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ABSTRACT

RESEARCH AND EXPERIMENTAL ACTIVITIES RELATED TO CONIFERS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA

Evi Alizoti<sup>3</sup>, Michel Bariteau<sup>1</sup>, Fulvio Ducci<sup>2</sup>, Bruno Fady<sup>1</sup>, Ernesto Fusaro<sup>3</sup>, Christian Pichot<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> INRA, URFM, Écologie des forêts méditerranéennes, Avignon, France

<sup>2</sup> CRA – SEL, Centro di Ricerca per la Selvicoltura, Lab. Risorse Genetiche Forestali, Arezzo, Italy

<sup>3</sup> CRA – PLF, Unità di Ricerca per le Produzioni Legnose Fuori Foresta, Casale Monferrato, Roma, Italy.

<sup>4</sup> AUTH - Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, School of Forestry and Natural Environment, Lab. Forest Genetics and Tree Improvement, Thessaloniki, Greece.

In april 2002, during the XVIII *Silva Mediterranea* Session in Rome, it was highlighted the importance valorising the main results obtained by the experimental and research networks established by the research branch jointly with IUFRO (International Union of Forest Research Institutions) WG 20213 (Breeding and genetic resources of Mediterranean conifers).

At the same time the DG of Forests and rural affairs of the French Ministry for Agriculture, Food, Fishery and rural areas offered the financial and organisation opportunity (through the INRA, Avignon) to establish a first survey of the Mediterranean experimental networks and to publish the main results: list of trials, number of provenances tested. This inventory started in 2004 and was concluded in 2006. Data were received from 8 Mediterranean Countries (France, Greece, Italy, Libanon, Maroc, Spain, Tunisie and Turkey). In total 839 tests established since 1960 and concerning 14 countries (including IUFRO and countries not belonging to SM) were recorded. Results of this survey can be found on the Internet FAO web site <http://www.fao.org/forestry/site/31848/en/>.

A FAO SM and IUFRO WG 20213 joint meeting of experts from countries interested on the research branch was organised in Arezzo and Rome, Italy, the 21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 2007, near CRA SEL and CRA PLF. Research officers from 11 Countries reported the research experiences concerning species included in the common networks: Pines of sect. *Halepensis*, *Pinus pinea*, Mediterranean *Abies* species, *Pinus pinaster*, *Cedrus* species. Presentations of reports can be found on the same web site above mentioned.

Reccomendations were issued by the group in order to improve cooperation among resarchers belonging to the Mediterranean countries, and to support new activities in view of the climate change effects. Those are supposed to be very hard just in the Mediterranean area in the next future and either the experimental test networks, either their results can play a focal role in ths framework.

Five working groups (coordinated by INRA, Avignon, <http://www.avignon.inra.fr/ForSilvaMed>) focused on the main groups of species were established to collect detailed characteristics on tests and materials, whilst the reports will be published on proceedings of the meeting.

**For the future Research** can support *Silva Mediterranea* with:

- Experimental *ex situ* networks monitoring;
- Testing new methods for *in situ* conservation;
- Producing/collecting maps of possible climatic scenarios;
- Study transfer methods and logistics of species/populations in new sites;
- Proposing the establishment of international agreements for hosting abroad national genetic resources.
- Looking for international agreements or projects for funding the above research activities;
- Presenting the final document produced in June (in press).