

Summary of the Forest Department Annual Report  
of the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural  
Resources for the year 1979.

---

The main targets and objectives of the Forest Department during 1979 were the following:-

1. Protection of the Forest against fires.
2. Reforestation of burnt and bare areas.
3. (i) Production of timber and other forest products.  
(ii) Production of forest and ornamental plants.
4. Silvicultural treatment of stands.
5. Management of forests and forest lands.
6. Training of Cypriot and overseas foresters.
7. Continuation and expansion of forest Research.
8. Application of Forest Engineering aiming at the:-
  - (i) Improvement and extension of forest roads.
  - (ii) Maintenance and improvement of forest telecommunications.
  - (iii) Construction and maintenance of forest buildings.
  - (iv) Purchase and maintenance of machinery.
9. Protection of the forest environment, establishment, extension and maintenance of picnic places.
10. Securing employment to the inhabitants of forest villages.

For the achievement of the above targets and objectives, an amount of £773,223.000 mils under the Ordinary Budget and £1,050,323.000 mils under the Development Budget were approved. Out of the above Budgets the sum of £759,541.000 mils and £962,000.000 mils were spent respectively. The total expenditure was £1,721,541.000 mils.

I. Forest Protection.

Forest fires are the biggest and most serious enemy of our forests due to the dry and prolonged summer. The following measures were taken for the prevention and suppression of forest fires:-

- (i) A fire Fighting Task Force consisting of 58 members was in operation. Its members were employed on various forest operations at strategic points in the forest and they were on call at any time through radio telephone.

- (ii) During the summer months 10 Fire Look-out Stations, found on various high peaks in the forest were manned on a 24 hour basis in order to detect and report forest fires.
- (iii) About 6.50 km of forest roads were constructed and 2.91 km were widened. In addition 23 km of vehicle tracks were constructed, which serve also as fire traces.
- (iv) Seven water-tanks, one at Vrysi tou Pouliou and one at Vrysi tis Dichalous in Papho-forest, one at Kato-Kannoures and one at Pashia-Livadhi in Troodos forest, one at Argakin tou Dhia in Adelphi forest and two in Machera forest and localities Drys and Arades were constructed, in order to supply water, in the event of a fire, to the Departmental fire-engines.
- (v) Lectures on the prevention and suppression of forest fires were given to the National Guard, the Police and the Public. Also extensive publicity was made through the various mass media.
- (vi) In view of the increasing unavailability of labour in forest areas and especially of labour capable of fighting forest fires and in view of the need of getting advantage of modern successful technology it became imperative to mechanise also this sector of Forestry. The mechanisation was initiated in 1978 on a trial basis with the free grant to us of 6 fire vehicles by the Federal Republic of Germany. Apart from the above vehicles, during the year under review 9 fire pumps were also given to us as aid by the Federal Republic of Germany, and in this way the total number of our fire pumps was doubled. The use of fire engines proved to be very successful, efficient and encouraging. Thus our target is to increase gradually their number up to at least thirty.
- (vii) In spite of the measures taken in 1979, fiftyfour forest fires broke out and burnt a forest area of 371 hectares. As a result of these fires forest trees of a total volume of 10,028 cu.m. R.O.B. died. Forty of these fires were put under control almost immediately after they broke out. One the 20th August, 1979, a forest fire started through the carelessness of a picknicker in Adelphi forest near Asinou, and burnt an area of about 330 hectares. The

offender was prosecuted and convicted. The Forest Department takes all precautionary measures against forest fires and puts in all possible effort to eliminate or reduce them to an absolute minimum, but this is not possible without public co-operation and help. Asinou Forest fire started from a picnicker who lighted a fire at a prohibited area to prepare his meal. Hence our efforts to enlighten the public and especially the forest villagers and picnickers in general to prosecute the offenders continued with intensity.

#### Reforestation.

The reforestation of the burnt areas of Papho-forest continued at a high speed. During the year under review the area which was reforested was rather reduced from the previous year. This was due to the fact that the machinery used were also reduced and the wage-rates were increased considerably. So an area of 2039 hectares (15,241 donums) were reforested and/or cultivated, against an expenditure of £454,788.- Forty one tractors were employed continuously for ground preparation as well as a big number of labourers for planting, sowing and construction of small hand made gradoni, where the employment of machinery was impossible or not indicated. Extensive reforestation was not only carried out in the burnt areas of Papho-forest, where about two thirds of the year's funds were spent, but also in other bare areas such as Athalassa forest, Stavrovouni, Limassol, Adelphi, Troodos, Machera forest, Profali, Megali Moutti, Sotira (near Ayia Napa), Randi (near Petra tou Romiou), Xylofagou forest (near Liopetri river) etc.

During 1979, the work of the newly established Expansion Division was continued. Thus an area of 405 hectares (3030 donums) found near Larnaca area (Megali Moutti, Pipis, Alyki) was declared as Main State Forest. At the same time the process of bringing under forestry more lands especially in the vicinity of Larnaca-Goshi-Nisou-Dhali-Kornos and Pera Chorion as well as along the new Nicosia - Limassol road is continued. These areas are derelict and dry and will be afforested as soon as possible for the purpose inter alia of recreation and amenity. During the year under review an area of about three hectares private land at Troodos and Machera Forests was purchased by the Department.

### 3. Timber production and disposal.

During the year under review timber extraction and supply to local wood-working industries continued in a very satisfactory way.

55,801 cu.m.r.o.b. of green timber were extracted from various state forests and sold to the Cyprus Forest Industries, Co. Ltd., and to private individuals for the production of constructional timber, chipboard, box-shooks etc. In the above amount 4,464 cu.m. R.o.b. of branchwood fuel for the construction of chipboard is also included. The revenue derived from the sales of timber and fuel was about £491,937.- including £42,622.- being value of timber sold to the Cyprus Forest Industries in the previous year.

During 1979 the operation of Platania Sawmill continued and 120 cu.m. of sawn timber were produced.

Part of this timber was used by the Department mainly for construction of wooden forest buildings and the rest was disposed of to other Government Departments and Services.

The disposal of charcoal which was produced during the previous years continued; 45,808 kg, were sold and the sum of £5204.- was collected. The Department issued 61 sawmill permits during 1978.

During the same year the value of imported timber and timber products amounted to £26,255,876.- as against £10,767,700 in 1978 i.e. our imports have been doubled.

### 4. Silviculture.

During the year under review attention was also given to the Silvicultural treatment of stands. An area of about 1490 hectares (11138 donums) was treated silviculturally at a total cost of £33667.

Seed collection was satisfactory having met the increased Departmental needs and demand for export. A quantity of about 7291 kg of seed was collected at a total cost of £9140.-

The production of seedlings in the Departmental nurseries was efficient but inadequate due to limited funds. 762,166 seedlings were raised; the seedlings produced in 1979, plus the stock from previous years production reached 1,110,758. Out of this number 347,487 seedlings were used Departmentally, 203,976 were sold to the public or other Government Departments

and 47,778 were given free of charge to schools village authorities and other organizations and institutions for planting on public or communal lands.

5. Forest management.

The classification of the Main State Forests into categories has almost been completed; measurements for checking the volume tables prepared in 1975 continued during the year under review. New volume tables for Papho-forest have been prepared. The stratification of Papho-forest for enumeration purposes which started in 1978 was completed and checked by the Forest Surveyors. During 1979 1,300 hectares (9,718 donums) of forest land were leased for agricultural and animal husbandry purposes and the sum of £18,872.- was collected; 24 prospecting permits, 6 quarry licences and 2 mining licences were issued or renewed in State Forests.

6. Forest Education.

The Cyprus Forestry College completed in 1979 its 28th Academic year. The 29th Academic year began in October 1979 with a complement of 43 students out of whom 31 were cypriots and 12 from other countries.

During the year under review 2 Foresters (University graduates) and another one (Graduate of the Cyprus Forestry College) were sent abroad on scholarships awarded by the Governments of U.K. and Federal Republic of Germany, to specialise in various subjects and others participated at various international conferences and seminars.

7. Forest Research.

Forest Research and Publicity were continued on the same lines as in the past and intensified, against an expenditure of £2,994.- A quantity of 116 kgs of seed was introduced and sown in the forest nurseries for the production of seedlings and improvement of the Cyprus flora. The bee-keeping project was also successfully continued.

8. Forest Engineering

(i) Forest Roads.

The construction of new forest roads and improvement of existing ones, constitutes an important aspect of the work of the

Department, as roads serve on the one hand forest protection, tending and exploitation and on the other hand tourism and communication between forest villages.

During 1979, 3.42 km of forest roads were constructed at a cost of £6,945.- In addition the Department undertook the construction of two other roads for other Government Departments.

- (a) 2.4 km Lagouthera - Xyliatos road for the Improvement of Pitsilia Development project at a cost of £81,646.- and
- (b) 0.688 km Kornos - Limassol new road for the Public Works at a cost of £1,808.-

Furthermore 23 km of vehicle Tracks and extraction roads were constructed in various forest areas at a cost of £44,890.

During the year under review 1318 km of forest roads and 584 km of vehicle tracks were maintained.

(ii) Forest Telecommunications.

The Forest Department maintains a well organised telecommunication network for proper forest protection and management. An amount of £15246.- was spent for its maintenance and £4358.- for its extension and improvement.

The telecommunication system in the free part of Cyprus by the end of 1979 consisted of the following:-

- (a) 540 km of telephone lines
- (b) 355 telephone instruments
- (c) 9 telephone switch boards
- (d) 20 V.H.F. radio links
- (e) 4 V.H.F. Control Stations
- (f) 133 mobile radio telephones
- (g) 86 portable radio telephones.

(iii) Forest Buildings.

Kionia Fire-Look-Out Station was demolished and a four storey building was constructed in its place by the Cyprus Telecommunication Authority. One storey of this building was allocated to the Forest Department to be used as Fire Look-Out Station.

Improvements to various forest stations were also carried out during 1979. The programme of 1979 for the construction

of new buildings was postponed by the Government.

For the construction and improvement of forest buildings the sum of £9,085.- was spent.

(iv) Machinery and Plant.

During 1979 the number of machinery and Vehicles was also increased. The following machinery and equipment, valued at £74,705.- were donated to us as technical assistance by the Federal Republic of Germany and U.S.A. through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees:-

- (a) A new Tractor "Menzi - Muck" type.
- (b) 9 fire engines
- (c) various spare parts and accessories
- (d) 28 chainsaws.

For the operation and maintenance of all machinery and vehicles an amount of £143,599.- was spent.

9. Nature Conservation and Forest Recreation.

The Department of Forests during 1979 contributed greatly towards the effort undertaken by the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, for Nature Conservation, through various activities.

- (a) The Department intensified its efforts through the organization of lectures, voluntary work ceremonies and speeches through radio and T.V. for expansion of tree planting and protection of nature, especially after its catastrophe by the Turkish invaders.
- (b) An amount of £11,584 was spent for the improvement and extension of the picnic places at Pashia Livadhi, Xerokolymbos, Mandra tou Kambiou etc.  
At Pashia Livadhi a water tank of 20,000 gallons was constructed and the water was conveyed into it from Pano Livadhi. A camping site was initiated by the Cyprus Tourist Organisation at Limni Forest near Polis and the development of the sand drift Plantation for recreation, near Limassol was continued.

10. Provision of employment to the inhabitants of Forest villages.

Within the socio-economic policy of the Government which is expressed also through the Department of Forests, employment was provided to the inhabitants of forest villages and to certain displaced persons who took refuge therein. The total employment offered to both casual and regular employees was 646,400 working hours against an expenditure of £274,720.

II. Revenue.

In 1979 apart from the so many indirect benefits of the forests, which cannot be expressed in terms of money, an amount of £607,282.- was collected. An additional amount of £42,622.- representing forest products on credit is still to be collected.

Acknowledgements.

Warm thanks are expressed to the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources for its significant and effective help in the execution of the work of the Department. Thanks are also due to all Ministries and Government Departments for their close co-operation and to the Police, the National Guard, the U.N. Force in Cyprus, the Cyprus Telecommunications Authority, the Boy-Scouts, the Girl Guides, the Cyprus Forestry Association and to all other organisations and individuals for their kind assistance to the Department of Forests. War, thanks are also expressed to the Governments that donated to us as described in the main part of the report various machinery and/or Scholarships. Last but not least, warm thanks are expressed to all the Forest Staff, senior and junior, for their hand work, zeal and devotion to duty and for the their close co-operation, without which none of the targets and objectives of the Department would have been achineved.