

February 2010

E



منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food
and
Agriculture
Organization
of
the
United
Nations

Organisation
des
Nations
Unies
pour
l'alimentation
et
l'agriculture

Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная
организация
Объединенных
Наций

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

NEAR EAST FORESTRY COMMISSION

NINETEENTH SESSION

NEAR EAST FORESTRY WEEK

HAMMAMET, TUNISIA
5 – 9 APRIL 2010

**Forests and range: adapting to global changes for sustainable
development**

***Silva Mediterranea*: progress report on activities**

1. The African Forestry and Wildlife Commission (AFWC)/European Forestry Commission (EFC)/Near East Forestry Commission (NEFC) Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions, *Silva Mediterranea*, held its Twentieth Session in Sofia, Bulgaria, from 7 to 10 April 2008. The session was attended by twelve member countries (Algeria, Bulgaria, Spain, Serbia, Portugal, Morocco, Italy, Israel, Greece, France, Cyprus and Turkey) in addition to observers from international non-governmental organizations namely The Mediterranean Regional Office of the European Forest Institute (EFIMED), *Centre International des Hautes Etudes Agronomiques* (CIHEAM), *Plan Bleu* and *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit* (GTZ).
2. During the session the activities of the four working groups were presented and discussed: Forest Fires; Cork Oak; Mediterranean Forests and Sustainable Development; and Forest Genetic Resources in the Mediterranean Region. Two new working groups were established: Forests and Climate Change, led by Morocco, and Funding Mechanisms led by Bulgaria.
3. The lead countries of the six existing working groups were invited to communicate to the Secretariat the terms of reference for their activities (work plans with corresponding objectives, expected outputs, activities and budget). The Committee authorized the enlarged Executive Committee to approve the work plans at its next meeting scheduled for 20 October 2008.
4. Member countries and FAO decided to reinforce the involvement of the Committee in all relevant forest events (notably through its secretariat) and to develop relevant communication material (logo, newsletters, leaflets, posters and *Silva Mediterranea* Website).

This document is printed in limited numbers to minimize the environmental impact of FAO's processes and contribute to climate neutrality. Delegates and observers are kindly requested to bring their copies to meetings and to avoid asking for additional copies.
Most FAO meeting documents are available on the Internet at www.fao.org

5. The Committee also welcomed the preparation of the draft document on “Guidelines for good forestry and range practices in the arid and semi-arid zones of the Near East”, and commended the initiative of the Near East Forest Commission to set up the “Near East Network on Forest Health and Invasive Species”. Among the series of topics discussed during the Sofia session forest fires was considered of high importance. Italy and FAO subsequently organized related field days in Sabaudia, Italy, in May 2008 for *Silva Mediterranea* members.
6. The Committee decided that its official sessions be held every four years instead of every two and accordingly recommended that the next meeting be held in 2012. It was also decided that inter-sessional meetings be organized, including during sessions of the Committee on Forestry (COFO). In addition, it proposed that the enlarged *Silva Mediterranea* Executive Committee meet every year.
7. A first post-Sofia meeting of the enlarged *Silva Mediterranea* executive committee was held in October 2008 in Rome, where *inter alia* the work plans of the following five working groups were endorsed: Forest Fires (WG 1), Cork Oak (WG 2), Mediterranean Forests and Sustainable Development (WG 3), Forest Genetic Resources in the Mediterranean Region (WG 4) and Forest and Climate Change (WG 5). All Work Plans for the period 2009 to 2012 are available on the *Silva Mediterranea* Website (WWW.FAO.ORG/FORESTRY/SILVAMED/EN). Several projects are currently under preparation with Spain, France/FFEM, Germany/GTZ and the European Commission to obtain financial support for the activities of these different Working Groups.
8. As a follow-up to the Sofia meeting, a workshop was organized in July 2009 by FAO, *Silva Mediterranea* and GTZ, hosted by Morocco, to identify crucial needs for external support to facilitate adaptation of forest policies and sustaining forest-related ecosystems services (including biodiversity) in the North African and eastern Mediterranean in the context of climate change.
9. A total of 22 people participated in the workshop, representing three countries of the southern Mediterranean region (Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey), two European countries (Italy and Germany) and of three regional institutions (The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), *Plan Bleu*, and EFIMED) together with *Silva Mediterranea* and FAO. As a further step, bilateral meetings with different governments in the Near East region were launched, resulting in the preparation of a project proposal on “Adapting policy framework conditions for sustainable forest management in the North African and eastern Mediterranean (Algeria, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey) to implement the Morocco workshop outcomes.
10. A meeting was held in Marseille (*Plan Bleu*) in September 2009 to prepare a joint agreement between GTZ, *Plan Bleu*, France and FAO *Silva Mediterranea* (with possible enlargement to other partners) to define the contributions of different partners in the regional programme of the GTZ (WG 5 – Forest and Climate Change) and the process of strengthening the Secretariat of *Silva Mediterranea*.
11. In November 2009, a regional workshop was organized by FAO *Silva Mediterranea*, CIHEAM and EFIMED in Crete (CIHEAM of Chania) on Mediterranean Forest Genetic Resources and Climate Change. The objectives of the workshop, in accordance with the recommendations of the 20th Session of the Committee for the *Silva Mediterranea* Working Group 4, were to:
 - consider expected climatic changes and their impacts on forest ecosystems, discuss the role of forest genetic resources and diversity in adaptation to climate change, with special reference to the Mediterranean region (where woodlands and rangelands are considered together with forest ecosystems);
 - consider the incorporation of conservation and management of forest genetic resources concerns into national strategies to address climate change;
 - identify research and training needs in forest genetic resources management in the context of climate change in the Mediterranean region; and

- assess the availability of forest genetic resources information and prepare for the Mediterranean contribution to the first State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources report.

12. During this workshop a presentation of the *Silva Mediterranea* programme on Forest Genetic Resources and Climate Change (2010-2013) was made by the leader of the *Silva Mediterranea* Forest Genetic Resources (Working Group 4). Key issues concerning forest genetic resources and adaptation to climate change in the Mediterranean region were identified and approved by expert members of *Silva Mediterranea* WG 4. Recommendations were provided to integrate forest genetic resources issues in national strategies for adaptation to climate change.

13. Two *Silva Mediterranea* Newsletters have been published with a special focus in the last issue on forest genetic resources. The next issue will be prepared in April 2010, focusing on climate change. During the period 2010-2011 a *Silva Mediterranea* Newsletter will be published every two/three months in order to present regularly the activities of the six Working Groups.

14. The human resources component of the *Silva Mediterranea* Secretariat has been reinforced with the arrival in July 2009 of Ms Nora Berrahmouni (FAO Forestry Officer -Arid Zones and of Mr. Christophe Besacier (seconded by France) in November 2009. Both officers joined the Forest Conservation Team (FOMC), which has responsibility for the *Silva Mediterranea* Secretariat and related activities.