

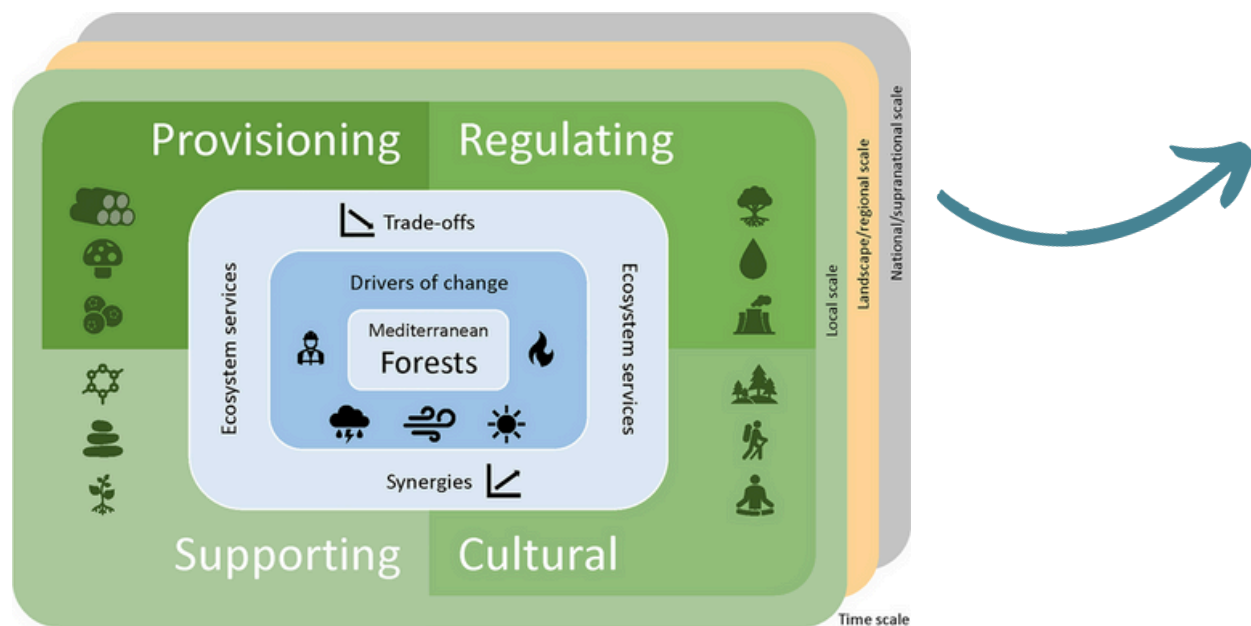
# SURVEY PRELIMINARY RESULTS:

## Mediterranean Model Forest Network and ecosystem services

### CONTEXT

What are the ecosystem services and why to work on them as Model Forest Med Network

Ecosystem services are the essential benefits that natural ecosystems provide to humans for their co-existence with the environment, including clean water, air purification, pollination, soil fertility, and climate regulation.



### The specific relevance of Ecosystem Services in the Mediterranean

- **Climate Regulation:** Mediterranean forests sequester CO<sub>2</sub>, helping to reduce greenhouse gases and mitigate climate change.
- **Biodiversity:** As a biodiversity hotspot, these forests are essential for preserving unique plant and animal species.
- **Erosion Control and Soil Quality:** Forest roots stabilize soil, preventing erosion and maintaining soil fertility, crucial for agriculture.
- **Desertification Prevention and Water Conservation:** Forests help combat desertification, enhance water infiltration, and recharge aquifers in water-scarce areas.
- **Hydrological Cycle Regulation:** They improve water quality, regulate river flows, reduce flood risks, and support aquifer recharge.
- **Fire Prevention and Climate Resilience:** Forests are increasingly vulnerable to fires and diseases due to rising temperatures and lower rainfall.
- **Socio-economic Benefits:** Forests provide resources, jobs, and attract tourism, boosting the regional economy.

Considering:

1. The **Model Forest approach** as suitable to enhance ecosystem services
2. The **relevance of the topic** in the Mediterranean
3. The presence of a **network** of Model Forests in the region

Starting from the initiative of the Aterno Valley Model Forest, we presented a survey to the network to:

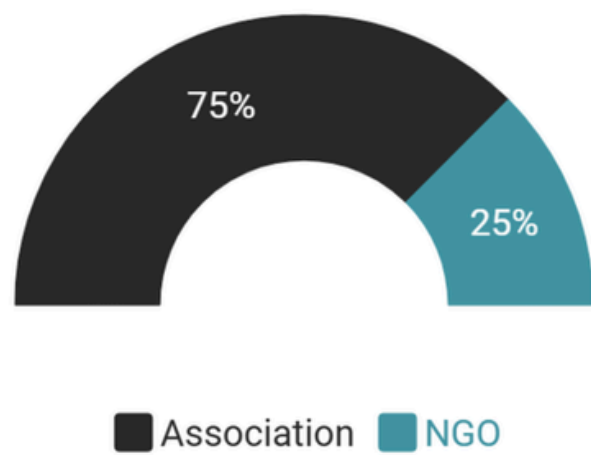
- To know which activities are already underway or planned, what the main needs are, and if there are best practices to be shared
- To conduct an initial assessment of the current state of ongoing initiatives
- To identify opportunities for new activities, projects, funding, and resources to be integrated at the Mediterranean level.

### SURVEY ANSWERS

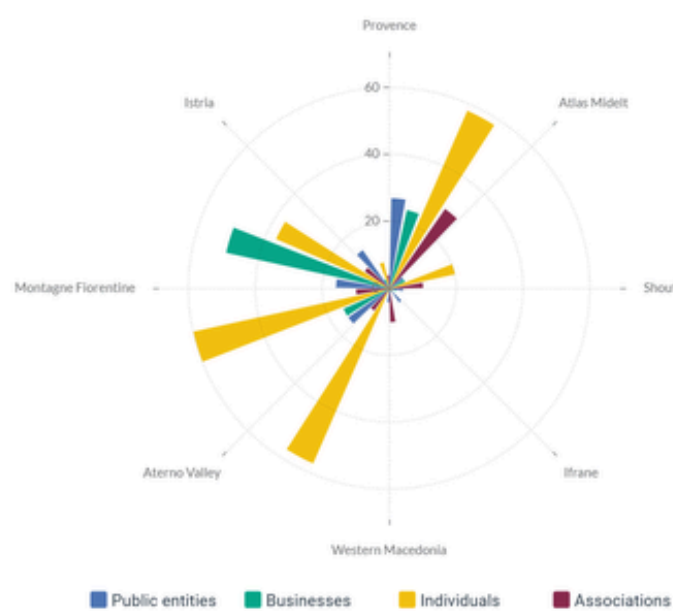
How the different territories within the Med Model Forest Network are addressing the issue of ecosystem services

#### WHEN & HOW

Starting date going from **2010 (Ifrane)** and **2012 (Montagne Fiorentina)** till the newest one in **2024 (Western Macedonia and Atlas Midelt)**. One of them is on the way for its candidacy (**Shouf**).



The local networks' composition:

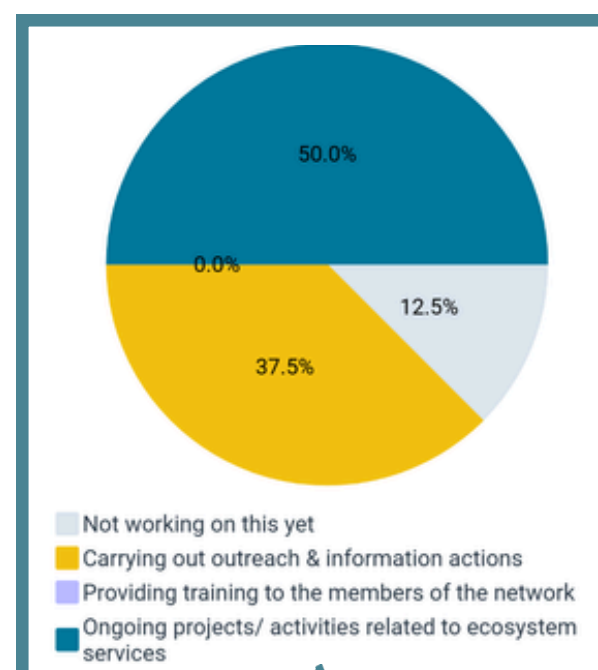


Which kind of activities are implemented:

- Networking
- Citizen science & Environmental education
- Research
- Management
- Products & Services
- Local activities
- Projects



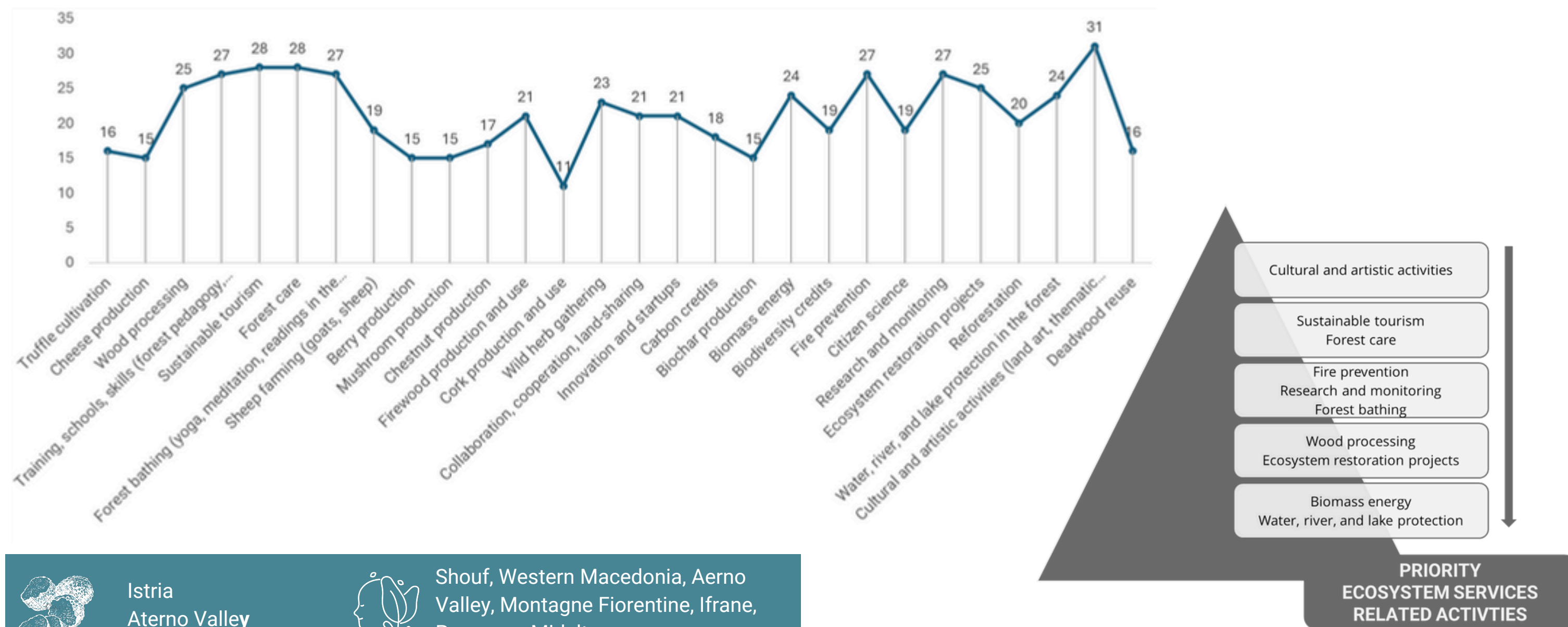
If and how they are working on Ecosystem Services:



Shared good practices:

Model Forest	Topic	Good practice
Shouf	Biomass Planning, Ecotourism	Setting up a specific management plan for sites, Management of Biomass, Ecotourism and outdoor services related to sites, Customized FLR guidelines
Ifrane	Education	Working with schools
WESTERN MACEDONIA	Forest events	FORESTIVAL: a festival dedicated to the forest.
Aterno Valley	Truffle Biochar, Indicators, Value chains	Truffle; biochar; footpaths adoption; new enterprises tutoring, forest bio-indicators, survey on forest perception by local community, ecosystem-service related value chains
Montagne Fiorentina	Forest therapy, Biomass, Certified wood, Certified forest events, Education	The FOR.SA project related to forest therapy; the use of locally produced biomass through small-scale woodchip boilers for district heating of residential areas and facilities in the territory of the Forest Model; the "FMMF IL LEGNO" brand for materials produced within the Montagne Fiorentina Model Forest; summer camps and educational activities in schools for boys and girls; the "Festa Saggia" circuit, through which the FMMF certifies events by ensuring they meet certain sustainability and content standards.
Istria	Business	Plan to promote ecosystem services within private forest owners.
Provence	Workshops	Working on a new type of workshop on ecosystem services to explain the dynamics between tree species (for example, the guild of species around the cork oak for the shrub layer).
Midelt	Ecotourism, Biochar, Empowerment	Activities related to sustainable ecotourism and biochar production to empower women and rural youth in the area.

What are the priorities for socio-economic development activities related to ecosystem services in the Model Forest areas?

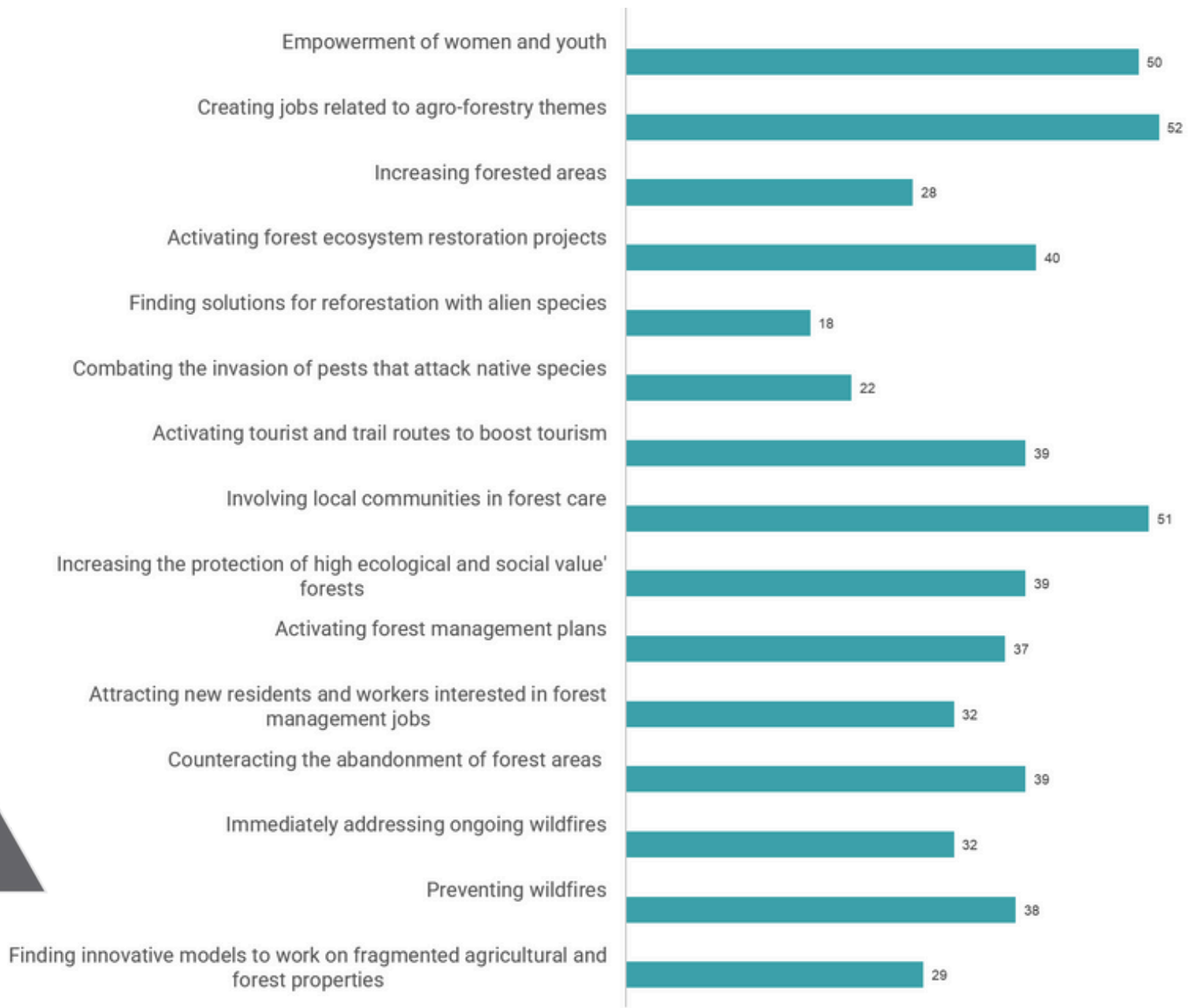
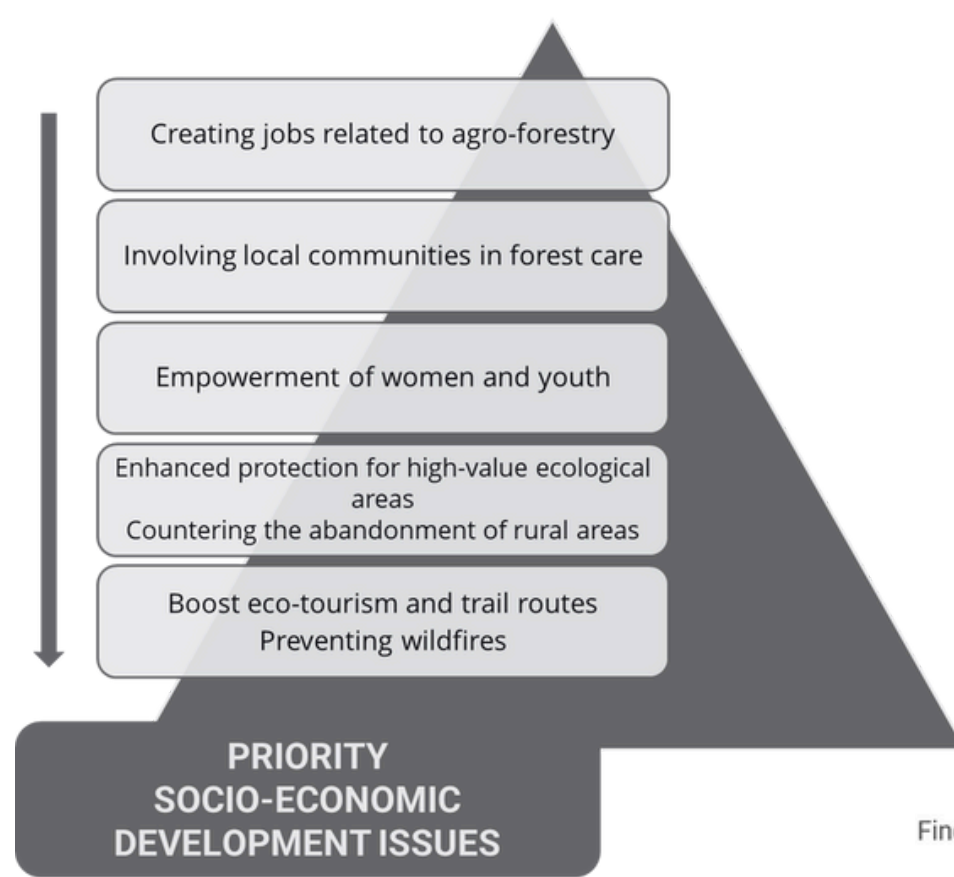


	Istria Aterno Valley		Shouf, Western Macedonia, Aerno Valley, Montagne Fiorentina, Ifrane, Provence, Midelt
	Montagne Fiorentina, Western Macedonia		Shouf, Western Macedonia, Montagne Fiorentina, Provence, Midelt
	Shouf, Western Macedonia, Aterno Valley, Montagne Fiorentina, Istria, Provence, Midelt		Shouf, Ifrane, Western Macedonia
	Shouf Midelt		Istria, Western Macedonia, Ifrane, Aterno Valley, Provence, Midelt

While the chart presents the responses in an aggregated format, highlighting the overall priorities that emerged, the table provides specific examples of top priorities (highest values) for some of the responding Model Forests. This approach underscores the value of understanding the unique priorities of each territory, which can be useful for developing joint projects.

What are the most significant issues in the area of action of the Model Forests:

The chart, in turn, highlights the main challenges to socio-economic development, which can be connected to the activities mentioned above to support local development while enhancing ecosystem services.



WHAT NEXT?

Based on survey responses, we will monitor **potential actions and funding opportunities** to involve the Mediterranean Model Forest Network, either in full or in part, according to shared socio-economic and environmental priorities. Our aim will always be to share the results of each relevant project or action with the entire network.



An initiative of



In collaboration with



Realized by

**Annalisa Spalazzi**  
PhD candidate in Regional Science & Economic Geography  
Contact: annalispalazzi3@gmail.com