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Item 4e of the provisional agenda

EFC matters

**Progress of *Silva Mediterranea* and the Working Party on
the Management of Mountain Watersheds**

Progress of *Silva Mediterranea* and the Working Party on the Management of Mountain Watersheds

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

This paper provides basic information on the activities conducted under the auspices of *Silva Mediterranea*, including the State of Mediterranean Forests, working groups work, and the Fifth Mediterranean Forest Week.

The paper also provides brief information on the activities of the EFC Working Party on the Management of Mountain Watersheds.

I. Activities of *Silva Mediterranea*

A. Meetings of the Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions-*Silva Mediterranea*

1. A meeting of the Executive Committee of *Silva Mediterranea* was organized on 8 April 2016 in Rome to address the working plans of the working groups of *Silva Mediterranea*. An extraordinary meeting of the Committee was organized on 22 July 2016 during the Committee on Forestry of FAO and addressed the follow up on the decisions taken by the Committee in 2015, the preparation of the Mediterranean initiative on restoration, the preparation of the 5th Mediterranean Forest Week and the preparation of the new edition of the State of Mediterranean Forests.
2. The Committee held its 22nd session on 22 March 2017 in Agadir, Morocco, during the 5th Mediterranean Forest Week. The Committee elected Mr José Manuel Jaquotot Sáenz de Miera from the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Food and Environment as the new Chair of *Silva Mediterranea*. The Committee:
 - (a) took note of the progress in the implementation of the decisions taken by the Committee during its extraordinary meetings from 2012 to 2017;
 - (b) recognized the Strategic Framework on Mediterranean Forests adopted in 2013, as a voluntary tool to prioritize forestry questions in the region and monitor progress on the key forestry questions;
 - (c) recommended to give impetus to the establishment of a specific strategy for *Silva Mediterranea*;
 - (d) took note that the Mediterranean Forest Weeks have replaced the technical content of the former sessions of the Committee;
 - (e) adopted the overall organization process of the 6th Mediterranean Forest Week to be held in 2019;
 - (f) validated the concept for a Mediterranean Agro-silvo-pastoral Memento as a complementary book to the State of Mediterranean Forests 2018;
 - (g) recommended to suppress the working group on sustainable financing mechanisms, and to reconsider the existence of the working group on climate change;
 - (h) adopted the working plans for the biennium 2017-2019 of the other working groups;
 - (i) gave its support to the ongoing regional dynamics on Forest and Landscape Restoration in the Mediterranean.

B. Working groups of *Silva Mediterranea*

3. A statement on Mediterranean forest fires was presented at the 6th International Wildland Fire Conference in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea, 13 October 2015 by the working group 1 on forest fires of *Silva Mediterranea* acting as member of the Mediterranean and Near East Wildland Fire Network.
4. Activities were implemented within the COST Action FP1202 on “Strengthening conservation: a key issue for adaptation of marginal/peripheral populations of forest trees to climate change in Europe (MaP-FGR)” as part of the working plan of working group 4 on forest genetic resources. A policy brief on “Marginal and peripheral forests: a key genetic resource for enhancing the resilience of European forests to global change” has been

published. The final conference of the COST Action was organized from 26-29 September 2016.

5. A series of eleven documents has been published as outcomes of the regional project “Maximize the production of goods and services of Mediterranean forest ecosystems in the context of global changes” that was implemented under working group 5 on climate change. Two digital products (a data base and digital maps) and 11 video were also produced by the project. In the framework of this project, the working group organized a side-event “Mediterranean forests and us facing climate change” in the Climate Generations area of the UNFCCC COP21 in Paris on 7 December 2015, as well as a two-day workshop in October 2016 to review the REDD+ activities in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Lebanon and the role of the forest sectors in the Nationally Determined Contributions of these countries.
6. A policy brief on urban and peri-urban forestry in the Mediterranean has been prepared by the working group on urban and peri-urban forestry. The working group has also established a data base of case studies and a set of indicators for the assessment of urban and peri-urban forestry and green infrastructure in the Mediterranean.
7. A workshop “Desertification and Restoration in Mediterranean Drylands” was organized by the corresponding working group on 16 October 2015 in Ankara, Turkey, during the COP 12 of the UNCCD, to define the road map of the working group and initiate a regional initiative on forest and landscape restoration in the Mediterranean region.

C. Other activities

8. The Committee co-organized with partners the 5th Mediterranean Forest Week (MFW) from 20-24 March 2017 in Agadir, Morocco, on the topic of the restoration of Mediterranean forests and landscapes. Report on the 5th MFW is provided in Secretariat Note FO:EFC/17/15 Section 4. The 6th MFW in 2019 will be hosted by Lebanon.

9. The preparation of the new edition of the State of Mediterranean Forest (SoMF) was initiated in January 2016. Two meetings of the contributors to the new edition of the SoMF have been organized in 2016. The writing of the thirteen chapters of this new edition is under way under the responsibility of chapter coordinators. The publication of the new edition of the SoMF is expected in 2018. As a complement to the SoMF, a concept note for a Mediterranean Agro-silvo-pastoral Memento has been developed. A chapter on Mediterranean forests has been published in the CIHEAM flagship report *Mediterra 2016*.

10. Young entrepreneurship in the bioeconomy was addressed in a project idea called Blue Forest developed with UCL (Université Catholique de Louvain), the Mediterranean Office of the European Forest Institute (EFIMED) and CIHEAM. Blue Forest aims at developing an incubator to turn ideas of forest-based projects in the Mediterranean green economy into implementable business plans.

D. Points for consideration

11. The Commission may wish to:
 - (a) encourage the development of activities related to the young entrepreneurship in the bioeconomy as a way to address the challenges faced by Mediterranean forests in the context of global changes;
 - (b) encourage the development of activities on forest and landscape restoration in the Mediterranean region.

II. Activities of the Working Party on the Management of Mountain Watersheds

A. Activities of the Working Party

1. Since the last session of European Forestry Commission (EFC) in Engelberg in 2015, the Working Party undertook the following activities:

(a) In the period 2016 – 2017, two steering committee meetings of the Working Party were organized. The meeting in 2016 in Rome focused on the work plans of the two Working Groups (WG) whereas the one in 2017 in Prague focused on the preparation of the 31st session.

(b) Two Working groups (WG), WG1 “Forest and water”, and WG2 “Hazards and disaster risk management” concretized and implemented first activities of their work plans and produced first outcomes. The Working Groups are coordinated by lead countries (WG1: Finland, Czech Republic; WG2: France, Austria). All member countries of the EFC are encouraged and invited to join these working groups according to their interest and priorities.

(c) WG1 has compiled a book on the topic of “Ecosystem services of headwater catchments”. The book, which contains 24 papers selected from contributions to recent meetings of the Working Party, aims to address the evaluation of environmental impacts and services identified in headwaters of different eco-zones of the world. In November 2016, WG1 organized a workshop at FAO Headquarters in Rome in order to update and refine the objectives and elements of its work plan on forests and water.

(d) WG2 has implemented the second and third workshop for practitioners on the topics of “Hazard zone mapping and the integration of the forest protection function” in Austria and “Sediment and woody debris transport regulation in torrential catchments: case study of an Alpine torrent” in France. The reports are available for download at the website of the Working Party.

(e) The Working Party will hold its 31st Session in Prague, Czech Republic, from 4 – 6 September 2017. The overall theme of the session will be “Management of municipal watersheds in mountain regions”. The in-session seminar will be followed by reports from the two WGs, country and observer reports. The excursion will focus on “Forest practices in watersheds of drinking water reservoirs” and provide the participants with an insight into the rich experiences of the Czech Republic regarding municipal watershed management. The outcomes of the session will be presented to EFC members by the secretariat.

B. Points for Consideration

2. The Commission may wish to take full advantage of the services of the Working Party and facilitate its work by:

- (a) strengthening further their commitment to the Working Party, including through designating a focal point to serve on the Working Party;
- (b) providing continued guidance for the Working Party, in particular in terms of priority topics to be addressed by the group.
- (c) Publicise the work of the Working Party and make full use of its services, for example through the submission of news items and announcements to be posted on the Website.

