

# Forest Bioenergy in the Protected Mediterranean Areas

Report on the external events – General Assembly of FECOF



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## **BRIEF EVENT DESCRIPTION**

On Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September was held the Congress “Change Processes and Change Management in Forestry” of the Union European Foresters (UEF) in which FECOF participated. During the Congress, the General Assembly of FECOF dealt with different items that were put in value during its Assembly on 29<sup>th</sup> September where AMUFOR also introduced the ForBioEnergy project.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Congress was organized in order to examine the European-wide change processes, as well as the action strategies of the forests administrations.

In Europe's forests there is a long tradition of the sustainable and multifunctional forestry management. Nowadays, different changes are taking place not only in silviculture or technical, but also in the organisation, creating uncertainty. For this reason, in the Congress was examined the change processes in Europe, the action strategies of the forests administration and the impact on the workforce managing forests.

In this regard, the representatives of forests from different regions of Europe discussed in a moderated panel the corresponding focus on the change, the required adjustments and the opportunities and problems for their country.

It is noted that a common forest policy does not exist on European scale, unlike the common agricultural policy; the Directorate-General for Agriculture is basically the responsible for forestry issues in the EU. Nevertheless, the influence of other Directorates is also evident in parallel with other areas that concern the forestry sector (e.g. Natura 2000).

### **1.1 Location**

The Congress and the General Assembly of FECOF were held in Mainz (Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany) in the Schloss Waldthausen (Sparkassenverband RLP, Im Wald 1, 55257 Budenheim).

## 1.2 Who attended

The meeting was attended by around 130 actors from 14 countries of the EU.

The General Assembly of FECOF held on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> was attended by the Directive Council of FECOF in which Fernando Pradells represented AMUFOR.

### **BRIEF OUTLINE OF KEY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES ADDRESSED IN THE EVENT**

As an act within the congress, the General Assembly of FECOF underlined the following items:

- Common position paper on Renewable Energy Directive (RED II, COM (2016) 767 final) and the planned certification of biomass for the period after 2020.
- List of Invasive Alien Species of Union Concern that has existed since summer 2016 and was updated by the new implementation Regulation [(EU) 2017/1263] of the EU Commission of 12 July 2017.
- FECOF LULUCF Position paper: the relevant contribution that the LULUCF (Land use, Land-use Change and Forestry) can make regarding the ambitious objectives established of the EU until 2030. The LULUCF Directive is included in the framework for climate and energy of the EU Commission.
- Natura 2000 Action Plan: the European Commission has adopted a new Action Plan in order to improve the nature and biodiversity protection in the EU for the benefit of its citizens and the economy. The Plan has 15 actions to be reached between now and 2019 for improving the implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives, as well as the management of these areas. The purpose is to connect more widely nature protection and socio-economic activities, engaging the national authorities, stakeholders and young people. Specifically, the 15 actions are focused on 4 priority areas:
  1. Improving guidance and knowledge and ensuring better coherence with broader socio-economic objectives,
  2. Building political ownership and strengthening compliance,
  3. Strengthening investment in Natura 2000 and improving use of EU funding,
  4. Better communication and outreach, engaging citizens, stakeholders and communities.

- Forest Europe Process: development of the Directives and criteria for a sustainable forest management and other instruments which can promote this management. The Ministerial conference of the participating states about the protection of the European forests has concluded the development process.
- 10-year anniversary of the European Forestry House in Brussels: the aim is to make the forestry sector more visible at European level, as well as give it a voice.
- DFWR [German Forestry Council] Working Group Europe.

### **1.3 Purpose and scope**

The purposes are to examine the “Change Processes and Change Management in Forestry” and to discuss and examine the strategies, opportunities and difficulties generate in a European and National level, at the same time that the General Assembly of FECOF explains the implemented European initiatives in which the Federation is involved. In this regard, AMUFOR introduced the ForBioEnergy project with the aim to disseminate its principle and to be made known for establishing new synergies.

### **1.4 Key messages, outcomes, recommendations and synergies with thematic community project**

- To establish more synergies with the EU institutions and other forest stakeholders for communication process and exchange of current political actions.
- To arise awareness of the implication of other countries in order to represent the municipal forest owner interests in the EU.
- The concern about the lack of forest management and the current barriers in protected areas: the necessity to act and implement a new Action Plan for a new regulatory framework and roadmap to promote the use of forest biomass for energy purposes and to overcome the barriers that hinder the development of the forest sector.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

FECOF, as European Federation of the Forest Municipalities, represents municipal forest owner interests in the EU and its objective is to work closely with partners and EU institutions through the cooperation and the participation at decision-making processes in order to exchange experiences and knowledge.



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Zadar County



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