

**CONCEPT NOTE**

**International Conference on Mediterranean Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems**

12-13 of October 2016, Antalya, Turkey

**Background:** Agricultural research in the Mediterranean is scattered within the EU members and in Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPC), while most of the problems and challenges are shared by all countries. Even further; its objectives are largely the same in the whole area, though if priorities can vary from one country to another; the conditions resulting from climate change as well as the objective of sustainable development and food security require rethinking agricultural research to increase its impact. This situation necessitates a coordination action at the level of the Mediterranean to fight fragmentation in fostering the convergence of national programmes and in founding a new critical mass to address the key issues *(such as the growing demand for safer, healthier and higher quality food; the sustainable use of natural resources; threats to the sustainability and security of agriculture resulting from climate change),* to increase excellence and relevance of research, to enhance and strengthen the cooperation within the region in sharing the objectives and the priorities.

A first step of coordination has been achieved through the **ARIMNet** ERA-Net (2008-2012) on coordination of Agricultural Research in the Mediterranean, where strong relationships between partners and a better knowledge of current research programs have been established. As a follow up of it, one of the **ARIMNet2** objectives is to foster Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System in order to ensure that the agricultural research will impact the stakeholders of the Mediterranean basin and support their socio-economies (**WP5: From Research to Innovation**). This work package mainly focuses on the integration of innovation specifically through the ideas about the Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) that has been triggered inside the SCAR-CWG and intended to extend this reflection to the Mediterranean area.

**Objectives**

1. Sharing of opinion and mutual learning on approaches to innovation processes and policies for enhancing the value of Mediterranean Scientific and Technologic Innovation (STI) cooperation.
2. Drawing on conference exchanges, to formulate evidence of good practice in innovation process and policies for informing regional STI authorities and enriching the formal Mediterranean STI policy dialogue.
3. Fostering exchange and networking among Euro-Mediterranean actors on STI cooperation, particularly around strategies for the translation and adoption of outputs into technologies, goods and services.
4. Providing an opportunity for potential networking between innovation actors within the Mediterranean countries.

**Expected Outcomes**

* Improved mutual understanding of the perceptions, roles and success factors of agri-food innovation policies and systems in the Mediterranean region.
* Scenarios for enhancing the outcomes of Mediterranean cooperation through joint innovation activities for translation of R&D outputs into technologies, services, goods, and institutions for addressing global societal challenges.
* Conference recommendations on innovation and Mediterranean STI cooperation partnerships to inform up-coming regional STI policy dialogue.
* Propose a road map and collaborative models to impact future innovation collaborative policies and consolidate the governance of innovation

**Conference Structure: A two-day stakeholders' conference consisting of:** Key note speeches on knowledge based innovation for addressing global challenges, and good practice examples for fostering innovation based on projects supported through ARIMNET.

* **Parallel workshops on:**
1. **Platform/Cluster between firms and academia**: Interest of developing Platforms for innovation/clusters between academic and industries, and representatives ofcooperatives
2. **Extension services and Interactive Innovation models**: How to improve the efficiency of the farmer’s extension services by increasing the interactions between them and the research institutions and other centers of knowledge (i.e. creating operational groups gathering farmers, advisors, researchers…)
3. **Innovation potential of the projects (including social innovation):** How to better valorize the research results? How to increase the innovation potential of research projects? How to predict the innovation potential of a research project? How to improve the sustainability and durability of research projects?Defining Criteria to evaluate the innovation potential of a project (i.e. involvement of end-users, dissemination conferences...)

**Participation will be by invitation only for approximately 100-125 experts and stakeholders from Mediterranean region including representatives from some or all of the following groups:** Policy stakeholders; Members of SCAR AKIS SWG; Academics and research scientists; Mediterranean STI cooperation projects; Local authorities and NGOs; Technology transfer and private sector; Financial and legal experts; Civil society; Implementing governmental agencies; International organisations and Farmers…