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## World Congress on Silvo-pastoral Systems in a Changing World: Functions, Management and People

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The Congress took place at the University of Évora, located in the region of Alentejo, Portugal. Alentejo is a Southern European region where the land use is strongly dominated by the silvo-pastoral system “Montado”, which occupies more than 1 M hectares. A similar system, the “Dehesa”, occupies more than 3 M hectares in the neighboring regions of Spain.

The Congress was organized by the University of Évora (PT) and the University of Extremadura (SP), with support from IUFRO Working Party 8.01.02 Landscape Ecology. Some 300 researchers from 52 different nationalities from all over the world were present and shared their work and reflections.



Participants engaged in debates on analytical perspectives and methods with a view to the contribution of the knowledge produced to the improved management of the silvo-pastoral systems of the world, and aiming for their sustainability. The Congress was based on the expectation that an increased societal awareness of the value of silvo-pastoral systems creates the conditions for new adaptive management models and public policy intervention that can create novel sustainability conditions, also in regions of environmental and economic marginality.

The event brought together researchers from different disciplines, as well as some practitioners and policy makers from different governance levels, who deal with the management and sustainability of silvo-pastoral systems. The meeting created a fruitful platform of exchange to enhance progress through interdisciplinary research approaches that can help translate scientific knowledge into new adaptive management solutions, and thus build a bridge from science to practice.

### Congress conclusions:

- The silvo-pastoral system is at the center: there is a remarkable interest from researchers from many disciplines, with highly diverse perspectives, which are aware and dedicated to a dialogue across regions and disciplines;
- We need more data: mapping, assessing, defining and assessing trends – not only on land cover and production, but also more on management practices, models, and impacts, e.g., more data on land use systems and their different modalities;
- There should be an increase of efforts to combine scales and enhance the territorial approach, so that we can understand the farm unit, which is at the same time the everyday decision unit, in its spatial, ecological, and social contexts.
- Even if there is an interest from a variety of disciplines, and many gathered in the Congress, we need to bridge gaps between

multiple approaches: biophysics-socio-economics, economics-social, silviculturalists to understand grazing and pastoralists to understand trees, this means considering complexity not only inside each disciplinary field and its evolution, but also bridging to others;

e) There is need for more and new knowledge, and to focus this knowledge on integrative management models: this means to recognize the importance of systematic knowledge and the importance of integrating land managers concerns;

f) Silvo-pastoral systems are highly diverse: progress in knowledge can only be translated to management if acknowledging differentiation;

g) There is much knowledge gathered already on long term traditional extensive systems, and this should be mobilized also when creating innovative ecologically intensive systems;

In conclusion, the Congress highlighted the need for increased visibility of these systems, still often unknown or not valued according to their multi-functionality and resilience.

This should be achieved through: i) continued and reinforced joint work, ii) a global network, or a strong partnership of existing networks, iii) a periodic World Congress organization prepared by local organization supported by an accompanying committee gathering the existing networks.

Find the full report at: <http://www.iufro.org/science/divisions/division-8/80000/80100/80102/activities/>  
(Report slightly abridged by the editor.)

Photo:  
Group photo outside the auditorium at the University of Évora at the end of the Congress. Photo provided by the Congress Organizing Committee