



FORESTERRA Steering Committee Meeting, Barcelona, Spain, 3 September 2013

A meeting of the FORESTERRA Steering Management Committee took place in Barcelona, Spain, on 3 September 2013. The venue was the the Sant Pau UNESCO World Heritage Site in Barcelona, where is located the new EFIMED Office.

The objective of the meeting was to review and discuss the progress in the different workpackages and future plans. The meeting was attended by 29 participants from national institutions of Algeria, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey, and also from the two international partner organisations, CIHEAM and EFI.

The meeting was opened by David González from MINECO, Madrid, Spain, as FORESTERRA Coordinator. The participants had the opportunity to meet Inazio Martínez de Arano, the new EFIMED Head of Office, who will replace Marc Palahí in the FORESTERRA activities developed by EFI.

For WP1 (Coordination and management), the two main issues introduced by David González and Victoria Sanz were the amendment to the Grant Agreement, including a new Description of Work (DoW), and the First financial and technical periodic reporting to the European Commission. The amendment to the Grant Agreement was required due the change of Coordinator (David González instead of Rocío Lansac) and the addition of a third party in the consortium, ECOFOR. The most relevant aspects of the periodic reporting that corresponds to the first eighteen months of the project were presented, pointing out that all the deliverables expected have been submitted to the European Commission, all the milestones for this period have been achieved, and all the WP leaders have sent their reports with the support of the Task leaders.

For WP2 (Mapping research activities), Giuseppe Scarascia showed a new elaboration of data and an impressively detailed country analysis. He presented a cluster analysis on staff number, papers per country, the most promising research topics, efficiency of research capacities and infrastructures and relationship around the Mediterranean countries. This new analysis will be soon available at the FORESTERRA website.

In WP3 (Strategic activities), Marc Palahí presented the FORESTERRA Strategic Plan, including the four strategic research themes proposed in the last Management Committee meeting in Paris: 1) Understanding global change drivers, indicators and impacts on Mediterranean forest ecosystems: a Mediterranean-scale approach; 2) Fostering forest system resilience through managing biodiversity, from genes to communities; 3) Multi-purpose forest landscapes management to enhance the role of non-wood products in rural development; and 4) Integrated watershed management for delivering forest water-related services. In the discussion that followed, some important issues were pointed out, such as the available funding, the timing of the call and the potential cooperation in other initiatives. Further discussion on these matters followed in the WP5 presentation.

In relation to WP4 (Implementation of joint activities), Jean-Charles Valette gave an overview of WP4's tasks, underlining that the Networking Workshop will take place in

Marseille, France, on 12th and 13th of December 2013. The main objectives of this workshop are the coordination of future scientific research projects, the improvement of the cooperation among the institutions, and the reinforcement of the networking activities. INRA will also focus on the identification of forest research infrastructures through a questionnaire.

Joana Pinheiro gave a general description of WP6 and its objectives. A common template to identify and describe the main funding and research programmes in the different Mediterranean Climate Areas (MCAs) has been elaborated and is being completed through the FORESTERRA Web. This will allow the identification of common strategic areas, topics and activities for reinforcing future transnational scientific cooperation with other MCAs, including specific network activities (visits and workshop in Australia and California). In that sense, researchers and stakeholders from other MCAs (USA, Australia, Chile and South Africa) will participate in the FORESTERRA workshop on the following day, in the framework of the EFIMED Week 2013.

Dunixi Gabiña outlined overall WP7's objectives and different tasks and reminded that the FORESTERRA dissemination documents are available at the FORESTERRA website: official logo, banner, poster and brochure, and also that all the project's relevant documents can be downloaded from the Intranet. In order to improve dissemination among European Union member states and candidate states, a meeting in Sofia (Bulgaria), on 27-29 May 2014, organised by EFA with the collaboration of EFIMED. The workshop will serve to explore possibilities for participation of new countries, such as Georgia and Ukraine, in FORESTERRA's joint activities. FORESTERRA news appears now monthly in the EFIMED newsletter, in collaboration with EFIMED. Furthermore, two newsletters of the project have been published and a new one will be out in October 2013.

Given its relevance for the FORESTERRA ERA-NET, the Transnational Call content and launching (WP5), including the situation of the financial contributions and the foreseen timetable, was dealt with in a specific session. David González presented the plan and procedures for implementing the joint transnational research on the basis of WP3's results. Two topics, each of them with a specific instrument, will be included in this Call:

- Understanding global change drivers, indicators and impacts on Mediterranean forest ecosystems: a Mediterranean-scale approach (Global Change) - Networking Action, with a one-step procedure.
- Fostering forest system resilience through managing biodiversity, from genes to communities (Biodiversity) - Collaborative project with a two-step procedure.

David González commented the general aspects to be considered in the evaluation procedures, underlining that the proposed actions should meet the criteria of added value, interdisciplinarity and transnational collaboration. He described the scope, expected impact and objectives for the two thematic research areas proposed. The model of "virtual common pot" will be used, where each country funds its own approved national research teams.

Elena Capolino introduced the proposed key documents and the timetable for the FORESTERRA joint call for proposals, which will be entitled "Mediterranean-scale approach to study global change drivers, impacts & indicators on forest ecosystems and to foster forest system resilience through managing biodiversity". After a general

discussion, the timetable, the criteria for eligibility and the rules for participation were adopted by the Consortium. The Call is planned to be launched on 4 November 2013. The deadline for the first step, definitive for the Networking actions, and leading to a pre-selection for the Collaborative projects, will be 15 January 2014. The deadline for the second step of the Collaborative projects will be 7 July 2014. The expected start dates are July 2014 for the Networking actions and December 2014 for the Collaborative projects. The Call will be managed through the FORESTERRA web through an on-line submission tool.

