

Conference

Jobs, Development, Social Inclusion and Climate Change Migration in the Mediterranean: The transformative power of the Forestry and Environmental sector

Co-chaired by **Santiago Fisas Ayxelá & Francesc Gambús**, Members of the European Parliament and **Tomas Matraia**, International Cooperation and Development Expert

16 November 2016 / 16.00 - 18.00

Brussels, European Parliament, Room A3E2 - Interpretation EN-FR

The conference will be followed by a cocktail reception

Concept

Europe and Mediterranean partner countries (MPCs) are today facing unprecedented **risks and share common challenges**. Threats are from an environmental, social and economic nature, and, combined, their dynamics are an explosive mix. Tackling them separately has proved to be ineffective and unsustainable. Thus, the **solutions, need to be based on a holistic approach**, effectively integrating the experiences, local contexts and priorities of both the EU and the MPCs. Elements such as **social inclusion, human empowerment, and cultural dialogue** are as important as the **scientific, research and technical elements**.

Climate change is no different case, and while it is affecting the entire Mediterranean basin, different land use changes, policy approach and social contexts all result in **diverse consequences** across the Region. In European countries, **land abandonment** results in forests which are new but not managed, which means that they are prone to fire and infestation due to increasing temperatures and drought, all of which have **social and economic repercussions**. Meanwhile, in North Africa, forest intensification combined with a hotter and dryer climate provokes **desertification, impacting also on migration and local development capacities**.

The MENFRI project has worked to promote **innovative Mediterranean forest management and conservation** through forest use by sharing knowledge between the northern and southern Mediterranean. Traditional uses of forests from the **Maghreb** are sources of eco-innovation, which can promote the management of new European forests. Meanwhile, land use practices from southern European countries can decrease forest intensification, leading to a more sustainable use of the forest. In both cases this approach could lead to potential **creation of jobs, sustainable development and social progress**.

One of the results of the project is the establishment of the **Mediterranean Network of Forest Research & Innovation**. The Network has successfully expanded and has led to the formation of an external group of key actors from different sectors, all of which have joined forces and have created an independent service-hub called the Node.

The NODE - Node for Opportunities, Development and Environment - uses a **multidisciplinary approach** combining policy advisory capacities with market opportunities, knowledge, training and people's empowerment in order to provide **tailored sustainable development solutions** in the forestry and environmental sector. The Node stands ready **to support EU and International Organisations** so that they may achieve their objectives.

*The Conference will gather representatives of the **EU Institutions, UfM, United Nations agencies, national authorities, academia, private sector and civil society**.*

To register and get be able to enter the Eu Parliament on the event's day please contact:

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Agenda

16:00 **Welcome and opening remarks**

Francesc Gambús, Member of the European Parliament, European People's Party Group

16:05 **Introduction to the conference**

Tomas Matraia, International Cooperation and Development Expert

16:15 **MENFRI Project: Building a network of Mediterranean forestry actors**

Enrique Doblas, CREAM researcher & MENFRI coordinator

Session 1 - The transformative power of Forestry and Environmental sector: Challenges and opportunities in the Mediterranean

Chaired by **Francesc Gambús** – Member of the European Parliament (EPP)

- 16:20 **Almotaz Abadi**, Managing Director, policies and water infrastructure, Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) – *Combining potential for growth, social inclusion and local development*
- 16:30 **Dina Ionesco**, Head of Climate Change Migration Department, International Organisation for Migration (IOM) - *Climate change, migration and adaptation policies*

Session 2- A new approach to providing sustainable development solutions: The Node for Development

Chaired by **Santiago Fisas Ayxelá** – Member of the European Parliament (EPP)

- 16:45 **Xavier Noyon**, PEFC International - *Potential of certification programmes and education*
- 16:55 **Joachim Englert**, Social Forest CEO - *Social inclusion and empowerment*
- 17:05 **Rachida Nafaa**, Dean of the FLSH, University of Hassan II, Casablanca- *Maghreb opportunities & needs*
- 17:15 **Ramon Vila**, Vision Communication CEO - *Social awareness, outreach and engagement*

Session 3- Reactions and open discussion

Chaired by **Tomas Matraia** – International Cooperation and Development Expert

- 17:30 Interventions from the audience and wrap-up

Conclusions and Launching of the Node

- 17:50 **Santiago Fisas Ayxelá**, Member of the European Parliament (EPP)

Cocktail Reception

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