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### **ISOCARD, the International Society of Camelid Research and Development, to Hold its 5<sup>th</sup> Conference in Laayoune**

**Laayoune, November 12, 2018**

Organized under the high patronage of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, ISOCARD, the international scientific event dedicated to camelids, has chosen Laayoune to host its 5th conference given the great number of camels in this region. Scheduled from November 12 to 15, 2018 at the Palais des Congrès de Laayoune, the scientific conference's theme will be Recent advances in camelids: biology, health and production.

The 5<sup>th</sup> ISOCARD conference, organized by IAV Hassan II and ISOCARD, with the help and support of the Phosboucraa Foundation, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Rural Development, Water, and Forests, the Laayoune Sakia El Hamra Region, the Wilaya of Laayoune-Sakia El Hamra, and the Laâyoune-Sakia El Hamra Council, will focus on five important themes:

- Recent advances in camelid biology;
- Meat, milk and other production systems and their technological processing;
- Camelid health;
- Camelids and the environment;
- Socio-economic challenges in camelid production.

This conference will be an opportunity to showcase all the aspects of this important cultural heritage and the ancestral know-how of the camel breeder. The camel remains a central animal of southern Morocco's culture and especially of the Saharan provinces.

Three hundred and fifty Moroccan and foreign delegates from 34 countries on 5 continents will present the results of their research, discuss, and share their knowledge and expertise on camelids.

On the sidelines of this major scientific event, three specialized technical workshops are organized and led by eminent specialists:

- Cheese production from camel milk;
- Morphometry in camels;
- Molecular genetics to improve production performance in camels.

Workshops are limited to a small number of candidates (10 to 20 per workshop). Meetings and round tables will also be organized on November 9 and 10 by the Euro-Maghreb research group leading the CARAVAN-ARIMnet project. Breeders and agriculture and National Office for Health Security of Food Products (ONSSA) executives will take part in the discussion,

focusing on the results of this project's research and the insights and testimonies they can provide.

**ISOCARD:**

The International Society of Camelid Research and Development is an apolitical, non-religious and non-profit association composed of camelid scientists and related professionals. The creation of this society was first suggested and discussed during the international conference on young camel conference held in Ouarzazate, Morocco, in 1999. Several other discussions followed and the founders of ISOCARD—namely the Hassan II Institute of Agronomy and Veterinary Medicine (IAV) and the International Cooperation Center for Agronomic Research and Development (CIRAD) in France—successfully held the first international conference in 2006 in Al Ain, United Arab Emirates.

The event was later held in 2009 in Djerba, Tunisia; in 2012 in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman; and in 2015 in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

ISOCARD's goals include granting camelid science international scientific status, promoting camelid science and practice, and holding international camelid conferences every three years.

**Press contact:**

Louna **Lahiani**

+212 (0)6 10 39 20 53

[louna@tls-groupe.ma](mailto:louna@tls-groupe.ma)