



<b>NEAR EAST FORESTRY COMMISSION</b>
<b>NINETEENTH SESSION</b>
<b>NEAR EAST FORESTRY WEEK</b>
<b>HAMMAMET, TUNISIA 5 – 9 APRIL 2010</b>
<b>Forests and range: adapting to global changes for sustainable development</b>
<b>IMPLEMENTATION OF REGIONAL GUIDELINES ON GOOD FORESTRY AND RANGE PRACTICES IN ARID AND SEMI-ARID ZONES OF THE NEAR EAST</b>

### *Background*

1. Several meetings and consultations at governmental and intergovernmental levels, and including non-governmental organizations, within and outside the region, were held in the preparation of the guidelines. A group of experts charged with the task of finalizing the document was established. The final version thus benefited from the skills of experts and significant contributions of relevant organizations within the region and aims to respond in the best way possible to the needs and expectations of the targeted users.
2. The eight guiding principles presented in the guidelines cover the principal activities in forestry and range development, taking into account the social, economic and environmental dimensions, in a region where the extent of forest formations is limited due to dominant arid and semi arid conditions and where competition for water resources among plants and animals combined with human activity is high.

### *Implementation of the guidelines*

3. The guidelines (Working Paper - RNEO 1-09) the PDF document can be downloaded from the News section of the *Silva Mediterranea* Website at [HTTP://WWW.FAO.ORG/FORESTRY/SILVAMED/EN/](http://www.fao.org/forestry/silvamed/en/)) were prepared to serve both policy

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makers and forest and range managers and their implementation will depend greatly on the interest and commitment of these target audiences.

4. Given the usefulness of the guidelines to forests and range sustainable management, and rural development at large, all possible efforts should be made to distribute the guidelines widely and to encourage their use by foresters, range specialists and all rural development officers and technicians. The guidelines can also, and should be, extensively introduced as a teaching tool in training programmes.

5. At its last meeting in December 2008, the Near East Forestry Commission Task Force recommended that the *ad hoc* group of experts which took part in the compilation of the guidelines, be converted into a regional arid zone forestry network which could play an active advisory role in implementation and follow-up.

***Discussion items:***

6. Delegates may wish to:
- report on how the guidelines are perceived and shared in their respective countries and on any difficulties encountered in their adoption by stakeholders involved in forest and range development programmes and policy;
  - outline follow-up actions for having the guidelines adopted as a working tool by all those engaged in forest and range development programmes and policy;
  - examine the need/ recommendation for developing extension and awareness raising activities to make the guidelines accessible to local stakeholders and potential users such as rural development projects, local communities, the World Food Programme in some countries, public services etc.);
  - examine and endorse the recommendation of the NEFC Task Force for the conversion of the *ad hoc* group of experts into a regional arid zone forestry and range network.