Eastern Europe (SWG)

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P.O. Box 659
1000 Skopje
North Macedonia

and

International Center for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM)

11 Rue Newton, 75116 Paris
France

MoU
on Cooperation in the Area of Agriculture, Rural and Economic Development,
Environmental Protection and Food Safety

Between

The Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group of the South - Eastern Europe
(hereinafter referred to as "the SWG"),

And

The International Center for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM)
(hereinafter referred to as "the CIHEAM")

Jointly referred to as the "Parties" or individually as the "Party".

Whereas the CIHEAM is an international intergovernmental organisation founded in 1962, at the joint initiative of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Council of Europe, composed of 13 member states (Albania, Algeria, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia and Türkiye) whose mandate is to promote multilateral cooperation in the Mediterranean region in the fields of agriculture, food, fisheries and rural territories sustainable development through capacity building, networked research, development projects and political partnership to meet the needs of its member states.

The CIHEAM, acting as a platform for political dialogue, has developed a strong operational, result-oriented approach to regional cooperation and is operating in a flexible manner to promote intergovernmental, inter-parliamentary and business cooperation.

Whereas the Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group in South Eastern Europe (SWG) as an International Intergovernmental Organization, serves as a platform for regional cooperation in the field of agriculture, food, rural, economic development and trade with agro- and food products.

The Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group has an objective to facilitate the identification of mutual needs and interests, support joint planning of cross-border rural development projects, as well as assure close and permanent cooperation in order to accomplish the common policy of integration with the EU, stimulate and organize initiatives and activities on national, regional and global scale and apply critical approach to the ongoing integration processes in Europe, as well as towards a worldwide cooperation.

Considering shared efforts to promote sustainable agriculture and rural development, environment protection, food safety and quality in South-Eastern Europe.

Emphasizing the importance of the enlargement and rejoining of the Western Balkan countries/territories and Moldova i.e. SWG Members in CIHEAM.

Aspiring to strengthen the relations between both organizations with the aim of promoting agriculture and rural development.

Recognizing the importance of developing and strengthening the agricultural and rural sector, environmental protection, food safety and quality in South-Eastern Europe by joint projects.

Willing to cooperate in promoting sustainable agriculture and rural development, environment protection, food safety and quality and the values of regional cooperation.

Willing to engage in an open dialogue between both organizations.

Agree on the following:

I. PRINCIPLES

(1) This MoU establishes cooperation between the Parties in accordance with the terms provided herein on a non-exclusive basis, in the area of common interest.

(2) The provisions of this MoU shall be without prejudice to the privileges and immunities of the Organizations/Institutions.

(3) Nothing in this MoU, or in any Implementing Agreement or activity relating there to, shall be construed as constituting a waiver of the privileges and immunities of CIHEAM and/or the SWG, nor as conferring any privileges or immunities of CIHEAM to the SWG or its personnel and vice-versa.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this MoU is to further strengthen the cooperation between the Parties in the field of:

- Enlargement and reintegration of the Western Balkan countries/territories and Moldova i.e. SWG Members on multilateral basis in CIHEAM;
- Joint creation and promoting agriculture and rural development programs for the Western Balkan countries/territories and Moldova;
- Strengthening regional (transnational) cooperation in the field of agriculture, rural development, environment protection, food safety and quality;
- Identification, planning and implementation of trans-national projects;
- Development of institutional structures to promote agriculture, rural development, synergies in the development processes of environmental protection, food safety and quality in rural regions in SEE;
- Promoting regional know-how, research, education and innovation transfer;
- Capacity building and networking;
- Scholarships for students from the Western Balkans and Moldova;

III. FORMS OF COOPERATION

(1) The following forms of cooperation may be used to pursue the goals determined within this MoU:

1. Sending observers to meetings or conferences convened by the Parties;
2. SWG hub for the Western Balkan countries/territories and Moldova in the process of reintegration of the WBs in CIHEAM;
3. Providing and transferring of knowledge, know-how and research experiences;
4. Co-organizing educational activities;
5. Co-organizing study visits;
6. Cooperating in the areas of international development assistance;
7. Informing the other Party regarding the activities related to the areas specified within this MoU;
8. Joint appearance as a consortium to undertake various projects on international level;
9. Informing the other Party regarding the potential activities of cooperation and matters of mutual interest;
10. Staff exchange for the purpose of knowledge and experience transfer in accordance with the Parties' respective staff regulations;
11. Joint identification, planning and implementation of projects.

(2) The Parties shall conclude additional Implementing Agreements for more detailed arrangements on specific activities, as required. Such Implementing Agreements shall be concluded in accordance with the respective rules and procedures of the Parties.

IV. CONTACT PERSON

Each Party shall nominate a contact person responsible for coordinating the implementation of provisions of the MoU. Any change of the contact person shall be communicated forthwith to the other Party of the MoU.

V. PLAN OF COOPERATION

(1) Cooperation in accordance with this MoU shall be based upon a mutually agreed Plan of Cooperation which will be included in the additional Implementing Agreement. Agreed plan of activities may be altered by mutual, written consent between the Parties.

(2) The Parties shall, at such intervals as deemed appropriate, convene meetings to review the progress of activities being carried out under the present Memorandum of Understanding.

VI. FINANCES

Finances for activities for the implementation of this MoU shall be provided by both Parties. The specific financial arrangement for particular activity shall be determined prior to its implementation in relevant Implementing Agreements (Scope of Cooperation document). The implementation of this MoU shall be subject to the availability of financial and other necessary resources.

VII. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS AND CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

(1) The Parties agree to protect the confidentiality of personal, proprietary, and other confidential information and materials acquired, exchanged, and provided on the basis of this MoU. Such information or materials shall not be published or revealed to third parties without written permission of the Party whose information is in question.

(2) Intellectual property rights, in particular copyright, of material such as information, software and designs, made available by SWG and CIHEAM to be used to carry out the activities under this MoU shall remain with the originating Party. Copyright of the information, as well as rights to any other intellectual property, developed jointly by SWG and CIHEAM shall be jointly vested in both Parties. Each Party shall have full rights to exploit such jointly owned works without the need of approval of the other.

(3) The Parties agree not to use in any press release, memo, report or other published disclosure related to this MoU any of the other Parties' name and logo without prior written agreement by the Party concerned.

VIII. LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

Any activity carried out by the Parties pursuant to this Memorandum of Understanding must be consistent with the policies, rules and regulations of the respective Party. In no event will either Party be liable to the other under any theory of liability, however arising, for any costs of cover or for direct, indirect, special, incidental or consequential damages of any kind arising out of this Memorandum of Understanding.

IX. TERMINATION AND AMENDMENTS

(1) Each Party may withdraw from this MoU by providing at least 60 days' written notice to the other Party. In such a case, the MoU shall have the termination period of 6 months or until the end of an already commenced project, if the end date is anticipated beyond the 6-month period. The termination period shall be used by the Parties for consultations between the Parties with a view to ending all commenced activities and canceling any planned activities, including activities under Implementing Agreements concluded under this MoU.

(2) The content of the MoU can be amended any time with an annex to the MoU signed by both Parties. To instigate the amendment, the Party advocating for the amendment shall communicate the proposal of the amendments to the other Party. If the other party agrees with a proposed amendment in writing, such amendment shall then be included in the MoU.

X. RESOLUTION OF DISPUTES

Disputes emerging from the implementation or application of this Memorandum shall be resolved between the Parties by mutual agreement, or in a manner agreed between the Parties.

XI. FINAL PROVISIONS

(1) This MoU shall enter into force when signed by both Parties.

(2) It will be in force for **5 years** and remain in effect until cancelled in writing by either party.

(3) This MoU is prepared in two (2) identical samples, out of which one (1) remains with SWG and one (1) with CIHEAM.

SWG

**The Regional Rural Development
Standing Working Group in SEE**

Mr. Boban Ilic

SWG Secretary General



Date

23. Feb. 2026



CIHEAM

**International Center for Advanced
Mediterranean Agronomic Studies**

Mr. Teodoro Miano

CIHEAM Secretary General



Date

23.02.2026

