

# ARGAN TREE, SYMBOL OF RESILIENCE

Natural resources and agriculture play complementary roles to promote resilient and sustainable development and efficient ecosystem restoration. Within such perspective, two new strategies were launched by His Majesty King Mohamed VI may God assist him, on February 13, 2020: "Generation Green" that capitalize and consolidate the achievement of the "Green Morocco Plan" for agricultural sector and the new strategy "Forest of Morocco" that promote an inclusive model for the forestry sector. Two coherent and complementary strategies to guide development of the argan value chain and restoration/rehabilitation of the argan forest for the next decade. These strategies are developed for future generations. They mainly promote human components through support of a rural middle class and young entrepreneurs.

The common vision for the argan sector (ecosystem + value chain) is based on coherent improvement of the relationship "Man/Nature" towards of an inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development that integrates the environmental dimension through technical, institutional, political and organizational interventions. Such vision relies on scientific achievements, beside all stakeholders contribution. Research and Development actors are, priorly asked to contribute to the formulation of adequate solutions, produce knowledge and support the development of the argan value chain and the argan ecosystem.

The arganeraie ecosystem and the argan value chain face future challenges because of: (i) major social and economic changes, (ii) growing demand for argan products and (iii) the justified need to build local resources valorization-based economy. These situations can create great pressure on the ecosystem. R&D is requested to implement prospective studies to anticipate negative effects. Research system should, also, propose suitable alternatives, in particular, by designing and implementing technological and management solutions that sustain exosystemic services provided by the Arganeraie. Finally, insuring competitive added value for the benefit of territories and populations.

During the last decade significant dynamics, are noticed within and around this sector, relating to: significant scientific publications number and quality growth, 10000 ha of argan orchards planted, more than 180000 ha of natural forest rehabilitated and professional organization of actors. It is, therefore, essential to take advantage of the R&D efforts and achieved results to support such dynamic through capitalization, facilitating access to results and knowledge management and transfer to serve in the innovation process and prospective for the

Arganeraie Biosphere Reserve (ABR) and the value chain. The Argan tree/ Arganeraie ecosystem earned valuable international recognitions for its key role in the ecological balance and its value as part of the natural and cultural heritage of humanity. The declaration of May 10th as the International Day of Argania (IDA) by the United Nations General Assembly is a major recognition. This recognition at this level is also a challenge that stakeholders, including scientists, must face. They must work and innovate towards a reconciliation of socio-economic and natural imperatives in a perpetual changing global context.

The International Congress of Argan tree (ICA), focusing on different issues and dimensions of the argan tree and arganeraie ecosystem, is an opportunity for capitalization and interaction between scientists and diverse professionals. After 5 editions, the ICA became a key scientific event in the agenda of all ABR, the value chain et the argan specie actors.

The achievements, to date, of scientific research on current and complementary issues helped designing clear orientations, and well-defined scientific priorities. they generated documented knowledge for the benefit of the ecosystem and the value chain. However, the inherent complexity of the arganeraie ecosystem and the value chain require continuous mobilization of scientific expertise to design options and support the strategic vision chosen. This edition is part of a forward-looking and sustainable vision, aims to sharing the achievements of scientific research. Participants will examine potential contribution of Argan/Arganeraie to future development, propose innovations that meet future needs and address precautions to be taken to promote a sustainable use of natural resources.

This edition organized while the Green Morocco Plan strategy ends and the two new strategies « Generation Green » and « Forest of Morocco » are launched. The approval of a new argan commodity program contract, will allow to: (i) strengthen the scientific support of the orientations and prospects for the development of AA, (ii) consolidate the role of the congress in the dialogue between scientists, professional, decision makers and local community organizations, (iii) build a technological foresight to innovate, produce and manage knowledge.

The 6th edition organized, through videoconference, aims to prospect and enlighten future perspectives. It will be animated by national and international researchers with the participation of government representatives, interprofessional organizations, technical and financial partners, leaders of civil society.