

To the Erasmus+ Agency

The Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree (EMJMD) Mediterranean Forestry and Natural Resources Management (MEDfOR) has brought together the best expertise, human resources and infrastructure to educate the next generation of leaders in forestry and natural resources and public and private land management throughout the Mediterranean. The continuing commitment by Mediterranean universities, research, technological and outreach centers as well as by stakeholders has been key to the program's success, as is the financial support from the Erasmus+ Agency. This funding has enabled the participation of many students, otherwise unable to attend, through scholarships and further offered opportunities for post degree work opportunities and further study. The wider Mediterranean land management community recognizes the MEDfOR degree as having contributed to the development of a coordinated and multidisciplinary approach to the sustainability of forest ecosystems and to the provision of ecosystem services in a context of global change. This is reflected through the development of the substantial network as described above and the continued participation and success of student's which represent demographic diversity, rich ethnicity and the fundamentals of gender equality.

I, as with many of my colleagues, have benefited greatly from the flexible structure and mobility of the joint Master Degree MEDfOR. This flexibility, breadth, scope and expertise as demonstrated through consortium universities and their partners, has enabled an excellent platform from which to continue my career in forestry and natural resource management. Furthermore, it has allowed the sharing of culture, values and experiences that have influenced my personal integrity and those of my colleagues on our respective journeys across continents.

Possible lack of financial support from the Erasmus+ Agency is a concern. Given the success of the program in the past and my personal gratitude for participation. Continued funding is essential for the next four new editions and discontinuation may prevent many applicants to enroll in the program, losing the advantage from the continuing effort from the MEDfOR community. I thus strongly recommend the support by the Erasmus+ Agency to the next four editions of MEDfOR, starting in 2020. This will maximize the impact of this successful, coordinated and multidisciplinary approach on the forest and natural resources sustainable development goals.

Best regards

Jim Yates

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jim Yates", written in dark ink.