

EDITORIAL

FORESTS AND FORESTRY IN 2021

We explained the mission of this column in a double issue of *Forestry Journal* several years ago. We pointed out that the intention of the column was not to teach forestry experts about forestry (the profession which they study at the faculty), but to point to some current events taking place in the forest and the forestry profession. By stating the facts, we try to help the forestry practice and science to take a stand on a particular professional problem or event, all with the view of protecting the forest and the profession. Therefore, let us remind ourselves of last year's columns, which point to the problems that await us in the future.

In the double issue 1-2/2021 we announced the year-round celebration of the 175th anniversary of the founding of the Croatian Forestry Society (1846) and the 145th anniversary (1877) of the publication of the scientific-professional paper *Forestry Journal*. Among other things, we pointed out that the Croatian Forestry Society achieved its two main goals. The first was the introduction of higher forestry education in Croatia by founding the College of Agriculture and Forestry in Križevci in 1860 and the Academy of Forestry (the present Faculty of Forestry) in 1898 as the fourth higher education institution of the University of Zagreb. The second goal was achieved by publishing the first issue of *Forestry Journal* on January 1st, 1877. We especially emphasised that the awareness of the need for higher education to manage forest ecosystems was keenly felt even then. We asked ourselves what the current situation was regarding the forestry profession. We concluded it was dire: everybody knows everything about the forest without having the slightest idea of the forestry profession. We also drew attention to the non-market management of forest resources, particularly the most valuable ones, when by exporting wood raw material instead of wood processing products, we export jobs and devalue the long-lasting hard work of forestry experts.

In the double issue 3-4/2021, we discussed the text by Thomas Waitz, representative of the Green Party in the EU, published under the bombastic title "New Report on Deforestation in Croatia", which our Greens immediately "embraced". In view of over 250 years of managing our forests according to the principle of sustainable management, this title is an insult to Croatian experts. In addition, this mixing up of the concepts of deforestation and controlled felling of forests is a blatant example of ignorance, or rather amateurism, which today permeates not only forestry but also other professions. We warmly recommend rereading this Editorial in order to gain a stronger basis for a possible debate of this subject.

The Editorial in the double issue 5-6/2021, was entitled "The demise of a man who has devoted his life to forests and forestry". Although his life path was extensively presented in the column "In memoriam", we briefly described the most important points of his life path, concluding: "The demise of Professor Matic ends a period which we, his contemporaries, will always look upon as an unforgettable experience of living a

noble foresters' life in togetherness, the result of which are well-tended and preserved forests. Will the new trends, increasingly visible in present day forestry, in which foresters have less and less contact with forests and with their colleagues, be able to respond to all the challenges, particularly in the light of distinct climate changes, remains to be seen."

The topic of the double issue 7-8/2021 "Who is to blame for poor business results of wood processors?" is accompanied by the text of the European Forestry Institute and the World Bank, entitled "A survey and recommendations for the wood raw material sale system in the company Croatian Forests Ltd." According to the text, 93 % of wood products in Croatia are sold administratively on the basis of long-term contracts, and only 5 % are sold on the market (Poland 89 - 90 %, Czechia 96 %, and Estonia and France about 100 % on the market). Compared to European prices and prices in neighbouring countries, Croatia sells wood raw material at prices which are 30 - 30 % lower, which incurs a loss of about 316 million kuna annually (oak 163 million kuna, beech 105 million kuna, spruce and fir 48 million kuna). Taking into consideration the principles of sustainable management, as well as the quality and naturalness of Croatian forests (which has earned them the FSC certificate - of which it is the wood processors who reap the highest benefits), we suspect that the losses are even higher than the ones mentioned above.

The topic of the double issue 9-10/2021 was "What does the new EU forest strategy for 2030 bring?" A core part of the European Green Deal, this strategy anticipates a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55 % by 2030 and a climate-neutral continent by 2050. It also helps meet EU targets to increase CO₂ removal through natural sinks under the Climate Act. The strategy gives forests, foresters and the forest-based sector a central role in meeting these targets. With their help, a European transition to a modern, climate-neutral, resource-efficient and competitive economy is expected.

The double issue 11-12/2021 was concerned with predictions contained in the text "What does the Glasgow Conference bring us?" As part of the signed Declaration on Forests and Land Use, which has so far been supported by over 140 countries in which more than 90 % of world's forests are located, the leaders pledged to work together to "halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation" by 2030. The main objective of the conference was to limit the increase in global average temperature to a level significantly lower than 2 °C above the level in the pre-industrial period. Here, we are concerned about the fact that those who are uninformed, but in position of authority, equate deforestation and controlled felling, which is a silvicultural operation performed in order to maintain and regenerate forest stands. Despite the fact that Croatia is highly forested, this could significantly affect our proven success in the management of our forests.

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