

EDITORIAL

DO WE READ FORESTRY JOURNAL (OR NOT)?

Forestry Journal is a scientific forestry-specialized publication of the Croatian Forestry Association, whose first issue came out on January 1st, 1877. The journal has since been continuously published to this day, reaching its 143rd anniversary this year! At the foundation of the Croatian Forestry Association 172 years ago, the set goals included the introduction of forestry education in Croatia (which was fulfilled by the establishment of the Agriculture and Forestry College in Križevci in 1860), the publication of a forestry journal, and the construction of Forestry Home (completed in 1898). All these goals, achieved by our foresters-predecessors, have been left to us to guard and value. New generations of forestry experts must preserve and add to these firmly laid foundations. Are we performing this task in a responsible manner? These few introductory sentences are meant to remind us of our forestry history. But why the question in the headline? These days we have been hearing some criticism on the quality of our journal, as well as some doubts as to whether forestry experts, in particular those working in the field, actually read their journal. Criticism is certainly more than welcome, because it drives us to make improvements, but it should be benevolent and well argued. If criticism relates to the quality of scientific and specialized articles, we must say that the quality is primarily determined by the topics from all segments of forestry and by the authors. Before being accepted and printed, the topics are verified by the Editorial Board and by the reviewers. It is unthinkable that the Editor-in-Chief and two reviewers, specialists in a scientific-specialized field of forestry, could “allow” an uninteresting and low-quality article to be printed. If, on the other hand, the problem lies in the topics and authors of scientific and specialized articles from abroad, the comment may have a “two-way” aspect. Both to them and to Croatian authors it is important for their articles to be published in Forestry Journal, which is cited in relevant world journals. as this contributes to their advancement in the profession. Is this not a good advertisement for our journal as well? It is also almost impossible to imagine that our forestry experts cannot find at least one of the topics by foreign authors interesting, considering that Croatia is a mo-

untainous, lowland and Mediterranean country covered with forests similar to those in the surrounding countries. If, on the other hand, the problem lies in the foreign language, despite the fact that all the abstracts and supplements are written in two languages, then we should question our intellectual “profile” in the 21st century. We would particularly like to stress that the Editorial Board always gives priority to Croatian scientists and experts in the field. We always invite them to publish in the journal and follow in the footsteps of our illustrious predecessors. Forestry Journal is digitalized and it is not hard to browse through earlier volumes and observe the quality of the articles and the importance of practical forestry topics, something that we, to be honest, lack. Here is a question for our forestry experts, in particular those who criticise: when was the last time you wrote a scientific-specialized article or any other writing and published it in your scientific-specialized and professional journal? The Croatian forestry has had and will continue to have organisational and professional problems. The journal columns Challenges and Confrontations or Current Topics provide an ideal opportunity to discuss them and look for solutions. We have on multiple occasions benevolently highlighted current problems, hoping to receive feedback from the profession! It is clear, however, that the majority of us are prepared to be “backstage” rather than on the open stage.

Here is yet another comment related to reading (or not reading) Forestry Journal or any other journals: the doyen of Croatian forestry, late Professor Emeritus Bраниmir Prpić, used to say: “A person who has been out of the profession for five to seven years should enrol the faculty anew.” This goes in favour of the currently discussed issue of life-long learning, for which we believe Forestry Journal provides one of the “tools”. Finally, it would be revealing if we would stand in front of the mirror, look ourselves in the eye, and ask and answer questions that burden forestry today. If in the process we sometimes cast down our eyes, then there is still hope for us and our profession.

Editorial Board