



## Editorial to the thematic issue: “Current and previous forestry research in Czechia and Slovakia”

Dear readers,

It is my great honour to introduce this thematic double issue devoted to selected scientific results achieved by Czech and Slovak, or Slovak and Czech (I intentionally present both alternatives to ensure the equality of our nations) scientists. It is no coincidence that we have come to the preparation and publication of this double issue. Czech and Slovak people know very well that many breaking events in the region occurred in the years ending with the number eight, but I am pointing this fact out to potential readers from other countries. As examples we can name: uprisings for national emancipation in the year 1848, the end of WWI in 1918, the for-our-nations-unfortunate Munich Pact in 1938, the change of the social system in 1948, the occupation of our country by the Warsaw Pact troops in 1968, or the beginning of the federal state in the same year.

I intentionally did not mention the other two anniversaries, which we devote this thematic issue to. Specifically, 120th anniversary is related to the year 1898 (January 1st), when the Central Forestry Research Station was established in the town of Banská Štiavnica (Slovakia). At the same time, outside research stations at four mountainous nurseries of the Kingdom of Hungary were also established, out of which one was located in the current Slovak Republic, namely in Liptovský Hrádok. Following the organisational rules of that time, the head of the central station was a professor of forest silviculture at the academy, and the heads of outside stations were directors of forestry schools. The first director of the central station was prof. Eugen Vlkolínsky-Vadas. It was the first forestry research institute in the territory of Slovakia, as well as one of the first institutes in Central Europe. The Central Forestry Research Station in Banská Štiavnica became a member of the International Forest Research Institute (IUFRO) already in the year 1903. An important historical fact is that in the year 1910 on VI<sup>th</sup> IUFRO Congress prof. Vadas was elected as a IUFRO president. The next congress was supposed to take place in Banská Štiavnica in the year 1914, which however did not happen due to the start of the WWI. At that time, the territory of the current Slovak Republic belonged to the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, which collapsed after the war. We have to note that the National Forest Centre - Forest Research Institute Zvolen is proud to be a continuous follower of the forestry research in Slovakia. We would like to remind that the original outside research station in Liptovský Hrádok has also its followers in the Secondary Forestry School and the Semenoles enterprise (which manages 11 forest nurseries with an area of 200 ha). Both mentioned organisations are still based in the town.

Another, a beautiful, 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary is related to the establishment of the first Czechoslovak Republic (October 28, 1918). The establishment of this republic brought at least three important positive changes for both nations: a democratic society, mutual coexistence of our nations, and partial national emancipation. In spite of the fact that in the first Czechoslovak Republic (CSR) not everything was ideal, it was a period of unprecedented economic and cultural development of Czechs and Slovaks. Since the historical circumstances of the establishment and existence of this republic are well known, I will not go into more details. Let me at least mention the fact that during the first CSR a great boom was observed also in forestry science and practice. The forestry research institutes of that time started to actively cooperate (Czecho-Slovak cooperation) and participate in international programmes (e.g. within IUFRO). An important progress in forestry research in Slovakia was achieved for example in the field of forest nursery management and silviculture of the most important tree species for forestry, timber transport, introducing and acclimation of non-native tree species, etc. The forest research institutes provided extensive consulting services in the whole CSR.

Here I would like to remind of one more event in the year 1928, which is less known to general or forestry public. The establishment of the first CSR was remembered by a unique action related to forests and forestry sector. The decree of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Czechoslovak Republic - General Directorate of State Forests in Prague No. 17061-V / 17/1928 dated May 15, 1928 ordered all Directorates of state forests and farms in CSR to establish jubilee groves to celebrate the 10th anniversary of

CSR. The directorates were to report on their establishment before June 1, 1928. There have been several hundreds of jubilee forest stands at the territory of the first CSR. The groves were supposed to have stone memorials with a permanent label the “Czechoslovak Republic 1919 – 1928”. Tree species were selected in different ways, at many places in such a way to differentiate the groves from the surrounding forests, which was often achieved using coniferous species (e.g. yew, Weymouth pine, Stone pine, blue spruce, thuja). For example, the grove on the Tartar Meadow under the Sitno hill (near Banská Štiavnica town) was planted in the shape of the Slovak coat of arms including its internal colour differentiation. This activity was unique because the next opportunity to establish new groves at the 20th anniversary was gone due to the political changes and subsequent breakup of Czechoslovakia in the year 1938, and was not repeated in subsequent phases of the existence of our common state. Stone memorials along with planted jubilee groves are forgotten in time and even local people have no idea about them.

Czechs and Slovaks lived in a common state, with a short break during WWII, for almost 70 years. Although a quarter of a century has already passed since its dissolution, we cannot forget the “Czechoslovak” history, particularly at such an important anniversary. Apart from other areas, an above-standard cooperation can be currently seen also in forestry research. The “Central European Forestry Journal” is an example of a Slovak-Czech cooperation, since two organisations are its co-publishers: National Forest Centre - Forest Research Institute Zvolen (Slovakia) and Czech University of Life Sciences in Prague, Faculty of Forestry and Wood Sciences (Czech Republic). The journal has existed in such a common “mode” for five years, and the mutual cooperation has proved to work very well. The journal does not want to create space only for researchers from these two countries, but it is open to scientific results from the whole Europe.

The present double issue comprises nine works, out of which four are review papers, and five are original scientific papers. In total, nearly fifty authors from seven different Czech and Slovak organisations contributed to the papers. They cover a wide area of forestry science. They map the results of forestry research achieved by previous generations (works by Zahradník et al. or Konôpka et al.) covering also different parts including forest silviculture (Štefančík et al.). The next paper (Jarský et al.) analyses the process of forest restitution before and after the division of Czechoslovakia, or the occurrence and characteristics of forest stands on former non-forest land (Šebeň et al.). Then, the research results from the areas of long-term diameter increment (Sitková et al.) and mortality development of main tree species in both countries (Pajtík et al.) are shown. Finally, the research results focused on deposition of emissions and nitrogen concentration in forest complexes (Krupová et al.), and development of forest health state monitored by remote sensing (Barka et al.) are presented for both Slovakia and Czechia. I firmly believe that the selected topics are up-to-date, interesting, and will find their readers, and citation responses.

Here I would like to point out that the present double issue represents already the fifth thematic issue of the journal. The first thematic issue was published in the year 2013 and focused on “Production and ecological research at the Vrchslatina research site” (Central part of Slovakia). In the year 2014, the thematic issue was devoted to “Drought – forest interactions”, while in 2015 the topic was “Disturbance and post-disturbance processes in forest ecosystems”, and in 2016 it was “Forest entomology”. Last year (2017 No. 2/3) we published the thematic double issue dealing with two topics: „Properties of forest soils and soil-related ecosystems“ and “Carbon sequestration in forest biomass”. Next year we are planning to publish another thematic issue, which should focus on modern technologies in forestry research and practice.

At the end I would like to thank all those who help with the preparation of our journal, mainly authors, editors, reviewers, and the whole editorial board, for their hard work. I also thank the readers for their interest in our journal. I wish that the contemporary readers remained faithful to the journal and that the readership base geometrically expanded.

I greet all of you with the classic foresters’ greeting: Salute to a forest!

Bohdan Konôpka  
Editor-in-Chief