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AFWC/EFC/NEFRC COMMITTEE ON MEDITERRANEAN FORESTRY QUESTIONS – *SILVA MEDITERRANEA*

THE BRUMMANA DECLARATION FOR THE ROLE OF MEDITERRANEAN FORESTS TO FULFILL THE NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS

We, the participants to the high-level segment of the Sixth Mediterranean Forest Week, held in Brummana, Lebanon, on the 4th of April 2019, support the orientations of the Sixth Mediterranean Forest Week, regarding climate change mitigation and adaptation in the Mediterranean and the implementation of the Nationally-Determined Contributions of Mediterranean countries within the Paris Agreement.

Welcoming the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030 adopted by the UN General Assembly on 1st March 2019, to offer unparalleled opportunity for job creation, food security and addressing climate change,

Noting the importance of both restoring forests and preventing deforestation and forest degradation to address climate change as expressed in the Global Forest Goal 1 of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030,

Noting that all Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) of Mediterranean countries and the European Union refer to forest as a key sector,

Noting that all National Action Programmes (NAPs) prepared by Mediterranean countries to implement the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification explicitly refer to forest and the nexus between deforestation and land degradation, and that land restoration is a major dimension for achieving Land Degradation Neutrality and enhancing societal resilience to drought,

Noting that the fight against deforestation and forest rehabilitation are also explicitly mentioned in most of the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) of Mediterranean countries under the Convention on Biological Diversity,

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Noting the recommendations of the 2014 Ministerial Declaration on environment and climate change of the Union of the Mediterranean (UfM) regarding desertification/drought, biodiversity and resilience to climate change,

Endorsing the Agadir Commitment towards a Mediterranean regional initiative on Forest and Landscape Restoration,

Recognizing the importance already given at the national level to actions to address climate change based on the Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use sector,

Recognizing, as mention in the UN 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, the link between the promotion of sustainably management natural resources and job creations in rural areas, that is also contributing to Sustainable Development Goal 8 to “Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all”,

Noting that in the Mediterranean region, the economically valuable goods and services provided by Mediterranean forest ecosystems can be used at a basis for job creation for the youth in rural landscapes,

We, the participants of the Sixth Mediterranean Forest Week, recognize the importance of the sustainable forest management and the forest and landscape restoration to address climate change issues in the Mediterranean.

We underline the importance of the empowerment of young entrepreneurs in the Mediterranean region by turning forest- and rangeland-based project ideas with economic or social purpose into viable businesses in a green economy to address the environmental, economic and social challenges faced by the Mediterranean countries.

We also acknowledge as a cross-cutting issue the importance to introduce, integrate and use communication as a tool to raise awareness and promote good practices on the forests, including their role in achieving the SDGs and combatting climate change.

We therefore call on the political and administrative authorities at national and local levels to reinforce the sustainable forest management and the integration of forest ecosystems restoration into the Nationally Determined Contributions of Mediterranean countries as part of their commitment under the Paris Agreement.

We also encourage all stakeholders involved in the management of forest ecosystems and other wooded areas in the Mediterranean to implement forest and landscape restoration actions and to support the forest initiatives launched by the young entrepreneurs with a view to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, land degradation neutrality, drought preparedness and biodiversity conservation.

In this spirit, we encourage the political and administrative authorities at national level as part of the commitments already taken by countries to ensure that all the conditions are met to duly fulfil the NDCs through actions designed to

1. Continue to reinforce with the support of the scientific community the knowledge and experience sharing on deforestation drivers, climate change threats and forest and landscape restoration approaches, with a view to
 - quantify the contribution of carbon sinks and survey existing forest genetic resources together with their adaptation capacities in Mediterranean forests,
 - assess the content of high education programs in forestry and forest-related topics to propose better adequacy between capacity building of young people and the market demand in a green economy, and
 - assess the costs and benefits of restoration;

2. Create with the support of international organization, academic institutions and the private sector incentives for youth to participate in diversified forestry education programmes, including through the creation of jobs for youth, to
 - ensure that youth entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean region can fully and effectively participate in achieving the objectives set out in the NDCs, and
 - promote innovative ideas, connect young entrepreneurs to large networks from around the Mediterranean, and bring these young entrepreneurs into coaching and training programs to turn innovative ideas into business in the market;
3. Mobilize with the support of stakeholders and relevant agencies climate finance including from the Green Climate Fund, which entails to
 - ensure readiness on Forest and Landscape Restoration options to address climate change by building capacity and reflecting these options in policy documents,
 - prepare investment frameworks integrating the Sustainable forest management and the Restoration as a key solution to implement and achieve the NDCs. And
 - synergize forest monitoring and reporting systems with a view to converge, as far as relevant, towards a set of indicators and reporting system for Forest and Land Restoration that are consistent with the Global Core Set of forest-related indicators;
4. Strengthen and support the work of the scientific community, in coordination with communicators network, to reinforce the knowledge and experience sharing on Mediterranean forests communication to
 - survey the elements of the structure of the social representations of the forest, and
 - assess the main communication vehicles of the social representation of the forest and their effectiveness.