



International Congress of Mediterranean Agroecology
<https://www.coordinamentoagroecologia.org/aemed2025en/>
Sicily - Italy

Ministries of Agriculture of the European Union

Ministries of Agriculture of the Mediterranean countries

Agroecology Europe

AEMED 2025 - Policy Recommendation*

1st Mediterranean Agroecology Congress – Agrigento: June 9–12, 2025

The Scientific Committee

HAVING REGARD to the documents and decisions of international organisations on agriculture, sustainable development and the harmonisation of global policies in this area issued by: FAO, WTO, IFAD, UNEP, UNDP, and in particular:

HAVING REGARD to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) adopted in Nairobi, Kenya, on 22 May 1992;

HAVING REGARD to the WTO's 1994 Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) and International Rules on Agriculture;

HAVING REGARD to the Voluntary Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, adopted by the FAO in 1995;

HAVING REGARD to the FAO's 2004 Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Food;

HAVING REGARD to the Rome Declaration on World Food Security, adopted by the FAO during the World Summit on Food Security - 16-18 November 2009 in Rome;

HAVING REGARD to the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests, known as VGGT, adopted by the FAO in 2012;

HAVING REGARD to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the guidelines for agricultural policies increasingly integrated into climate adaptation and mitigation strategies, such as the 2015 Paris Agreement;

HAVING REGARD to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) defined by the United Nations as a strategy “to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all” in Agenda 2030;

HAVING REGARD to the agroecology regulations in force in the Mediterranean Basin, such as, in particular, the “Farm to Fork” strategy of May 2020;

HAVING REGARD to Regional Law 21/2021 of 29 July 2021 of the Sicilian Region on “provisions on agroecology, the protection of biodiversity and Sicilian agricultural products, technological innovation in agriculture, and maritime state concessions”;

CONSIDERING the findings of scientific and experiential abstracts from 16 countries in the Mediterranean Basin and 10 countries in other parts of the world, produced during AEMED 2025, the global trends driving agricultural and agri-food systems are one of the main reasons for the crisis in the planet's ecological processes and social conflicts among humanity, which endanger the stability and resilience of ecosystems and the well-being of people and animals.

Despite their apparent efficiency, the dominant agricultural and agri-food systems are losing resilience, accentuating territorial imbalances and becoming increasingly unstable and susceptible to shocks and crises. FAO data show that since 2016, hunger and malnutrition among the world's population have been on the rise again, as has resistance to antimicrobial drugs, fuelled by intensive farming practices, and current wars have highlighted the vulnerability of Mediterranean agri-food systems.

Many different approaches and frameworks are now being proposed to transform agricultural and agri-food systems towards more sustainable models. Although there are no definitive solutions, the path forward for the European Community has been laid out by the objectives of the two European Green Deal Strategies, Farm to Fork and Biodiversity 2030, as achieving their goals is essential to addressing the environmental, social and global health issues that motivated them, and which remain relevant today.

Beyond the climate and environmental crises, since the 1990s, EU policy has encouraged a policy aimed at increasing the scale of farms, effectively concentrating funding on larger farms. Although these represent 20% of the total, they absorb 80% of CAP funding. In Italy, this policy has contributed significantly to a drastic reduction in the number of smaller farms. In October 2020, there were 1,133,023 active farms in Italy, a 30% decrease compared to 2010 (-487,000). In the 38 years since 1982, almost two out of three farms have disappeared (-63.8%, ISTAT). The reduction has been more pronounced in the last twenty years: the number of farms has more than halved compared to year 2000, when it stood at almost 2.4 million. This decrease in the number

of farms has been followed by a reduction in actively used land of about one third, from 18 million hectares in the 1970s to the current 12.4 million. In fact, the country has lost productive capacity instead of becoming more efficient, and the abandonment of land in the high hills and mountains has led to the degradation of hydraulic-agricultural and hydraulic-forestry systems, with consequent impacts in terms of hydrogeological instability on slopes and flooding in lowland areas. A mirror phenomenon, caused by the abandonment of inland and mountain areas, is the uncontrolled increase in wooded areas, with the risk of greater vulnerability to extreme events and fires.

The Mediterranean, heavily marked by conflicts, still lacks a common process that can find in the agroecological transition, with the commitment of farmers, politicians, scientists and citizens who have shared agricultural, commercial and social systems for millennia, a concrete tool to begin developing a path of free trade that protects biodiversity, the climate and the people who live around it, without affecting the agroecosystem's potential to feed populations and protect the environment.

The diversity of agricultural and agri-food systems in the Mediterranean basin, as throughout the world, means that there is no perfect recipe. However, there is an inclusive model, a vision to pursue, that of agroecology, which already includes the fundamental principle of diversity in its principles. Furthermore, diversity lies specifically at the core of agroforestry practices that sustain and enhance biodiversity, while fostering diversified and multifunctional production systems and landscapes.

CONSIDERING the findings of AEMED 2025,

WE RECOMMEND

A Roadmap for a just agroecological transition in the Mediterranean. The global trends driving agricultural and agri-food systems are one of the main reasons for the crisis in the planet's ecological processes and social conflicts among humanity, which endanger the stability and resilience of ecosystems and the well-being of people and animals.

WE POINT OUT that, despite their apparent efficiency, the dominant agricultural and agri-food systems losing resilience, accentuating territorial imbalances and becoming increasingly unstable and susceptible to shocks and crises. FAO data show that since 2016, hunger and malnutrition among the world's population have been on the rise again, as has resistance to antimicrobial drugs, fostered by intensive farming practices, and current wars have highlighted the vulnerability of Mediterranean agricultural and agri-food systems.

WE PROPOSE referring to the two European Green Deal strategies, Farm to Fork and Biodiversity 2030, as guidelines for the European Community, as achieving their objectives is essential to responding to environmental, social and global health issues.

WE OBSERVE that EU policy has encouraged a concentration of funding on larger farms, causing a drastic reduction in the number of smaller farms, with consequences for production capacity and environmental degradation in marginal areas.

WE URGE that the agroecological transition be considered as a tool for building a free trade process in the Mediterranean that protects biodiversity, the climate and local communities.

WE SUPPORT the agroecology model as an inclusive vision, based on diversity and its fundamental principles, to rebalance agricultural and agri-food systems.

WE BELIEVE that a paradigm shift based on the 13 principles and 10 elements of agroecology is necessary to build resilience in supply and value chains, landscapes and livelihoods.

WE WANT to invest in knowledge and technologies for the recovery of agricultural land, integrating agroecological practices, agroforestry and organic production, and introduce agro-eco-voltaic systems and technologies for mechanisation in difficult areas.

WE INDICATE the need for genetic improvement technologies that involve farmers and researchers, without dependence on seed companies.

WE RECOMMEND reducing greenhouse gas emissions, fossil fuel use, deforestation, and food competition between humans and animals, protecting natural resources.

WE PROPOSE renewed social justice in agricultural and forestry systems, protecting rights and access to food, especially in rural areas.

WE AFFIRM that agroecology, integrating collective health and the environment (One Health), is the best way to reject neo-colonial models disguised as development aid.

WE DENOUNCE that conflicts and occupations, such as, but not limited to, those in Palestine in the Mediterranean, are incompatible with any discourse on sustainability.

WE EMPHASISE that migrants are often victims of exploitation in the agricultural fields of the southern Mediterranean, and that gender justice is an essential condition for food sovereignty.

WE REITERATE the importance of integrated and participatory knowledge for the transformation of food systems, including fair and sustainable economic management.



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WE DECLARE that AEMED, in Agrigento, must be the starting point for a renewed impetus for ecological transition in the Mediterranean.

WE WANT to promote an agroecological development model where the rights of people and the environment are at the centre.

WE INDICATE that the alliance with organic farming is central to Mediterranean agroecology, maintaining consistency with its original principles and monitoring the risks of co-optation.

WE NOTICE the importance of certification systems, which must be consistent and participatory in order to support agroecology without diluting its principles.

WE URGE the support of policies in the next European programming period for a change of model.

WE FIND the European Commission's vision for 2040 does not adequately reflect the perspectives of Mediterranean countries and we strongly encourage greater consultation with them.

WE CALL FOR a fair, innovative, balanced, sustainable and inclusive CAP for all Mediterranean countries.

WE REITERATE that only through peace, justice and cooperation will it be possible to build truly sustainable agri-food systems.

Agrigento, September 12, 2025

Signed
Scientific Committee of AEMED 2025

* This Document is being sent to all Ministries of Agriculture of the Mediterranean countries and of the European Union.