



# The Latest on Mediterranean Forests

N°12 December 2008



## Editorial

It's my very agreeable task to present in this, the 12<sup>th</sup> issue of our Bulletin, two items of information related to events held by sister organisations.

The first, in an article by Jean-Paul Chassany, concerns the annual meeting of the European Forestry Institute at Orvieto (Italy). This important gathering devoted one day to the EFIMED, the Mediterranean branch of the EFI whose president is Yves Birot, and included a very successful field trip to an area straddling Umbria, Tuscany and Latium.

Yves Birot and myself have just signed a Memorandum of Understanding that gives a clear overview of our two organisations and their shared desire to cooperate.

Secondly, there is an article by Henri-Luc Thibault, director of the Blue Plan, outlining the conclusions of the seminar they held devoted to climate change around the Mediterranean Rim.

Let me here remind everybody that the IAMF and the Blue Plan also have an agreement together based on the same Memorandum of Understanding referred to above.

Little by little, initiatives are converging to enhance taking into account all facets of the environment in Mediterranean regions through a commonly-held undertaking that encompasses the sustainable development of each area, scientific knowledge along with higher education, a widened public including managers and users and, with the WWF, one of our partners, a rigorous approach to nature conservancy.

So you can see why we will always be keen to devote space in this journal to the activities of all possible partner organisations.

It's the least that Mediterranean forests and natural areas deserve!

**Mohamed Larbi CHAKROUN**  
**IAMF President**

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## Recently, IAMF took part in...

### **Saint-Maximin (France)** **September 23 2008**

Louis Amandier, Council member, Jean Bonnier, Executive Secretary, and David Gasc, Project Manager, took part in the first preparatory workshop for Foresterrannée 2008 organised by the French association Forêt Méditerranéenne.

### **Montpellier (France)** **September 30 2008**

Louis Amandier and Jean Bonnier took part in the second preparatory workshop for Foresterrannée 2008.

### **Marseille (France)** **October 22-23 2008**

Louis Amandier and Denys Poulet, Project Manager, took part in the regional seminar on "Climate change in the Mediterranean" organised by the Blue Plan.

### **Marseille (France)** **October 31 2008**

The IAMF submitted the Qualigouv project file to the MED programme's Joint Technical Secretariat. The partners involved in this project are: regions of Murcia and Valencia (Spain), the province of Taranto and the Med Po branch of the WWF (Italy), the regional nature parks of the Luberon and the Alpilles,

the ONF (French Forestry Commission) and the IAMF.

### **Istanbul (Turkey)** **November 3-14 2008**

Turgut Celikkol, Council member, represented the IAMF at the seventh session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 7), organized by the UNCCD.

### **Etang-des-Aulnes (France)** **November 27-28 2008**

Louis Amandier, Jean Bonnier and David Gasc took part in the wind-up symposium of Foresterrannée 2008 devoted to the relationship between research and management.

## Membership and/or subscription form

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# **EFIMED Regional Office meeting and EFI Annual Conference**

**Jean-Paul Chassany's<sup>1</sup> minutes**

The yearly meeting of the EFIMED regional council was held in Italy in September 2008. The venue was in the very beautiful town of Orvieto which is located some 100 kilometres north of Rome, in the Umbria Region in the Appennine Mountains. This meeting preceded the annual conference of the European Forestry Institute (EFI), of which the EFIMED is a part. The conference, held on September 18-19, also took place in Orvieto, at the Palazzo dei Congressi, a medieval palace dating from the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

## **Background**

In 2000, MEDFOREX, a "project centre" associated with the EFI, was set up as the result of the combined initiative of the University of Barcelona (Prof. Pere Riera), the Forestry Technological Centre of Catalonia (Dr Marc Palahi) and the University of Padua (Prof. Maurizio Merlo, who sadly has since died). One of its first undertakings was an assessment of the value accruing to forests and woodlands in 18 countries around the Mediterranean Rim from activities involving as much the public interest as those generating actual products. Initially the work was carried out by teams from four countries (Spain, France, Italy and Portugal) and it led to the publication in 2006 of a book that has become the reference on the topic: "Valuing Mediterranean Forests, towards total economic value", edited by M. Merlo and L. Croitoru, published by CAB

International Publishing (USA) 2005.

Several seminars held at Solsona by the Forestry Technological Centre of Catalonia (CTFC) provided ongoing updates of the survey and led to further applications for research grants from the European Union. Reflection and discussion subsequently resulted in the creation of the Regional Office for the Mediterranean - EFIMED - based in Barcelona and an integral part of the EFI.

Based at Joensuu in Finland, the EFI emerged from a concept first mooted in 1990 and was actually set up in 1993-4. The EFI sees itself as an umbrella body federating at a Pan-European level assorted forestry organisations: the 130 member organisations come from 38 countries. In the main, there are research and training institutes, particularly university departments, and stakeholders in the forestry, wood and pulp and paper industries. The EFI was set up to foster research and development involving forests. Aspects concerned include as much ecological issues as the multi-purpose and multi-usage dimension of forest resources, as well as matters related to supply and demand of timber and other wood-based products. A scientific advisory committee assesses the work carried out and gives its opinion on future lines of action suggested by members. A further aim is to foster adequate policy-making, especially taking into account the expectations of industrial concerns and landholders.

In 2005, the EFI gained official recognition as an international body thanks to a convention ratified by 17 countries. Thus, it can now make available to the EU its expertise in forestry matters.

The EFI very quickly realised how necessary it is to take into account the diversity of the ecological and politico-economic contexts surrounding forests and woodlands in Europe. As a result, EFIMED became the first regional branch, set up specifically for the Mediterranean. This first branch is to be followed by others, as we shall see below.

## **The EFIMED meeting (September 17 2008)**

The meeting provided participants with an update on research and development activity undertaken by the EFIMED in 2008 in a context where the issue of the impact of climate change appears crucial for Mediterranean forests. It also dealt with an altogether different subject, now increasingly part of the general awareness of all those involved with forests-related issues: the possibility of getting added value for stakeholders from non-commercial goods and services, whether from payment for public service (landscape, biological diversity, carbon sinks, regulation of the water table...) or from the development of tourist or even cultural activities. No longer is it utopian to imagine that forests and woodland might become more profitable. Even so, there remains the problem of how to put a figure on

the value of non-commercial goods and services.

Other related themes were discussed:

The risk of wildfires (45,000 a year on average in Europe - no one has forgotten the forest fires in Portugal and Greece in recent years, not to mention in California this last autumn): objectives to strive for include ranking the level of threat in the light of the ends assigned to particular woodland areas, working out the most suitable management techniques that take into account a rural area as a multifarious whole and designing policies to implement such methods. Research can help towards these goals by enhancing understanding of the integrated ensemble, particularly by modelling the dynamics of Mediterranean woodlands, which of course means factoring in the multi-purpose aptitude that is such a strong feature of Mediterranean forests and natural areas. Such contributions must necessarily go hand-in-hand with full-scale trials and experiments, including suitable monitoring and assessment of the suggested approaches (an aspect as yet not much talked about).

The second theme concerned the complex question of interaction between forests and water. Recently an international conference was held in Barcelona which took stock of present knowledge at a worldwide level, and considered the Mediterranean context under four headings: future climate and rainfall patterns in particular; water for trees; the interface between forests and forest management and the water resource; and water for people.

Finally, the recurrent issue of sustainable management of Mediterranean woodlands and forests, taking into account their various levels and their multi-purpose nature, continues to be the subject of much research throughout the whole Mediterranean area.

All these efforts by Mediterranean organisations have led to increased expertise that has been reinforced by the various training programmes set up by the EFIMED.

### ***The EFI annual conference (September 18-19 2008)***

The usual speeches were given but two main points stand out:

✓ The setting-up of four regional branches and the presentation of work in progress.

The assembly, after a long procedural debate and a secret ballot by empowered members, decide to accept four of the five proposals for new regional offices: EFIAtlantic, based at the INRA (French national agricultural research body) in Bordeaux, for western Atlantic forests; EFICEE, based in Vienna (Austria), for East-Central Europe; EFICENT for Central Europe, with a tripartite base in Nancy, Friburg and Zurich; and EFISEE for South-East Europe, covering the Balkans and Hungary but without Greece. A project for EFINORD, centring on the forests that stretch from Great Britain through Scandinavia to the Baltic, was not accepted at this conference due to insufficient reflection on the idea. Another project involving the forests of Russia and associated countries is also on the cards.

The establishment of these regional branches reflects the

need to take into account the specific features of the broad bio-geographical and socio-cultural zones into which these forests fall. A powerful lobby at a European level is emerging in order to gain recognition for the problems that confront forests, with the timber industry in a significant role. Thus, a window of opportunity seems to have appeared, something similar to what made setting up the EFIMED possible for the Mediterranean regions, offering the chance to certain partner bodies to gain acceptance for their prime concerns.

✓ The second point concerns the seminar on research.

The first session was devoted to taking into account forest biology within the framework of multi-purpose management of woodlands: the slogan "Trees for wood, biomass and environmental sustainability" sums up the issue fairly well. Associated topics discussed were landscape dynamics and silvicultural practices, the impact of pollution on the growth of trees, and the prevention and fighting of wildfire.

The second session was concerned with new tools for monitoring and planning rural and forest landscapes, for assessing the impact that fragmenting landscape has on the vulnerability and resilience of woodlands and forests as well as the role of corridors in the preservation of biodiversity. And this session, it goes without saying, also considered the indicators of climate change (for example, data from Scotch pine monitoring or the use of satellite imagery...).

The third session gathered together the results of work on

**Prof. Scarascia-Mugnozza, with Dr. Conticelli, during the visit to Selva Meano and Monte Rufeno - Photo: JB**



putting a value on environmental services and their advantageous or profitable use. Over and above the usual attempts at valuing particular cases, which is always a doubtful procedure, it is worth noting examples where non-use is taken into account (conservation of old stands or emblematic trees - Israel) or the integration of cultural values.

It should also be noted that in numerous countries, especially those of the Mediterranean Rim with their EFIMED teams, there is definite impetus to find ways to make forests profitable. Such an aim coincides with what specialists in development call the marketing of "baskets of goods" within the framework of a process of "local / regional specificity" based on the gainful exploitation of resources that are specific and original to the given area and, thus, less exposed to competition. Such goods baskets contain at one

and the same time saleable products as well as less- or non-commercial products, including services of public importance produced jointly. For example, tourism services can be associated to other forest products calling on the image of the area as a whole, which implies at least a minimum of coordination with other sectors in the socio-economic matrix. This is an approach we are all very familiar with at *Forêt Méditerranéenne* (French branch of IAMF).

All such work reflects quite faithfully the current pre-occupations of European forestry and, indeed, Mediterranean forests might well serve as a start-up model.

It should also be noted that, within the framework of the European Tempus scheme, there exists an international master's programme on the management of Mediterranean forest ecosystems.

Finally, note that the next meeting of EFIMED/EFI will be held at Marrakech in Morocco from April 28-May 1 2009, on the theme "Mediterranean forests in the context of integrated management of regional resources: water, soil, fodder".

The Conference went on with a field outing during which our Italian forester friends took us around the magnificent forests of Umbria and showed us work on converting beech coppicing into superb timber stands with a view to conservation and making natural areas available to city dwellers (natural silviculture at "Selva di Meana" and the nature conservation area at Monte Rufeno). We also visited the wonderful sweet chestnut groves (run for chestnuts) and the outstanding beech forests on the Monti Cimini, as well as a remarkable sawmill supplying chestnut roofing timber to the national Italian monuments administration from... French chestnut forests in the Limoges area! When you learn that it's extremely difficult to persuade French carpenters to return to using chestnut once more because of lack of local supply... it's like a (bad) dream...

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<sup>1</sup> The author would like to thank Yves Birot for rereading and revising this report

# Regional Seminar “Climate change in the Mediterranean”

Main conclusions presented by Henri-Luc Thibault (Blue Plan Director)

The seminar on “Climate change in the Mediterranean: from acknowledgement to action” was held in Marseilles on 22 and 23 October, 2008, within the framework of the work of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development and following on from the guidance given by the heads of State and government at the Summit for the Mediterranean held in Paris on 13 July 2008. The main conclusions which the Blue Plan draws from this seminar are as follows:

## 1) The Facts

There is today consensus within the international scientific community as concerns global warming. The work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has, in particular, confirmed the existence of abnormal global warming unprecedented in scale and speed, of which the root cause is human activity.

The IPCC has also established that, given the fragile nature of the ecosystems which comprise it and the numerous pressures stemming from its demography and economy, the region to which the Mediterranean countries belong is one of the areas most vulnerable to the various impacts of the climate change currently underway.

These impacts are likely to trigger a rise in sea-levels, greater coastal erosion, a weakening of natural coastal defences, whilst also placing a strain on ecosystems already affected by deforestation, increasing water scarcity, disrupting fish stocks and prompting the renewed outbreak of epizootics and vectoral diseases.

The climate threat is arising at a time when most Mediterranean countries are also having to face up to the energy, economic and ecological challenges of globalisation against a backdrop of general population growth. The combination of these various challenges could well affect the efficiency if not the relevance of the economic investments made over the last few years and give rise to unprecedented social problems.

## 2) Recommendations

Given this state of affairs, making the Mediterranean a showcase for combating climate change implies:

### At the scientific level,

✓ The full participation of scientific and academic stakeholders and networks from the southern and eastern Mediterranean countries in designing and implementing scientific work on climate change, modelling in particular,

✓ Setting up a genuine information system on climate change, initially pooling and drawing on existing data and subsequently identifying and seeking out any missing data, particularly through enhanced regional cooperation, driven by those institutions which are active in the field,

### At the political level,

✓ Including the climate factor in regional and national planning and decision-taking processes as of now,  
✓ Including impact and vulnerability to climate change in public and territorial policy by striving to develop integrated approaches, which will allow sectoral work to be interlinked,

### At the financial level,

✓ The creation of financial instruments by the partners in development, aimed at supporting the Mediterranean countries' efforts towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to future changes in the climate and setting up a forum for exchange to deliberate together the eligibility criteria of Mediterranean projects for the Adaptation Fund decided upon in Bali,

### At the institutional level,

✓ The regular organisation at a Mediterranean level - under the aegis of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable

Development and the Blue Plan, for example - of events dedicated to climate change, with particular focus on drawing up, calculating and regularly producing indicators on the impact of climate change in the region, the exchange of good mitigation but particularly adaptation practices, as well as the adaptation measures to be brought in and the means to finance them.

✓ Continuing the work first begun by MAP's Cleaner

Production Centre, in order to measure the carbon footprint of the various sectors of consumption, and by the Blue Plan to estimate the cost of non-action on combating climate change in the Mediterranean region,

**At the public mobilisation level,**

✓ Taking account of the essential role of local authorities, associations and NGOs in mobilising the public to combat

climate change and involving them closely in work and thinking in this field.

Marseilles, 23 October, 2008  
([www.planbleu.org](http://www.planbleu.org))

## Zooming in on... a new member

*With each new issue, "The Latest on Mediterranean Forests" will introduce a new IAMF member*



**Henri Dalbiès** joined our association in 2008. A retired forestry technician, he worked for many years for France's ONF in the Alpes de Haute-Provence area.

In particular, his expertise in communications and public reception enabled him to lead workgroups on rural land improvement and development

and organise residential environmental education courses for schools. He also contributed to a number of tourist guides and hikers' handbooks, as well as moderating several television programmes devoted to issues of land improvement and development and pastoralism.

As a specialist in pastoralism and silvi-pastoralism, Henri Dalbiès spearheaded in the course of his career several forestry and land development projects involving pastoralism. These activities led him to attend many national and international conferences and workshops and to write a number of articles.

In 2007, he was elected vice-chairman of the "Development for urban and mountain communities" commission of the

Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region's Social and Economic Council. He is also president of ICD-Afrique (Institute for Cooperative Development in Africa), an organisation which fosters and coordinates away-from-home stays for young people in difficulty, professional training and economic development (ecotourism).

Henri Dalbiès is also president of the "District of Asses, Verdon, Vaire, Var" Development Council and as such is a driving force in the dynamic action of this body that works in the Colmars-les-Alpes area of France's Alpes de Haute-Provence département.

You can reach Henri Dalbiès at: [henri.dalbiès@cd-afrique.org](mailto:henri.dalbiès@cd-afrique.org)

# Mediterranean forests, the talk of the town!

For more details and the latest updated information, don't forget to check the diary on our website ([www.aifm.org](http://www.aifm.org)).  
And don't forget: tell us about any event that doesn't appear in the diary - it will make it that much better!

## 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on Drylands, Deserts and Desertification

14-17 December 2008 - Sede Boquer Campus (Israel)  
Website: <http://cmsprod.bgu.ac.il/Eng/Units/bidr/desertification2008>

## 6<sup>th</sup> National Forestry Congress "Forest in a globalized world"

6-9 October 2009 - Ponta Delgada (Portugal)  
Website: <http://www.spcf.pt>

## Advanced course on the economics of natural resources and the environment

2-13 February 2009 - Zaragoza (Spain)  
Website: [http://www.iamz.ciheam.org/en/pages/paginas/pag\\_formacion6.htm](http://www.iamz.ciheam.org/en/pages/paginas/pag_formacion6.htm)

## 13<sup>th</sup> World Forestry Congress on the topic "Forests in Development: a Vital Balance"

18-25 October 2009 - Buenos Aires (Argentina)  
e-mail: [info@cfm2009.org](mailto:info@cfm2009.org)  
Website: [www.wfc2009.org](http://www.wfc2009.org)

## 2009 EFIMED Annual Meeting

28 April-1 May 2009 - Marrakech (Morocco)  
Website: [http://www.efi.int/portal/about\\_efi/organisation/regional\\_offices/efimed/networking/efimed\\_annual\\_meetings/efimed\\_am\\_2009\\_-\\_marrakech](http://www.efi.int/portal/about_efi/organisation/regional_offices/efimed/networking/efimed_annual_meetings/efimed_am_2009_-_marrakech)

## 4<sup>th</sup> International Congress " Fire ecology and management"

30 November-4 December 2009 - Savannah (USA)  
Website: <http://www.fireecology.net/Congress09/Home.html>

## International Conference "Climate changes and environmental evaluation"

26-29 May 2009 - Niamey (République du Niger)  
Website: [http://www.sifec.org/Niamey\\_2009/Niamey\\_2009.htm](http://www.sifec.org/Niamey_2009/Niamey_2009.htm)

## 5<sup>th</sup> International Wildland Fire Conference

9-13 May 2009 - Sun City (South Africa)  
Website: <http://www.wildfire2011.org>

## Conference "Biodiversity hotspots in the Mediterranean area"

22-28 June 2009 - Cagliari (Italy)  
e-mail: [info@ccb-sardegna.it](mailto:info@ccb-sardegna.it)

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