

# MEDAE network Operating principles

This document is a framework document for the MEDAE network.  
It summarizes the important points of network operation that members need to be aware of.  
It must be consulted and approved by members wishing to join the network.

## Background

The MEDAE network emerged as part of the of the [NATAE](#) project (Fostering the Agroecological Transition in North Africa [2022-2026]) and from the desire of the project partners to create a sustainable network for exchanges between the various stakeholders involved in promoting the agroecological transition in the Mediterranean. The network's operating principles were developed through a collaborative process with the various NATAE project partners.

## Objectives

The MEDAE network has two main objectives:

- Stimulate collaborations, projects and exchanges of information, knowledge, solutions and experience between the various stakeholders working to develop agroecology in the Mediterranean.
- Represent Mediterranean agroecology stakeholders at national and international levels and develop scientific and political advocacy in favor of agroecology.

The network focuses on regions of the Mediterranean basin (north and south) that share common agricultural characteristics and face similar environmental constraints (drought, exacerbated climate change, etc.) and socio-economic challenges (population growth, urbanization, land pressure, etc.).

## Membership

MEDAE members are mainly organizations, with the exception of a few individual experts. Organizations are represented by a focal point, the network's main contact. The focal point may be accompanied by other individuals from the organization, who will be contributors and beneficiaries of the network.

MEDAE members are not necessarily based in Mediterranean countries, as long as they operate in Mediterranean regions.

The MEDAE network is made up of organizations with different statuses and operating at different levels, in order to encourage the exchange of knowledge and experience and to gain a collective and systemic understanding of how to work effectively to promote the agro-ecological transition.

To facilitate governance (see below), members are grouped into 4 boards:

- **Board A: Technical, education and research institutes**

Composed of research institutes, technical institutes, universities and agricultural high-schools, etc.

- **Board B: Development and experience-sharing organizations**

Composed of development stakeholders, NGOs, networks of agroecology stakeholders, etc.

- **Board C: Local stakeholders**

This board includes organizations acting on a more local scale: producers' and farmers' organizations, consumer associations, private sectors (distributors, processors, etc.), etc.

- **Board D: Political organizations and individual experts**

This board includes local authorities, governmental and intergovernmental organizations. It also includes individual experts, recognized by the MEDAE network as resource persons. To join the network, individual experts must be sponsored by a member organization.

## Governance

The MEDAE network is governed and animated by its members.

The MEDAE network has no formal existence. It is hosted by a host organization ([CIHEAM-IAMM](#)), itself a member of the network, and responsible for its administrative and financial management.

The MEDAE network is coordinated by a coordinating organization, rotating every 3 years, responsible for implementing and monitoring the network's activities. Until 2026, the [CARI](#) association will be in charge of running the network.

A steering committee, responsible for monitoring the network's activities and decision-making, is elected for 3 years. It is made up of a maximum of 3 representatives per board A, B and C (elected from among the organizations' focal points) and must guarantee geographical representativeness of members as well as parity. To preserve the network's apolitical status, members of board D will not be able to participate in the formal governance of the network.

An annual meeting will be organized with all members to review the past year's activities and present the strategy for the coming year.

## Activities

A network action plan will be drawn up each year.

Network activities are partly organized by working groups, bringing together network members interested in contributing in a specific area of interest. Working groups are intended to produce results and are organized

around a specific project (organization of webinars, production of advocacy...). They are thus periodic and evolving they are created for a specific project and end once the work has been completed.

During the first two years of the project, a minimum of three formal working groups will be set up: a membership working group, a communication working group and an advocacy working group. Other working groups may be set up at a later date: a knowledge-sharing working group, a financing working group, etc.

A person in charge of each working group should be chosen to liaise with the coordinator.

## Financing

The network's dynamism requires an office team responsible for administrative management and network animation, as well as funding to carry out the network's own activities. Until 2026, the NATAE project will cover the expenses for network's activities and office team. From January 2027 onwards, sources of funding will have to be found to ensure the sustainability of the network's activities and associated functions (animator, administrative and financial manager). At this stage, the following sources are being considered: membership fees, donations, project subsidies....

## Languages

The two languages used for internal communication within the network will be French and English.

## Join the network

To join the network, members will need to complete an online registration form, approve the network's framework documents<sup>1</sup> and nominate a focal point by providing a letter of appointment.

Each application will be examined on a case-by-case basis and validated by the MEDAE steering committee.

Members can join the network at any time of the year, and membership is valid until the end of the current calendar year.

### Membership renewal

Membership must be renewed at the beginning of each calendar year by all network members. An online form will be available to members to facilitate renewal.

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<sup>1</sup> The network's framework documents are: MEDAE Operating Principles, MEDAE vision for sustainable food in the Mediterranean, and Member Benefits and Commitments.

## Loss of membership

Any member organization may submit its resignation in writing to the network coordinator at any time. Any membership fees due at the time of resignation remain the responsibility of the resigning organization.

An organization or a participant may be removed from the MEDAE network by a resolution adopted at a steering committee meeting. This decision may be taken in the event of a breach of the network's operating principles or ethics or, if a membership fee is charged, in the event of voluntary non-payment of the fee.