



My Report and Evaluation

On the evaluation report of Silva Mediterranea

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1. Back Ground

During the 21st Session of Silva Mediterranean held in Antalya, Turkey at the date of 2-3rd of February, 2012 a decision has been taken in order to evaluate the six working groups under Silva Mediterranea. Lately the decision has been broadened for over all evaluation of Silva Mediterranea.

For this purpose, an evaluation panel established with the distinguished members like below;

- Prof. Dr. Christine Farcy, Belgium
- Alain Chaudron, France
- Ameer Mokhtar, Tunisia
- Placido Plaza, Spain
- Giuseppe Scrascia- Italy.

The draft report prepared by this panel submitted to the Enlarged Executive Committee of Silva Mediterranea held in Hammamet, Tunisia, 3-4 December, 2013. It was proposed to send the comments and thoughts before 14th of February to the Secretariat and Panel.

After having the comments the Panel will submit its final report and during the COFO 22nd Session the report will be discussed by the members.

2. Main Findings

2.1. According the Panel Report

- Special emphasis was placed to Tlemcen Declaration, Strategic Framework for Mediterranean Forest and Policy Orientations.
- It was expressed that; Silva Mediterranea was the only one intergovernmental forum for forestry issues in Mediterranean Region. But it was stressed that; the terms of references never updated after 70s and nearly half of the members never joined the last five sessions.
- Due to lack of a working document of the Committee, the activities are being executed independently by working groups.
- The Secretariat of Silva Mediterranea has been played an important role for the preparation of Mediterranean Forest Weeks.
- It was stressed some conflicts occurring between the Secretariat and Presidency due to lack of a working document and framework.
- According to the decision approved in 2008, the formal sessions of SM have been organized in every four year instead of 2. This situation resulted some

inconveniences between the COFO and other regional commissions activities of FAO Forestry section.

- It was stressed that there is a need to clarify the link between CPMF.
- Special emphasis was given to lack of political interest to the SM and its working group activities.
- Also stressed that the National Focal Points were not working well, active and sustainable manner.
- There is no regular financial mechanism supporting the Committee and its activities.

2.2. Some Considerations Voicing at the meeting in Tunisia

The draft evaluation report prepared by the Panel is very huge of volume. But because of written in French it was very difficult for me to investigate every page and all detail. Rather then I examined the English summary and I tried to follow the presentation made by Prof. Farcy, the Chair of the Evaluation Panel. <http://www.fao.org/forestry/silvamed/35411/en/>

During this presentation the same findings have been discussed and the following issues rose:

- The duplication and conflicts between CPMF and the Committee.
- Lack of political interest of the members, lack of working framework for Presidency, Secretariat, Working Group and National Focal Points.
- Lack of regular financial mechanism.
- Removing some members from the Committee which are not attending the meetings.

3. My Finding and Recommendations

3.1. My National and International Experiences

Before saying something about the draft report, it is better to say about my national and international experiences affecting my thoughts.

I am a Forest Engineer by training and further I have Master Degree on Natural Resource Management. Beside this I have Master Degree on Public Management from Institute of Public Administration for Turkey and Middle East¹. I also attended some special courses like; Geographical Information Systems in Finland, Basic Europe in Brussels and Senior Government Managers in Harvard University.

I worked at the field nearly 8 years and after I worked as Division Director, Head of Department, and Chief of the Cabinet to the Minister and recently Deputy Director.

At international level; I attended the meeting related to UNFF, Forest Europe, UNFCCC, CBD, UNCCD, UNECE Timber Committee, and European Union and so on. I found the possibilities

¹ <http://www.todaie.gov.tr/hakkimizda.php?Baslik=1>

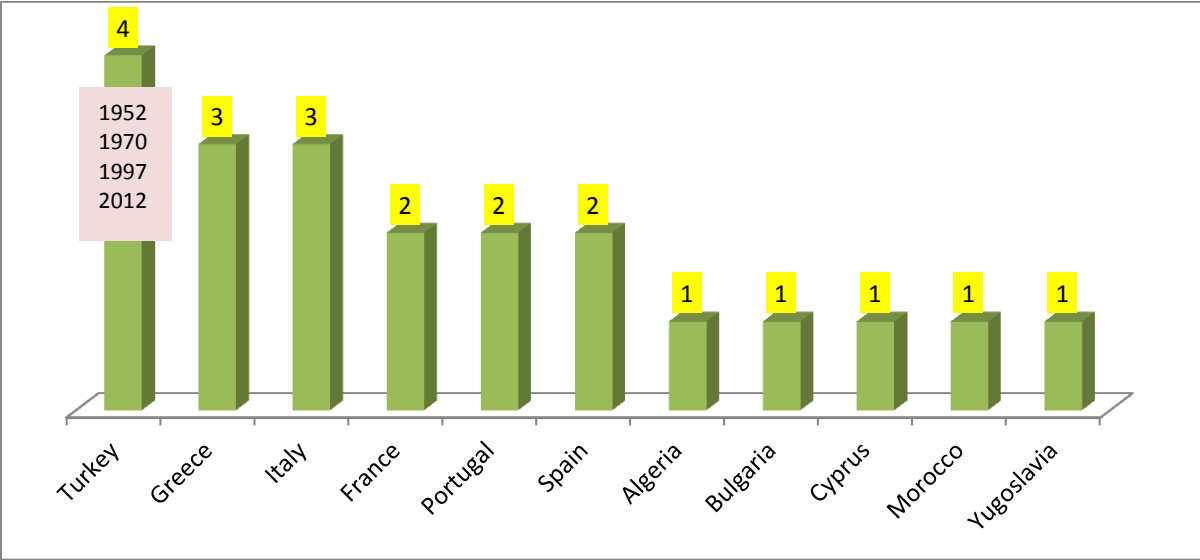
to visit some SM Countries like; Greece, Italy, France, Spain, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Cyprus.

I have been working with Silva Mediterranea starting 2009. I attended the First, Second and Third Mediterranean Forestry Weeks.

With the line of above mentioned issues I can say followings

3.2. Turkey-Silva Mediterranean Relations

Turkey has been one of the most active members of Silva Mediterranea, starting from its foundation. As it shown in the following chart, Turkey is the first country hosting SM sessions.



Graphic 1 Countries hosting SM Sessions

The reports and information about the attendants can be reached at the following links.

Session	Year	Place	Link
Third	1952	Istanbul	http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/009/ae867e/ae867e00.htm
Eleventh	1970	Ankara	http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/009/ae875e/ae875e00.htm
Seventeenth	1997	Antalya	http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/009/w6877e.htm
Twenty First	2012	Antalya	http://www.fao.org/forestry/silvamed/4911/en/

Table 1 Sessions Organized in Turkey

At the first time during the history, some officials from Ministry of Foreign Affairs and from other institutes have been joined the meetings and this resulted very good effects.

No	Sessions	Country	City	Year	Date
1	First session	Italy	Roma	1948	13 – 17 December
2	Second session	Algeria	Algeirs	1950	8 – 13 May
3	Third session	Turkey	İstanbul	1952	13 – 15 May
4	Fourth session	Greece	Athens	1954	1 – 5 June
5	Fifth session	France	Nice	1956	27 – 29 May
6	Sixth session	Spain	Madrid	1958	17 – 21 April
7	Seventh session	Portugal	Lisbon	1960	2 – 7 May
8	Eighth session	Yugoslavia	Dubrovnik	1962	12 – 15 May
9	Ninth session	Greece	Athens	1965	23 – 26 June
10	Tenth session	Italy	Roma	1968	3 – 9 May
11	Eleventh session	Turkey	Ankara	1970	1 – 3 October
12	Twelfth session	France	La Grande-Motte	1985	2 – 6 December
13	Thirteenth session	Spain	Zaragoza	1987	28 Sept – 2 Oct
14	Fourteenth session	Greece	Athens	1989	9 – 13 October
15	Fifteenth session	Portugal	Faro	1992	16 – 20 March
16	Sixteenth session	Cyprus	Larnaka	1994	13 – 17 June
17	Seventeenth session	Turkey	Antalya	1997	10 – 13 October
18	Eighteenth session	Italy	Roma	2002	2 – 5 April
19	Nineteenth session	Morocco	Rabat	2005	28 – 29 November
20	Twentieth session	Bulgaria	Sofia	2008	7 – 10 April
21	Twenty First Session	Turkey	Antalya	2012	2-3 February

Table 2 SM Sessions

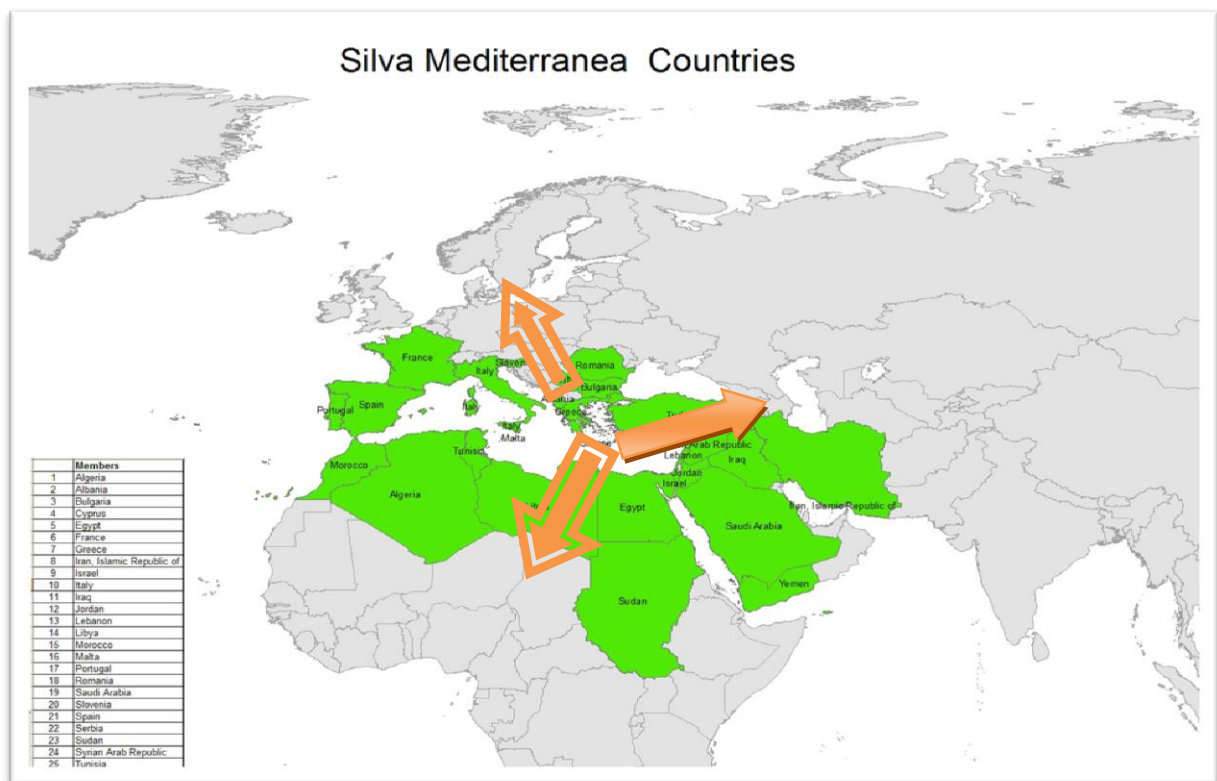
3.3. My Opinions about the Current Situation and Future of SM

3.3.1. The Only, the oldest, the bridge!

3.3.1.1. In General

Like as indicated in the panel report, SM is the only intergovernmental forum in the region and I strongly believe that we must keep its position!

- It is the **only intergovernmental forum** related to forests in the Mediterranean.
- It is one of **the oldest forestry initiatives** in the world.
- It's a bridge between continents! Africa, Europe and Asia and others

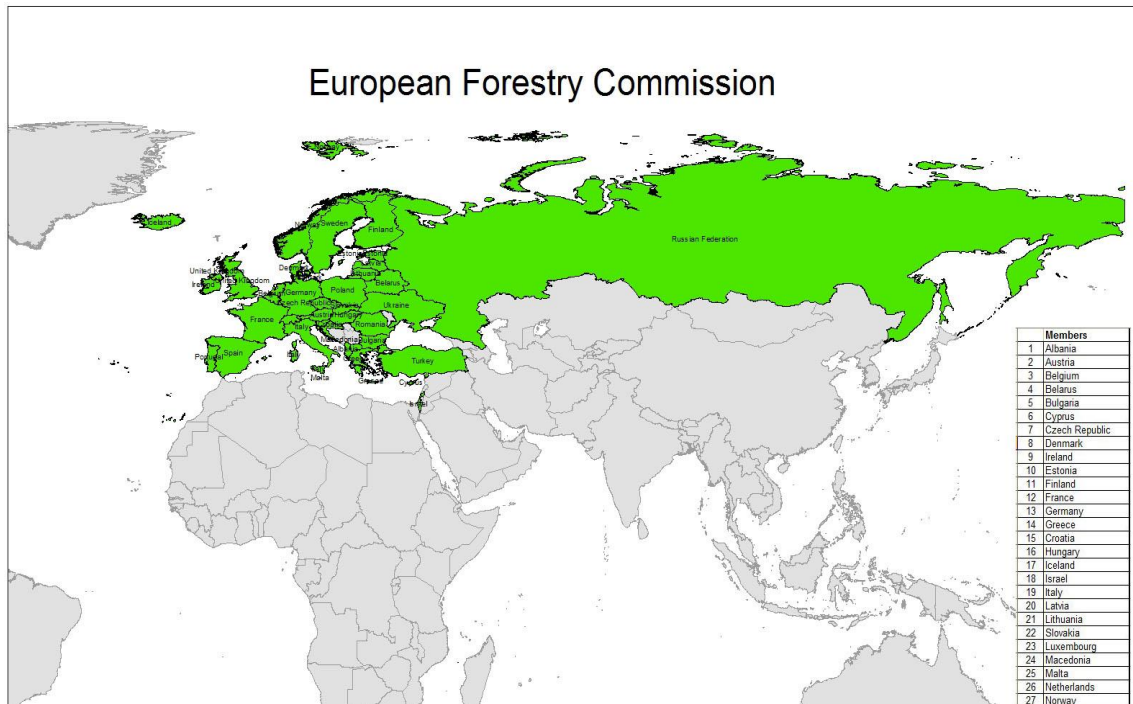


Map 1 Members of Silva Mediterranea

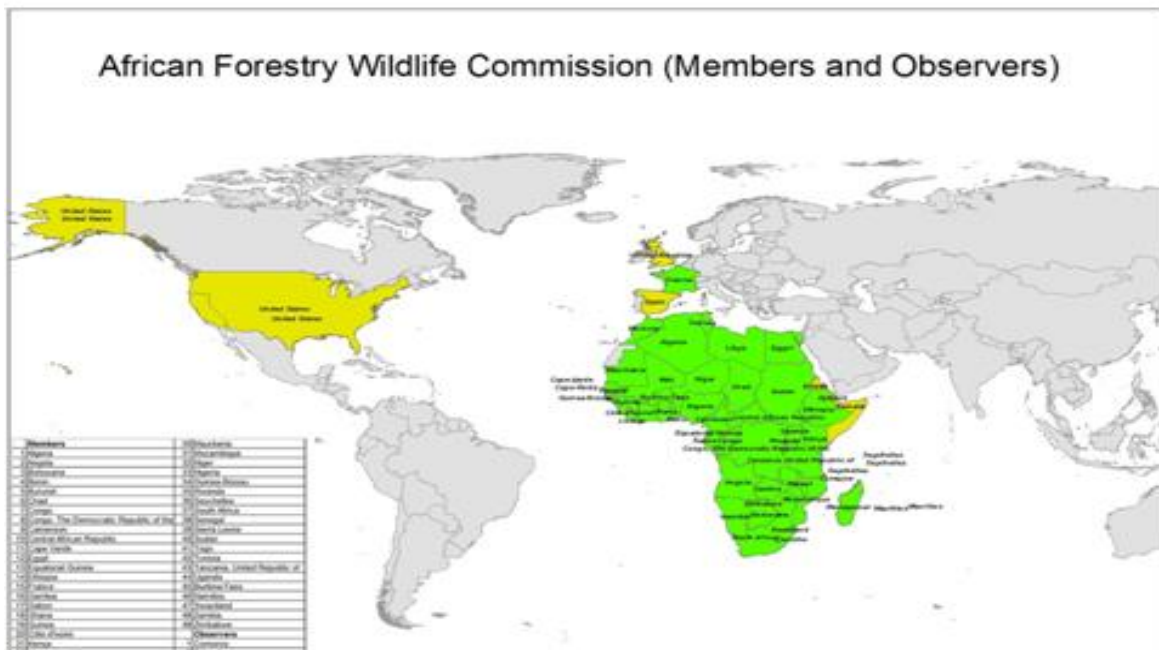
Because of being a bridge between three continents and a bridge between three FAO's Commissions namely Europe Forestry Commission, Near East Forest and Rangeland Commission and Africa Forest and Wildlife Commission; SM has a very unique position and actually has very unique experience.

I believe that it is necessary to have good link between Forest Europe and UN ECE Timber Committee.

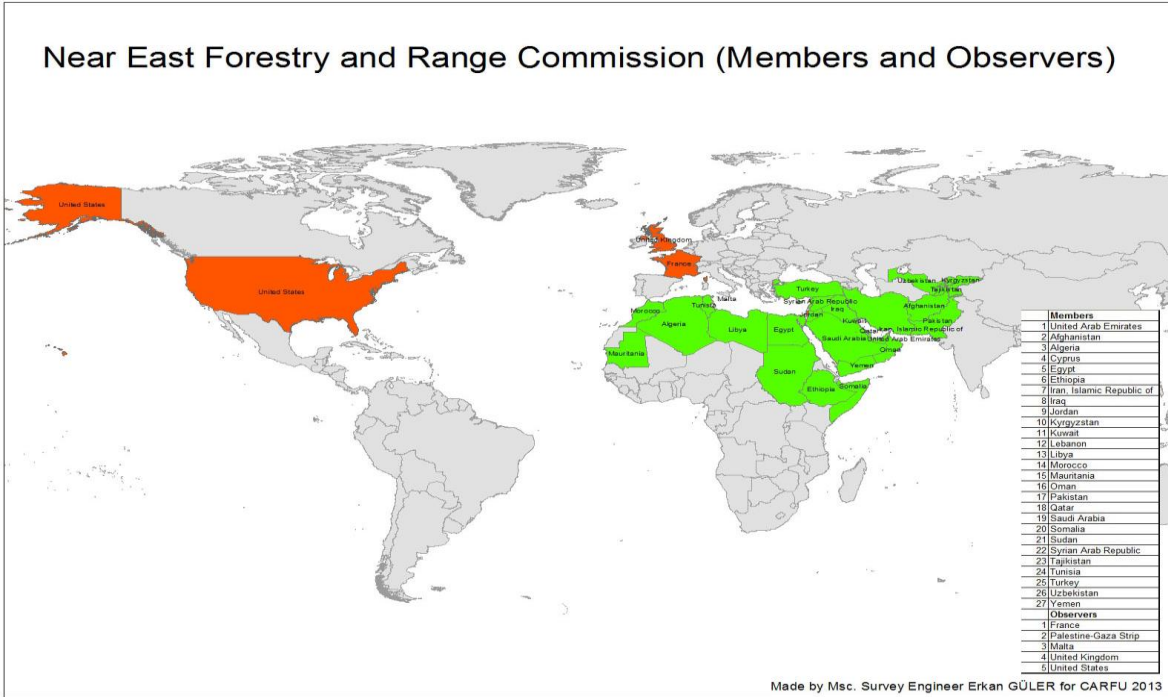
3.3.1.2. Some Other Regional Initiatives



Map 2 Members of European Forestry Commission

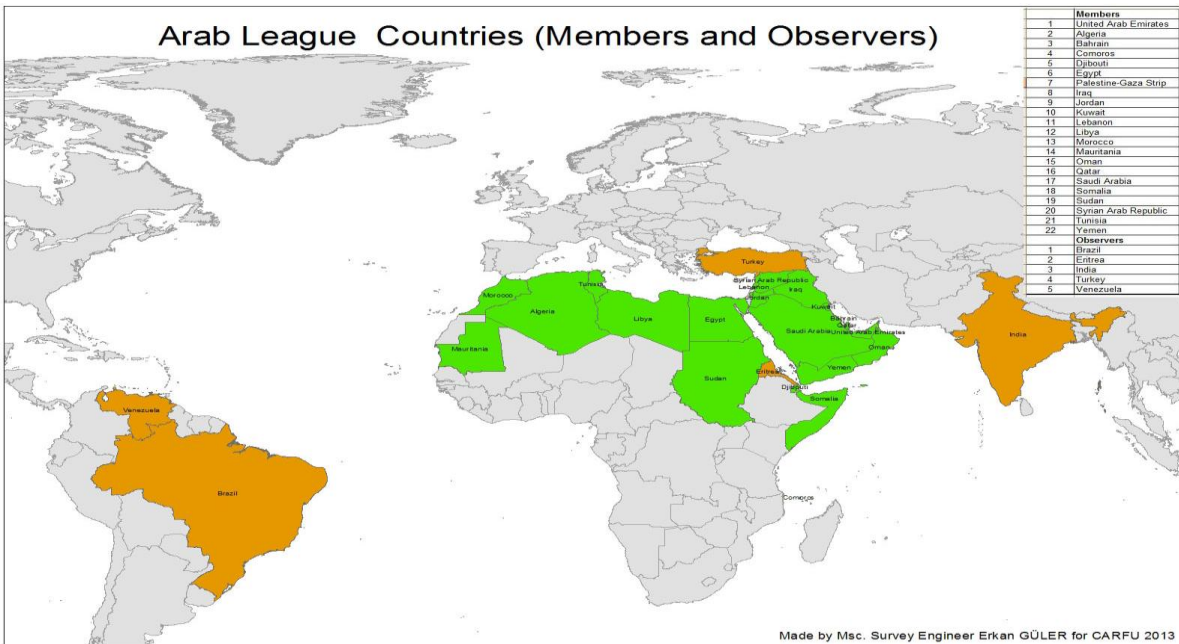


Map 3 Members and Observers of Africa Forestry and Wildlife Commission



Map 4 Members and Observers of Near East Forestry and Range Commission

As we know, the European Union is a member of the SM. Like this, in order to strengthen its interregional position we can invite the African Union, Arab League and the Islamic Cooperation Organization (OIC) to be member of this Committee and we can sign a memorandum of understanding.



Map 5 Members of Arab League

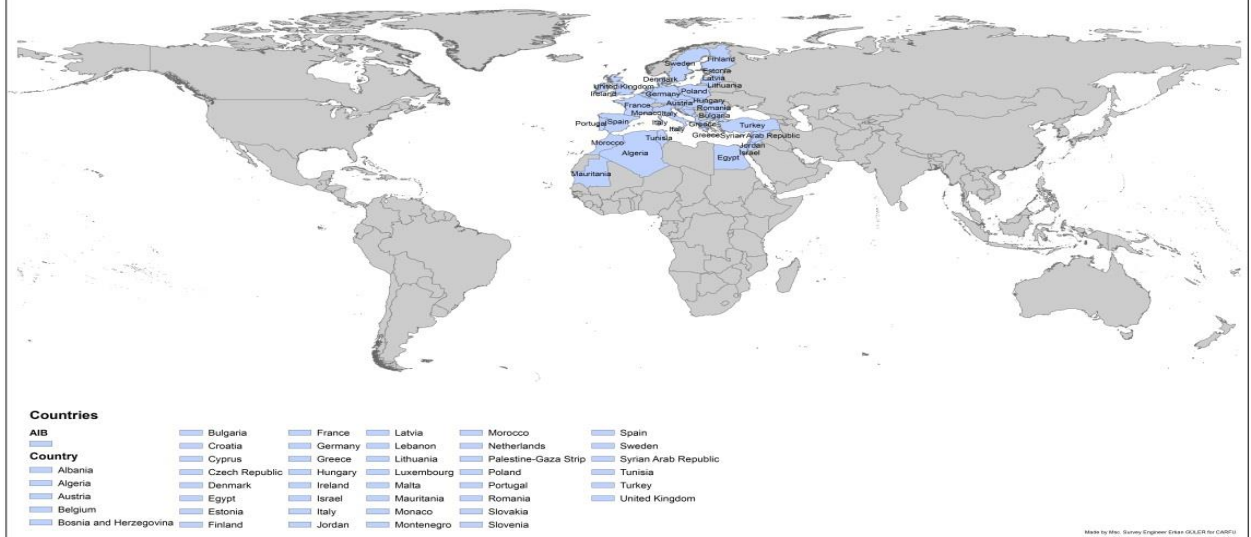
Organization of Islamic Cooperation



Map 6 Members of OIC

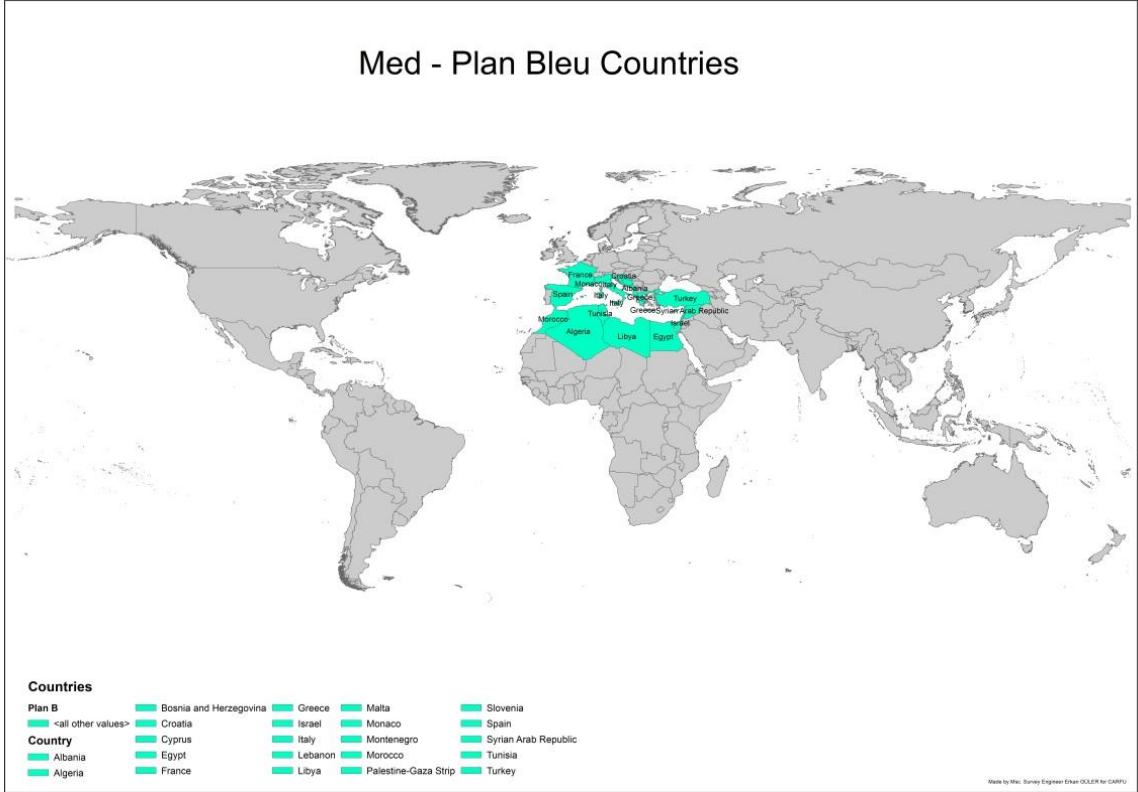
Having the members from Europe, Middle East and Africa; Union for the Mediterranean could be a good option and perfect partner for Silva Mediterranea for intercontinental cooperation and collaboration.

Med-Union for the Mediterranean



Map 7 Union for the Mediterranean Countries

As it is known, the SM and Plan Bleu have been working together for numerous projects and there has been synergies between two initiatives. This is the same for EFIMED and Mediterranean Model Forest Network.



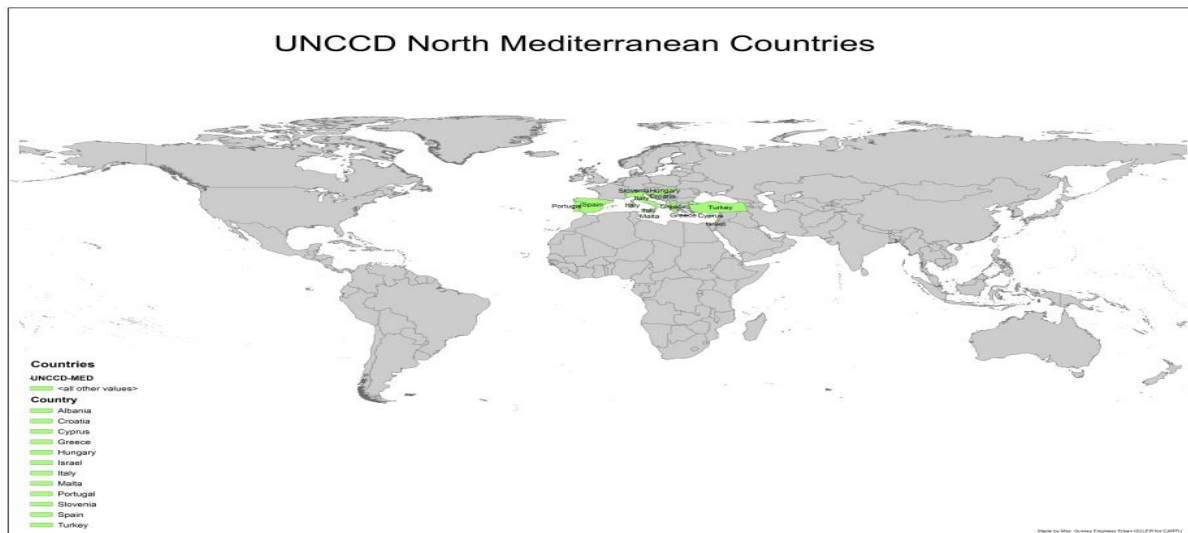
Map 8 Plan Bleu Countries

As indicated by some reports and declaration like Tlemcen Declaration; desertification and drought is one of the main problems shaping Mediterranean ecosystems. For this reason a working group, **“Desertification and Restoration of Ecosystems in Forests in Dry Land Areas”** has been constituted under Silva Mediterranean.

The United Nations Conventions on Combating Desertification gives special emphasizes to the Northern Mediterranean Countries² like Turkey, Greece, Spain, and Italy. During the COP11 of UNCCD held in Namibia in 2013 a decision has been taken to open the regional coordination office in Turkey. Furthermore, the upcoming COP of UNCCD is going to be organized in Turkey in 2015. So it should be better to have more cooperation and to have a memorandum of understanding between Silva Mediterranean and UNCCD Secretariat.

So I would suggest to have a courtesy visit to newly appointed UNCCD Executive Secretary.

² <http://www.unccd.int/en/regional-access/Northern-Mediterranean/Pages/alltext.aspx#secondtitle>



Map 9 UNCCD North Mediterranean Countries

If I summarize my thoughts on Siva Mediterranea regional and intergovernmental role;

- It is the **only intergovernmental forum** related to forests in the Mediterranean.
- It is one of **the oldest forestry initiatives** in the world.
- It's a bridge between continents! Africa, Europe and Asia and others

There are some others actors working very actively in this region like; Plan Bleu, EFIMED, MMFN, AIFM, CIHEAM. But the situation of Silva Mediterranea comes from FAO which has a unique role for all countries and all regions.

This comparative advantage must be kept and improved. Being a part of FAO; Silva Mediterranea can have the members from all three forestry commissions and can have observers from the countries which are observers for three commissions.

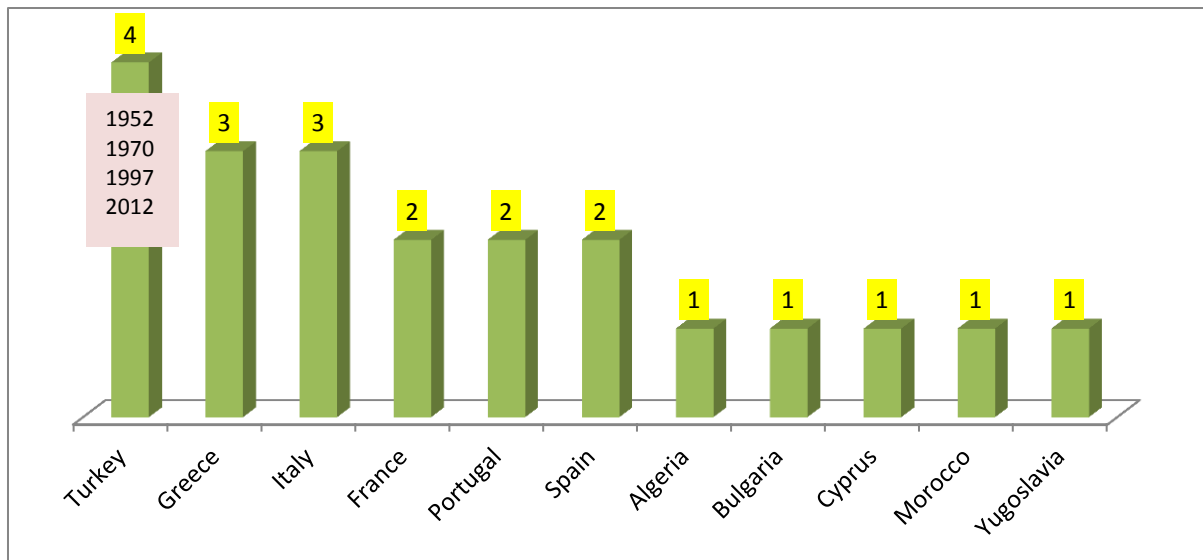
3.3.1.3. Final Words on Regional and Intercontinental Role of SM

Regarding the CPMF, I will give more detail lately but; as principle this is a part, a body, a project under Silva Mediterranea like FFEM project and should not be seen as independent legal entity. Such kind of approach harms and destroy the SM. It is something to cut one's own throat.

Removing some members from the list without their written permission or without meeting with the responsible authorities is also dangerous and unacceptable.

3.3.2. Formal Sessions and Other Meetings

Although some irregularities the formal sessions of Silva Mediterranea have been organized in several countries.



So far eleven members hosted the formal sessions. With the help of these meetings foresters and other people were able to come together and discuss all subjects. The Secretariat disseminated all reports via web page and some hard copies.

Currently the organizations of Mediterranean Forest Week have become a good effect on regional cooperation.

Giving special attention to regional disparities and ownership the next session should be organized in a Balkan (Albania, Serbia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia) or Middle East Countries (Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon ect.) This is the same for Mediterranean Forest Week.

3.3.3. Documents- Reports

3.3.3.1. Newsletters

Starting from 1925 to 1935, the news letters published at this link. <http://www.fao.org/forestry/silvamed/49276/en/>

Besides this; starting from 2008 the Secretariat Prepared the newsletters and published. They can be reached also this link: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/silvamed/53178/en/>

This is a perfect possibility to follow all detail and the secretariat really deserve a magnificence thanks!

3.3.3.2. Political Documents

Under the umbrella of Silva Mediterranea some important political documents like below have been prepared

- State of Mediterranean Forest- <http://www.fao.org/docrep/017/i3226e/i3226e.pdf>
- Tlemcen Declaration- <http://www.fao.org/forestry/36632-03883494ea162d6695e84f2182b57129f.pdf>

- Strategic Framework of Mediterranean Forest, <http://www.fao.org/forestry/36632-03883494ea162d6695e84f2182b57129f.pdf>
- Strategic Lines of MF- <http://www.fao.org/forestry/36632-03883494ea162d6695e84f2182b57129f.pdf>

3.3.3.3. *Ministerial Conference of Silva Mediterranea*

With the line of above mentioned activities, **I believe that, it should be better to organize a Ministerial Conference of Silva Mediterranea during the 22nd Session to be held 2016.** This region and this committee deserve and can manage a Ministerial Meeting and Ministerial Declaration without any doubt

3.3.4. Web Page

I believe that the web page with the following link is working very actively and I believe the secretariat reserve a “big thank” <http://www.fao.org/forestry/silvamed/en/>

But; the lacks of personalized information like pictures, emails; news for other people is a kind of insufficiency. The web page looks like very formal. The new face of FAO main web page www.fao.org could be good example for Silva Medietarreena.

So, I would suggest to have **a project in order to renew and update Silva Mediterranea web page. The GIZ or FFEM Project can reserve some resourse for this aim.**

3.3.5. The Abbreviation of Silva Mediterranea

To be honest! Always I am having trouble when I am saying “Silva Mediterranea”. It’s a bit long and difficult to say!

So, for short one, **we can say “SilvaMed”.** Actually most of the friends use this word usually but I am not sure if it is true or legal or authorized.

3.3.6. Members-Observers

As it can be seen at the following link; <http://www.fao.org/forestry/silvamed/32024/en/> Silva Mediterranea has 27 member countries and one regional organization, European Union. So it has 28 members and no observers.

Some of the members are “inactive”. Probably they have no information about their membership. So I believe we should have a special plan for memberships including observers.

3.3.6.1. *For Existing Members*

As we know all the members have Embassies to Rome. Some countries have Permanent Representatives to FAO.

- For the existing members including EU; a special team for Silva Mediterranea should pay a visit with a special agenda.
- The team can be consisting of the President of Silva Mediterranea, the President of Evaluation Panel and the representative of the Secretariat.
- Such visit should be completed before the final version of Evaluation Report. I am sure we will have very important findings and ways to solution.

One week, preferably the first week of April, 31st of March- 4th of April, 2014 could be a perfect option.

3.3.6.2. For Potential Members

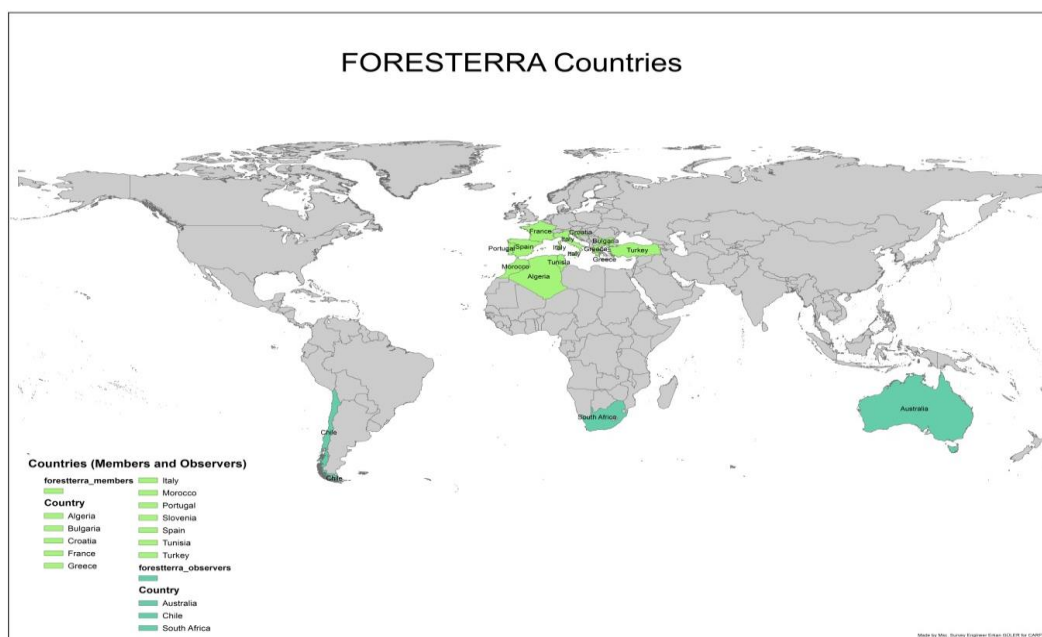
Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Kosovo, Croatia, Montenegro and Palestine could be invited to be membership because of their geographical and ecological situation.

Besides member countries, some international organization like *Union for the Mediterranean, African Union, Arab League, And Islamic Cooperation Organization* could be visited and invited to be a membership.

3.3.6.3. For Observers

The Committee should be open for observers and the countries that are observers for any of the three FAO Commissions for Europe, Near East and Africa can be observer for Silva Mediterranea. For example the United Kingdom is an observatory country for Near East and the United States has also observatory statue for Africa and Near East Forest Commissions.

As we know Foresterra Project is dealing with “Mediterranean type ecological regions” like California of the USA, Chili and Australia.



Map 10 Foresterra Countries

3.3.6.4. Invitation to the Existing and Potential Members and Observers to FAO

In order to save the time and resources, first, we can invite all the related country representatives to FAO. And we can inform them.

For example; that kind of meeting can be organized at the 1st of April, Tuesday, 2014 at the FAO HQ. We have 28 members at hand, 6 countries eligible for the membership, two countries for observer status (the UK and the USA) and AU, OIC, Arab League.

If we have 15 or 20 representatives that would be fine and we can visit the others immediately. After this meeting and visit we can send the letters.

3.3.6.5. The Information and Invitation Letter

As it was indicated in the panel report, one of the main problems for Silva Mediterranean is the lack of political interest.

In order to help for solving this problem, after the formal meeting, a letter of invitation and information should be sent to all existing and potential members including possible observers.

That kind of letter should be signed by the DG or ADG on behalf of FAO and President of Silva Mediterranea on behalf of the countries/committee.

3.3.6.6. FAO Regional Commissions

The committee has members from three regional commissions, Europe, Near East and Africa. As far as I know the relations and cooperation between Europe is good enough. The cooperation with Near East is moderate but there is no enough cooperation with African Forestry and Wildlife Commission. We should find a way to deal with this issue.

3.3.7. Projects

Although the official status can diverse, the ongoing projects related to SM like below according to me.

- Adapting forest policy conditions to climate change in the MENA -GIZ- <http://web.ogm.gov.tr/diger/mena/Sayfalar/default.aspx>
- Maximize the production of goods and services of Mediterranean forest ecosystems in the context of global changes-FFEM <http://www.fao.org/forestry/82782/en/>
- Enhancing FOrest RESearch in the MediTERRAnean through improved coordination and integration- <http://www.foreserra.eu/> The legal entity of SM, the Presidency and the Secretariat should be supported by these projects by any means.

3.3.8. Collaborative Partnership on Mediterranean Forest

It is well understood that there is a real debate on CPMF, its functions and roles. To me, it is kind of initiative established under Silva Mediterranea umbrella.

But others say different things.

So, we must examine the official documents!

If we look at the signed text;

<http://www.fao.org/forestry/27071-06717246b550358373e2ed5606a203042.pdf>

At the first page it was written that;

“Collaborative Partnership on Mediterranean Forests **between** the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations on behalf of the Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions-Silva Mediterranea and”

So it is very clear that the owner of this agreement, the owner of this initiative is FAO.

If we look at another official document. At the beginning of this initiative the Embassy of Germany to Ankara sent a “Note Verbale” to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey. Again in this text, it was indicated very clearly that, this is an initiative under Silva Mediterranea.

http://web.ogm.gov.tr/diger/mena/Dokumanlar/Resmi_Yazilar/mena-disisleri-nota.pdf

So, CPMF is an initiative under Silva Mediterranea! No need to have a different legal entity, no need a logo!

The Project or let's say the CPMF should support the Silva Mediterranea, its secretariat and the President!

Annexes:

Annex 1: My Speech Text for 21st Session of Silva Mediterranea

http://www.cem.gov.tr/erozyon/Files/Silvamed/SilvaMED_2012_2016_Donem_Baskani_ismail_BELENin_Konusmasi.pdf

Annex 2: Turkish Presidency Road Map for Silva Mediterranea

http://foris.fao.org/meetings/download/2012/extraordinary_session_of_the_committee_on_mediterr/presentations/cofopresentationtemplateismailbelen.pdf

Annex 3: The Note Verbale of the Embassy of Germany to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey

http://web.ogm.gov.tr/diger/mena/Dokumanlar/Resmi_Yazilar/mena-disisleri-nota.pdf