

Workshop on “Desertification and Restoration in Mediterranean Drylands”

UNCCD COP12, Ankara (Turkey)

REPORT

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Executive Summary

Twenty five experts from seven Mediterranean countries (Portugal, Turkey, Morocco, Tunisia, Spain, France and Lebanon) attended the workshop on “Desertification and Restoration in Mediterranean Drylands” held in Ankara, Turkey on 16 October 2015. Taking into account the results of the evaluation of *Silva Mediterranea*, the workshop was a brainstorming to prepare a Road Map for the working group on “Desertification and Restoration of Mediterranean dryland”.

It was concluded that the working group will be focusing on the implementation of the Strategic Line 6 of the Strategic Framework on Mediterranean Forests (SFMF): “Restore degraded Mediterranean forests landscapes” at national/regional level by:

- 1) Promoting the dissemination and implementation of FAO's “Global guidelines for the restoration of degraded forests and landscapes in drylands - Building resilience and sustainable livelihoods” at the Mediterranean level;
- 2) Capitalizing on existing successful restorations efforts already implemented in the Mediterranean and sharing best practices and lessons learned at the regional level through projects, programs and other initiatives on restoration of forest and landscapes in drylands with, in particular, the support of the new Forest and Landscape Restoration Mechanism (FLRM);
- 3) Preparing a significant chapter focused on restoration in the next edition of the State of Mediterranean Forests;
- 4) Focusing the next edition of the Mediterranean Forest Week (V MFW) to be held in Morocco in 2017 on Forest and Landscape Restoration;
- 5) Establishing partnerships with organization supporting the development of innovative financing mechanisms for FLR and LDN.

Background

A significant part of the Mediterranean region is considered as drylands and a large part of the Mediterranean area is affected by desertification. These areas are under increasing pressure caused by demographic and economic drivers, and are prone to desertification, land degradation and drought. Moreover, these effects will be exacerbated by climate change. According to the State of Mediterranean Forests (FAO, 2013), it is expected that climate change will strongly affect the region, through increased mean temperatures and extreme weather events including heat waves, resulting in increased drought and forest fires.

If no action is taken, land degradation will cause major losses of the goods and services provided by these landscapes, with severe consequences on the environment, biodiversity and the economy, and in particular for rural vulnerable livelihoods.

Although Mediterranean forests have low productivity in terms of wood production, they provide a wide range of ecosystem goods and services; they are in fact of great economic, social, and ecological significance, increase resilience and are an essential provider of the productive functions (of wood and non-wood forest products such as cork, nuts, medicinal and aromatic plants, fodder) and protective functions (such as protection against soil and water erosion, flooding) of dryland ecosystems.

Forest and Landscape Restoration (FLR) is being increasingly recognized for its potential to reverse land degradation processes. Countries have started to engage in global commitments to restore degraded lands, such as with the Bonn Challenge, a global aspiration to restore 150 million hectares by 2020. Efforts are also being made at the regional level, for example through the Initiative 20x20, aiming to bring 20 million hectares of degraded land in Latin America and the Caribbean into restoration by 2020.

During its twenty-first session in February 2012 in Antalya, Turkey, the Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions *Silva Mediterranea* adopted a decision to create a working group on “Desertification and Restoration of Forest Ecosystems in Arid Zones”(WG8). It was agreed that this new working group was to be led as a start by Turkey. It was also agreed that technical support was to be provided by FAO, recognizing FAO's Forestry Department expertise on dryland forestry and Forest and Landscape Restoration matters and other led initiatives.

The need to address degradation in the Mediterranean region has also been prioritized during the III Mediterranean Forest Week (III MFW) in March 2013, through the policy orientations that were conceptualized under the Strategic Framework for Mediterranean Forests (SFMF). Strategic line 6 explicitly calls to “Restore degraded Mediterranean forest landscapes” through a series of eleven recommendations.

Restoration is promoted as a way to enhance resilience, food security and livelihoods, regain environmental and cultural services, while managing, monitoring and evaluating restored forest ecosystems.

The policy orientations of the SFMF were endorsed in the Tlemcen Declaration and adopted during the high-level segment of the III MFW. The Declaration calls for an effective implementation of the Strategic Framework on Mediterranean Forest. It also explicitly”

reflects a strong political support to the “promotion of resilience in forest ecosystems [...]” also by "restoring degraded Mediterranean forest landscapes".

In this context FAO and Turkish partners launched the new working group for addressing the issues of desertification and restoration in the Mediterranean region on the occasion of the UNCCD Cop 12 in Ankara on October 16, 2015.

Report

On October 16, 2015, on the occasion of the 12th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 12) to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) held in Ankara, Turkey, it was held the Workshop on “Desertification and Restoration in Mediterranean Drylands” to launch the new working group of *Silva Mediterranea* aiming to address issues of desertification and restoration in the Mediterranean region ([See Annex 1 – Agenda of the Workshop](#)).

Twenty five experts from seven different Mediterranean countries (Portugal, Turkey, Morocco, Tunisia, Spain, France and Lebanon) attended this workshop ([See Annex 2 – List of participants](#)). The event was supported and organised by several technical organizations such as: FAO/Forestry Department /the FLRM team, the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD and TUBITAK.

After the presentation of the global and the regional context by FAO (See the PowerPoint presented by FAO <http://www.fao.org/forestry/flrm/89477/en/>) the sessions focused on a brainstorming for preparing a future Road Map of this working group/thematic group on “Desertification and Restoration of Mediterranean drylands” ([See Annex 4 - Activities of *Silva Mediterranea* Working Group 8](#)).

Taking into consideration the results of the evaluation of the *Silva Mediterranea* working groups, carried out in 2013, this one day workshop on “Desertification and Restoration of Mediterranean drylands” focused on how to build support for the development of this new working group and especially to:

- 1) Support the implementation of Strategic Line 6 “Restore degraded Mediterranean forests landscapes” of the SFMF in Mediterranean countries;
- 2) Promote and support the implementation of FAO's “Global guidelines for the restoration of degraded forests and landscapes in drylands - Building resilience and sustainable livelihoods” at the Mediterranean level;
- 3) Promote and share best practices and lessons learned at the regional level through projects, programs and other initiatives on restoration of forest and landscapes in drylands with, in particular, the support of the new Forest and Landscape Restoration Mechanism (FLRM) launched by FAO at the occasion of COFO in June 2014;
- 4) Support and contribute to the future editions of the State of Mediterranean Forests with regard to issues related to degradation/restoration affecting the Mediterranean region (e.g. degradation of Mediterranean dryland forests, post-fire restoration, etc.);
- 5) Target the next edition of the Mediterranean Forest week (V MFW) to be held in Morocco in March/April 2017 on Forest and Landscape Restoration;

Main results of the workshop and key recommendations for the new working group on "Desertification and Restoration of Mediterranean drylands"

The working group/thematic group will be focusing its effort on the implementation of the Strategic Line 6 "Restore degraded Mediterranean forests landscapes" of the Strategic Framework on Mediterranean Forests (SFMF) at national/regional level by:

1. Promoting the dissemination and implementation of FAO's "Global guidelines for the restoration of degraded forests and landscapes in drylands - Building resilience and sustainable livelihoods" at the Mediterranean level. Those guidelines prepared jointly by FAO and Turkey with the support of TIKA could be adapted to national/local contexts and used as a key tool for promoting good practices on restoration, in particular on assisted natural regeneration options, in the Mediterranean;
2. Capitalizing on existing successful restorations efforts already implemented in the Mediterranean and sharing best practices and lessons learned at the regional level through projects, programs and other initiatives on restoration of forest and landscapes in drylands with, in particular, the support of the new Forest and Landscape Restoration Mechanism (FLRM) launched by FAO at the occasion of the Committee on Forestry (COFO) in June 2014. The integration of the Mediterranean region in global initiatives on restoration could be supported by this FLRM team taking advantage of other existing regional initiatives like the Initiative 20x20 in Latin America, or other global initiatives such as "The Restoration Initiative" currently in preparation as a GEF 6 Programmatic Approach with several members of the Global Partnership on Forest and Landscape Restoration, and led by IUCN, UNEP and FAO;
3. Preparing a strong chapter focused on restoration in the next edition of the State of Mediterranean Forests to be prepared with the key support of FAO (Secretariat of *Silva Mediterranea* and other experts within the Forestry Department) by end of 2017. Taking into consideration that land degradation and restoration are key issues for the Mediterranean this chapter could provide information/recent knowledge on: (a) land degradation assessment, building on the new Land Degradation Neutrality concept formally adopted in Ankara and recently recognized as one of the new SDGs (SDG 15.3); (b) identification of the main restoration opportunities in the region, taking into consideration the multi-functionality of Mediterranean landscapes (agriculture, forest, pasture, recreation...) and the need to identify a well-balanced package of restoration options; and (c) provision of recommendations in order to deal with the main current barriers for the implementation of large scale restoration programs in the Mediterranean.
4. Focusing the next edition of the Mediterranean Forest Week (V MFW) to be held in Morocco in March/April 2017 on Forest and Landscape Restoration. This

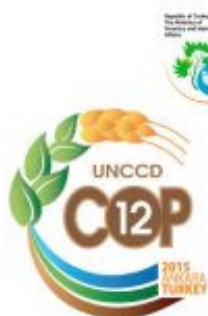
option could be an excellent opportunity to highlight the efforts already made by the region on “Desertification and Restoration of Mediterranean drylands” and to disseminate the first results/new recommendations/publications of the working group at the regional level. Some participants also highlighted the need to use several upcoming events by 2017 to promote the Road Map/Results of this new working group on “Desertification and Restoration of Mediterranean drylands” with, in particular, the NEFRC to be held in Algeria (Tlemcen) from 13 to 16 December 2015 and the UNFCCC COP 22 to be held in Morocco at the end of 2016

5. Establishing partnerships with organization supporting the development of innovative financing mechanisms for FLR and LDN, e.g. the FAO FLRM and the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD, following the recommendations of the newly published discussion paper “Sustainable financing for forest and landscape restoration” (FAO & UNCCD, 2015) and related policy brief.

All those proposals from the participants are totally in line with several adopted recommendations of the evaluation of the Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions - *Silva Mediterranea*, such as: (i) “the Committee should have a shared vision and strategy based on the identification of priority thematic areas from the Strategic Framework for Mediterranean Forests”, (ii) “the Committee should focus on the “areas for which the FAO Forestry Department has experts” including the thematic “combating desertification and restoration of degraded lands”, (iii) “the Committee should regularly publish/update the State of Mediterranean Forests (SoMF)” and the (iv) “the Committee should regularly organize Mediterranean Forest Week (MFW) with the support of the Forestry Department within FAO (Secretariat of *Silva Mediterranea* and other thematic teams)”.

Annex 1 – Agenda of the Workshop

AGENDA
16 October 2015
Turkish Pavillion



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Workshop on Desertification and Restoration in Mediterranean Drylands

09:00 - 10:45 SESSION 1: OPENING AND INTRODUCTION

- Opening remarks: welcoming of participants and introduction to the workshop – *Representative of Turkey*
- Presentation of *Silva Mediterranea* – *Ismail Belen, president of Silva Mediterranea*
- The Strategic Framework for Mediterranean Forests: policy orientations to restore Mediterranean forest landscapes and the global context for Forest and Landscape Restoration – *Christophe Besacier, FAO*
- The FAO Dryland Restoration Initiative and the Guidelines for the restoration of degraded forests and landscapes in drylands – *Nora Berrahmouni, FAO*
- Presentation of proposed terms of reference for the working group and introduction to the working group sessions – *Ludwig Liagre*

10:45 - 11:00 COFFEE BREAK

11:00 - 13:00 SESSION 2: WORKING GROUPS SESSIONS

- Identifying the key thematic priorities based on the Strategic Framework for Mediterranean Forests Strategic Line 6: Restore degraded Mediterranean forest landscapes

GROUP 1: POLICY AND DECISION MAKERS

Recommendation 1: Recognize and ensure the contribution of forests and sustainable forest management in the combat against desertification
Recommendation 2: Identify restoration priorities and goals as well as required funding on the long-term
Recommendation 3: Develop capacity of foresters and users on restoration approaches, practices and tools
Recommendation 4: Manage restoration as a collaborative action by promoting good governance at local level, involving all relevant stakeholders and sectors
Recommendation 5: Plan forest restoration actions at the right scale and with an integrated approach on the long-term and addressing drivers of land degradation and desertification

GROUP 2: PRACTITIONERS

Recommendation 6: Select the right species, varieties and genotypes. The promotion of native species is often the best choice as they meet social, environmental, cultural and economic demand and they are well adapted to environmental constraints such as water scarcity and communities needs
Recommendation 7: Use high quality reproductive plant material (seeds, seedlings, cuttings) of Mediterranean trees, shrubs and grasses with wide genetic diversity
Recommendation 8: Promote natural regeneration to restore forest ecosystems as often as possible particularly after wildfires
Recommendation 9: Ensure sustainable management and protection of the restored areas
Recommendation 10: Ensure monitoring and evaluation for adaptive management
Recommendation 11: Develop and implement participative methods for assessment and monitoring of forest restoration projects for future improvement of results in degraded landscapes

13:00 - 14:00 LUNCH BREAK

14:00 - 16:00 SESSION 3: WORKING GROUPS REPORT TO PLENARY AND DISCUSSION

16:00 - 16:30 SESSION 4: NEXT STEPS AND CLOSING OF THE WORKSHOP

- Road map and agenda for the next two years (validation) – *Ludwig Liagre*
- Concluding remarks – *Abdelkader Ouraini, Morocco*

Annex 2 – List of participants

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Annex 3 - Terms of Reference

Introduction

A significant part of the Mediterranean region is considered as drylands and a large part of the Mediterranean area is affected by desertification. These areas are under increasing pressure caused by demographic and economic drivers, and are prone to desertification, land degradation and drought. Moreover, these effects will be exacerbated by climate change. According to the State of Mediterranean Forests (FAO, 2013), it is expected that climate change will strongly affect the region, through increased mean temperatures and extreme weather events including heat waves, resulting in increased drought and forest fires. If no action is taken, land degradation will cause major losses of the goods and services provided by these landscapes, with severe consequences on the environment, biodiversity and the economy, and in particular for rural livelihoods.

Although Mediterranean forests have low productivity in terms of wood production, they provide a wide range of ecosystem goods and services; they are in fact of great economic, social, and ecological significance, provide resilience and are an essential provider of the productive functions (of wood and non-wood forest products such as cork, nuts, medicinal plants, fodder) and protective functions (such as protection against soil and water erosion) of dryland ecosystems.

Forest and Landscape Restoration (FLR) is being increasingly recognized for its potential to reverse land degradation processes. Countries have started to engage in global commitments to restore degraded lands, such as with the Bonn Challenge, a global aspiration to restore 150 million hectares by 2020. Efforts are also being made at the regional level, such as the through the Initiative 20x20, aiming to bring 20 million hectares of degraded land in Latin America and the Caribbean into restoration by 2020.

Rationale for a workshop on “Desertification and Restoration of Mediterranean drylands”

During its twenty-first session in February 2012 in Antalya, Turkey, the Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions *Silva Mediterranea* adopted a decision to create a working group on “Desertification and Restoration of Forest Ecosystems in Arid Zones” (WG8). It was agreed that this new working group was to be led as a start by Turkey. It was also agreed that technical support was to be provided by FAO, recognizing FAO’s Forestry Department expertise on dryland forestry and Forest and Landscape Restoration matters and other led initiatives¹;

¹ The African Union Commission and the European Union have appointed FAO as the implementing agency for AUC’s projects in support to the implementation of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative, which also includes several Mediterranean countries. Moreover, FAO’s “Global guidelines for the restoration of degraded forests and landscapes in drylands” (to be published soon) will be of particular importance to address land degradation in the Mediterranean region. Furthermore a number of field projects have been implemented by FAO since decades, providing a number of lessons learnt and experience.

The need to address degradation in the Mediterranean region has also been prioritized during the III Mediterranean Forest Week (III MFW) in March 2013, through the policy orientations that were conceptualized under the Strategic Framework for Mediterranean Forests (SFMF). Strategic line 6 explicitly calls to “Restore degraded Mediterranean forest landscapes” through a series of ten recommendations. Restoration is promoted as a way to enhance resilience, food security and livelihoods, regain environmental and cultural services, while managing, monitoring and evaluating restored forest ecosystems.

The policy orientations of the SFMF were endorsed in the Tlemcen Declaration and adopted during the high-level segment of the MFW; the Declaration calls for an effective implementation of the SFMF. It also explicitly reflects a strong political support to the “promotion of resilience in forest ecosystems (...)” including by “restoring degraded Mediterranean forest landscapes”.

The establishment of a new working group would be a way to contribute in addressing the issues of desertification and restoration in the Mediterranean region, including by:

- Supporting the implementation of Strategic Line 6 “Restore degraded Mediterranean forests landscapes” of the SFMF in Mediterranean countries;
- Promoting and supporting the implementation of FAO’s “Global guidelines for the restoration of degraded forests and landscapes in drylands – Building resilience and sustainable livelihoods” at the Mediterranean level;
- Promoting and sharing best practices and lessons learned at the regional level through projects, programs and other initiatives on restoration of forest and landscapes in drylands with, in particular, the support of the new Forest and Landscape Restoration Mechanism (FLRM) launched by FAO at the occasion of COFO in June 2014;
- Supporting and contributing to the future editions of the State of Mediterranean Forests with regard to issues related to degradation/restoration affecting the Mediterranean region (e.g. degradation of Mediterranean dryland forests, post-fire restoration, ...)

It is to be noted that the new working group -or thematic group- should be consistent with the results of the evaluation of the *Silva Mediterranea* working groups that was carried out in 2013; the latter recommends that “the Committee should have a shared vision and strategy based on the identification of priority thematic areas from the Strategic Framework for Mediterranean Forests” and that focus should be made on the “areas for which the FAO Forestry Department has experts” including the combating desertification and restoration of degraded lands and . The evaluation also calls for a gradual transition of the working groups into a lighter and more flexible system of task forces and thematic working groups.

For each priority issue identified by the Committee, “thematic working groups should monitor, follow-up and provide an interface with future or on-going initiatives, projects and programs on the Mediterranean forest scene, including with FAO’s agenda”. The evaluation panel recommended that these thematic groups should “lead and facilitate the network of national focal points during the intersession of the committee and intervene in thematic debates during formal sessions”.

Outline of the workshop

The workshop will be organized and hosted by the Government of Turkey, with the technical support from FAO. Its main objectives are:

- To provide a focus on desertification issues and restoration opportunities in the Mediterranean region;
- To launch a new *Silva Mediterranea* thematic group on “Desertification and Restoration in Mediterranean drylands”, by defining its terms of reference and agenda.

Annex 4 - Activities of *Silva Mediterranea* Working Group 8 (WG8) on “Desertification and restoration of forest ecosystems in arid zones”

Recommendation	Outcomes	Existing initiatives (N/R)	Need for further activities (N/R)	Technical partners	Financing partners
1) Recognize and ensure the contribution of forests and sustainable forest management in the combat against desertification	Combat desertification in most of areas in countries	Align pastures and forest strategies and national strategies to combat desertification	NATIONAL: Implement integrated forest management in territory units	WBCSD	
	Ensuring local communities commitment	Organization of local communities in forest and pastures management and control	Organize ‘Mediterranean forest week’ and other regional or international events on forest and desertification (including private sector)	Researchers, academia and universities, other NGOs (e.g.: TEMA)	
	Combating desertification for other sectors (e.g. energy, soil and pastoral areas and water)	High planning commission and official journal publications regarding agriculture, foreign affairs and forest	Ensure access to rights with new politics (efficient governance system)	TURKISH Trade Union (TOBB)	
	Including forest for combating desertification in international targets/agenda (e.g. COP12 Climate Change and others; SDG15; Bonne Challenge; AICHI 15; FAO guidelines)	Existing national forest planning systems and other initiatives	REGIONAL: Capitalize successful cases	TUBITAK (and researchers)	
	Integrating private sector		Develop knowledge and technical platforms	National entities	
	Include researches, academia, universities and other NGOs as stakeholders		Network of monitoring assessment and reporting mechanisms based on cases from the countries	FAO GMUNCCD IUCN EFIMED (and others)	
2) Identify restoration priorities and goals as well as required funding on the long-term		Restoration priorities from Portugal	Application of ROAM activities	IUCN	
		Defined some references about restoration	Assess cost of degradation and cost of restoration	TEEB	IPBES

	Use the guideline which is already exist		Need to introduce more data about Mediterranean forest and to use and capitalize that we have done so far about forest management, valuing goods services and forest fire	Use technical and economic partners	
			Encourage people to use the guideline more and FAO could make more support about it		FAO
			Adoption to climate change parameters could be the first priority		
3) Develop capacity of foresters and users on restoration approaches, practices and tools			Train and use the guideline but also other global guidelines as well		
			Need an capacity development and building in three level; institute, individual and community level		
			More comprehensive plan should cover all stakeholders, researchers and private sector and also specifically capacity building and institutional system needed to them in long term		
			Practical restoration curricula and restoration center at international level		
4) Manage restoration as a collaborative action by promoting good governance at local level, involving all relevant stakeholders and sectors			Monitoring tool and global guidelines		
			Restoration planning should take a place with all the actors		
			Integrated watershed management principles should guide it		
			Needed to work in intersectoral and multisectoral		
			Making partnership with other sectors(Morocco example)		
5) Plan forest restoration actions at the right scale and with an integrated approach			Restoration action should be plan and promoted based on land scape, land cover type and multisectoral		

on the long-term and addressing drivers of land degradation and desertification			Include local people to plan and management and NGO		
			Partnership with private sector to test investment in restoration		
			Plan and projects should incorporate with local people and local needs		
			Planning incorporate with LDN targets		
			Social component is one important factor to get success		
			Adequate public incentive schemes for private lands to invest in restoration		
			Sometimes scale should be a lower level (communities, local champions)		
			Scale should consider mosaic structure and available land for forest		
			Guideline of afforestation and plantation scale at the EU level could be useful		
			having participatory planning		
			Framework of REDD+		
6) Select the right species, varieties and genotypes. The promotion of native species is often the best choice as they meet social, environmental, cultural and economic demand and they are well adapted to environmental constraints such as water scarcity and communities needs		Existing seed bank	Select right species and also it could be chosen based on people and community needs		
			Sometimes nonnative species could be adapted		
			Selected seed which is already adapted to climate change		
			alien species or other exotic species for genetic diversity		
			Assisted migration based on native species		
			Should promote and support knowledge on genetic populations adapted for restoration in Mediterranean context		
			Need to careful decision process to use alien and exotic species in wild area		
			Develop knowledge on existing species for restoration		

			Increase knowledge on the use of non-traditionally used native species for restoration and support experimental trials		
7) Use high quality reproductive plant material (seeds, seedlings, cuttings) of Mediterranean trees, shrubs and grasses with wide genetic diversity		Seed bank, garden and institute	Adapt and extend certification schemes		
		Seed transfer maps and guidelines (Turkey)	State of the art of seed supply in the Mediterranean (regional state of forest genetic resources)	Bioversity SOMF	
			Develop protocols for the production of specific seedlings e.g. Juniperus Crataegus		
			Exchange of knowledge on less used species of interest		
8) Promote natural regeneration to restore forest ecosystems as often as possible particularly after wildfires		COST FP 7 action group Expert group on restoration after fire	Continuation of COST action work programme		
			Public awareness e.g. regarding post fire land reclamation and restoration	Media Universities	
			Implement project pilot activities Or and capitalization on existing ones Compile and or Develop case studies for knowledge sharing and awareness raising		
9) Ensure sustainable management and protection of the restored areas			Target multiple objectives e.g. biodiversity shelter/ fire protection/soil protection		
			Increase benefits /for ownership\ by local communities of restoration areas		
			Include LDN targets in restoration strategies and action plans		
			Certification of quality of restoration projects e.g. quality standards / Portugal		
			Develop incentive schemes e.g. compensation mechanism and PES		
			Target multiple factors (Turkey and Morocco examples)		

10) Ensure monitoring and evaluation for adaptive management			<p>Identification of risk prone desertification areas e.g. existing tool in Turkey</p> <p>LDN Performance Index / national and regional monitoring</p> <p>could be reported by <i>Silva Mediterranea</i></p>		
			<p>Regional Project on LDN target setting/ implementation/ financing/ and monitoring</p>	EU/ GEF	
		<p>Land use change assessment / southern part of Europe / near east and middle east</p>	<p>Use dataset for restoration purposes</p>		

Annex 5 - Leaflet of the Workshop

For further information, please visit:
<http://www.fao.org/forestry/aridzone/en/>
<http://www.fao.org/forestry/silvamed/en/>

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**Workshop on
Desertification and Restoration
in Mediterranean Drylands**

A photograph of a dry, cracked desert landscape under a blue sky with light clouds. A single, small tree stands in the distance on the horizon.

What ?

Launch a new *Silva Mediterranea* working group on “Desertification and restoration of forest ecosystems in drylands”

Why ?

To contribute in addressing the issues of desertification and restoration in the Mediterranean region:

- Supporting the implementation of Strategic Line 6 “Restore degraded Mediterranean forests landscapes” of the SFMF in Mediterranean countries
- Promoting and supporting the implementation of FAO’s “Global guidelines for the restoration of degraded forests and landscapes in drylands – Building resilience and sustainable livelihoods” at the Mediterranean level
- Promoting and sharing best practices and lessons learned at the regional level through projects, programs and other initiatives on restoration of forest and landscapes in drylands
- Supporting and contributing to the future editions of the State of Mediterranean Forests with regard to issues related to degradation/restoration affecting the Mediterranean region

When ?

At 9.00 a.m. on Friday 16th October 2015, during the one-day workshop on “Desertification and restoration in Mediterranean drylands”

Where ?

At the Turkish pavilion of the 12th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 12) to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

Who ?

UNCCD Focal Points and partners in the Mediterranean with the support of the FAO team working on Forest and Landscape Restoration in Drylands and *Silva Mediterranea*