



**Experience-sharing event on Technical, organizational and policy levers and obstacles in promoting agroecology in the Mediterranean area**

# **Policy support for farmers in Algeria: balancing food security and sustainability challenge**

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**Bouzid Amel-CREAD**

# Introduction

Agricultural policies in Algeria have evolved over the years, particularly to encourage agricultural intensification, a key objective of the government to improve the productivity of the agricultural sector and reduce dependence on food imports.

Like the majority of Mediterranean countries, Algeria has faced major challenges, including a semi-arid climate, inefficient water resource management, and low mechanization of agriculture.

The policies implemented aim to overcome these obstacles and promote a more modern and productive agriculture.

# Characteristics of Agriculture

- Utilised agricultural area: **8.6 million ha**  
(**6 million ha private land**)
- GDP : **\$239.9 billion**
- Agricultural GDP : **\$35 billion (18% GDP)**
- Number of farms: **1 260 000 farms**
- Agricultural employment: **2.6 million employees**  
(**20% of the working population**)

# Characteristics of Agriculture

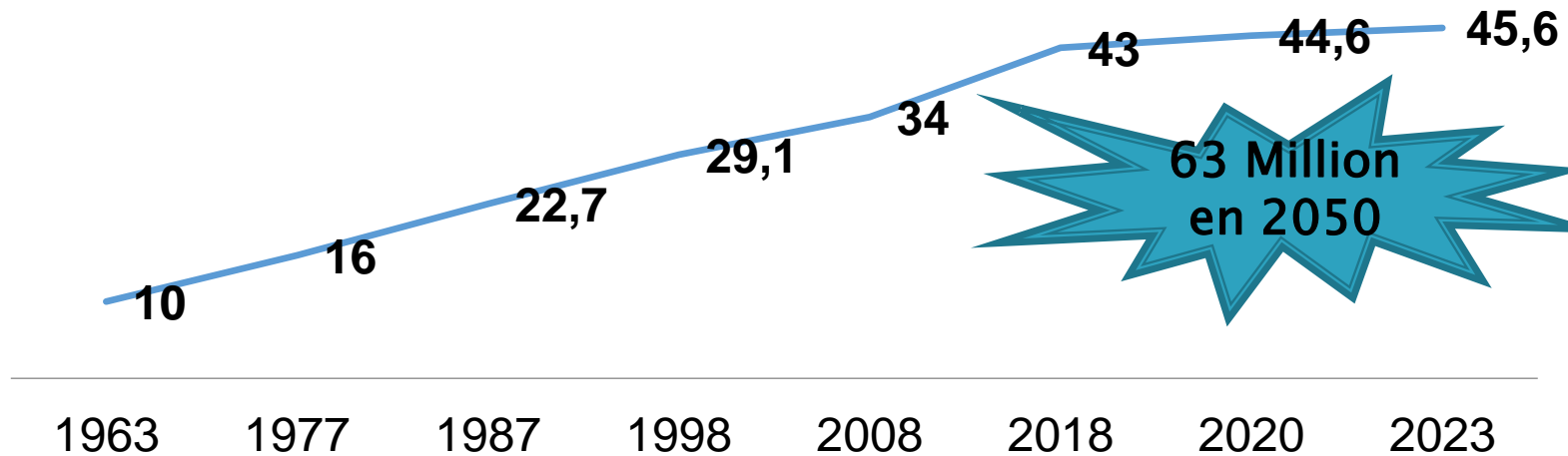
- The food bill has been growing continuously in recent decades.
- Imported products contribute **55%** of the calories consumed by Algerians, which ranks Algeria in the **top ten** of the largest food importers in the world

# Characteristics of Agriculture

- National cereal production: 3.3 millions tons
- Domestic production covers only 10% of soft wheat and 50% of durum wheat.

	Share of imports/food availability (%)
Products	Moy 2000-2022
Weat	80
barely	30
Corn	100
Sugar	100
Vegetable Oil	100
Milk	40

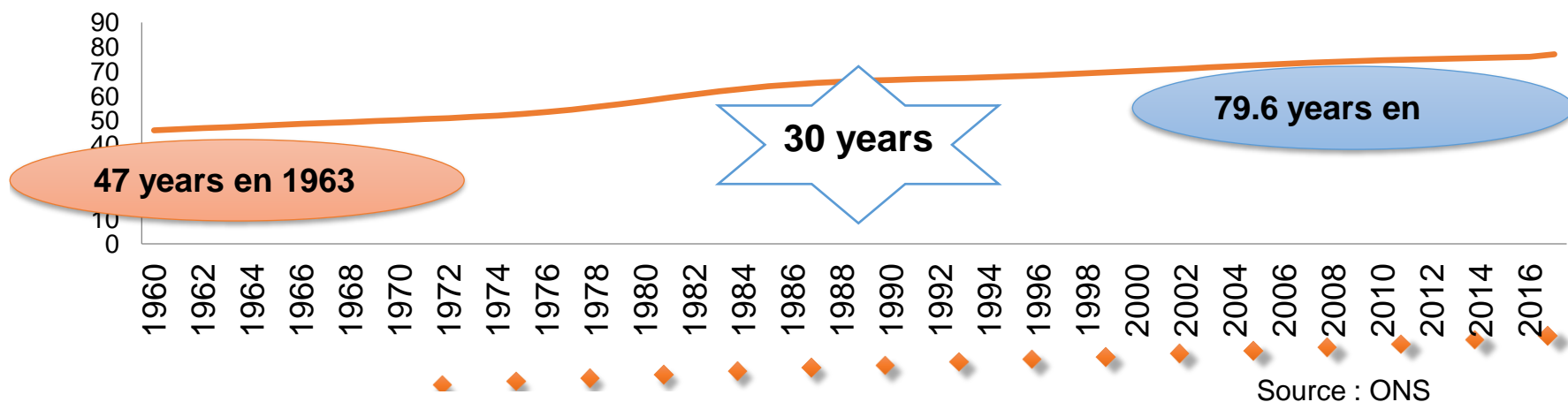
# The Algerian population in millions of inhabitants



- **Demographic growth is a major determinant of food security.**
- **It had fewer than ten million inhabitants in 1963, by January 1, 2023, Algeria's population reached 45.6 million people. A UN study predicts that this population will grow by 52% and reach 63 million by 2050.**



## Life expectancy at birth



**The life expectancy at birth for Algerians, which increased from 47 years after independence to 79.6 years in 2023 means that Algerians have gained 30 years of life.**

# Macroeconomic policies

Since food security does not depend only on the agriculture sectors, we focused on macroeconomic policies and their impacts on food security

From **1962 to 1986**, within the framework of a planned and highly state-controlled economy, the government made efforts to ensure food security for the population.

The approach adopted included:

- ✓ Increasing agricultural production and productivity.
- ✓ Developing the industrial base both upstream and downstream.
- ✓ Implementing a policy of low consumer prices.
- ✓ Relying on food imports to meet domestic demand.



## Negative consequences of the 1962-1986 policy

The state ensured a **relatively adequate supply of the domestic market**

**But**

- Continuous and very strong growth in food imports.
- Underutilization of the capacities of agri-food industries (IAA).
- The burden of subsidies became unbearable for the state's budget

# Macroeconomic policies

After the decline of oil prices on the international market, several reforms were implemented

**Reform in 1987** focused on the state **agricultural sector**, where the state disengaged, leading to the creation of 22 642 Agricultural Cooperative Farmers (EAC) and 15 279 Agricultural Individual farmers(EAI

**The structural adjustment program ( PAS in 1990)** had very negative impacts on **the goal of food security**. Specifically, the policy of subsidizing consumer prices was abandoned, leading to:

- An increase in the consumer prices of basic products.
- Privatization of public sector.
- A rise in unemployment and a decline in purchasing power

# Macroeconomic policies

After the rise in oil prices, **the Economic Recovery Support Program (2001 - Present)** aimed to boost the Algerian economy with key objectives, including:

- Reducing poverty
- Creating 850 000 jobs
- Preserving regional balances and revitalizing rural areas
- Economic diversification
- Supporting Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

# Macroeconomic policies

## Results of P.S.R.E

- Poverty has decreased, with the proportion of the population living below the poverty line falling from 14.5% in 1995 to 5.6% in 2006.
- Overall, living conditions have improved, as well as general health (life expectancy rose from 66.9 years in 2000 to 77.1 years in 2010).
- The unemployment rate decreased, falling from 29.5% in 2000 to 10% in 2016.

# Agricultural Policies

The program	Period
<p>The <b>National Agricultural Development Plan (PNDA)</b> aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Modernize agriculture and increase productivity:</li><li>• Promote food self-sufficiency</li><li>• Encourage investments in the agricultural sector:</li></ul>	2000-2010
<p><b>The Rural Renewal Program :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>The intensification and development</b> of so-called strategic production sectors (cereals, potatoes, milk), the strengthening of land development actions,</li><li>• the <b>dissemination of water-saving irrigation techniques</b>,</li><li>• the fight against desertification and <b>the protection of natural resources</b>,</li></ul>	2010-2014
<p><b>Le plan Filaha</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The pursuit <b>of the intensification of agricultural</b> and agri-food production,</li><li>• The strengthening of mechanisms to protect national production,</li><li>• <b>The intensification of actions to preserve and enhance natural resources, and</b></li><li>• The continuation of efforts to strengthen human capacities and provide technical support.</li></ul> <p>Plan Filaha 2019: The objective of creating integrated farm models with <b>an intensive production system</b>.</p>	2015-2020
<p><b>The roadmap.</b></p>	<b>2020-2024</b>

# The roadmap

## Highlights the promotion of the green economy

- Emphasizes the importance of the **rational management of natural resources through the implementation of sprinkler and drip irrigation systems**, covering nearly 1,473,919 hectares.
- Since 2020, the agricultural sector has been actively encouraging the **adoption of renewable energy within** farms located in the high plateaus, the steppe, and the southern regions.
- The sector integrates **the forestry industry**, which plays a crucial role in diversifying the economy and increasing rural populations' incomes through **the creation of green jobs**.
- An extensive development program for **rustic species, including carob trees, argan trees, and almond trees**, has been launched to strengthen the sector's resilience and sustainability.
- **Promotes innovation and research**, particularly focusing on the development of **bio-fertilizers and bio-pesticides**, as well as innovative technological solutions.

# The roadmap

The agricultural strategy in Algeria clearly appears to be oriented towards the promotion of environmentally friendly and sustainability-focused practices. Although the term "agroecology" is not explicitly mentioned, it is implicit in the adopted approach, particularly through the emphasis on sustainability and organic farming.

This orientation demonstrates a commitment to preserving natural resources, reducing environmental impacts, and developing more resilient agricultural systems. The evidence lies in the existence of a sub-directorate dedicated to organic farming and certification within the Ministry of Agriculture

# The roadmap

Beyond the use of specific terms, the agricultural strategy seems to integrate several agroecological principles, such as crop diversification, crop rotation, optimization of natural resources, and the promotion of biodiversity. These practices, in addition to supporting environmental sustainability, strengthen the resilience of agricultural systems in the face of climate change and future challenges.



# Conclusion

Despite the adoption of various policies since its independence, Algeria continues to face difficulties in meeting its food needs due to insufficient agricultural production. The strategies and policies in place focus on sustainable development and environmental protection, with an increasing interest in agroecological practices.

# Conclusion

However, the reality on the ground shows a gap between rhetoric and concrete actions, such as the relocation of agriculture to the Saharan regions, where irrigation is ongoing through the use of groundwater, as well as the excessive use of subsidized fertilizers.

# Conclusion

Current agricultural practices prioritize intensification, suggesting that this approach remains the only viable solution to achieve food security, especially in the face of a constantly growing population.

# Ksar Tafilalit

The first ecological city in the Ghardaia

The city was officially inaugurated in 2004.



In 2014, the city was awarded the Arab League Environmental Prize

In 2016, the city received the first prize for sustainable city in Marrakech.

In 2023, the city received the International Energy Globe Award for Ecological Cities in Norway

Thank you for your attention