

# BULLETIN of the

**D**espite the difficulties that attend the setting up of an international association and then keeping it alive, the IAMF, founded six years ago, continues to pursue its aims. While such a period is a bit short for drawing conclusions, it can be objectively affirmed that what we have achieved is important, even if much remains to be done.

Important because the IAMF, by providing a meeting place for all those who care about Mediterranean forests, has filled a gap and facilitated the emergence of a vast network. The carrying out of the Interreg IIC project "The Problem of the Mediterranean Forest" has generated synergy among a large number of specialists and key figures from different backgrounds and countries, enabling them to identify the major stumbling blocks that hinder the protection and development of Mediterranean woodlands. Our publication giving a synopsis of the project is now available !

## Editorial

Thanks to the backing of six regional governments\* an Interreg IIIB project is soon to be submitted for funding by the EU. Its aim is to put into effect specifically Mediterranean-based know-how in the sustainable development of pilot areas around the Mediterranean Rim.

In addition, the participation by the IAMF in international meetings related to Mediterranean woodlands (Silva mediterranea, World Conference on Sustainable Development...) has highlighted the contribution that can be made by a specialist NGO.

Nevertheless, what has been achieved needs to be consolidated. So we truly hope our activities will attract more landowners, both private and public, more companies involved in forestry and wood-related industries, as well as NGO's from countries around the Mediterranean Rim.

What's more, our News Bulletin is well placed to publish a greater number of articles giving an account of research and experience, along with the problems that arise. The IAMF is your association : its advancement will depend on your contribution to its activities.

(\*) : Algarve, Campania, Umbria, Murcia, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, Valencia

**Mohamed Larbi Chakroun**  
President



## INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MEDITERRANEAN FORESTS

### Help us to reduce costs...

...by telling us<sup>(1)</sup> before December 31 2002, by fax, e-mail or letter, whether or not you wish to continue being informed about the International Association for Mediterranean Forests. If we have not heard from you by this deadline, we will remove your name from our files.

(1) Except if you have paid your membership fee or if you took part in one of the seminars of the Interreg IIC programme "The Problem of the Mediterranean Forest".

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Official registration March 2002



# Wildfire prevention and rehabilitation policy as a response to the origins of forest fires\*

Examples from four countries of the Mediterranean Rim  
(Cyprus, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia)

*What is the situation concerning forest fires on the southern side of the Mediterranean Rim ? Are such wildfires bigger outside Europe ? How do the inhabitants and official bodies view woodlands and the damage to them resulting from wildfire ?*

Such were the topics we were to consider at the request of the FAO who had asked the CEMA-GREF\*\* at Aix-en-Provence to produce a **technical guide**\*\*\* **"The Protection of Forests against Wildfire"** (PFCI, French abbreviation), covering all the countries of the Mediterranean Rim. The Guide seeks to enable every country to access information from other countries and thus take into account more data and information in the decision-making process. It is designed for all those involved in the protection of woodlands against wildfire, such as senior management responsible for fire fighting, civil defence personnel, forestry technicians and engineers, woodland owners...

We visited, amongst other countries, Cyprus, Morocco, Syria and Tunisia. We met forestry professionals and firefighters in the field as well as those with overall responsibility for forestry and for PFCI, at both regional and national levels. In this paper we offer you a guided tour of the four countries mentioned, giving you an insight into what has been undertaken in matters of prevention and rehabilitation. Follow the guide!

These four countries, too, face the problem of wildfire which here acquires the nature of a real curse because it devastates woodland areas

\* : This article first appeared in "Info DFCI" n° 47 published by the "Centre de documentation forêt méditerranéenne et incendie" of the Cemagref (October 2001).

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that are already severely reduced and scattered. The awareness of the destructive nature of wildfire on plant cover is often undermined by the needs of a local population desperate for new arable land. For example, in some regions in Syria peasants run the risk of going to prison in setting fire to stubble too near to the edge of woodlands in the hope that the flames will reach the nearby trees and thus clear land that can then be used for farming.

The four countries use the same palette of means to prevent wildfire and to rehabilitate burnt-out areas. The effective recourse to these means does of course depend on the human and financial resources available ; but also on the socio-economic and cultural context in the country as well as on the nature of the fire.

## Concerning prevention

As a mean to assess the risk of wildfire each of the four countries is presently building up a data bank with details of every fire affecting its territory.

Foreseeing risk, both its location and the period of occurrence, is a general concern in the four countries but for the moment is still at an early stage. Meteorological indicators are already used in Tunisia and Cyprus while techniques for mapping risk are being developed in Morocco and Tunisia.

All four countries have a surveillance system (lookouts, patrols) that goes into effect during the high-risk season. The lookouts are permanent structures which often include living quarters for the wardens. However, in Morocco some of the lookout posts are merely the highest points of the landscape. Many outbreaks are first reported by the local population.

Firebreaks have been established in all four countries and in Cyprus some breaks of the "clear cut" type have been created.

In Morocco, Tunisia and Syria efforts to raise public awareness have mainly targeted the rural population living off the woodlands and/or in "conflict" with them. In Cyprus, on

	Total area	Forested area		Burnt area (years 1981 - 1997)	
		1 000 ha	1 000 ha	% total area	total ha/yr
Cyprus	924	140	15,2 %	130	0,09 %
Morocco	44 630	3 835	8,6 %	3 459	0,09 %
Syria	18 378	219	1,2 %	1 312	0,60 %
Tunisia	15 536	555	3,6 %	1 468	0,26 %

Source : FAO

the other hand, such efforts are also aimed at local and foreign tourists. Repressive measures exist, it would appear, in proportion to the degree of risk threatening the woodlands (Syria, Morocco).

Silviculture carried out specifically as a method of protecting stands is non-existent. On the other hand, when stands have a function of production, silvicultural practices aimed at enhancing production and protection are used on occasion. Such is the case in Morocco where coniferous stands are lopped.

#### *Concerning rehabilitation*

All four countries do their utmost to avoid burnt stands losing their role as woodland. Planned reforestation takes the place of natural regeneration in Morocco and Syria, not for technical reasons but rather to safeguard the woodlands from human pressure : livestock grazing in Morocco, encroachment on the land in Syria.

## **Countries confronted by forest fires**

### *Man and woodlands*

Let us begin with an overview. The surface varies from country to country, from 1.2 % to 15.2 % of the country's total area.

In some countries, the area under woodland has stabilised : this is the case in Tunisia since its independence. In Morocco, on the contrary, woodland area is receding by 15,000 hectares per year, which is nearly 4 % of such area.

An increase in population is reflected in pressure on the woodlands. Effectively, the local inhabitants need more space to meet their requirements for housing and food. In Tunisia and

Morocco, 10 % of the population lives in woodlands.

In the four countries, most of the woodlands are state property. Encroachment by private individuals for purposes of building or farming is not possible when there exist clearly delineated limits, a map of landholdings and laws defining the future of land that has been damaged by wild-fire. In Cyprus and Tunisia, the boundaries of state-owned forests are clearly marked out on the land and maps are available. But in Syria, though forest boundary markers do exist, they are easily destroyed by the local population.

The main forest product is wood. Only Morocco produces a considerable quantity of saw wood and industrial timber (600,000 m<sup>3</sup>/yr). In Morocco and Tunisia, the locals consume large quantities of firewood for heating and cooking. Charcoal production within the forests, often done illegally, is a not insignificant activity. In Morocco, the production of cork reaches 65,000 m<sup>3</sup>/yr which makes Morocco the world's third biggest producer.



Goats in argan trees, Morocco - Photo P-Y. Colin/Cemagref Aix

Alongside such production, the woodlands supply a wide range of lesser products : the inhabitants collect for their own use rosemary, myrtle, capers, Aleppo pine seeds (Tunisia) or stone pine kernels, acorns from the cork oak (Tunisia and Morocco) and dead wood. In Morocco and Tunisia ; the woodlands frequently provide grazing for herds of livestock, whereas in Syria pasturing is more strictly regulated.

Tourists and visitors, whether foreign or domestic, go to the woodlands for leisure and recreation (family picnics). Hunting is widespread in Morocco and Tunisia but forbidden in Syria.

Finally, in all four countries, woodlands contribute significantly to protection of the soil and the prevention of erosion.

Thus, in each of these countries woodlands have a vital social function. By way of example, in Morocco the advantages deriving from user rights in woodlands represents for each user half of a Moroccan's basic salary.

In return, the users of the woodlands have a major influence on forested areas : positive, by their clearing of the undergrowth, reporting outbreaks of wildfire and helping to combat them ; but negative as a result of the severe pressure they exert on



**Lookout in Cyprus** - Photo M. Jappiot/Cemagref Aix

the forest (agriculture, tourism) and by the fires originating from their activity.

#### ***Woodlands and wildfire***

The area burnt each year by wildfire varies between 140 ha. and 3,835 ha., equivalent to 0.09 % and 0.60 % of woodland area. Such figures may not seem very big but they must be considered in the context of countries where the total woodland area in each is very low. At present, in order to better understand wildfires, the forestry service in each country is working in conjunction with the FAO to establish a shared database. It is designed on the lines of the European model and "a common foundation" contains the minimum information required to describe a fire. Data specific to each country is also logged. This database has been functional in Tunisia since 1985 and more recently in the other three countries (1993 to 1998).

Details on wildfires need to be interpreted with caution, bearing in mind that the terms used (forest, fire...) and their very definitions vary from one country to another. Concerning the causes of wildfire, many outbreaks have an unknown cause (39% in Tunisia, 32% in Cyprus) and some causes may be grouped or appear under different headings that are impossible to cross-check.

#### ***Man and wildfire***

Whether caused by accident (electricity cables, unsupervised refuse dumps) or the result of carelessness, an unintentional human origin is the most common cause of outbreaks of wildfire in the four countries visited.

The known causes of outbreaks can be correlated with the main functions of the woodlands.

Thus, fires due to activity in the forest (firewood, harvesting honey, charcoal burning and pastoralism) predominate in Tunisia and Morocco where considerable numbers of the population live within the woodland areas. In Syria, on the other hand, outbreaks are largely caused by agriculture carried out near to woodland limits. In both situations, a compromise needs to be found between preservation of the woodlands and the socio-economic development of the neighbouring communities. The urban population in Syria, but also in Cyprus, is responsible for many outbreaks in both these countries. Foreign tourists may also be the cause of wildfire, notably in Cyprus.

The extra space required by a rapidly growing population is acquired at the expense of woodlands, through fires that facilitate their quick and effective clearance and occupation. This is flagrantly the case in

Syria and Morocco and in some parts of Tunisia. The upshot is that it can be hard to determine whether some outbreaks of wildfire near woodlands are accidental or deliberate.

## **Prevention**

### ***Foreseeing the risk***

Prevention of wildfires involves knowing when and how such fires threaten to occur.

Thus, in Tunisia the National Meteorological Institute devised in 1992 an index for assessing weather-related risk. Since then the Institute has produced a daily weather bulletin during the period May 1-October 31 specially devoted to indicating the forest fire risk.

In Cyprus, an indexed value, based on the weather conditions and the level of moisture in vegetation is broadcast daily. Unfortunately, it does not display a wide enough variation, generally remaining high throughout the summer season ; but it does play an important role in making the public more aware of the issue.

### ***Raising public awareness***

In the four countries we visited, the raising of general awareness of the issue of wildfire throughout society figures as a major element in undertakings concerned with prevention. Making the public more aware consists in emphasising to local inhabitants the benefits they actually derive from the woodlands and, at the same time, informing them of behaviour that involves the risk of causing wildfires. The themes addressed and the means used vary according to the functions of the woodlands, the nature of the causes of wildfire and the culture of the populations involved.

In Morocco, efforts to raise public awareness center on the market places, the villages and the mosques and stress the benefit to be had from woodlands as pasture (80 % of goat herds graze there), as a source of fallen dry wood, of construction wood and of medicinal plants to be sold in towns.

The ways used to raise the awareness of woodland-dwelling inhabitants can be less direct : in Syria, forestry managers, recognising that income which depends on the continued existence of forests reinforces awareness among the local population for the need to preserve woodlands, make sure that some job opportunities become available when reforestation work is undertaken.

Attempts to enhance awareness only work when there is a relationship of mutual trust between those promoting the message and the population involved. In Syria in earlier times, relations between foresters and inhabitants were very bad since the professionals were seen only as agents of repression. So those responsible for forestry organised campaigns to raise awareness, highlighting the benefits for day-to-day existence that woodlands provide. In 1997, following the advice of the FAO, a body was set up for "forestry education" comprising groups of men and women who produced information posters, established contacts and organised seminars.

Raising awareness can also be associated with work on fire prevention and fighting. The Regional Department for Water and Forests in the Rif area of Morocco has set up an original system for raising villagers' awareness and involving them in wildfire control. The aims of the organisation – comprising watch committees and emergency firefighting squads – are :

- ✓ raising public awareness,
- ✓ immediate mobilisation and intervention whenever a fire breaks out,
- ✓ getting inhabitants to feel responsible for the way their local territory evolves.

Such committees are set up on the basis of administrative levels of authority (village, annex, province), with each level having its own group organised according to a basic standard pattern. When there is an outbreak of wildfire, if the situation gets beyond the resources of the local group it can call in the annex group

which will then deploy further fire-fighting means.

These committees are composed of four members :

- ✓ a representative of the Ministry of Water and Forests (sorting manager)
- ✓ a representative of the Ministry of Home Affairs (Interior) (Moqqadem, Sheik...)
- ✓ an elected councillor
- ✓ a dignitary representing the local population (Faik from the mosque...)

### **Legislation**

The protection of woodlands against wildfire has given rise to considerable legislation. This has taken various forms, including regulations governing human activity as well as prescribing punishment for lawbreakers.

In Syria, forestry law authorises the rational use of woodland areas for the benefit of the local population. Woodland villages can avail themselves of nearby woodland, within the village limits or within a radius of five kilometres at the most from the centre of the village. The user rights laid down by this legislation allow the inhabitants to :

- ✓ collect dead wood as a source of energy,
- ✓ take timber for building,
- ✓ graze domestic animals except for goats and camels.

Repressive measures and punishment complete the legislative armoury.

In Morocco, to combat the pressure from the local population a law forbids using, for any non-forestry purposes, burnt-out plots which were previously woodland.

### **Adapting the land**

The four countries visited have all created and maintain a network of trenches as fire breaks. In Cyprus, clearcut breaks have been established at the woodland-farmland interface. In Morocco, fire breaks are conceived

as a form of passive prevention and are not always accessible to vehicular equipment. In Syria, breaks are most often created while the fire is actually burning.

Unfortunately, technical and land-owning impediments sometimes result in such fire breaks being made where their effectiveness is not at its best.

### **Cultivating the forest**

Reducing inflammable biomass, especially at the undergrowth level, helps to reduce the risk of wildfire spreading. In Morocco and Tunisia, this is achieved by grazing in the woodlands and carrying off dead wood, thus clearing up the undergrowth.

In Morocco, lopping and trimming of the coniferous stands, the main silvicultural operations used in quality wood production, also act preventively against forest fires. In the cork oak forests of the Rif region, the thick undergrowth is eliminated to facilitate access and harvesting the cork. These woodlands, once cleared, are then maintained by grazing livestock beneath the cork oaks.

The profits hoped for, or obtained, from forest production (wood, cork) encourage foresters to undertake silviculture which will enhance production and which at the same time reduces the risk of wildfire.

### **Surveillance**

All four countries have lookout posts. The lookout wardens are all recruited locally and know the terrain sufficiently well to be able to localise an outbreak without reference to maps.

In Syria, surveillance is also carried out by forestry patrols. In Morocco, boundary wardens go through the forests and some are paid by sportsmen who rent the hunting rights.

In Cyprus, the forest boundaries are regularly patrolled. The patrols are responsible for detecting, alerting and



**Poster for wildfire prevention -**  
Photo P-Y. Colin/Cemagref Aix

fighting the fire in its initial stages ; but it is also their duty to inform the public about relevant matters and to police the woodlands. This surveillance is very effective and has brought a reduction in the number of outbreaks. On higher risk days, fire trucks go out on patrol along the tracks and on roads around the forest, the aim being to enable them to intervene as quickly as possible.

## Rehabilitation

The techniques used for regenerating woodland after a fire depend on the natural environment, the means available but, above all, on the functions of the particular forest and the pressures it undergoes.

In Tunisia, the commonest recourse is to forbid access to the burnt areas in order to favour natural regeneration. Species which reshoot are cut down to a stool. Very successful stands of naturally self-seeded Aleppo pine are frequently to be seen. Reforestation is only used where natural regeneration does not take place.

The same holds true in Cyprus where the forestry service presently tends to favour natural regrowth before any attempt at reforestation, largely because of landscape criteria.

Conversely, in Morocco burnt-out areas are systematically replanted. Reforestation is carried out and paid for by the Water and Forestry Service. Public access to the replanted area is forbidden for six years. In most cases, natural regeneration is sufficient to renew the damaged woodlands. Recourse to replanting aims at reassuring the population as to the "rapid return" of the forest, though it also facilitates this aim in so far as respect for the no-access regulations is greater for replanted stands than for natural regrowth. In the cork oak forests of Mamora (near Rabat) the burnt oaks are felled and the area decreed out of bounds to avoid the local inhabitants coming into the forest to gather acorns.

In Syria, any burnt area is immediately replanted the following year to take advantage of the rainfall. The aim of such reforestation is to occupy the land, thus pre-empting any attempt to encroach on it by the local population. Plantations are patrolled by a warden recruited amongst the local inhabitants. His job is to prevent any access by domesticated animals or people.

In the countries visited, natural regeneration, whether by self-seeding or reshooting, appears to be frequently possible after a wildfire. Nevertheless, in Morocco and Syria, where the rural population exerts considerable pressure on the woodlands, only replanting makes it possible to keep the renewed areas free from the acquisitiveness of the local population and the browsing of their animals.

Faced with the problem of wildfire, each of the countries visited has conceived and carried out solutions adapted to its socio-economic context and to the causes of the outbreaks. This is especially obvious concerning the raising of public awareness and reforestation. Despite the sometimes limited physical means available, the wide range of solutions resorted to has enhanced the effectiveness of protection against wildfire. Our hope is that this International Guide succeeds in reflecting this diversity and may

serve as a tool for cooperation between all the countries of the Mediterranean Rim.

We would like to thank most heartily all those who gave us such a warm welcome on our visits to Cyprus, Morocco, Syria and Tunisia.

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# Annual General Meeting of the International Association for Mediterranean Forests



**Neum (Bosnia and Herzegovina) April 12, 2002**

The Annual General Meeting was preceded by addresses of welcome by Mrs Behija Hadzihajdarevic (Minister of Forests of the Federal Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina) and Mr Rodoljub Trkulja (Minister for Forests of the Republic of Srpska<sup>1</sup>), by a word of thanks by IAMF president Mohamed Larbi Chakroun on behalf of the Association. Also, Cedomil Silic and Cedomir Burlica gave an account of the characteristics of Mediterranean forests in the karstic areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

## President's Report

President Mohamed Larbi Chakroun gave his report :

"At the present time, the Association has 48 members, of whom two are organisations, but we have not yet sent out reminders for this year. Let me remind you that we were 121 in 2001 (with 13 member organisations) and 106 in 2000 (14 member organisations).

Our network numbers 1,812 people and organisations compared to, for example, 1,507 on November 1, 2001.

Thus we can claim that our undertaking is having an ever-wider effect and our reputation is growing. We shall suggest why ; but also - indeed, this should be a priority - we should consider the means for accelerating our development because Mediterranean forests, even limiting ourselves to just those countries

*1 : These two entities together make up the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina.*

*2 : These documents are available on request or on the website of the IAMF.*

around the Mediterranean Rim, involve 25 countries and 60 million hectares.

Nor have we been standing still since the beginning of 2001. The Interreg IIC project "The Problem of the Mediterranean forest" has been carried out through six meetings :

- ✓ a preparatory workshop session of the group "Training, research, raising public awareness" took place at Avignon (France) on February 12-13, 2001. The steering committee of this group, made up of people from France, Portugal, Spain and Italy, reflected on which aspects of the group's topics should be followed up at its future seminar.
- ✓ The seminar on "Civilisation and heritage" was held at Aix-en-Provence (France) on March 8, 2001. 22 people took part in discussing the idea of awareness of Mediterranean woodlands as a part of the region's heritage ; and identifying the main distinctive features of woodland heritage prior to deciding which aspects should be explored further during the First Conference on Mediterranean Forests and Natural Land Areas.
- ✓ A seminar of the "Training, research, raising public awareness" group took place at Marseille (France) on May 14-15, 2001, in which 41 participants from 8 countries debated the issues related to research and education and training. They also discussed which communications strategies should be adopted to boost the value of Mediterranean natural areas and enhance the benefits deriving from them.
- ✓ A seminar of the group "Risks threatening Mediterranean forests and the role of forests in preventing such risks" was held in Valencia

(Spain). Several eminent specialists on the subjects of wildfire, erosion and the threats to the health of plants took part. The backing of the Regional Council of the Comunidad de Valencia and its director of forest resources, Javier Gómez Martín, was instrumental in holding the seminar.

✓ A seminar on "Cooperation" took place on November 5, 2001 at Marseille (France).

✓ A round-up seminar held on November 6, 2001 at Marseille (France), attended by 73 participants, was the occasion for presenting and debating the synthesis of all the work carried out within the framework of the project.

These syntheses form an annex included in the document that you were given during our proceedings<sup>2</sup>.

Altogether, 198 people have been involved in this work which has been the object of a report that has had nothing but unanimous praise and which will be published in French and in several other languages.

In the course of the last year we have published four issues of our Association's Bulletin, in French and in English, as well as setting up our website which I invite you to browse through at the following address : "<http://www.aifm.org>".

We have taken part as actively as our organisational structure has allowed, in the activities of allied organisations and of our partners :

- ✓ participation in an international seminar in Rome, on July 5-6, 2001, concerning the preparation of the Interreg III programme.
- ✓ a visit to the Parco della Madonie



Neum (Bosnia and Herzegovina) - Photo D. Poulet

in Sicily, accompanied by the park staff.

- ✓ a meeting (on September 10, 2001) at the Universidad Complutense in Madrid with a view to preparing a "Forest" project within the framework of the Interreg IIIB-SUDOE programme.
- ✓ participation in a work group preparing the establishment of a training programme "Mediterranean woodlands" at the ENGREF, October 10, 2001.
- ✓ participation in the "Regional Encounters on the Environment" of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region, at Digne, October 17, 2001.
- ✓ attended the meeting of the Mediterranean Committee for Sustainable Development at Monaco, November 11, 2001.
- ✓ attended a meeting of the MOI-CSD at Monaco, November 13, 2001.

The IUFRO has proposed that we be one of its affiliated bodies. Steps are presently being taken to this end : the IAMF has indicated its agreement and we are now awaiting the decision of the IUFRO to be taken at the meeting of its executive committee at Vancouver in June 2002.

We have hired a secretary-assistant, Ms Claire Lallemand, who joined us July 9, 2001.

A large part of our internal activity has been devoted to the administrative and financial management of the Interreg IIC programme which is exceedingly demanding in time and energy, given the great rigour required to satisfy the financial monitoring criteria attendant on EU funding (ERDF).

During this period we have also made many contacts with potential partners who could well take part in the Interreg IIIB programme. This was especially the case at the November 7, 2001 meeting in Marseille.

To date, here is the list of our partners :

- ✓ those who have given their formal acceptance (or all but...) :
  - ◆ Algarve Region (Portugal)
  - ◆ Campania Region (Italy)
  - ◆ Crete Region (Greece) (outside the MEDOC zone until 2004)
  - ◆ Murcia Region (Spain)
  - ◆ Provence-Alpes-Côtes d'Azur Region (France)
  - ◆ Comunidad de Valencia (Spain)
  - ◆ Vesuvius National Park (Italy)
- ✓ those who are not officially committed but on whom there is no doubt that we can count for support :
  - ◆ Alentejo Region (Portugal)
  - ◆ Andalusia Region (Spain)
  - ◆ Balearic Region (Spain)

- ◆ Gard *département* (France)
- ◆ Sicily Region (Italy)
- ✓ those who are likely to join our project :
  - ◆ Catalonia Region (Spain)
  - ◆ the Republic of Cyprus

Before concluding, I would like to thank all the organisations that have given us help :

- ✓ The European Union,
- ✓ The French Government, via the *Préfecture* of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region, the Ministry of Land Use Planning and of the Environment, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
- ✓ the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region,
- ✓ the Bouches-du-Rhône *département*,
- ✓ the *Generalitat Valenciana* (Spain)
- ✓ the Vesuvius National Park (Italy)
- ✓ the Campania Region (Italy)
- ✓ the Complutense university of Madrid.

And of course, once again I thank most gratefully the administration of Bosnia-Herzegovina which has made this meeting possible.

And I thank you all without whom there would be neither association, ideas nor a dynamic.

Many thanks, too, to Jean Bonnier, Claire Lallemand and Denys Poulet who keep our Association functioning so well.

Finally, I can inform you that Ms Hélène Cambe, who worked with us at one period, has given birth to a little boy, Vince.

He has our best wishes."

### Discussion

Christina Montiel : Taking into account our human and financial resources, a great deal has been accomplished. Even so, though we may be overworked, we must make a further effort, each in his or her own country, so that news of what has been achieved gets written about and effectively spread.

The Association is at a crucial moment when considering European Union programmes. We need to submit a cogent project.

**The President's Report was adopted unanimously by the members present or represented.**

## Financial Statement

Marielle Jappiot, the treasurer, presented the accounts for the financial year 2001.

### Discussion

**Carlo Bifulco** : A possibility exists for obtaining funding from the EU aimed at helping environmental associations (with no specific activities stipulated). He requested that the secretary look immediately into the matter. He also asked for the IAMF's main operating costs to be made available.

**Jean Bonnier** : He proposed that the details asked for be sent by post in the near future to all the members of the Administrative Council.

**The financial statement was unanimously approved by all the members present or represented.**

## Setting the IAMF membership fee in Euros

The following motion was unanimously adopted : as of April 12, 2002, the membership fee for individuals will be 15 euros (instead of the previous 15.40 euros) and the fee for organisations will be 50 euros (instead of the previous 45.73 euros).

## Other questions

**Behija Hadzihajdarevic** : Bosnian forestry specialists are here today to discover both the work undertaken by the IAMF and its objectives. In addition,

3 : This document is available on request (for members only).

tion, they would like to know what are the practical repercussions in the field of the work accomplished and how can they get grants to help solve the problems that confront them here. To whom can they address their requests ?

She pointed out that the IAMF is not a "classic" organisation. It is relatively young (6 years old). It strives to heighten awareness of the importance of taking into account the specific features of Mediterranean woodlands and to ensure they are protected, all this within the framework of the different programmes of the European Union. Its headquarters are at Marseille. Though the Association employs only a few people, and given the limited means at its disposal, altogether it achieves notable, significant results.

She hoped that the IAMF could serve as a link between projects in Bosnia and those of the EU.

The problem of forests in Bosnia and Herzegovina is essentially related to the anti-personnel mines whose continued presence prevents intervention to fight wildfire or treat pests and diseases. Some areas are truly hotbeds of infection by insects or disease which then spread (or may do so) to elsewhere in Bosnia and throughout the Mediterranean.

She feels that even if the IAMF has limited means it can be influential in transmitting information.

**Jean Bonnier** : Because few of the Bosnians present speak either French or English, communicating with the IAMF is likely to be difficult (in the absence of simultaneous translation). If there are a sufficient number of people in Bosnia interested in such exchanges, he recommends that a Bosnian "Mediterranean Forest association" be set up, thus establishing a link with the IAMF.

**Behija Hadzihajdarevic** : An association of forestry engineers already exists in a part of the country. But the matter can be profitably investigated.

**The order paper having been**



**Tree nursery in Bosnia and Herzegovina - Photo D. Poulet**

**dealt with in its totality, the President declared the Annual General Meeting finished.**

**Mohamed Larbi Chakroun**  
President  
and  
**Carlo Bifulco**  
Secretary

The IAMF has recently brought out a publication entitled *The Problem of the Mediterranean Forest* (192p.) which gives an account of two years' work involving some 200 people in 14 Mediterranean and European countries.

In our view, the ideas presented provide a new outlook on issues which concern all those for whom Mediterranean woodlands are a vital feature in land use and management.

A work not to be missed !



The book can be ordered from the IAMF (25 euros to cover costs, including postage).



# Visit to the Circeo National Park

Italy, April 4, 2002

On the occasion of the Silva Mediterranea meeting, the *Corpo forestale dello stato italiano* – the Italian state forestry service – organised on April 4 last a field trip to the Circeo National Park, located some hundred kilometres south of Rome.

The park comprises four types of area :

- ✓ a limestone promontory which has given its name to the place, either because of its shape or because Circe, Odysseus's temptress in the epic, had her quarters here. This part is characteristic of hill country of the Mediterranean coast, with holm oak, arbutus and manna ash... and villas whose spread the park is struggling to limit.
- ✓ a lido with superb beaches that separates the sea from a number of coastal lagoons. These are fed by water coming from the marshes that first the Vatican and then the Italian governments of the 1920's-30's

drained, thus ridding the place of malaria and making it suitable for agriculture, transforming the vast latifundia into peasant holdings. A lot of people come to this lido which is thus subjected to heavy pressure from human activity. The *Ente*, the park authorities, through very expensive but well thought out and on-going measures, is trying to ensure that this dune environment does not regress but evolves with a positive dynamic.

✓ the coastal lagoons, used for fishing in the past and still so nowadays thanks to concerted agreement with the fishing professionals. As is often the case in such zones, the great challenge to the park technical staff is the management of the waters, whose levels and salinity vary a lot.

✓ an exemplary forest that improvement has preserved (or that has been preserved from improvement). This lowland forest, extending over

4,000 hectares, is a classic example of a particular humid Mediterranean plain environment and, as such, is justification in itself for a visit to Circeo. The park manager, Mario Priolo, a forestry professional who is at the same time traditional and ultramodern, is trying out a silvicultural approach which seeks only to accelerate the most natural evolution of the stands which are dominated by pedunculate oak. The method seeks to avoid giving the public an impression of an abandoned habitat but at the same time avoid heavy intervention that could give be interpreted as over-exploitation : the effect is a kind of gardening that the *Prosylva* activists would espouse...

The Circeo National Park is also a "Man and the Biosphere" nature reserve.

Jean Bonnier

# Visit to the Mljet National Park

Croatia, April 16, 2002

At the time of the IAMF Annual General Meeting that was held at Neum (Bosnia and Herzegovina), I was able to fit in a quick visit to the Mljet National Park.

It occupies a third of the island of Mljet, about 5,400 hectares, some thirty kilometres to the west of Dubrovnik.

To get there takes an hour by boat and then you need transport to go from the dock to the park site (25 km away). It is a virtually untouched example of Mediterranean coastal forest dominated by the Aleppo pine

and its associated plants (evergreen oak, lentiscus, manna ash...).

The park was created at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century under the aegis of the Austro-Hungarian royal family and has been variously maintained by succeeding governments.

It is no doubt one of the most outstanding conservation sites of Mediterranean nature, due to the absence up to now of pressure from tourism and the very small number of wildfires that have affected it over the last half-century. So much for ecology.

But the park also features two lakes beside the coast : these are karstic depressions filled with water and connected to the sea. One, small, has water that is almost fresh. The second larger one receives some input of seawater and has a Romanesque monastery (Saint Marie's) in it.

One could happily see this park involved in close cooperative arrangements with France's Port Cros National Park.

Jean Bonnier

# Bosnia and Herzegovina : Beware of landmines !



At the time of the IAMF Annual General Meeting held at Neum, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Association members were able to enjoy three days of valuable exchange with forestry colleagues from the Federation of Bosnia and from the Serbian Republic (Sprska) of Bosnia (cf. the report of the AGM above).

Ms. Behija Hadzihajdarevic, the Federation's Minister of Forestry, specifically asked us to inform as many people as possible that one of the major problems confronting the forestry sector in Bosnia is the presence of landmines scattered throughout the woodlands.

The number of hectares mined is around 250,000, of which 140,000 are situated in the Federation and 110,000

in the Sprska Republic. These areas are spread across the country, more particularly on the mainland.

Concerning the Mediterranean sector, the karst lands, mines are present on 50,000 ha., along a front, parallel to the Adriatic (Croatian) coast, more than 60 km long. On top of this danger is the usual risk of wildfire.

Whether it be a question of forestry activity such as replanting, silviculture or merely keeping a lookout for fire and fighting outbreaks, it is hard to see how anything can be done without a real feeling of anxiety.

And, clearly, demining will be done first in residential areas and on agricultural land (which is understandable).

Once again, forests reveal the

nature of the words' etymology : species "on the outside" which get attention only when all the rest have been dealt with ! We would be happy to learn that Ms. Behija Hadzihajdarevic has been getting messages on this subject, even if only messages of sympathy, but how much better if they carried word of a solution or making material means available.

**Jean Bonnier**

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Mehmeda Spahe 3 Sarajevo  
Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Fax : +387 37 332 384  
email : t95lka@bih.net.ba

## Announcements

✍ 16-17 November 2002 - Marseille - France  
**Meeting of the Administrative board of the IAMF**  
Contact : AIFM - 14, rue Louis Astouin - 13002 Marseille - France  
Phone : +33 4 91 90 76 70 Fax : +33 4 91 90 71 62  
e-mail : info@aifm.org - Website : www.aifm.org

✍ 18-23 November 2002 - Coimbra - Portugal  
**IV<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Forest Fire Research 2002 - Wildfire Safety Summit**  
Contact : D.X. Viegas - Associação para o Desenvolvimento da Aerodinamica Industrial - Apart. 10131 - 301601 Coimbra - Portugal  
Phone : +351 239 790731 Fax : +351 239 790771  
e-mail : xavier.viegas@dem.uc.pt

✍ 5-8 December 2002 - Lisbon - Portugal  
**II<sup>nd</sup> Conference on the state of the Natura 2000 network in the countries of the Mediterranean Rim**  
Contact : S. Fragoso - Liga para a protecção da natureza - Estrada do Calhariz de Benfica, n°187 - 1500-124 Lisbon - Portugal  
Phone : +351 21 778 00 97 Fax : + 351 21 778 32 08  
e-mail : lpn.natureza@mail.telepac.pt - Website : www.lpn.pt

✍ 14-15 January 2003 - Barcelona - Spain  
**Meeting of Experts on "Orientations" for Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development**  
Contact : Arab Hoballah - PAM PNUE - Athens - Greece  
Phone : +30 10 727 31 26 Fax : +30 10 7257 31 96  
e-mail : hoballah@unepmap.gr - Website : www.unepmap.org

✍ 17-28 February 2003 - Saragossa -Spain  
**Courses : Natural resources economy**  
Contact : IAM - Apart. 202 - 50080 Saragossa - Spain  
Phone : +34 976 716 0001 Fax : + 34 976 716 001  
e-mail : iamz@iamz.ciheam.org - site Web : www.iamz.ciheam.org

✍ 7-9 April 2003 (to be confirmed)- Algiers - Algeria  
**VIII<sup>th</sup> meeting of the MSSD**  
Contact : Arab Hoballah - PAM PNUE - Greece

✍ 5-9 May 2003 - Oeiras - Portugal  
**II<sup>nd</sup> Seminar on invasive woody plants : "Management of ecosystems occupied by woody forest species considered as invasive"**  
Contact : Eugénia Rocha and Assunção Caçador - Estação Florestal Nacional - INIA - Quinta do Marquês - Oeiras - Portugal  
Phone : +351 21 390 16 61 Fax : + 351 21 397 31 63  
e-mail : 2eiil@clix.pt

✍ 21-28 September 2003 - Quebec - Canada  
**XII<sup>nd</sup> World Forestry Congress**  
Contact : CP 7275 - Charlesbourg - Quebec G1G 5E5 - Canada  
Website : www.cfm2003.org

✍ 8-13 August 2005 - Brisbane - Australia  
**XXII<sup>nd</sup> IUFRO World Congress**  
Contact : R.J. Haines - Queensland Forestry Research Inst. - Australia  
Phone : +61 7 38969714 Fax : +61 7 38969628  
e-mail : hainesr@qfril.se2.dpi.qld.gov.au and iufro@forvie.ac.at

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