

Farmers' association hosts forest law experts meeting in Cyprus

by Nektarios Karios and Peter Herbst

IUFRO RG 6.13.00 ("Forest law and environmental legislation") has made it a round dozen. Still, not only because of that, the 12th International Symposium on "Legal Aspects of European Forest Sustainable Development" was something very special: Besides being the first ever scientific congress on the island of Cyprus covering such forestry topics, this meeting - unlike most other such meetings on European level, which usually are organized by scientific and/or state institutions - was hosted by a grass-root organisation, Cyprus' largest farmers' association, Panagrotikos.

Forty-one researchers and practitioners originating from eighteen different countries met in Lemesos/Cyprus (31 May – 3 June, 2010) and used this opportunity to get acquainted, involved and familiar with the new legal situation not only in European forests, but, profiting from the presence of participants from across the world, also Cameroon, Japan and Iran.

The participants were surprised to experience the long-standing tradition of sustainable forestry on the host island, which combined with the amenities of the Mediterranean Sea helped to create the very right atmosphere for that meeting of experts reviewing the state of forest laws and environmental legislation.

This time, the main focus was on the role of forests, the goals of forest management and the objectives of public policies addressing sustainable forest management.

Specifically, issues like legal aspects of different types of forest land tenure, legal regulations of forest management plans as a tool for sustainable forest management, the status of compensation of forest owners for ownership restrictions in the public or private interest, legal and Institutional status of national parks as tool for sustainable forest management, as well as the legal and institutional framework for recreation and environmental markets for forest enterprises were analysed and discussed by international and local participants.

The symposium was kindly hosted by Panagrotikos Sydesmos of Cyprus and supported by the respective governmental agencies and all institutions involved in the management of the local forests and natural environment of the Republic of Cyprus, as well as the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Switzerland. The meeting was organized by Nektarios Karios and his staff at Panagrotikos, as well as Peter Herbst (IUFRO 6.13.00). The high relevance of this meeting was emphasised by the attendance and active participation of the Leader of the Democratic Rally of Cyprus, Mr. Nicos Anastasiades, as well as the Minister of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment of Cypyrus, Mr. Demetris Eliades.

Photos:



Cyprus_Forest_Staff_1899: *Staff of the forest office at Paphos / Cyprus (1899); by Anon.*



IUFRO_61300_Lemesos_10: *Participants at Troodos National Forest Park – bridging the gap; by Peter Herbst*