

# EDITORIAL

## AT THE END OF THE YEAR

At the end of a year we always wonder at how quickly it has "flown by"; one would say "in a blink of an eye". Now it is time for new action programmes for the upcoming year, but first and foremost it is time for the recapitulation of the current programmes. We may not even need to draw up new programmes; we might just as well copy the current ones. Namely, for reasons of either objective or subjective nature, almost none of the set activities have been realized. To make matters worse, this year's situation looks even bleaker than that of last year. One of the aims of this Editorial has always been to highlight the existing problems of the profession, argument them and seek solutions, with the expectation that the authorities will adopt the attitudes of the profession and defend them at the level of politics as the final decision-maker. Let us remind ourselves of the topics we discussed in this column in 5 bi-monthly journals issued this year, in order to see whether there has been at least modest progress or whether we will really be forced to simply copy last years' actions programme.

The bi-monthly issue 1–2 we commemorates Emeritus Professor Branimir Prpić, Ph.D., the long-time editor-in-chief of the Forestry Journal, who passed away on the first day of 2012 New Year. Over a number of years, Professor Prpić used this column to persistently explore the current problems of the profession. Particular mention was made of his outstandingly important texts in the column Acknowledgements, in the text State Award for Science for the year 2010 – Lifetime Achievement Award for Emeritus Professor Branimir Prpić, Ph.D. In the first issue we also elaborated on the detrimental decision to cut down on the means for non-market forest functions (hereinafter referred to as OKFŠ)) by 50% and on our fear that this fee would be completely abolished.

The text in the bi-monthly issue 3–4 entitled "Croatian Forestry at a Crossroad" discusses the unfounded and ignoring attitude of politics towards the profession and the seriously undermined principle of joint decision making regarding forests and forestry. Some examples that illustrated the problem included the Danube–Sava Canal, Natural 2000, employment in forestry, and the alleged surplus of workers

due to lack of jobs (there are jobs, but they are ignored), and particularly the relationship between knowledge and politically based employment.

The issue 5–6 addresses the non-existence of a coherent strategy in the relationship between forestry and timber processing, as well as persistent disagreements regarding the price and sales methods of wood assortments, which, in our opinion, leads to an un-economic and inadmissible use of highly valuable resource and consequently, lavish waste of the national wealth. The price of wood assortments in terms of the share of wood as raw material for the manufacture of high quality final wood products does not justify criticism of the allegedly high price of raw material, but brings easy profit to sawmills, as well as enables the conversion of highly valuable wood assortments into semi-products of the lowest categories. We particularly stressed that it is the wood processing subjects who are the principal users of the FSC certificates of Croatian forests, but at the same time they perceive the means for OKFŠ as parafiscal taxes which they are not prepared to pay.

The bi-monthly issue 7–8 explores the restructure of the company Hrvatske Šume Ltd. An attempt was made to restructure the company according to the "third recipe", after failures with the Irish and the Faculty of Economics. Although new times bring new changes, many countries with forestry traditions, including Croatia, still rely on their long-lasting experience and successful recipes. Therefore, all we need to do is compile these experiences. We stressed that the point of restructuring is not to lay off workers, but to implement the prescribed tasks and broaden the economic activities in a professional manner.

The current employment policy in forestry was discussed in the bi-monthly issue 9–10. We juxtaposed profit and all the operations intended to preserve the eternity of forests and enable them to produce goods which we all want to use but do not want to pay for.

We again hope that the voice of the profession will be heard more loudly in the upcoming year. With this hope in mind, we wish all the readers of the Forestry Journal Merry Christmas and a Very Happy and Successful New Year 2013.

Editorial Board