

SYNTHESIS OF THE “MEDITERRANEAN AND AFRICAN BREAKFAST” OF 4TH APRIL 2017.

“Africa - Mediterranean - Europe: for shared and sustainable food sovereignty and security”

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For the third edition of the “Mediterranean and African breakfasts”, co-organised by IPEMED, Bpifrance and La Tribune, the morning of 4th April 2017 was dedicated to the following topic: “**Africa - Mediterranean - Europe: for shared and sustainable food sovereignty and security**”; which was the object of one of [IPEMED’s last publications](#). The event animated by Alfred Mignot, gathered over 110 people and was a success.

As an introduction to the debates, Jean-Louis Guigou, President of IPEMED, wished to [pay tribute to Xavier BEULIN](#), former President of the AVRIL group and the FNSEA, who died in February 2017. He underlined the concepts that were of importance to the former President of IPEMED’s Supervisory Board, that must guide all our reflections on agri-food challenges in the Mediterranean and in Africa:

- the necessary shift of paradigm in companies’ international, and especially European, strategies, and the shift from a **purely commercial approach to a partnership approach**, of [“coproduction”](#) and of [“co-development of territorialised agri-food industries](#);
- promoting a **Mediterranean label** for Mediterranean diet flagship products such as olive oil, dates, durum wheat and wine;
- implementing **“short circuits”** between farmers and consumers, by taking into account the growing will of local actors to be more autonomous and resilient in terms of management of their natural resources and their ecosystems;
- improving **transport and logistics networks**, following the example of the Trans-Saharan Dorsal carried out by the Algerian government;
- fostering a **greater cooperation between Africa, the Mediterranean and Europe**, to favour these changes, and using the project of La Verticale foundation as a lever.

Taking into account all the dimensions of food insecurity...

Based on these structuring elements, the participants agreed on the current food insecurity situation facing the countries of these three regions. **Jean-Louis RASTOIN**, IPEMED expert associate, Professor Emeritus at Montpellier SupAgro and scientific advisor of the UNESCO Chair in World Food Systems, recalled the definition of **food security**, which is a state provided by the availability, accessibility, nutritional and cultural quality of food, as well as by an adapted healthcare environment.

Presenting the main points of an [article co-written](#) with Kelly ROBIN, project manager at IPEMED, he insisted on the systemic character of food insecurity in the Mediterranean and in Africa, and on its consequences on nutrition, health, society (in 2050, nearly one person out of three will live in a rural environment), the economy (because of the high exterior food bill of these countries, estimated at 180 billion dollars), as well as ecology and technology.

Khaled IGUE, Director of Public and Institutional Partnerships of OCP International and President-Founder of [Club 2030 Afrique](#), agreed on this polysemous approach. He highlighted several major challenges such as: land security, the fight against waste and the necessary improvement of preservation, storage and transport of foodstuffs, as well as the implementation of adapted infrastructures.

... to promote a more sustainable agri-business model

By highlighting the limits of the two existing models, which are the traditional system (family agriculture), generating “poverty traps”, on the one hand, and the specialised, globalised, dominating agri-business model causing “food

illiteracy” on the other hand, Jean-Louis RASTOIN, along with all the participants, called **for new inclusive and sustainable farming models** that would give rural and suburban areas a central role. In this regard, the first [“Farmer’s houses”](#) were implemented by OCP. They gather in one place all the products and services small farmers need to develop their activity in a sustainable manner. **Khaled IGUE** insisted on the employment potential of the agricultural and agri-business sectors, upstream and downstream, and on the necessity to specifically support youngsters and women, who account for 75% of processing activities over the African continent. These new agri-business models also need to be adapted to the specific needs of African populations and be used in favour of the local food heritage. Sharing these observations, **Cosimo LACIRIGNOLA**, Secretary General of [CIHEAM](#), underlined the key role of agriculture as a **“social stabiliser”**, in the North and in the South alike. He encouraged “investment in rural areas” to avoid any territorial break and slow down the rural exodus.

Towards new cooperations?

Cosimo LACIRIGNOLA reminded the founding role of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in the European construction and lamented the current procrastinations of the European Union (EU). *“To rethink Africa and the Mediterranean, we must rethink Europe first”*, he said, while **Khaled IGUE** called Africans to *“rethink Africa with its partners”*. **Cosimo LACIRIGNOLA** then presented the action plan implemented by the CIHEAM for the Mediterranean by 2050, [“PACMED 2025”](#), aiming to fight against waste (especially knowledge waste), to ensure food and nutrition security, to favour an inclusive development of the industry, to improve populations’ resilience in the face of climate change, and to solve the root causes of migrations in the region. He renewed his call to make of **agriculture a lever of cooperation between the Northern and the Southern shores**.

Likewise, Jean-Louis RASTOIN encourages the deployment of an ambitious action plan within the macro-region “Africa-Mediterranean-Europe” around two lines: (i) new conquest of interior markets through a **better managed food sovereignty**; (ii) implementation of a **“three-way vertical solidarity”** based on the co-development and coproduction principles that are dear to IPEMED. This action plan could comprise three priority items: a consumer education programme, the implementation of “territorialised circular bioeconomy” projects (BEST), following the example of the “Songhai Leadership Academy” founded by Godfrey NZAMUJO, and finally agreements on “solidarity supplies”. In this regard, the current re-negotiation of the **Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA)** is an opportunity to promote these new cooperation paradigms.

Finally, according to **Khaled IGUE**, **public-private partnerships** can play a crucial role in the improvement of the agricultural sector in Africa. However, the public part would need to play its role: implementing adapted transport, energy and water infrastructures, incentive regulatory framework, etc. *“FDI and local investment”* go hand in hand he explained. All the participants called for more dynamic relations between the economic actors on the field between the two shores of the Mediterranean. **The region could play a role of laboratory to test successful “coproduction” operations between small and middle-market companies**. This last point was defended by **Pascal LAGARDE**, Executive Director of Bpifrance, who reminded the study carried out by Bpifrance Le Lab on [“Agri-food small and middle-market companies: Daring to grow”](#).