



ORGANIC ECOSYSTEM

*ORGANIC ECOSYSTEM - Boosting cross border
Organic Ecosystem through enhancing agro-food
alliances*

Charter

for the creation of a

Cross-Border Organic Agro-Food Open Ecosystem

Background

In the framework of ENI CBC MED Organic Ecosystem Project: “Boosting cross border Organic Ecosystem through enhancing agro-food alliances”, the main objective of WP3 is to establish a Cross-Border Organic Agro-Food Open Ecosystem (hereinafter called Ecosystem).

The Ecosystem is an open network where complex interactions among different players with complementary background are produced. It is established on a well-structured national and cross border alliance, through a concrete collaborative approach and a synergistic effect. The Ecosystem aims at increasing cooperation and dialogue among private and public actors of the organic sector stimulating dynamic discussion and participatory exchange of experiences, problems, needs and possible sustainable solutions to scale up the Med organic sector and improve its competitiveness as well as to promote economic growth in Partner countries and in the Region.

This Charter, signed by Organic Ecosystem beneficiaries (Partners, Associated Partners, MSMEs, actors of organic and innovation chain) aims at giving an overview of general objectives, principles and conditions under which the partners of the Ecosystem intend to develop capacity building activities, knowledge sharing and cooperation, aimed at strengthening organic MSMEs in the Partner Countries supported by Competent Authorities (CAs, members of the Mediterranean Organic Agriculture Network-MOAN).

Objectives, principles and conditions of the Ecosystem

The signatories agree as follows:

Art.1 Name: the parties agree on the establishment of a “Cross-Border Organic Agro-Food Open Ecosystem” namely Ecosystem in the framework of ENI CBC MED Organic Ecosystem Project.

Art. 2 Mission: the general objective of the Ecosystem is to scale up the organic value chain and to promote innovation in the organic sector by establishing innovative and sustainable national and cross border business alliances and the creation of new economic opportunities, especially for young and women entrepreneurs, with a people-to-people approach, thanks to the establishment of CB public-private linkages and cooperation forms keeping in mind the quintuple helix approach (university-industry-government-media-based and culture-based public and civil society-natural environments of society relations).

These innovations will be based on sustainability principles, thus will have a positive impact on the environment, on the enterprises and territory economy, and on the well-being of civil society. Therefore, a process based on the principle of co-generation and co-participation has to be triggered.

In particular, the Network aims at developing activities in connection with:

- **capacity building** targeted to:

- 1) public institutions aiming at developing capacities for i) surveillance, ii) development of appropriate policies based on MSMEs needs and iii) establishment of Consultancy services for business development to facilitate SMEs in innovative value chain creation;
- 2) training/coaching to young innovators and start-ups aiming at developing new skills and co-designing more innovative and successful value-chain favouring MSMEs access to global market and creating new job opportunities.

- **knowledge sharing** such as the creation of tools and practices to exchange and share knowledge and information (Open access Data Base, local and CB Labs, new business alliances, international business events and the mobilization of organic operators at CB level in order to favour innovative business creation.

- **cooperation** among chain actors (institutions, universities, research centres and MSMEs), at local and CB levels, leading to:

- i) structuring MSMEs aggregation at local level and enhancing existing clusters at CB level to successfully access the increasingly complex markets both for quality and trade rules requirements.
- ii) developing joint local institutional reinforcement initiatives and favouring the participation in programs of national and international funding.

Art. 3 Membership: the members of the Ecosystem are Organic Ecosystem Project partners and associated partners as well as MSMEs, actors of organic chain of Partner countries and outside.

The Ecosystem is also open to all institutions, bodies and organisations working at cross border, national, regional and local level for the promotion of innovative ideas in the agro-food sector in general and in the organic sector in particular.

Art. 4 Management and coordination: The Network is managed by a Managing Committee composed of the Organic Ecosystem Partners and including one representative for each party. CIHEAM Bari (PP3) will ensure the coordination of the network and will possibly try ensuring its sustainability by connecting it to MOAN after the end of the project.

All the activities developed by the members for the Network will be carried out on a voluntary basis at their own expense.

The Ecosystem holds seminars in each Partner country during the project implementation as follows:

- The first and launching meeting is held the day after the kick-off meeting in Jordan, to sign the Charter and define Ecosystem tasks.
- During National seminars, objectives of the Ecosystem will be shared with stakeholders at local level and membership will be enlarged to new interested actors.
- The second meeting will be held in Lebanon to discuss country analysis carried out to define common organic challenges identified during national seminars and stakeholders' surveys.
- The 3rd meeting in Greece aims at assessing the training impact on MSMEs' capacity of increasing organic innovative value chains, sharing the structure of the Organic Data Base and validating features to increase the scaling up of innovative organic value chain based on common criteria selected at national level.
- The 4th meeting is held in Tunisia to draft the CB Organic Strategy based on MSMEs needs and challenges assessment.
- The 5th meeting is held in Italy to approve the Strategy and to identify the sustainability of the Organic Ecosystem, taking into account feedbacks on innovative value chains by new business alliances.

Art. 5 Website and communication: All members accept to make their membership status visible on the website and on any social media or communication tool of the Organic Ecosystem project. They also implement the communication strategy according to Organic Ecosystem project Communication Plan at local level with their own tools and dissemination channels; this would

multiply the impact of the dissemination activities and encourage the involvement of other stakeholders. Moreover, they undertake to provide and update any relevant information.

Art. 6 Obligations: The members of the Ecosystem agree to:

- Collaborate to the creation and the population of the Ecosystem;
- Cooperate in studies and surveys, share information and knowledge useful to develop organic agriculture and innovative value chain;
- Promote and create national and CB business alliances;
- Share and be involved in local and international activities concerning organic agriculture and innovative value chain;
- Participate in the planning process of initiatives to be put forward in future calls at international and local level for funding purposes (e.g. ENI program).

Art. 7 Withdrawal of members: Any member can voluntarily withdraw from the Ecosystem at any time with previous written notice.

Art. 8 Effective date: This Charter shall be effective as of the date of signature hereof (03.06.2020) and will remain in force over the period of the Organic Ecosystem project.