6th Mediterranean Forest Week and 23rd session of Silva Mediterranea

1-5 April 2019,
Brummana, Lebanon

Information Note

I. BACKGROUND

The Mediterranean Forest Week (MFW) brings together a diverse set of actors to participate in one of the most vital fora on Mediterranean forests today. The biennial event facilitates cooperation amongst the research community, policy-makers and other relevant stakeholders by providing a common regional platform for dialogue. The event also promotes the relevance of Mediterranean forests globally and calls attention to the specific challenges these forests face. Participants include forest administrators, the scientific and academic community, the private sector, donors, civil society, environmental agencies and nongovernmental organizations. The last MFW in March 2017 in Agadir, Morocco, brought together more than 280 participants on the topic of forest and landscape restoration in the Mediterranean. After the MFW of 2010 in Antalya, 2011 in Avignon, 2013 in Tlemcen, 2015 in Barcelona and 2017 in Agadir, the 6th MFW will be hosted by Lebanon on 1-5 April 2019.

The 6th MFW will focus on the role of Mediterranean forests in the Paris Agreement, addressing challenges and opportunities. The main objective of the 6th MFW will be to show how Mediterranean forests are important to address climate change and implement the Paris Agreement. The specific objectives of the 6th MFW are the following:

1. How Mediterranean forests contribute to global commitments related to climate change?
2. How important Mediterranean forests are for adaptation of people to climate change?
3. How important Mediterranean forests are for the adaptation of water, agriculture, cities and other sectors to climate change?
4. How important Mediterranean forests are for mitigating the effects of climate change?

II. MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

The Sixth Mediterranean Forest Week will take place at the Grand Hills Hotel of Brummana, Charkieh Main Road, 1204 Brummana, Lebanon. Participants can find more information on the website of the hotel: www.grandhillshotel.com.

The Meeting will start from 1st to 4th of April, including a field visit on the 3rd of April. The Opening Session of the Meeting will take place at 10h30 on Monday, 1st of April 2019.

The normal working hours of the Meeting will be from 09:00 to 13:00 hours and 14:30 to 18:30 hours, unless otherwise decided by the organizers.

The 6th MFW Agenda is attached to this Info Note, including the Parallel sessions and Side Events on issues of interest to participants, scheduled to take place during the same days.

A. LANGUAGES

Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in Arabic, English and French.

This document is printed in limited numbers to minimize the environmental impact of FAO’s processes and contribute to climate neutrality. Delegates and observers are kindly requested to bring their copies to meetings and to avoid asking for additional copies. Most 6th MFW meeting documents are available on the Web site of the 6th Mediterranean Forest Week: https://www.vi-med.forestweek.org/
B. DOCUMENTATION

The working documents will be sent to all participants after the meeting. Documents drafted during the Meeting will be available on the website of the 6th MFW.

C. CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence concerning the 6th MFW should be addressed to the Secretariat as follows:

i. The Meeting MOA Focal Point in Beirut, Ms. Pascale Milan.
   Tel.: (+961) 3 435495
   Fax: (+961) 1 849621
   E-mail: pmilan@agriculture.gov.lb
   Edward Antoun
   E-mail: EAntoun@agriculture.gov.lb

ii. Mr. Nicolas Picard
    Secretariat of Silva Mediterranea
    FAO Tel.: (+39) 0657055137
    Cellular Phone: (+39) 3339818762
    E-mail: nicolas.picard@fao.org

And copied to:

iii. The Meeting FAO Focal Point in Beirut, Ms. Solange Matta-Saadé.
    Fax: (+961) 5 922 128
    E-mail: solange.mattasaade@fao.org
    Tel.: (+961) 70 146170

III. TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

A. FORMALITIES FOR ENTRY INTO LEBANON

Participants requiring entry visa to Lebanon are advised to apply for their visas from the Lebanese Consulate or competent Diplomatic Mission in their country before leaving for Beirut, minimum of three weeks prior to the date of travel.

Participants are advised to provide, at least two weeks prior to arrival, the name of carrier, flight number, time of arrival and other related information to the Meeting’s Secretariat and to the MOA and FAO in Lebanon Focal Points. (No stamp of Israel on passport).

B. HOTELS

For accommodation during the meeting, participants are responsible for booking their own rooms.

Special rates for rooms have been negotiated with the hotel from USD 130/night for a standard single room to USD 160/night for a special double room (Excluding 11% VAT). These special rates can be obtained only by booking either by phone or email directly to the hotel and not through the online booking available on the hotel website. The contact person is Mrs. Elyse Abou (elyse.aboujawde@luxurycollection.com, tel: +961 4 868888 ext. 8307).

As an alternative to the Grand Hills Hotel, participants can also book their room at the Colibri Hotel or the Printania Palace Hotel in Brummana. Both hotels are within five minutes by car (2 km) of the Grand
Hills Hotel (transportation by shuttle secured as per meeting’s agenda). Special rates have also been negotiated with these hotels. They can be obtained only by booking either by phone or email directly to the hotel and not through the online booking available on their website:

1. For the Colibri Hotel (info@colibrihotelbl.com), the special rate is USD 55$/night (inclusive VAT) and the contact person Bernard Gemayel Name: Hotel Manager Tel: +961 81 205150

2. For the Printania Palace Hotel (http://www.themonroehotels.com/printania/index.html), the special rate ranges from USD 70/night for a standard single room to USD 90/night for special double room (without 11% VAT) and the contact person is Mrs. Jennifer Abdallah (sm@printania.com, tel: +961 4 862 000, GSM: +961 3 020 053, fax: +961 4 862 000).

C. TRAVEL FACILITIES

Beirut-Rafic Hariri International Airport (https://www.beirutairport.gov.lb) has direct scheduled flight from many cities in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. Airport transfer from the airport to the conference venue will be organized. To benefit from the shuttle between the airport and one of the hotels listed in Section III.B, participants are requested to provide, at least two weeks prior to arrival, the name of carrier, flight number, time of arrival and other related information to the Meeting’s Secretariat (see contact in Section II.C). Taxis services are also available at the airport where certified taxis are parked next to the terminal at the arrival gate and have an airport logo on the side. As these taxis are regulated by the airport authorities, they have a unified official rate (USD 30 to Brummana). Regular taxis are also available but their charges are subject to bargain. The taxi ride from the airport to the Grand Hills Hotel of Brummana takes about 45 min.

The official travel agencies of FAO in the country are as follows:

1- The Travel Club, contact person:
   Ms. Carole Chalita
   Travel Supervisor Agent
   Email: travel1@the-travelclub.com
   74 Nasra Street, Maasarani bldg., Ashrafieh
   T. +961 1 209 409/209 509/209 900 Ext: 104
   F. +961 1 209 709
   P.O.Box 16-5712 Beirut, Lebanon

2- The Kurban travel, contact person:
   Mr. John Tawk
   Senior Travel Supervisor Corporate
   Email: corporate@kurbancorporate.com
   Kantari, Ground Floor, Kurban & Daouk Building, Army street
   T. +961 1 420620
   D. +961 1 420620
   F. +961 1 370129
   P.O.Box 11-1954 Beirut, Lebanon

3- The World Wide Travel & Tourism s.a.l; contact person:
   Ms. Nancy Tarabay
   Email: nancy.tarabay@worldwidetravel-lb.com
   Clemenceau, Minet EL-Hosn. Justinian Str.
   Beirut – Lebanon. P.O.Box: 113-5663
   Tel: +961 1 366 505/6/8. Ext 104.
   Fax: +961 1 366509

All meeting’s participants are advised to finalize, at an early date, return travel arrangements.
D. FOREIGN EXCHANGE AND BANKING

The official Lebanese currency is the Lebanese pound or lira (LL). Notes are available in denominations of: LL1,000; LL5,000; LL10,000; LL20,000; LL50,000; and LL100,000. There are also LL250 and LL500 coins. In daily dealings, foreign currency can be exchanged at the official rate at hotels (hotels have different rates) or banks. U.S. dollars are used widely throughout the country. Restaurants, hotels, and stores often quote their prices in U.S. dollars, and many establishments will convert and provide U.S. dollar prices for you upon request. The bank rate at present is approximately USD1= LL1500. Internationally-recognized credit cards are accepted in hotels, major shops and restaurants.

E. MEDICAL SERVICES AND SECURITY

Each traveller should carry an international travel insurance to cover any medical emergency. Medical and first aid services will be available at the Meeting premises. For medical emergencies please press the emergency button on the nearest phone and for all other medical services, call the reception (0).

Strict security measures are observed at the Hotel. Metal detectors are in operation at all the hotel’s Buildings entrance.

Participants are requested to wear their Meeting badges at all times. Participants are advised not to leave briefcases or any valuable items unattended in conference rooms.

Participants are advised to carry their valuables in a safe place. Once Participants have checked into their hotels, it is advisable to leave important documents such as passports in the hotel safe and to carry a photocopy.

The following numbers may be useful in case of emergency outside the Hotel: Medical Emergencies 140; General Emergencies 112; Fire 125.

The nearby hospitals are:
- Bellevue Medical Center/Hospital located in Mansourieh. Tel: +961 1 682666; Hotline N°: 1565
- Levant Hospital located in Sin el Fil. Tel: +961 1 501500
- Sacre Coeur Hospital located in Hazmieh. Tel: +961 1 457 112
- Hotel Dieu de France located on Alfred Naccache Boulevard. Tel:+961 1 615300.
- Hayek Hospital, Horch Tabet , Sin El Fil, Tel +961 1 481 333

IV. LOGISTICS

A. REGISTRATION

All participants are required to register through the 6th Website at: https://www.vi-med.forestweek.org/fr/content/enregistrement or https://www.vi-med.forestweek.org/en/content/registration

Only invited journalists, invited VIP, MOA team and selected young volunteers don’t have to register. For all other participants, please register in advance and not upon arrival to avoid long queues!

Registration fees include:
- Participation for all conferences and parallel events at the Grand Hills Hotel
- Shuttles from and to the airport (see below)
- Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in Arabic / English / French translation (for plenary sessions only)
- Coffee breaks for the week
- Lunch breaks for the week (standard and MENA rate only rate not student and Lebanese rate )
- Participant’s bag and conference documents
- Carbon compensation measures

The different rates are:
When registering on line on the above link, you may choose your language: English, French, Italian, Spanish.
You may make a grouped registration up to 15 people and pay once for all of them.

At the end of the process, you have two options:

- **Option 1: Pay by credit card**
  In that case you receive an email from the platform, with a link for downloading you ticket. You just have to print and present that ticket at the “validation counter” of the registration desk with your ID (and your student card if it is the case).
  Please note that, if you want to pay by credit card, it must be done through the website as it will not be possible at the registration desk.

- **Option 2: Reservation**
  In that case you receive an email from the platform confirming your reservation. You may pay later online. If not, you just have to print and present that email to the “payment counter” of the registration desk with your ID (and your student card if it is the case). A group of volunteers will be at the reception helping participants to do registration or to pay online. You may pay in cash in euro, US dollar or Lebanese Pound but not by credit card.

The registration desk will be open on Sunday 31st of March from 16:00 to 20:00 hours and on Monday April 1st from 08h30 at the Grand Hills Hotel with shuttle from other hotels as needed.

**Only registered participants will be issued badges, which will permit them to enter the Meeting halls.**

### B. **ACCESS TO MEETING VENUE**

Shuttles will be available for the participants who are staying in the listed hotels above (Section III.B). To benefit from this airport shuttle, participants are requested to provide, at least two weeks prior to arrival, the name of carrier, flight number, time of arrival and other related information to the Meeting’s Secretariat (see contact in Section II.C). Your contact persons at the airport, are:

**Mr. Alain Awad, Tel.: +961 2 470581 or Mr. Ralph Maatouk, Tel.: +961 70 143853.**

The Grand Hills Hotel is located in Brummana. It can be reached by car or taxis/service.

Brummana is located 18 km east of Beirut, overlooking at 700 meters above sea level the capital and the Mediterranean. Brummana is one of Lebanon’s main summer resorts due to its relatively cool climate. Sitting on top of a pine-forested hill, the town has views over Beirut, the Mediterranean coast, and the surrounding mountainous area.
C. FIELD VISIT

A field visit is organize to the Ehden Nature Reserve (ENR).

The ENR is situated on the upper north western slopes of Mount Lebanon, ranging in altitude from 1200 to 2000 m; it covers more than 450 ha and is considered as a very important part of the country for its unique biodiversity. Extending over 3 bio-geographic zones, the forest assembles different species of mammals, birds and plants of which some are nationally rare and threatened. Over 1,058 plant species have so far been recorded in the reserve, accounting for nearly 40% of all native plant species in Lebanon. The trip from Brummana to Ehden Nature Reserve will take about 2 hours. The visit will include a presentation about the reserve, the nursery visit and a hiking. The hiking will be in a trail of 1.7 km length, for an average time of 1 hour and half, and the difficulty of the trail is listed as 6/10.

V. Special Access

The Grand Hills Hotel is accessible to disabled persons with wheelchairs. A lift is provided in all Buildings. Restroom facilities for disabled visitors are located on the minus one floor.

A. PARKING FACILITIES

Valet parking is available for the use of Participants to FAO meetings for LBP 10,000. It is, however, possible to park in the vicinity of the hotel.

B. CAR RENTAL

Participants requiring cars can make their own arrangements with local car hire firms. The average rental price is about 30 USD/day. Some car rental companies have offices at Rafic Hariri International Airport (open 24/7). Following are recommended Car Rental Places:

- Avis: Rafic Hariri International Airport arrival hall.
- Europcar: Rafic Hariri International Airport arrival hall.
• Hertz: Rafic Hariri International Airport arrival hall.
• City Car: Rafic Hariri International Airport arrival hall.

Car rental can also be arranged at the hotel concierge desk: extension 0

C. TAXIS

Taxis are the most reliable for public transportation in Lebanon. This service can be provided by the concierge team (Ground Floor, Lobby area) at the hotel extension 0. You can also contact the following taxi companies:
Charlie Taxi. Tel: +961 1 285710 whatsapp 961 3 329252
Trust Taxi, Tel: +961 1 427777
Allo Taxi, Tel.: +961 1 517030 whatsapp +96178 881213

D. PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Apart from buses, people are served by either service or taxis. 'Service' is a lot cheaper than taxis however, to avoid misunderstanding, agreement over the pricing needs to be made before setting off. Note: Meters are NOT used in Lebanon. Prices for Taxis must be negotiated before entering the vehicle.

Service-taxis are probably the most popular means of transportation in Lebanon and recognizable by their red plate. People can take a service or taxi just by hailing in the street. If there are no passengers, it has to be specified if it is needed as a “taxi” (private cab) or as a “service” (shared cab).

VI. CONFERENCE VENUES

A. CATERING AND DINING FACILITIES

The Grand Hills Hotel offers dining and snack bar facilities where participants may sit down for a meal, or order a quick snack and beverage. On the other hand, many of the local restaurants and shops are located in the Brummana main street (open from 10:00 till 22:00 hours). For more details or reservations please contact the concierge desk (extension 0).

B. WIFI COVERAGE

WIFI is provided for the conference attendees at the meeting rooms. Grand Hills Hotel guests are entitled to complimentary internet all around the hotel. For any other internet use the business center located at the Grand Hills hotel Ground floor.

C. BANKING AND CURRENCY EXCHANGE FACILITIES

The official Lebanese currency is the Lebanese Pound or Lira (LL).
Banking hours are Monday through Saturday, 8:30-14:00 hours.

Internationally-recognized credit cards are accepted in hotels, major shops and restaurants.

The Blom Bank is located in Brummana Main road next to the hotel (the nearest) and is open from Monday to Friday from 8:00 till 147:00 hours. Cash dispensers (ATM) for credit card withdrawals are located at the Blom Bank Building.

However there are a lot of banks in Brummana. Kindly find hereafter few:
Bank Audi: Main Road next to the restaurants street  
BankMed: Rizk plaza Brummana main road Brummana  
Credit Libanais: Main Road, Tawil Building, Brummana

D. WEATHER

Springtime (April-May) is one of the most pleasant times in Lebanon. It is characterized by rising daily high temperatures, with daily highs increasing from 21°C to 23°C (70°F – 73°F) over the course of the month, exceeding 29°C (84°F) or dropping below 17°C (62°F) only one day in ten.

E. ELECTRICITY

The voltage in Lebanon is 220 volts AC. Plugs used are CEE 7/16 (Euro plug).

F. SHOPPING

Shops are typically open Monday through Saturday, 10:00-19:00 hours. The malls are open till 22:00 hours, including Sundays. Restaurant hours vary, and many restaurants, especially in Beirut, are open late. Sunday: official shutdown (Except big stores and trade centers). Small shops open in local areas almost all day long.

Nearby Shopping centres are:
- Brummana main street.
- CITYMALL, 14 Dora Highway, El Bauchrieh
- ABC Achrafieh
- Le Mall, Sin El-Fil
- City Center, Hazmieh

You can visit http://www.whereleb.com/. It is a useful tool to find Lebanon top Restaurants, Nightlife, Shopping and Businesses.

G. PRAYER ROOM

Prayer Room is available for use by Meeting participants in Grand Hills Hotel, 1st Floor.
APPENDIX A

REGISTRATION FORM

This form should be submitted **no later than 24 of March, 2019** together with a recent passport size photo.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSONAL DATA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of Organization:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Name:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Name:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official Title:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official Address:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Details of flight</th>
<th>Flight Number:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date and hour of arrival:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date and Hour of Departure date:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel Accomodation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants are requested to wear their Meeting badges at all times.