



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MoU)
FOR THE ADHESION TO THE MEDITERRANEAN MODEL FOREST NETWORK (MMFN)**

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is made by and among the following institutions that sign in accordance with Article 3 below:

1. The Junta de Castilla y León, Consejería de Fomento y Medio Ambiente, having its administrative offices at CL Rigoberto Cortejoso 14, 47014 Valladolid (Spain),
2. The Canadian Forest Service of Natural Resources Canada, acting through the International Model Forest Network Secretariat (IMFN Secretariat)
3. The Regione Abruzzo, having its administrative offices at

They may be referred to herein as a "Participant" or collectively as the "Participants".

WHEREAS the Model Forest concept is an innovative approach that combines the social, cultural and economic needs of local communities with the long-term sustainability of forest landscapes;

WHEREAS the International Model Forest Network (IMFN) is a voluntary association of public forest services, civil society organizations and others from around the world working towards the common goal of sustainable management and use of forests and forested landscapes (SFM);

WHEREAS it is also necessary, to take into account the different integration and cooperation initiatives in the Mediterranean region, i.e. (i) the political processes conducted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO): the Committee on Forestry (COFO) and the Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions (Silva Mediterranea), (ii) other processes such as the Collaborative Partnership on Mediterranean Forests, the Barcelona Process or the Mediterranean Union, and (iii) other networks and networking activities;

NOTING that the Model Forest concept falls well within the working programme of the FAO Forestry Department;

TAKING into consideration the objectives of the "Non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests" issued by the United Nations Forum on Forests and adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 22 October 2007;

RECOGNIZING that the Regional Government of Castilla y León in Spain has been working for years towards sustainable forest management (SFM), through the development of different initiatives such as certification, sustainable entrepreneurship support, research funding and others, and that the Castilla y León 2002-2027 Regional Forest Plan includes a participation in the IMFN as a means to improve the quality of its forest management standards;

TAKING into consideration that on various occasions in 2007 and 2008, preparatory workshops were held in the Urbión Model Forest (Castilla y León, Spain), FAO headquarters in Rome (Italy) and Provence-Alps-Côte d'Azur (PACA) Government headquarters in Marseille (France) with the participation of a group of regional governments, forest owners associations and others, who discussed the development of a proposal to identify ways of cooperation, mainly through site-based and inter-regional cooperation in a European Union context, in support of networking for SFM in the Mediterranean;

AND ASSERTING that the Mediterranean Model Forest Network's functioning since 2009, where a precedent version of this MoU was in place, shows that the established aims and means are worth further pursuing;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Participants convene in the following understanding:

1.- Purposes of this MoU

Forest areas and landscapes in the Mediterranean environment face significant challenges such as climate change, increasing fire hazards, erosion, land abandonment and degradation, and loss of biodiversity. Coming from Canada and internationalised at the "Rio Summit" (UNCED 1992), the Model Forest concept, based on the ideas of broad-base partnerships within complex landscapes working toward sustainability, is of high relevance to help solve these and other problems, common to the whole Mediterranean area, through innovation and participatory governance. Participants to this MoU share a will to enhance the quality of life in rural areas on both the Southern, Northern and Eastern rims of the Mediterranean Sea.

The signatory Participants to this MoU are in accordance with a common understanding of strategic problems and a shared vision of future.

The Participants hereby convene to collaborate with the objective of consolidate a network of territories that share as a common aim to develop the Model Forest concept in the Mediterranean environment, under the name of Mediterranean Model Forest Network and as part of the International Model Forest Network.

The objective of the Network is to experiment the Model Forest concept in the Mediterranean.

At the highest operational level the Mediterranean network has two functions: at site level, to promote locally-based forest landscape governance through the creation of Model Forests; and regionally to develop and support networking opportunities among Model Forests across the Mediterranean in order to accelerate learning and innovation in support of the goals agreed upon in this MoU.

2.- Nature of collaboration activities

The Participants will undertake common activities for the attainment of the above-mentioned objective, which can include but are not limited to:

- providing training, advice and any other requested assistance to candidate Model Forests in the Mediterranean, in collaboration with local agents interested in the establishment of Model Forest processes;
- disseminating information (website, newsletter, etc.) about Model Forests and the IMFN in general inside the network, and communicating about MMFN progress to the broader Mediterranean audience;
- organizing regular opportunities (seminars, field visits) for the network's members to exchange information, experience and know-how on key issues for the regions involved and existing or future Model Forests in the Mediterranean;
- providing continuing support in respect of the preparation, implementation, dissemination and consolidation of co-operation projects involving members of the network on key issues for SFM in the Mediterranean, including maintenance of ongoing links among projects via the network's activities;
- reporting on ongoing Model Forest progress in the Mediterranean, so as to fully capitalise on the Participants' experiences for their mutual benefit, the whole network and the Mediterranean forest-based sector;
- supporting innovation and experimentation in order to find solutions adapted to the specific contexts found in the Mediterranean Basin.

3.- Participants to this MoU

Regional government bodies in the European Union and candidate countries and, in other countries, national government bodies having competencies over forest-based development, and which share the natural environment and cultural background of the Mediterranean, may enter into this MoU with the promoters of the initiative, the Junta de Castilla y León and the IMFN Secretariat, by signing a copy of this MoU.

Members of the Mediterranean Model Forest Network are:

- The National or Sub-national bodies having competencies over forest-based development, parties to this MoU, and
- Officially recognised Model Forests in the Mediterranean region.

MMFN Supporting Members are: Local and other sub-national authorities without direct competence over forest-based development, international and multilateral agencies, research centres, universities and NGOs, may join the MMFN acting as Supporting Members, with a voice, but no vote, in the Assembly. Founding Participants are the Members of the MMFN that signed the preceding MMFN MoU before the 16th of June 2008, date of the IMFN Global Forum in Canada.

Prospective Members interested in joining the MMFN can be invited as observers at their request.

4.- Commitments of Participants

Each Participant of this MoU commits its active participation in the activities, as well as its active exploration of the concept in its competence area, including the willingness to support the establishment of at least one Model Forest in its competence area.

The IMFN and MMFN Secretariat will provide technical advice to Participants as requested.

5.- Governing structure

The main governing body of the Mediterranean Model Forest Network is the Assembly, comprising all Members. Members nominate their representatives to take part in the Assembly, who are duly authorized to take decisions.

Committees can be established and commissioned by the Assembly, as executive bodies between Assembly meetings. At its inception, any such Committee should be provided with Terms of Reference clearly defining its mandate, scope, composition, term and performance milestones.

The MMFN Secretariat, supported by the Junta de Castilla y León until otherwise agreed upon by the Assembly, provides support to common activities under the guidance and oversight of the Assembly. The Assembly will develop and adopt rules and operating procedures for the MMFN Secretariat. The MMFN Secretariat, until otherwise agreed upon by the Assembly, shall be headquartered at CESEFOR Foundation, Polígono Industrial Las Casas, CL C, P. 4, ES42005 Soria (Spain).

The IMFN Secretariat participates in the governing structure of the MMFN as an observer providing technical advice as requested.

6.- Entry into effect

This Memorandum of Understanding shall enter into effect on, and remain in effect until 31 December 2019. After that date, the MoU will be considered to remain in effect for annual periods unless otherwise explicitly decided by the Assembly.

7.- Evaluation and Continuation

Participants commit themselves to participate in interim and final evaluations, and decide for continuation of the MMFN initiative accordingly.

8.- Additional Co-operation

The Participants will seek ways and means to strengthen co-operation among them with regard to exchange of experience, with a view to implement further activities for the purposes of this MoU.

9.- Termination of MoU

Any Participant may terminate its participation under this MoU by giving notice in writing to the Assembly of its decision to leave. Such termination will be effective once the Assembly has received such notice.

10.- Language

English is the one official version of this Memorandum of Understanding.

11.- Representations and warranties

Each Participant hereby represents and warrants to the other Participants that: (i) it has the corporate power to enter into this MoU; (ii) it is not a Participant to any agreement or understanding and knows no law or regulation that would prohibit it from entering into and performing its obligations under this MoU or that would conflict with this MoU; and (iii) it shall perform its obligations under this MoU in compliance with all applicable laws in its country or region.

12.- Legal obligations

This MoU does not create any legally binding obligations among the Participants and is not binding under international law.

In witness thereof, the undersigned, being duly authorized, have signed this Memorandum of Understanding in four copies in English.

Date: October 27th, 2018, Rocca di Mezzo (Italy).....

Signatures

[NAME OF SIGNATORY]

[TITLE]

Regione Abruzzo (Italy)

REGIONE ABRUZZO

Juan Carlos Suarez-Quiñones
Fernández

*Consejería de Fomento y Medio
Ambiente*

Junta de Castilla y León (Spain)

Jeffrey Biggs

Executive Director International

Model Forest Network Secretariat