



Forest Department - אגף הייעור
Land Development Authority – מנהל פיתוח הקרקע
KKL – Jewish National Fund – קרן קימת לישראל

Statement on Behalf of the Israeli Forest Service KKL-JNF on Item 6.3: Dialogue with Statutory Bodies in Forestry during Committee on Forestry (COFO 24th session, 18.7.2018)

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate the secretariat for the successful convening of the 24th session of the Committee on Forestry.

Israel is proud to be here today, alongside other nations, to contribute to the global effort for achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as indicated in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Israel is located at the crossroads of three continents: Europe, Asia and Africa, and situated at the stitching point between the Mediterranean and the arid regions. Our region is characterized by low average rainfall and long, dry and hot summers. This complex reality called for the development of advanced water management techniques, for which Israel is renowned worldwide today.

The Mediterranean is considered a climate-sensitive region due to its vicinity to the semi-arid region, and climate change is likely to encourage the encroachment of the dry zone further northward, resulting in the degradation and desertification of formerly vigorous Mediterranean forests. Thus, the effective adaptation of Mediterranean forests to climate change requires the adoption of management methods and afforestation techniques borrowed from dryland forestry, in order to ensure their long term sustainability and vitality.

Therefore, we would like Silva Mediterranea to emphasize in its strategy that semi-arid and Mediterranean forestry are inseparable, and should be addressed jointly in all relevant forums.



Forest Department - אגף הייעור
Land Development Authority – מנהל פיתוח הקרקע
KKL – Jewish National Fund – קרן קימת לישראל

The Israeli Forest Service (KKL-JNF) developed advanced practical methods that increased the resilience and adaptive capacity of our forests, enabled rehabilitation of degraded lands and forest and landscape restoration, combating desertification and **dryland afforestation on a large scale**. Since its establishment in 1948, the forest area in Israel has increased roughly by 1800%. This places Israel as one of the only countries in the world that increased their forest cover significantly during the 20th century.

This afforestation enterprise is ongoing, including in semi-arid regions, and contributes directly to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Mr. Chairman.

We would like to **endorse the Agadir Commitment** and demonstrate our support and commitment to the Mediterranean region and the Statutory Body of Silva Mediterranea.

We believe that in order to confront regional and local challenges, a pan-Mediterranean effort is needed. This will reduce fragmentation and enhance coordination and collaboration among international organizations, governments, institutions and all relevant regional stakeholders.

We take note of the points for consideration presented by the committee of statutory body of Silva Mediterranea in item 13 in Annex 1, by negotiating a Memorandum of Understanding with the FAO regarding taking an active role and technically supporting ongoing forest and landscape restoration projects.

We would also like the statutory body of Silva Mediterranea to **reconsider its recommendation** to suppress the Working Group on Sustainable Financing Mechanism as indicated in item 1.G in Annex 1. We strongly believe that sharing of knowledge and expertise should meet adequate financial resources in order to support capacity development and the initiation of sustainable forest and landscape restoration projects.



Forest Department - אגף הייעור
מנהל פיתוח הקרקע – Land Development Authority
קרן קימת לישראל – KKL – Jewish National Fund

Israel is committed to share its knowledge and expertise for the benefit of all communities worldwide. The Israeli Forest Service, KKL-JNF, is pleased to offer its expertise on dryland afforestation for any regional cooperation, in the Mediterranean and beyond.

Thank you Mr. Chairman