



# Thematic Workshop: Challenges, opportunities, and adaptation strategies to climatic changes in dryland forestry systems

## Project Information

doi:

<https://dx.doi.org/10.21750/REFOR.15.01.103>

**Background:** As a part of networking activities of PEN-CAFoRR COST Action (CA19128), the combined meeting took place in Mitzpe Ramon, Israel from 15 to 16 March 2023. In addition to the Core Group and Working Groups Meeting, a Thematic Workshop was organized by the local organizer Dr Ilan Stavi.

Short report: The Thematic Workshop on Challenges, opportunities, and adaptation strategies to climatic changes in dryland forestry systems took place in Mitzpe Ramon and surrounding area, encompassing four lectures given by invited experts (Figure 1) and a field trip to relevant afforestation sites. The first lecture on 'National and regional adaptation to Mediterranean climate change – Best practices afforestation in the northern Negev' was given by Gil Siaki, The Head of the Southern District in the Keren Kayemet Le'Israel (KKL, the national forestry agency). The second lecture on 'Patterns of primary productivity and water consumption of conifer forest ecosystems along Israel's semiarid to dry-subhumid climatic gradient: Implications of afforestation and forest management' was given by Tarin Paz-Kagan, whom is a Senior Lecturer at the Ben Gurion University of the Negev. The third lecture on 'Managing forests as social-ecological systems: the conceptual and methodological challenges' was given by Andrej Ficko, whom is a Professor at the Biotechnical Faculty, University of Ljubljana. The fourth lecture on 'Soil water availability and its impact on planted forests in a semi-arid environment, northern Negev Region Israel – Ambassadors forest' was given by Eli Argaman, whom is a Senior Researcher at the Soil Erosion Research Station of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. The three lectures given by Israelis, provided the workshop participants with better understanding of challenges and opportunities faced by dryland forestry systems, and particularly, to adaptation strategies to climatic changes. The fourth lecture provided the participants with information on socio-ecological aspects related with forest management.

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Figure 1. The lectures session at the Thematic Workshops

The Thematic Workshop was attended by the 28 members of the PEN-CAFORR Network (Pan-European Network for Climate Adaptive Forest Restoration and Reforestation). Aiming to improve forest restoration and afforestation success, learning about techniques of runoff water harvesting for afforestation in semi-arid regions in Israel was very interesting for attendees.

Following the lectures session, on the second day a field trip took place by visiting relevant afforestation sites (Figure 2, left) and the forest tree nursery (Figure 2, right). More specifically, the attendees have seen various techniques for water runoff harvesting and learned about the main challenges faced by dryland foresters.



Figure 2. Left: using ancient knowledge on runoff harvesting, the KKL establish small afforestation plots in ephemeral stream channels, Zipporim Ridge; Right: the KKL nursery, Gilat.

**Acknowledgements:**

This article/publication is based upon work from COST Action CA19128 – Pan-European Network for Climate Adaptive Forest Restoration and Reforestation (PEN-CAFoRR), supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology).

**References and links:**

PEN-CAFoRR - <http://www.pen-caforr.org/>

COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) - <https://www.cost.eu/>