Forest invasive species in Lebanon collaboration in Mediterranean countries

- Chadi Mohanna
  Director of RDNRD – Ministry of Agriculture

- Nabil Nemer
  Forest Entomologist
1995-2000
2012-present
Forest Damage
Cephalcia tannourinensis Chevin, lebanese cedar sawfly
An example of a specialist organism

Distribution in the region

- The Cedar sawfly until now is only present in the northern cedar stands of Lebanon

- Until to date, Monitoring has been carried in Turkey, Cyprus, Algeria and Morocco and no sign of this sawfly

- Care should be taken that this insect do not cross boundaries since until to date this is the only defoliator of cedar trees that can lead to their death amid climate change.

- Specific care should be taken when transporting soil coming form cedars forest since they contain the overwintering stage of Cephalcia tannourinensis
Pine Dieback 2015-2019
Causal Agents

Bark beetles

- *Tomicus destruens*
- *Orthotomicus erosus*

*Both well established*

- 5 new species to Lebanon recorded during this outbreak:
  - *Hylurgus ligniperda*
  - *Hylurgus micklitzi*
  - *Hylastes angustatus*
  - *Hylastes attenuates*
  - *Carphoborus pini*
Distribution in the region and challenges in Management

- Climatic scenarios predict that Mediterranean ecosystems may be affected more than temperate and boreal ones
- Most of these bark beetles are European and they are currently turning into cosmopolitan beetles present all over the world
- With the prevailing climatic changes and temperature increases; the number of generations is increasing and thus damages are recorded
The American Western Pine Bug

*Leptoglossus occidentalis*
Final Points: Distribution of Leptoglossus and other forest pests in the region

- Detected for the first time in Lebanon in 2015, Leptoglossus now it is present all over the country and attacking at least 3 genera of conifers:
  - Pinus pinea, halepensis, brutia
  - Juniperus excelsa
  - Cedrus libano
- Leptoglossus has been expanding since 1999 at a very rapid pace north, south, east and west from its original Western North America
- Bark beetles the causal agents of pine dieback have been expanding rapidly with climate change especially in the Mediterranean region
Cross border collaboration

Near East Network on Forest Health and Invasive Species (NENFHIS)
- located with the FAO Regional Office for the Near East in Cairo,
- Web site is hosted on FAO servers
- supports exchange of relevant information, knowledge and expertise on forest health and invasive species issues in the NENA region.

Improved communication and collaboration in the region will help member countries address and manage the increased threats to forest health from forest pests and diseases, invasive species, climate change and abiotic disturbances.
Challenges in cross border collaboration

- Factors such as increased trade or global changes facilitate the spread of insects or cause forest dieback to become increasingly widespread.

- The probability that these insects cross borders, from one territory to another, is increasing.

- The lack of knowledge or resources in a region can cause a threat to spread to neighboring regions.

- The lack of a predefined strategy for coordination between the response teams on both sides of the border means losing precious time, which could be used for combat or eradication.
**Recommendations**

- Joined cross border efforts on management of transboundary pests, exchange solutions and coordinate the management of risks and threats to forests.

- Take advantage of the knowledge or experiences that neighbors may have, and establish collaboration agreements prior to an emergency that will affect both sides of the border.

- Need for specialized task force groups to work and coordinate the different action between the countries.