



Centre International de Hautes Etudes Agronomiques Méditerranéennes

CIHEAM BARI

press release

29 June 2023

Representatives of NENA Region's Ministers of Agriculture endorse the 'Bari Declaration' on plant protection

A five-year action plan to manage Transboundary Plant Pests and Diseases in the NENA Region launched at the joint FAO and CIHEAM Bari High-level Meeting

The 'Bari Declaration', a five-year strategic action plan on plant protection, was endorsed last week during a high-level meeting organised by FAO and CIHEAM Bari, with the support of Puglia Region, at CIHEAM Bari's Cosimo Lacirignola Campus.

The representatives of the Ministers of Agriculture from several Near Eastern and North African (NENA) countries addressed new and re-emerging plant diseases, including *Xylella fastidiosa* on olive trees, spotted wing drosophila (*Drosophila suzukii*), red palm weevil (*Rhynchophorus ferrugineus*), maize fall armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda*), desert locust (*Locusta migratoria*), palm fusarium wilt (*Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *albedinis*) and banana fusarium wilt (*Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *cubense*), wheat rust (*Puccinia graminis* f. sp. *tritici*), and fruit fly (*Ceratitis capitata*).

The national plant protection systems were discussed, and future joint strategies were outlined to contain the spread of transboundary plant pests and diseases (TPPDs), which pose a serious threat to food security in areas already affected by climate change.

The countries' delegates firmly confirmed their willingness to cooperate by committing to the allocation of national financial resources to a common fund for TPPDs control and monitoring across the region. Cooperation and shared action plan will help encourage donor countries and international agencies to provide financial resources and support the efforts of local authorities in the Mediterranean region.

Such a plan shall envisage strengthening of technical assistance and staff training, setting up of laboratories, implementation of monitoring programmes, and adoption of measures to compensate farmers forced to remove their crops for disease eradication. Providing resources to finance cooperative research will also be crucial.

CIHEAM BARI

Press Office

Dott. Stefania Lapedota

Via Ceglie, 9 - 70010 Valenzano (BA) ITALIA

Tel.: +39 080 4606271 Mobile: +39 320 7157864

lapedotas@iamb.it - www.iamb.it



Centre International de Hautes Etudes Agronomiques Méditerranéennes

The signatory countries have pledged to undertake the procedures for allocating the resources provided by the member states to a common fund managed by the FAO, once the strategy is officially launched.

Following their visit to the areas affected by *Xylella fastidiosa* and taking stock of the economic, social and environmental damage that TPPDs can cause, the delegates highlighted the pressing need for joining forces to act at regional level and no longer at national level. Moreover, they recognised that the Mediterranean agri-food systems shall urgently be improved to become more efficient, inclusive and resilient.

This implies the development of strategies for sustainable management of TPPDs, climate change adaptation and leveraging of research and innovation to ensure the economic sustainability of agricultural production systems.

Therefore, the 'Bari Declaration' is an important step forward in plant protection policy in the Near East and North Africa Region; it paves the way for a concrete action plan and enhanced cooperation between the countries concerned.

CIHEAM BARI

Press Office

Dott. Stefania Lapedota

Via Ceglie, 9 - 70010 Valenzano (BA) ITALIA

Tel.: +39 080 4606271 Mobile: +39 320 7157864

lapedotas@iamb.it - www.iamb.it