



# World Congress Silvo-Pastoral Systems 2016

Silvo-Pastoral Systems in a changing world: functions, management and people



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## Main Conclusions

The Congress was organized by the University of Évora (Portugal) and the University of Extremadura (Spain), with support from IUFRO. 300 researchers from 52 different nationalities, from all over the world, were present and shared their work and reflections.

These researchers gathered around a common research object, the multiple silvo-pastoral systems around the world. There were many different disciplines and disciplinary views. Participants engaged on debates on the analytical perspectives and methods, with a common guideline related with the contribution of the knowledge produced, for the improved management of the silvo-pastoral systems of the world, aiming for their sustainability and for reinforcing their multi-functionality for the current societal demands.

The conclusions of the Congress can be summarised as such:

- a) The silvo-pastoral system at the centre: 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;
- b) We know how to describe the system and there is a diverse and rich publication record on the silvo-pastoral system; but we need more data, providing hard evidence: mapping, defining and assessing trends – not only on land cover and production, but also more on management practices, models, and impacts;
- c) In order to enhance visibility and acknowledgment, we need to demonstrate the added value of silvo-pasture (animal welfare, weight gain, milk production, carbon footprint, etc) in many different regions, with convincing data from every region;
- d) There should be an increase in 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, social) context
- e) 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, as well as from silviculture experts to better to understand grazing, and pastoralism experts to better understand trees; this means considering complexity not only inside each disciplinary field and its evolution, but also bridging to others;
- f) Silvopastoral systems work well for many societal demands, but to respond to these multiple targets farmers need complex-integrative management schemes. 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;
- g) Silvo-pastoral systems are highly diverse: progress in knowledge can only be translated into management if this knowledge acknowledges differentiation and the specific characteristics and conditions of each system;
- h) There is much knowledge gathered already on long term traditional extensive systems, and this should be mobilized also when creating innovative ecologically intensive systems;

Concluding, the Congress highlighted that there is a need to increased visibility of these systems, still often unknown or not valued according to their multifunctionality and resilience, and their role on the management of the rural territories. 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.