



## GID-CIHEAM PARMENIDES IX Conference

Bari, Italy, 19/20/21 October 2021

### Conference Concept Note

The Inter-Academic Group for Development (GID) and the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM) (see box below on these two entities) have decided to jointly organise a conference for the countries bordering the Mediterranean on the theme “**Sustainable Management of Mediterranean Watersheds Faced with the Challenges of Social and Climate Change.**”

Despite the fact that the course of History was not always so smooth, it is obvious to state that there is a form of unity in the Mediterranean basin. From the Crusades to the conflicts between Islam and Christendom via the Barbarians, later, the multiple influences of this or that supranational whole, the common culture forged in Egypt, in Syria then in Greece and Rome, maintained and developed in the Middle Ages thanks to the rise of Arab civilization, resumed, affirmed and disseminated by the whole of Europe, the commercial exchanges initiated by the Phoenicians, developed by the Carthaginians, later by the Venetians, globalized from the 19th century thanks to the opening of the Suez Canal, the common concerns relating to the environment and the protection of this vulnerable Sea, everything confirms the existence of a communion of interests of all Mediterranean countries, Portugal included.

Yet, at the beginning of the 21st century, humanity is faced with the immense challenges brought by the demographic, economic and technological developments of the last two centuries without always sufficiently taking account of their consequences on urban and coastal concentrations, on correlative desertification, on the governance of nations and higher order political entities, on the inequalities between rich countries and less developed countries, and lastly on the major global balances such as the climate.

In view of the history of humanity, over a short period of time we went from the civilization of coal and steam, to that of oil and electricity, then again to that of the digital

and globalization, with a 7-fold increase in the world's population. The Mediterranean basin is at the forefront of difficulties of all kinds, induced by disorders related to exponential developments that are too often poorly controlled.

As from this year, the Mediterranean rim has been affected by massive forest fires that are most probably the consequence of global warming and which remind us of the prophetic speech of a European President: "Our house is on fire and we are looking elsewhere". Researchers give us good reason to believe that the Mediterranean will be one of the first areas in the world to be affected by the various consequences of demographic, social, political and climate changes. Besides, at the origin of the appearance of life on earth, water is probably the most spectacular marker of these changes: rise in sea level, desertification, torrential rains, depletion of resources, pollution, food shortage...

Of course, it is not a question of giving in to panic but of face and address challenges and the best way is to go on the ground and in the case of the water, to go in the watersheds and establish rational and forward-looking management with the actors concerned. At the same time, convergence of interests does not mean uniformity. The Mediterranean region presents on all levels and specifically in the field of climate and water resources, a very great diversity of situations and experiences. As a result, all the countries involved have a great deal to learn from each other.

This is the approach that the GID and the CIHEAM wish to provide to the participants of the Parmenides Conference in Bari. After **presentations of the general framework** on the notion of watershed, the impact of climate change on hydrology, the scarcity of resources and land use planning, **a first session devoted to food security** will include four round tables on the control of demand and of supply, on agroecological transitions and agropastoral systems.

**The second session will address the issue of vulnerabilities** through a first round table devoted to water quality, a second-round table on flash flood risks and a third one on vulnerability indicators.

Lastly, **a third session will address governance** through concrete cases, also stressing the importance of dialogue between stakeholders and organizing a debate between world-renowned economists and jurists revolving around the legal, economic and financial dimensions of good governance.

The concluding session will strive to summarize the work and identify prospects for enhanced cooperation between the southern and northern Mediterranean countries, especially in the fields of research, initial and continuing training and management,

through existing tools or, if necessary, the setting up of new and shared institutions. Lastly, proposals will be discussed and formulated with the aim of sending a strong message to the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum that will be held in Dakar in 2022.

#### **The GID**

The Inter-Academic Group for Development - GID - is an international association established in 2007 by eleven academies from Southern Europe and the African continent. With the ambition to “mobilize knowledge in the service of a true Euro-African co-development”, since its inception, the GID has succeeded in federating an active community of partners from countries in Europe, the Mediterranean and Africa, a geostrategic axis of growing importance.

Today, no other academic network achieves the combination of the two inter-academic components operated by the GID, one geographic, extended to thirty Academies of Southern Europe and African countries, and the other through multiple areas of expertise of the Academies of which it is composed (sciences, technologies, health, agriculture, human and social sciences, etc.).

This originality makes the GID capable of addressing development issues in their complexity, with the independence of any partisan interest conferred on it by its academic status, by presenting itself as a centre of reflection, a force for proposals and a catalyst for action.

[www.g-i-d.org](http://www.g-i-d.org)

#### **The CIHEAM**

Established in 1962, the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM) is a Mediterranean intergovernmental organization composed of thirteen Member States (Albania, Algeria, Egypt, Spain, France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Portugal, Tunisia and Turkey). The CIHEAM has 4 Institutes based in Bari (Italy), Chania (Greece), Montpellier (France) and Zaragoza (Spain) and a General Secretariat in Paris. A major multilateral cooperation actor in the fields of agriculture, food, fisheries and rural areas, its missions revolve around four objectives:



Protecting the planet by struggling against all forms of waste, including that of know-how and knowledge



Food and nutrition security by promoting sustainable food and agriculture



Inclusive development by investing in new generations and in fragile territories



Crisis prevention and the resilience of territories.

These four pillars form the basis of the CIHEAM action plan for the Mediterranean 2025 (CAPMED 2025), within the framework of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In order to meet these objectives, the main fields of action of the CIHEAM are: specialized training, network research, cooperation and technical assistance, but also on political dialogue and partnerships.

[www.ciheam.org](http://www.ciheam.org)