

Mediterranean Forests

Malaga, 2 June 2023



A knowledge baseline on Mediterranean forests supported by innovation

English will be the language of the event

Friday, 2 June 2023

From 9.00 to 17.30 hrs

Malaga, Spain

[REGISTRATION HERE](#)

ABOUT MEDITERRANEAN FORESTS

The Mediterranean region is home of 75 million hectares of forest and wooded lands known for their physical and biological heterogeneity. Despite indications on an increase in forest area extent in the region, 91% of Mediterranean forests are reported as degraded and fragmented.

In addition to human uses, the increasing environmental and climate related pressures on Mediterranean forests are affecting their structure and function and their capacity to provide vital ecosystem services, such as the wood and non-wood resources, biodiversity shelter, genetic pool conservation, capacity to sequester and store carbon, purify water and air, prevention of soil erosion, etc.

Transforming the way Mediterranean forests are understood and managed is vital to ensure their health and functions, make them resilient to the current scenario, and provide co-benefits for local socio-economies. Though several international and regional policy instruments are in place to address forest related topics, there is still a need to bring together existing knowledge and identify the information gaps to conform a holistic and efficient approach to forest monitoring, assessment, management, conservation, and restoration priorities at a Mediterranean (basin) scale.

THE WHY AND WHAT IN MALAGA

This event, co-organised by the European Environment Agency (EEA) and the European Topic Centre on Spatial Analysis and Synthesis of the University of Malaga (ETC-UMA) in the frame of the ERDF funded project EnBiC2-Lab¹, aims to bring together a community of EU and Mediterranean key players to address the status of regional political and research agendas in support of forests. How new technologies and innovative methodologies can support multiple scale forest inventories in developing a robust baseline on regional forest ecosystem as a basis for improved forest sustainable management and informed action prioritisation will be tackled during this event.

The first session will focus on key forest data and indicators used and/or needed by regional and national institutions to better inform policy measures related to an effective management, including the potential adoption of protection and restoration measures. This will be followed by a targeted session to show the results of collaborative work across countries led by ETC-UMA with the support of Mediterranean institutions on mapping forest typologies in the Mediterranean basin using new technologies and open data. This session will inform about the resulting Mediterranean wide map and online harmonised database and how it can support a better informed decision making to forest management in the region, including the prioritisation actions for restoration and conservation. The contribution and potential synergies of this Mediterranean forest analysis towards national forest inventories, local sites and monitoring programmes will be discussed among representatives from public authorities and information users. An interactive session showcasing the available / accessible technologies that are at the service of National Forest Inventories at this stage with the results achieved by this knowledge baseline and tools created and presented in the prior session.

Finally, the event will look at ongoing financing and partnership opportunities to further support the use of new technologies, open data and informed decisions towards a better status of Mediterranean forests.

¹ Environmental and Biodiversity Climate Change Lab through the integration of databases and services related to water, soil, air, fauna and flora

KEY TOPICS

Latest available data on Mediterranean forests and their typology, and how new technologies, citizen science data and national inventories can be combined to produce the knowledge needed to prioritize key areas for conservation and restoration.

- The Mediterranean Forest Policy stage: data needs versus availability
- The use of technology and innovative methods for better forest cartography: satellites, AI, Big data, modelling, meta-analysis, automating, etc.
- Solutions in practice: Insights on how technologies can support forest monitoring efforts at national and regional levels
- Addressing the challenges: new skills for modern forest managers and partnerships in the Mediterranean

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

The event will include local, subnational, national and Mediterranean forest actors as well as researchers and representatives from biodiversity, climate, and sectoral agencies. All organisations interested in forest conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of forest resources in the Mediterranean region are welcome to join.

You can [register here](#).

LOGISTICS

The final venue in Malaga is the Ada Byron Research building, C/Arquitecto Francisco Peñalosa n. 8, 29010 Malaga. Visit the [ETC-UMA website](#) to find directions.

For more information, please contact [Virginia García](#).

AGENDA – 2 JUNE 2023

8.30 – 9.00 Registration

9.00 – 9.30 Welcome and Introduction

- *Jose F. Aldana Montes, University of Malaga*
- *Christos Arvanitidis, LifeWatch ERIC*
- *Dania Abdul Malak, European Topic Centre on Spatial Analysis and Synthesis (ETC-UMA)*

9.30 – 11.00 SESSION I: Visions for Mediterranean forests: the policy scenario

This session informs about the vision and political mechanisms to ensure healthy and resilient Mediterranean forest ecosystems in the next decade. Political instruments and governance tools at hand will be highlighted along the data gaps to strengthen a fully Mediterranean-wide political agenda for forests. Cross cutting success factors, barriers, and key actions for healthy and resilient Mediterranean forests will be reviewed from a policy perspective.

Setting the stage: *Cécile Roddier-Quefelec, European Environment Agency (EEA)*

Facilitator: *Dania Abdul Malak, ETC-UMA*

- *Cécile Roddier-Quefelec, European Environment Agency (EEA)*
- *Giovanbattista de Dato, FAO – Silva Mediterranea*
- *Javier Chico Zamanillo, Spanish Ministry on Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenges (MITECO)*
- *Carla Danelutti, IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation*

11.00 – 11.30 Coffee Break

11.30 – 13.00 SESSION II: New approaches to map forests - advantages, limitations and complementarities

This session showcases the latest developments in knowledge, tools, and information systems at different scales in the Mediterranean for forest monitoring, a forest typology map and the online data platform by ETC-UMA in collaboration with the project. These regional results building on Earth Observation and technological tools on the extent and distribution of major forest types in the Mediterranean will be debated with relevant users.

Setting the stage for a forest typology map and facilitator: *Virginia Garcia Millan, ETC-UMA*

Roundtable followed by Q/A on traditional and innovative methodologies for forest mapping in Mediterranean countries.

- *Alice Pezzarossa, Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA), Italy*
- *Issam Touhami, University of Carthage. National Research Institute of Rural Engineering, Water and Forestry (INRGREF), Tunisia*
- *Malki Fouad, National Agency of Water and Forests, Morocco*
- *Georges Mitri, Balamand University, Lebanon*

13.00 – 14.00 Lunch break

14.00- 15.30 Session III: Technologies to support forest monitoring

The session will focus on collaborative actions developed to build capacities on the use of new technologies, tools, and open-source data for improving and validating the knowledge on forests at different scales in the Mediterranean region as well as experiences from outside the region. The session will show the role that collaborative work and the transfer of skills and experience among relevant institutions and individuals can play to keep a Mediterranean major forest type map up to date.

Facilitator: *Annemarie Bastrup-Birk, European Environment Agency*

- *Emanuele Mancosu, ETC-UMA*
- *Francesca Giannetti, University of Florence, Italy*
- *Rubén Valbuena, Swedish University of Agriculture Sciences, Sweden*
- *Ludvig Forslund, Copernicus Land Monitoring Service - EEA*

15.30 - 16.30 Session IV: The way forward for Mediterranean forest protection - a conversation between managers and scientists

The session will look at ensuring regular forest mapping actions at various scales, supporting national forest inventories and integrating them into Mediterranean wide monitoring and assessment approaches to inform forest action...from conservation and restoration to their sustainable use in a climate changing environment. The session will highlight regional work to inform Mediterranean wide actions on forest in the next years.

Facilitator: *Magda Bou Dagher Kharrat, Mediterranean Facility European Forest Institute (EFIMED)*

- *Annemarie Bastrup-Birk, European Environment Agency*
- *Giovanbattista de Dato, Silva Mediterranea FAO*
- *Iciar Alberdi Asensio, National Institute of Agricultural and Food Research and Technology INIA-CSIC, Spain*
- *Dania Abdul Malak, ETC-UMA*

17.00 – 17.30 Key recommendations and conclusions