

EDITORIAL

REPETITIO EST MATER STUDIORUM

The old Latin saying „Repetition is the mother of all learning“ is true on principle, but the question is how many times something should be repeated to a person in order for this person to grasp it and master it. This depends on the will of an individual or of the society, but also on the person's level of professional capacity in a certain segment. If we ask ourselves which of these is true for our society – experience tells us it is both. Which topics should we repeat without our readership objecting that they have already been dealt with either directly or indirectly? In the same way in which repetition is the mother of all study, the Strategy, which is based on the factual state, can also be said to be the „mother“ of future planning for the State and its segments. The need to plan and draw up a general Strategy, including in particular the Strategy of Forestry Development, was discussed in this column of the Forestry Journal on several occasions, e.g. in No 4-5-/2011 and No 3-4/2016, when we quoted the words of the then minister that „the deadline for drawing up the strategy of agriculture and food industry, forestry and wood processing was the end of 2016“. The deadline is long past but the Strategy has not been made. Whether it is being developed and by whom is not known to us; what we know is that the Croatian Forestry Association does not have its representative in the Commission on Strategy Development. We believe that the topics discussed in the editorials of the Forestry Journal volumes mentioned above, the several articles in the column Challenges and Conflicts, as well as the article of the Management Board of the Croatian Forestry Association in No 11-12/2015, provide „good material“ for the Strategy. Such an important document should be developed at the highest professional-scientific level rather than at the „clerical“ one. An order/priority should be made in making the documents and in their compatibility so as to avoid parts of one document to counteract others. Every document should be tested in practice in order to remove

irregularities and even criminal actions and should contain measures and competences of dealing with and penalizing such actions. Likewise, the documents should contain „instructions“ for overcoming unforeseen circumstances caused by biotic and abiotic agents. The case of the catastrophic ice break in Gorski Kotar warns us of the need to undertake an exceptional revision of management plans using professional methods of restoring the damage, rather than approaching such circumstances in an unplanned and chaotic manner. Inactivity and lack of appropriate measures can also be seen in, for example, the non-reforestation of burned areas, the main agent of future erosions, or in the disharmony and anarchy of managing private forests. Article 52 of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, which protects forests and classifies them into natural resources of particular interest for the Republic, does not refer only to state forests, but to all forests irrespectively of ownership. Consequently, all forests should be treated and supervised in an equal manner.

With reference to the order of activities, it seems illogical to pass a new Law on Forests or the Law on the Agricultural (again the question: why not the Forestry) Advisory Service and other documents before making the Development Strategy, which is the core document for all the other laws and by-laws. As for the Law on Agricultural Advisory Service currently under way, we stress that the problem is not only in the omission of forestry from the name of the Law, but more importantly, in the vagueness and non-comprehensiveness of the problems in particular articles, which should be re-examined. The need for further upgrades illustrates the complexity of the matter we are dealing with, and requires appropriate solutions both in the main and in the accompanying documents. After all, these documents provide a basis for the management of forests on the principles of sustainability.

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