



## 7th Arab Water Forum, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

### **Regional Dialogue - Community-Led Water Resilience: Water Risk Management and Nature-Based Solutions**

**Date:** Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July

**Duration:** 120 minutes (09:00 – 11:00)

**Theme alignment:** Theme 1 (Working with Nature) + Theme 2 (Participation, equity and trust)

#### **Proposed Modality**

Regional dialogue with case-clinic format (3 cases + facilitated discussion + structured audience interaction), ensuring balanced representation of CIHEAM's four Institutes and dialogue with selected partner institutions.

**Lead Convener:** CIHEAM (HQ – Paris)

**Co-Conveners:** CIHEAM (4 Institutes)

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#### **Rationale**

Across the Mediterranean and wider regions, growing water scarcity, climate change, land degradation and socio-economic vulnerabilities are placing increasing pressure on communities, ecosystems, agriculture and food systems. These interconnected challenges require integrated approaches that combine water risk management, Nature-Based Solutions (NbS), sustainable agricultural practices and inclusive governance mechanisms capable of strengthening both community resilience and food security.

This session creates a structured space to:

- Articulate CIHEAM's strategic vision and operational diversity;
- Confront it with complementary approaches from key regional and international actors;
- Identify scalable, community-led models that bridge policy, practice and finance.

## Objectives

1. **Position CIHEAM's Strategy 2030** and its implementation through the four Institutes, highlighting geographic coverage, thematic pillars and operational tools.
  2. **Showcase community-led approaches** for water security, sustainable agriculture, water risk management and Nature-Based Solutions across rural and peri-urban contexts.
  3. **Strengthen participation, equity and trust** by examining inclusive governance arrangements (gender, youth, local institutions, evidence-based decision-making).
  4. **Identify enabling policy and financing mechanisms** that empower local actors (WUAs, cooperatives, municipalities).
  5. **Co-produce 3–5 replicable models or action packages** for scaling NbS and community water resilience
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## Agenda & Questions

<p><b>09:00 – 09:05</b></p> <p><b>Opening and Welcome</b></p> <p><b>Strategic Keynote</b></p>	<p><b>Teodoro Miano, Secretary General, CIHEAM</b></p> <p><b>Theme: Water Resilience, Food Security and Community Action in CIHEAM Strategy 2030</b></p> <p>Key messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water resilience as a prerequisite for food security.</li> <li>• Integrated approaches linking water, agriculture, climate and rural development.</li> <li>• The role of communities, innovation and regional cooperation.</li> <li>• CIHEAM's Strategy 2030 and operational priorities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>09:05 – 09:35</b></p> <p><b>From Strategy to Practice:</b></p> <p><b>CIHEAM Experiences Across the Mediterranean</b></p>	<p><b>Opening question to all:</b></p> <p>Water resilience is increasingly recognised as a prerequisite for food security, economic stability and sustainable development. In your view, what should be the starting point for building resilience in Mediterranean territories and Arab countries?</p> <p><b>Roula Khadra (CIHEAM Bari)</b></p> <p>Among the nature-based solutions implemented in the region, which ones have demonstrated their ability to reduce water-related risks while generating benefits for agriculture, ecosystems, and local communities?</p> <p><b>Mohamed Elhag (CIHEAM Chania)</b></p> <p>Remote sensing and geospatial technologies are transforming our understanding of water-related risks. How can these tools help communities and decision-makers better identify, monitor, and assess the impact of nature-based solutions in arid regions?</p> <p><b>Emirjona Kertolli (CIHEAM Montpellier)</b></p> <p>Your research focuses on the link between water, energy, food, and ecosystems. How can integrated approaches help reduce water-related risks while balancing environmental sustainability with the economic realities faced by rural communities, and what implications does this have for public policy?*</p>

<p><b>09:35 – 10:05</b></p> <p><b>Community-Led Solutions in Practice</b></p>	<p><b>Case Studies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bilal Derardja</li> <li>• Abdelouahid Fouial</li> <li>• Aymen Sawassi</li> </ul> <p><b>Common question</b></p> <p><b>In three minutes, could you briefly present:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What water- or climate-related risk were you trying to reduce?</li> <li>• What nature-based solution or territorial approach have you implemented?</li> <li>• What concrete benefits have you observed for food security, livelihoods, local economies or social cohesion?</li> </ul> <p><b>Follow-up discussion</b></p> <p>When comparing these three experiences, what matters most: technology, financing, governance or community engagement?</p>
<p><b>10:05 – 10:20</b></p> <p><b>Innovation and Entrepreneurship for Water Resilience</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Nicolas A.Farhat (Berytech)</b></li> <li>• <b>Gamal Allam (Planetek Italia)</b></li> </ul> <p>Short interventions highlighting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovative technologies;</li> <li>• Entrepreneurial solutions;</li> <li>• Opportunities for scaling impact;</li> <li>• Financing, public-private partnerships</li> <li>• Contributions to water resilience and sustainable food systems.</li> </ul>
<p><b>10:20 – 10:25</b></p> <p><b>Regional Perspective</b></p>	<p><b><u>VIDEO MESSAGE (Union for the Mediterranean)</u></b></p> <p><b>Joan Borrell</b> Deputy Secretary General for Stability and Resilience</p> <p><b>Nisreen Tamimi</b> Deputy Secretary General for Sustainable Development</p> <p>How regional cooperation frameworks can help bridge the gap between successful local initiatives and broader policy impact across the Mediterranean?</p> <p><b>Key messages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water resilience as a regional stability issue</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Connecting local solutions to regional policies</li> <li>● Strengthening Euro-Mediterranean cooperation</li> <li>● Moving from successful pilots to large-scale impact</li> </ul>
<p><b>10:25 – 10:55</b></p> <p><b>Regional Dialogue: Building Partnerships for Scaling Impact</b></p>	<p><b>Moderator Yasmine Seghirate (CIHEAM)</b></p> <p><b>Amal Azab, Arab Water Council (AWC)</b></p> <p>Across the Arab region, countries are experimenting with different approaches to water governance. From the perspective of the Arab Water Council, what institutional arrangements have proven most effective in connecting local initiatives with national water policies and long-term resource management objectives?</p> <p><b>Raul Compés (CIHEAM Zaragoza)</b></p> <p>Beyond technical solutions, how can agricultural policies and economic incentives support farmers in adopting more sustainable and water-efficient practices, and how can economic constraints be prevented from becoming barriers to transition?</p> <p>What role should agricultural education, training, and advisory services play in supporting this transition to more resilient production systems?</p> <p><b>Noura Abdelwahab, Gender and social inclusion expert</b></p> <p>Climate and water resilience programmes often focus on infrastructure, technology or finance. Yet your experience shows that social and institutional factors are equally critical. In your view, what are the main levers that enable communities particularly women and youth to become genuine actors of resilience rather than passive beneficiaries of projects?</p> <p><b>Final Round – All Speakers</b></p> <p>Looking ahead to the World Water Forum to be hosted by Saudi Arabia, what should be the single highest priority for regional cooperation to strengthen water resilience across the Mediterranean and Arab regions?</p>

<p><b>10:55 – 11:00</b></p> <p><b>Key Messages and Way Forward</b></p>	<p><b>SG Teodoro Miano</b></p> <p><b>Closing Remarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Summary of key recommendations;</li><li>● Main takeaways for policy and practice;</li><li>● Follow-up opportunities and regional cooperation perspectives.</li></ul>
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