

Silvopastoralism and Sustainable Management
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DECLARATION FOR SILVOPASTORALISM

Silvopastoralism is an ancient way of managing forestland and a recent way of managing pasture land. It is a type of agroforestry system, fully in line with the global action plan for areas of sustainable development: Agenda 21.

Silvopastoralism can be applied in forest, grazing and arable lands in a sustainable way for diversification and multipurpose land use. It can increase biodiversity, protect the environment, combat and prevent desertification, promote the landscape, improve health and increase rent income at short, medium and long terms for managers when the social, cultural and economic benefits are accounted for. Silvopastoralism promotes land sustainability, integrated land use management and offers benefits to managers, local communities and the public.

Forest areas: Agenda 21 promotes the maintenance of sustainable forests through conservation and management, by maintaining or restoring the ecological balance and expanding the contribution of forest to human needs and welfare through the utilization of non-timber products. Silvopastoralism can be a way of conserving and enhancing forest protection from fires, and increasing of rent incomes and biodiversity. At the same time, it promotes the better use and development of some types of forests and woodlands, including planted forests, through appropriate, environmentally sound and economically viable, activities and management of plant and animal species (including autochthonous breeds). It promotes management of wildlife, attractive landscapes, as well as eco-tourism, which ensures the adequate participation of the private sector, rural communities, indigenous people, youth and other user groups in sustainable forest management.

Agricultural areas: Agenda 21 promotes the expansion of areas under forest and tree cover, which unfortunately in many cases encourages rural abandonment and necessitates increased public investment for their protection. Promotion of Silvopastoralism will increase rent income in the short, medium and long term for managers, therefore taking into account social, cultural and economic aspects which promote land sustainability. Silvopastoralism prevents rural abandonment, enhances more viable rural communities, promotes rural tourism and enjoyment of land for different population sectors, and enhances sustainable economic management of the natural resources. Therefore, it is a land user-centred approach instrumental to the attainment of sustainability.

Multipurpose land use is fulfilled through the increase of resource use efficiency at spatial and temporal scales, the reduction of hazards and risks, the enhancement of system stability (multiple species) and the promotion of the social and recreational use of rural land.

Biodiversity increase is attained through patchiness and heterogeneity that promotes efficient use of land resources and therefore plant species and structural richness of habitat. This system can be used for preserving autochthonous animal breeds, and wildlife preservation and for prevention of hazards (erosion, fires)

Protection of the environment is reached through the maintenance of soil fertility, the enhancement of buffers against pollution (N, P...) and the reduction of

fertiliser needs, combating desertification, carbon sequestration and carbon reservoirs, the improvement of water and soil quality and the prevention of climate warming.

Health protection is attained through the improvement of community and animal welfare, and reduction of pollution effects.

Finally, silvopastoralism **promotes landscape** as it enhances its conservation and amenity value.

Therefore, Silvopastoral systems should be promoted for preserving and enhancing productivity in marginal areas (mountain) in a sustainable way as well as for increasing stability, profitability, biodiversity and multipurpose uses of more productive areas since they improve traditional farm and animal husbandry activities and have the potential to increase the participation of diverse groups of people and offer more employment of people

The inherent complexity of silvopastoral systems requires adequate management plans. This complexity makes research necessary at different levels: traditional knowledge evaluation, surveys, identification of management problems at a local level, research, training of all relevant sectors and communities and technology transfer.

In the European context, silvopastoralism should be considered a viable alternative land use in agricultural lands and included in the Reformed CAP as a way of strengthening rural development and decoupling subsidies from production and Expansion of the European Forest Strategy.

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