



6th Mediterranean Forest Week, Brummana, Lebanon
Welcome address by the Chairman of *Silva Mediterranea*
Monday 1 April, 11:00-11:10, Grand Hills hotel, Theater room

- Mr. Minister, national and international authorities, ladies and gentlemen
- First of all, let me thank to the Lebanese government and specially to the Lebanese people for the very warm welcome and hospitality with all of us in this 6th MFW
- Ten days ago, Spain, most of the Mediterranean countries, celebrated the International Day of Forests to promote education to learn to love forests. In the Mediterranean region, the topic of forests and education is closely connected to the contribution that Mediterranean forests can make to the climate agenda. Not only because future forest engineers, future scientists and future policy makers have to be trained on climate change, how climate change will impact Mediterranean forests, and how forests can be adapted to climate change. But also, and even more important, because education is needed to change the way we envision the role of forests in the context of climate change.



- The Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions-*Silva Mediterranea* that I have the honor and pleasure to chair since 2017 is highly dedicated to those questions. *Silva Mediterranea* has twenty-seven members around the Mediterranean Sea. It aims:
 - 1) to review trends in the use of forest land in the Med area and to assess the impact of changes implemented in the agricultural, industrial and urban sectors
 - 2) to advise member governments accordingly on reorientation or improvements necessary to meet changed situations or newly-emerging needs
 - 3) to check progress in forestry technology within regional and ecological contexts in order to better assess present forest land utilization methods
 - 4) to identify forestry research priorities in the Mediterranean area, lead forestry research projects of common interest to member governments in the region
 - 5) to determine and carry out, in collaboration with member nations, technical studies and surveys to assist in the formulation and implementation of national forest policies.



- *Silva Mediterranea* offers a unique opportunity for all countries around the Mediterranean Sea to discuss on forestry questions, share experience, and identify priorities to be jointly addressed at the regional level. This is very important because we have problems in common in the region regarding forests, and a variety of experience and expertise among us to solve these problems.

- As most of you know, there are today five working groups in the Committee that address priority topics.
 - forest fires
 - non-wood forest products
 - forest genetic resources
 - urban and peri-urban forestry
 - desertification and restoration

- The resilience of the forest ecosystems and other wooded lands in the Mediterranean to global changes is a cross-cutting issue that is addressed by all the working groups of *Silva Mediterranea*. Since the Strategic Framework on



Mediterranean Forests that was adopted in 2013 during the Third Mediterranean Forest Week in Tlemcen in Algeria, improving the resilience of Mediterranean forests to climate change has been prioritized by *Silva Mediterranea* as a key challenge to be addressed in the Mediterranean region. There are different dimensions to address to tackle this issue.

- We may highlight:
 - 1) **wildfire prevention** that has to be promoted to face the increasing risks associated with ongoing climate change in the Mediterranean region
 - 2) **forest genetic resources** and biodiversity that should be managed in order to enhance the adaptation of forest ecosystems and other wooded lands to climate change in the Mediterranean
 - 3) **degraded Mediterranean forest landscapes** that should be restored.
- In 2017 at the Fifth Mediterranean Forest Week in Agadir in Morocco, Mediterranean countries adopted the Agadir Commitment to improve Forest and Landscape



Restoration, Land Degradation Neutrality and biodiversity conservation efforts in the Mediterranean region. This regional commitment aimed to restore, on a voluntary basis, at least eight million hectares of degraded forest landscapes by 2030. The Agadir Commitment was a first step towards the implementation of Forest and Landscape Restoration as a forest-based solution to address the challenges faced by the region.

- This 6th Mediterranean Forest Week that is bringing us together today must be the next step. Discussions between all stakeholders during this week will hopefully allow us to set the path for reinforcing the contribution that Mediterranean forests can make to climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- Before ending these words, let me tell you something:
I am Mediterranean, you are Mediterranean. We live in the best region of the world.
Let's work to make it better
- Sucran, Merci beaucoup, thank you very much and all the best for this week

Broumana, April the 1st, 2019