Editorial note

A further step forward

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Scientific journals are the most vital means for disseminating research findings and are usually specialized for different academic disciplines or subdisciplines. The Forestry subject category represents 0.6% of the total number of scientific publications on a global scale (Giannetti et al. 2016): while representing a relatively little share in the global scientific production, this category means an amount of nearly 10,000 articles per year. However, despite such a large forest research production, not much is specifically written about silviculture: according to the SCOPUS database, only 7% of the articles published worldwide under the Forestry subject category directly refers to silvicultural aspects (Corona 2016).

This evidence has been the main reason for establishing the *Annals of Silvicultural Research* as an open access international journal since 2013, when it has taken over the former *Annali* of the Italian Forestry Research Institute whose history dates back to more than 80 years ago. Now, we are at a first turning point of this new journal, with its recent inclusion in the SCOPUS database, the need to even more foster open data policy within the community of silvicultural scientists, and, last but not least, the retirement of Gianfranco Fabbio who left the position of Editor-in-chief last January 2017.

Since 2013, *Annals of Silvicultural Research* has gained consideration within the international scientific community, as the increasing citations clearly demonstrate. Of course, bibliometrics does not say all. A researcher is efficient not when he/she publishes international papers but when he/she produces new (relevant) knowledge: the publication of a scientific article represents just the means for disseminating the relevant findings. On the other hand, a scientific journal is not just a "static" collection of papers: its policy and practice can largely influence the progress of a given scientific community.

This latter was the main reason why I have ac-cepted the challenge of becoming the new Editor-in-chief of *Annals of Silvicultural Research*. My greatest hope is to contribute positively to the body of knowledge in the silvicultural field, being such journal an appealing place for publication, especially (but not only) from young scholars. My personal willing is to do the best to support potential authors with suggestions, ideas and constructive criticism aimed at improving quality of their scientific products. Under this perspective, I am convinced, indeed, that editorial process is just as satisfying as seeing one of my own papers published.

With advanced conceptual, methodological and technical tools becoming progressively available, silvicultural research is constantly addressing new issues and questions, making use of both consolidated and original field techniques and data analysis. The vast expertise in this scientific domain builds upon the legacy of many years of practical experience: as repeatedly shown during the long history of the *Annali* (Fabbio 2013), a well-grounded past is a requisite to suitably understand the present research context and to creatively envision future scenarios. To this end, I do expect that *Annals of Silvicultural Research* continues to effectively contribute to challenging common assumptions and/or the research data in order to gain an ever clearer understanding of facts and findings in forestry. An effective support of science-policy and science-practice dialogues and interactions is even more expected by stimulating a stronger involvement of stakeholders and practitioners in the journal's life and by enhancing open access and open data policies. A broad drive across the research, funding and publishing communities is under way to make the availability of research data more transparent: as the research community embraces data sharing, academic journals can do their bit to help (Nature Editorial 2016).

It is well known that, behind facts and findings, there are ideas and people. So, I would finally like

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to thank Gianfranco, the Executive Editors and the Editorial assistants for the intense work at this journal during the last few years. We are all also indebted to the members of the Editorial Board and the independent reviewers for their invaluable contribution to the scientific quality and technical soundness of the issued papers.

References

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