



## CARTHAGE APPEAL

We,

Academics, researchers and food systems professionals, participants in the International Symposium held at the Tunisian Academy of Sciences, Letters and Arts in Carthage, Tunisia, on the 3rd and 4th of June 2024, on the theme

**“Diversity of food cultures, resources for a sustainable world”.**

In this historic place, the cradle of the first maritime and commercial power in the Mediterranean, founded by Elyssa, the Phoenician princess in 814 B.C. The land that gave birth to Hannibal, one of the greatest military strategists in history, whose ideal seemed to be guided more by the liberation of peoples than by the conquest of new territories, to Magon, one of the first and most brilliant agronomists, and to Saint Augustine, whose work continues to inspire the great philosophers of our time, a capital that was razed and burnt to the ground in accordance with Cato's incantations “*Delenda Carthago*”, but which is still standing today, and constitutes one of the richest heritages of humanity and gives its name to dozens of cities in different parts of the world.

Concerned by the very serious deterioration in human health and in the world's flora and fauna, and by the threats to the sustainability of our planet Earth, particularly those caused by food systems. Committed to the universal principles enshrined in:

- The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 25 of which sets out the Right to Food, stipulating that “*everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services*”).

- The 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Article 11 of which sets out the need to “*improve methods of production, conservation and distribution of food by making full use of technical and scientific knowledge, by disseminating the principles of nutrition education and by developing or reforming agrarian systems in such a way as to ensure the most efficient development and utilization of natural resources*”.

- The United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, adopted in Rio in 1992.

- The twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties (COP21) concluded with the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, as well as their financing.

- The definition of food and nutrition security submitted to the Global Committee on Food Security in 2015.

- The definition of the “One Health” concept as proposed in 2021 by the United Nations High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE).



Let us launch this Appeal, which we call the “CARTHAGE APPEAL”, to all members of the academic and research community throughout the world.

We welcome the work being done by national and international institutions, governmental and non-governmental organisations and individual initiatives in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas. This work concerns the major challenges for the search for solutions in terms of food and nutritional security and social and environmental impact, with a view to a transition towards sustainable food. As an extension of this movement, we wish to draw the attention of the scientific community, civil society and the media to the value of knowledge about local food cultures and the decisive role they can play in meeting the vital challenges facing humanity in the near future. The challenge is to feed a fast-growing world population sustainably, while respecting cultural diversity, against a backdrop of accelerating climate change, depleting natural resources and growing social inequalities.

From the interaction between the ecosphere and human societies, with their cultures, their conceptions of their relationship with the fauna and flora, are born food and culinary systems. This ethno-culinary diversity constitutes a heritage in the same way as biodiversity, which is itself totally intertwined with food ethnodiversity. In this respect, our vision of food and culinary systems is fully in line with the recent definition of the “one health” concept.

Agricultural and food know-how, production techniques, culinary techniques, symbolic values, organoleptic qualities and forms of conviviality are all levers for protecting biodiversity. We therefore need to know more about this knowledge in order to protect and conserve it, but also to assess it in terms of its effects on health and the environment, using contemporary scientific knowledge.

This appeal is launched to mobilise the international community on the importance of taking into account the diversity of food cultures in the quest for food and nutritional security for all the peoples of the world, with a view to sustainability.

Its fourfold objective is to:

1. Mobilise and intensify research in the human and social sciences in the field of local food cultures and systems. Because food cultures are heritages, the result of long-term interactions between human communities and their environment, we need to know more about them in order to protect and revitalise them and ensure that they are passed on to future generations.

2) Conduct inter-disciplinary assessments combining biology, health, socioeconomics, history and geography. In this way, nutrition, genetics, epigenetics and the study of microbiota will enable us to revisit certain analyses relating to traditional food.

3. Develop research-action issues in collaborative networks around polymorphous dietary diversity.

4. To give the public and decision-makers access to the results of the research in order to raise their awareness of:

\* biodiversity issues.

\* the nutritional quality of food.

\* the need to rethink the food system, from production to consumption, in order to reduce poverty and dependency, in particular by giving priority to local products and preserving the hedonic and social dimension of cooking.

\* changing food production and consumption patterns to reduce waste and environmental pollution.



REPUBLIQUE TUNISIENNE  
PRESIDENCE DU GOUVERNEMENT  
**Académie tunisienne des sciences,  
des lettres et des arts**  
*Beit al-Hikma*

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The signatories of this Appeal undertake to disseminate it as widely as possible in order to gain the support of their institutions and peers, and to take part in drawing up, within one year, a Charter specifying the shared values, objectives and nature of the actions that can be undertaken as part of a strategic vision to ensure a transition towards a more responsible and sustainable food supply.