

## Presentation of CEDDEM: European Centre of Euro-Mediterranean Studies and Sustainable Development

### Issues

The Mediterranean production of medicinal, aromatic and perfume plants (MAPP) is the illustration of multifunctional agriculture, an indispensable element in the stability of the economy of its territory.

From the early 2000s, MAPP benefitted from a spectacular revival of interest among consumers in the field of cosmetics, perfumes, food flavouring, wellness products and pharmaceuticals. Several recent studies show that despite a difficult global economic environment, demand for consumer products incorporating these natural raw materials is on the increase.

The Mediterranean basin is particularly concerned because a large amount of MAPP production is often in a globalized market which plays the role of both a hub and a large consumer market. But the Mediterranean basin is one of the most important tourist areas in the world and MAPP, along with their use in the landscape often forge the image of the territory, making them seem even more strategic there.

Regional issues are important and, by their nature and their environment, these plants are faced with different challenges:

- **Technical challenges** insofar as the species concerned are numerous and valorisations complex and diverse, the technical means upstream are generally limited for this small agricultural production. It is therefore highly desirable to share expertise and technical innovations and transfer best practices while of course respecting specific corporate information. These challenges can be seen more specifically in the fields of crop protection and the quality of raw materials.
- **Economic challenges** because these markets are, for the most part, restricted, and due to the fact that lack of information or organization can cause sudden variations which are detrimental to the sustainability of markets. Updated economic information should be accessible to the greatest number of partners, including producers who do not often have direct access to this type of information.
- **Other economic challenges**, with the challenge of the distribution of agro-identity products of good quality capable of satisfying the local population and the curiosity of all consumers.

- **Social challenges**, because the production of many MAPP is an agricultural sector where the need for labour is important and in fact, is sometimes confronted, due to the relatively small volumes produced, with relocation issues. Sustaining this sector could help to secure permanent jobs and maintain expertise in rural areas.
- **Environmental challenges**: according to IPCC forecasts, Mediterranean countries are likely to be particularly affected by climate change and its significant impacts on biodiversity. It is therefore important that these sectors adopt measures for the conservation of biodiversity, especially as some of these productions have an important role in the composition of landscapes.
- **Regulatory and normative challenges**: until recently, the issue of the fine composition of essential oils arose only to clarify their identity or as a reference to a quality standard, to prevent fraud or specify some of possible problems encountered. Since the 2000s, the development of toxicology in various forms and subsequent regulations has changed this situation. The REACH regulation on chemicals provides a programme of studies including different toxicological tests for essential oils whose detailed composition must be known. If this knowledge is technically possible, it encounters considerable variability regarding the naturalness of the products.
- **Tourism challenges**: very often, MAPP and a few other very specific productions are strongly linked to the territory where they are produced, such as: Provence lavender, Morocco roses, Neroli from Tunisia, Egyptian jasmine, Calabrian bergamot, Spanish thyme, mastic from Greece, etc. Studies have shown that these productions very often provide more advantages for tourism and the territory than they receive, due mainly to the lack of suitable valorisation products (including services). Yet, besides soil, climate and expertise aspects, it is in the interest of these productions to benefit from a structured link with their territory in as much as it allows them to be specified regarding international competition, and particularly Indo-Asian competition. On this subject too, sharing experience, methodology, innovations in tourism products and services for the development of these products are required.
- **Organizational challenges** : according to the countries of the Mediterranean, structuring of sectors is fragmented, ranging from somewhat unorganized systems in which economic operators hold number of functions more or less successfully, to much more elaborate systems which are based on public or parapublic interprofessional structures. Without actually needing to impose a single organizational structure, all the partners have much to learn from discussions on this topic and particularly to avoid the mistakes which have already been tested by others.

## Ceddem's objectives

In its essential mission, Ceddem is a tool to support the sustainable development of Mediterranean plants and their valorisation in the fields of perfumery, cosmetics, food, medicine, and in terms of landscape, culture and tourism. The basis of this mission is to establish partnerships with the countries of the Mediterranean. Ceddem intends to be a "gateway" for working in partnership on the development of the MAPP sector in Euro-Mediterranean countries.

These partnerships are preferentially organized around the following topics:

- **Research:** Ceddem should identify research activities to reduce production costs, improve the quality of MAPP, respect the environment and facilitate the use by industries of these plants and their extracts. It may become the place where these projects are initiated and serve, where possible, for the transposition of results from one crop system to another.
- **Development** through the support of economic actors in their development project and in partnerships in the field of research & development which may have Euro-Mediterranean dimensions.
- **Training** by providing the training courses needed for these development projects and communication on the training sessions organized in Euro-Mediterranean countries.
- **Valorisation of projects**, by proposing and carrying out promotional activities in partnership with local actors.
- **Cooperation**, by playing a leading role in cooperation between the countries of North and South of the Mediterranean.
- **Participation in working groups at European and international level**, in order to work on the issues of Euro-Mediterranean productions.

## Ceddem's Activities:

4 priority areas have been identified to date.

### **Establishing of a collaborative platform for information exchange and cooperation across the Mediterranean area:**

- Making the [www.ceddem.org](http://www.ceddem.org) website available to share information about past and upcoming events, publications, photos, videos, etc.
- Providing a digital centre of information resources on the economy and sustainable development of Mediterranean plants. This centre can be found at the following address: <http://ceddem.centredoc.fr/opac/> and offers around 4000 references. This documentation centre is jointly supplied by the Volx FranceAgriMer agency and UESS, and can be open to other partners.
- Creating an observatory of MAPP markets with a network of Euro-Mediterranean experts with global economic data and focus on the productions of the various countries.

### **Promoting sustainable development of production and industries around the Mediterranean:**

- Offering training in the sustainable development of sectors
- Providing methodological support for the development of strategies and sustainable development charters.
- Assisting in the certification of sustainable development charters.
- Organizing conferences and events valorising sustainable development.
- Research and project engineering on sustainable development, particularly in relation to the consequences of global warming.
- Sharing lessons learned on sustainable development approaches in terms of creation, management, promotion to the downstream, etc.

### **Supporting producers and users of natural products in the framework of regulatory changes:**

- Listing and possible research on the impact on human health and the environment of MAPP and extracts,
- Supporting producers on regulatory requirements and strategic issues (REACH, etc.).

### **Valorising outlets for Mediterranean plants:**

- Creating a database of Mediterranean plants with interesting active ingredients, with geographic, economic, technical and scientific entries (MEDIPPAM).
- Supporting the research, training and development of Euro-Mediterranean MAPP projects.

## **Partners**

Ceddem is an international association. It includes:

- Founding members: FranceAgriMer (Volx agency), UESS, Cpparm, Crieppam, PPAM de France.
- Scientists, institutions, producers and companies interested in participating in Ceddem actions, or partners who have been involved in common projects.

The particularity of Ceddem is that the association's governing body includes representatives from the scientific (university research) and institutional world (from local to national level), producers and their associations, as well as companies and their unions. This is therefore an area of interdisciplinary work, focused on the production and valorisation of MAPP.