



MEDITERRANEAN INTERREGIONAL WORKING GROUP ON DESERTIFICATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE

PROPOSED ROADMAP July 2022

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I. Background

Desertification implies the loss of fertile soils and the inability of [ecosystems](#) to fulfil their regulatory function of supplying goods and services, with dry arid and semi-arid areas being the most susceptible to the effects of desertification, especially those affected by excess salinity and low organic carbon emissions.

Desertification is a growing threat in the EU. Climate change forecasts show increasing vulnerability to desertification in the EU, with rising temperatures and droughts in southern Europe, in particular in Italy, Portugal, Greece, Cyprus, Spain, Bulgaria and Romania.

In this context, climate change is one of the main challenges for agriculture and food, as the consequences of rising temperatures could alter the fragile balance in which many crops grow. Mediterranean regions are clearly sensitive to these phenomena, where agricultural production is particularly vulnerable due to a high proportion of poor soils with low precipitation levels.

Combating desertification should include approaches and proposals from all sectors involved, especially the agricultural sector and sectors linked to water resources management. Efforts to combat desertification should be part of integrated land use in arid and semi-arid areas, mainly rain-fed areas, to prevent and reduce land degradation, the rehabilitation of partially degraded lands and the recovery of already deserted lands.

Special report on *combating desertification in the EU: an increasing threat requiring further action* from the European Court of Auditors¹ indicates that "the risk of desertification in the EU was not being addressed effectively and efficiently... We recommend that the Commission propose a better understanding of land degradation and desertification in the EU..."

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Climate change adaptation
of dryland agricultural systems
in the Mediterranean area

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Based on the conclusions and results of the LIFE AMDRYC4 project, we would like to launch a common initiative of the Mediterranean regions to provide the EU institutions with a contribution to a better understanding of land degradation and desertification in the EU from a Mediterranean perspective and therefore a better assessment of needs in terms of policy, strategies and funding.

II. Objectives of the working group

- Position paper on the specific challenges of the Mediterranean in relation to sustainable management and use of resources in combating desertification and land degradation and synergistic effects with other ecosystem services, such as climate change adaptation and biodiversity mitigation and conservation. Current scenario, trends, needs. Contribution to the current EU agenda on carbon agriculture and the “Fit to 55” package.
- Disseminate the results of LIFE AMDRY for possible application/replication in other areas at risk of desertification and drought
- To explore a project proposal: *Towards a global indicator on adaptation to climate change from a Mediterranean perspective.*

III. Activities

SHORT-TERM

- Sending during the penultimate week of July the draft of the first conclusions to the participants of the 1st Forum, as well as the Roadmap and documentation presented to the Forum, for assessment and proposal of comments within a maximum of 10 days.
- After the deadline for comments, based on the conclusions of the Forum, a draft COMMON POSITION will be prepared, which will be sent through the CIM-CRPM to all regions affected by desertification or stakeholders, for presentation by videoconference under the newly constituted Forum, together with Project Life AMDRYC4 and its possible replication in these regions. This videoconference is expected to take place on 9 September and will set a deadline for comment.

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I FORO INTERREGIONAL MEDITERRÁNEO DE LUCHA CONTRA LA DESERTIFICACIÓN

I FORUM INTERREGIONAL
MEDITERRANÉEN DE LUTTE
CONTRE LA DÉSERTEFICATION

I INTERREGIONAL
MEDITERRANEAN
FORUM TO COMBAT
DESERTIFICATION

- Approval during the first week of October (tbc date) of the COMMON POSITION document, during a face-to-face meeting in Romania, for institutional transfer to the responsible authorities of the regions involved.
- Presentation and institutional signature of the COMUN POSICION at the PLENARY ASSEMBLY OF THE CRPM, which will take place in Crete on 27 October.

IN THE MEDIUM TERM

- Proposal for a common project: *Towards a global indicator on adaptation to climate change from a Mediterranean perspective.*
 - Summary, development of the project proposal
 - Comments from interested partners
 - Analysis of the EU funding programme
- Presentation of the draft to the Commission



I FORO INTERREGIONAL
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CONTRA LA DESERTIFICACIÓN

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