

Water Security in the Mediterranean: Connecting Knowledge, Skills and Regional Cooperation

CIHEAM WORKSHOP

[Euro-Mediterranean Water Forum 2026](#)

Rome, 1 October 2026

16:30 to 18:00

GIORDANO Room

Duration: 90 minutes

A) Background and rationale

Water security and sustainable water management are issues that are both critical and increasingly complex for the future of agriculture and rural areas in the Mediterranean. Increasing water scarcity, recurrent droughts, extreme weather events, the depletion of groundwater reserves and competing uses are, on the one hand, putting water resources under pressure; and, on the other hand, calling existing agricultural models into question and demanding new approaches to the governance, use and optimisation of water.

Building resilience requires technological innovation, integrated governance, closer links between science and public policy, investment in skills and human capital, and enhanced regional cooperation to support the adaptation of Mediterranean agriculture to climate change.

Against this backdrop, the CIHEAM workshop will bring together the political, scientific and capacity-building dimensions related to water security. Building on the key messages drawn from CIHEAM's contributions throughout the Forum, the discussion will explore how knowledge, education and training, innovative approaches and regional partnerships can help translate shared priorities into concrete actions and strengthen water resilience across the Mediterranean.

B) Expected objectives and outcomes

The workshop aims to:

- **Identify the main economic, social and governance challenges** associated with increasing water scarcity and groundwater pressure in Mediterranean agricultural and rural areas
- **Draw lessons from concrete experiences and projects**, including both successful approaches and their limitations, and assess the conditions under which solutions can (or cannot) be transferred across different contexts
- **Examine the potential and limits of technological and agronomic solutions**, including non-conventional water resources, and the governance, regulatory, economic and social conditions required for their sustainable and inclusive deployment
- **Identify emerging skills and capacity-building needs** and explore how education, training and research institutions can better support farmers, professionals, water managers and policymakers in adapting to changing water challenges
- **Formulate practical messages and recommendations for Mediterranean cooperation**, helping connect local and national experiences with regional policy dialogue and collective action on water resilience

Proposed Agenda

16:30 - 16:35 Opening remarks	Teodoro Miano, Secretary General, CIHEAM
16:35- 16:45 Setting the scene: Key takeaways from the Euro-Mediterranean Water Forum	Biagio Di Terlizzi, Director, CIHEAM Bari
16:45-17:40 Moderated panel discussion	Moderator: Yasmine Seghirate, Administrator, CIHEAM General Secretariat Ms. Nour Nsiri, economist and researcher at CIHEAM Montpellier Mr. Ramzi Belkhodja, Head of Training, CIHEAM Zaragoza Prof. Zohra Lili Chabaane, Delegate of Tunisia to CIHEAM, President of the Institution of Agricultural Research and Higher Education

	Ms. Virginia Lachana, Coordinator of the CIHEAM Education Pillar, CIHEAM General Secretariat Mr. Dario Quadri, Project Analyst; Stability and Resilience Division, Union for the Mediterranean
17:40- 17h50	Q&R
17:50 - 18:00 Closing messages	• H.E. Dr. Hussein El-Atfy, Secretary General of the Arab Water Council Arab Water Council • Mr. Teodoro Miano, Secretary General, CIHEAM

PANELISTS - SHORT BIOGRAPHIES

Yasmine Seghirate - Administrator (CIHEAM General Secretariat)

Yasmine Seghirate oversees communications and publications at the CIHEAM General Secretariat and serves as focal point for Gender Policy and Women and Youth Empowerment. A graduate of Sciences Po Aix-en-Provence, she has held positions with ORSE, UNITAID, and the French Development Agency (AFD), and is a founding member of ATLAS.

Teodoro Miano - Secretary General (CIHEAM General Secretariat)

Teodoro Miano has served as Secretary General of CIHEAM since March 2023. Full Professor of Agricultural Chemistry at the University of Bari Aldo Moro and former Vice Rector for International Relations, he has over 35 years of academic and professional experience in agriculture, food systems, and sustainability.

Biagio Di Terlizzi - Director (CIHEAM Bari)

Biagio Di Terlizzi is Director of CIHEAM Bari and an agronomist by training, with over 35 years of experience in sustainable agricultural development and international cooperation. Since joining CIHEAM Bari in 1987, he has held several senior positions and contributed to training, research, and technical assistance initiatives across the Mediterranean and beyond.

Nour Nsiri - Researcher (CIHEAM Montpellier)

Nour Nsiri, economist and researcher at CIHEAM Montpellier, specializing in environmental and agricultural economics, with a focus on sustainable groundwater management, farming systems, and water governance in the Mediterranean.

Ramzi Belkhodja - Principal Administrator, Head of Training (CIHEAM Zaragoza)

Ramzi Belkhodja is Principal Administrator and Head of Training at CIHEAM Zaragoza, where he also coordinates the International Master in Plant Genetics, Genomics and Breeding. His expertise covers agricultural education, plant production, health, and breeding, with a focus on training, research, and cooperation in the Mediterranean.

Zohra Lili Chabaane - President (IRESA)

Zohra Lili Chabaane is President of the Institution of Agricultural Research and Higher Education (IRESA) in Tunisia and Professor at the National Agronomic Institute of Tunisia (INAT). An agricultural engineer by training, she specializes in remote sensing, GIS, and sustainable water resource management, and contributes to agricultural research, higher education, and international cooperation. She also serves as Tunisia's Delegate to the CIHEAM Governing Board.

Virginia Lachana, Head of Education (CIHEAM General Secretariat)

Virginia Lachana is an economist specializing in education coordination, CSR, and institutional management. At CIHEAM, she coordinates academic programmes and educational activities and leads the Educational Working Group, contributing to curriculum development, academic governance, and alumni engagement.

Dario Quadri Ilkhani - Project Analyst, Stability and Resilience Division (UfM)

Dario Quadri Ilkhani is a Project Analyst at the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Secretariat, contributing to regional cooperation on water and sustainable resource management. His work focuses on water resilience, digitalisation, and the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems (WEFE) Nexus.

H.E. Dr. Hussein El-Atfy, Secretary General of the Arab Water Council

H.E. Dr. Hussein El-Atfy is Secretary General of the Arab Water Council and former Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation of Egypt. A civil engineer by training, he has over 40 years of experience in water resources management, irrigation, and sustainable water development at national, regional, and international levels.