Coordination meeting between CIHEAM, EFIMED, FAO, Plan Bleu, UfM

Friday 29 January 2016 – Rome, FAO headquarters, Queen Juliana room

Purpose

On 29 January 2016, at FAO headquarters and by Skype conference, a coordination meeting between CIHEAM, EFIMED, FAO, Plan Bleu and the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean was organized. This meeting aimed at establishing a light informal coordination platform regarding Mediterranean forests between CIHEAM, CMI, EFIMED, FAO-*Silva Mediterranea*, Plan Bleu and UfM Secretariat, and at identifying possible joint lines of actions.

After a welcoming address by Mrs Susan Braatz, presentations were successively made by EFIMED, FAO-*Silva Mediterranea*, the Global Forest Survey of FAO, Plan Bleu, and UfM Secretariat. The slides of the presentations are available at http://www.fao.org/forestry/silva-mediterranea/88943/en/.

Participants

Name	Surname	Email	Institution
Almotaz	Abadi	almotaz.abadi@ufmsecretariat.org	Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean
Alessandra	Sensi	alessandra.sensi@ufmsecretariat.org	Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean
Moujahed	Achouri	Moujahed.Achouri@fao.org	FAO, DDN
Nora	Berrahmouni	Nora.Berrahmouni@fao.org	FAO, Forestry Department
Christophe	Besacier	Christophe.Besacier@fao.org	FAO, Forestry Department
Simone	Borelli	Simone.Borelli@fao.org	FAO, Forestry Department
Nelly	Bourlion	nbourlion@planbleu.org	Plan Bleu
Susan	Braatz	Susan.Braatz@fao.org	FAO, Forestry Department
Michela	Conigliaro	Michela.Conigliaro@fao.org	FAO, Forestry Department
Valentina	Garavaglia	Valentina.Garavaglia@fao.org	FAO, Forestry Department
Magali	Maire	Magali.Maire@fao.org	FAO, Forestry Department
Caterina	Marchetta	Caterina.Marchetta@fao.org	FAO, Forestry Department
Inazio	Martínez de Arano	inazio.martinez@efi.int	EFIMED - European Forest Institute - Mediterranean Regional Office
Danilo	Mollicone	Danilo.Mollicone@fao.org	FAO, Forestry Department
Marc	Parfondry	Marc.Parfondry@fao.org	FAO, Forestry Department
Chiara	Patriarca	Chiara.Patriarca@fao.org	FAO, Forestry Department
Nicolas	Picard	nicolas.picard@fao.org	FAO, Forestry Department

Excused participants

Anne-France	Didier	afdidier@planbleu.org.	Plan Bleu
Hervé	Lévite	hlevite@worldbank.org	CMI
Placido	Plaza	plaza@ciheam.org	CIHEAM
Sven	Walter	SWalter@unccd.int	UNCCD - The Global Mechanism

Results

The following opportunities for collaborations were identified:

- Regarding collaboration with the Mediterranean regional Office of the European Forest Institute (**EFIMED)** as focal institution:
    - Update of the Mediterranean Forest Research Agenda (MFRA): the update is not yet started and it could be done in the context of the Bioeconomy Agenda, involving also stakeholders and decision makers (not only researchers). A link should be made between the MFRA and the Strategic Framework on Mediterranean Forests (SFMF), as already done in the strategic lines 4 and 7 of the SFMF, to address the following question: how can research help in implementing the SFMF?
    - Regarding the Barcelona Bioeconomy Forum (2016?), FAO could contribute on topics like watershed management, wood energy, cork oak and non-wood forest products (NWFP) as per *Silva Mediterranea* Working Group 2.
    - Possible links for the next EFIMED week. A possible topic could be the connections between migration and forestry.
- Regarding collaborations with **FAO** as focal institution:
    - Edition 2018 of the State of Mediterranean Forests (SoMF 2018): make a link with the MFRA and SFMF (by developing indicators as done for the State of Europe's Forests).
    - Link Mediterranean forests with the Sustainable Development Goals (DGs) (especially those regarding poverty alleviation and food security) and the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) under UNFCCC. Possible collaboration with other institutions or UN programme (e.g. UN habitat).
    - Promote advocacy sessions at the EU parliament (as already done for forest fires and the SFMF) also on a regular basis.
    - The FAO Forest and Landscape Restoration Mechanism (FLRM) pointed out the possibility to support regional initiatives (such as a Mediterranean initiative).
    - Regarding the drylands assessment in the Mediterranean biome: data will be free available and further analysis and collaboration will be welcome
    - Keep the SFMF updated by assessing how it has put in practice through different projects/activities (also at national level). No need of indicators or complicated tools. Make it a living document so that it can be updated and re-endorsed.
    - Proposal submitted to the Secretariat of UfM to join the other members of the Collaborative Partnership on Mediterranean Forests (CPMF) for the Organizing Committee of the 5th Mediterranean Forest Week (MFW).
- Regarding collaboration with **Plan Bleu** as focal institution:
    - Collaborations aiming at reactivating the role of observer of Plan Bleu (indicators, GIS, data...) are welcome.
    - A new strategy has to be confirmed after the arrival of the new director of Plan Bleu.
- Regarding collaboration with **UfM** Secretariat:
    - UfM Secretariat recognizes the importance of the activities on Mediterranean forests and the clear connection within the general framework of the UfM agenda especially through the ministerial declaration on environment and climate change.
    - The UfM Secretariat can provide support in order to increase the visibility of Mediterranean forests and create synergies.

- FAO- Forest secretariat showed interest to label some of their projects and initiatives to insure more visibility for their work aiming at ensuring synergies and harmonization.
- UfM secretariat clarified the labelling procedure that allows priority projects of regional relevance to obtain a political recognition by the 43 UfM countries, including those that are not directly concerned by the projects activities themselves. It stressed the importance of securing financing or associating a solid financing plan/perspective.
    - The follow up of the regional project funded by FFEM (http://www.fao.org/forestry/82782/en/), currently at the identification phase, could be submitted to the UfM labelling procedure. Its timing should be looked at in more detail.
    - The project on Urban and Periurban Forestry (UPF) on the identification of Ancient Heritage Urban Woodlands in Mediterranean cities and at proposing effective management strategies to be put in place towards their conservation and valorization (especially with regard to their socio-cultural value) could also be submitted to the UfM labelling procedure. Financing aspects should be looked at more in depth.
    - Possibility to label a regional forest initiative, including a package of projects on Mediterranean forests.
    - If there is pretty secure source of funding, the labelling procedure can be advanced fairly quickly, but in general it must be done before or just at start of a project – and not at a late stage of the project – and it must integrate a regional context and promote for regional cooperation on the topic (2 countries at least but preferably more)
- Possible link between the UfM NAMA initiative and NAMAs in the Mediterranean (Lebanon was mentioned) that will be supported by FAO.

- General points for collaboration:
    - FAO had been already actively participating in the UFMS water expert working group and in the climate change expert group during 2015.
    - Possibility to expand the MoUs between UfM/FAO, UfM/Secretariat of Barcelona Convention to account for new joint lines of action.
    - UNFCCC COP22: very good opportunity for Mediterranean countries to promote questions related to climate change and landscape restoration.
    - Reduce fragmentation of stakeholders activities at the regional level by taking advantage of already existing federative products:
        - State of Mediterranean Forests (SoMF)
        - Mediterranean Forest Week (MFW)
        - UNFCCC COP22

Follow-up

Wrap up for future steps:

- The next opportunity to meet is the 1st meeting of the Organizing Committee of the 5th MFW in Rabat, Morocco (end of March 2016).
- Further meetings of this light informal coordination platform on Mediterranean forests can be organized as Skype conferences on a regular basis.

Appendix: concept note for the meeting

Context

Different intergovernmental organizations have a mandate solely or partially on Mediterranean forests. These organizations have different mandates, roles and thematic and geographic coverage, but have in common the topic of Mediterranean forests and maintain connections between each other:

The International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM) is a regional intergovernmental organization created in 1962 with the mandate to contribute to the training of human resources and executives of the Mediterranean agriculture within a cooperation spirit. Its 13 Mediterranean Member States work together in their common belief in the importance of multilateral cooperation in agriculture, food security, rural areas and fisheries. CIHEAM deploys its expertise in specialized training, research and technical assistance. Its mission of cooperation relies on its ability to bring together resources within regional networks and to guide decision-makers in their strategies.

CIHEAM and FAO have collaborated for more than 35 years and a renewed agreement was recently signed (October 2015); CIHEAM is part of the network of institutions of EFIMED (though not being a member of EFIMED); CIHEAM is a partner of CMI; CIHEAM is a member of the Collaborative Partnership on Mediterranean Forests (CPMF).

The Centre for Mediterranean Integration (CMI) is a multi-partner platform where development agencies, Governments, local authorities and civil society from around the Mediterranean convene in order to exchange knowledge, discuss public policies, and identify the solutions needed to address key challenges facing the Mediterranean region. Through innovative solutions, the CMI aims to help countries achieve transformative reforms and enhance integration in the Mediterranean region. The CMI was established in 2009 and is composed of 8 Member States as well as 2 local authorities and 2 international financial institutions as members.

The set of partners of CMI includes CIHEAM and UfM.

The Mediterranean regional Office of the European Forest Institute (EFIMED) is based in Barcelona and it is the first regional Office created by the Institute in 2007. The European Forest Institute is an international organisation established by European States that conducts research and provides policy advice on forest-related issues. EFIMED coordinates and supports knowledge transfer projects, organises specific courses and provides specific grants to upgrade the skills of researchers coming from the Southern and Eastern countries of the Mediterranean basin. It coordinates a network of more than 60 forest research institutions from 17 Mediterranean countries.

The network of institutions of EFIMED includes CIHEAM, FAO (Forestry department and *Silva Mediterranea*) and Plan Bleu; EFIMED is a founding member of the CPMF.

The Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions-*Silva Mediterranea* is a statutory body of the FAO that was established in 1948 to review the trends in the use of forest land in the Mediterranean area, to periodically examine progress in forestry technology within regional and ecological contexts, to identify forestry research priorities in the Mediterranean area, and to determine and carry out the technical studies and surveys which are deemed necessary to assist Governments of the Region formulate national forest policies or facilitate their implementation. *Silva Mediterranea* belongs to three regional commissions of the FAO and is composed of 27 Member States plus the European Union (Member Organization).

The MoU between CIHEAM and FAO refers in its Appendix 1 to the collaboration between CIHEAM and *Silva Mediterranea*; *Silva Mediterranea* is part of the network of institutions of EFIMED; *Silva Mediterranea* is a founding member of the CPMF.

Plan Bleu is a centre for observation, analysis and prospective studies launched in the late 1970 within the Mediterranean Action Plan of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Sustainable Development of the Coastal Areas of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention). The centre is managed by a the French law association (1901). Its activities include the development of databases and meta-databases on environment, economics and society, analyses and prospective studies on the main issues of sustainable development at the Mediterranean Basin scale; publication and dissemination of the results of its studies and synthesis; development and animation of experts' networks in the Mediterranean countries and support for capacity building.

Plan Bleu is part of the EFIMED institutions network; Plan Bleu is a founding member of the CPMF.

Other regional organisations that can strongly support the work on Mediterranean forests:

The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) is an intergovernmental organisation bringing together the 28 European Union Member States and 15 countries from the Southern and Eastern shores of the Mediterranean. It provides a unique forum to enhance regional cooperation and dialogue in the Euro-Mediterranean region. The Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean based in Barcelona is the operational institution that empowers this regional dialogue between the UfM Member States and stakeholders, fostering synergies among them and promoting cooperation projects and initiatives with a direct impact on the lives of people. Projects and initiatives are implemented in six strategic priority areas which are: business development, social and civil affairs, higher education and research, transport and urban development, water and environment, and energy and climate action.

The set of partners of UfM includes CIHEAM and CMI.

Background

Different actions have jointly been implemented by some of these intergovernmental organizations. As members of the Collaborative Partnership on Mediterranean Forests (CPMF), CIHEAM, EFIMED, FAO-*Silva Mediterranea* and Plan Bleu have jointly contributed to the Strategic Framework on Mediterranean Forests (SFMF) and to the successive meetings of the Mediterranean Forest Week. The SFMF consists of nine strategic lines to reach three main objectives. Its strategic line 8 aims at reinforcing international cooperation on Mediterranean forests and includes recommendations such as integrating forestry topics in the several fora on the UE-MENA dialogue, or developing shared vision and positions on Mediterranean forests specific issues and promote them within international organizations. This strategic line 8 was specifically mentioned in the Tlemcen Declaration issued by the high-level segment of the 3rd Mediterranean Forest Week (MFW) in 2013.

During the session on bilateral/multilateral donors at the 4th MFW in 2015 in Barcelona, UfM highlighted the convergence of the objectives identified in the SFMF with those adopted in the UfM's ministerial declaration of May 2014 on the environment and climate change. UfM proposed to develop collaborations to integrate the issues around Mediterranean forests and woodlands into the current debate on the environment, the green and "circular" economy and climate change, and proposed to promote and prioritise projects with a clear regional focus and impact through a

"labelling" procedure, promoting resources mobilization, visibility and - more importantly - integration/prioritization in the regional agenda. During the same session at the 4th MFW, CMI highlighted the need for regional cooperation and for the integration of issues connected to Mediterranean forests into a broader, intersectorial framework. The challenges and issues highlighted in the SFMF could be usefully shared with the CMI so as to participate in the major debates that CMI leads (in particular the MedCOP conference), to foster meetings and exchange between the funding institutions related to Mediterranean forests and woodlands, and to sharpen the awareness of such partners as the World Bank and the European Investment Bank.

The evaluation of *Silva Mediterranea* made in 2013 by a panel including a representative of CIHEAM recommended the creation of a light coordination platform among the main intergovernmental organizations that have a mandate solely or partially on Mediterranean forests. This recommendation was adopted by the Committee of *Silva Mediterranea* during its extraordinary session in March 2015.

Objective

The meeting will aim at establishing a light informal coordination platform regarding Mediterranean forests between CIHEAM, CMI, EFIMED, FAO-*Silva Mediterranea*, Plan Bleu and UfM. The idea is that these organizations, having a shared vision, will find there a space for debate within which they will be able to align their work and their respective scope of action and thus decrease, or even, avoid dispersing efforts, fragmentation and redundancies. This platform could operate based on an equal footing relation, with a rotating secretariat and would be composed by executives of the different organizations involved.

Expected results

1) Roadmap towards a shared vision and identification of the thematic objectives where the actions of the different institutions could be complementary or jointed
2) Identification of the fluxes of information that have to be established between the institutions regarding
    - thematic priorities (e.g., how to promote the SFMF through UfM Working Groups?)
    - projects and initiatives (e.g., how to improve the interface between research and policy makers? How to disseminate key project results through UfM or CMI platforms of dialogue on environment / water / climate change? How to promote the UfM labelling process among developing projects?)
    - events and conferences, expertise, etc.
3) Operational modalities of the light coordination platform

Tentative agenda

09:00-09:15 Welcome address from FAO, introduction of participants
09:15-09:30 Meeting agenda, objectives and expected outcomes (*Silva Mediterranea*)

Tour de table where each institution will present its ongoing or potential support to Mediterranean forests work/agenda in terms of contribution priorities, and expectation
09:30-10:00 CIHEAM
10:00-10:30 CMI
10:30-11:00 Coffee break
11:00-11:30 EFIMED
11:30-12:00 FAO-*Silva Mediterranea*

12:00-12:30 Plan Bleu
12:30-13:00 UfM
13:00-14:00 Lunch break

Discussion on the roadmap towards a shared vision and identification of the fluxes of information to share
14:00-15:30 Discussion
15:30-16:00 Coffee break
16:00-17:00 Discussion
17:00-17:30 Concluding remarks
Leading questions:

- What is the potential contribution of each institution to the Mediterranean forests agenda/work and related sectors (water, environment, migration…)?
- What are the priority thematic objectives for each institution regarding Mediterranean forests and related sectors (water, environment, migration…)?
- On which thematic objectives and actions (projects, initiatives, events, etc) are the complementarities or groupings of effort to be obtained?
- What should the fluxes of information to be shared deal with? (strategic and policy-oriented documents, projects and initiatives, events and conferences, expertise…)
- How to organize these fluxes of information?

The outcome of the discussion will be a final document with potential joint lines of action.