



Mohamed Hijri

Candidate for Vice-President

Professor, University Mohammed VI
Polytechnic (UM6P)

Founder, African Genome Center



Candidate statement

Born in 1969 in Morocco, Mohamed Hijri studied plant biology at the University Cadi Ayyad (Marrakech, Morocco) before pursuing advanced studies in France. He completed a B.Sc. in Cell Biology (1994) and an M.Sc. in Biochemistry, Molecular and Cell Biology (1995) at the Université de Bourgogne, where he also earned his Ph.D. in 1999. His doctoral research focused on genetic polymorphism and genome organization in arbuscular mycorrhizal (AM) fungi.

Following his Ph.D., he carried out postdoctoral research in Switzerland, first at the University of Basel and later at the University of Lausanne (1999-2005), working on molecular genetics, genome evolution, and the functional diversity of AM fungi. In 2005, he joined the Université de Montréal as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences and the Institut de recherche en biologie végétale (IRBV), where he subsequently progressed to Full Professor. In 2021, he joined The University Mohammed VI Polytechnic (UM6P) and founded the African Genome Center, where mycorrhizal research represents a major focus area.

Prof. Hijri's research centers on the genomics, genetics, ecology, and biotechnological applications of AM fungi. His team investigates plant-microbiome interactions, fungal diversity, microbial dynamics in the mycorrhizosphere, and the potential use of AM fungi in sustainable agriculture and environmental remediation, particularly in biofertilizers and circular nutrient economy approaches. His work integrates microbial genomics, high-throughput sequencing, molecular ecology, and microbiome analysis.

He has authored more than 160 peer-reviewed articles, books, book chapters, and reviews; supervised numerous graduate students and postdoctoral researchers; and contributed extensively to scientific outreach and international collaborations across North America, Latin America, Europe, Africa, and Asia. He also serves on editorial boards, including Mycorrhiza and Environmental Microbiome, and has participated in organizing major international conferences such as ISME 16 and ISME Africa.

As Vice-President of the IMS, Prof. Hijri aims to strengthen the integration of ecological, molecular, genomic, and innovation-driven perspectives in mycorrhizal research, ensuring that the society remains at the forefront of scientific advancement. He is committed to enhancing the global visibility and influence of the IMS, while promoting more equitable participation of scientists from underrepresented regions, particularly across Africa and the Global South, through strong advocacy for diversity, equity, and integrity (DEI) in all IMS activities. Prof. Hijri strongly supports the continued development of IMS newsletters, webinars, and professional training programs as essential tools for knowledge exchange and community building. He also seeks to contribute actively to the successful organization of future ICOMs, with a vision of creating more inclusive, interdisciplinary, and accessible congresses. Moreover, his long-term ambition is to foster deeper connections between academic researchers, industry partners, and policymakers in order to accelerate the application of mycorrhizal symbioses in sustainable agriculture, ecosystem restoration, and climate resilience.